

NCOP Delegates Happy With Job Creation Initiatives in North West Province

Permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) embarked on a week-long Provincial Week programme in the North West province where they assessed employment creation initiatives by various sectors of society and the provincial government under the theme: *“Advancing our collective efforts to creating work opportunities for our people.”*

This year’s Provincial Week occurs as Parliament and the legislative sector celebrate 20 years of the Constitution and 20 years since the establishment of the NCOP.

The delegates were joined by Members of the Provincial Legislature including Premier Supra Mahumapelo and Members of the Executive Council (MECs), representatives from the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Mayors and other relevant stakeholders.

The delegation used the opportunity to conduct oversight visits in short and long term projects and interventions such as factories, industries and expanded public works projects to, among others, assess in Ngaka Modiri Molema and Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipalities.

In Ngaka Modiri Molema District, amongst the projects visited was the Springbokpan grain silos operated by the Department of Rural Environment and Agricultural Development to assist emerging and commercial farmers store their crops and has a storing capacity of 50 000 tons and training programme in Romaine High School in Magogwe village in Mahikeng where 1000 youth are trained every year in a SASSETA (Safety and Security SETA) SERVICES SETA accredited NQF Level 3 qualification. The programme is aimed at allowing the provincial government to establish a state owned security company that will guard government buildings and entities.

In Sundown Resort near Mahikeng, over 100 entrepreneurs are currently receiving a one year training in wholesale and retail and taught how to successfully run a retail business in a container that comprises of a chisa nyama, hair salon, hardware store and convenience store. After training, they will also be able to buy discounted goods from large-scale food producers and can therefore compete with other players who already exist.

At the public meeting in Gopane village in Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality, over 300 residents raised various service delivery related issues ranging from lack of water, electricity, education, police services, limited health services and high unemployment.

In Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District, the delegation visited the construction site of the North West School for Deaf in Leeudoringstad where the project was 80 percent complete, and also construction sites at Matlosana Health Care Centre and Alabama Primary School which has been using asbestos classrooms for the last 50 years.

Overall the NCOP is happy with job creation activities in the province. In a draft report tabled to the Speaker, Hon. Sussana Dantjie, Hon. Boingotlo Nthebe, Whip for North West in the NCOP who was also leader of the delegation said they were impressed with efforts made by the provincial government to ensure that they create employment in the province. He said; "Out of 6 projects they managed to visit, about 1852 jobs were created and out of that over 50 % (1100) of them are sustainable.

NWPL Speaker, Hon. Sussana Dantjie appreciated the report and the work done by the 5th dministration to ensure that "our people get employment."

"The Hon. Premier and his administration has a plan to implement the NDP through the 5 Concretes of the province. We can see that the plan is working and we are proud of the work done.

"If there is any department that is not assisting or helping out our SMMEs in VTSD areas, relevant portfolio committees will engage those departments during our oversight meetings," said Hon. Dantjie.

The Speaker however noted with concern the absence of the opposition party members who are deployed in the NCOP in some of the meetings and in the briefing.

"Oversight programmes are the best opportunity for Members of the Provincial Legislature including the opposition to understand why sometimes there is Irregular and Unauthorised expenditure. Most of the time our people think that the two expenditures mean that there is corruption and yet money was channeled to other projects as a result of unforeseen circumstances," said Hon. Dantjie.

