

BUDGET DEBATE ON THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

VOTE 1

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We in the UCDP take note that there is truth in the saying that uneasy lies the head that wears the crown, we equally know that as testified by Shakespeare, Talkers are not good doers.

The office of the Premier is charged with guiding the province to calmer seas and to achieve that, that office needs the support of all.

With that in mind this office has to be head and shoulders above other departments and set the pace in coming up with ways and means to do away with poverty and unemployment by 2014 and ensure that skills are honed to grow the economy of the province.

We hope in time to come there will be a monitoring programme to ensure that all plans and strategies laid down by the different departments and a good number of them already accepted by this house are followed up and reported on.

It cannot be business as usual where departments come to this house to present glossy reports and then nothing comes out of that. The UCDP fully supports President Zuma in saying that those who can't cope will choke and be left out of the system.

The trying economic times we live in have no room for clots that obstruct circulation as that would cause the main body to suffer thrombosis and paralyse the body politic.

We note that the sub-programme on institutional development is the key driver in delivery of people capacity and capability, service delivery and knowledge management and therefore expect them to function like a well serviced engine of an Osh kosh truck.

With most municipalities in a state of stupor, the office of the Premier should be on top of the situation to ensure co-operative governance because if municipal level of governance falters, there is no way the provincial government may prosper.

It is high time that there be consistency in national policies. If there are dedicated desks for people living with disabilities there is every reason that there should be schools for such people.

One worrying issue that I raised during the debate on the State of the Province last month is that of the provincial Commissioner of Police. While we accept that policing is a national competence, we maintain that the offices of head of police should be in the capital of the province. Heads of other instances of national competences such as Justice, Home Affairs, Electoral Commission, Receiver of Revenue and Auditor general have their provincial heads occupying offices in Mmabatho, the capital of the province. There is no reason why the police cannot do likewise especially as they have to provide security to the premier at her back and call. Being in Potchefstroom, some 260 kilometres away, is not on. This has to change.

The UCDP takes note of the decision by the Premier to detach Traditional Affairs from her office and delegate that responsibility to another department.

This will leave the day to day running of the section to the affected department and she will only come in to adjudicate on matters of dispute, thus avoiding being the jury and the judge.

We also note that she is on course to reroute the Forensic Unit to the Department of Finance after the resolution of sticky issues.

There is concern that people are not informed about happenings in the province. The question that crops up is where are the Multipurpose Community Centres? Are they strategically situated so that rank and file citizens can have access to them? Are they equipped and staffed? Perhaps it is high time that the citizens be duly educated on the use of these structures.

We pray much the strength of the Premier, members of the executive council and the entire public service in the province to do their utmost to lift the North West Province from the doldrums of poverty.