



dpwrt

Department:
Public Works, Roads and Transport
North West Provincial Government
Republic of South Africa

Modiri Molema Road
Old Parliament Complex
Mmabatho, 2735
Private Bag X 2080, Mmabatho, 2735
Republic of South Africa
Tel.: +27 (18) 387 2447
Fax: 086 535 1538
Website: www.nwpg.gov.za/public-works

MEC Mahlakeng Mahlakeng address to the media today (10am) at the department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mafikeng.

Date: Wednesday, July 21, 2010

- Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen

I was privileged, to be in a Government delegation, which was led by the Premier of the Province, which accompanied other high-profile leaders of the ruling party, to Tlakgameng village this past Sunday.

Our mission, culminated in a community mass meeting, which members of the delegation, including myself, had an opportunity to address.

- While the reception we received in Tlakgameng village could be interpreted as hostile, I still think we had a successful meeting even though not fruitful.
- Members of the community- young and old- indeed turned out in numbers to hear us speak and to engage us. They neither boycotted nor disrupted the meeting, which started and ended without an incident.
- Residents who were given an opportunity to ask questions, indeed spoke their minds, and even went beyond to express personal views about some of us in that delegation.
- Those present and represented at that mass meeting, may not necessarily have agreed with some of our responses, particularly in relation to the gravel road between Ganyesa and their village. This road seems to us, to be very central to the dispute that is currently raging on Tlakgameng.
- In spite of all of that, as a leader of government, I will never take a decision which I cannot defend at some point. It will be irresponsible of me, as a leader to make promises, and commit government, on something that is just impossible to deliver in a short or term.
- More so, when I know, and everybody else is very much aware by now, that funds to undertake a project as huge as road construction are not available.
- It is also ludicrous, to go on a misinformation campaign, deliberately peddling false information, in a frantic effort to make the community of Tlakgameng to believe, that, my department at some point appointed a contractor, and even allocated money for the

construction of the tar road from Ganyesa to Tlhakgameng.

- I had hoped those who claim to be in the know during that mass meeting, to at least name of this invisible contractor that repeatedly mentioned.
- I was curious, and so was every member of the delegation, to hear:
 - Where and when was such a tender advertised? Who appointed that contractor? Who paid and how much was paid?
 - That information would have been very crucial to point us in the right direction but it remained elusive.
 - I found it mind-boggling, just how the young people of Tlhakgameng- who I must confirm were in the majority at the meeting- failed to interrogate these questions above, but rather chose to steadfastly believe as gospel, that government completed the 2010 Fifa World Cup road projects in Rustenburg, using funds allocated for the construction of the road in Tlhakgameng.
 - It is indeed regrettable, but it still remains our responsibility as government, never to be impatient in explaining the facts no matter how long it takes, to explain why certain things cannot be done at a flick of a switch, today, tomorrow or even a day after, in spite of a dire need by communities be they rural or urban.
 - The only time a decision will be taken, and implemented, to have the road from Ganyesa to Tlhakgameng paved or tarred, is when sufficient funds for that particular project, are available.
 - To this end, we have applied in writing to the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA), for a loan of at least R100m, specifically for the Ganyesa to Tlhakgameng road including other critical road projects in the province.
 - DBSA acknowledged our application, and subsequently informed us that they would respond to us between October and November 2010
 - I do not want to speculate how they would respond, but we hope for the best.
 - If our application for a loan succeeds, which is what all of us are hoping for, I can assure you that:
 - Within a reasonable period, a tender will be advertised, a contractor will be appointed lawfully and procedurally and I will ensure that, that appointed contractor is on site, is seen to be working, and complete that project in record time.
 - In the event the bank rejects our application, this road project, like many others elsewhere in the province, will be put on hold, until the next the financial year, which

only begins in April 2011.

- That is the position of Government, which I communicated to the community of Tlakgameng and wish to re-emphasise that, just in case there was any misunderstanding
- I never expect some people to accept this position, but we will keep on saying it without any fear of contradiction over and over again.
- I will be going back to Tlakgameng, not to address a mass meeting, but to drill home this message to all stakeholders during separate meetings which I have arranged in the coming weeks and month.

