

Democratic Alliance speech by
Nazley Sharif
DA Gauteng Spokesperson for Economic Development

Lesufi's solutions to curb unemployment are not effective

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Thank you, Madam Speaker,

The best way to describe the State of the Province Address (SOPA) is the definition given by Albert Einstein, who said, and I quote: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Premier Lesufi offered nothing new—no new ideas, no innovation—but rather more rehashing of the same hyperbole with no clear plans or how these ideas will be implemented. Instead, he has a weird obsession with a speed bullet train.

Mr Premier, your words at SOPA, your promises, and your so-called plans would have meant something if people could trust your word. The problem is that your word means nothing. If we have learned anything, is that a person who cannot keep to their word has nothing but a lack of integrity and can't be trusted.

Mr Premier, you keep selling false dreams to those who are the most desperate for a better life. This is one of the cruellest things you can do: give people hope and take it away from them. This is what you did to too many young people knowingly; you failed to pay young people and failed to retain them in your pipedream of Nasi iSpani. You did that!

Having big ideas is great; it's encouraged, but if you cannot back these ideas up with action, it means nothing to people. It means nothing to the brothers in Zola, Soweto, who went to school and got engineering degrees but sit around on the street corners because they cannot find a job.

It means nothing to Mam Monica in Protea Glen, who has lived with a disability her whole life and tries to feed her family and run a successful business of making clothes. One of the most talented people I have met struggles to get assistance from this government when requesting space to expand her business.

Your empty words and broken promises mean nothing to Khanyisile in Emdeni, who wants to open up her own business but struggles to get access to information, skills training, or development to help her become a successful entrepreneur.

The plans by the so-called Government of Provincial Unity lack clever ideas and will not rescue Gauteng. This is evident from the increase in unemployment in quarter two of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for 2024, indicating that your interventions are not working.

You create jobs by creating an environment for investment and access to skill training. The government's role is to give every person the opportunity they need to participate in the economy while also having a strong social welfare safety net for the most vulnerable.

I agree with you when you say and I quote, "We cannot be sorry forever; we must act."

To grow the economy and rescue Gauteng, the DA advocates for a “whole of society” approach that requires government, businesses, communities, and individuals to work together to overcome the challenges we face. We must do business and focus our procurement on goods and services from companies with the most positive socio-economic impact.

We must increase employment through the implementation of growth and investment reforms to drive job creation. We must improve the levels of financial literacy to ensure that people can understand and manage their finances. We must have a “One-Stop-Shop” for small businesses to save them time and money by making it easier to access information and assistance. We must ensure that the money allocated to grow the economy is spent on doing just that instead of filling the pockets of the corrupt.

Mr Premier, too many of the initiatives you outlined in your SOPA address should have already happened. These ideas are obvious, no-brainers, and lack any forward thinking. It is unfortunate that you let the moment get the better of you, but again, we cannot expect anything better from you. When someone shows you who they are, believe them.

I thank you.

Media Enquiries:

Nazley Sharif MPL
DA Gauteng Spokesperson for Economic Development
079 875 4930

Dorianne Arendse
GPL Media and Issues Specialist
076 983 0118