
THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

The sign † indicates the original language and [] directly thereafter indicates a translation.

The House met at 14:15.

The Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER: Please be seated. Good afternoon, hon members! Before we proceed, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the delegation from the California Assembly in the gallery under the leadership of hon Dr Corey Jackson. To our colleagues, welcome to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and welcome to the Chamber of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

Hon members, I would like to remind you of some of the logistical arrangements. As has been our practice to date, hon members will be participating in this Sitting of the House both from here in the Chamber with the Presiding Officer and the Table Staff, and via Microsoft Teams.

Our Standing Rules have accordingly been amended to accommodate such hybrid Sittings.

Hon members experiencing challenges in connecting to the Sitting are requested to contact the WCPP ICT colleagues, who will assist to resolve their connectivity challenges.

Hon members, the quorum requirements for this Sitting are provided for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules. Unless there is an indication of unanimous concurrence, voting will be confined to members present in the House and on the hybrid system, who are entitled to cast their votes as per the ATC issued on 11 August 2020.

Members present in the Chamber and via Microsoft Teams have all the privileges and immunities imparted by law. Hon members, when you are considered out of order by the Presiding Officer, you will have your microphones muted and called to order.

The Serjeant-at-Arms will record members' attendance.

Hon members, all microphones have been muted. However, for those hon members participating in this Sitting via Microsoft Teams, you are requested to use the raise-hand functionality of the system when you desire to raise a point of order and I will recognise you.

Hon members, the media have also been granted access to this meeting via MS Teams as guests of the WCPP. However, I wish to remind the members of the press that they may not use the chat room or speak or activate their cameras while the Sitting is in progress.

Hon members, for this Sitting, Language Translation Services are available in the Chamber as usual and via Microsoft Teams via the respective channels.

Hon members, I wish to remind you that no interjections are permitted during these hybrid Sittings and to this end I wish to draw your attention to Rule 40 of our Standing Rules.

That, hon members, is the logistical arrangements for this Sitting. I now recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I move:

That the House resolves to revive the consideration of the Green Haven Petition introduced during the Sixth Parliament, and hereby refers the petition to the Standing Committee on Infrastructure. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved?

No objections? Agreed to.

I recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP: Thank you, hon Speaker, I give notice and move:

That notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 20(1) that precedence be given to the Subject for Discussion. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Chief Whip. Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved?

No objections? Agreed to.

We will now deal with the Subject for Discussion in the name of the hon member W F Kaizer-Philander as printed on the Order Paper. I recognise the hon member Kaizer-Philander.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

The failure of the South African Social Security Agency to provide services to the people of the Western Cape and the impact this has on the most vulnerable people in the society.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker, fellow members and South Africans watching and listening today. The failure of SASSA to deliver social grants that vulnerable citizens rely on is not a distant administrative issue. It is a crisis affecting countless families, communities and ultimately the moral fabric of our nation. This matter is one that strikes at the very heart of our society.

†Maatskaplike toelae is meer as net 'n finansiële transaksie. Dit is 'n belofte, 'n belofte dat ongeag jou omstandighede die Regering sal 'n basiese vlak van ondersteuning gee. Dit is vir die oues van dae wie 'n leeftyd gewy het vir die bou van die land, persone wie uitdagings in die gesig staar waarvan ons onself nooit sal kan indink nie, en families wie se enigste inkomste die toelae is, is hierdie geld 'n *lifeline*.

[Social grants are more than just a financial transaction. It is a promise, a promise that irrespective of your circumstances the Government will provide a basic level of support. To the elderly, who have committed a lifetime to building the country, persons who face challenges of which we cannot imagine ourselves, and families whose sole income is the grant, this money is a lifeline.]

But what does it mean when the lifeline becomes unreliable? What does it mean when that promise is broken, month after month and year after year? Across the Western Cape and indeed throughout South Africa, we hear stories that are not just about financial hardship, but about the loss of dignity. Families are scrambling to survive. Children go hungry and elderly citizens face each day

with uncertainty, wondering if this month will finally be the one in which they receive what is owed to them.

†Agb Speaker, stel jou voor hoe dit moet voel om 'n ma te wees wat nie in staat is om haar kinders te voed nie, nie omdat sy onwillig is om te werk nie, maar omdat haar regering haar teleurgestel het. Stel jou voor dat jy 'n bejaarde vrou is met niemand om na te wend nie, gedwing om te wag, dag na dag in uiterste weersomstandigede, net om toegang tot die minimum te kry om te oorleef. Stel jou voor die wanhoop, die frustrasie en die hulpeloosheid wat hierdie Suid-Afrikaners voel. Dit is niks minder as 'n nasionale skande nie.

[Hon Speaker, imagine how it must feel to be a mother who is not capable of feeding her children, not because she is unwilling to work, but because her government has disappointed her. Imagine you are an elderly lady with no one to turn to, forced day after day in extreme weather conditions, just to get access to the minimum to survive. Imagine the despair, the frustration and the helplessness that these South Africans feel. It is nothing less than a disgrace.]

The crisis with SASSA's failure is not merely a flaw in service delivery. It is a deep-rooted issue in the values and priorities of the former ANC-led Government. While the people suffer, while they wait, SASSA's leadership remains untouched, shielded by bureaucracy and comforted by perks and bonuses. This is not governance. This is exploitation. Government must answer. How can it allow this neglect to continue, and what does it say about those at the helm when they are so disconnected from the suffering of their people?

I would like members of this House to join me in calling for the resignation of the CEO of SASSA, Ms Busisiwe Memela... [Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: Hear-hear!

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): ...who has since 2019 failed to improve the situation of SASSA. In fact, under her leadership it has gotten worse.

†Agb Speaker, die realiteit in Bellville en ander areas is dat mense wag, nie vir dae nie, nie vir weke nie, maar vir maande en jare. In sommige gevalle selfs meer as 'n jaar vir iets so eenvoudig as 'n aansoek om deur die stelsel te gaan. Dit is nie stadige dienslewering nie, dit is minagting van menslikheid. [Hon Speaker, the reality in Bellville and other areas is that people wait, not for days, not for weeks, but for months and years. In certain instances even more than a year for something as ordinary as an application to go through the system. That is not slow service delivery, it is contempt for humanity.]

Each month that grant is delayed the suffering compounds. Children miss school because there is not enough food at home. Elderly people are pushed to physical and emotional breaking points as they stand in queues, sometimes without water or adequate shelter. Is this how we want our nation to treat the most vulnerable?

†Laat ons duidelik wees. Die ANC Regering het versuim om die hervorming

van SASSA se bedrywighede en prosedures te prioritiseer. Hierdie vertragings, hierdie ontkenning van diens is heeltemal voorkombaar maar in plaas daarvan om die stelsel reg te stel het die maghebbers gekies om die status quo te handhaaf, onverskillig teenoor die menslike koste.

[Let us be clear. The ANC Government failed to prioritise the reform of SASSA's activities and procedures. These delays, this denial of service is totally preventable but instead of setting the system right those in power chose to maintain the status quo, unconcerned about the human cost.]

The people of this country are owed more than just an apology or another round of promises. They deserve an immediate and uncompromising commitment to change. This is not a time for bureaucratic delays or empty statements. This is a time for action, for accountability and for reform. We, as representatives, must demand a new standard of care and responsiveness from our National Government. We must demand that SASSA fulfils its mandate, not as a favour to the people, but as a duty.

†Want genoeg, agb Speaker, is nou wragtig genoeg. Ons mense wag. Hulle het hulle hele lewens gewag, nie net vir toelaes nie, maar vir die geregtigheid wat 'n behoorlike diens moet bring. Hulle vra nie vir luukshede nie. Hulle vra vir die minimum wat hulle nodig het om menswaardig te lewe. Dit is ons plig om vir hulle in te staan en die Regering aan sy beloftes te hou.

[Because enough is now really enough, hon Speaker. Our people are waiting. They have been waiting their whole life, not just for allowances, but for justice that a decent service should bring. They are not asking for luxuries. They ask

for the minimum that they need to live with dignity. It is our duty to support them and keep the Government to its promises.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Kaizer-Philander, your time has expired. Please conclude.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Hon Speaker, no more turning a blind eye to the suffering of our people, the people of South Africa deserves a Government that will not rest until this crisis is resolved.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Kaizer-Philander.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

The SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Thank you very much. I recognise the hon Kamfer.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, members. There is a member on the floor.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker, members in the House.
[Technical problems]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Kamfer, please take your seat. My apologies for

that technical problem. Can I just ask that the Table Staff deal with that? I do not want you to be prejudiced in your time on the floor so let me just make sure that everything is in order before we continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Speaker, this is the first time he is back in the House since the... [Inaudible.] [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, if you want to address the House please rise. [Interjections.] Order, members!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Yes, he asked me for... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister and hon Premier, that is unparliamentary what you are doing. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Here, there were three! There were three!

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Hon members, can I just get an indication if I can continue? [Interjections.] Hon member Kamfer, let us try again.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Just hold on. Can the Table Staff please reset hon Kamfer's time?

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Kamfer, you may continue. Once again for the record that was not his error, it was the Table Staff and the Chamber, so my apologies. You may continue.

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker, for the opportunity, and members in the House for the opportunity.

†Agb Speaker, laat my toe by hierdie pragtige geleentheid om die volgende te sê. Dit is dat die aanhoudende uitdagings wat die Suid-Afrikaanse Maatskaplike Sekuriteit Agentskap (SASSA) in die verskaffing van voldoende dienste aan die mense van die Wes-Kaap in die gesig stel, is diep kommerwekkend.

Hierdie kwessies het verreikende gevolge vir die mees kwesbare lede van ons samelewing, veral die bejaardes en dié wat in armoede leef.

Ons kan die diepgaande impak wat hierdie diensversaking op die lewens van toelaatbare begunstigdes het, nie oordryf nie. Elke dag wat verbygaan sonder 'n oplossing vir hierdie probleme, is 'n verdere dag van swaarkry vir ontelbare gesinne wat op maatskaplike toelaes staatmaak om in hulle basiese behoeftes te voorsien.

Agb Speaker, dit is hartseer stories wat ons gehoor het van moeders wat nie hul kinders kan voed nie, bejaarde individue wat by poskantore weggestuur word, kwesbare burgers wat addisionele koste in die gesig staar net om toegang tot hul regmatige toelaes te kry. Dit is nie net 'n administratiewe ongerief nie; dit is 'n menseregtekweisie wat onmiddellik ons aandag vereis.

Terwyl ons die Demokratiese Alliansie se pogings om hierdie saak deur debatte soos hierdie na vore te bring, erken, moet ons die opregtheid van hul benadering bevraagteken. Is dit die regte doel?

Dit is ontmoedigend om op te merk dat dit die tweede keer in een jaar is dat die DA hierdie debat na vore bring. Ons moet die min konkrete aksie aan die kant van die SASSA, bevraagteken, agb Speaker.

'n Mens kan nie anders as om te wonder of hierdie debat 'n politieke oefenlopie is, eerder as 'n opregte poging om blywende oplossings te vind nie.

Agbare Speaker, ons moet egter erken en ons waardeer die *MEC* se deurlopende betrokkenheid by SASSA in die Wes-Kaap, ons moet dit erken wat u doen, maar dit is nie genoeg om die probleme op te los nie

Verder, agb Speaker, wil ons sê, die *MEC* is bewus gemaak van die onderliggende uitdagings wat ons elke dag sien tot hierdie diensversaking. Watter tasbare stappe is gedoen om hierdie probleme aan te spreek?

Die mense van die Wes-Kaap verdien meer as net besprekings; hulle het beslissende aksie en werklike oplossings nodig.

Laas September, tydens 'n soortgelyke debat van hierdie saak, agb Speaker, was die voorstelle gemaak, insluitende die idee om groot kleinhandelaars in die provinsie te betrek om koeponkaarte aan geraakte begunstigdes te verskaf, wat die Regering, insluitend die Provinsiale Regering, dan sou vergoed. Hierdie het nie plaasgevind nie en 'n haalbare oplossing is nie geïmplementeer nie. Was dit werklik 'n bekommernis om aan hierdie stappe en die welstand van ons burgers aandag te gee?

Agb Speaker, ons gaan verder deur te sê, ons het 'n regering nodig wat meer doen as net om probleme uit te lig. Ons het een nodig wat aktief oplossings na vore bring.

Aan die MEC wil ons sê: U vergaderings met SASSA is 'n stap in die regte rigting. Ons moet u erkenning gee daarvoor. Agb Speaker, ons dring daarop aan dat die wortel van hierdie diensversaking aangespreek word en 'n betekenisvolle oplossing gevind word.

Verder, agb Speaker, laat ek enkele van die onderliggende uitdagings uitlig wat bydra tot die huidige krisis.

In areas soos Khayelitsha en Langa en SASSAs in die omgewing, om die

kantore van die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling te verlaat nadat opknappings voltooi is. In Eersterivier het die vertraging van 'n dak se opknapping deur die Stad Kaapstad tot verdere ontwrigting gelei en dit is hoekom die Bellville-kantore so vol is en geen dienste gelewer is nie.

As ons hierdie opknapping versnel, kan ons na ons dienste terugkeer, en hoop ons die dienste sal terugkeer na normaal en teen volle kapasiteit kan funksioneer.

Verder moet die Provinsiale Regering en die Stad Kaapstad grond voorsien, stel ons voor, aan die Departement van Infrastruktuur om 'n nuwe SASSA-kantoor in Gugulethu en Khayelitsha te bou om dienste aan ons mense te lewer. Dit is al meer as 10 jaar wat ons wag op tenders vir die bou van hierdie kantore, en die MEC hoop ons, het vir ons 'n antwoord hoekom dit nog nie gebeur het nie.

In plaas daarvan om kritiek te gee, agb Speaker, en die mense se pyn te gebruik om goedkoop politieke punte te behaal, doen ons 'n beroep op die Provinsiale Regering om saam met SASSA te werk om hul stelsels te verbeter, kommunikasie met begunstigdes te verbeter en te versterk, en toelaesverspreidingspunte vir almal, veral in landelike areas, te versterk.

Ten slotte doen ons 'n beroep vir 'n onmiddellike en omvattende plan om die uitdagings wat SASSA in die Wes-Kaap in die gesig staar, op te los. Hierdie

plan moet die volgende insluit:

1. Duidelike riglyne vir die implementering van verbeterings aan SASSA se dienslewering.
2. 'n Strategie om die tegnologiese en logistieke probleme wat ons toelaeverspreidingspunte belemmer, aan te spreek.
3. 'n Openbare bewusmaking om begunstigdes in te lig oor veranderinge van hulle regte.
4. Samewerking met plaaslike regering en munisipaliteite om ondersteunende strukture aan toelaatbare begunstigdes te verskaf.

Dit het tyd geword, agb Speaker, nie meer vir debat nie. Die mense van die Wes-Kaap het aksie nodig. Laat ons ons politieke verskille opsy sit en saamwerk om te verseker dat ons mees kwesbare burgers die ondersteuning kry wat hulle dringend nodig het en verdien. Die maatstaf van enige samelewing is hoe ons sy mees kwesbare lede behandel.

Ek dank u, agb Speaker.

[Hon Speaker, allow me to at this lovely opportunity to say the following. It is that the continuous challenges staring the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) in the face in the provision of adequate services to the people of the Western Cape, is deeply concerning.

These issues have far-reaching consequences for the most vulnerable members of our society, especially the aged and those living in poverty.

We cannot exaggerate the deep impact that this service failure has on the lives of allowed beneficiaries. Every day gone by without a solution for families depending on social grants to provide for their most basic needs.

Hon Speaker, we have heard sad stories about mothers who cannot feed their children, aged individuals who are sent away at post offices, vulnerable citizens who stare additional costs in the face just to get access to the rightful grants. It is not only an administrative inconvenience; it is a human rights issue that requires our attention immediately.

While we acknowledge the Democratic Alliance's efforts to bring this issue to the front through debates like these, we have to question the honesty of their approach. Is that the real purpose?

It is disheartening to note that it has been the second time in one year that the DA has brought this debate forward. We have to question the little amount of concrete action by SASSA, hon Speaker.

One cannot but wonder if this debate is a political exercise, rather than a genuine effort to find lasting solutions.

Hon Speaker, we have to, however, acknowledge and we appreciate the continuous involvement of the MEC at SASSA in the Western Cape, we have to acknowledge what you do, but it is not enough to solve the problem.

Further, hon Speaker, we want to say, the MEC was made aware of the underlying challenges we see every day to this failure of delivery. What tangible steps were taken to address these problems?

The people of the Western Cape deserve more than just discussions; they need decisive action and real solutions.

Last September, during a similar debate, hon Speaker, proposals were made including the idea to involve retailers in the province to provide coupon cards to affected beneficiaries which the Government, including the Provincial Government, then would reimburse. This has not taken place and a viable solution has not been implemented. Was it really a concern to pay attention to these steps and the wellbeing of our citizens?

Hon Speaker, we go further to say we need a government that does more than just highlighting problems. We need one that actively brings solutions.

To the MEC we want to say: your meetings with SASSA is a step in the right direction. We have to acknowledge you for that. Hon Speaker, we insist that the root of this service delivery failure be addressed and a meaningful solution be found.

Further, hon Speaker, let me highlight some of the underlying challenges contributing to the present crisis.

In areas like Khayelitsha and Langa and SASSAs in the area, to leave the

offices of the Department of Social Development after renovations have been completed. In Eerste River the delay of a roof renovation by the City of Cape Town led to further disruption and that is why the Bellville offices are so congested and no services were delivered.

If we accelerate this renovation, we can return to services, and we hope the services will return to normal and function to full capacity.

Further, the Provincial Government and the City of Cape Town must provide land, we suggest, to the Department of Infrastructure to build a new SASSA office in Gugulethu and Khayelitsha to deliver services to our people. It has been more than 10 years that we have been waiting for tenders to build these offices, and the MEC we hope, has an answer for us why it has not yet happened.

Instead of criticizing, hon Speaker, and using the people's pain to win cheap political points, we urge the Provincial Government to cooperate with SASSA to improve their systems, improve and strengthen communication with beneficiaries, and strengthen grant distribution points for all, especially in rural areas.

Finally we ask for an immediate and comprehensive plan to resolve the challenges facing SASSA in the Western Cape. This plan should include the following:

1. Clear guidelines for implementing of improvements to SASSA service

delivery.

2. A strategy to address the technological and logistical problems that hinder our grant distribution points.
3. A public awareness campaign to inform beneficiaries on changes of their rights.
4. Cooperation with Local Government and municipalities to provide support structures to allowed beneficiaries.

The time has come, hon Speaker, for no more debate. The people of the Western Cape need action. Let us put aside our political differences and work together to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens get the support that they urgently need and deserve. The measure of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable members.

I thank you, hon Speaker.]

†Die SPEAKER: Baie dankie, agbare lid. [The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member.] I recognise the hon Stephens.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Hon Speaker, members of the House and fellow South Africans. I stand before you today to address a pressing issue that deeply affects our most vulnerable citizens. The failures of the South African Social Security Agency, SASSA, in delivering critical services to the people of the Western Cape.

This debate is more than a matter of administrative shortcomings. It is about the human impact felt by those who rely on these essential services every day.

As representatives it is our duty to not only voice the frustrations of our communities, but to ensure that solutions are sought with urgency and compassion. SASSA's role is not merely procedural. It provides the lifeline that sustains families, empowers individuals and offers dignity to those most in need.

When this agency falls short, it is the elderly, the unemployed, people with disabilities and single mothers who bear the consequences. They are left waiting for basic support, often with no alternative to turn to.

The high level of corruption and incompetence happening at SASSA calls for immediate resignation of the CEO, who clearly is unfit to hold office. Millions of fraudulent transactions are going on where Stellenbosch University students, who tried to apply for the R370 grant found that their ID numbers were used since the inception of the Poverty Relief Programme.

In the Patriotic Alliance we believe that these citizens deserve better. We must demand accountability, ensuring that every measure possible is taken to address these shortcomings. SASSA must not only restore its systems, but also its commitment to the principles of dignity and respect that every South African deserves. The failure to deliver these services is the failure to uphold the very trust our communities placed in us. Let this debate serve as a reminder

that each delay, each gap in service affects real lives.

Let us work together towards solutions that bring relief, restore faith in our public institutions and honour the promise of care that SASSA represents. The number of foreign nationals who are recipients of the grants make it difficult for our own people to access the grants. The malfunctioning IT systems create endless problems for the recipients of the grant, which either sees them getting overpaid or not paid at all for months. This creates the snake queues at the SASSA offices where many old and frail people fall sick, and in cases they have to sleep on the cold tar at night to ensure that they are assisted.

A Commission of Inquiry must be established to investigate the fraud and corruption at SASSA to ensure that the funds are paid to the intended recipients, and I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Stephens. I recognise the hon Cassiem. Hon Cassiem is online.

MS A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you very much, Speaker. Hon Speaker, the South African Social Security Agency needs a change of leadership and management because in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution we cannot still be expecting people to be sleeping outside Government buildings in order to be first in the queue the following day to apply for a government grant. SASSA managed to digitalise applications for their Social Relief of Distress, which were the R350 grants, and if they can do that, hon Speaker, then they

can equally digitalise applications associated with all forms of grants, be it old age, social grants, child support grants or disability grants, among others.

The only thing they should improve associated with that, hon Speaker, is the information and communication technology system, which are currently flawed by fraud as a result of corruption, and the reason why the SRD Online Application System is so weak and vulnerable to fraud, it is obvious, it is because it is there to benefit and illegally enrich those running the agency.

Hon Speaker, if SARS and the National Treasury can operate with highly secured ICT systems, then there is nothing stopping SASSA to do the same and to digitalise the applications of these grants.

Hon Speaker, the value of Ubuntu does not allow for elderly people and people with disabilities to be subjected to long and endless queues for purposes of applying for basic services. These are people who should bypass any queue and be served first, no matter the situation.

