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# “We will rise again” says President Ramaphosa during #SONA21



President Cyril Ramaphosa

*Delivering the 2021 State of the Nation Address (SONA) in a hybrid joint sitting of Parliament, President Cyril Ramaphosa took the nation down memory lane to the release of former President Nelson Mandela 31 years ago, when he walked out of the gates of Victor Verster prison as a free person, a living embodiment of the resilience and courage of the South African people, writes Mava Lukani.*

President Ramaphosa said: “On the day of his release, Madiba gave his first public address here in Cape Town, where he reminded South Africans that there were difficult days ahead, and that the battle was far from being won.” Quoting former President Mandela, President Ramaphosa said: “Now is the time to intensify the struggle on all fronts. To relax our efforts now would be a mistake which generations to come will not be able to forgive.”

In counting the great cost of the past year, President Ramaphosa said we may be tempted to lose faith. “But we can get through this. Because we are a nation of heroes.” He compared our resilience to South Africa’s extraordinary fynbos family of plants that have thrived on the southernmost tip of Africa for 40 million years. This group of plants included the national flower, the protea, and is one

of the most diverse on the planet. Fynbos is also very adaptable and thrives in hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. And every once in a while, it needs fire to burn through it, so that seeds can be released, plants can rejuvenate and the whole cycle of life can begin again. “Throughout the summer, the burned foliage lies desolate,” President Ramaphosa said. “But when the autumn rains return, the seeds germinate, and its life cycle begins all over again.”

Nearly a year has passed since South Africa saw its first case of Covid-19. “As we look on the grave damage that this disease has caused,” the President continued, “we know that like the fynbos, like all those who have walked this land before us, we will rise again.”

The President remembered the nearly one-and-a-half million South Africans who

have been infected with the coronavirus and the more than 45 000 people who are known to have died from Covid-19. “Beyond these statistics lies a human story of tragedy and pain. It is also a story of courage and resilience. The year ahead must be a time for change, for progress and for rebirth, and it must be a year in which we rise again,” the President said. 🇿🇦



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## 2021 SONA anchored to four government priorities

*President Cyril Ramaphosa focused his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on just four priorities for 2021. Firstly, to defeat the coronavirus pandemic; secondly, accelerate economic recovery; thirdly, implement economic reforms to create sustainable jobs and drive inclusive growth; and finally, fight corruption and strengthen the state, writes Mava Lukani.*



HISTORY: Hybrid joint sitting of Parliament

In previous years, SONA would have included six or seven priority areas for the government’s plans for the year, but President Ramaphosa said he will address the other important elements of the government’s programme for the year in the coming weeks.

President ramaphosa emphasised on the nation’s recovery from Covid-19, as South Africa has just emerged from the second wave of infections, driven by a new variant of the virus. This second wave was more severe, the President said, and cost many more lives than the first. “Had the government not moved quickly to restrict movement and activity, had the government not prepared its health facilities, had South Africans not observed the

basic health protocols, the devastation caused by this virus could have been far worse,” the President said.

Part of the government’s measures to combat the disease include the intensification of prevention efforts and strengthening the health system. In addition, the government is planning a massive vaccination programme to save lives and dramatically reduce infections across the population.

President Ramaphosa mentioned the recent setback to these plans, in that one of the vaccines the government had procured, the AstraZeneca vaccine, offers minimal protection from mild to moderate infection by the new variant known as 501Y

V2. "This is according to early findings of a study by our scientists and researchers. The government applauds these scientists for leading this research and providing new evidence that is vital for guiding our response. Since this variant is now the dominant variant in our country, these findings have significant implications for the pace, design and sequencing of our vaccine programme," he said.

While it should not delay the start of the vaccination programme by much, it will affect the choice of vaccines and the manner of their deployment. "The first phase of our vaccination programme, which is targeted at health and other frontline workers, will now use the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which has been shown to be effective against the 501Y V2 variant."

He announced that the government has secured nine million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and that the first batch of 80 000 doses will arrive in the country the following week. Further consignments will arrive over the next four weeks, totalling 500 000 Johnson & Johnson vaccines. In addition, he said: "We have secured 12 million vaccine doses from the

global Covax facility.

This stock of vaccines will be complemented by other vaccines that are available to South Africa through the African Union's African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team facility. Pfizer has also committed 20 million vaccine doses, the President said, commencing with deliveries at the end of the first quarter.

President Ramaphosa assured South Africans that all medication imported into the country is monitored, evaluated, investigated, inspected and registered by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority. "We will continue to use the science-driven approach that has served us well since the earliest days of the pandemic," he added.



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# Four priority interventions will drive economic growth

*During the State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Cyril Ramaphosa said the government will focus on four priority economic interventions. They are: a rollout of infrastructure throughout the country; an increase in local production; an employment stimulus to create jobs and support livelihoods; and the rapid expansion of energy generation capacity, writes Mava Lukani.*

On infrastructure, he said: "We knew that to achieve this objective we would need to steadily rebuild technical skills within government to prepare and manage large infrastructure projects. The government has developed an infrastructure investment project pipeline worth R340 billion in network industries such as energy, water, transport and telecommunications. These projects include two major human settlements projects that will provide homes to almost 68 000 households in Gauteng. Similar human settlements projects are planned in other provinces."

On the creation of new cities, the President said the draft masterplan for a smart city, which will become home to between 350 000 to 500 000 people within the next decade, was completed in November 2020 and is now out for public comment.

Meanwhile, the Infrastructure Investment Plan identifies roads projects worth R19 billion covering the spine of the South African road network. Work is underway to finalise project finance structuring for these projects. Resources have been committed from the fiscus to support the construction and rehabilitation of the major N1, N2, and N3 highways.

On support to increase local production and to make South African exports globally competitive, the President announced that social partners that participated in the development of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan have agreed to work together to reduce South Africa's reliance on imports by 20% over the next five years.

As the Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of global value chains, the government has been able to speed up this initiative as the local supply chains opened to locally manufactured products. To this end, Cabinet approved the SMME [Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises] Focused Localisation Policy Framework, which identified 1 000 products.

Furthermore, the departments of Small Business Development and of Trade, Industry and Competition are supporting SMMEs to access larger domestic and international markets. "These efforts are supported by robust manufacturing support programmes," he added.

On industrialisation, which is underpinned by sector master plans to rejuvenate and grow key industries, the President reported that four master plans have been completed and signed to



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**SYMBOLS OF AUTHORITY: Mace and Black Rod**

date. These are part of the social compact between labour, business, government and communities and have already had an impact in their respective industries.

Through the implementation of the poultry master plan, the industry has invested R800 million to upgrade production. South Africa now produces an additional one million chickens every week. The sugar master plan was signed during the lockdown, with a commitment from large users of sugar to procure at least 80% of their sugar needs from local growers. "Through the implementation of the plan, last year saw a rise in local production and a decline in imported sugar, creating stability for an industry which employs about 85 000 workers," he said. 🇿🇦

# Covid19 vaccination programme will rely on collaboration, says President

*President Cyril Ramaphosa told the nation that the success of the country's vaccination programme will rely on active collaboration between all sectors of society: The government is greatly encouraged by the active involvement of business, labour, the health industry and medical schemes in preparing for this mass vaccination drive, writes Mava Lukani.*



"As we have overcome before, we will overcome again and rise. But it is not just this disease that we must defeat. We must overcome poverty and hunger, joblessness and inequality. We must overcome a legacy of exclusion and dispossession that continues to impoverish our people, and which this pandemic has severely worsened," he said.

