

Mpumalanga Elderly Citizens calls on government to remove insurance brokers and loan sharks at pension pay-points.

The elderly people urged the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature to ensure removal of all insurance brokers and loan sharks stationed in various pension pay-points. The elderly people in the province made the call during the Senior Citizens Parliament hosted by the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature in Mbombela. The elderly informed the sitting that the insurance brokers and loan sharks bring temptations that easily influence them to end up making unnecessary financial commitments.

The elderly also requested that the officials working at the pay-point centres must wear name badges so that they are able to identify them. The Senior Citizens Parliament was held under the theme "Together with the senior citizens, advancing people's power". There were three thematic areas under which the discussions were held which included rights to safe pay-points, access to old age homes and access to basic services .

Addressing the Sitting, the Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Mrs Thandi Shongwe said the elderly people are the backbone, information nerve and the library of the country as they have an in-depth knowledge of where this country is coming from. "It is for this reason that we need to take good care of our elderly people and we rely on you to pass the important history of our county to your grandchildren and the new generation."

Speaker Shongwe was excited to acknowledge the presence of famous photographer Mr Sam Nzima who was deeply involved in the coverage of Soweto students uprising of 1976, saying people like him are rich with information of the history of this country. The senior citizens parliament was also attended by Dr JZM Sambo of South African Choral Music and Mrs Beauty Mkhize wife to the late Mr Saul Mkhize a renowned liberation struggle stalwart.

Further raising the matters, the elderly cautioned themselves to avoid creating a society of beggars, saying the use of children as beggars in various street corners should not be allowed. This is a trend that we are seeing every day, where the elderly people let the children stand on the side of the road begging for food, with the elderly sitting further on the side of the road.

The senior citizens also made a call on government to ensure that old age centres have fully fledged staff compliment with professional nurses that have full understanding of the operations of these centres.

All the matters raised by the elderly citizens will be processed through legislature's Select Committee on Public Participation, Petitions and Members Legislative proposals through a committee report that will be tabled in the Legislature. The report will then be sent to various affected departments for further processing. The Legislature will follow up with the departments then report back to the senior citizens of the province.