Furthermore, if SASSA had an online application system where one can just fill in a form digitally and attach the necessary certified documents, then incidents where people constantly collapse outside of Government buildings while in a long queue to apply for grants could have been avoided. To add, hon Speaker, when it comes to the issue of failure to provide services to the people of the Western Cape, the Provincial Department of Social Development in this province is equally a culprit in all of this. This is a Department that fails to

protect the most vulnerable people in our society, which are homeless people. The Department cannot even make means to build shelters for homeless people or to reach out to them and assist them with getting simple things like IDs in order to apply for different forms of social grants. But in conclusion, Speaker, when it comes to those who are failing vulnerable people in the Western Cape in this province under the DA leadership, the DA Provincial Government should also take its position besides the culprits of failing those in need. Thank you, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Cassiem. I now recognise the hon member Van Minnen.

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Speaker, the philosophy of Ubuntu is deeply rooted in the belief of community, interconnectedness and mutual care. At its core, Ubuntu proclaims "I am because we are." Ubuntu is a core value reflected in the South African Constitution, particularly in its commitment to human dignity, equity and social justice.

SASSA, in principle, is a vehicle for promoting the spirit of Ubuntu by providing a lifeline towards the elderly, people with disabilities and families in need, as well as identified vulnerable groups who receive grants.

However, over the past 30 years, this institution has been run into the ground by previous ANC administrations. Decades of mismanagement and evisceration has left SASSA reeling, suffering from administrative and technical failures,

widespread payment disruptions, cyber-security failures and cases of corruption.

Who suffers when this institution fails, or when the system is offline, you might ask? The grant recipients, those who are the most in need. When SASSA fails, we fail those most at risk and we fail the values of the National Constitution. Although perhaps now collaborative governance can rescue SASSA from its inferno, maybe fresh eyes can see the seriousness of this issue. But only results matter and to measure results it is imperative to understand the issues facing SASSA.

An all more common issue is that of identity theft. This is a common problem in South Africa in general, but SASSA recipients are particularly vulnerable. These thieves are parasites, sucking dry the limbs stretched out to help those most in need, draining the lifeline and leaving our most vulnerable destitute. The rise of these miscreants can be linked to an over-reliance on traditional verification pins as opposed to multi-factor authentication.

In addition, a lack of encryption and relaxed cyber security means that thieves can intercept OTPs by SIM card swapping and cloning payment cards. Worst of all, SASSA has been held hostage by a Brazilian hacking group to using out-of-date data and exploiting operating systems riddled with issues.

If we still aspire to enact the spirit of Ubuntu, something has to be done about SASSA. Fortunately, our issues are not only unique to South Africa and we do have inspiration that we can draw from the Baltic countries and South Korea,

to protect beneficiaries from identity theft SASSA needs to implement several key measures.

Firstly, enhancing security protocols by introducing stronger authentication methods such as biometric verification, which will make it more challenging for fraudsters to impersonate beneficiaries.

Secondly, upgrading payment infrastructure by using more advanced encrypted cards along with upgrading payment points would significantly reduce the risk of card cloning and skimming.

Thirdly, implementing real-time fraud monitoring systems to track suspicious activities by making it faster to intercept cases of identity theft.

Next, efforts need to be taken to inform grant recipients through awareness campaigns how to identify fraud risks and teaching beneficiaries about secure banking practices.

Finally, establishing stronger oversight with SASSA's payment contractors and creating an accessible reporting system for beneficiaries, would ensure that the agency responds to fraud issues quickly and transparently.

These international benchmarks provide several best practices that SASSA could adopt, but it requires the political will to do so. If we truly believe in Ubuntu, we cannot sit idly by while SASSA continues to be ravaged by ANC

mismanagement, but what matters most is political will and the desire to do right by our most vulnerable. Thank you.

An HON MEMBER: So what does it tell you?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Van Minnen.

[Interjections.]

The PREMIER: Great speech! [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Excellent! [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, members! [Interjections.] Thank you very much, hon members. I recognise the hon member Jacobs. Hon member Jacobs on the online platform.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Speaker, am I audible?

The SPEAKER: Yes, we can hear you.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Okay, thank you, Speaker. Speaker, 2024 started in the worst way possible, when 150 000 beneficiaries failed to receive their SASSA grants in the Western Cape, placing them in an unimaginable hardship, which was only corrected in February and in March 2024.

Hon Speaker, we are currently seeing beneficiaries queuing as early as 04:00 in the morning for assistance, fully knowing they may not be assisted during the day. No water, no ablution services available for them as they wait, causing even more stress on people. Speaker, the hard reality is that our people are so desperate that they stand outside in the cold on windy, rainy days just to make sure that they have their paperwork in order.

Speaker, on October the 22nd a beneficiary, waiting in line at the Bellville SASSA, collapsed, and waited for more than an hour and a half for medical assistance. It is clear that SASSA services are on an ever-declining spiral and it needs urgent attention.

Now we know that Government offices open from 8:00 in the morning till 16:00 in the afternoon, but this is clearly not adequate enough for SASSA services and complaints. This is a clear indication of deprived services.

Speaker, as the NCC we propose that service hours be extended and that we as the Provincial Parliament and the Department of Social Development assist our communities by at least providing them with dignified ways when they queue.

Speaker, the SASSA programme might be national but the people are provincial. Let us give our people the services they deserve from a caring Western Cape Government. I thank you. *!Aesa!*

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Jacobs. I recognise the

hon member Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

Speaker, those in the employ of SASSA are proving to be most incompetent of administering this responsibility on behalf of the South African Government. The failures of SASSA, as mentioned in this House is a betrayal of the poor households who live from hand to mouth most days in a month. The diabetics, physically disabled and already unnourished children are dealt an additional undeserving punishment by SASSA resulting in their extended suffering. Nearly 40% of the total households in the Western Cape receive some form of social grant, and this is on the increase.

†Armoede het vererger in die afgelope 30 jaar en die COVID pandemie se effek is nog steeds sigbaar. Baie families het hierdie SASSA toelae broodnodig net om te oorleef. [Poverty has become worse during the past 30 years and the effect of the Covid pandemic is still visible. Many families badly need this SASSA grant just to survive.]

The integrity of the beneficiary database has also been compromised, as confirmed by two young Stellenbosch University students. In addition, systemic inefficiencies in the IT Security System made it highly probable that fraudsters are receiving social income while those households eligible to receive them receive nothing.

The Freedom Front Plus calls for a complete clean-up of their current beneficiary list, but not at the expense of eligible beneficiaries receiving their pay-outs on time. It would be prudent for provinces like the Western Cape to manage the administrations of pay-outs themselves and not be burdened with the incompetence of National.

In conclusion, Speaker, this ideal would be pursued and must be pursued by the Department of Social Development and Minister Londt in the interest of the SASSA beneficiaries of the Western Cape. I thank you, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Marais. I recognise the hon Brinkhuis.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Speaker, Al Jama-ah acknowledges that there are deep challenges people face with SASSA when they apply for grants. This is not only a problem in the Western Cape, but throughout the country.

The DA must stop playing politics by implying that the National Government practices discrimination against the people of the Western Cape, when it comes to providing resources for service delivery. Al Jama-ah has immense empathy with people, especially the most vulnerable in our society. We experience difficulties with applications for grants.

When Al Jama-ah's leader, hon Hanif Hendricks was appointed as Deputy

Minister of Social Development, he met with all relevant officials in the Social Development Sector to discuss how the Department can overcome the challenges experienced in the sector and ongoing solutions. Social protection plays a key role in realising the rights of all persons who qualify for grants, providing them with an adequate standard of living, a basic level of income security to eradicate levels of extreme poverty and vulnerability.

Government Social Assistance Programmes are designed to address challenges faced by especially persons with disability across the lifecycle. There is a care dependency grant for children with disabilities, a disability grant for those aged between 18 and 59 years and an old age grant for those aged 60 years and above. In addition, the recipients of the disability and old age grant can access the grant in aid for caregivers who provide care and support. There are good functions in place to provide social services to citizens and SASSA officials are open to ways on improving its services.

Al Jama-ah calls on the Province to put aside their political indifferences and to recognise and to support the objectives of SASSA as a national function to install dignity in the lives of the most vulnerable citizens. I thank you very much, hon Speaker. [Applause]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Brinkhuis. [Interjections.] Order!
[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION (ANC): ...politics like that.

[Interjections.] ...the DA's partner.

An HON MEMBER: They are an associate of the DA when it suits them.

An HON MEMBER: Our partner! Our partner!

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members, are you finished GNU-ing? I recognise the hon Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. It is refreshing to hear that the hon Leader of the Opposition did not write the previous speech. That is why he is clapping so enthusiastically. Hon Speaker, it is difficult to understand why prioritising services to the most vulnerable in our society is impossible for the African Social Security Agency to achieve.

They have such an important task, and yet the political will to fix the agency seems lacking from the National Department of Social Development's leadership, which includes the Al Jama-ah party. All they have to do is make sure that grants get disbursed on time to the correct beneficiaries in an easily and understandable and reliable process. Why is it so difficult to get right?

Beneficiaries have to choose to sleep outside SASSA offices to get their grants because service is beyond slow on grant days. This is the result of under

resourcing that puts the SASSA staff in this province in an impossible position.

We have seen numerous scandals involving service providers for the disbursements of grants. We have seen outright corruption involving the R370 SRD grant, where the details of eligible beneficiaries were hacked and used to defraud SASSA. It is still unclear who benefited most from this.

SASSA has proven themselves to be unconcerned with the privacy of the beneficiary. Net1, the company behind the Cash Paymaster Services, has been exposed for illegally accessing SASSA beneficiaries' details for their predatory mass marketing campaigns. More recently, as we have heard, SASSA was hacked by a Brazilian hacking group who is now threatening to disclose the personal information of its clients. Let us not talk about the failed GovChat partnership under Minister Lindiwe Zulu! Getting the grant you are entitled to under law should not put you at any risk of having your identity stolen. You should not have to worry about your personal information being leaked or your details being used to commit fraud.

The disregard that SASSA has displayed for the most vulnerable residents of the Western Cape is appalling. Before SASSA was the barrier that stood between our poor, disabled and elderly residents and giving them the support they deserved, the picture was quite different in this province.

The Provincial Government was responsible for the disbursement of grants and the Western Cape Government has proved itself more than capable of doing

this in an effective, reliable manner, but, once again, the over-centralisation of State functions has proven to be ineffective. It has been every single time that the ANC has tried to vest greater power in the national executive and every single time they show us that they fail. We are at a point where the status quo has become untenable. Something needs to change. SASSA, must become more responsive to the needs of the people they serve, and they need to listen and improve. The Western Cape Government regularly meets with SASSA and the Western Cape leadership of SASSA to relay the concerns but unlike some members opposite now seem to understand, the Western Cape Government is not responsible for SASSA; the Western Cape Government cannot build offices for SASSA, even though the City of Cape Town and the Western Cape Government go to great lengths to make sure that provincial and city facilities are available for SASSA. SASSA just cannot seem to get its act in order.

This Government is working to assist a failing national entity to provide services to the people of the Western Cape. What is needed is not a defensive approach, where the goal is to avoid the political consequences at all costs, we must be able to put the politics aside and have frank conversations about what is in the best interest of the most vulnerable people of this province. A society should be judged by how it treats the most marginalised citizens, and by that metric, South Africa has much room for improvement.

Hon Speaker, the failures of SASSA should absolutely be debated in this Chamber. I am astounded that hon members opposite me feel that this is not an important issue for us to discuss, but we should not be surprised. I remember

the previous National Minister of Social Development participating in water-bombing SASSA recipients at the Bellville offices. But what we really need to do, hon Speaker, is we need to ask and call on the National Government, our Government of National Unity, to prioritise effective engagement with the different spheres of government to once and for all solve the SASSA crisis, because once again the people of the Western Cape has been short-changed by the failures of the Al Jama-ah Party and the African National Congress. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Bosman. I recognise the hon Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Speaker. Speaker, when people look at Government, they look at Government as a whole. They do not look at Local Government. They do not look at Provincial Government. They do not even National Government. So when they struggle, they call for help. So Speaker, even if we debate this issue 50 times over, we must debate it because we are debating on behalf of the people of the Western Cape, the most vulnerable people in the Western Cape. So I know, hon Speaker, that the Department and the Minister are doing all to secure that people get their grants on time, but I want to ask and challenge the Minister. Minister, do more, because if we do not get rid of the CEO of SASSA, we are going to sit with this problem. We are going to sit this problem over and over again because when the captain fails, the team fails, and we are disappointing the people of the Western Cape.

I am thinking, †en ek praat vir die tannie en die oom wat die enigste toelae het, is daai SASSA grant, en wanneer hulle dit nie kry nie, [and I speak for the *tannie* and the *oom* who have the only grant, it is that SASSA grant, and when they do not get it,] the landlord does not understand that I am paid late. The landlord does not understand because many of our people are paying rent where we stay, and they are intimidated because they cannot pay and that, hon Speaker, cannot be tolerated, so drastic measures must be taken in order to address our people of the Western Cape.

Hon Speaker, another major problem that we have is many of these people go to sleep without food because that is the only money they have to buy the necessary, and to make it more painful is when they cannot provide for their children and that is disgusting and SASSA must face the full brunt because they are to blame. The ANC National Government must intervene. They must intervene because we are failing so many people in the Western Cape. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Christians. I recognise the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Speaker. Speaker, it has trite to debate the effects of SASSA's weaknesses and failures on vulnerable people. When people without a financial safety net struggle to access the money they depend on in order to eat, some of us may choose to look away, but we all know the

physical and emotional impacts can only be horrendous. SASSA is the responsibility of National Government. Its performance negatively impacts vulnerable people across the country, including in the Western Cape. It makes more sense for us to debate what we should be doing, which we have powers to do, to reduce unemployment and dependency on SASSA. If the DA is concerned about the most vulnerable people in the Western Cape, there are a few practical things it could do to alleviate this plight. Recognise the links between under-education, unemployment and poverty, and shelve plans to cut teachers' posts when there are already a shortage of teachers. This is simply achievable through reordering your spending priorities. Recognise the links between under-served communities, poor education outcomes and crime. Put more effort and resources into changing the conditions in neighbourhoods that have created environments in which gangsterism is endemic. Instead of closing down facilities like the Best College in Salt River, which supports vulnerable and traumatised children from poor communities, to rise back to their feet and contribute positively to society, prioritise keeping it open. Put more social workers on the street and add more rehabilitation facilities.

Finally, the most obvious reflection of the Western Cape Government's commitment to its most vulnerable people would be for this Government to advocate for a basic income grant, because poverty is not magically going to go away. Of course, SASSA must pull up its socks, but so too must this beautiful Province demonstrate that it truly gives a damn about poverty. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Herron. I recognise the hon Kaizer-Philander.

†Me W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Baie dankie, agb Speaker. Speaker, ek is seker toe die ANC se krimpende kookus vergader het, het hulle ooreengekom dat vandag se goue reël sal wees dat die DA speel politiek.

[Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Speaker, I am sure that when the ANC's shrinking caucus gathered, they agreed that today's golden rule will be that the DA plays politics.]

Shame on you! Then you have the audacity to come here and laugh at people in crisis. I am sure hon member Windvogel will carry on: †*dat die DA speel politiek [that the DA plays politics.]* You are so out of touch with the people of this province and the people of this country. Shame on you! [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Shame on you! [Interjections.]

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): It is clear that we are in agreement, as other Opposition parties, that this crisis needs to be addressed. A crisis that falls squarely on the shoulders of the former National Government and the SASSA national leadership. These issues are the direct result of a failure to provide adequate oversight, resources and accountability at the highest level of management and for too long, these failures have gone unanswered. I have highlighted the suffering of South Africans who depends on social grounds for survival.

I spoke about the experiences of those who are being left behind by the broken system at SASSA. Today, hon Speaker, we need to talk about solutions, agb Kamfer, we cannot afford to dwell on the past, †want dit is nou tyd vir aksie. Om SASSA reg te ruk verg meer as politieke toesprake en die verskuiwing van blaam. Dit vra vir opregte optrede, optrede deur die ANC wat ook eienaarskap moet neem van die krisis wat hy toegelaat het om te broei en te groei. Dit is nie nou tyd vir verskonings nie. Dit is tyd vir aanspreeklikheid en daadwerklike optrede. Daardeur het Minister Londt bewys deur sy interaksie met SASSA en die Premier bewys met sy interaksie deur die Eerste Donderdae waar SASSA ook teenwoordig is. [because it is now time for action. To set SASSA right requires more than political speeches and the shifting of blame. It asks for genuine action, action by the ANC who also has to take ownership of the crisis that it allowed to breed and to grow. Now is not the time for excuses. It is time for accountability and real action. That Minister Londt proved through his interaction with SASSA and the Premier proved through his interaction with the First Thursdays where SASSA is also present.]

We have seen that SASSA's current model is not fit for purpose. We need to restructure this agency to respond to the needs of the people, not the interest of a few and so the first solution is modernisation. We must invest in state-of-the-art technology to streamline processes and improve service delivery. In an age where technology enables fast, efficient communication, it is unacceptable that grant applicants are still left waiting for months to receive their answer.

Every individual, whether in urban or rural areas, should have the ability to apply for and receive their grants promptly. A more advanced automated system would not only speed up the process, but also significantly reduce the potential for human error.

Secondly, we must address the chronic understaffing at SASSA. This agency is stretched thin and can no longer meet the demands placed upon it. This is why we must advocate for an increase in human resources to ensure that SASSA offices are adequately staffed. Filling vacancies will reduce processing times, improve customer service, and restore dignity to those who rely on these essential services. Speaker, our people should not be greeted by empty desks and closed doors when they seek the support that is their right.

Thirdly, we need to hold SASSA accountable. The current leadership has fallen far short of the standard required to manage an agency of this importance. Rather than focusing on perks, bonuses, and personal gain, we need leaders who put the needs of beneficiaries first. Leadership must be composed of individuals, dedicated to upholding the mission of SASSA to serve the vulnerable with efficiency and compassion. This is a call for real demonstrable change in how SASSA is managed at every level.

In addition, we must strengthen the oversight to monitor SASSA's performance. For too long, this agency has operated with little to no accountability, allowing inefficiencies to multiply unchecked. Strength and oversight will bring much needed transparency to SASSA operations, ensuring that every action taken by

the agency is in the best interest of the people.

Let us also consider the importance of intergovernmental operations. We spoke to the interventions by the Provincial Minister. We spoke to the interventions by the Premier and the Cabinet. It requires collaboration between National and Provincial Government as seen here in the Western Cape to ensure that resources are adequately allocated and support systems are in place to serve all beneficiaries efficiently.

†Agbare lede, dit is nie 'n krisis van infrastruktuur alleen nie, lid Kamfer. Dit is 'n krisis van empatie en aanspreeklikheid. Ons het 'n Regering nodig wat die welstand van sy burgers prioritiseer, veral diegene wat dit dringend nodig het.

Die ANC kan nie aanhou om die geld uit te gee, te vermors of die hulpkrete van ons gemeenskappe te ignoreer nie. Hierdie agentskap dien as 'n reddingsboei vir miljoene en dit misluk. Ons moet eis dat diegene wat verantwoordelik is onmiddellike meetbare stappe neem om hierdie mislukkings reg te stel. Ek dank u, agb Speaker.

[Hon members, it is not a crisis of infrastructure alone, hon member Kamfer. It is a crisis of empathy and accountability. We need a government that prioritises the wellbeing of its citizens, especially those who require it most urgently.

The ANC cannot continue to spend the money, waste it or ignore the cries of help of our communities. This agency serves as a safety buoy for millions and

it fails. We have to demand that those who are responsible take immediate measurable steps to correct these failures. I thank you, hon Speaker.]

†Die SPEAKER: Agb Kaizer-Philander, baie dankie. [The SPEAKER: Hon Kaizer-Philander, thank you.] I recognise the hon Windvogel. [Interjections.]

Order members, there is a member on the floor. Hon Windvogel, speak to me and then I will protect you. [Interjections.] Order, members on my right-hand side.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you. [Inaudible.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Windvogel, that is unparliamentary. You must be in your bench when you speak.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Here is my bench but I do not want to put you [Inaudible] There is something not right down here.

The SPEAKER: Okay.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): That is the reason why they asked me to move, Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Alright. Thank you.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Hon Speaker, members of this House and the citizens of the Western Cape. Today we find ourselves once again debating the challenges of SASSA, a topic that has become all too familiar in this Chamber.

†Agb Speaker, ons kan nooit verkeerde dinge reg praat nie en 'n stelsel toelaat om ons mense verder te verarm nie, terwyl hulle ook ly onder 'n onverskillige en *uncaring* DA-regering in die Wes-Kaap nie. Ons kan nie stilbly wanneer ons ou OB trekkers sukkel met hulle *grants* nie. Ons moet kyk na maniere hoe ons ons mense kan help en bystaan om te stop met hierdie tipe gedrag van enige departement en ons wil hê hierdie ding, hierdie *Government* moet stop met die *blame game*.

Die LUR of die Minister het 'n verantwoordelikheid om die kwessies by 'n MINMEC te opper waar al die rolspelers is, maar hy is nêrens te vinde nie.

[Hon Speaker, we can never justify wrong things and allow a system to further impoverish our people, while they also suffer under a careless and uncaring DA Government in the Western Cape. We cannot keep quiet when our old OB beneficiaries struggle with their grants. We have to look at ways how we can help our people and assist them, to stop this type of behaviour of any department and we want this thing, this Government must stop with the blame game.]

The MEC or the Minister has a responsibility to take up the issues at a MINMEC where all the role players are present, but he is nowhere to be found.]

Yoh-yoh-yoh! Stop the hypocrisy, member Philander. Shame on you! Shame on you! [Interjections.]

While the challenges at SASSA are indeed painful and we wholeheartedly call for the speedy resolution, it is crucial to set the record straight. The issue of non-payment of grants is not a SASSA problem, but rather a South African Post Office challenge. SASSA has been tirelessly advocating for grants beneficiaries to change the payment method... [Interjections.]