What's the status with regards to the new official vehicle for the Premier

- As a department responsible for all government vehicles, including executive vehicles, I'm happy to announce that the Premier of the North West will soon take delivery of her first and new official vehicle.
- It is a BMW 750i, with a purchase price of R1m.
- We are in the process of fitting the e-fuel system and hope the blue lights as well as number plates will be fitted by the end of next week.
- I am very comfortable, to make this pronouncement, because this department is very transparent in its dealings, and we are upfront with the truth because there is nothing to hide and we are not in the business of hiding the truth from the public.
- You may not be aware that, since the Premier took office in May 2009, we have not purchased an official vehicle for her.
- We can also confirm that the official vehicle she inherited from her predecessor, was involved in an accident in February this year. She has been using one of our relief pool vehicles, an Audi Q7.
- We are in the process of having the damaged vehicle repaired, and once that is done, it would form part of fleet used as a relief by any of the executive members.
- Therefore, while parts of report published in one of the weekend newspapers about the Premier, and her new car are correct:
- Half that story is just full of inaccuracies and malice on the part of some with ulterior motives, and a desperate attempt to get business from government.
- We do not have time to stoop to their level. We are in Government; they are running a private business and we will deal with those issues internally.

Status regarding Brits Hospital:

- We have appointed a new contractor, JR Stock Madona Kononibo JV, to complete within the next two years, the Brits Hospital project in the Bojanala District.
- The project is in the Madibeng Local Municipality.
- In February 2009, we terminated the R456.5m contract, awarded to Ilima/Tsoga Construction Joint Developers, a joint venture agreement which ceased to exist, after the major partner, Ilima Projects (Pty) Ltd, applied for liquidation in the Gauteng North High Court.
- Tsoga Developers could not continue with the project, because of a lower grade, (GB5), which did not comply with the requirements of the contract.
- I am also informed that, an open tender for the completion of the Mini Garona in Vryburg, will be advertised before end of this month.
- The move, also followed the termination, because of poor performance, in December 2009, of the R137.5m contract awarded to the same joint venture, Ilima Projects/Tsoga Developers.
- The Mini- Garona project, which is a government office complex in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, was scheduled to begin in July 2006 and finish in July 2008. It is yet to be completed.

Status with regards to the construction work on the Koster to Lichtenburg:

- Work on that road is continuing following our protracted dispute with the construction company Kaulani Civils.
- We have agreed with the company in May 2010, that they move on site and continue with the work on a without prejudice basis in spite of the future legal disputes we will be pursuing against them.
- You will recall that, there is now overwhelming evidence that Kaulani Civils is one of the construction companies awarded road tenders irregularly and that has already cost Mr Eddie Thebe his job as Chief Director Roads.
- While on this matter, I am also informed we could receive a verdict following the speedy conclusion of the disciplinary enquiry of suspended CFO, Kwekwu-Odame Takyi.
- I have also been inundated with calls from various quarters asking about the status of the criminal case the department reported to the police.

- I cannot speak for the law enforcement agencies. What I can confirm is, we have cooperated fully with them but they can speak for themselves, and tell the nation how far they are with their investigations.

Reports of sale by the department of land in Hartebeespoortdam (Brits) to a private developer.

- The Mail & Guardian newspaper has to date published two reports, suggesting that my department sold land to a private developer for R76m in 2009 in what they describe as a controversial deal. It appears this happened before I took office.

- I am yet to be fully briefed to establish the facts regarding this matter, before I can make an informed comment or pronouncement.

- But be that as it may, I am informed by the Office of the Chief Directorate: Facilities Management and EPWP in the department that:

- The department indeed signed a Deed Sale, with a company called Global Eagles, to dispose portions of a farm no: 482 in Hartebeespoort in the Brits area.

- I will keep you posted on this subject matter once I have received a full briefing and established the facts.

I thank you for your time. Have a good day.