



LIMPOPO LEGISLATURE

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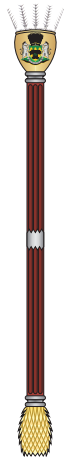


BUDGET
SPEECH

2022/23



Speaker: Hon. Molapo RR



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BUDGET SPEECH 2022/23

Limpopo Legislature Budget Speech Delivered by the Speaker of the Limpopo Legislature, Hon. Molapo RR, to the Sixth Limpopo Legislature at the Lebowakgomo Legislative Chamber, Lebowakgomo.

29 March 2022

The Presiding Officer,
Premier of the Limpopo Province, Hon. Stanley Chupu Mathabatha,
Members of the Executive Council,
Chief Whip of the House, Hon. Mokgonyana EM,
Leader of Government Business, Hon. Sekoati SC,
Leaders of the Opposition Parties,
Chairpersons of Committees, Hon. Mashamaite NV
Chairperson of Oversight Mechanism, Hon. Lekganyane NM
Honourable Members of this House,
Secretary to the Limpopo Legislature, Mr Simon Mothoa,
Officials of the Limpopo Legislature,
Distinguished Guests,
Media Houses,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ke ya le dumediša.

This budget is presented a few days after the country has celebrated International Women’s Day (8 March 2022) and Human Rights Day (21 March 2022) in which we commemorated the massacre of our people while protesting against apartheid pass laws. The Human Rights Day reminds all of us about the sacrifices that accompanied the struggle for the attainment of free, just, and democratic society. Inspired by this we need to move with speed and zeal to ensure the delivery of services that will make the lives of our people better.

Honourable Members,

The 2022/23 Budget Speech is delivered within the most challenging times of COVID-19 which has brought so much disruptions to our people’s livelihoods and wellbeing. Families have lost mothers and fathers due to COVID-19, and each of us has been affected with the loss of a distant or close family member. Equally, our economy has experienced a nosedive which led to unprecedented high level of unemployment with the youth being the most affected.

The Limpopo Province as a whole is logically characterized by pressing and competing needs for service delivery for our people. The local government elections held in 01 November 2021 has raised the expectations of our people on the need for better services. Furthermore, the Covid-19 challenge has taught us that there is a need for better and creative ways of maximizing service delivery initiatives in our communities. This approach is in line with what was alluded to by President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa in his State of the Nation Address when he remarked that *‘as the trajectory of the pandemic has continued to change, we had to adapt and evolved.’* Our Honourable Premier Stan Mathabatha further amplified this view in his State of the Province Address on the 24th February 2022 when he stated that *‘While Covid-19 caught us off guard, our collective response was swift and equal to the task’.*

This is the attitude that we adopted as the Limpopo Legislature. We did our level best as an institution to come up with creative ways to ensure that the business of the Legislature did not suffer as a result of the impact of the pandemic.

Honourable Members,

It is clear that with the prospect of a 5th wave, there is a need to enhance our approach to oversight and channel resources accordingly. Drawing from the gloomy economic environment outlined by the MEC for Treasury Hon Seaparo Sekoati in his budget Speech on the 8th March 2022, it is clear that the Limpopo Legislature's mandate of Oversight, Lawmaking and Public Participation should be enhanced to ensure the creation of a conducive environment for economic growth and development in our Province.

It is important that as a Legislature we should ensure through oversight that we derive value for money for the **R64.056 billion** budget allocated to the Province. In line with the call of our President, we must rebuild and restore 'trust and pride in public institutions'.

Honourable Members,

The Legislature being the vanguard and representative of the people is indeed strategically positioned to ensure through robust oversight that the people of the province are not failed. It is therefore incumbent upon us that we exercise oversight on the billions allocated to the Province, Departments and entities. Through our committees, which are the engine rooms of the Legislature, we will follow the provincial budget allocated to the Departments to ensure value for money and that the budget is used for the purposes intend for.

As the Legislature, it is our understanding that accountability and transparency are fundamental qualities of a functional and ethical developmental state. It is our constitutional obligation to hold the Executive accountable that compels us to agree with Mother Theresa when she said *“honesty and transparency make you vulnerable, [but] be honest and transparent anyway”*.