†n AGBARE LID: Gooi!

[An HON MEMBER: Throw!]

The SPEAKER: Order members!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Yet many are reluctant to do so. It is high time that the public representatives in this House, including those from the Democratic Alliance, step up and assist in this regard. Instead of engaging in armchair criticism, they should be using positive messaging to educate our people about these challenges and encourage them to make this necessary change.

This, hon Speaker, is the role that should be assumed by the Provincial Government and all members in this House, not the popular standing, being

mere spectators and armchair critics. The DA loves to throw around phrases like whole-of-society approach and whole-of-government approach as if they are magical spells of sham, but let me remind them, they are mere feel-good slogans. There are mechanisms that should be used to address pressing societal challenges such as the SASSA debate. Intergovernmental relations are key in addressing service delivery challenges, and it is for this reason that we demand to see the MEC and all public representatives working together to find lasting solutions.

Of course, hon Speaker, the request we are making to the MEC is far too much, especially considering that this is the same MEC who does not even attend MINMEC meetings. It is unreasonable to expect meaningful action or accountability from someone who fails to engage in the most basic and essential aspects of their responsibilities, and the Premier is aware of that.

As our esteemed colleague, member Kamfer has already pointed out, we want to see the MEC play an active role in bringing SASSA back to the Social Development offices in Khayelitsha, Langa. We want to see the MEC with the City of Cape Town, to expedite the roof renovations at the Eerste River office. Furthermore, we demand that the Provincial Government and the City of Cape Town urgently provide land for the Department of Infrastructure to build a new SASSA office in Gugulethu and Khayelitsha. and while we are at it, Mr Speaker, perhaps the MEC can enlighten us on the reasons for the delays surrounding the tender for the Eerste River and Strand offices. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Or is this another example of the DA's inefficiency when it comes to serving our most vulnerable communities.

An HON MEMBER: Disappointing!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Additionally the need for such a SASSA Satellite office in Delft is pressing and the MEC and the City should be at the forefront of facilitating identification and the rezoning of suitable land for this purpose.
[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Councillors in the City of Cape Town and other municipalities should also be actively involved in resolving these challenges. We want to see councillors, including those from the ANC and other small parties like the DA, ACDP, PA and others, inviting SASSA to be part of their outreach programme... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ... so that our people can benefit from SASSA services.

†Speaker, daar is verskeie maniere waarop die DA... [Tussenwerpsel.]

[Speaker, there are various ways in which the DA...[Interjection.]]

The SPEAKER: Hon Windvogel, please take your seat. Hon members on my right-hand side. I understand that this is a political debate, but throughout hon member Windvogel's input to the House there has been a constant commentary. I understand that this is a political debate, but you are not affording the member on the floor an opportunity to make a submission.

†Me P Z LEKKER (ANC): Hoor-hoor, Speaker!

[Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Hear-hear, Speaker!]

The SPEAKER: Order! Hon Windvogel, you may continue.

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Speaker, daar is verskeie maniere waarop die DA kan help om die uitdagings wat ons vandag bespreek op te los, maar eg aan hulle vorm sien hulle die dringende kwessies as 'n geleentheid om vir die galery te speel en goedkoop politieke punte te behaal. Ons het hierdie *grandstanding* gesien in uitdagings soos die geweldsmisdade wat arme werkersklas gemeenskappe affekteer.

In al hierdie gevalle is die DA se eerste instink altyd om te *grandstand*, eerder as om 'n aktiewe rol te speel in die aanspreek van hierdie uitdagings. 'n Mens kan nie anders as om te wonder of hierdie 'n lakse benadering is omdat die uitdagings wat ons vandag bespreek hoofsaaklik diegene met donkerder vel-

pigmentasie en effense plat neuse affekteer nie. Ons sien beslis nie dieselfde dringendheid wanneer daar veldbrande in welvarende areas is nie waar die Provinsiale Regering en alle senior amptenare hulle uiterse bes doen om hulpbronne te mobiliseer om die probleem vinnig op te los.

Ten slotte, mnr Speaker, dit is tyd dat die DA ophou om die sukkelinge van ons mees kwesbare burgers as politieke voedsel te gebruik. Die mense van die Wes-Kaap verdien beter as blote retoriek en vingerwys. Hulle verdien 'n regering wat hard werk om lewens te verbeter; nie een wat hulle swaarkry as 'n geleentheid vir politieke teater sien nie. Dit is tyd vir aksie, nie woorde nie. Dit is tyd vir oplossings, nie blaam nie, en die belangrikste, dit is tyd vir die DA om die mense eerste te stel eerder as hulle politieke ambisie.

Dankie, mnr Speaker.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Speaker, there are various ways in which the DA can help to resolve the challenges that we discussed today, but true to their form they see the urgent issues as an opportunity to play to the gallery and score cheap political points. We have seen this grandstanding in challenges such as the violent crimes that plague the poor worker class communities.

In all these cases, the DA's first instinct is always to grandstand, rather than play an active role in addressing these challenges. One cannot but wonder if this is a lazy approach because the challenges that we discuss today are mainly because it affects those with darker skin pigmentation and slightly flat noses. We definitely do not see the same lack of urgency when there are veld fires in

the wealthy areas where the Provincial Government and all senior officials are doing their utmost best to mobilise resources to quickly solve the problem.

Finally, Mr Speaker, it is time that the DA stops to use the struggles of our most vulnerable citizens as political food. The people of the Western Cape deserve better than mere rhetoric and finger pointing. They deserve a government that works hard to improve lives; not one that sees their suffering as an opportunity for political theatre. It is time for action, not words. It is time for resolutions, not blame, and the most important, it is time for the DA to put the people first rather than their political ambition.

Than you, Mr Speaker.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Hon Windvogel. Order members!

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Apparently indefensible.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members. I recognise the Hon Minister of Social Development, Minister Londt.

The PREMIER: Hear-hear!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, colleagues in the Cabinet, Premier and all the other members in the House, the gallery, and members of the media that are listening in.

As the Western Cape Minister of Social Development, I am acutely aware that SASSA's delivery is not optimal in the Western Cape. It is not a complete failure, but it is not optimal, because in October 1,7 million people in this province received a social grant. R1,9 billion was paid out to residents in this province that need it. The problem is there are hundreds and thousands of people that fall through the cracks because of SASSA's failure, and it is not the failure of the SASSA officials here in the Western Cape, it is a National failure.

An HON MEMBER: Exactly!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: And it is a failure created by the ANC Government nationally.

An HON MEMBER: Haibo, GNU!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Windvogel, you cry that we are not building... [Interjection.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL: Speak to the Chair. Do not speak to me, please!

The SPEAKER: Order, order members! Hon Minister, please take your seat.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER: You must listen!

The SPEAKER: Order members! Hon Members, I completely understand that this is a political debate so I do not want to stifle your freedom of speech and your right to interject, but when there is a member on the floor, please allow the member to make his or her submission. I have been trying to make sure that everyone gets a fair opportunity to get their point across, so it is now the opportunity for the Minister to respond to the inputs made by all speakers during this debate, so please allow the Minister to make the input. If you do not agree with the input of the Minister you can take it up with the Minister after the debate, outside, over a cup of coffee. Hon Minister, please speak to me.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, through you. R590 billion was wasted bailing out state-owned enterprises. Now as the Premier said, “The only way to provide dignity is by ensuring this province, the citizens of this province, have jobs,” and that is why we must celebrate when the unemployment stat in this province drops under 20%, because that means there are more people that have a job to look after their family, there are less people depending on SASSA, and that is because this Government under the DA has ensured that there is an enabling environment to create jobs. That is something that the ANC does not comprehend, but that is something that hopefully, through the GNU, the ANC will start to comprehend, that you can actually through implementing DA policies effect change that makes this country grow.

Just imagine, Minister Leon Schreiber in charge of SASSA for six months. There is no ANC Minister that can achieve in 30 years of democracy what he achieved in six months. If we have a DA Minister in charge of every National Ministry, this country will be on an upward trajectory, so it must be noted as hon members have stated, that SASSA shortcomings stem from a National level and since stepping into this office I have made it my duty to build a positive working relationship with the SASSA leadership in the Western Cape; and thank you for that acknowledgement.

The thing is, hon members, it is a national entity. It does not matter the noise that gets made here today, it is a national entity that is failing and we have a responsibility to shine a light on the failure of this national entity led by ANC and Al-Jama-Ah Ministers.

Now, Hon member Windvogel, your information is correct because two nights ago I attended a MINMEC at 21:00. Unfortunately the notice period of your colleagues are 24 hours, so we still make an effort. Every single MINMEC that has been held there has been Western Cape representation there.
[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Honourable, order members. Hon Minister, please take your seat.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ... so you are misleading and

lying in this House. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon, Leader of the Opposition, is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION (ANC): Yes, Hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION (ANC): Again, and we have allowed it to slip at the beginning, but the Hon Minister is speaking directly to the member, that is number one. Number two, it is unparliamentary for the hon Minister to say that the member is lying, misleading was correct, but to say she was lying, that is unparliamentary. Thank you.

An HON MEMBER: He said she was misleading the House.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): No!

The SPEAKER: Order! Order members! Hon Members there was a point of order. Hon Sayed, on your first part of that point of order, the Minister said, “through you Speaker, to hon Windvogel,” and the second point, Hon Minister, please rise. Hon Minister, did you refer to any member in the House, or did you say that the hon Windvogel is lying?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Unfortunately I could not find a synonym for lying, so I withdraw.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you.

The SPEAKER: So you will acknowledge that you in fact did say that. The hon Minister acknowledged for the record and has withdrawn. Hon Minister you may continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Through you, the hon members are twisting the truth so far, it is broken, okay. So the people that are the most affected in this province are the elderly, people with disabilities, children and families living in poverty. These are clients of the Western Cape Department of Social Development that are failed by SASSA. For many of these beneficiaries' social grants are a lifeline, and in some instances the difference between life and death. We thus have a duty to ensure that SASSA fully delivers on the mandate to provide effective services.

As my fellow hon members have highlighted, these failures and challenges are immense. The demand for services and social grants are increasing because people flock to this province for a better opportunity, and I want to give a statistic to you and I hope the media listens to this as well. This comes from SASSA directly.

From July to September 2024, disability grants, all adult grants, disability

grants processed in this province are 75%. In the rest of the country it is 40%. Disability grants versus all available grants processed in this province is 49%, the rest of the country only 28%. If ever there is clear statistics that this Province cares more for the most vulnerable, those with disabilities, it is these stats, and hon members look confused, Mr Speaker, but I mean I will put these statistics to them again. It is the truth, numbers do not lie, the same way the numbers do not lie that the ANC lost a third of their members in this House.

What I do now have to say, and again hon member Windvogel, through you Chair. She said we are playing armchair politics. I challenge her to try and match my diary how I have been moving through this province. I challenge her to try and do that, because I can promise you she will quit within the first week because there is no way she will be able to keep up with what this Government is trying to achieve. So the... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order! Order members!

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: One only needs to visit the SASSA local offices, like I did myself, to see what the problems are. The one problem is the long queues.

One of the reasons is that people get a better service in the Western Cape, so they will travel from the Eastern Cape to rather get a service here in the Western Cape.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): SASSA is national. Are you not saying that?

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon Windvogel, when you were on the floor I allowed you an opportunity to make your submission. Can I please ask that you allow the Minister to respond to the inputs made by all members? Hon Minister, you may continue and my apologies for the interruption.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: It is okay, Speaker, it is not your fault that some of the members are unruly. There are staff shortages that need to be addressed. The same way that the Western Cape has an increase in population, we need more teachers to look after the children. We need more health professionals. We need more social workers. So does SASSA in the Western Cape need more staff to look after the most vulnerable, because they are only human beings, and they can help 20 people per day, and unfortunately sometimes those people go out to communities to assist and then there are less people left at the office and they try their utmost. There is some brilliant staff, and I want to mention three of them. Xobe Mahlaba, Ms Roshana and Mr Hoho. Three people that treat people with dignity, the dignity they deserve but there are also staff that do not treat people waiting in the queues with dignity, and we are flagging that every single time with the SASSA leadership and they have committed to address that every single time. But we also need to realise there are people, unscrupulous individuals that take advantage of the most vulnerable, individuals that charge money to stand in the queues, money that people do not have to spend. But now we are encouraging people to go online.

There are even people that now start using that to take money away from the elderly.

There was one place up the West Coast where a person charged their elderly, not internet usage, because that we are providing for free across this province, they are charging the elderly to apply for the grants, and we have raised that with SASSA and they are also now going to help address that.

Hon Speaker, there is a positive that we can also do. Young people across this province, they are tech savvy, they are able to take our hands, and that is what we mean about “whole of society approach”, that they can step up and help the elderly in their family, help the elderly in their street to register for their grants, to step up and assist. Not for personal gain because those elderly have ensured that they can live in the society we have today. We also do not just complain about these challenges, we have taken proactive steps and as I have stated, we have monthly meetings with SAASA.

The problem is the current SASSA Western Cape leadership, five of the six people we met with yesterday are in acting positions. That needs to be fixed. Unfortunately SASSA nationally needs to fix that.

We have also invited them to join us at our First Thursdays. They have done that; they have joined us in Grassy Park for the First Thursday. They have joined us last month here as well, and they are going to join us next month again. They have also gone further and say, they are willing to provide a help

desk and the full services. That is what a positive working relationship can build.

We have also ensured that there are bilateral meetings set up between DSD, the City of Cape Town and SASSA to try and find solutions with the problems that there are. But, hon Speaker, unfortunately some of the colleagues from the ANC do not understand that we have finite resources available to us in the Western Cape, because of the mismanagement by the ANC Government for years and years and years, the inability of this ANC Government to sufficiently fund this Province, and we cannot now go and spend that money on building buildings for what SASSA needs to build. SASSA has got a budget and they need to make sure that they fight for a fair share of the budget and then build those buildings. But we are trying to find solutions, we are trying to think outside the box to come up with ideas. But members of the ANC here today, you have actually failed yourselves miserably. You should look at yourself in the mirror and say it is my party that have failed the most vulnerable in this province. But the only way you realise that is once you get voted out, and that is what happened to 33% of your colleagues. These voters in these provinces have rejected you, because they actually know that you are at fault for failing them [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, your time has expired, please conclude.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Speaker, we cannot fight this alone, we need to take hands, but we need to be honest. The SASSA failure

lies at a National level... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: ...and we will continue shining the spotlight on that and we will continue doing our best to pave over the cracks until that time.

The SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Thank you very much. Hon members, that concludes the debate on this subject.

[Debate concluded.]

The SPEAKER: We now move over to Interpellations as printed on the Question Paper in terms of Rule 197.

The first Interpellation, I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.

INTERPELLATIONS

1. Mr B N Herron asked Ms D M Baartman, the Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities:

With regard to the Education budget shortfall of R3,8 billion over the 2024 MTEF period:

- (1) How did the Education budget come to be underfunded by R3,8 billion over the MTEF period?
- (2) Whether she had proposed any measures to mitigate or eliminate the need to cut teacher posts?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Good afternoon, hon Speaker.

Speaker, in terms of Part 1 of the question, the National Fiscal Consolidation Exercise in the 2021 and 2024 MTEFs reduced Government budgets. This means that Provinces are not able to financially respond to increases in service delivery demands.

The 2024 budgets only accommodated for the cost-of-living adjustments for staff in the employment of the Department as of 1 April 2024, and no increases for service delivery demands. For Education there is an increased service delivery demand each year as more learners enter schooling.

This translates into a need for additional teacher posts required, and the reported R3,8 billion budget shortfall accounts for growth in teacher posts needed to respond to these service delivery demands.

As we have noted in the PERO between 2014 and 2023, the number of learners enrolled in our schools has grown by 19%, and the number of learners is projected to continue to grow every year. We need to provide places for these learners. If budgets do not grow in line with the costs associated with this, that can be characterised as a budget shortfall.

As of 31 July 2024, the Western Cape Education Department reported a projected COE shortfall for the 2024 MTEF of R3,8 billion which included provision for growth of teachers based on actual and projected learner numbers, spending trends and projected cost escalations for COE across the 2024 MTEF. COE projections over the medium term, shift continuously as numbers of staff change and the COE expenditure outcome at the end of the 2024/25 financial year could still change as the MTEF projections are based on the 2024/25 financial year's projections.

Speaker, Part 2. The Western Cape Government is considering some measures in the 2024 Adjusted Estimates and in the finalisation of the 2025 budget. However, the fiscal environment might not allow for the growth in teacher posts needed to fully cater for our growing number of learners, and further details will be tabled during the 2024 Adjusted Estimates and the 2025 Budget. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Hon Minister. I recognise the hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you Speaker and thank you Minister. Speaker, at the end of last month and after presenting the medium-term Budget Policy Statement. The National Minister of Finance told the media that any current funding crisis in Education is self-inflicted. Last week during the Questions for Oral Reply, the Provincial Minister of Education said he

fundamentally disagreed with the National Minister of Finance and he did not believe that this was directed at the Western Cape, but the numbers do not lie, and the Western Cape Education crisis is truly self-inflicted.

Within the Provincial Equitable Share the allocation for the two largest components, being Education and Health, is based on the demand and the need for education and health services in each province. The Education component is 48% of the total Equitable Share that we receive. It is based on the size of school, age, population and the number of learners enrolled in public ordinary schools.

The Provincial Minister of Education claims that the Western Cape Education Department needs to cut 2 407 teacher posts, because the Department is short R3,8 billion in funding over the next three years.

According to the Provincial Education Minister, the R3,8 million in funding is made up as follows:

- R687 million in the current year;
- R1,19 billion next year; and
- R1,92 billion in the 2026/2027 financial year.

We will see how the shortfall is self-inflicted if we look at what was allocated to the Province for Education and what the Provincial Government has done with that money.

In the current financial year we received R62,071 billion as our Provincial Equitable Share. 48% for the Education demand is R29,7 billion, but this Government has allocated R27,4 billion, underfunding Education by R2,3 billion.

In the next financial year R64,7 billion is our Provincial Equitable Share. 48% for the Education demand is R31 billion, but we have allocated only R28,2 billion, underfunding that year by R2,8 billion.

In 2026/2027 we have been allocated R67,587 billion as our Provincial Equitable Share. 48% for the Education demand is R32,4 billion and we have only allocated R29,2 billion, underfunding that year by R3,1 billion.

The Provincial Minister of Education has said he needs to cut 2 407 educator posts because his budget has a R3,8 billion shortfall over the next three years, but this Government has raided over R8 billion allocated to support education in this province over the next three years, and allocated it to other things, that is self-inflicted, and just to point out to the Minister, the number of school children that the allocation was for this current financial year was based on, is R1,267 million ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, your time has expired.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Well, we have R1,229 million ...[Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, your time expired.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you.

The SPEAKER: You will get another opportunity. I recognise the hon member Johnson.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker.

To the hon Minister. With the National Government being responsible for the allocation of the Education Budget it is understandable that many provinces struggle to match the need of their learners. With the Western Cape being one of the fastest growing provinces in the country, one can just assume the stresses of allocations are likely compounded.

What are some of the difficulties, hon Minister, that your Department face in the allocation of these funds, and what is the impact of net migration on funds allocated?

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the hon member Cassiem.

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, the cutting of teachers' posts in the Western Cape come 2025,

will mainly affect under-resourced schools situated in townships and the rural areas. This drastic measure will further impact on the quality of education in these schools, as well as reducing [Inaudible.] of their pass rate, because Quintile 1 to 3 schools strictly rely on funding from the Department for their operations, and which makes it difficult for them to fund the so-called SGB teacher posts and hire more teachers on their own.

The fee-paying schools on the other hand will not be too severely impacted by this move from the Western Cape Education Department as they can still afford to create SGB teacher posts using their own funds and systematically, hon Speaker, this whole conundrum will perpetuate inequality and further erode whatever is left in the quality of education from township and the rural schools.

Hon Speaker, the erosion of the quality of education in these schools will further entrench the stereotype that children who attend former Model C schools are intellectually better than those within schools situated in townships and rural areas, because these schools in townships and rural areas have been robbed of resources to produce quality education by the system and has nothing to do with the intellectual abilities and capabilities of these children.

Having said that, hon Speaker, I would like to know what will the Minister and his Department do to make sure that schools in townships and rural areas get adequate resources in order to produce quality education, and by resources I also mean human resources in the form of teachers? Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Cassiem. I recognise the hon member Christians.

Mr C F CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, we have debated this many, many times and hopefully with all the debates that we are having, that somehow pressure will be put on the Government in order to retain some of these teaching posts.

Somebody from Overberg sent me a message to say that they are losing 117 posts; Mount Pleasant Primary School 10 teachers; Hermanus High eight teachers; Swelihle five teachers, primary school, and we get an influx of learners each year, and now we are reducing teaching posts.

So I hope, with debating this over and over, that Government will look at this and that is why I think the question is now directed at the Minister of Finance not Education, because somehow the Minister and her Department will have to do something in order to detain some of these teaching posts.

Our children are going to suffer and the ACDP is urging this Government to relook at firing teachers. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Speaker.

I want to make the point that I tried to make at the end again.

In the current financial year the Education component of the Provincial Equitable Share is based on a school enrolment of 1 267 000 children. The Western Cape enrolment numbers as at June 2024 was only 1 229 000 children.

So we have been overfunded by 40 000 children despite the 19% growth that she speaks about, but, hon Speaker, while we received 48% of our Provincial Equitable Share in order to provide seminally important education services, we do not allocate 48% of our Equitable Share to Education.

The truth of the matter is that the crisis in the Western Cape Education Department, and in particular the claim that it is so underfunded that it needs to cut 2 407 educator posts next year, is entirely self-inflicted.

