

Winde hits road running with R1bn commitment to energy resilience in WCape

By  Katja Hamilton

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Western Cape Premier, Alan Winde, slammed national government's apathy towards SA's energy crisis in his fifth State of the Province's address Thursday (16 February, 2023).



Source: Western Cape Government

He criticised president Ramaphosa's declaration of a broad state of disaster as opposed to ringfencing the state of disaster solely for the country's electricity crisis.

"When people hear the word 'state of disaster' they think of rampant looting," he said.

"What we are seeing is increasing political centralisation. I really hope that the National Assembly puts in place transparency and accountability during this disaster. I hope we appoint an ad-hoc committee that has true oversight of anything that happens in this province around fixing our energy system."

He said all money tabled to be spent should be made transparent to this committee as well as made public to the citizens of the province.

Unlike national government, Winde said, the Western Cape government has been taking active steps to remedy the energy crisis. The formation of the Western Cape Energy Council was highlighted.

Meeting the basic needs of citizens

"We are putting forward a provincial emergency response for short emergency term actions for medium-term and longer-term energy resilience and independence to meet the basic needs of citizens.

"Western Cape government has made an adjustment of R89m and made it available to local authorities, to make sure we can fund generators to keep water flowing whether it's for water reticulation, water pumping or filling up reservoirs. We are also making sure that sewage systems work."

Winde said the Western Cape had further requested provincial treasury to allocate R1bn to respond to the energy crisis in the upcoming three-year budget cycle. It will cover expenditure to make sure services keep running while load shedding is happening and to make sure that it secures extra diesel to look after its power plants.

“ ‘This is the Western Cape, not a circus’ – interjected Freedom Front Plus member Peter Marais amid heckling as Western Cape premier Alan Winde delivered his State of the Province address on Thursday. <https://t.co/CDKHi9T9Qc>— Daily Maverick (@dailymaverick) [February 16, 2023](#) ”

R132m has been allocated to extra diesel. R25bn to diesel storage.

He said the funds would buffer healthcare and schools from loadshedding, and ensure the provision of power packs - comprising inverters and power-surge protectors - to poor households.

"Last year, citizens spent R50bn on inverters," Winde said, something people living in poor households can't afford to buy for themselves.

Driving the green economy

He said this emergency response would run concurrently with Western Cape government's work on the green economy, through GreenCape, a non-profit organisation that drives the widespread adoption of economically viable green economy solutions from the Western Cape.

Started in 2010, it works with businesses, investors, academia and government to help unlock the investment and employment potential of green technologies and services, and to support a transition to a resilient green economy.

“ pic.twitter.com/RhLDXB7agP— Premier Alan Winde (@alanwinde) [February 16, 2023](#) ”

Furthermore, Winde said Namibia's establishment of the green hydrogen corridor, in partnership with South Africa, would provide massive opportunities of attracting more investment into the region.

He said the goal for the Western Cape is to grow the provincial economy between 4 and 6% by 2035 and to become a R1tn provincial GDP economy by 2035. This would translate into an excess of 600,000 new jobs.

ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

Katja is the Finance, Property and Healthcare Editor at Bizcommunity.

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