To this end, it is important for the House to seek accountability from those entrusted with public funds. For this reason, the dominant discourse in our Portfolio and Standing Committees has taken the following pattern:

- *Identifying the measures or steps taken to prevent irregular, wasteful or unauthorised expenditure.*
- *Identifying the responsible officials.*
- *Clearly stating the action taken against responsible officials.*

This line of questioning is not meant to be antagonistic but to seek clarity on the usage of public funds in order to prevent anomalies in the future. In presenting this budget let me state it that it will be in the best interest of the people of Limpopo that Committees of the Legislature enforce accountability without fear or favour. Our zeal to exercise oversight is more than just a Constitutional obligation as it is founded on profound paradigm that our people need better services.

Amilcar Cabral captures it well when he states that *“Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone’s head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children”*.

Informed by this view, our oversight outlook should therefore be needs and developmental oriented.

Honourable Members,

In his State of the Province Address, the Honourable Premier clearly stated that *'The financial performance of our government is improving for the better'*. Other things being equal, it is worth noting that the oversight role of the Legislature over the Provincial administration cannot be taken for granted. Robust oversight by Portfolio Committees of the Limpopo Legislature has kept Departments on their toes, which has pushed them to continue to register favorable audit outcomes.

Honourable Members,

Legislatures are constitutionally required to meaningfully engage the public in all their affairs. Therefore, public hearings remain critical in enhancing effective participation of the public. During the previous financial year, public hearings were mainly held virtually in order to afford the public an opportunity to effectively participate during law making processes. As part of public participation, we have received and processed petitions across all the 5 districts of the Limpopo Province. We acknowledge that the processes of resolving petitions take long, but we should in the same breath celebrate our successes when it comes to resolving petitions referred to us.

The number of petitions referred to us clearly demonstrate that the public has confidence in the work we do as the Limpopo Legislature, and we cannot afford to disappoint them. Drawing from some of the successful interventions by the Legislature in the 2021/22 financial year:

1. The Legislature has brought remarkable joy and confidence to the children of **Ms Cecilia Mofokeng** from Greater Letaba Municipality who were born at home by facilitating that the Department of Home Affairs speedily process their birth certificates.

2. **Rantho Francina** from Mopani District was struggling to get an ID for her son and through the Legislature's intervention, Home Affairs issued the ID.

3. **Mmathabeng Maila** from Maila Seolo Village in Makhuduthamaga wrote a petition regarding an incomplete road D420 and the Legislature intervened, and the road was subsequently completed.

4. **Bakone Ba Matlala Traditional Council** in Capricorn District Municipality wrote a petition regarding the tarring of Road D3377 at Ga-Matlala Setumong to Limburg. Through the intervention of the Legislature the road was tarred.

5. **Mawele Secondary School** wrote to the committee to request for the fast tracking of a merger between their school and JM Gwangwa in Waterberg District. The Legislature intervened and the schools were merged, and learners provided with transport.

6. **Surprise Monyela** from Capricorn District had been applying for an RDP house for over 5 years and through the intervention of the Legislature, the house was built by Coghsta.

7. **M Mokoena**, a disabled petitioner from Julesberg in Mopani District wrote a petition regarding her request for an RDP house. A special RDP house was built through the intervention of the Legislature.

Honourable Members, I can go on and on but these are just some of the few examples of the many interventions that the Legislature as the vanguard of the people is doing to ensure that our communities receive quality and efficient services.

We will in the current financial year ensure that the petitions referred to us are quickly adjudicated on and resolved for the benefit of our petitioners. This will assist in ensuring that the petitioners get what they deserve from their government.

Honourable Members,

The Legislature conducted oversight visit in Mopane District focusing on the implementation of projects such as Norjax Tomato Paste Plant, Mabunda Citrus, Masalal Packhouse, Inhlahla Yami, Greenlife cooperative. Key amongst the Committee recommendations during the visits were mainly ensuring that the projects have water rights, and that farmers continue to get production inputs and technical support from the responsible departments. These are some of the approaches that our progressive Legislature is undertaking to ensure that our oversight is development oriented.

In the coming year, the committee has planned to conduct more intense oversight on the key catalytic projects that are anticipated to turn around the economy of the province.