In the current financial year the Western Cape Provincial Government has only allocated 46% to Education, creating this crisis. On the other hand in the Eastern Cape the Provincial Government has allocated 49% of its Equitable Share to Education. In Gauteng the Provincial Government has allocated 48,3% to Education. In KwaZulu-Natal the Provincial Government has allocated 48% of its Equitable Share to Education, and in Limpopo the Provincial Government has allocated 51,2% of its Equitable Share to Education.

The education crisis is self-inflicted and the comment by the National Minister

of Finance most certainly applies to the Western Cape.

While all nine provinces, like all National Governments and all Local Governments, struggle with fiscal constraints, it is only the Western Cape that has elected to defund Education to such an extent that it is prepared to slash the number of teacher posts in the province. This is the most uneducated political decision ever taken and it must be reversed.

Last week the Minister of Health and Wellness was at great pains to tiptoe around a question about whether her Department had sacrificed funding for the Western Cape Safety Plan. She claimed that her recollection is that the funding came from the Provincial Revenue Fund.

The Minister was previously the Minister of Finance. She must be aware that the Provincial Revenue Fund is the central fund where all monies that are paid to the Province, including our Equitable Share and our Conditional Grants, are paid into. It was the Premier himself who said in an election debate that he took R1 billion from Education and Health to fund the Safety Plan and that plan has since grown to a R5 billion project.

The current Minister of Provincial Finance must be aware that slashing teacher posts for which the Province receive funding, that is allocated elsewhere, is reckless and irresponsible, and what steps will she take in the Provincial Adjustment Budget to reallocate funds to save teacher jobs?

If she will do nothing then perhaps it is time for the Education component of the Provincial Equitable Share to be paid to provinces only as a Conditional Grant. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Herron. I recognise the hon Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker.

Hon Speaker, I will just quickly start with the budget and Equitable Share part.

So the full Main Budget Equitable Share total is R62 billion and Education in the Main Budget receives R27,42 billion, which translates to that 44,19%, and the National Treasury recommendation in terms of that has been 40%, if my recollection of the norm is correct.

However, what I do want to also say is Health receives R22,52 billion of the Equitable Share in the Western Cape, which amounts to 36,28%.

Now when you look at the Health component in the PES calculation nationally, that component deals with 27%. So when we are looking for where the extra Equitable Share is lying, the extra Equitable Share is for Health and it is because also of things like Goods and Services that have had, for example, medical inflation that is creating an increased pressure on health.

So when you look at the national Provincial Equitable Share formula, when you add up the Education component, which is the 48, plus the Health component which is 27, you will get to that full component being 75% essentially.

So when you count those two Equitable Share portions in the Western Cape budget up, the 44,19% plus the 36,28%, you actually get to a total percentage that the Western Cape Government gives Education and Health combined, to 80,47%, which is almost 6% more than what the national component combines.

So I do understand that it is not 100% exactly the same. However, we also have to take into consideration the pressures that has been on the health system in our province so far.

I do think I know which province the National FinMin might be referring to, but I do not want to throw another colleague of mine from another province under the bus, because that was discussed at the Budget Council. That particular province received some of the COLA money and did not necessarily spend all of the COLA money on education.

That particular Treasury gave that particular Education Department a choice as to what to do with the money, and that particular Education Department in a different province, which is not the Western Cape, actually spent some of their COLA money on Goods and Services, but again, hon Speaker, I do not want to throw a fellow colleague from a different province under the bus. I

think that is something that can possibly even be posed in the National Assembly.

So when you look at the 2021 to 2024 MTEF, and this is now separate to the general pressures within the wages, what we have seen is fiscal consolidation started in 2021 by the National Treasury, and again there was fiscal consolidation in the 2024 Budget, and even though the National Treasury indicated that fiscal consolidation ended in 2023, the carry-through effect of that fiscal consolidation created an R8,4 billion cut on the PES allocation for the Western Cape, and a good example to see when we have to have a conversation about the vertical split on Equitable Share, is the National FinMin actually made a deliberate decision to increase the Local Government Equitable Share for next year to 9,8% of the National Budget, or the national pie component, because one of his key goals is to get it to 10%, with the assumption that, for example, municipalities must fund the 90%.

Now when they say in the budget books the provincial envelope remains the same, that essentially means that the provincial budgets – whether you are now the Western Cape or Gauteng or KwaZulu-Natal, it essentially means that no extra money is going to be sent from the national pie to provinces, and that is essentially what they mean.

Just in terms of some of the difficulties that we face and the in-migration. So – oh.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister, your time has expired.

Hon members, that brings us to the end of Interpellation 1. We move on to Interpellation 2 and I recognise the hon Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Minister Marais.

2. Mr D W Jacobs to ask Ms A J D Marais, Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety:

With regard to the underspending of funds reported in the 2023/24 Annual Report:

(a) What priority areas are considered by her Department when allocating funding and (b) how does her Department ensure that funding is allocated where it is needed?

The MINISTER OF POLICE OVERSIGHT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY:
Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you, hon member Jacobs, for this interpellation.

The Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety has an overall responsibility for oversight over the SAPS in the Western Cape, which means Provincial Commissioner Patekile keeps me updated on the crime strategy and the situation on the ground. On occasion he has agreed to my request to strengthen police numbers in Atlantis, Bishop Lavis and Elsies River.

We are also responsible for the regulation and support of Farm Watches, Neighbourhood Watches, Rural Safety units and K9 units. The only departmental funding that is specifically focused on priority areas is the LEAP allocation.

As publicly communicated that LEAP deployment areas have been reduced from 13 to six to enable high-impact of law enforcement efforts in the high priority areas identified through data. The rest of the Department spending is to improve the overall level of safety and law enforcement of our province's residents. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Speaker. Ja, greetings to all, I greet you all in the name of the [Inaudible.].

Hon Speaker, the 2023/2024 Annual Report states as follows:

- The City of Cape Town received round about R332 million. They spent about R250 million;
- Mossel Bay received about R3 350 000. They spent just over R700 000;
- The West Coast District, they received almost R1,6 million. They also spent just over R500 000; and then
- the Cape Winelands District also close to R1,6 million. They spent about

R170 000.

Hon Speaker, these are some of the examples of budgets for LEAP and K9 crime prevention projects.

The Cape Winelands in particular is of a concern. It is clear that the Cape Winelands have no real appetite for crime prevention. Hon Speaker, the Western Cape is on fire, the Cape Flats is at war.

MEC, the name of our latest victim in Manenberg, her name was [Inaudible], and she was only 17 years old. Yes, 17 years old, and she had dreams just like any other innocent youth that lost their lives through gang violence on the Cape Flats. She had a dream of becoming an engineer.

Hon Speaker, there is saying that goes “the more the merrier”, let us secure the area.

MEC, let us deploy the 3 000 LEAP officers as promised to the people of the Western Cape, because it is the law-abiding citizens that suffer due to this. Hence I am asking the Western Cape Provincial Parliament to make sure we keep those municipalities that continue to underspend their safety and security budgets accountable. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I recognise hon member Walters.

[The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.]

Mr T WALTERS (DA): Hon Speaker, I want to hereby recognise the Western Cape Government's constant commitment to improving community safety and police supervision. I think it needs to be recognised.

The residents of the Western Cape's safety is this House's first priority, and this Government has reflected that priority by making calculated expenditures to meet both short-term and long-term needs.

In addition to holding police officers accountable to the communities they serve, the Western Cape Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety is making further strides to ensuring efficient law enforcement. This entails strengthening supervision mechanisms and boosting transparency so that the public can have confidence that their safety is in good hands.

Investment is focused on high-impact areas, such as broadening the reach of crime prevention programmes, enhancing collaborations between local organisations and the police, and supporting community-based safety projects. By making investments in safer communities this does not only lower crime rates, but also promote an atmosphere of trust and collaboration between the public and law enforcement.

We take an evidence-based strategy that prioritises resource allocation and data-driven tactics. The goal of every rand invested is to make our

communities as safe as possible so that every citizen feel safe both in the streets and in their homes.

To sum up, we are dedicated to creating communities that are safer, everyone in this House, and more resilient by means of efficient oversight, responsible spending and a constant emphasis on enhancing public safety.

Hon Chair, however, it is a start. There is a long road to travel and I would like to ask in relation to the LEAP programme, I would like to know from the Minister the impact of the programme since the deployment of boots on the ground in these high-impact areas? Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I now see the hon member Christians.

Mr C F CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we know that the financial year of municipalities and the Province does not align and that may be the reason of the underspending, but if the Minister can tell us that at the end of the financial year of the municipalities, did they spend the budget allocated to them? So that is the question.

The second thing, hon Deputy Speaker, I have mentioned it last week, the moving from one hotspot to the other. Criminals are so clever these days and

so shrewd, that when one hotspot is under fire, under threat from SAPS or law enforcement agencies, they move it to another base. So they are moving from one area to another, and we saw it happening.

So what is the Minister doing, when you look at your collaboration with SAPS and law enforcement agencies, how do you counter that? Because when Kraaifontein is hot and you identify that as a hotspot, they move to another area. Then it is Bishop Lavis, then it is another area. What are you doing in order to combat that? Because it seems to me that the criminals are winning the battle at the moment. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon member Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

†Manditsho ndithi abameli basiswana sibomvana namadla gusha abazazi imfuno zempula zikalujaca kweli phondo yiyo lonto. [I must say the representatives of black people don't care about those who are poor in this Province.] They are found wanting in respect to the allocation of resources.

As the violent instability is escalating in the working class communities across the province, we must ask ourselves the question, are we directing resources to areas where they are most needed, or are we continuing to follow a flawed and disjointed strategy that fails to meet the demands of our people on the ground?

Hon Deputy Speaker, we are not anti-innovation, we are not anti-technology, but there is no evidence in respect to positive results on the investment to the highly publicised or praised technology, such as Eye in the Sky, the ShotSpotter technology.

While this technology investments may offer some promises, they do not address the basic needs of our people, for instance, in crime hotspot areas such as Khayelitsha †kusekho ingxaki [there is still problems] recently, as we speak here, about 14 cameras in Khayelitsha were not functioning until recently. About 14 cameras in Khayelitsha were not operating until recently. Even when they operate, †i emails zakhona azicendisi azibonakali ziyenza kube nzima abecuphi to investigate.[Even when they operate their emails don't do any help they're not clear, they make it difficult for the detectives to investigate.]

Lastly, †ndiyakucela Mphathiswa [I plead with you Minister] please invest resources on organs of people's power, such as CPF, as well as neighbourhood watches †mazinikwe imal.[must be given money.]

Finally, with speed accelerate the involvement of the South African Police Service in the monitoring of CCTV cameras as part of the integral component of the cooperation agreement. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member Ngqentsu. I see the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Minister, through you, hon Deputy Speaker, one of my biggest concerns is that the underworld is developing and its membership is growing at a fast rate, so the underspending of budgets specifically allocated for safety and security to various municipalities, that sounds alarming.

Hon Deputy Speaker, when safety and security budgets get allocated to municipalities and they underspend while crime escalates, then it becomes the MEC's duty to deal with that municipality and charge the person in charge for negligence.

When the City of Cape Town received almost R332 million and they spend only R250 million while the Cape Metro is labelled the murder capital of South Africa, MEC, you must personally go and lay charges of negligence against J P Smith.

Hon Deputy Speaker, while the Western Cape Government is struggling with the Safety Plan the drug cartels are moving closer and closer, but it is not like if we do not know this.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the drug lords are moving out of Cape Town and they are infiltrating the smaller municipalities. How is it possible that the budget for the outside municipalities is so small, yet it is underspent?

Hon Deputy Speaker, is this an indication of a failed plan, or does it simply mean we never had a proper plan? Because we must never, never forget, hon Deputy Speaker, if we fail to plan, we plan to fail. [Inaudible.], I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member Jacobs. I see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF POLICE OVERSIGHT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you for everyone who participated in this interpellation.

The budget allocations are structured around a new integrated approach to violence prevention and community safety. The allocation of funding takes into consideration the Premier's and my ministerial priorities, direction provided by the Provincial Safety Steering Committee, which comprises of the Western Cape departments, the City of Cape Town officials and SAPS, as well as structured engagements with municipalities, the Community Policing Forum Board, the Safer City partners – that is SAPS and City of Cape Town – and various other stakeholders.

Evidence-based data is used as far as possible to validate or support the funding allocations. What that means is that our Department does not function on emotion or flies by the seat of its pants. We serve the whole of Western Cape society and will continue to do so.

Our clean audit shows that we now know where every cent in our budget goes and that nothing is misappropriated or stolen. It ensures that we continue serving the people of the Western Cape with honesty and to the best of our ability.

On that note, hon member Jacobs, I guess we all saw what your supporters did in Manenberg yesterday. Breaking down infrastructure and causing mayhem. It is clear that whereas to us on this side of the House it is important to build up our communities, there are others, such as the NCC, who specialise in breaking down what has been built up. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister.

Hon members, we will deal with the final interpellation as printed on the Order Paper. I now see the hon Minister Maynier.

3. Mr M K Sayed to ask Mr D J Maynier, Minister of Education:

What (a) are the harmful effects of asbestos in schools and (b) measures is his Department implementing to protect learners and staff against these hazards across the province?

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

I could not help noticing that in the last few days the hon Leader of the Opposition has been fighting the struggle from the steps of the Sydney Opera House [Interjections.] and so I am sure that the House joins me in welcoming the hon Leader of the Opposition back from Down Under. [Interjections.]

Now, hon Deputy Speaker, as the hon member knows, between 1970 and 1985 a large number of schools were built with concrete frame structures with pre-fabricated infill wall panels. Many of these buildings have steel windows and asbestos cement roofs and/or gutters on timber trusses.

While we have relatively small numbers of schools built with inappropriate materials compared to other provinces, we are nonetheless continuing with our commitment to replace these schools over time.

Since 2014 we have replaced 66 schools, some of which include asbestos-containing components. We will continue our programme of replacing in order of the greatest need and within the available budget.

I am of course advised by my Department that in terms of the asbestos abatement regulations contained in *Gazette* number 11196 of 10 November 2020, only broken asbestos components could pose a health and safety risk to learners and staff at our schools, and that is why we encourage all schools to report any broken or damaged infrastructure, including asbestos gutters, downpipes and panels, through our emergency maintenance portal or SEMMIS. This allows the Department to assess the damage and appoint the appropriate

specialist to deal with the maintenance issue.

In the infrastructure component an asbestos containing material, a relevant specialist will be appointed to safely remove the asbestos from the site. The removal of the asbestos is done in strict accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

All asbestos-containing material is removed as per the requirement of the asbestos plan of work for the site, which is first submitted to the Department of Employment and Labour. Removal of asbestos is accompanied by air monitoring that measures the quantity of airborne asbestos fibre per air volume. Swab samples are collected from surfaces in the identified areas to determine if fibres were detected.

I want to encourage of course any member who has any asbestos-related concerns about a particular school, to send the details to my office of course so that the Department can investigate the circumstances. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister. I see the hon member Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

I rise today to hold this Provincial Government to account for its appalling

disregard for the health, safety and well-being of our learners and educators, particularly at the Montana Primary School in Kalksteefontein. The Minister asked for a case, here is a case.

The situation at this school is not just an isolated incident, it is a glaring example of this Provincial Government's negligence, incompetence and utter lack of care for the lives of poor children in our province.

Earlier this month the Official Opposition was approached by concerned parents who have been watching helplessly as their children are subjected to unsafe, degrading conditions. The demolition of the school building and removal of asbestos have left 800 learners crammed into makeshift classrooms, shipping containers, without access to basic amenities like water and toilet facilities.

This is a school in crisis, yet MEC Maynier's Western Cape Education Department has chosen to ignore the dire circumstances. Even more disturbing is the fact that while contractors work on the demolition site asbestos rubble is being disturbed, creating a dangerous environment.

Despite the presence of harmful asbestos dust, neither the children nor the educators are being provided with any form of protective gear. No masks, no PPE. This is not just negligence, it is criminal indifference to the lives of our children. Asbestos exposure can cause life-threatening diseases, but it seems that the WCED and this Government is more concerned with cutting costs, as

we heard from the hon MEC of Finance, who has just left.

Furthermore, the old school building is being vandalised and dismantled in plain sight, adding to the chaos and putting learners at further risk. Whilst contractors are equipped with protective gear to safeguard themselves from the asbestos, the learners and staff who are at far greater risk, are left unprotected.

To date this Provincial Government has utterly failed to provide any clarity or reassurance to the parents, teachers and learners at Montana Primary School.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member. I see the hon member van Wyk.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I have to emphasise that asbestos pose a significant danger to our schools and that fast action is required to safeguard both pupils and staff members.

Historically widely employed in the building construction industry, asbestos is a dangerous material that can cause serious health problems, such as asbestosis and mesothelioma and lung cancer, especially when disturbed during restorations or destruction.

The Western Cape Government has made removing asbestos from our schools an important task because they understand how serious the situation is.

With an emphasis on both obvious and hidden hazards, the Western Cape Education Department has started conducting extensive investigations to find asbestos-containing materials in school buildings. When asbestos is found, the Department makes sure that quick action is taken, including the safe removal of materials, or sealing by qualified experts.

In addition we are putting regular oversight and safety procedures into place in close collaboration with the Department of Public Works and other relevant organisations.

While students are kept safe by avoiding potentially hazardous places, we can perhaps just ask the Minister to explain how school personnel receive training related to asbestos awareness and appropriate handling.

Can the Minister shed some light on the efforts to ensure that learners also know about the dangers of asbestos? Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I see the hon member Christians.

Mr C F CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, I just want to latch on with what I read in the newspaper about the Western Cape Education Department coming under fire at mid-demolition conditions at Montana Primary School in Kalksteefontein.

Now, hon Deputy Speaker, I do not think there is – I do not know, but it seems to me that the planning is not in order, because a grandmother was saying that only afterwards did they supply temporary toilets. She says the conditions are still bad and also you have security issues now, because children are not attending school, because I do not think there is proper record now of children attending school.

So I believe that it is bad planning when you come to demolish the schools with asbestos.

So if the Minister can tell us what is the situation at the current school, Montana in Kalksteenfontein, and is there proper planning? Because it seems to me that the planning is the problem. Children are not going to school, there are not adequate toilet facilities, and thirdly grandmothers are sitting with the children at home. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I note hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Hon Deputy Speaker, I withdrew my name from that speaking list, thanks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see hon member Sayed.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, let me thank the

hon Chairperson of our Standing Committee on Education for also emphasising the health risks with asbestos, and also thank the hon member Christians for his input underlying the challenge at Kalksteenfontein at Montana Primary. He is very passionate and walks the talk with us on issues of education, but we cannot overemphasise the fact that asbestos is a known hazard and prolonged exposure can lead to life-threatening diseases.

Yet again as amplified by the MEC's reply today, this Government's response has been wholly inadequate. While the WCED claims that temporary mobile classrooms are properly equipped, parents and staff have reported disruptions, including water shortages due to vandalism at the school in question. Plumbing work only began, hon Deputy Speaker, after this issue was raised, and I have got the WhatsApp messages in terms of my conversations with officials in the Department, highlighting the Department's lack of preparedness.

MEC Maynier must explain why this unsafe situation has been allowed to continue and he must provide us with clarity in this House as to when the new school will be completed. Parents and learners deserve answers on when they can expect a safe and dignified environment.

We call on MEC Maynier to take immediate action to ensure that full protective measures for both learners and staff exposed to asbestos are put in place; to remove learners from unsafe conditions like shipping containers; to provide adequate sanitation, water and security; to implement a clear timeline for the completion of the new school with regular updates to the parents.

This Democratic Alliance Government's failure to protect our children is a gross injustice and the MEC's inaction is an insult to every child who deserves a safe place to learn. It is time for urgent action.

First the Democratic Alliance wants to fire thousands of teachers as the MEC Herron has pointed out earlier. Then they want to poison pupils. What does this DA have against the children of the Western Cape, especially the poor and working class children? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member Sayed. I see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

I notice the hon Leader of the Opposition has come back from Down Under full of vim and vigour after a relaxing few days out of the country.

Let me assure the hon Leader of the Opposition and members in this House that when it comes to the situation at Montana High School, we have certainly not ignored the situation.

Hon members may know that on 27 November, on a Sunday, a group of individuals came onto the school grounds and vandalised portions of a building that is currently being dismantled, and other infrastructure. Far from ignoring

the situation of course the SAPS were in attendance and assisted our Department in securing the site. The vandalism unfortunately did affect the water supply, but water access has been provided to the staff and to learners, and water supply has been restored.

Claims of learners in shipping containers that do not have toilets are false. Learners are currently being accommodated in a mobile school with the required ablutions as the old school building was not safe. Buildings materials are being removed by contractors according to safety regulations.

We will of course continue to support the school and appeal to the community to report any suspicious activity by criminals in the area and share any information they might have with the South African Police Service.

I also want to assure hon members that when it comes to training of staff on the whole question of dealing with asbestos, we do inform our school staff about how to report and deal with these kinds of incidents, and we encourage all our schools to report any broken or damaged infrastructure, including asbestos gutters, downpipes and panels, through our emergency maintenance portal on SEMMIS, and we do that, hon members, so that the Department can immediately respond and support our schools here in the Western Cape. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister.

That is the end of Interpellations. Please allow me to also indicate that I will ensure that the Report from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is urgently tabled as soon as that is available. [Interjections.]

Hon members, we will deal with Questions for Oral Reply in terms of Rule 202 and the relevant Rules will be applicable. I now see the hon Premier.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

New Question to the Premier:

1. Ms A P Bans to ask Mr A R Winde, Premier:

Regarding lifestyle audits for the current Cabinet members:

(a) How many audits have been completed to date, (b) what findings have emerged from these audits and (c) when will the final report on this process be available?

The PREMIER: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you very much to the hon member Bans for the question.

When I became Premier in 2019, that is the beginning of the last term, one of my most important commitments was to continue and enhance the Western Cape Government's reputation for good, clean governance. I committed then

to full lifestyle audits for myself and my entire Provincial Cabinet and for our respective spouses or life partners, if applicable.