He reported that government's plans have had to be adapted in response to the global emergency of Covid-19. Budgets have had to be reprioritised and many programmes have had to be deferred. Over the past year, South Africa has experienced a sharp decline in growth and a significant increase in unemployment. "Poverty is on the rise. Inequality is deepening. In the third quarter of 2020, our economy was 6% smaller than it was in the last quarter of 2019."

He reported that 1.7 million fewer people were employed in the third quarter of 2020 than in the first quarter, before the pandemic struck. "Our unemployment rate

now stands at a staggering 30.8%. As a result of the relief measures that we implemented and the phased reopening of the economy, we expect to see a strong recovery in employment by the end of 2021."

As the government worked to contain the spread of the virus, it also had to take extraordinary measures to support ordinary South Africans, assist businesses in distress and protect people's livelihoods. "The social and economic relief package that we introduced in April last year is the largest intervention of its kind in our history. It identified measures worth a total of R500 billion – or about 10% of our GDP [gross domestic product] – to provide cash directly to the poorest households, to provide wage support to workers and to provide various forms of relief to struggling businesses.

"A total of 18 million people, or close to one-third of the population, received additional grant payments through these relief measures. It is estimated that this grant lifted more

than five million people above the food poverty line, helping to alleviate hunger in a moment of great crisis.

"To date," he continued, "more than R57 billion in wage support has been paid to more than 4.5 million workers through the Special UIF TERS [Unemployment Insurance Fund Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme]. More than R1.3 billion has been provided in support mainly for small- and medium-sized businesses."

In addition, more than R70 billion in tax relief was extended to businesses in distress. Around R18.9 billion in loans have been approved for 13 000 businesses through the loan guarantee scheme. 🇿🇦



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# State-owned enterprises are an increasing liability, says President

*Speaking on state-owned enterprises (SOEs) during the State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa said they have been paralysed by mismanagement and looting. This has turned them into an increasingly heavy burden for tax payers, writes Abel Mputing.*



The disruptive effects of Covid-19 have compounded the problem, according to the President and placed further pressure on the economy. However, the Presidential State-Owned Enterprises Council has outlined a clear set of reforms that will enable SOEs to fulfil their mandate for growth and development.

Legislation for SOEs will be tabled in Cabinet this financial year and in Parliament in the following year. In addition, a centralised SOEs model will be implemented. "A centralised SOEs model is being implemented this financial year, which will ensure a standardised governance, financial management and operational performance framework for all SOEs to ensure that they are responsive to the country's needs and the implementation of the National Development Plan."

Turning to Eskom, President Ramaphosa assured the nation that hard work is being done to ensure that load shedding does not impact negatively on the

economy. Part of Eskom's turnaround strategy hinges on its restructuring process, which seeks to ensure that generation, distribution and transmission operate as independent legal entities. This will be coupled with the addition of renewable energy sources and independent energy producers to the national grid.

These moves form part of broader structural economic reforms aimed at propelling high economic growth rates and employment. This commitment is championed by Operation Vulindlela, which draws critical skills and resources from both the National Treasury and the President's office. The President conceded that "these reforms are necessary to reduce costs and barriers to entry, increase competition, stimulate new investment and create space for new entrants in the market". 🇿🇦



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## Commitment to fight crime will help promote economic recovery

*As South Africa charts its way out of the ravages of unemployment and declining economic growth imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, President Cyril Ramaphosa committed his administration to focusing on fighting crime, writes Malatswa Molepo.*

The pledge to fight crime that President Ramaphosa made during his State of the Nation Address (SONA) has been identified as one of the enablers of economic growth. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has argued that it is not surprising that crime and violence remain so disturbingly high in South Africa. In fact, it is surprising that there is not more of it, given the country's violent past as poverty and inequality continue to deepen and increase.

According to the ISS, crime will be exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19, and that the state has failed

to maintain the confidence of its citizens and promote respect for the rule of law. But this will soon change when crime-fighting pillars announced by the President are implemented.

The President said there has been a great effort in rebuilding capacity within the law enforcement agencies as a way of ensuring effectiveness of those bodies. "Critical leadership positions have been filled with capable, experienced and trustworthy professionals," President Ramaphosa said.

Another horrid crime that the President highlighted as a concern is the scourge of

corruption, which has been laid bare by evidence given at the Zondo Commission of Inquiry. As a remedy, the President announced that the government has started the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, which lays out the basis for a comprehensive and integrated society-wide response to corruption.

“We will shortly be appointing members of the National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council, which is a multi-sectoral body that will oversee the initial implementation of the strategy and the establishment of an independent statutory anti-corruption body that will report to Parliament.

“Cooperation among law enforcement agencies has also been highlighted as an effective tool to ensure alliance in fighting crime. There is improved cooperation and sharing of resources between the respective law enforcement agencies, enabling a more integrated approach to investigations and prosecutions,” President Ramaphosa said.

To strengthen collaboration and cooperation, the President announced the establishment of a fusion centre, which brings together key law enforcement agencies to share

information and resources. The Fusion Centre, according to President Ramaphosa, has brought many cases to trial and preserved or recovered millions of rands in public funds.

To encourage economic activity and reverse the 6% contraction of the economy in the third quarter of 2020, an effort will be made by government to fight crimes like cable theft, railway infrastructure vandalism, land invasions, construction site disruptions, and attacks on truck drivers, because these types of crimes hamper economic activity and discourage investment.

President Ramaphosa informed the country that task teams have been set up in a number of provinces to deal with extortion and violence on sites of economic activity. “We are also fast-tracking the implementation and capacitation of the Border Management Agency to curb illegal immigration and cross-border crimes,” the President said.

As South Africa contemplates a life post-Covid-19, it will also anticipate a crime-free country that is focused on economic growth, that creates employment for the millions of work-ready adults in the country. 🇿🇦



## Political parties in Parliament debate SONA

*Debating President Cyril Ramaphosa’s State of the Nation Address (SONA), political parties represented in Parliament had diverse opinions on the speech, with some bashing the government and accused the President of failing to inspire confidence in his address to the nation, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

Some political parties argued that the speech was a replication of previous addresses with no evidence of improvement on promises made in the past. However, for African National Congress (ANC), the speech was a reflection of a government that was “focused, determined and hard at work”.



**Ms Pemmy Majodina**

According to the ANC’s Chief Whip in the National Assembly, Ms Pemmy Majodina, the President, “gave full account of the 2020 state of the nation and crafted a clear way forward and implementation plan for 2021 ... Mr President, the spirit of your address was an appeal for resilience and courage in this time of crisis that we are facing, with two major challenges – the coronavirus and struggling economic growth. We join millions of South Africans in expressing confidence in your government Mr President – focused, determined and hard at work,” said the Chief Whip.

She also reiterated the ANC parliamentary caucus’s commitment to

robust oversight to ensure accountability and fight corruption.

In an apparent response to claims made by former Members of Parliament in the Zondo Commission that the ANC’s parliamentary caucus was protecting corruption and lenient on implicated government officials, the Chief Whip said: “I want to state it categorically that no member of the ANC has ever been instructed to cover up corruption. On the contrary, we instructed all our committee chairpersons, whips and members to leave no stone unturned and hold those responsible for the deeply disturbing acts of corruption accountable. “We reject the narrative that the ANC caucus has sought to micromanage committees and to prevent them from performing their duties.”