In the backdrop of the recent Covid-19 pandemic and the economic recession, it is important to ensure that Portfolio Committees are geared to undertake oversight that goes beyond mere inquiry and scrutiny but development focused. Committees must inspire economic growth and ensure that there is reduction in unemployment as well as eradication of inequality and poverty. It is for this reason that our committees will, for instance, actively monitor the implementation of the socio-economic recovery plan by the LEDET and other such initiatives aimed at developing our province.

Honourable Members,

The long-awaited relocation of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) function from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Education is concluded and the implementation is set for 1st April 2022. The relevant Committees of the Legislature will ensure that robust oversight is undertaken to ensure a smooth transition.

Our interest in the Education of our children is the one that is driving the Committees of the Legislature to play an active role by monitoring the implementation of the schools programme throughout the financial year. The Legislature undertook oversight visits to all special schools in the province, focusing on the state of the infrastructure in special schools, like Rivoni, Asiphumelele and Rethuseng.

Our committees will continue to engage with the Department of Education on issues that affect the performance of schools. The Legislature will also engage the provincial Department of Education on the Grade 12-year end performance for 2021 academic year as well as plans to address poor performance and gaps wherever they exist.

Honourable Members

In exercising our oversight to the Department of Transport, the Legislature visited various sites in order to check if the mandate of the department of ensuring effective, affordable, safe transport and secure province is implemented as planned. In line with this, oversight was undertaken to various Traffic Stations, Weighbridges, Police Stations and South African Police Service Garages to primarily assess the state of infrastructure, personnel, eye tests and payment sections and general policing in the area.

In this case Mabopo, Schoonoord, Lebowakgomo, Mankweng Driving Testing and Licensing Centre were visited by the Legislature.

Some police stations which are amongst the top 30 high crime stations such as Thohoyandou, Maake, Bolobedu, Lebowakgomo, Burgersfort, Polokwane Seshego and Mankweng have been visited as well. SAPS Garages are equally important as their efficiency in repairing and servicing police vehicles play a critical role in SAPS efficiency and in this case, Makhado, Lebowakgomo, Tzaneen and Polokwane SAPS Garages have been visited. This is Legislature at work Honorable Members. We leave no stone unturned. We seek for accountability and transparency on behalf of the people who elected us.

Oversight at Limpopo Training Traffic College and Thohoyandou Intermodal facility with massive infrastructure development are some of the infrastructure projects which draw the attention of the Legislature. Our own Polokwane International Airport which is managed by Gateway Airport Authority Limited was also visited as it was experiencing its most downfall times when it was downgraded to a lower level. The Legislature did not rest until the airport regained its status back and opened for operation of commercial flights. The Legislature will continue to play its vigorous oversights in this provincial key point until this airport is able to sustain itself and generate better revenue. Our committees will make the necessary follow ups on such initiatives due to the fact that we understand and appreciate the role of efficient transport system in development.

The Legislature intends to take its oversight to borderlines which include amongst others Groblersbrug, Pontdrift and Stockport to assess safety and security. Furthermore, interact with Community Policing and Safety Forums to assess their operational efficiency.

It is impressive and historic to note that, our Portfolio Committee on Health has conducted oversight visits to ALL psychiatric hospitals and ALL nursing colleges in the Province. These are some of the examples of the hard work undertaken by the Committees of the Legislature in order to make a difference in the lives of our people.

Honourable Members,

By ensuring that there is effective oversight over CoGHSTA, municipal audit outcomes have improved significantly in the past two financial years as well. There is a reduction in the number of municipalities that are using consultants to prepare annual financial statements. This is a result of Portfolio committees playing oversight for development purpose and working towards improved audits outcomes by municipalities, entities and Departments.

The Legislature is exercising oversight over major projects implemented by the Department of CoGHSTA. These projects include the construction of community residential units in Marapong, Lephalale; Alldays Veterans Housing Units, Talana Temporary Residential Units, Burghersfort Extension 10 Temporary Residential Units.

The legislature will continue to play oversight on the construction of 1000 housing units at the under-developed Vingerkraal village in Bela-Bela municipality which is made up of a 'scatterlings' of shack dwellings.

Honourable Members,

As Members of this House, we need to ensure that government programmes, as outlined by Honourable Premier, Chupu Stanley Mathabatha during the State of the Province Address, are fully implemented. Our government needs to contribute in job creation and also create conducive environment for the youth to participate in the economy.

