

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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# QUESTION PAPER

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**Note:**

1. ★ Indicates an oral question.

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### QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2026

#### CLUSTER 4: ECONOMICS

**★260. Ms F Hassan (ANC) to ask the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources:**

- (1) Whether, given the heightened global geopolitical instability, including ongoing conflict in the Middle East affecting oil shipping routes, he has found that the Republic's current petroleum supply security arrangements are adequate to withstand a sustained external supply shock; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, for what total number of days of national consumption will the current strategic petroleum reserve volumes last;
- (2) what supply diversification agreements has his department concluded or is in the process of finalising with alternative producer nations to reduce the Republic's exposure to geopolitical disruption in any single supply corridor?

NO1591E

**★249. Ms N L Hlazo-Webster (BOSA) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

With reference to her reply to question 824 on 4 October 2024, regarding the Labour Activation Programme's (LAP) commitment to recruit 360 000 unemployed persons during the 2024-25 financial year, and in light of her department's February 2026 statement indicating that 30 876 opportunities have been activated in Gauteng, what (a) is the total number of unemployed persons who have actually been placed into work and/or paid employment through the LAP nationally since July 2024 and (b) factors have contributed to the variance between the target and actual placements? NO1579E

**★300. Mr K H Wakelin (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

In light of the fact that a number of municipalities continue to experience serious governance failures, persistent audit disclaimers and repeated underspending of infrastructure grants, yet they continue to receive unconditional transfers through the Local Government Equitable Share and other allocations within the Division of Revenue framework, what steps has the National Treasury taken to ensure that municipalities that consistently demonstrate weak financial management and poor service delivery outcomes do not continue to receive transfers without stronger accountability and/or corrective measures? NO1632E

**★261. Ms N Q Mvana (ANC) to ask the Minister of Electricity and Energy:**

Given that the free basic electricity (FBE) allocation has remained at 50kWh for several years without revision and considering the increased need for electricity, (a) by what date will the FBE allocation for the poor and indigent be increased and (b) what is the envisaged time frame for the implementation of the revised FBE allocation? NO1592E

**★282. Mr L D Selepe (MK) to ask the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources:**

(1) Given the current volatility in the global petroleum sector, with Brent crude futures surging over 13% and threats to the Strait of Hormuz disrupting shipping and driving up fuel prices, what measures has his department taken to mitigate the impact of the price hikes on South African consumers;

(2) whether there are any plans to review the fuel pricing mechanisms of the Republic and/or explore alternative energy sources; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NO1613E

**★320. Ms O M C Maotwe (EFF) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

Whether, considering that the Western Cape High Court has ruled that section 7(4) of the Value-Added Tax Act, Act 89 of 1991, is invalid and not consistent with the Constitution of the Republic, 1996, he will appeal the judgement since he was the first respondent; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NO1652E

**★262. Ms S W Davids (ANC) to ask the Minister of Agriculture:**

Whether, with regard to the 24 February 2026 briefing to the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, where officials reported 1 072 confirmed foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks and 714 suspected outbreaks, alongside a risk-based distribution of the first one million imported vaccine doses, he has also set a public target of vaccinating 80% of the national cattle herd by 31 December 2026; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NO1593E

**★302. Mr A G Bateman (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

Whether, considering that the Republic's tax rates are amongst the highest among developing nations and are even high when compared with the developed world, he has a medium-term strategy to make the Republic's tax rates competitive in order to attract investment, economic growth and the creation of new jobs; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the full details of the strategy? NO1634E

**★263. Ms K L N Sangoni (ANC) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

Given that over-the-top platforms and online services operating in the Republic remain largely unregulated, (a) what policy position has his department developed on over-the-top service taxation and local content obligations and (b) at what stage is the engagement with the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa and the Film and Publications Board on implementing the specified obligations? NO1594E

**★248. Mr A D Beesley (ActionSA) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

- (1) Whether, in light of recent statements by the Commissioner of the SA Revenue Service (SARS), Mr E Kieswetter, that the illicit economy has grown from approximately 5% of gross domestic product (GDP) two decades ago to between 12% and 15% of GDP today (details furnished), he has found that the illicit economy has expanded significantly faster than most formal sectors of the South African economy over the past two decades; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) what specific fiscal, enforcement and/or institutional interventions have been implemented by the National Treasury, in collaboration with SARS and law-enforcement agencies, to reverse the rapid growth of illicit economic activity that undermines compliant businesses and erodes the tax base? NO1578E

**★264. Ms M L Mofokeng (ANC) to ask the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources:**

- (1) Given the promulgation of the Upstream Petroleum Resources Development Act, Act 23 of 2024, what local content obligations and management participation requirements have been embedded in the regulations under the specified Act that go beyond the 10% baseline of the previous framework;
- (2) what mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that black-owned and black-women-owned upstream companies are able to meaningfully participate in licensing rounds, rather than serving merely as passive equity partners to large international operators? NO1595E

**★306. Mr E V Baptie (DA) to ask the Minister of Electricity and Energy:**

What progress has been made on the ringfencing of revenues in the electricity distribution business of municipalities that are not paying diligently for the electricity that is purchased from Eskom? NO1638E

**★285. Mr K B Madlala (MK) to ask the Minister of Agriculture:**

- (1) What measures have been taken to ensure that provinces are leading the control of the foot-and-mouth disease;
- (2) whether the procurement of vaccines has been decentralised to provinces given that schedule 5 designates veterinary services as functional areas of exclusive provincial competence; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

NO1616E

**★266. Ms N Makasi (ANC) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

Given that unresolved land claims represent critical challenges to the achievement of the commercialisation strategy in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority, what inter-ministerial framework has been implemented to resolve the land-tenure challenges?