Ms Majodina also told the joint sitting about her party’s commitment to ensure the 6th Parliament remains consistent in taking action against corruption and crime, regardless of who is implicated.

“We have already demonstrated this commitment in the manner in which we have processed the AG’s [Auditor-General’s] first report on the expenditure of Covid-19 relief funds. The oversight committees called the respective Ministers and DGs [Directors-General] to account accordingly, when we

do our oversight diligently as Parliament, using the powers vested in us by the Constitution, we are able to achieve decisive outcomes,” she said.



**Mr John Steenhuisen**

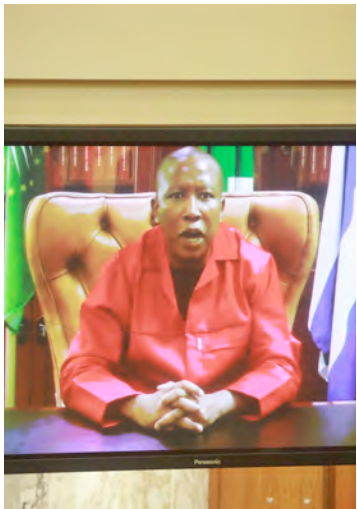
First to denounce President Ramaphosa’s address was the leader of the official opposition (the Democratic Alliance), Mr John Steenhuisen, who claimed that there is a growing realisation that the President cannot tackle the big issues of the day. “Except for a few lines on Covid-19 and the vaccines, this SONA was more or less the same as the ones in 2018, 2019, and 2020. The same burning issues are still right there at the top of the President’s agenda – promises made in previous SONAs – but very little evidence of improvement,” Mr Steenhuisen said.

He also argued that the President’s entire speech was full of massive contradictions between noble-sounding pledges and the realities of the government’s actions, and exposed a huge gap between what was promised and what the government is able to do or willing to do. “The President spoke of fixing the public service as he did in last year’s SONA, but what he really means is that he wants to continue with the ANC’s state capture project through the policy of cadre deployment.

Mr Steenhuisen also accused the government of discouraging entrepreneurship and making it as hard as possible for small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) to survive because of unreliable power supply, rigid labour laws and incompetent state bureaucracy. He also

opposed expropriation without compensation, arguing that it is the antithesis of strengthening agricultural output. "It is a massive deterrent to investment, not only in agriculture, but in all sectors of our economy," he said.

Reacting to the President's announcement of an anti-corruption advisory council, Mr Steenhuisen said the promise was meant to create an illusion that something was being done. "We don't need another council or panel or agency. We need to bring back the Scorpions with their 93% conviction rate," he said.



**Mr Julius Malema**

The leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Mr Julius Malema, labelled the President as "incompetent, incapacitated and the most unreliable human being. Three years since you took office, you have not achieved anything that is worth mentioning – nothing to celebrate under your leadership. The conditions of our people are getting worse, while coronavirus has also worsened them.

"When you were elected President in 2018, the unemployment rate was 26.1%. Today it has increased to 30.1%, and the number of unemployed people has increased to well over 10 million. More than two million people who had jobs when you took office, no longer have jobs; you must take responsibility for that," said Mr Malema.

Mr Malema also argued that despite empty promises at investment summits, the economy continues to shrink,

adding that the country was already in recession for three quarters before the outbreak of coronavirus. This was made worse by the fact that the government's contribution to gross domestic product continues to decline due to the reduction of the budget. South Africa's industrial capacity was not growing because there was no coherent and cogent industrial policy for industrial expansion.



**Mr Mangosuthu Buthelezi**

Inkatha Freedom Party leader (IFP) Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi was more concerned about corruption in government, and suggested that the costs of vaccines and their rollout must be scrutinised by Parliament's Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa).

"The problem in our country is corruption. It is unfortunate that despite the admission that South Africa is in an economic crisis, there were still those who saw a pandemic as a chance for themselves to get rich. Parliament must work hard to halt maladministration and fraud in government," Prince Buthelezi said.



**Mr Pieter Groenewald**

Mr Pieter Groenewald, the leader of the Freedom Front Plus (FF+), was consistent

on his party's stance on government's the black empowerment policy, saying this was discrimination against whites. "Covid-19 tourism relief grants and the equity grants excluded white South Africans, but the irony is that there are white business people who employ black people. Why don't you want to assist them to keep their employees? That is discrimination," said Mr Groenewald.



**Mr Bantu Holomisa**

The leader of the United Democratic Movement (UDM), Mr Bantu Holomisa, said South Africa needs a competent government that can create decent living conditions and advance the livelihoods of all its people, especially the poor. He also commended the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture for uncovering explosive evidence of corruption that he said has been allowed to flourish for many years.

"There is still more to uncover and we must allow the Zondo Commission the time and resources to finish its job, and ultimately the money that was stolen must be returned to the people and the guilty must go to jail," said Mr Holomisa.



**Rev Kenneth Meshoe**

The leader of the African

Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), Rev Kenneth Meshoe, said the speech was a repeat of what the President has said in previous SONAs, with the exception of the government's priority to fight coronavirus. "Whilst the ACDP welcomes the update of the economic recovery plan, we are nevertheless concerned that the upcoming World Economic Forum's (WEF's) great reset in August will jeopardise the government's economic recovery plan.

"On the face of it, our NDP [National Development Plan] and the WEF's great reset have one major goal in common, they both aim for equality by 2030. However, there are huge disparities between the two. one of the strategies of the NDP is to broaden ownership of assets to historically disadvantaged groups, while according to the WEF's great reset, you will own nothing and you will be happy. How is that possible?" remarked Rev Meshoe.

He also criticised the programme for "compassionate access" to the drug Ivermectin for patients with Covid-19 as "never intended to provide access to medicine, and demonstrating no political will to be compassionate at all, given the regulatory obstacles the programme presents. This is disgraceful and a flagrant undermining of the fundamental of the human rights of the patients and doctors," said Rev Meshoe.



**Mr Vuyo Zungula**

The African Transformation Movement (ATM) warned the President not to use Covid-19 as an excuse for government's poor performance, saying

"corruption, unemployment and a poorly performing economy were there even before Covid-19".

"We still say restore the R400 billion informal economy to the citizens in order to have a meaningful impact on the reduction of unemployment and poverty. It cannot be that more than 70% of the most basic level of the economy is in the hands of non-citizens. Prioritising citizens in the informal economy and jobs is long overdue," argued ATM leader, Mr Vuyo Zungula.



**Mr Mandla Galo**

Mr Mandla Galo of the African Independent Congress (AIC) commended the President's speech, which he said was anchored in key developmental, high-impact growth initiatives such as boosting the manufacturing sector in order to ignite growth through job creation and export revenue.

He also advised President Ramaphosa to "urgently proclaim a fully-fledged import substitution agency to be housed within the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition. This agency will have an import substitution strategy to focus on infantile industries, preferential procurement and targeted funding to textile, clothing, footwear and fibre industries".



**Mr Ahmed Shaik-Emam**

Mr Ahmed Shaik-Emam of the National Freedom Party (NEP) said: "We admit there have been successes in the country but equally, there have been failures. The fact of the matter is that despite the successes, we are still facing a crisis in South Africa," he said. He also condemned corruption, saying the country was losing about R300 billion annually in infrastructure development because of non-implementation of projects and underspending.