Investing in our youth is our priority and we will set aside resources to ensure that the month of June is dedicated to youth empowerment through the hosting of the Youth Parliament. During our oversight function, we will ensure that the Executive plays its part when it comes to the participation of youth in the economy.

Honourable Members,

In the 2021/22 financial year, the Limpopo Legislature hosted sectoral parliaments for the youth, workers and people with disabilities. The events provided these groupings with an opportunity to discuss issues affecting their wellbeing and rights. We will continue even in the current financial year to provide them with a platform to participate in the activities of the legislature.

We have however noted that the challenge with conducting virtual sectoral Parliaments and public hearings during the Covid-19 is that not all participants were able to participate due to lack of resources such as smartphones or laptops with cameras or poor internet connectivity in some areas. This affected the number of participants negatively. This may sometimes lead to complaints from stakeholders from disadvantaged communities about their non-involvement in our processes and activities.

We are exploring alternative options and support through which such stakeholders can participate in our activities notwithstanding their connectivity challenges.

Having outlined the challenges of public participation under Covid-19, it is still crucial that Members of this House should ensure that the resolutions taken during sectoral parliaments are fully implemented by the Executive. We will continue in the current financial year to host sectoral parliaments or alternative reach out initiatives in an effort to discuss and address issues affecting children, workers, youth, the disabled, women and elderly people.

Honourable Members,

Capacity building is a necessary requirement to strengthen and sharpen Members and support staff with skills and knowledge on the mandate of the Legislature. In the 2021/22 financial year, 12 members who were registered with the University of the Witwatersrand completed their entry certificates and will commence with their Diplomas in due course. We also have two members who are pursuing their Diplomas with the University of Johannesburg.

We have also trained Members on the rules, oversight and accountability as well as public participation framework. We remain committed to the empowerment of all Members through training and professional development programmes and workshops with recognized institutions of learning.

These kinds of interventions will continue in this financial year in order to successfully implement effective capacity building programmes to address the needs of the Legislature, particularly on issues related to oversight, accountability, rules and procedures, public debate, finance, ethics, etc.

More workshops and training will be provided in the financial year to continue with the capacity building initiatives which commenced in the previous financial year.

Hon Members, the Limpopo Legislature has in the past years provided capacity building needs for Municipal Councils and Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPACs) in the Limpopo Province. Municipalities remain critical to service delivery and realization of the goals of a developmental state; hence we cannot afford to have them failing in their goal. This view is in line with what our Honourable Premier alluded to in his State of the Province Address where he indicated that *'one of our standing commitments has been to ensure that our municipalities are well governed and that finances are properly accounted for'*. In this financial year, we will where possible assist municipalities in our areas of expertise in order to enhance their capacity whenever the need arises.

Furthermore, the Office of the Speaker annually hosts the Provincial Speaker's Forum, which is a forum that rotates per district in Limpopo. The forum provides a platform for the legislature presiding officers to share best practices with municipal speakers with regard to presiding and legislative matters. We will continue in the current financial year to host the Provincial Speaker's Forum to share best practices and empower our municipalities.

Honourable Members,

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated to us that no institution can operate without ICT technology. When the Covid-19 situation was at its worst we were able to successfully run critical and core functions/business of the Legislature through virtual operations.

The reality is that these technological setups do not come cheap as the latest infrastructure and software are required to keep the systems running. It is clear that more funding will be required to ensure that the institution keeps up with the latest ICT technology in order to effectively achieve our mandates.

Honourable Members,

The renovations at Block 3 of the Legislature building have been completed and upon our assessment we found that most of the existing assets that were used before have become old and obsolete for any use. Therefore, this means we are faced with a demand for new office furniture and office equipment to replace the old and broken ones.

Furthermore, the aging assets in the Chamber still remain a worrying factor that need urgent attention. A chamber system must be procured to replace the existing one which has become obsolete and therefore incompatible with the latest technology. We have performed a benchmark exercise on the audiovisual systems at various legislatures and at some municipalities to check their audiovisual systems at their chambers, and we have realized that we will need some millions to improve our current chamber system. Some of the chairs at the chamber are also broken and need replacement as this poses a risk to the safety of the Members.

These are some of the challenges and pressing needs that should be addressed for the Legislature to effectively fulfill its mandates.

