

Ramaphosa tours newly built Mpumalanga hospital

President Cyril Ramaphosa recently visited and inspected the newly built Middelburg Hospital in Mpumalanga.



Source: Reuters. President Cyril Ramaphosa.

“This is most impressive. It’s modern, state-of-the-art and it’s going to serve the community of about 330,000 people. This is development. This is how we are developing our country from a social- and health point of view and we’re doing it cost-effectively as well,” the president said.

This was ahead of the District Development Model Presidential Imbizo held at Emalahleni in the province the same day.

“I also appreciated the way there was thorough consultation with various stakeholders in the area to bring in small and medium enterprises, and to bring in communities, who participated in one shape, form or the other in the construction of the hospital,” the President said at the site visit.

He praised the participation of the community in the construction of the hospital and said it has many benefits.

“This is what we should do because in many ways, it also avoids this very bad practice that has emerged of construction mafias. When the community is well-organised and is part of the construction of a facility, everybody feels like they own the facility and they can benefit from a job point of view, and from a supply point of view.

“I appreciate also the funding model that was used. It was funded from the budget but over a five-year period in various phases, not all at once. To do it over a set period is clearly the way to go,” he said.

Precursor to NHI

President Ramaphosa added that the hospital serves as a precursor for things to come.

“This is going to be a clean, well-run hospital and a really good demonstration of what the NHI [National Health Insurance] is going to be all about. So this is a very good precursor to the NHI.

“Those who have been criticising the NHI [we now]... have... an improved facility and improved infrastructure... this is it. We are ready for the NHI at this site. When the NHI Bill is signed [into law], this is going to be one of the exciting sites for NHI implementation,” he said.

The president later led government’s interaction with communities and stakeholders at the 12th Presidential Imbizo.

Themed ‘Leave No One Behind’, the imbizo promoted participatory democracy and inclusive development by allowing community members and stakeholders to voice proposals and express any concerns or dissatisfaction they may have about conditions in the district or province.

The imbizo got underway at the Sy Mthimunye Stadium in Emalahleni.

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