**Mr Ganief Hendrickcs**

The Leader of Al Jama-ah, Mr Ganief Hendricks, applauded the President for speeding up legislation to fight gender-based violence. He also added that the President must now work on ending racial discrimination in the Cape Flats and capture the ganglands. He said Al Jama-ah also wants the NDP to be revisited to respond to the post-Covid new normal.



**Mr Seiso Mohai**

The Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Mr Seiso Mohai, welcomed the President's vision on the transformation of apartheid's spatial development patterns through the creation of post-apartheid smart cities, saying this was long overdue. Mr Mohai also called for greater

investment into human settlements to transform townships into liveable places that uphold the dignity of the people.

He also spoke strongly against corruption, saying it "deprives our people of basic services – the employment of incompetent, unqualified officials, illegal awarding of tenders, and non-payment of service providers are among the challenges faced by local municipalities. "We are confident that the rollout of the District Developmental Model countrywide will enhance greater cooperation, coordination and joint planning. This will in turn address the uneven capacity and development between different provinces by enhancing coordination of support and monitoring of local government by the national and provincial governments," said Mr Mohai.



**Mr Mzwanele Nyhotso**

According to Pan African Congress's (PAC's) Mr Mzwanele Nyhontso: "SONA continues to be a make-believe form of address without content. It continues to fail the dispossessed, most exploited, the dehumanised, the African indigenous majority. SONA failed dismally to address the fundamental interests of the African majority. Land remains an item of conflict in Azania and it must be repossessed and restored to its rightful owners," he said. 🇿🇦

## Vaccine rollout under Parliament's spotlight

*Opposition parties in the National Assembly (NA) want the government to be more transparent and provide a detailed plan, as well as estimated costs of the Covid-19 vaccine rollout process, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*



developed any plan for the vaccination of the nation until it is too late and the consequence of this is devastating for the lives of millions of our people. While the whole world is moving at speed to vaccinate, we are grasping at straws here, taking whatever crumbs we can get. The truth of the matter is that we were caught unawares as far as vaccine procurement and rollout is concerned," said Dr Thembekwayo.

For Mr Mkhuleko Hlengwa of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the disappointing part was the "ongoing politicisation of the vaccine programme and the apparent inability of the various role players to work together in the interest of the people of South Africa . . . We are disappointed by the ongoing concern on the secrecy and the lack of transparency in vaccine-related matters."

Mr Steve Swart of the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) said the lack of transparency around the rollout of the vaccine must raise alarms, given the experience of widespread corruption with regard to the personal protective equipment (PPE) funds. "Frontline healthcare workers were left without PPE, many succumbed to the virus. This is disgraceful, so it is critical that an open and transparent process is followed with the rollout of the vaccine programme. It will indeed be a fertile ground for looting and corruption with between R25 million and R30 billion expected to be spent. This must be prevented at all costs through proper oversight and accountability by Parliament," Mr Swart said.

They argue that the absence of a plan could deny Parliament and the public the right to scrutinise the process and hold the government accountable. The Democratic Alliance (DA) sponsored a debate titled "An urgent matter of national importance: rollout of Covid-19 vaccination plan for South Africa", which was led by Ms Siviwe Gwarube.

Ms Gwarube told the hybrid sitting of the NA that Parliament needs to be appraised of the vaccine rollout process in a detailed fashion, in a codified plan that can be tabled for scrutiny. "The excuse that no codified plan could be produced because the environment is highly competitive and forever changing, is simply lazy at best- Parliament cannot be treated as an inconvenient stop for the executive.

"Some of the questions that must be answered are about the manufacturers that government is negotiating with. This does not mean undermining sensitive negotiations, but an indication of where we are, where we are acquiring vaccines, what are the doses and what are the expected timelines?" she asked.

Ms Gwarube also proposed the

establishment of an ad hoc committee that will oversee the work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee "so that we can demand an efficient rollout of this vaccine with clear deadlines, and make sure that the process is free from corruption".

"The longer we take to vaccinate our people, the higher the chances of a various mutation, which undermines the efficacy of vaccines and worsens our chances against the third wave," she said.

Dr Suzan Thembekwayo, speaking on behalf of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), also lashed out at government for failing to develop a plan to vaccinate the nation and waiting until it was too late to begin negotiating with vaccine manufactures.

"We knew that with the virus affecting all corners of the world, the rat race towards the development of a vaccine would lead to rich countries hoarding the vaccine for themselves to the exclusion and detriment of developing countries, which will be hardest hit by the virus over an extended period of time.

"Despite this, you never



The African Transformation Movement (ATM) feels Parliament has been robbed of meaningful input that would not only have enhanced the safety of our people, but ensured there was more prudence and circumspection than the commercial interests that seem to have been the priority.

“We are meeting in the aftermath of the litany of blunders that have been made by the President and his army of advisors, including the Minister of Health and his eminent scientists. It is not clear which processes were followed to procure the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, were there no better options, what are the implications of rolling out a vaccine which is not FDA-approved?” asked the ATM Member of Parliament, Ms Thandiswa Marawu.

Welcoming the beginning of the vaccination drive in South Africa and calling it a moment of hope after years of unprecedented trauma, disruption and loss, Mr Shaun August of the Good Party also warned that the arrival of the first vaccine on our shores does not signal that the war was over. “Covid-19 is as unpredictable as it is deadly, nobody anywhere in the world knows what the next variant might bring. Let us focus on the logistics of safely vaccinating the nation.

“We are pleased that the vaccine will be free to all South Africans. This is not only fair to our radically unequal society, it also shuts down opportunities for crooks looking to skim money off the project. Anyone caught trying to sell the vaccine or jump the queue must be stopped and prosecuted,” said Mr August.

Mr Willie Madisha of the Congress of the People (Cope) said government’s claims that it was working hard to save South Africans from Covid-19 is not true. He also accused the government of wasting money and allowing corruption by government officials and close family members of

government officials.

“Instead of saving South Africans from the Covid-19 virus, money is wasted by this government. It has even wasted millions of rands to buy wrong vaccines such as the AstraZeneca, for example, though scientists had told government that that vaccine won’t work,” said Mr Madisha.