We made this commitment long before National Government made this process mandatory. We did so because we believe that no one should be able to enrich themselves with public funds due to their position.

In a country like ours where corruption at a national level is so prevalent, it is important that we not only make a solemn promise to our residents to act with integrity, but that we back that promise up with action. That is a commitment and a promise that we continue today.

With that in mind I can reply to the House that not only did we start with those entry audits in the start of the previous term five years ago, and now getting to the answer.

- (a) At the end of term lifestyle audits were conducted and completed on 11 members of the Provincial Cabinet, as well as their spouses and/or life partners.
- (b) The results indicate that the lifestyles of the previous Cabinet were found to be commensurate with their incomes and the audits did not identify any potential conflicts of interest on the part of anyone of these 11 Cabinet members or the respective spouses or life partners.

The process found that all Cabinet members lived within their means and did not appear to derive any undue material benefit from their positions. For the Ministers that remain in the Cabinet, these end of term audits become their baselines going forward.

- (c) In addition to the audits, which have been already completed, our auditing service provider have begun the same process on the three new members of the Provincial Cabinet who were sworn in for the first time this year and those audits are almost done. They are currently in process at the moment.

Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the hon member Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let me start by appreciating the response from the Premier. However, I would want to pose the question to the Premier of asking should there be an opportunity to extend such life audits to senior officials of departments, would Premier consider that? Thank you.

The PREMIER: I absolutely will, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see a follow-up from the hon member Van Minnen.

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

If I could ask the hon Premier, through the hon Deputy Speaker, in what way do the Provincial Government processes of conducting lifestyle audits differ from the lately introduced audits performed by other provinces and at national level? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much to the hon member for the question.

As far as I know at a national level we know that the current President in, not the beginning of the last term, but at the end of the term before that in 2018, did make a comment to say in one of the State of the Nation Addresses, that there would be lifestyle audits at national level in the National Cabinet. As far as I am aware that did not happen at all in the previous term and has not happened in the current term as yet.

As far as provinces go. I am aware that the Premier in Gauteng did make a comment that he would have lifestyle audits in place, but I have also subsequently seen a further comment that they are not in place, but I cannot – this is what I have read or seen, there is no process of reporting by provinces, but I think it is something based on the position that our country finds ourselves in, I think it is definitely something that should be mandatory across all

provinces and at a national level.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see no further follow-ups.

Hon members, as agreed to by the House we will now deal with Questions standing over from Thursday, 7 November, and I see the hon Minister Simmers.

Questions standing over from Thursday, 7 November 2024, as agreed to by the House:

2. Mr D G Jacobs to ask Mr T A Simmers, Minister of Infrastructure:

In the light of projects and developments being stalled by extortion and the so-called “construction mafia”:

Whether his Department has taken steps to limit these interferences; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you for the hon member for agreeing to let it stand over until today.

In terms of the hon member’s question. My Department continuously engages with local communities, seeking their support and requests communities to report the perpetrators who block the progress to SAPS. My Department also

reports incidents to law enforcement agencies and actively engages with local communities for their support in crime prevention.

Enhanced security measures have been put in place, including specialised tactical support are also deployed to these sites and we have a follow-up meeting scheduled with the NPA on the cases which we have been monitoring. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I see the hon member Jacobs.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Thank you, hon Minister.

Hon Minister, I just wanted to check with you. So with regards to the other projects that we find that are standing still, is there perhaps a list that the Minister can forward to us so that we can see which of the projects are still hampered by extortion and the construction mafia? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and through you to the hon member.

Indeed there is a list of projects that are most affected by extortion and they are in the Metro. This include projects in the Airport Infills areas as we call it, which we see 729 housing opportunities actually are affected.

Then in the area of the Gugulethu Infills project 571 housing opportunities are still affected. These projects are jointly valued at just under R400 million.

Then there are also some small to medium scale projects that have also been affected in several areas across the Metro as well, hon Deputy Speaker, which includes the Driftsands relocation project, maintenance at TRA5 and 5.1 and TRA6 in Delft, Valhalla Park and the Clarke Primary School, as well as the Ravensmead CDC replacement project, and I will be providing a formal written list to the member as requested, but these are some of the key projects which the hon member must note. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note no further questions. Hon Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thank you very much, MEC.

Given your response, in the affected areas, have there been any arrests and who are the forces who are involved in these extortion enterprises? Thanks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you very much. Through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to the hon member.

Indeed the areas, and I have listed them and I have given them for a specific reason, are areas where so-called community groupings or so-called community

development forums, which are actually just a facade for these criminal bodies, to actually then exercise or seek to exercise extortion through these so-called legalised bodies, hon Deputy Speaker, and which is concerning because sometimes some of these so-called individuals are also sadly linked to local-based political parties, which also seek to practise some form of extortion.

Again, cases have been opened by people that are brave enough, hence we have a follow-up meeting with the NPA, because we have picked up problems in certain instances where the police, who are supposed to be investigating these cases of extortion, are not playing their part, putting at risk those individuals who – the last time I spoke to this House I asked him please send information, we will protect your identity, and they have done that. I need to thank the citizens of the province, but yet the law enforcement and investigative capacity are what is failing them at the moment. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there another question? I see hon member Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): MEC, your response is quite fascinating. Who are these people who are involved in extortion enterprises in communities you have indicated? Do you have names?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Indeed where cases have been opened and hence we are having a follow-up meeting with the NPA, it is because these names were provided by the citizens, again, whose interest are that these projects must go ahead. Hence we want to have this follow-up meeting with the NPA.

Again, those names have been provided in affidavit format through the police. So hence our follow-up engagement with the NPA.

In some instances we have as a department also sought the preventative interdicts on certain sites. Again, the facade of community development forums is what we are picking up. Some of these groupings are well-known. They stem from Mitchells Plain and they have now seeked to evolve even to the area of Eerste River. Hence our preventative interdicts.

So again, this is why we are having a follow-up meeting with the NPA regarding this, because the names are known, also the groupings which they practise under.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see no further follow-ups.

That concludes the first question from those that stood over.

An HON MEMBER: Who are these people?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I again see the Minister, Minister Simmers.

6. Ms A Cassiem to ask Mr T A Simmers, Minister of Infrastructure:

With regard to the fire that broke out in the Taiwan Informal Settlement in Site C, Khayelitsha, on Sunday, 22 October 2024, that destroyed 40 shacks and left 90 people destitute:

(1) Whether any intervention was conducted by his Department to make sure that all those residents – who now remain homeless – found alternative accommodation; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether his Department reached out to those residents to check if any Matric learners were among them; if not, why not; if so, (a) whether arrangements have been made with their schools or with the Western Cape Education Department to make sure that they will not be disadvantaged while writing their final examinations and (b) what those arrangements are?

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Hon Deputy Speaker, again through you to the hon member Cassiem. I do want to thank her for affording opportunity for this question to stand over and I will respond to the first and

second part of the question accordingly.

In terms of the first part, it is that when my Department became aware of the Taiwan fire incident we immediately contacted the City of Cape Town and the National Department of Human Settlements. The reason for this approach is that the immediate emergency response remains the competence of the City of Cape Town's risk disaster management.

The National Department of Human Settlements provides the emergency fire kits as the competency for the provision of emergency kits during times of disaster has been centralised by the National Department of Human Settlements.

The Department was informed by the National Department of Human Settlements that they would attend to the incident on 23 October 2024. However, the Department was also informed that the National Department of Human Settlements has depleted its funds, which would make it difficult for the National Department of Human Settlements to actually intervene in this matter.

The second part of your question, hon member, through you, hon Deputy Speaker. It is that the Department of Education manages learners who are affected during school examinations as they have full competence and capacity to coordinate school arrangements. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there any follow-up from hon member Cassiem?
I see hon member Cassiem.

Ms A CASSIEM (ANC): Thank you very much and thank you to the Minister for the response.

If I could just ask, in line with the recent incidents in the province where shacks continue to burn down in informal settlements, I would like to know if this Department is still continuing with its dedensification efforts of congested informal settlements, which were promised during the height of COVID-19 pandemic, but never materialised? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I note the Minister.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Thank you. Through you, hon Deputy Speaker, to the hon member.

Indeed there is an informal settlement platform where all 25 municipalities do participate. Again, there is a ISUPG business plan again which is funded through the respective grant. Part of that focus is of course on dedensifying highly populated informal settlements.

The problem of course is we saw well over 1 000 new informal settlements being formed over the COVID period, which the hon member alludes to. The problem that we have is the Western Cape is the only province where there is

a database of all of its informal settlements. The oldest one is well over 40 years and the latest one is just under two weeks old.

The problem is we see many of these new informal settlements actually making demands which they then seek to do marches, and I mean we recently had a march again around the municipal areas, and the problem is they then interfere with the planning processes to such an extent that I have engaged the National Minister of Human Settlements, because they seem to entertain these newfound informal settlement areas at the expense of those that have been waiting very, very long.

So as a Provincial Government, as a department, we are committed to the dedensification programme, but the problem is those that are demanding services now versus those that have legally been waiting, and that is the big problem in terms of informal settlement upgrading as well.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I see no further follow-ups in this regard.

We will now deal with New Questions as printed on the Order Paper, and again I see the Minister.

New Questions

2. Mr D G Jacobs to ask Mr T A Simmers, Minister of Infrastructure:

*What is the current status of the Manenberg School of Skills Project and
(b) what issues are stalling this project?*

†Die MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUKTUUR: Die agb lid Jacobs is baie besig.
[The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: The hon member Jacobs is very
busy.] Hon Deputy Speaker, through you to the hon member.

In terms of the (a) part of the member's question. The letter of appointment for the successful contractor, and their name I can point out, is Fury Point (Pty) Ltd, was issued on 12 September 2024. The contractor is currently on site and commencing with construction work.

In terms of the (b) part. There are currently no issues stalling this project.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Jacobs, is there any follow-up question?

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Yes, yes, thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may go ahead.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Minister. Hon Deputy Speaker, through you.

Minister, I just wanted to check here, you know, the people of Manenberg has been waiting for the School of Skills like they have been waiting for the G F Jooste Hospital. Is there a specific timeline for this project to commence?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE: Again, hon member, it is quite fitting that the question relates to Manenberg, quite fitting.

Hon member, I can provide you with a written timeline, because from the moment that the contractors actually established site and construction work has commenced, there is a clear timeline because built into our contract with the main contractor, there are specific milestones which they need to accomplish, because we do have a competent team once the supply chain process has been concluded, and actually we do hold our main contractors accountable and penalties are built into the contract if they do not perform.

So the hon member can rest assured and he can convey this message to the citizens in Manenberg, it is that what we have committed to we will deliver on schedule, again, but we request that political parties stay off these sites, that the community does not interject, that extortion attempts are not attempted on this site, because we do want to stay on track.

We can only manage what is within our control, but the biggest role-player and partner for the success of this contract is the community of Manenberg

themselves. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I see no further follow-ups.

I now see the hon Minister, Dr Meyer.

3. Mr D G Jacobs to ask Dr I H Meyer, Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism:

Whether he has any initiatives to educate farmers on the regulations and laws pertaining to evictions; if so, what are the relevant details?

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: Dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker, en baie dankie aan die agb lid Jacobs, baie dankie vir u vraag.

[The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the hon member Jacobs for your question.]

†Soos die ...[Onvoltooid.] [Tussenwerpsels.]

[As the ... [Incomplete.] [Interjections.]]

I am sorry that my electricity is more powerful than that of Eskom.

[Interjections.] NERSA must take note. There is power in the House.

[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr Meyer, please proceed.

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: Dankie aan die agb Jacobs vir die vraag, en soos die Leier van Regeerkunde nou gesê het, u was baie aktief, ons waardeer dit dat u vrae vra, want op daardie wyse hou u ons rekenpligtig en verantwoordelik, want rekenpligtigheid en verantwoordelikheid is een van die ~~{Onhoorbaar}~~ funderings en die basiese onderbou van ons regeerkunde-argitektuur.

So baie dankie aan agb lid Jacobs, maar ook baie dankie vir hierdie vraag.

Die uitsetting van landbouwerkers en familieledede wat op plase woon en werk is die mandaat van die Nasionale Departement van Landbou, Grondhervorming en Landelike Ontwikkeling. Prosesse om uitsettings beide wettig en onwettig te hanteer, word geaktiveer en bestuur deur die betrokke eenheid vir verblyf-implementeringshervorming van die Nasionale Departement om bystand met die uitsettingsverrigtinge te verseker, deur ook regsbystand, sowel as die herstel van die diens aan die inwoners van die gesinne te fasiliteer.

Hierdie verblyfsregeenheid sal dan ook klaers na die Regshulpkantore verwys vir regsbystand indien hulle dit vereis. Die eenheid verskaf ook dan opleiding aan amptenare, landbouwerkers en die produsente oor die Wet op die uitbreiding van sekerheid vir verblyf.

Verskeie regsprosesse uit die aard van die saak, agb lid Jacobs, moet gevolg word en voltooi word. Dit wil sê bemiddeling vir vriendskaplike oplossing en toepassing van hofverrigtinge deur die relevante ESTA-wetgewing.

Die Landelike Ontwikkelingsprogram binne die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Landbou - want dit help nie ek kom hier en sê dit is Nasionaal se mandaat, maar dit is my plaaswerkers in die Wes-Kaap nie - en daarom het die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Landbou ook dit sy erns gemaak en ons het ook 10 arbeidsregte- en verantwoordelikeidessies gereël, want die vraag was wat doen ons?

Ons het daardie sessies gereël, want arbeidsregte in die land moet gerespekteer word. Hierdie kant van die Huis en ook my

[The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you to the honourable Jacobs for the question, and as the Leader of Governance has said, you were very active, we appreciate it that you ask questions because in that way you keep us accountable and responsible, because accountability and responsibility is one of the foundations and basic substructures of our governance architecture.

So thank you to the honorable member Jacobs, but also thank you for this question.

The eviction of agricultural workers and family members living and working on farms is the mandate of the National Department of Agriculture, Land

Reform and Rural Development. Processes to handle evictions both legally and illegally, are activated and managed by the relevant unit for accommodation implementation reform of the National Department to ensure support with the eviction activities, by facilitating also legal support as well as the repair of the service to the members of families.

This occupational rights unit will then also refer complainants to the legal aid offices for legal support should they require it. The unit also provides training to officials, agricultural workers and the producers on the act on the extension of surety for occupation.

Various legal processes naturally have to be followed, hon member Jacobs, and be completed. That means mediation for amicable solution and application of court proceedings by the relevant ESTA legislation.

The Rural Development programme with in the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, it does not help that I come here and say it is national's mandate, but it is my farmworkers in the Western Cape, and therefore the Western Cape Department of Agriculture takes it seriously and we have arranged 10 labour rights and responsibility sessions, because the question was, what are we doing?

We have organized those sessions, because labour rights in the country should be respected. This side of the House and also my] GNU partners are now supporting the principle of the rule of law, and legality and constitutionalism,

and I am so happy that we have now found partners in the rule of law, and unlike Mr Zuma, MK, who believes in the rule of lawyers. This is the rule of law and not the rule of lawyers.

That is why Mr Zuma has for 20 years been using Stalingrad and not applying the rule of law, and so for us it is important to continue to assist and educate the farm workers about their rights, and I am so happy that we will continue to do that, †want hierdie sessies neem ook dan die vorm aan van werksinkels wat ons hou, opleidingsessies van landbouwerkers, ook hulle toesighouers, ook die produsente, maar ook die Menslike Hulpbronne-afdelings van die verskillende plase, hulle word ook opgelei oor wat is die regte van mense, sodat mense nie onnodig uitgesit word nie, want ons moet ons arbeidsmag beskerm.

Soos die agb lid Jacobs weet is 17% van alle mense wat in die Wes-Kaap werksaam is, werksaam in die landbousektor. So jou vraag is relevant. Ons intensies is eerlik en gefokus om ons mense te help, maar as die agb lid enigsins weet van enige mense wat uitgesit word buite die raamwerk van die wetgewing, moet hy daardie inligting onmiddellik onder my aandag bring, en ek sal bitter graag dit wil opvolg, dit is my mandaat, want ek moet agri-werkers in die provinsie beskerm.

Benewens die 236 000 agri-werkers wat ons hier in die Wes-Kaap het, het ons nog 250 000 werkers in die agri-prosessering en dit is werklik substantief dat ons kyk na die verblyfreg van ons agri-werkers.

Daarom is die Menslike Hulpbronne-bestuurders van die verskillende plase hier in die Wes-Kaap opgelei oor hoe hierdie goed moet werk, maar, agb lid Jacobs, ek dink u kan my sien, u wil my graag sien, ons het ook 'n boekie uitgebring van die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Landbou. Dit staan:

“Werk saam, 'n kitsgids vir landbouwerkers.”

En een van die hoofstukke in hierdie boek handel oor ESTA en die wetgewing. Die vraag is wie word deur ESTA-wet beskerm, wie mag uitgesit word en wie mag nie uitgesit word nie, en wat is die omstandighede, en wanneer is uitsetting wettig? Daardie inligting gebruik ons deur middel van werksinkels, en as u asseblief vir my wil help om ook van hierdie boekies in u kiesafdeling te versprei sodat ons mense se regte kan beskerm, want ons glo aan die oppergesag van die reg, ons glo in die regstaat, ons glo in die konstitusionele demokrasie, maar ons glo ook in die waardigheid van ons agri-werkers, en ek is baie bly dat lede van hierdie Huis, [because these sessions then also take on the form of workshops, training sessions of agricultural workers, also their supervisors, also the producers, but also the human resources divisions of the different farms, they are also trained as to what the rights are of people, so that people are not evicted unnecessarily, because we have to protect our labour force.

As the honorable member Jacobs knows, of all people working in the Western Cape, are working in the agricultural sector. So your question is relevant. Our

intentions are honest and focused to assist our people, but if the honorable member knows about any people that are evicted outside the framework of the legislation, he must immediately bring that information to my attention, and I would really like to follow it up, it is my mandate, because I must protect agri workers in the province.

Apart from the 236 000 agri workers that we have here in the Western Cape, we have another 250 000 workers in the agri processing and it is really substantive that we look at the occupational right of our agri workers.

Therefore the human resources managers of the various farms here in the Western Cape are trained on how these things have to work well, but, hon member Jacobs, I think you can see me, you would like to see me, we have also published a booklet of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture. It says:

“Work together, a quick guide for agricultural workers”

And one of the chapters of this book deals with ESTA and the legislation. The question is who is protected by the ESTA Act, who may be evicted, and who may not be evicted, and what are the circumstances, and when is eviction legal? That information we use through workshops, and if you please would like to help me to also distribute these booklets in your constituency so that we can protect our people’s rights, because we believe in the supremacy of the law, we believe in the legal state, we believe in the constitutional democracy, but we also believe in the dignity of our agri workers, and I am very pleased that members of this House,] they are members of this House, like I, I am

responsible for the protection of the labour laws. I call on you and hon member Jacobs to please assist me in providing dignity to our farm workers.

†Ook, agb lid Jacobs, hierdie sessies van die opleiding, want u vra wat doen ons, ons doen opleiding en hierdie sessies fokus ook op uitsettings en die ESTA-wet. Die program het dan ook addisionele inligtingsessies oor uitsettings wat gefasiliteer word deur aanbiedings, ook regshulp van die Departement en ook deur kollegas wat onlangs bewus geword het van die Agri Prestige Werkerforum. Hulle is ook my adviseurs en binnekort ontmoet ek hulle by Leeuwenhof waar die Premier ook toegelaat het dat ons die agri-werkers daar kan sien, en by daardie vergadering vra ek vir hulle om sulke kwessies soos hierdie onder my aandag te bring, en wanneer dit onder my aandag gebring is, het ek 'n eenheid Landelike Ontwikkeling in die Departement van Landbou. Daardie persone stuur ek dan uit na die plaas toe, na die gevalle toe waar daar moeilikheid is, en dan sal ons die nodige intervensies daar vestig, want daar is baie duidelike riglyne, byvoorbeeld wie mag nie uitgesit word nie?

'n Langtermyn bewoner wat langer as 10 agtereenvolgende jare op 'n plaas woon met die toestemming van die eienaar en/of persoon in beheer, en wie ouer is as 60 jaar, mag nie uitgesit word nie; of 'n langtermyn bewoner wat langer as 10 agtereenvolgende jare op 'n plaas woon met die toestemming van die eienaar en/of persoon in beheer, en wie medies ongeskik verklaar is terwyl hy of sy vir die grondeienaar gewerk het.

So dankie, agb lid Jacobs, ek het omvattend geantwoord, maar, agb

Adjunkspeaker, indien daar nog vrae is het my agb lede van die Kabinet my opdrag gegee om gereed te staan sou daar verdere vrae wees, en die agb Minister van Kultuursake en Sport, hy sê terwyl ek staan kan ek maar bly staan. [Also, hon member Jacobs, these sessions of the training, as you ask what we do, we do training and these sessions also focus on evictions and the ESTA Act. The programme then also has additional information sessions on evictions that are facilitated by presentations, also illegal aid of the Department and also by colleagues who have recently become aware of the Agri Prestige Workers Forum. They are also my advisors and soon I will meet them at Leeuwenhof where the Premier also allowed that we can see the agri workers there, and at this meeting I ask them to bring issues such as these to my attention, and when it was brought to my attention, I have a division Rural Development in the Department of Agriculture. Those persons I then send to the farm, to the cases where there is trouble, and then we will establish the necessary interventions there, because there are very clear guidelines, for example who may not be evicted?

A long-term inhabitant who has been living on a farm 10 years consecutively with the consent of the owner and/or person in charge, and who is older than 60 years, may not be evicted; or a long-term inhabitant living on a farm for longer than 10 consecutive years with the consent of the owner and/or person in charge, and who has been declared medically unfit while he or she worked for the land owner.

