

MEC's VR Shongwe's Key Note Address to the Arrive Alive Easter Campaign Launch held at Mbombela Stadium on the 30th of March 2012.

The District Executive Mayor, Clr L. Shongwe
The Executive Mayor of Mbombela Clr C. Dlamini
Head of Department of Safety, Security and Liaison Mr T. Sibuyi
Deputy Provincial Commissioner, Major General Phahla
General Manager for Traffic, Mr S. Nkuna
National Department of Transport represented by Ms Thandi Moya
SANTACO represented by Mr MJ Msiza
Eskom Representative Mr Nico Singh
The Cross Border Road Transport Agency Mr P. Mathebula
Seniors Managers and Managers from DCSSL,
Members of the Media,

Ladies and gentlemen

I greet you all,

Ladies and Gentlemen, our roads are daily becoming death traps and will soon have to be declared the next highest killer after HIV/AIDS if we do not act now. We are losing lives in our roads unnecessary. Many of the accidents that claims lives could be avoided and prevented from happening. It is particularly for this reason that we are saying Sekwanele, Bopha.

We have lost enough lives at the hands of drunken drivers. Some results from driver and vehicles that are not fit to drive, while many results from pedestrians who drink and walk on the road. Fatigue and speeding also adds insult to the injury. If, ladies and gentlemen you agree with me that this are indeed major contributors to road accidents, you must as well agree that Sekwanele, Bopha.

We are today launching the Arrive Alive Easter Campaign and our immediate task is to ensure that we do not lose another 31 lives like it happened in 2011 during the same period. We are preparing ourselves for a large volume of traffic on our roads and are committing ourselves to managing that traffic in a manner that will not take another 31 lives.

I have indicated before that we want to convert our roads from killer roads to holly roads. That will not happen without an effort. We need men and woman of courage, who are determined to go an extra-mile to save those innocent lives who are going to get into their cars with a hope that they will reach their destination safely.

This men and woman must commit themselves as they take on their uniform that they are going to protect law abiding drivers from reckless, drunk, speeding and irresponsible drivers on our roads.

We are making this call, guided by the Premier of Mpumalanga who said in his State Of the Province Address,

"On a sad note we experienced an increase on road carnage despite high visibility of traffic law enforcement officers. The inclement weather conditions that impacted on the conditions of the roads, visibility, the conditions of vehicles, reckless driving, fatigue and the attitude of drivers contributed immensely on the fatalities recorded".

The Premier, Honorable DD Mabuza went on to say, "We shall continue with our efforts in making our roads safer for all users including rolling out programmes to educate our people as part of changing behavior and working closely with the Department of Education by providing licenses at certain grades".

The Premier has spoken and all that he said during the State Of the Province Address has become marching orders for us. We must intensify our efforts to ensure that our roads are safer.

We will not tolerate any form of traffic violation in this Province because as you have heard, we have the backing of the Premier in our efforts to making our roads safer. That is why, I am calling on all Traffic Law Officers to deal with traffic law violators like a Bull Dog dealing with a Bull Bone. I want you to go that extra mile in order to ensure safety in all roads of our Province.

The Premier also raised the question of Safety Education which is an integral part of the Arrive Alive Easter Campaign that we are launching today. As result, there will be rests stops, alerts stops and road shows which are all geared towards educating road users about road safety.

I have already alluded to the fact that , last year, we lost 31 lives during the Easter period and our efforts this year is to ensure that we reduce that number significantly or even to eliminate it.

We understand that it cannot be the Traffic officials or law enforcement urgencies alone that can save the innocent lives during this Easters. We know that because this cars that get involved in accidents are driven by human beings, the pedestrians who get knocked down are human beings and as such the people of Mpumalanga and all road users must come to the party.

We have deliberately given the Arrive Alive Easter weekend a theme which says " Road Safety comes in CANS, meaning, "I Can, You Can, We Can".

In that we are calling on the people of the Province to report immediately reckless drivers, drunk drivers, speeding drivers, unroad worthy vehicle, overloaded vehicles and other road violation to law enforcement agencies.

It is when we commit ourselves in that manner as the people of Mpumalanga that we will this year help 31 families and ensure that their loved ones travels to and from their destinations safely.

We will enforce traffic laws in this Province irrespective of who says what. We will enforce it to protect innocent lives and it is on that note that I want to appeal to our traffic officials never to take bribes. The bribes of R100 or R60 that irresponsible and reckless drivers pay is in turn compensated by innocent lives on our roads.

You take this hundred rands or so and allow a traffic law transgressors to go to cause accidents and in the process breading orphans. This people who bribe you are the ones who kills on our roads.

We must pay a special attention to bakkies that are transporting people, to taxis, to busses and ventures because they carry a large number of passengers at a time. That is not to say that other vehicles should not be targeted but we must prioritized the once I have mentioned above.

Even though we will be visible all over the Province but there are specific routes that will never escape our close monitoring. They are N2, N4, N12, N17, R23, R38, R40, R536, R538, R540, R546, R555, R568, R577, D2945 and D797.

Lastly Program Director, let me tell you now and warn traffic laws violators out the that we will be merciless. They must expect no mercy from us because Sekwanele, we have had enough of their bad behavior on the roads.

If some think that they will drink and get on the road in Mpumalanga, they must know that they will be sending an invitation to us to come closer to them.

Rest assured Program Director; we will respond to the invitation and indeed come closer. Our Traffic Laws Enforcers will know exactly which prescription they must prescribe as and when they get to the traffic law violator.

Those who think they are Bosses must also know ukuthi bazowathola amanye amaBhoza, bazowathola khona emigacweni.

Sekwanele manje, lets turn the tide and collectively create safer roads this Easter holidays.

Sekwanele, Bopha...

I thank you.