Honourable Members,

The 2022-23 budget comes at a time when the country is struggling to meet competing socio-economic needs which is exacerbated by the current economic meltdown. The national fiscus has been negatively affected by the general socio-economic pressures triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. Drastic budget cuts had to be implemented since the 2020-21 financial year, to enable government to address the economic challenges that were mainly worsened by the pandemic. The Legislature itself was not immune to these budget cuts and challenges of limited financial resources. The predicament facing us is to always ensure that the limited financial resources available are effectively and efficiently utilized to ensure that the objectives of the Legislature are met without compromise of the quality of services provided. The oversight, lawmaking and public participation roles of the Legislature will always be the core focus, despite the limited financial resources within which we are expected to operate. The Legislature is more than ever determined to ensure intense and robust oversight over the executive notwithstanding the challenges outlined. We will also work hard to ensure adherence to supply chain management processes and will avoid unauthorised, irregular, fruitless, wasteful expenditure by ensuring that all is done within the prescripts of the Financial Management of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act (FMPPLA).

We will continue to play effective oversight over the executive in the 2022-23 financial year to safeguard the limited financial resources of the province. Focusing on improving our oversight role and encouraging public participation in the activities of the Legislature, whether physically or through the available social media networks, remain high on the list of our priorities.

The Legislature will work within the limited allocated budget to ensure that the most critical projects and programmes are completed within this financial year.

Honourable Members,

The total budget allocation for Limpopo Legislature in the 2022-23 financial year is **R385,9 million** of the equitable share. This budget shows a **reduction of 2,46%** when compared to the prior year allocation. A 2,46% reduction on the budget means that the Legislature will have to operate within a limited budget environment.

	Medium-term estimates		
	2022/23 R'000	2023/24 R'000	2024/25 R'000
Treasury funding			
Equitable share	385 979	391 709	399 412
Total receipts: Treasury funding	385 979	391 709	399 412

The budget as presented, will be utilized to cover employee costs, goods and services, capital expenditure as well as support to political parties. The budget is allocated to the three programmes of the Legislature as follows:

Programme 1: Administration

This programme has been allocated **R146,8 million** in the 2022/23 financial year in order to provide strategic leadership and administrative support to the entire Legislature. Most of the infrastructure and ICT costs will be incurred from this programme.

Programme 2: Facilities for Members and Political Party Support

Facilities for Members and Political Parties has been allocated **R142,1 million** in the 2022/23 financial year to provide compensation of members and support to political parties.

Allocation to programme 2 includes the direct charge of **R51,6 million** for the remuneration of members as well as an amount of **R77million** as required by section 34(5) of the Financial Management of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act. This R77million will be transferred to political parties for constituency allowance and political party support.

Programme 3: Parliamentary Services

Parliamentary Services has been allocated a total of R97,5 million in the 2022/2023 financial year to provide services related to oversight, public participation and law-making.

Honourable Members,

Having outlined the allocation of the budget to various sections and divisions, the legislature will continue to execute its mission of being the vanguard and the voice of the people dedicated to continually fulfilling its core mandates of oversight, law making and public participation.

As an oversight body, we are entrusted with enormous responsibility of ensuring that our democracy functions and services are delivered to our people by exercising effective oversight over the Executive. We are fully awake to the reality that for us to achieve this goal we require the prudent use of both our financial and human resources.

Mindful of the separation of powers as outlined in our Constitution, the colossal challenge ahead of us demands the collaboration between the Legislature and the Executive in order to contribute to the growth and development our province.

We thank all our stakeholders in particular Chapter 9 and 10 institutions for supporting democracy as provided in the Constitution. The work of the AG has enhanced the oversight work of the Legislature and has indeed lifted it to another level.

Let me take this opportunity to thank Honourable Members of the Legislature for their support and the leaders of political parties represented in this House for your commitment in serving the people of Limpopo. A special thanks goes to the Oversight Mechanism, led by Honourable Lekganyane, for always providing useful guidance and inputs to the work of the Legislature.

I also like to thank the Secretary to the Limpopo Legislature, Mr Simon Mothoa, the Management and Team Legislature for your support and commitment.

It is my honour and privilege to table the Limpopo Legislature 2022/23 Budget Vote to this House.

Thank you!!

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