

Transport Minister officially opens the newly built N1 Musina ring road

By Bernard Chiguvare

The long-awaited N1 Musina ring road was officially opened – to the delight of many road users – on Thursday, 1 September. The Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula, did the honours.

In his opening speech, Mbalula thanked the local communities and businesspeople for working together to contribute to South Africa's National Development Plan to invest in a strong network of economic structures designed to support the country's medium- and long-term objectives for sustainable and inclusive growth by 2030.

"This is yet another milestone in our effort to deliver infrastructure that enables

service delivery to our people," Mbalula said.

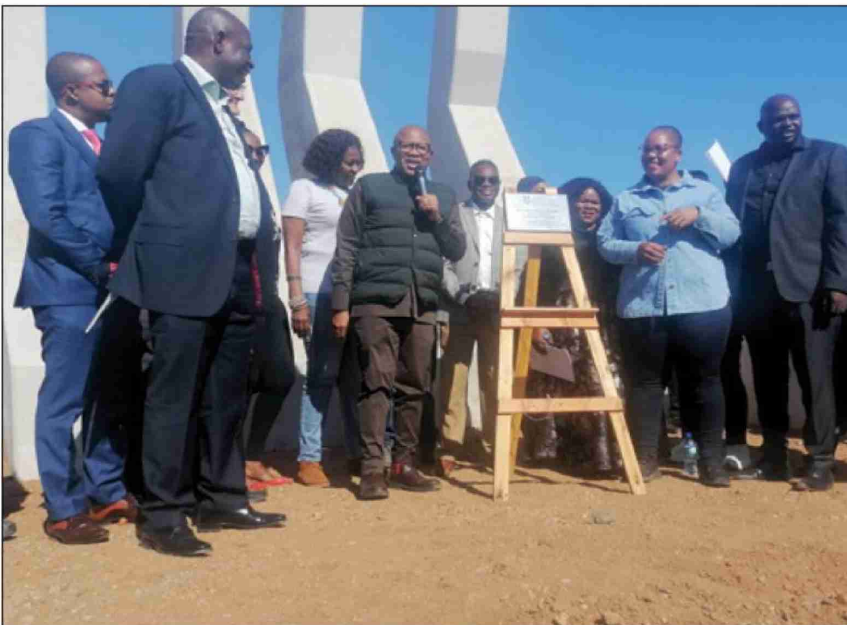
The R640 million project commenced in 2015, although actual construction only started in April 2016. The project was expected to be completed by 2018, but the first contractor, Basil Read Ltd, went into business rescue before it was finished. A new contractor, Raubex, was appointed in 2020, but because of the Covid-19 restrictions, progress was delayed.

According to Mbalula, the project created 275 full-time jobs at a cost of more than R28 million. More than R51 million was spent on local subcontractors.

The development is expected to ease traffic congestion and reduce motorists' travelling time around Musina, as

long-distance trucks coming into and leaving South Africa can now use this ring road.

Musina's acting mayor, Cllr Victor Manavhela, thanked the minister for doing the honours. "The opening of this ring road came at precisely the right time, with the physical infrastructure work for the Musina-Makhado Special Zone also just having kicked off. Our desire of becoming a city in the near future is finally unfolding. As a provincial growth point, this development will help to enhance our local economic development initiatives. Furthermore, this state-of-the-art road network means faster and more effective mobility, making various destinations more accessible than before," said Manavhela.



To the left of the plaque is Minister of Transport Mr Fikile Mbalula and on the right (in blue shirt) is Ms Nkakareng Rakgoale, MEC for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure during the official opening of the N1 Musina ring road. Photo: Bernard Chiguvare.