

# Transport infrastructure critical for economic growth

A safe and reliable transport infrastructure is a key basis for the country's efforts to accelerate economic growth and social development, Transport Minister Ben Martins said on Thursday.



(Image: GCIS)

"Without safe infrastructure and services, it will be difficult for goods and people to move from one place to another, with negative implications on the economy," he said at the opening of a new taxi rank in Mthatha, Eastern Cape.

The event was part of the countrywide Transport Month activities.

Government declared October as national Transport Month, with campaigns focusing on transport infrastructure and road safety.

Earlier this year, President Jacob Zuma highlighted the strategic role of transport as one of the drivers of growth in other sectors of the economy such as tourism, agriculture and mining.

On Thursday, Martins linked transport to tourism growth, highlighting the fact that domestic and international tourists depended on transport to move about. In addition, their choice of destinations was largely influenced by the state of transport.

"Similarly, mining and agricultural goods have to be transported to local and international destinations through the road, rail, maritime and aviation modes of transport," said the minister.

Significant amounts of resources have been allocated to improve existing transport systems, while at the same time, creating new infrastructure, especially in rural and poor urban areas, he said.

Martins said government's interventions were also geared towards achieving other national policy goals such as job creation, poverty eradication, skills development, and local economic development.

The refurbishment of the Mthatha Taxi Rank, the airport and the construction of the Mbashe Bridge formed part of many activities being implemented across the country, he added.

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