So thank you, hon member Jacobs, I have replied comprehensively, but, hon

Deputy Seaker, if there are more questions my hon members of the Cabinet instructed me to be ready should there be further questions, and the hon Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, he says that while I'm standing I may as well keep standing.]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Agb lid Jacobs, is daar enige opvolgvraag?

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Jacobs, is there any follow-up question?]

†Mnr D G JACOBS (NCC): Ja, dankie, dankie, agb *Deputy Speaker*.

Dankie, agb Minister, daai was 'n baie ordentlike antwoord, maar ek wil net vir Minister gou sê, Minister het gepraat mos nou van nasionaal en almal die goeters, maar nou wanneer dit kom by 'n *crime*, agb Minister, dan kan ons mos nou nie, daar is mos nou nie 'n *national crime* en 'n *provincial crime* en 'n *local crime* nie, 'n *crime* is mos nou 'n *crime*.

Die Wet, nie ek nie, nie Minister nie, die Wet en die Konstitusie sê dat net 'n *competent court of law* kan 'n *order* gee dat mense uitgesit kan word.

So my vraag aan Minister, want ek het nou gehoor Minister praat nou van Minister en die Kabinet wat vir Minister wil help en dit vir my klink baie, baie, baie goed, wil ek net vra, agb Minister, ek is baie buite op die plase en ek sien wat die boere doen met ons mense. As ons afkom op so 'n geval, kan ek maar vir Minister of diegene wat in die Kabinet is, kan ons julle maar kontak sodat

julle vir ons kan kom help? [Tussenwerpsels.]

[Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Yes, thank you hon Deputy Speaker.

Thank you, hon Minister, that was a very decent reply, but I just want to quickly say to the Minister, Minister spoke now of national and all those things, but now when it comes to a crime, hon Minister, then we now cannot, there is now of course not a national crime and a provincial crime and a local crime, a crime is a crime.

The law, not I, not the Minister, the law and the Constitution say that only a competent court of law can give an order that people can be evicted.

So my question to the Minister, because I have now heard Minister speaks of Minister, and the Cabinet that wants to help Minister, and it sounds to me very, very good, I just want to ask, hon Minister, I am often out on the farms and I see what the farmers do to our people. If we find such a case, can I contact Minister or those in the Cabinet, can we contact you so that you can come and help us? [Interjections.]]

†Die ADJUNKSPEAKER: Dr Meyer, ek herken u.

[The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr Meyer, I recognise you.]

†n AGB LID: Ons het 19 uitsettings. [Tussenwerpsels.]

[An HON MEMBER: We have 19 evictions. [Interjections.]]

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: Agb Adjunkspeaker, ek moet nou eers tot verhaal kom nadat my geliefde kollega 'n interjeksie gehad het. So deur u na haar toe, dankie vir die humoristiese moment, want dit is spanningsvol in hierdie Parlement. Ons het die humor nodig.

Agb lid Jacobs, baie dankie vir u opvolgvraag. U is absoluut korrek. Hier is een sin wat ek nie gelees het nie en u het daarna verwys, so ek wil graag op bladsy 17 hierna verwys:

“'n Uitsetting is slegs wettig indien dit ingevolge 'n hofbevel of 'n uitsettingsbevel geskied.”

So u is absoluut korrek, en sou daar enige sulke aktiwiteite gebeur wat onwettig is en u het daardie dokumentasie, al is dit selfs net 'n *allegation*, ek gaan nie nou vir u sê, “Maar bring die feite nie.” Ek stuur my amptenaar en gaan stel die feite vas. Ek het 'n metodologie in my Departement, dit staan bekend as *BTOR*, *back to office report*. Amptenare moet uitgaan en vir my 'n *back to office report* gee oor wat gaan daar aan, en laaste is dit twee bladsye, vertel u verhaal wat daar gebeur op die plaas en 'n aanbeveling aan die Minister, watter aksies moet hy uitvoer.

Uit die aard van die saak het ek ook met die kommersiële landbou geskakel. Hulle is deeglik bewus en hulle het ook 'n maatreël in plek gestel dat geen een van hulle lede mag aan sulke onwettige aktiwiteite deelneem nie, maar dit is

nie my taak om te ontken wat hier gebeur nie. My taak is ook nie om te ontken dat daar sulke gevalle is nie.

U is 'n openbare verteenwoordiger, u is 'n lid van hierdie Huis, hierdie is die beste Parlement in Suid-Afrika, en u sal nie sulke stories net hier bring nie, en daarom sal ek groot waardering hê as u daardie sake onder my aandag bring en, agb lid Jacobs, ek gee sommer nou vir u my selnommer, want u is nou my kollega in hierdie Huis. My nommer is 083 561 0006. U kan my 'n WhatsApp stuur en ek antwoord u binne 24-uur soos die Leier van die Amptelike Opposisie gister ervaar het. Binne 24-uur het ek hom geantwoord, [THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, I have to first get to my senses after my beloved colleague had an interjection. So through you to her, thank you for the humourous moment, because it is stressful in this Parliament. We need humour.

Hon member Jacobs, thank you for your follow-up question. You are absolutely correct. Here is one sentence that I have not read and you have referred to it, so I would like to refer to this on page 17:

“An eviction is only legal if done in terms of a court order or an eviction order.”

So you are absolutely correct, and should any such activities happen which are illegal and you have that documentation, even if it is only an allegation, I'm

not going to say to you “But bring me the facts.” I send my official and go and determine the facts. I have a methodology in my Department, it is known as BTOR, back to office report. Officials have to go out and give me a back to office report about what is going on there, and lastly it is two pages, tell your story about what happens there on the farm, and a recommendation to the Minister, which actions should he execute.

Obviously I have also liased with the commercial agriculture. They are well aware and have also put a measure in place that none of their members may participate in such illegal activities, but it is not my task to deny what is happening here. My task is also not to deny that there are such cases.

You are a public representative, you are a member of this House, this is the best Parliament in South Africa, and you will not just bring such stories here, and therefore I will have great appreciation if you would bring those matters to my attention, and hon member Jacobs, I give you my cell numbr right now, because you are now my colleague in this House. My number is 083 561 0006. You can send me a WhatsApp and I will reply to you within 24 hours as the Leader of the Official Opposition experienced yesterday. Within 24 hours I have answered him,] because we believe in accountability. You are a member of this House, it does not matter what your political affiliation is. I believe in democracy, I believe in serve in leadership. [Interjections.]

So you have my number, hon member, and I only have one number, unlike some of the members here in this House, [Interjections.] especially on that side. I

have one wife and one number. [Interjections.] It is part of the answer. Those that have four, I am worried. I have one wife and one phone, and, hon member Jacobs, I repeat also for you in German, null, acht, drei, fünf, sechs, eins, null, null, sechs. That is my number, so you can call me. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Minister. I see the hon member Masipa.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Thank you. Through you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Hon Minister, †my Afrikaans data is op [my Afrikaans data has run out,] so you might have answered the question, so if I repeat what you have already answered, please let me know, I will stop.

Regarding the principle of the rule of law as it relates to the implementation of Extension of Security of Tenure (ESTA) on farms, how is the Department working with the National Department of Land Reform and Rural Development to ensure that all role players, not only farm workers, are educated around ESTA? Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the Minister.

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: Dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker.

Toe ek hier in hierdie Kabinet aangestel is het ek 'n kontrak onderteken met die Premier dat ek gaan Engels praat Maandag, Dinsdag en Vrydag. Vandag is Donderdag, so ek praat Afrikaans.

Agb voorsitter van die Staande Komitee, die vraag is hoe werk ons saam in [The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

When I was appointed in this Cabinet I signed a contract with the Premier that I will speak English on Monday, Tuesday and Friday. Today is Thursday, so I speak Afrikaans.

Hon Chairman of the Standing Committee the question is how do we work together in] the broader context of the National Government, the role of other departments? How are we working together?

Hon member Masipa, in this book here are the following departments that we work with and cooperate with on the implementation in the context of the principles of this law:

- I cooperate with the Department of Home Affairs because you deal with documentation.
- I cooperate very importantly with the Department of Labour because it deals with contracts, salaries, †verlof, werkloosheidsversekering, inspeksies en al die goed [leave, unemployment insurance, inspections

and all the things.]

- I also cooperate with the National Department specifically for die wet op die uitbreiding van sekerheid vir verblyfreg [on the act on the extension of security for occupational right.]
- My own Department obviously, together with the rest must cooperate.
- I also cooperate with my colleague, the Minister of Police Oversight and Community Safety, Minister Anroux Marais, because if there is an illegal activity I have to report it also to her so that she can also intervene, because she also looks at rural safety. We work closely together.

I am so happy some of you referred to the whole-of-government approach, working together vertically and horizontally. So that cooperation happens.

To be more practical, hon member Noko Masipa, in my various districts I have [Inaudible] and advising officers. I also have regional offices. So the first point of duty is to contact my regional manager and say, “Please go and look what is happening there.”

- Also the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport.
- Also the Department of Health, because if somebody has been evicted at night, it is raining, it is cold, there are children, people can get sick, the Department of Health is always concerned about the health, like all of us should be.
- Also the Department of Local Government, because if such cases are happening normally people go to the Thusong Centre, that falls under

Minister Bredell, of the various municipalities. If these things happen, Disaster Management comes on board, the municipality must come on board. We cannot say it is nothing to do with me. If it happens in your area of jurisdiction you, as a Mayor, must see what is it that you can do.

- Also the Department of Social Development and other municipalities.
- CCMA and all of these.

I would like to refer it to SASSA, but after listening to this debate in this House from hon Minister Londt, I do not know if I shall refer such matters to SASSA because it is in complete shambles, disarray, and I will rather refer that particular matter to hon Lekker because she has more compassion to deal with people than SASSA.

An HON MEMBER: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: ...if I shall refer such matters to SASSA because it is in ...[Interjections.] complete shambles, disarray, and I will rather ...[Interjection.]

† 'n AGBARE LID: Sies, man!

[An HON MEMBER: Siss, man!]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: ...refer that particular matter to hon Lekker because she has more compassion to deal with people than SASSA. [Laughter.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thank you very much. Whilst humour is important, a little bit, but it must not be used to escape answering questions. Here is my question †uyadwaba man ingxaki yakho. [your problem is you're sad]. Here is my question, hon MEC, and please respond to the question. Who is running those education programmes and when was the last education programme in respect to this question? As you indicated that there are stakeholders involved, to what extent is organised labour involved and please give us the names of those unions involved in this process. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before the hon Minister responds, hon members, I would want to remind the hon members that it is one follow-up question. I have noted three questions in that particular follow-up. I will allow the hon Minister to respond, but also remind the hon members that as usual, translation services are available on Microsoft Teams, as well as in the House on the various channels. I see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, I take your advice and your counsel on this matter. You have said there are numerous questions; there should be one follow-up question. I am now responding to the one follow-up question which the hon member asked. Is the commercial agriculture involved: the answer is

yes.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I did not ask that question. I have not ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot dictate to the response, but I can note that there is one follow-up question remaining. So, I will allow hon member Ngqentsu to ask that follow-up.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): The question. I know that he represents the commercial farmers. The question was not about commercial farmers, it was about trade unions involved in the training initiative. Thanks.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: All of these stakeholders are involved, including labour unions and I will look for a list of the last workshops that were conducted because we normally have an attendance register. I am very happy, hon Deputy Speaker, to submit it to you. I cannot guarantee that they will always attend, but they get invited.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, as per our parliamentary Rules, further follow-up questions can also be submitted in writing. We have now dealt with 60% of our time for questions and we will proceed. I again see the hon Minister, Dr Meyer.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Hon Deputy Speaker, can you ...[Interjections.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Who is our follow-up?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: ...can you please ...[Interjections.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): ...follow-up?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Yes, do not worry. [Laughter.] I will come there ...[Inaudible.] later. Hon Deputy Speaker, can you rule the hon Minister of Local Government out of order. He said I must take the rest of the 40% that is remaining. [Laughter.] I do not know whether that has been accepted by the House ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will ...[Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND

TOURISM: ...or whether that is merely a suggestion.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: I am joking.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will have to bring a substantive motion, but hon Minister, in terms of the Rules, we are dealing, hon members, with Question 4 based on the new questions. The hon Minister has been noted and that question was posed by hon member Christians. So, I will again note the hon Minister for reply.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker, and I want to thank hon member Christians for the question. If I answer very comprehensively, hon Deputy Speaker, it is because I miss the hon members. I was not here last week, so I missed them. So, I'll answer a very comprehensive response because it is also part of transferring skills ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: ...comprehensive. We are just involved.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Sir, you are now invited to the next training course, through the hon Deputy Speaker. You are invited to the next training course. If the hon Deputy Speaker can just focus. [Laughter.] He is also invited to my training course. [Laughter.]

An HON MEMBER: So, you want more stakeholders?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will request that you proceed to answer the question. [Interjections.]

†Die MINISTER VAN LANDBOU, EKONOMIESE ONTWIKKELING EN TOERISME: *Okay*. Agb Deputy Speaker, hier is 'n baie belangrike vraag deur agb Christians, rondom die verbod op die uitvoere van vrugte en groente van Suid-Afrika na Namibië en Botswana, en ek wil die agb lid werklik bedank want hierdie is ook een van my pynlike ervarings wat ek die afgelope twee jaar gehad het.

†So, om direk te antwoord. The hon member must listen carefully so that you can now know what is being answered. †Die invoerbepelkings wat Namibië en Botswana ingestel het, het gemengde uitwerking gehad op die landbousektor van die Wes-Kaap. Ten spyte van hierdie uitdagings, het die Wes-Kaap 'n groei van 11% in primêre landbou-uitvoere gehad in die jaar 2023. Met ander woorde, verlede jaar, en R66,9-miljard bereik het.

In other words, R66,9-billion in 2023, †terwyl Suid-Afrika se algehele uitvoer met 14% toegeneem het tot omtrent so R136-*billion*. So, in 2023, exports of South Africa to both Botswana and Namibia grew by 14% to R136-billion. Specifically, hon Deputy Speaker, †landbou-uitvoere vanaf die Wes-Kaap na Namibië en Botswana, ons onmiddellike bure, het onderskeidelik met 15% en

41%, dit is Botswana, gegroei. In die geval van Namibië was ons uitvoere omtrent so R633-miljoen en Botswana R335,9-miljoen.

†Let wel, agb Adjunkspeaker en agb Christians, hierdie syfers volg op 'n drastiese afname in ons uitvoere toe spesifieke groente en sitrusvrugte verban was om uitgevoer te word na Namibië en Botswana. Dit het werklik ons negatief beïnvloed hier in die Wes-Kaap en uitvoere na Namibië het byvoorbeeld 'n 26% daling gehad in die jaar 2022. Die vorige syfers het ek verwys na 2023. Ek praat nou van 'n afname in die uitvoere van 2022.

[The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Okay. Hon Deputy Speaker, here is a very important question by the hon Christians, around the embargo on the export of fruit and vegetables from South Africa to Namibia and Botswana, and I want to really thank the hon member because this is also one of my painful experiences I have had the past two years.

So, to reply directly. The hon member must listen carefully so that you can now know what is being answered. The import restrictions that Namibia and Botswana introduced had a mixed affect on the agricultural sector of the Western Cape. In spite of these challenges, the Western Cape had growth of 11% in primary agricultural exports in the year 2023. In other words, last year, and reached R66,9 billion.

In other words, R66,9-billion in 2023, while South Africa's total export had increased by 14% to about R136 billion. So, in 2023, exports of South Africa

to both Botswana and Namibia grew by 14% to R136 billion. Specifically, hon Deputy Speaker, agricultural exports from the Western Cape to Namibia and Botswana, our immediate neighbours, grew by respectively 15% and 41%, that is Botswana. In the case of Namibia our exports were about R633 million and Botswana R335,9 million.

Please note, hon Deputy Speaker and hon Christians, these figures follow on a drastic decrease in our exports when specific vegetables and citrus were banned to be exported to Namibia and Botswana. It really impacted us negatively here in the Western Cape and exports to Namibia for example had a decrease of 26% in the year 2022. The previous figures I referred to were 2023. I'm now speaking of a decrease in the exports of 2022.]

A 26% decline in exports of fruit and vegetables from the Western Cape to Namibia and an 8% decline in our exports to Botswana.

That is why I am extremely happy that there is a new government, Mr Dave, in Botswana. Things are changing. †So, en dit het herstel, agb Christians. Dit het met 59% herstel in 2023. Die Wes-Kaap se uitvoer vrugte na Botswana het ook in 2022 met 16% afgeneem, maar het in die jaar 2023 met 65% teruggespring tot R191,5-miljoen. Daar was ook geringe afnames. Dit is waargeneem in die uitvoere na Namibië, vrugte soos 0,02%.

†Maar agb Deputy Speaker, waarom was ek gestres en ongelukkig? Wanneer jy in besigheid is, is daar beginsels van sekerheid. [So, and it recovered hon

Christians. It recovered by 59% in 2023. The Western Cape's export of fruit to Botswana also decreased by 16% in 2022, but in the year 2023 it recovered by 65% to R191,5 million. There were also slight decreases. It has been noted in the exports to Namibia, fruit like 0,02%.

But Deputy Speaker, why was I stressed and unhappy? When you are in business, there are principles of security.] In English, we speak about business predictability. So, you plant to harvest, packhouse, cold storage, transport, harbour, logistics. That is a value chain. Normally, when you plant you have already an export market in mind. Suddenly, the Government of Namibia and the Government of Botswana unilaterally decided they close the borders.

This is not the way to treat your borders, your neighbours, especially if you are a member of SACU, the Southern African Customs Union. In fact, the oldest customs union in the world. Here, we are neighbours and here we have neighbours: boom, they close the borders. Within SACU, there are dispute mechanisms. If you do not like the size of the apple, the colour of the orange, there are dispute mechanisms. Closing the borders is not an option.

So, I am happy to recommend to the hon Christians, to request the hon member Noko in my Standing Committee. I would highly recommend that you undertake a study tour to both Namibia and Botswana, and also meet the people in the industry, since we have a new government that is more fair, more reasonable, more knowledgeable, and more open in Botswana. I recommend it. Hon member, you can go with. Please, you cannot just fly to Canada and

places like that. [Interjections.] So, please, I recommend that you go. Please, go. Love your neighbour, love Africa. That is the job.

†Ook, agb Christians, die invoerbeperkings wat deur Namibië en Botswana ingestel is, vir beide groente en sitrusvrugte, geaffekteer was met tussenposes, tussen 2021 en 2024, hier waar ons nou is, maar daar was tussenposes waar ons kon uitvoer maar dit was 'n bakleiery. Ek sit nou met 'n probleem, agb Adjunkspeaker. Die varkboere kan nou nie uitvoer na Namibië toe nie. Ek kry elke dag 'n brief en dit is werklik ontstellend oor die behandeling, maar ons is 'n regering en 'n regering beteken: [Also, hon Christians, the import restrictions introduced by Namibia and Botswana for both vegetables and citrus fruit, affected by intervals, between 2021 and 2024, here where we are now, but there were intervals where we could export but it was a fight. I now have a problem, hon Deputy Speaker. The pig farmers cannot now export to Namibia. I get a letter every day and it is really upsetting about the treatment, but we are a government and a government means:] deal with complexities and we are dealing with the complexities.

†So, agb Christians, die verbod het die Suid-Afrikaanse Regering dan ook onder leiding van die Nasionale Departement ook aangespoor om meer aktief betrokke te raak in gesprekke en in handelsamewerking te verbeter en ook oplossings te kry. Dit is werklik vir my skokkend dat ons buurlande ook 'n verbod geplaas het op ons sitrus, en dit is belangrik, agbare. Soos u weet, Suid-Afrika is die tweede grootste produsent en uitvoerder van sitrusvrugte in die wêreld, naas Spanje. [So, hon Christians, the embargo also impelled the

South African Government under guidance of the National Department to become more actively involved in discussions and improve in trade cooperation and also to find solutions. It is really shocking that our neighbouring countries have also placed a ban on our citrus, and it is important, honourable. As you know, South Africa is the second largest producer and exporter of citrus fruit in the world, after Spain.] And Spain is now using, I would say, unfair business competitive practises because of false codling moth and black spot. So, the South African Government has now, I can give a lecture up to five hours about false codling moth. I do not know whether the hon members want me to go into the technical detail. ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: I read it!

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: You read it? Okay, are you ready. This will take five hours. Do I have the time? [Laughter.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please proceed.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Okay.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will make sure that once the time is up, this particular section of the Order Paper will be concluded.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Okay. I will go there based on the advice of the hon member Lekker. I will tell a lekker story of how complicated this matter is. So, the world's second biggest producer of citrus fruit is South Africa. The biggest exporter from South Africa or the producer, rather, is Limpopo. The second biggest is the Sundays River, Sondagsrivier in the Eastern Cape. The Western Cape is the third biggest.

Now, when the South African Government declared a dispute at the World Trade Organisation in Brussels, I met with the CGA, the Citrus Growers Association, about false codling moth. I visited. In fact, I gave R2-million to the citrus farmers in Clanwilliam, where the false codling moth anti-process takes place to protect the citrus export industry. I have given them that, but this question deals more specifically about Botswana, and I am particularly upset. That is the right word. But I accept that the National Government has now done everything possible to work with the industry in Botswana.

What, hon member Christians, we have now advised if a neighbouring country bans the exports or in their case, the imports, of our fruit, I have requested my farmers to diversify because you cannot simply produce what the market no longer wants. So, I have encouraged them to diversify, and we have now also seen a diversification. My colleagues, the hon member Lekker, she grabs me with BRICS. She is in love with BRICS and I want to encourage her to help me to get into the BRICS market. But I am thankful to the Minister Leon Schreiber who has now made available visa reforms that will allow us to export

more of our products into China and into India. Why China and India: 1,4 and 1,5-billion people. That is what you want in terms of the export market.

In addition, hon member Christians, my Department then also developed a strategy, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. I have shared that agreement with the Consul Generals of these African countries here, based in the Western Cape and I did that on 25 May. The reason why I did it on 25 May, as the hon members of this House will know, that is Africa Day. So, we delivered that in that particular context.