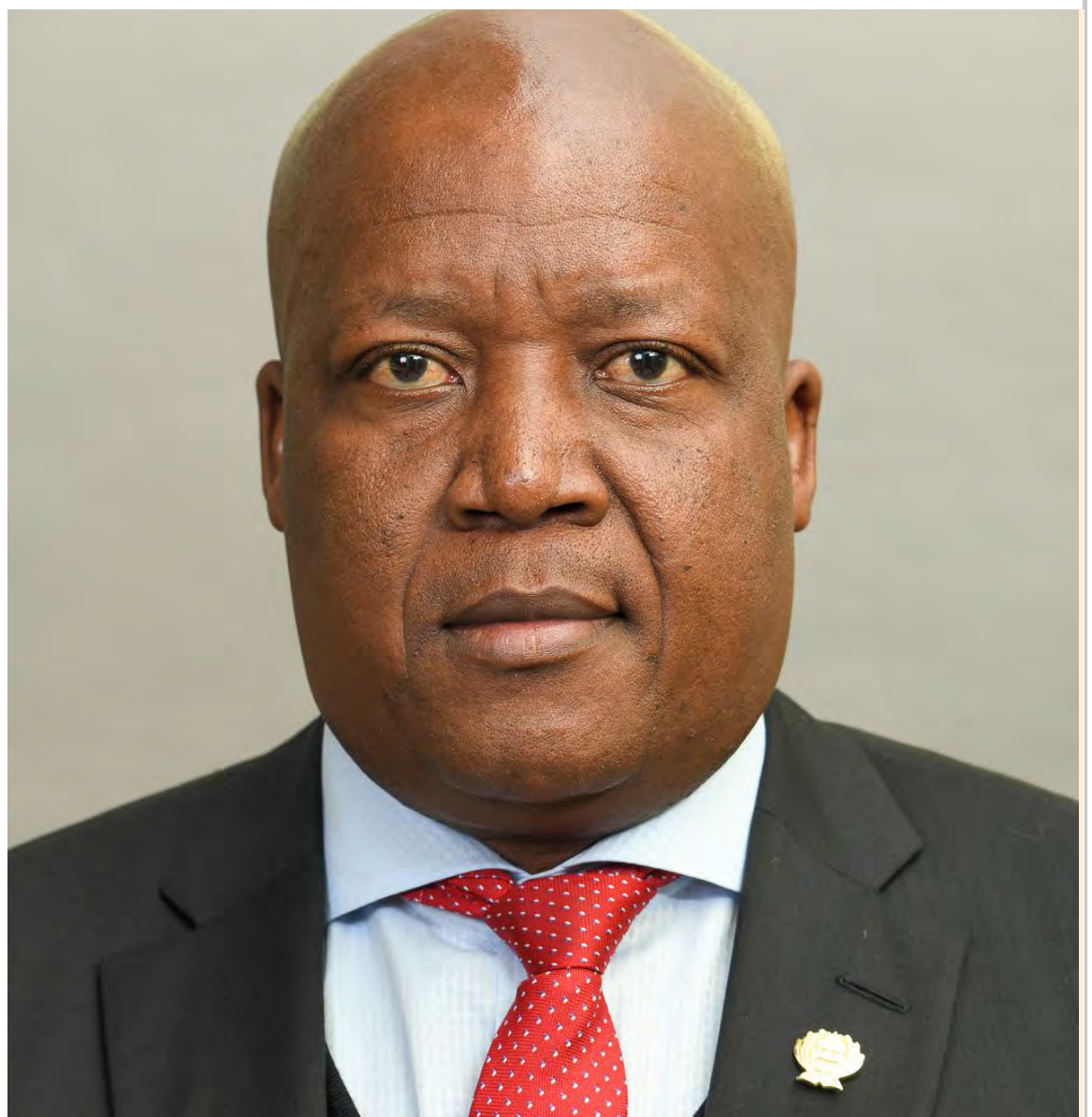
Responding to the criticism from the opposition parties, the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, said the procurement of vaccines has been a complex process that required negotiations with multinational manufactures of vaccines in the face of vaccine nationalism and protectionism. He said the government has signed a non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) with most of the leading manufacturers of vaccines, which allows South Africa to gain a critical insight into their supply lines, their manufacturing plants and possible blockages in the manufacturing pipeline. This allows government to pursue negotiations over the prices and volumes and timelines for delivery.

“We need to correct the erroneous impression that there are questions that we are avoiding to answer because of the NDAs. Rather it should be understood that the NDAs must be respected in order to protect the process of timely acquisitions, but we will make that information available to this House when it is ready,” said Dr Mkhize.

Dr Mkhize also told the House that the signing of the final agreement requires thorough consultations with National Treasury to provide guidance so that Public Finance Management Act, and that other related legislation is upheld before final agreements are signed. “Once all these contracts are signed, they will be made available to the National Treasury and the Auditor-General’s office for perusal,” added Dr Mkhize. 🗣️

# Presiding Officers have a mammoth task of maintaining discipline when debates are heated

*The Presiding Officers of Parliament have a mammoth task of maintaining the decorum of the House, regardless of the levels of heat because of divergence of views on issues on the floor of the House. In session writer Mava Lukani spoke to Mr Jomo Nyambi who is the NCOP’s House Chairperson responsible for committees.*



Mr Jomo Nyambi

**ML: The heat of robustness on issues sometimes results in Members of Parliament ignoring House rules and inadvertently play each other and not the ball. This sometimes wastes time, as the focus becomes on explaining rules.**

Mr Nyambi’s response: On your first question regarding how the presidium is able to maintain order during virtual sittings, I need to indicate that the decorum of the House or any sitting of Parliament needs to be maintained across all three

platforms. Members are guided by rules and joint rules in their participation in the business of Parliament, whether it’s physical, virtual or hybrid attendance.

It is the duty of the Presiding Officers to enforce these rules across all platforms. Presiding Officers have access to the same levers of control on any of the available platforms and their own conduct, like any other Member, is subject to the rules. So it’s rules, rules, rules!

**ML: The NCOP represents**

**provinces. Why are delegates to the NCOP are referred to by their parties instead of provinces during debates in the NCOP and in joint sittings?**

Mr Nyambi’s response: On the matter of speakers being selected by their respective parties during NCOP sittings even though the NCOP represents provinces, the following needs to be taken into consideration. Our system of government is a party-based democracy, which should not seek to diminish the voices of individual parties

as voted for by the people in their various constituencies.

The proportionality of such representation finds expression in the number of Members per party in the NCOP and the time allocated to each party during debates. The NCOP cannot, therefore, appropriate to itself the administrative function of fielding speakers, as this would diminish party political voices which represent the political spectrum of our country. 🇿🇦



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**“SO IT’S RULES,  
RULES, RULES!”**

- Mr Kouakou

## Appropriations committee calls for turnaround strategies of public entities to show progress

*Reporting on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) to the Standing Committee on Appropriations recently, the National Treasury told the committee that the SABC received a R3.2 billion recapitalisation in 2019/20 and that the entity has R1.18 billion remaining from that amount, writes Abel Mputing.*

The committee also heard that staff costs remain a concern, and doubts remain as to the broadcaster’s ongoing sustainability and profitability, in a period of low revenue growth. Part of the SABC’s financial misfortunes are attributed to the non-funding of its public mandate. The National Treasury told the committee a Bill is being planned to address this discrepancy and to determine how “to differentiate the public and commercial mandates, and the funding model for both”.

The committee heard that the South African Post Office (Sapo) is also at a critical juncture in its history. It received R2.947 billion in the in 2018 Adjustments Budget, R1.5 billion of which was allocated for universal service obligations (USO), which is part of its developmental mandate. However, committee

Members asked why Sapo is still unable to adequately service its clientele, given such a large capital injection. The committee heard that if Sapo is not restructured it will collapse, and that it is unable to continue in its current form without annual government funding to cover its losses.

According to the National Treasury, of all public entities, Eskom received the lion’s share of the recapitalisation funds. The entity received R49 billion in 2020, R56 billion in 2021 and R31.7 billion in 2022 budget allocations. It has an R8 million projected internal cost saving, which will rise to R12 million at the end of this financial year. But debt, liquidity and load shedding challenges, among other things, persist.