NO1597E

**★326. Mr M N Paulsen (EFF) to ask the Minister of Electricity and Energy:**

- (1) Noting that energy security needs have previously required deferring the scheduled retirement of Eskom's aging coal plants, what are the details of his plan to reconcile such delays with the decarbonisation of the Republic after the commitments under the Just Energy Transition regime;
- (2) considering that loadshedding was again implemented at the beginning of 2025, what specific interventions has he put in place to ensure that the Generation Operational Recovery Plan is sufficient to prevent further rotational blackouts without relying indefinitely on non-compliant coal units?

NO1660E

**★258. Inkosi R N Cebekhulu (IFP) to ask the Minister of Agriculture:**

In light of the strong performance of the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors, which recorded growth of 17,4% and played a key role in contributing to the Republic's overall gross domestic product increase in the fourth quarter of 2025, how does he intend to leverage this momentum to strengthen food security, particularly by (a) supporting emerging and small-scale farmers and (b) ensuring that strategic partnerships and investment initiatives translate into sustainable long-term growth for the sector?

NO1589E

**★267. Ms F Hassan (ANC) to ask the Minister of Electricity and Energy:**

- (1) Following the recent announcement of a game-changing preferential electricity tariff framework aimed at supporting the ferrochrome smelter industry, what total number of smelters have formally committed to the new tariff arrangement;
- (2) whether any safeguards are in place to ensure that the specified intervention does not shift costs onto households and/or small businesses already facing tariff pressures; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

NO1598E

**★314. Mr A D de Blocq van Scheltinga (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

With reference to damage done by the January floodings in the Kruger National Park, what are the full details of the resource mobilisation and/or fundraising efforts undertaken by his department to repair the park?

NO1646E

**★268. Ms S W Davids (ANC) to ask the Minister of Agriculture:**

Whether his department has concluded any urgent and time-bound intervention to keep the sugar mills operating for the April 2026 crushing season; if not, why not; if so, what are the (a) funding and (b) governance steps that have been taken to avoid large-scale job losses and local economic collapse in the affected mill communities?

NO1599E

**★277. Mr M Manyi (MK) to ask the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources:**

- (1) Whether his department has undertaken any scientific and/or policy review of the continued classification and regulation of coal primarily as a mineral under the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, Act 28 of 2002; if not, why not; if so, what were the key findings;
- (2) whether his department has considered developing a dedicated regulatory framework for coal as a strategic energy and industrial resource, similar to the approach adopted for petroleum under the Upstream Petroleum Resources Development Act, Act 23 of 2024; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

NO1608E

**★322. Ms T J Mokwele (EFF) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

Whether, given that the Unemployment Insurance Fund remains financially solvent with accumulated reserves and steady contributions by workers, and considering the need for financial assessment against structural unemployment and high benefit outflow, she has found that the current reserves are actuarially sufficient under prolonged high unemployment scenarios; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) what are the relevant details and (b) on what date was the last valuation conducted?

NO1656E

**★269. Mr S I Subrathie (ANC) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

Whether his department has assessed the revenue impact of removing small parcels under 1kg from the reserved postal services on the turnaround sustainability of the SA Post Office (SAPO); if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) are the findings and (b) alternative business model has his department put in place to ensure SAPO remains financially viable in the changing postal sector? NO1600E

**★307. Ms S Singh (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

Considering that the decision to disestablish the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa and establish a Digital Development Fund was first proposed in 2016, yet previous administrations failed to finalise the necessary legislation and thereby left the Agency in prolonged uncertainty, what progress has he made to advance this long-overdue reform since he took office? NO1639E

**★272. Ms N S Nkopane (ANC) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

(a) How will her department ensure that employers hiring undocumented foreign nationals are prosecuted and (b) what measures have been implemented and/or are envisaged to promote voluntary compliance with labour laws by the employers? NO1603E

**★273. Ms N Gantsho (ANC) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

(a) What measurable benchmarks with timelines has he set for iSimangaliso Wetland Park to reduce its dependency on outsourced professional services, (details furnished); (b) how is his department addressing the budget constraints and structural barriers that have historically prevented the filling of critical internal vacancies? NO1604E

**★308. Ms S Singh (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

Considering that for nearly a decade, successive administrations failed to stabilise the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa and the Universal Service and Access Fund, resulting in governance instability, leadership vacancies, declining performance and repeated audit findings, what steps has he taken since he assumed office to address this legacy of mismanagement and restore stability to these institutions? NO1640E

**★283. Ms H H Mbele (MK) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

Given that her department was duly alerted regarding the appointment of a certain company (name furnished) for the Labour Activation Programme, notwithstanding the fact that the company is under investigation for fraud committed against the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, specifically for the submission of a fraudulent Unemployment Insurance Fund certificate which was confirmed as such by her department in 2024, (a) what is the current status of the investigation into the specified matter and (b) by what date is the investigation anticipated to be concluded? NO1614E

**★276. Ms J Q Khumalo (ANC) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

What plans does his department have in place to improve access to careers in the environmental sciences for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds?

NO1607E

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