But here is the issue. My job in this Government is to grow our exports. My job in this Government is to grow the investment portfolio to R200-billion, triple exports, triple tourism, get great investment. My job is to increase. If I use 5% export of agricultural products, the economic modelling that was done by the Bureau of Economic Research at the University of Stellenbosch, their model forecast a new job creation of 22 900. So, your question is very relevant.

So, I want to conclude, hon Deputy Speaker. †Die Wes-Kaap maak ook staat... [The Western Cape also relies...]because we believe in fair trade, sir. We do not just want to export, we also import. Do you understand? I think, since you look at me like that, you do. The imports are into Namibia, sorry, from Namibia into South Africa; we import also from Botswana although it is at a different scale.

†In 2022, ons landbou-invoere na die Wes-Kaap vanaf Namibië was omtrent so R500-miljoen. Daar was 'n 11% toename en R25-miljoen uit Botswana. Daar was 'n afname maar ons weet wat is daardie omstandighede. Daarom beveel ek aan dat u saam met die voorsitter, Dave Bryant, en die Staande Komitee asseblief Botswana besoek. Adjunkspeker, maak voorsiening vir die fondse. Moenie met die geld vassit nie. Laat die mense die plek gaan besoek.

Wat ons wel sien, agb Adjunkspeker, hierdie handelsruil weerspieël 'n nouer verhouding tussen die Wes-Kaap en sy buurlande en Suid-Afrika, selfs al verskuif uitvoer- en invoerdinamika as gevolg van die regulatoriese veranderinge en markaanpassings, maar fundamenteel tot hierdie vraag is, hoe kan ons beter verhoudinge bevorder met ons buurlande om groter uitvoere te fasiliteer?

Agb Adjunkspeker, my Departement neem gereeld deel. Daar is ook 'n [In 2022, our agricultural imports to the Western Cape from Namibia was about R500 million. There was an 11% increase and R25 million from Botswana. There was a decrease but we know what those circumstances are. Therefore I recommend that you please visit Botswana with the Chairman, Dave Bryant, and the Standing Committee. Deputy Speaker, make provision for the funds. Don't be stuck with the money. Let the people go and visit the place.

What we do see, hon Deputy Speaker, this trade exchange reflects a closer relationship between the Western Cape and its neighbouring countries and South Africa, even if the export and import dynamics shifts as a result of the

regulatory changes and market adaptations, but fundamental to this question is, how can we improve better relations with our neighbouring countries to facilitate larger exports?

Hon Deputy Speaker, my Department participates regularly. There are also Agricultural Trade Facilitation meetings and my Department, on a regular basis, takes part in those Trade Facilitation meetings to build proper relationships. But what I want is: politics is a science, and the science of politics is to be present where these decisions are taken. That is why I recommend that the hon member and the hon member, my friend, she must also go with to meet with the colleagues. [Laughter.] She must go with because I want them to. The first law of politics: be present. I want her to be present when hon member Noko has those discussions in Gaborone and in Windhoek.

Hon member, that is as far as I can answer the question, but if there are any follow-up questions ...[Interjections.] There is a question: when can the study tour happen? I highly recommend that in the situation of the current financial situation, that we seek the advice of the hon Minister of Finance, but her laugh indicates to me that she allocated money to you, and she has confirmed that she wants no rollover money. So, please make use of that money to visit Namibia. If you would like ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members!

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND

TOURISM: ...to invite me ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, any follow-up questions?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM: If there are any requests ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: They should only be asked ...[Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM: If there are any requests ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ...via the appropriate forum. [Interjections.] Any
follow-up questions should only be asked via the appropriate forum. Hon
Minister, have you concluded your initial reply? Yes. I now see the hon
Christians. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM: I see that my friend, the hon member Christians, since he has posed
the question, I want to offer him the respect and to prepare for any follow-up
questions from his side.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: †Baie dankie, [Thank you,] hon Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy

Speaker, it is concerning when you are reading the *Business Day* or *Mail & Guardian* to say South Africa imports are going to harm the economy. My question is and thank you, hon Minister, for the comprehensive answer. We know that agriculture plays a big role in a strong economy. I want to know from your side, will it affect jobs when it comes to farms? Will people lose their jobs because of this incident from Botswana and Namibia? Thank you, hon Minister.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Honourable ...[Interjections.] Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. There was a question here, but I rather prefer to answer a more intelligent question because I normally make a choice when I get questions. Which is the more intelligent one and I revert to the intelligent question. I have also seen the article in the *Business Day*. The research paper that was done by this Government and also tabled by the hon Minister of Finance, Ms Deidré Baartman, in her documentation and in the report.

It has confirmed that in the last 10 years, agriculture in this province has grown with 38%. It is unheard of. That is history. But what we also know, I indicated to you that if we have a 5% increase in exports, we generate 22 900 jobs. The inverse is also true. If there is a reduction of 5% in exports, that is the amount of jobs that we negatively lose and you have, for example, seen what I referred to in the context of exports and the decline in the agricultural exports.

For example, there was a time when we had a ban on vegetables and citrus imports into that country. There was a 26% decline in exports. In other words, a decline in exports and a decline in imports into Namibia. As you know, Namibia is our biggest trading partner, and also a decline of 8% to Botswana. To answer you correctly: yes, it did impact on the loss of jobs here in the Western Cape, but the economic modelling will say 5% over a five-year period: that is the model.

This was now over one year, so it is significantly less, but the answer is in the affirmative. We are losing jobs. I am so happy you asked that question, hon member, because the Government of National Unity of which the hon Chief Whip at the back and my friend, the hon Lekker know that the Government of National Unity has three key priorities. You touched on those key priorities through your question. Number one ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please conclude your reply.

An HON MEMBER: He has barely started. [Laughter.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: I just got warmed up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members! [Interjections.] Hon members! [Interjections.] Hon Minister, please conclude your reply. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: I wanted to. Okay, I conclude. We have lost some jobs in 2022 as a result of the closing of the border of our exports into Namibia and into Botswana. But hon members, I would very much like you to also follow the trend of what is currently happening with the export of the pork industry. I have met with the ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Am I finished?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time has expired for oral questions. Hon members, that brings us ...[Interjections.] Please take your seat, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I am available after this Sitting to answer more questions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister. Outstanding replies will be printed in Hansard. I would also want to remind the House that Chairpersons, together with members, have been briefed in terms of the process to follow for all international visits. Hon members, we will now deal with Members' Statements as per Rule 145. I will now note the African National

Congress.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

An HON MEMBER: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, can you please take your seat. My apologies. It is the DA. [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: The DA is not ready. [Interjections.]

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I am online. I have my hand up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see hon member Walters. You may go ahead.

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. I would like the House to note the investment by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, and the Matzikama Local Municipality in the upgrading of the Klawer sports fields. These sports fields simply fell off the agenda during the political turmoil of past coalition politics before the current coalition took power. This project will have a huge impact in the Klawer community to reduce crime, create healthy activities in the community and very importantly, to restore a sense of community.

This, as well as the Municipality's efforts to clean out nepotism, corruption and malpractice shows that Matzikama is turning a corner and busy joining the success story of the Western Cape.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much ...[Laughter.] hon member Walters. I now see the ANC. ...[Laughter.]

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The ANC to keep fighting to end DA corruption in Matzikama Municipality. Hon Deputy Speaker, I rise today to address the DA failure to act on corruption and maladministration in Matzikama Municipality. A forensic investigation commissioned by hon MEC Anton Bredell uncovered serious misconduct, including the appointment of Heinrich Elmer Koopman, son of the DA Deputy Mayor, Amelia Job. Despite lacking qualifications, violating municipal recruitment policies and causing wasteful expenditure under the Municipal Finance Management Act.

Rather than take action, the DA has obstructed transparency by blocking Opposition counsellors from reviewing the report, refusing the rescue implication of officials and presenting alternative findings to contradict the investigation. These efforts were aimed to shielding Municipality Manager Lionel Phillips from accountability. These actions by the DA and hon MEC Bredell expose a pattern of hypocritical disregard to transparency where the DA members, including elected officials, have acted in their own interests instead of prioritising the needs of the people they serve.

The ANC calls on hon MEC Bredell to stop prioritising his party interests and take immediate action to end these undemocratic practices within the party surrounds. The ANC demands immediate disciplinary actions against those involved in these irregular practices. We also call for the removal of Mr Koopman and to recover the irregular payments made to him and for those responsible for the mismanagement, to be held accountable. Furthermore, the ANC demands an audit for appointments within the Municipality to ensure merit-based hiring and to ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you ...[Interjection.]

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): ...the future ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ...so much.

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): ...favouritism. The people of Matzikama deserve accountable leadership.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member. Please conclude.

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): They must vote on 20 November 2024 for the ANC.
[Laughter.] [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member. I now see the

Patriotic Alliance.

Mr N CONSTABLE (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, thank you very much. †Miskien moet ek net sê, toe almal praat, toe sit ons stil. [Perhaps I just have to say, when every one was talking, then we sat still.] So, I please ask the House also to listen to what the PA is saying, to give them respect, to also want respect. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Be greeted in the Almighty name of Jesus Christ.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our statement is as follows from the Patriotic Alliance. Hon Deputy Speaker, hon members of the Provincial Parliament and residents of the Western Cape. It is with great concern that we address the series of tragic accidents that have occurred in Saldanha over the past weekend and week. These incidents have resulted in significant loss, impacting families, our communities and our region as a whole.

On behalf of this Government, this Provincial Government, we must extend our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones who have suffered loss during this period. Our thoughts and prayers are with the injured and those who are lost. We call on them and we wish them a swift recovery and full recovery. The safety of our residents and the protection of human lives are of paramount importance.

In light of these incidents, we are committed to working closely with local authorities, law enforcement and transportation safety bodies to ensure

thorough investigations are conducted. We will assess the causes of these accidents and identify measures to enhance road and community safety. The Provincial Government must also and is also committed, hon Deputy Speaker, to bolstering public awareness on road safety practices and reinforcing support for emergency response services in the Saldanha region and beyond. We recognise that ensuring the wellbeing of our residents requires a collaborative approach that includes all sectors of government, community organisations and the public at large. Thanks.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member. Hon members, I once again remind the House that in terms of the sequence and the Rules, it is two minutes per member statement. I see the Democratic Alliance.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Across South Africa, millions of hon citizens rely on social grants as a lifeline, yet we continue to witness repeated failures within SASSA leading to delays in efficiencies and the ever-present risk of leaving our poorest citizens without vital support. This is a grave disservice to those most in need and it is clear that these systemic issues reflect a larger failure in our country's social safety-net.

But, hon Deputy Speaker, while social grants are essential for those that need them, a sustainable future depends on something more: economic growth and job creation. Our Government should not merely support people in times of hardship but work tirelessly to create an environment where fewer and fewer

South Africans rely on these grants.

In this regard, the Western Cape has led by example. In our province, we have achieved the significant milestone of reducing unemployment to below 20%. Only one in five people in the Western Cape are unemployed, a figure that demonstrates that a proactive job-focused government can, indeed, lift people out of poverty and into sustainable livelihoods. This Provincial Government remains committed to expanding opportunities, creating jobs and reducing reliance on social grants, proving that with vision and dedication, we can build a future where every South African has the opportunity to thrive. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I note the Economic Freedom Fighters.

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): As the EFF, we would like to take this opportunity and reiterate our call for spaza shops and other outlets selling food, to be adequately regulated as a matter of urgency. This is due to the widespread incidents of food poisoning incidents which continue to escalate in the country with each day passing and putting the health and lives of our children in danger.

The issue of contaminated foods which is sold in spaza shops, has now become a national disaster which poses a serious danger on the lives of our people. However, on the other side, the intervention from all levels of government in this regard is not only slow but remains hopeless. It cannot be that we live in

a country where something drastic must first happen with people losing their lives before people can do their jobs. It does not make sense that there have not been health inspections over the years in all these outlets selling foods over and over, and then Government wants to come now and attend these inspections whilst children are lying in hospital.

Just in this past weekend, a five-year-old epileptic child from Kensington was rushed to hospital after eating a pie that had mould in it, which was bought from a nearby spaza shop. If the City of Cape Town's health officials were doing their jobs by conducting random and unexpected inspections in these spaza shops, they could have found that the business owners of these outlets are not following the correct procedures when it comes to storing and freezing of food. We cannot lose lives whilst these health officials are not doing what they are supposed to do, while getting paid to do it.

Furthermore, as the EFF we call upon National Government to make a law which will require spaza shops or other outlets selling food, to be registered. It is during this registration process that applicants must be taught about health safety by health officials and how food should be handled. In conclusion, following the registration of these businesses, health inspectors must also make it their duty to do regular unexpected visits to these outlets for purposes of food safety. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the National Coloured Congress.

Mr D G JACOBS (NCC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the NCC rises today in this House, as we celebrate the Class of 2024. Twelve years of hard work, dedication in difficult conditions, comes down to these few weeks. The future is in your hands, and we wish you all of the best.

However, hon Deputy Speaker, today we must stand and look at ourselves as Government. Hon Deputy Speaker, around 435 000 kids who started the journey 12 years ago in Grade 1, will not be taking the Grade 12 exams as we speak. We must take a serious look at the current education system, and we must say to ourselves: we have failed a generation. These youths who are not yet killed in gang violence or drug addiction, roam the streets looking for a better life, but without formal education, this means it will be a continued pipedream.

Hon Deputy Speaker, research has showed that there is an average amount of youth not making Grade 12 from Grade 1. This means that in the last five years, at least a million unemployed and semi-skilled youth are living in our country. The Western Cape Government also did not do much of anything when it comes to the schooling system in the Western Cape. After 30 years into our democracy, we are still sitting with temporary schooling infrastructure and many of these schools on the Cape Flats are falling apart while ...[Audio distorted – 3:10:30.] education is creeping closer.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the non-placement of students at schools still maintains

a huge issue in our communities and this results in a child not in school is a child in a gang. The issues raised and the overcoming of challenges, this is what makes the Grade 12 of 2024 such a huge success story. Going to school, knowing hey, †die skote gaan klap, [the shots are going to ring,] going to school knowing †jy, ons lê maar net plat [you, we just have to lie down.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, we owe this to our children to create a better integrated education system and detailed focus on youth employment. If education is the golden rule, let us be the leaders that make that history. Let there be equal education for all. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the African National Congress.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, whistleblowers must be protected. †Makhe simamele ngoklwaphilizo lwe DA. [Let us listen about the corruption of the DA] I am deeply alarmed by the growing evidence of corruption, cronyism and maladministration within the Western Cape Department of Mobility. These serious allegations demand immediate and transparent action from the hon Premier, Alan Winde, to show that his Government is not complicit in corruption.

At the heart of this concern is the so-called Mini Cooper gang, a group of senior officials accused of exploiting their positions for personal gain. The alleged individuals include Deidre Ribbonaar, Kaylee Rykenaar, Recardo

Collins, Gamsa Martin and Farrel Payne, are implicated in numerous scandals that undermine public trust in the integrity of the Government's operations. There are reports of officials owning luxury properties such as a R4-million apartment in Sea Point that was bought cash and individuals owning fleets of more than eight luxury vehicles, all while using the public office for self-enrichment. Hon Deputy Speaker, these officials are also accused of appointing family members and in-laws to cushy government jobs, further entrenching nepotism within the Department. "Aphile Makajong"

Moreover so, companies such as Pegasus and Routemaster allegedly linked to families of these officials, have been awarded multimillion-rand contracts. Routemaster has not only secured lucrative deals but is alleged to be occupying office space within the Department of Mobility raising serious concerns, hon Deputy Speaker, about conflicts of interest and kickbacks. One of the most troubling issues is the procurement of 122 BMW vehicles for traffic officers allegedly overseen by the Director, Farrel Payne. This procurement process raises questions about financial mismanagement and potential corruption.

Hon Deputy Speaker, if hon Premier Winde is serious about rooting out corruption, he must institute a full investigation into these allegations, including lifestyle audits for senior officials and ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I have afforded additional time for the Chief Whip of the Opposition Party to conclude. I now see the Democratic Alliance.

An HON MEMBER: Lives in blue! [Interjections.]

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members! [Interjections.] Hon members, we are nearing the end of this particular Sitting. Let us please keep the decorum of the House. I see hon member Masipa.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I bring to you good news from the Elsenburg State farm managed under the Democratic Alliance Government leadership. The Elsenburg College State farm established in the early 1940s, stands as the oldest and largest of its kind in South Africa. Percheron horses were brought to Elsenburg from Grootfontein, Glen and Cedara decades ago, making it a key representation of South African heritage in equine breeding. Historically, these horses were also used in the Western Cape's wine industry as essential traction animals.

Some years back, the Department recognised the significance of the Percheron stud declaring it a national monument, thereby underscoring its preservation. This stud is widely regarded by breeders across South Africa as the best, owing to its exceptional genetic material that consistently yields outstanding offspring. Breeders nationwide use these unique genetics to enhance their own studs. Notably, the Department studs are registered with the SA Studs Book and the Percheron Association of South Africa.

Recently, these horses have regained popularity for traction on farms, practicing conservation and regenerative farming as they exert less soil compaction compared to conventional machinery. In a testament to the Western Cape's efficiency over the past eight years, the Department has sold 23 horses. In line with a science-based approach, the Department of Agriculture under the capable leadership of Ivan Meyer of the Democratic Alliance, oversees approximately two matings for clients at Elsenburg annually.

This exemplifies what a capable government accomplishes, creating value, preserving biological assets and upholding high standards of animal welfare. Congratulations to the Department of ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, please conclude.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Sorry?

An HON MEMBER: Serves him right!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): Oh, I did not hear. Congratulations to the Democratic Alliance Government of the Western Cape. Indeed, the Western Cape works.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon member. I now see the

Freedom Front Plus.

†Mnr G P MARAIS (FFP): Baie dankie, agb *Deputy Speaker*. Agb *Deputy Speaker*, die aankondiging deur die Wes-Kaapse Regering en die agb Minister van Plaaslike Regering op 6 November 2024 dat die Theewaterskloof Munisipaliteit onder Artikel 139(5)-proses ingevolge die Grondwet geplaas sal word, kom slegs 10 weke nadat die Vryheidsfront Plus se raadslid, Theunis Zimmerman, in die Munisipaliteit as die nuwe burgemeester verkies was.

[Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the announcement by the Western Cape Government and the hon Minister of Local Government on 6 November 2024 that the Theewaterskloof Municipality will be placed under Section 139(5) process in terms of the Constitution, comes only 10 days after the Freedom Front's Councillor, Theunis Zimmerman, was elected as the new Mayor in the Municipality.]

The Freedom Front Plus welcomes the process and the decision taken by the Western Cape Government and since taking over, the Freedom Front Plus Mayor was proactive in approaching the hon Minister beforehand for assistance, due to the existing financial cash challenges and cashflow challenges of the Municipality. Hon Minister Bredell and the hon Finance Minister Deidré Baartman recently initiated this particular process after an assessment was conducted confirming the financial distress situation.

The Freedom Front Plus will give its full cooperation in working with the financial administrator as soon as he or she gets appointed, and Mayor Theunis

Zimmerman has assured his cooperation. We wish to emphasise the importance that this Municipality be placed on a stable financial footing within the next few months as the main objective.

Although the Theewaterskloof Municipality is at this moment not eligible for the Debt Relief Programme which could result in the eventual write-off of the Eskom debt, we call on the hon Minister of Local Government to ensure that no political motives are at play by his political party, as an attempt to intentionally cause the Theewaterskloof Municipality Council to be eventually dissolved. The DA's political expediency should not take priority, but the stabilisation of the Municipality and that which is in the best ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): ...interest of the Theewaterskloof residents. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. Your time has expired.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see Al Jama-ah.

Mr G BRINKHUIS (AL JAMA-AH): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Al Jama-ah has noted with much concern the recent eviction of

several homeless people from Cape Town's streets and the demolition of their structures. We also note that the evictions were executed with a court order with no regard for human rights, as these homeless people have nowhere else to go to. The Western Cape Provincial Government has estimated that 14 000 individuals are living on the streets in the City and the City's safe spaces can only accommodate 1 070 people.

Forceful removal of people from their living spaces is a brutal reminder of the Group Areas Act during apartheid and the thousands of ongoing unjust evictions of farmworkers from farms. If we do not handle the homeless with dignity, we are trampling on our Constitution which safeguards the rights of vulnerable people. We must recognise homelessness as ...[Audio distorted.] It is a complex socio-economic issue with deep roots in the apartheid system. Forcing the homeless to relocate to remote areas out of the city further deprives them from accessing socio-economic opportunities such as jobs, health services, education and others.

Al Jama-ah reminds the Province that addressing the problem of homelessness is much deeper than just providing shelters or the questionable safe spaces the City established. Interventions must be based on the root cause of homelessness, dealt with justly and in a dignified manner. Shelters must be equipped to provide amongst others, skills development rehabilitation and family reintegration. We further remind this DA-run Province of the thousands of homeless people living on the streets throughout the city. They are living on the Cape Flats, at malls, under bridges, in parks and along riverbeds.

Al Jama-ah calls on the Province to stop returning unspent budgets and to spend on strategies to combat homelessness, such as providing affordable housing for low-income families. I thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I see the African Christian Democratic Party.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the ACDP calls for a destruction site for illegal firearms in the Western Cape. Hon Deputy Speaker, news headlines read after the National Police Minister answered a question in National Parliament that hundreds of police guns were lost or stolen in the 2023/2024 financial year. In the Western Cape, in the second semester, 22 guns were stolen. Guns in the hands of criminals are killing innocent lives.

In January this year, it was reported that 1 725 official SAPS firearms were stolen between April 2021 and July 2023. This equates to 61 firearms stolen every month over a period of 30 months. The ACDP calls and reiterates for a destruction site for illegal firearms in the Western Cape. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I see the GOOD party. I see the Democratic Alliance.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): The Democratic Alliance in the Western Cape welcomes

the achievement of unqualified audit outcomes for every Western Cape Government department, as well as every entity under the Provincial Government control for the 2023/2024 financial year. This has been confirmed by the Auditor-General of South Africa.