The Chairperson of the

committee, Mr S’fiso Buthelezi, asked: “Is there value for money in these investments? And what do we do to ensure that Eskom stops being a huge liability to our national budget?” In response, the National Treasury said: “If we did not assist Eskom, it would not be in position to repay its debt. It would have defaulted and the state would be compelled to settle its R300 billion debt, or it would be liquidated. In all, it would be in a much worst condition than now.”

The committee heard that R2 billion of the R10 billion bailout for the South African Airways (SAA) is allocated for employees’ costs. The National Treasury told the committee that the extent of the business rescuers’ salaries have not yet been made public.

Mr Buthelezi remarked that the National Treasury carries



the cross of all departments’ expenditure transgressions because, as the custodian of the public purse, it has an oversight role to play over the expenditure of public funds. “We have been told of turnaround strategies of public entities, but there is little progress in this regard. This impacts on committee Members because it is we who have to approve the recapitalisation of these entities, and that seems to bear no fruits.”

On the South African Police Service (SAPS), Mr Buthelezi said it is unacceptable to hear of underspending when there is a spike in crime, particularly crimes of gender-based violence. “These are implications that should be considered when the

police department does not spend funds allocated to it,” he added.

He further urged the delegation from the National Treasury to contemplate the implications of non-expenditure in relation to job creation, economic stimulation and to our debt to gross domestic product ratio. “Non-expenditure by government departments has cross-sectional effects and implications on the socio-economic programmes of the government. As such, it should not be treated lightly, but as a sign of incompetency and non-compliance, if not an indictment of our government’s developmental agenda,” he said. 🇿🇦

# National Treasury accounts to Standing Committee on Appropriations

*The National Treasury presented the 2020/21 3rd quarter expenditure before the Standing Committee on Appropriations to account for government expenditure and deliverables, as specified by the Minister of Finance during his tabling and subsequent readjustment of the national budget in 2020, writes Abel Mputing.*

On the whole, the preliminary data for the third quarter of 2020/21 shows spending of R730.9 billion, which is lower by R767.1 million or 0.1% against the projected expenditure of R731.6 billion.

The National Treasury's Senior Economist, Dr Mampho Modise, said goods and services contributed to the largest proportion of the lower than projected underspending by R4.3 billion, compensation of employees by R2 billion, payment for capital assets by R1.9 billion. On the other hand, Dr Modise said the transfer and subsidies, payment for financial assets and interest and rent on land are higher than projected by R3.9 billion, R3.4 billion and R5.7 million, respectively. Dr Modise said Covid-19 expenditure amounted to R24.5 billion at the end of the third quarter.

Dr Modise further added that the National Treasury's higher than projected spending was mainly attributed to exchange rate fluctuations in the payment for financial assets for South Africa's sixth capital contribution instalment to the New Development Bank.

In her reportage of the financial performance of public entities, Dr Modise pointed out the difficulty of verifying data, because some are not based on the basic accounting system (BAS). They do not have budget programme structures, as is the case with departments

that are approved by the relevant Treasury. "Hence their programmes are not necessarily linked to deliverable objectives. Their spending is only in economic classification terms."

Most Members of the committee regretted the fact that the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) only spent R700 million of its R4 billion allocation, particularly as the rail network is experiencing underinvestment and vandalism. The Chief Director of State-Owned Enterprises at National Treasury, Mr Ravesh Rajlal, replied: "Given the current magnitude of vandalism, it's now no longer a maintenance issue, it's now part of its capital expenditure."

The National Treasury's report also flagged Denel as a concern, especially in meeting its R1.2 billion debt. Mr Rajlal said: "The major concern is that Denel has liquidity problems. It has not progressed in the sale of its non-core assets and has not found equity partnerships to help turn the company around."

Denel had a turnaround strategy that was approved in 2018 that was meant to turn it into a profitable company. "Why it has not yet been implemented?" asked Mr Xolisile Qayiso, another Member of the committee. "There will be further discussions with the



Mr S'fiso Buthelezi, Chairperson Standing Committee on Appropriations

shareholder in February and it will soon table its intent to dispose the non-core assets before the Cabinet. This would bring R3 billion to Denel's coffers. Debate with our defence force and other strategic clients of Denel will resume to ensure Denel returns to its past glory and is financially viable," replied Mr Rajlal. 🗣️

## Standing Committee on Appropriations calls for deviators from procurement rules to be named

*The Standing Committee on Appropriations received a briefing recently from the Chief Procurement Officer on various departments' procurement deviations, modifications and expansions of contracts in the last quarter of the current financial year 2019/20, writes Abel Mputing.*

The Procurement Office, which is based in the National Treasury, is charged with the task of advancing fair and competitive bidding norms and standards to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations governing procurement processes in government departments.

Sometimes there is a legal basis for deviations, but only in urgent and emergency circumstances that compel a department to deviate from the normal competitive procurement rules. According to the Acting Chief Procurement Officer, Ms Estelle Setan, a deviation can occur if there is a serious



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threat to property, life or due to a natural disaster. This deviation must be recorded within 10 working days if it exceeds R1 million.

A deviation can also be granted to departments to modify and expand a contract due to contractual obligations. According to procurement rules, a modification or expansion of a contract is allowed if a project had to be extended due to unforeseen circumstances or the nature of a contract initially entered into.

The committee heard that the spike in deviations in the second quarter of the current financial year is attributed to eight applications from Eskom amounting to R68.7 billion and which forms part of renegotiating its coal supply. Apart from this, the committee heard that of the 231 deviation applications worth well over R10 billion, the top 20 departments and entities that applied for deviations are the Department of Health and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa).

Ms Setan said much of the Department of Health's deviations relate to its procurement of vaccines and Covid-19-related commitments. As for Prasa, she said: "Well over R1.1 billion has been granted to Prasa for technical assistance, rehabilitation, maintenance of networks and security."

In her view, many departments are departing from competitive bidding processes, which is a worrying trend. Even more alarming is the tendency by accounting officers to implement deviations in the face of National Treasury disapproval.

She told the committee that an automated procurement portal, which will integrate a central supply database to curb non-compliance has not yet been implemented. "This is compounded by the scarcity of information from departments regarding their procurement processes," said

Ms Setan, which "makes it hard for us to conduct our due diligence and carry out our mandate."

Covid-19 has exacerbated this sorry state of affairs and departments have been slow to submit Covid-19-related procurement reports to the Procurement Office. "Of 805 expected reports, only 171 have been received thus far," Ms Setan said.

#### COMMITTEE WANTED ANSWERS

The committee asked if there is enough capacity in the office to uphold its mandate of curbing wasteful expenditure. In response, Ms Setan said: "We don't have enough personnel with the necessary skills to deal with government institutions that have complex supply chain management systems. The office's incapacity to make a follow-up on the outstanding departments' Covid-19 procurement reports is a case in point."

The committee also asked Ms Setan about consequences for accounting officers who ignore the National Treasury's disapproval of their departments' deviations, as a deviation without approval is a serious problem that cannot be tolerated. Ms Setan said this is an issue that the National Treasury is currently grappling with.

Ms Setan told the committee that the office's responsibility is to write rules of engagement. "We are basically policy makers. We ensure that departments have the necessary instruments in place to follow fair procurement processes. Our mandate is limited to that."

The Chairperson of the committee, Mr S'fiso Buthelezi, asked: "Who approves these deviations. Who allows departments to deviate from the law?" In response, Ms Setan said: "There is a Governance, Compliance and Monitoring Unit at the National Treasury that approves deviations."

