



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU - NATAL - ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU - NATALI

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

UMNYANGO WEZOKUTHUTHA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MCHUNU REJECTS CLAIMS OF INKANDLA GIVEN THE PRIORITY ON ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

KZN MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu strongly rejects claims that his department has invested a lot of resources in Nkandla because it is the homestead of the sitting head of State, the Honourable President Jacob Zuma.

Mchunu rejects these allegations as a fallacy created by those who are failing to acknowledge the good progress made by government in developing rural communities.

Yesterday Mchunu together with the District Mayor of uThungulu, Her Worship Thembeke Mchunu officially opened major road infrastructure development projects in the area.

We must state for a record and categorically that the two roads, P15 and P50 were identified before President Zuma took the office. The construction of P15 linking Kranskop, Nkandla and Eshowe started in August 2006.

This road serves as a major feeder to the communities and facilities, it provides a shorter link from Pietermaritzburg to Showe and Nkandla. This road is 34.2 km is providing access to 8 local schools, Ntunjambili hospital and three local clinics.

It also provide easy access to Kranskop Police station which is the nearest in the area, access to the Thusong centre and the local pension pay-points. The construction of this road over the past years created 5 826 job opportunities to the local community.

Road P50 is linking eMpangeni, Showe and Nkandla. This road also serves 6 schools, two tribal authorities and three clinics. The road also links Eshowe, Nkandla and Kranskop and has a high agricultural potential. Furthermore tea is grown and harvested in the area.

This road is strategic for the economy of the province as it provides an easy access to other ecotourism and heritage sites, including King Cetshwayo's grave. This road which is 54.4 kilometers was identified in 2003 and has provided more than 6 269 jobs to the local people.

The development of these roads and other major corridors in the province is part of the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy. There are many other strategic projects which the Department of Transport is busy finalizing, which are important for the growth of the provincial economy.

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The John Ross Highway in Richards Bay, which is supporting the Richards Bay harbor, is one of the success stories of this province. The construction of the Sani Pass, linking South Africa and Lesotho is another road of national importance.

This must be a clear indication that the Department of Transport is stretching its limited resources to all parts of the province.

With limited resources, the Department of Transport remains committed in meeting its target of constructing 85 kilometers of upgraded roads, 15 pedestrian infrastructure and 7 vehicle bridges.

Just to illustrate the point that the department is on massive roll-out of road network infrastructure, please note just some of the projects below being undertaken in the 2012/13 financial year.

- to total of R270 million has been set aside in the current year for construction of roads in the uThungulu District
- P435, Ndumo, 17 kilometers, access to the town of Ndumo and iNdumo game park, R103 million
- P711, linking Maphumulo, Glendale and Stanger, 32 kilometers, R180 million
- P601, linking Mzimkhulu and Franklin, 46 kilometers, R300 million
- P487, provide decent access to Ceza and Thulasizwe hospital, 32 kilometers, R170 million.
- R900 million, John Ross Highway, Richards Bay harbour

"Surely this should illustrate to everyone that our limited budget covers a wide range of places in the province. Clearly the spread of this expenditure and areas identified illustrate that our work has nothing to do with politics or the alleged and imagined perceptions that the Nkandla projects were meant for the president of the country," said Mchunu.

Recently MEC Mchunu started a forum to meet with district mayors together with local municipalities to synchronize road infrastructure planning in the province.

"When the construction of all these roads started, President Zuma was not the president of the country. In fact the former President, Thabo Mbeki announced iNkandla and other struggling municipalities as priorities. The plan to develop these roads and bridged was then developed. People of KwaZulu-Natal can attest to the fact that we have been in all districts constructing roads and bridged. There is no area which is given preference over others. However the people of eNkandla deserve a better life like all other South Africans. We cannot be apologetic of changing lives of our people who were neglected before. As the Department of Transport, with limited resources at our disposal, we remain committed in ensuring infrastructure development all across the province of KwaZulu-Natal," said Mchunu.

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