

**ADDRESS BY LIMPOPO PREMIER MR CASSEL MATHALE DURING THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE RANCH RESORT EXECUTIVE GOLF
COURSE, ACADEMY AND CHALETS.
THE RANCH RESORT, CAPRICORN DISTRICT, LIMPOPO SOUTH AFRICA.**

22nd MAY 2010

Thank you Programme director
Members of the Executive Council here present
Executive Mayors and Mayors
Shareholders and directors of the Ranch
Employees of the Ranch
Traditional leaders present here
Stalwarts and Veterans of our liberation struggle
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

Good evening!

We are meeting here this evening to join members of the Ranch Hotel on this occasion that marks 50 years anniversary of their existence and the official opening of the golf estate, golf academy and chalets. It is an honour and privilege to be part of this gathering representing our government and the people of Limpopo for we understand that it is through business growth and business successes that more job opportunities are created for our people. In this regard, we are here to celebrate this historic moment of the Ranch group and wish you all success in your respective business ventures. It is proper to acknowledge that your history in this business is very interesting and motivating.

Programme director

Limpopo province has proved to be a dominant force within the hospitality business in the country and the world over, and tourism is one of the pillars of our economic growth. The artistic work in most of our hospitality sites is assisting in attracting many visitors to the province and this plays a significant role in boosting our economic muscle as the province. Our wildlife resorts and the geographical location of Limpopo in the SADC region continues to place the province far ahead as a tourists' destination of choice.

The expansion of our hospitality sector to meet the growing demand is not happening in isolation. Most importantly, it is taking place in the context of the needs of the market, of which the game of golf has been at the center stage of this development. Our province is home to some of the best luxurious wildlife golf estate resorts in the country and the African continent as a whole. It is on this note that we are correctly regarded as a tourist province in the country.

In recent years, we have seen a reasonable number of people showing interest in the game of golf. But it is worth to indicate that the perception surrounding the game cannot go unnoticed. There are some who view the game of golf as a game for the few privileged and rich people, who do not care or careless about the plight of many people besieged by poverty and other social ills.

The bottom line is that the game of golf is just the same as other sporting activities, but the difference is that its requirements, especially playing tools and venues are not user friendly to purchase or maintain. The game of golf is a very special game with its own history of unique origin and it is now growing in the province with people registering for membership in various golf clubs.

In 2003 it was estimated that the economic impact of golf and golf-related spending in the province amounted to R 219 million per annum and this sector accounted for almost 2 500 jobs, spending R 34 million in salaries and R 22 million in tax revenue. Limpopo has only 22 golf courses with a utilization rate of 22%. This is a living testimony that the

game of golf has enormously increased tourism, economic growth and business expansion in the province.

We are counting on the Ranch Hotel and other organizations to join hands with government in the development of the game of golf for interested people, including the ordinary of members of the society.

Programme director

The opening of the Golf Estate and the expansion of this facility could not have come at a right time than when our province is preparing to welcome and host soccer lovers from all walks of life to the South Africa 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. It is now 19 days to go before the kick off of the world's most loved and cherished sporting tournament, the soccer world cup at the Soccer City. And it is 21 days to go before the kick off of the first game at the Peter Mokaba Sports Complex here in Limpopo.

We are ready as a province from all corners and we cannot wait to demonstrate our ability of hosting a successful soccer world cup event ever seen in the history of football. This message we also conveyed to the Deputy President of the Republic this morning about the state of our readiness as the province.

This occasion is one of many symbols that confirm our readiness as a province to stage an unforgettable soccer tournament. We have on many occasions wished all the teams success in the tournament and we continue to send the same message even on this platform.

We are wishing the Ranch Hotel many more years full of achievements and prosperity as you commence another journey towards your centenary and beyond.

Afrika ke nako!

Working together, we can do more!

Thank you!