Mr Buthelezi added: "I am asking this question because there is often an outcry when we, for instance, approve R56 billion for the recapitalisation of entities such as Eskom. The citizens of this country would be even more outraged to learn that these funds are not, at best, spent responsibly and, at worst, in accordance to the procurement laws of this country . . . We need not be pedestrian when we deal with this matter because much of the corruption and fraud engulfing the government departments emanate from lack of compliance with procurement rules and regulations."

Mr Buthelezi demanded that the office should provide the committee with the top five departments and entities that consistently deviate from procurement procedures in successive financial years, and those that are yet to provide it with Covid-19 procurement reports.

He told Ms Setan that it is obvious that the Procurement Office is overstretched and needs to be capacitated urgently to address one of the components that is critical in the management of public funds. "It is unacceptable that we still don't have an integrated supply chain management system across all departments and that it remains as fragmented as it is, given the strategic role that procurement plays in addressing economic inequalities and in effecting service delivery."

He said there is so much at stake here, and added: "We can't afford to be pedestrian about the inefficiencies that confront this office. Our country's development agenda hinges on this office's ability to do its work efficiently and effectively. Its inception was galvanised by this realisation. As a committee, we should not spare any effort in righting all the wrongs that beset its mandate." 🙏



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# Committee on Higher Education calls for improved management at NSFAS

*The Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology has called for close collaboration between the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS); the Office of the Auditor-General (AG); the Department of Education, Science and Technology; and the National Treasury to improve the scheme's performance, writes Mava Lukani.*



The committee received a briefing recently from the AG on NSFAS's audit outcomes, as well as a briefing from NSFAS on its annual report for the 2019/20 financial year. The delegation was led by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande.

The committee heard that NSFAS received a qualified audit opinion with findings for the 2019/20 financial year because of poor quality financial statements that lacked credible evidence reporting and had not been prepared according to the Public Finance Management Act.

The AG also highlighted that the NSFAS had failed to consult the Minister in revising the criteria and conditions for loans and bursaries in

2018/19 and 2019/20. This resulted in NSFAS carrying irregular expenditure of R50 billion.

The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Philly Mapulane, said the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years are the worst years in NSFAS's administration, in which it received a qualified audit opinion and lots of material findings. "Year after year from that period the situation worsened. This is the period in which the entity was under an administrator who was supposed to turn it around, but worsened it," he said.

The failure to gazette the new funding criteria, Mr Mapulane said presents an opportunity to write a strong motivation to the National Treasury to resolve the matter. On non-compliance with

legislation and policy on the determination of benefits for the advisors to the former NSFAS administrator, which is not captured in the audit report, Mr Mapulane requested NSFAS to furnish the committee with information related to this irregular expenditure.

The committee welcomed the new NSFAS Board Chairperson, Mr Ernest Khosa and the new CEO, Mr Andile Nongogo, and assured them of its support. It urged them to improve the situation at NSFAS so that it is able to meet its mandate of serving students.

After the new CEO briefed the committee on plans to implement the AG's recommendations, the committee asked NSFAS to return soon to include timeframes in the presentation. The committee told the new NSFAS board and CEO that they have inherited a mess created by their predecessors, for which they will not be held accountable. However, they will have to present an excellent report at the end of the 2020/21 financial year. 🇿🇦



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# President Ramaphosa commends traditional leaders for their role in fighting Covid-19

*Addressing the annual opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders (NHTL), in Parliament recently, President Cyril Ramaphosa commended traditional leaders for their contribution to the fight against the coronavirus, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

The hybrid sitting of the NHTL was attended by traditional leaders from across the country, including the recently recognised Khoisan leaders following the passing of the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill, as well as Parliament's Presiding Officers and representatives from neighbouring Botswana.

The President hailed the NHTL, the provincial houses and the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) for their management of the customary initiation process during the pandemic. "As hard a decision as it was to make," the President said, "you agreed that we suspend initiation in all provinces when the pandemic was at its height, and as a result, we were able to ensure that fewer people were exposed to the virus.

"I would like to express my gratitude to you as traditional leaders for joining the government to fight the pandemic. You worked with us to ensure that communities observe regulations and protocols, including with respect to funerals and other gatherings. Traditional leaders, through their structures and

working with the government, conducted rigorous awareness campaigns and monitoring, helping to ensure that illegal initiation schools were closed down," said President Ramaphosa.

Traditional leaders assisted with the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the distribution of food parcels, together with various stakeholders, and the NHTL partnered with the Solidarity Fund to implement the Farming Inputs Voucher project, which helped mitigate the impact of the pandemic on traditional farming communities.

"I have further been advised that the Department of Traditional Affairs and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development now have a Memorandum of Understanding in support of agricultural projects in rural communities. The Invest Rural Master Plan, which aims to unlock the potential of traditional communities, was launched in Phokeng on the 25th of February 2021. The master plan is expected to capacitate traditional leaders, traditional councils



and communities to fight rural poverty and foster self-sufficiency," the President said.

On the matter of powers and functions of traditional leaders, President Ramaphosa said broad consultations that were agreed to last year will need to be conducted. He also confirmed that plans to host the Presidential Summit on Land were still in place, and encouraged each provincial house to have their engagements to inform the process leading up to the summit. The consultations would include the broader society, such as youth formations, women's groups and people living with disabilities.

"We remain committed to hosting the Presidential Summit on Land and it is critical that we resuscitate the initial plans to convene provincial engagements beforehand. The institution of traditional leadership must be at the forefront of both land reform and the agrarian revolution," said the President. He also described government's partnership with traditional leaders as "sacrosanct" and for the two to ensure "respectful,

functional and progressive relations".

The Chairperson of the NHTL, Ikosi Sipho Mahlangu, said the President's address to the traditional leaders was very encouraging and confirmed the reality that it was not going to be business as usual. He assured the President of the NHTL's support: "We are going to work differently, we are going to work together with government and with speed, our people are getting impatient," said Ikosi Mahlangu. 🇿🇦



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# Secretary to the National Assembly explains timeframe for processing bills tabled by the Minister of Finance in the National Assembly

*Insession writer Mava Lukani spoke to the Secretary to the National Assembly (NA), Mr Masibulele Xaso, about timeframe within which the Bills that the Minister of Finance tabled in the National Assembly when he delivered the Budget Speech should be processed, timeframe within which the President must assent Bills that are referred to him by Parliament, and amendment or repeal of pre-1994 legislation identified by Parliament as not in line with the current constitutional dispensation.*



**Mr Masibulele Xaso**

On legislation tabled by the Minister of Finance during the Budget speech, which includes the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals, the Division of Revenue Bill, and the Appropriation Bill, Mr Xaso said the passage of these bills is regulated by the Money Bills Procedure and Related Matters Act (2009). The act determines that each of these instruments must be considered sequentially by committees and the respective Houses, within a particular timeframe, as follows:

- Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals: the Standing Committees on Finance must report to each House within 16 days, or as

soon as possible thereafter.

- The Division of Revenue Bill: Parliament must adopt the Bill within 35 days after the Fiscal Framework, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- The Appropriation Bill: Parliament must consider the Bill within four months after the start of the financial year.