In a very constrained fiscal environment, it is more crucial than ever to ensure that money is spent for intended purposes, is not wasted, and does not simply disappear into the pockets of corrupt politicians. Sound financial management with a stringent set of checks and balances make it possible to see exactly where taxpayer money is spent and also to assess where Government programmes deliver value for money. Unqualified audits also directly contribute to better service delivery because good financial governance means that there is more money available to spend and to improve the lives of our residents.

The DA in the Western Cape commends the Western Cape Government and especially, the Provincial Treasury, for their commitment to developing and implementing comprehensive financial governance practices over the last 15 years. Where the DA governs, transparency and accountability are core values and in the case of the Western Cape, residents can trust that the Provincial Government can account for every cent of taxpayer money that is spent. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon member, in terms of Rule 145(6), I now give one of more hon members of the Executive present, an

opportunity to respond to Members' Statements collectively for no more than five minutes, which will be strictly implemented. I see the hon Premier.

The PREMIER: Thank you very much. I would like to say to the hon Bans thank you very much for that comment that you made. I note that it comes from an email sent on 17 October at 14:49. I received it and sent it on for investigation on 17 October at 17:41. We note that it does come from an anonymous source, and it was copied to 49 different people with no exact evidence based to it. I presume you have evidence and that you have laid a charge with the police station with that evidence. But from our side, I can assure you that it is being investigated.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see hon Minister Londt.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Marais from the Freedom Front: what happened in the most recent election is that the Western Cape Freedom Front ran on a ticket of removing this Province from the rest of the country. The DA said 'No, we are one country. We will work together to fix this country.' The Freedom Front got a pounding at the polls, losing half their seat and daddy's boy just got elected to this Parliament.

Now, the Freedom Front in the Western Cape goes and destabilises DA governments like Oudtshoorn, where they vote with the ANC and the Patriotic Alliance to get a Freedom Front leader elected. Then, when the DA wants to

fix Theewaterskloof, the Freedom Front goes and works with the ANC and PA and continues to make sure that that Municipality gets run into the ground.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Not true. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see hon Minister Maynier.

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker and that is precisely why the Plus has been gouged out of the Freedom Front Plus. ...[Laughter.] ...[Interjection.]

An HON MEMBER: You are voting with us there, but you do not want the Freedom Front voting with us. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION: Hon Deputy Speaker, I would just like to remind the hon Jacobs that this province has one of the highest Grade 10 to Grade 12 retention rates in our country. To illustrate the point, the Free State's retention rate is about 55%, compared to the Western Cape's retention rate which is about 70%. But of course, I nevertheless do share the hon member's concern about children not in school. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two minutes and 42 seconds, hon member Baartman. First hon member Baartman.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, on the Matzikama case, the DA Mayor asked for the investigation, firstly. Secondly, I had last, when I checked, I was also a DA member, commenced with the interdependence forensic investigation because the DA will not hide anything. Fourthly [sic – 3:27:14], the Municipality must now act, and we must give them the space to act. There are certain questions that they want to ask, short and clarity on the investigation, and that is their right to do that.

But the ANC must remember, they must read the whole report because there are recommendations that we must broaden the scope to get to the time when the ANC governed Matzikama and look into their appointments, and that is what they want to hide. But we will get there because we are going to clean up Matzikama, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Hon members. [Interjections.] Order, hon members. Hon members! Order! [Interjections.] I am at pains to start naming members. Hon member Lekker. I see the Minister, hon Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, the main objective of the Provincial Government is to ensure uninterrupted continuation of service delivery to the residents of Theewaterskloof. In case the respective hon member does not know, over the past two years in terms of revenue collection, the Municipality has seen a rapid

decline in its financial position. Its collection rate dropped to 77% by September 2024 from over 95% in the 2022/2023 financial year, below both the Municipality's plan, as well as the National Treasury norm. It has been in arrears on a payment of Eskom since June 2024.

The reason the Theewaterskloof Eskom money has not been approved for the Debt Relief Programme by the National Treasury is because it did not meet the requirements, other than the other municipalities in the Western Cape. Specifically, it had R47-million owing to creditors for more than 30 days at September 2024. This is an increase from R43-million outstanding for creditors in August 2024 [sic – 3:29:07], amounting to a nearly 6% of the adjusted 2024/2025 operating expenditure budget which is well in excess of the 2% threshold for a mandatory intervention in terms of Section 140(2)(c) of the MFA.

Conditional Grants are not cashbacks. The National Treasury wants the Conditional Grant money back from Theewaterskloof, which it currently cannot pay. In terms of Disaster Relief Funding, it has not been reporting on the R41,3-million and it was of cashflow an expenditure ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ...over your cash available ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, hon Minister Baartman. Hon

members, that is the end of Members' Statements.

MOTIONS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: In terms of Rule 151, all notices of motions by the hon members are required to be delivered to the Secretary for placing on the Order Paper. These motions have duly been submitted and published on the Order Paper below the line.

MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the proliferation of unregulated spaza shops in South Africa.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the effectiveness of the Western Cape Safety Plan in reducing violent crime and considers additional measures to enhance public safety and to combat criminal activities in the province.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House urgently debates the Western Cape Government's decision to cut 2 407 teacher posts, its impact on education quality, particularly in less affluent areas, and explores alternative solutions to address the Province's funding challenges in education.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates strategies to stimulate economic growth and to create jobs in the Western Cape, with the focus on addressing unemployment and promoting sustainable development across all sectors.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates comprehensive plans to reduce the number of informal settlements in the Western Cape, focusing on providing dignified shelter and alleviating poverty through sustainable housing solutions.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the merits and challenges of devolving authority over policing, rail and logistics to the Western Cape Government and municipalities, and its potential impact on service delivery and governance in the province.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates measures to combat the ‘extortion mafia’ phenomenon affecting infrastructure projects in the Western Cape, and considers strategies to protect businesses and to ensure the completion of critical development initiatives.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the improvement of disaster response and prevention measures in the Western Cape, with particular focus on building regulations, enforcement and enhancing the role of the Provincial Disaster Management Centre.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr B PETRUS (PA): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the tragic collapse of a building in George, which occurred on 6 May 2024, which has raised significant concerns regarding safety, accountability and governance under the leadership of the DA-led George Municipality; notes that the recent collapse of a building in George has not only resulted in the devastating loss of life and property, but has also exposed serious questions regarding the oversight, regulatory building and compliance, including the safety standards currently maintained by the local municipality; and calls on the Premier of the Western Cape to table the preliminary report on this incident urgently in the House for debate, including instituting a judicial commission of inquiry to investigate this tragic incident further independently where any shortcomings have been identified and to report back to the House on the findings thereof.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr B PETRUS (PA): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House notes and debates the impact of illegal foreigners on jobs, education, crime, housing, health, trading and agriculture in the Western

Cape, and implements measures and a strategy that will protect the citizens of the Western Cape against the negative impact of illegal foreigners.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

The SPEAKER: We will now proceed in terms of Rule 150, Motions without Notice. I would like to inform the House that in terms of Standing Rule 150 pertaining to Motions without Notice, condolence and congratulatory were submitted to the Programming Authority prior to this plenary on 12 November 2024. Hon members are also reminded that Motions without Notice pertaining to congratulatory and condolence, will not be allowed in this Sitting that have not been processed by the Programming Authority.

I have been informed that in the Programming Authority meeting on 12 November 2024, political parties did submit the names of the hon members in the desired order of speaking and who had wished to move a Motion without Notice in this Sitting of the House. I will therefore, just for noting and for purposes of the Minutes, call out the hon members whose names have accordingly been submitted and approved.

The following hon members' motions have been approved by the Programming Authority as follows: hon N Masipa, second, again the hon N Masipa, third, the hon M K Sayed, fourth, hon F Kampfner.

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): I move without notice:

That the House notes the recent international achievements of Creation Wines, Klein Constantia Wine Estate and Benguela Cove at the prestigious World's Best Vineyards 2024 competition; acknowledges that Creation Wines was ranked 3rd globally and honoured as the African Continental Winner for its exceptional wine experiences, which combine gourmet tasting menus with educational insights into viticulture; further notes that Klein Constantia achieved an impressive ranking of 41st globally, while Benguela Cove also secured a place among the world's best, demonstrating the high quality of South Africa's wine industry; recognises that this acknowledgment highlights what is already well-known: that the Western Cape, and South Africa as a whole, offers world-class wine tourism experiences, reinforcing our region's status as a premier destination for wine enthusiasts worldwide; moves that the House sends a congratulatory message to these businesses, commending the men and women who drive excellence in the Western Cape's wine industry and encouraging them to continue elevating South African wine on the global stage.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): I move without notice:

That the House notes that the Nantes Athletic Club, based in the Ithemba constituency in the City of Cape Town, recently hosted its annual Heritage Athletic Event in Athlone, which drew thousands of runners from across the Western Cape, including participants of all ages and members of the City of Cape Town Firefighters; acknowledges that the Nantes Athletic Club was established in 2014 by members from Athlone, Heideveld and the surrounding communities, with a mission to promote healthier lifestyles through walking and running, while emphasising enjoyment and community spirit; further notes that the Cape Town Chinese Consul and dignitaries attended the event to gain a greater understanding of various Western Cape Provincial Parliament constituencies; recognises that the event is not only a day of athletic activity but also a celebration of the culture and heritage of the Western Cape, uniting communities in shared traditions; notes that representatives from the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and the City of Cape Town were present to engage with participants and residents as part of a constituency outreach and heritage commemoration; emphasises the need for more events like this to provide positive outlets for the youth, to reduce crime, to promote healthy lifestyles and to foster unity across diverse communities; and moves that the House sends a congratulatory message to the Nantes Athletic Club, encouraging other communities to establish similar clubs to address health and wellness challenges and strengthen community bonds.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: I move without notice:

That the House notes and congratulates Mr Ayanda Ndamane, an award-winning photojournalist from Independent Media, on his outstanding achievement at the 2024 Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards, where he was honoured with the Photographer of the Year title for his powerful body of work, including the photograph “Pro-Palestine crowd clash with police”, which was featured on the front page of the *Cape Times*; further notes that this prestigious award follows Mr Ndamane’s earlier recognition at the 2024 Standard Bank SikuVile Awards where he was celebrated for his impactful images covering pro-Palestinian protests, and further cementing his place as one of South Africa’s most talented and influential photojournalists; acknowledges Mr Ndamane’s exceptional commitment to his craft, which not only highlights his technical skill, but also his dedication to telling important stories, often at great personal risk, and his role in using photography to illuminate critical social and political issues; further acknowledges that Mr Ndamane’s success serves as a powerful inspiration to young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds such as his own, demonstrating that hard work and perseverance can overcome even the greatest challenges, and providing hope to the next generation of journalists and photographers; and congratulates Mr Ayanda Ndamane on his well-deserved recognition at the 2024 Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards and commends him for his continued excellence and commitment to the profession of

photojournalism.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and congratulates Emile Witbooi, a 16-year-old football talent from Cape Town City, for receiving the incredible opportunity to attend trials with the Chelsea Football Club, one of the most respected and prestigious football teams in the world, in recognition of his remarkable abilities on the field; further notes that Emile has been invited to a four-week trial at Chelsea's training base in London, a significant step in his promising football career and testament to his skill and potential, which have already attracted attention from several top European clubs; acknowledges that Emile's football talent runs in his genes as he is the son of the highly respected footballer, Bradley Ralani, who has played for prominent teams, including Cape Town City, Cape Town Spurs, and Mamelodi Sundowns, contributing to Emile's own passion and drive in the sport; recognises that this opportunity represents a significant milestone for Emile, not only in his personal development as a footballer, but also as a potential future star for Bafana Bafana, South Africa's national football team; and congratulates Emile Witbooi on his trial invitation with the Chelsea Football Club and wishes him all the best as he embarks on this exciting chapter in his football career.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

The SPEAKER: I now put the motions duly submitted and approved by the Programming Authority to the House. Are there any objections? There are no objections, agreed to. The motions will appear in the Minutes of the proceedings and in Hansard, in each individual member's name as if the member had read them out aloud.

I will now afford an opportunity to the hon members to move Motions without Notice as per Standing Rule of 150(2)(d). This could include Motions without Notice that were not approved in the Programming Authority meeting. Hon members are reminded that 30 minutes as per Standing Rule 150(2)(d), will start now. I see the hon Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The African Christian Democratic Party moves without notice:

That the House notes with concern an article by Marsha Dean in the *Cape Argus* of Tuesday, 12 November 2024. The gist of the article is about a Grade 3 learner who wants to be a gangster when he grows up. Notes that the boy writes that he wants a gun in his hand; he is going to smuggle guns. He twice says he is going to be a gangster within the four lines he has written. Hon Deputy Speaker, the boy lives in one our communities; his name and the name of his school he attends are withheld. He is a product of the abnormal life lived on the Cape Flats. Normally God-

fearing fathers strive to teach their children, especially their sons, to follow in their footsteps. They do their best to guide and teach them by setting an example to follow. However, in the abnormality of gangster-infested communities, parental teachings are replaced by an attraction from the pit of hell itself. The rule of the gun and a life of having power over others replace patriarchal guidance with gangster lore. The shocking statement from this young boy is a damning indictment of so-called modern society. This is a young boy who will try to exert himself over his peers. He has chosen a way of life that could end in his untimely death. He feels called to belong to a gang and be a gangster. He feels called to a future of drug-dealing, gang-fights, shooting and murder, and jail time. This style of living, written by his own hand calls him out of his childhood and the protection of his family. It is the plea of the ACDP before Almighty God that this nameless boy will have the opportunity to be shown the way out of this dilemma that he finds himself in. He and others like him can be assisted to see that there is a different way of life. We call on the assistance of role players to bring accepted normalcy to this life and others like him. I so move move. I thank you.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? No objections, agreed to. I now see the hon Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and joins the international socialist forces in celebrating the 107th anniversary since the 1917 Great October Socialist Revolution, and as noted by Nikos Mottas in the socialist journal, *In Defense of Communism – The Marxist-Leninist Blog*, the significance of the Great October Socialist Revolution lies in the fact that it was historically the first conscious step for the transition from the barbaric, violent and inhuman system of capitalism to socialism, and the abolishing of man by man; acknowledges that, contrary to bourgeois scholars and media who have always wanted to portray the Great October Revolution as a ‘coup’; the Great October Socialist Revolution was a product of organised working class struggles led by the great Lenin and Bolsheviks to usher in a just and human socialist order; notes further that the Great October Socialist Revolution elevated in practice that the class struggle is the driving force of history and thus the South African Communist Party this year used the 107th anniversary celebration to mobilise and organise South Africa’s working class against the capitalist crisis of the rising cost of living and called for expansion of VAT-exempt basic products; a decisive advance towards a comprehensive social security system; comprehensive poverty eradication programme; fair pricing in retail; comprehensive implementation of NHI; implementation of the Bela Bill and including Clause 4 and 5; public employment programme; getting rid of budget cuts; transformation of monetary policy and the Reserve Bank; re-industrialisation and sectoral policy; revitalisation of State Owned Enterprises and public development finance institutions; and the

transformation of the financial sector to serve the working class; and appreciates that this Provincial Government have immense lessons to learn from this revolution. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? [Interjections.] There is an objection. The motion will be printed on the Order Paper. I now see again, the hon Ngqentsu.

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep concern the recent statement made by the Democratic Alliance, MP Ian Cameron, regarding the escalating gun violence in the Western Cape, particularly in areas such as Manenberg, where three lives were tragically lost and four others were injured this past weekend; notes further that while acknowledging the alarming rise in gun violence, it is imperative that we do not allow these serious issues to be mischaracterized or used for political gimmicks; acknowledges that Ian Cameron's statement, while highlighting the need for effective policing, fails to address the root causes of this violence, which are deeply embedded in the persistent crisis of chronic underdevelopment of working-class communities here in the Western Cape and the ongoing socio-economic challenges our people face, which include amongst

others, poverty, unemployment, and inequality; further acknowledges that the escalation of gun violence in the province cannot be seen in isolation from the broader socio-economic conditions that prevail in many of these crime ridden communities including Manenberg and the other 13 crime hotspots; appreciates that the lack of economic opportunities, the systemic neglect by the Provincial Government and municipalities, particularly the City of Cape Town, and the inadequate focus on social services have all contributed to an environment where violence thrives; educates Cameron that the fight against crime is not simply a matter of policing, but of creating communities that are empowered, economically active, and equipped with the resources necessary to overcome the conditions that breed criminality, and so it is factually incorrect for an apartheid apologist like Ian Cameron to place disproportionate blame on national structures like the South African Police Service and also use the crisis of crime to advance the DA's misplaced devolution of police powers, without acknowledging the role of provincial and local governments in addressing the underlying social issues that contribute to crime and calls on the Provincial Government, particularly the DA-led City of Cape Town, to take responsibility for the chronic crisis of underdevelopment of working-class communities here in the Western Cape and commit to greater investment in social infrastructure, housing, education, and job creation.

I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? [Interjections.] There is an objection, and the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. I now see the hon Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep concern regarding the disturbing fact that companies implicated in the corruption of the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to do business with the Government, despite the findings of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU); notes further that it is particularly alarming that in the Western Cape, the company Masiqhame Trading, which was identified as a key player in PPE corruption during the pandemic, continues to secure lucrative multiyear contracts with the Provincial Government and that this is not only a violation of the public trust but an affront to the efforts of those who are working tirelessly to ensure transparency and accountability in Government procurement; notes further that despite the damning findings of the SIU Masiqhame Trading has not been blacklisted, nor has any substantial action been taken to prevent them from benefiting from taxpayer money through ongoing contracts with the Western Cape Provincial Government and that this situation is utterly unacceptable, and it raises serious questions about the political will and moral leadership of those in positions of power, particularly hon Premier Alan Winde; acknowledges that while hon

Premier Winde has often spoken out vehemently against corruption, yet his actions, or lack thereof, suggest a far more complacent attitude towards those implicated in corruption within his own province as he has failed to take meaningful action against Masiqhame Trading, a company that has been at the centre of one of the most shameful instances of corruption in the history of the Western Cape; and calls on hon Premier Alan Winde and hon MEC David Maynier to demonstrate true leadership and integrity by immediately taking action against Masiqhame Trading and any other companies implicated in PPE corruption, as the time is now for hon Premier Winde to back his strong rhetoric with real, decisive action as the public deserves more than words; they deserve accountability and the assurance that no company, no matter how well-connected, will be allowed to profit from corruption at the expense of the people of the Western Cape. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? [Interjections.] There are objections. The motion will be printed in the Order Paper. I now see the hon Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, I move without notice:

That the House notes with great pride and appreciation the decrease in the

official unemployment rate, which has dropped by 1,4 percentage points to 32,1% in the third quarter of 2024 (Q3:2024), compared to the second quarter of 2024 (Q2:2024); celebrates the positive employment outcomes as highlighted in the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for Q3:2024, which show a promising trend in job creation across key sectors of the economy; acknowledges and commends the ongoing efforts by the ANC-led Government in driving sustainable job creation and economic growth, recognising that this reduction in unemployment is not a mere statistical shift but a tangible outcome of targeted interventions to stimulate economic activity, expand opportunities for work, and empower previously marginalized communities; recognises that this achievement is a direct reflection of the ANC's transformative policies and the strategic implementation of initiatives outlined in the 2024 Election manifesto, which prioritises economic stability, inclusive growth, and the creation of meaningful, sustainable jobs for all South Africans, particularly the youth and women who have been hardest hit by unemployment; affirms the ANC's commitment to further reducing unemployment through continued investment in skills development, infrastructure, and support for small and medium enterprises, as well as addressing the structural challenges that continue to impact the labour market, especially in rural areas; and calls on all sectors of society to continue to support and build on these efforts, ensuring that the trajectory of job creation and economic empowerment continues to gain momentum in the coming quarters, as we strive towards a more equitable and prosperous South Africa for all. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? [Interjections.] There are objections. The motion will be printed on the Order Paper. I now again, see the hon Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP (ANC): Nkosi, hon Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, I move without notice:

That the House notes and calls on hon Premier Alan Winde to expedite the implementation of lifestyle audits for all members of his Cabinet, in order to ensure transparency, accountability, and the integrity of the Provincial Government; notes further and recommends that the scope of these lifestyle audits will be expanded to include senior and top managers within the Provincial Government, particularly directors and chief directors, who hold significant influence over departmental decision-making and resource allocation; further notes with great concern the growing reports and reliable information regarding deeply entrenched corruption in various Provincial Government departments, where certain officials at senior levels have reportedly captured entire departments for personal gain, and are actively perpetuating a culture of cronyism and nepotism; highlights that this corruption undermines the effective delivery of services to the people of the Western Cape, breeds inefficiency, and contributes to the erosion of public trust in the

Provincial Government; hon Deputy Speaker, emphasizes the need for urgent action to address these systemic issues of corruption, capture and patronage, which have not only allowed corrupt practices to flourish, but have also obstructed the Province's ability to operate in an open and accountable manner; and calls for the establishment of a transparent and independent mechanism to oversee the lifestyle audits, ensuring that the process is free from political interference and that any findings are acted upon decisively, with the appropriate disciplinary actions taken against individuals found to be engaging in corrupt activities; and further urges hon Premier Alan Winde to show strong leadership in this regard, making it clear that there will be no tolerance for corruption within his administration, and that steps will be taken to restore the integrity of the Provincial Government and ensure that public resources are used for the benefit of all citizens, not for personal enrichment. I so move, hon Speaker.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The SPEAKER: Are there any objections to that motion statement being moved without notice? [Interjections.] There are objections. The motion will be printed on the Order Paper, printed on the Order Paper.

Hon members, that concludes the business for the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting, and all the hon members will be exited from the Sitting. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 18:00.