On legislation referred to the President for assent, Mr Xaso said Sections 79 and 84 of the Constitution states that when a bill is sent to him for assent, the President must assent to and sign the Bill or, should he have concerns about its constitutionality, refer the Bill back to Parliament. The Constitution does not,

however, prescribe specific timeframes by when such actions must be done. To ensure clarity, Parliament is engaging the Presidency with a view to agree on a framework in fulfilling the aforementioned constitutional obligations.

On pre-1994 legislation, Mr Xaso said, during the Fifth Administration, Parliament identified a list of pre-1994 acts that remain on the statute books and which may require amendment or repeal to ensure consistency with the Constitution. A record of this legislation was communicated to the executive in 2020, with the intention that the Minister responsible for administering each act would be identified and Parliament informed accordingly, so that it could press for further action if needed. The matter is still receiving attention. 🇿🇦

**NA passes Recognition of Customary Marriages Amendment Bill, NCOP amends legislation**

The National Assembly (NA) recently passed the Recognition of Customary

Marriages Amendment Bill and the Bill will now be sent to the President for assent.

The primary aim of the Bill is to amend the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998, by regulating proprietary consequences of customary marriages entered into before commencement of the Act.

The Bill also seeks to bring provisions of the 1998 Act in line with Constitutional Court judgments in *Ramuhovhi and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others* and *Gumede v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others*.

These judgments found s7(1) of the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act to be inconsistent with the Constitution and invalid, because the provision limited the right to human dignity and discriminated unfairly against women on the basis of gender and race, ethnic or social origin.

Last year, the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) passed the Bill with amendments and returned it to the NA for concurrence. The NA agreed with these amendments at one of its plenary sessions recently.

**The NCOP amends the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill and agrees to restart the process of appointing the National Youth Development Agency Board Members**

Meanwhile, during a virtual sitting, the NCOP agreed to the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill with amendments and it will now be sent back to the National Assembly (NA) for further consideration.

The Bill seeks, among other things, to amend three existing election-related laws in preparation for forthcoming local government elections. These laws are the Electoral Commission Act, 1996 (Act No. 51 of 1996) (“Electoral Commission Act”); the Electoral Act, 1998 (Act No.

73 of 1998) (“Electoral Act”); and the Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act, 2000 (Act No. 27 of 2000) (“Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act”).

**Bills before Parliament:**

1. Customary Initiation Bill [B7D-18 (s76)]
2. Local Govt: Municipal Structures A/B [B19D-18 (s76)] (Plen 16/3)
3. Recognition of Customary Marriages A/B [B12B-19 (s76)] (Plen 2/3)
4. Criminal & Related Matters A/B [B17B-20 (s75)]
5. Correctional Services A/B [B32-20 (s75)] (2nd Rd 9/3)

**BILLS THAT ARE INTRODUCED AND TO BE REFERRED**

1. Division of Revenue Bill [B3-21 (prop s76)] (2nd Rd 19/3)
2. Appropriation Bill [B4-21 (prop s77)]

**BILLS BEFORE NA COMMITTEES**

1. Protection of State Information Bill [B6H-2010 (s75)] – Justice (returned)
2. Liquor Products A/B [B10B-2016 (s75)] – Agriculture (NH TL)
3. Performers’ Protection A/B [B24B-2016 (s75)] – Trade (returned)
4. Traditional Courts Bill [B1D-17 (s76)] - Justice
5. Copyright A/B [B13B-2017 (s75)] – Trade (returned)
6. International Crimes Bill [B37-17 (s75)] – Justice
7. Prevention of Hate Crimes & Hate Speech Bill [B9-18 (s75)] – Justice
8. State Liability A/B [B16-18 (s75)] – Justice
9. SA Reserve Bank A/B [B26-18 (s75)] – Finance
10. National Health A/B [B29-18 (s76)] – Health
11. Public Finance Management A/B [B41-18 (s76)] – Finance
12. Civil Aviation A/B [B44-18 (s75)] – Transport
13. National Health Insurance Bill [B11-19 (s76)] - Health
14. Economic Regulation of Transport Bill [B1-20 (s76)] - Transport
15. Fiscal Responsibility Bill

- [B5-20 (s76)] - Finance
16. National Road Traffic A/B [B7-20 (s76)] - Transport
17. Transport Appeal Tribunal A/B [B8-20 (s76)] – Transport
18. Public Finance Management A/B [B13-20 (s76)] - Finance
19. Employment Equity A/B [B14-20 (s75)] - Labour
20. Financial Sector Laws A/B [B15-20 (s75)] – Finance
21. Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) A/B [B16-20 (s75)] – Justice
22. Children’s A/B [B18-20 (s76)] – Social Development
23. Cannabis for Private Purposes Bill [B19-20 (s75)] – Justice
24. Domestic Violence A/B [B20-20 (s75)] – Justice
25. Compensation for Occupational Injuries A/B [B21-20 (s75)] - Labour
26. Expropriation Bill [B23-20 (s76)] – Public Works (NH TL)
27. Fund-raising A/B [B29-20 (s76)] – Social Development
28. Pension Funds A/B [B30-20 (s75)] – Finance
29. Sectional Titles A/B [B31-20 (s76)] – Agriculture
30. Agricultural Produce Agents A/B [B33-20 (s76)] – Agriculture
31. Electoral Laws 2nd A/B [B34-20 (s75)] – Home Affairs
32. Animals Protection A/B [B1-21 (s76)] – Agriculture
33. Disaster Management A/B [B2-21 (s76)] – Cogta (NH TL)
34. Special Appropriation Bill [B5-21 (prop s77)] – Appropriations
35. Ease of Doing Business Bill [B6-21 (prop s75)] – Public Service

**ON NCOP ORDER PAPER**

1. National Gambling A/B [B27B-18 (s76)] (Plen 10/3)
2. Electoral Laws A/B [B22B-20 (s75)] (Prop Am’s) (Plen 2/3)

**BILLS BEFORE NCOP COMMITTEES**

1. National Forests A/B [B11B-16 (s76)] – Land
2. National Environmental Management Laws A/B

- [B14D-17 (s76)]
3. Local Govt: Municipal Systems A/B [B2B-19 (s76)] - Cogta
4. Auditing Profession A/B

- [B2B-20 (s75)] - Finance
5. Upgrading of Land Tenure Rights A/B [B6B]

# Covid-19 claims committed and diligent MP Prescilla Mantashe



**Ms Prescilla Mantashe**

At the end of January, Parliament lost one of its Members, Ms Priscilla Mantashe. Ms Mantashe joined Parliament after the 2014 general elections as a Member of the National Assembly (NA). She served on various parliamentary committees, including the NA’s Rules Committee, the Joint Rules Committee and the Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry.

The NA Speaker, Ms Thandi Modise, and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Mr Amos Masondo, said Ms Mantashe was a committed and hardworking Member of Parliament. She carried her committee oversight work with diligence and passion, they added, and was always driven by empathy for the vulnerable, including workers and rural communities. Her passing robs the institution of a well-versed public

representative who brought a unique perspective to the oversight and legislative work of the committees on which she served.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry, Mr Duma Nkosi, said: “Ms Mantashe was a diligent member of our committee, who always provided valuable inputs. She had great institutional memory as she served on the committee during the previous Parliament as well.”

He added: “Issues of women empowerment, broad-based black economic empowerment and the upliftment of rural communities were close to her heart and this was clear from her line of questions during our meetings with the department and its entities. We are truly saddened to have lost such a great fighter for the poor and vulnerable communities.”