
THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2026

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

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

[Virtual sitting held through Microsoft Teams]

The House met at 14:15.

The hon Speaker took the Chair and read the prayer.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, before we proceed, I would like to make some comments about the logistical arrangements. Today's sitting shall be governed by the Standing Rules, and in instances where the Standing Rules cannot be applied, the ruling by the Presiding Officer is final. The quorum requirements for the sitting of the House are as provide for in the Constitution and the Standing Rules.

The Sergeant-at-Arms will be recording members' attendance. Hon members, you have all the privileges and immunities imparted by law, and unless there is an indication of unanimous concurrence, voting will be confined to only those members who are logged into the sitting that may cast their votes in accordance

with our Standing Rules.

Hon members who are considered to be out of order by the Presiding Officer will have their microphones muted and will be called to order. When an hon member wishes to raise a point of order, such an hon member may address the Presiding Officer as normal, but must mute his or her microphone when he or she has completed speaking.

Hon members participating in this virtual sitting are requested not to sign into Microsoft Teams on more than one device. Hon members are reminded that no interjections are permitted during these virtual sittings, and to this end, I draw the hon members' attention to Rule 40 of our Standing Rules.

Hon members, I wish to reemphasise that because this is a virtual sitting, no interjections are permitted in terms of Rule 40. The Secretary and her administration will ensure that there is dedicated technical support at all times during the sitting. We will now proceed to the Business of the House.

The SPEAKER: I recognise the Chief Whip.

BUSINESS OF THE DAY

(Motions)

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Hon Speaker, I move in my

name:

That, notwithstanding the provision of Rule 20(1), precedence be given to the Matter of Public Importance, as printed on the Order Paper. I so move.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, are there any objections to that motion?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: No objections.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Bans, I will recognise you. Is this in terms of the motion? Is that an objection?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No, hon Speaker, I am raising on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Okay, I will deal with your point of order after that. I have already put the motion to the floor for a vote, so I will recognise you thereafter. Are there any objections to the motion raised by the Chief Whip? No objections. Agreed to. Hon member Bans, before I recognise the hon member Adams, what is your point of order?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, hon Speaker. We have been made aware that a sitting is virtual on the basis that the Chamber is under construction. Can we be provided with a reason as to why we are having a virtual sitting, and not even hybrid, because this morning, we learnt that we are not having a sitting because of the weather conditions. Can we be taken into confidence as to the reason why we are having a virtual sitting? Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Indeed. As I have communicated, and as has been communicated to all members, there has been some construction that was needed due to the damage that was done on the precinct on the sixth floor and on various floors. The service provider and the relevant departments responsible for those repairs have indicated that they will be busy with repairs today.

I, as the Presiding Officer, have allowed the service provider to continue with the work that needed to be done in order to get Parliament, after the damages, back into operations. For that reason, that decision was taken in terms of the Rules. Hon member Sayed?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, thank you very much. Mine is also just to add to the hon member Bans. That surely the service provider would have been provided with the Parliamentary Programme, so as not to, in a sense, disrupt the physical work of Provincial Parliament. These types of matters ought to be ventilated better.

We are not necessarily putting the blame on you, hon Speaker. But just to say that I think going forward, the Parliamentary Programme in its full, ought to be taken into account by service providers and the relevant department in the Executive that are doing this type of work. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Without getting into a dialogue on this matter, the work of Parliament is not being hindered. Virtual and hybrid sittings are as per provided for in the Rules. For that reason, the work of Parliament is continuing. It would have been a different story if the sittings have always just been in the Chamber.

The Rules have been amended to make provision for exactly this purpose, and for that reason, the work of Parliament is continuing in line with the Standing Rules. With that being said, I move onto the subject in the name of the hon member Adams, the Matter of Public Importance. I recognise the hon member Adams.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(In accordance with Standing Rule 143)

The floods affecting the Garden Route region and their devastating
impact on communities in the area

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Good day, hon members, hon Speaker. Good day to all of the people listening on the platform. Hon Speaker,

once again, thank you for allowing me to address the following issues.

I rise today in this urgent debate following the devastating floods and severe weather conditions that have affected communities around the Western Cape from George and the Garden Route at large, to the Karoo, the Cape Flats, the Overberg, Cape Winelands and many informal settlements across the Cape Metro.

The disaster has once again exposed the clear inequalities in service delivery between wealthy and less privileged communities. In affluent areas, infrastructure and stormwater systems are generally better maintained and upgraded regularly. While other communities, informal settlements and backyard dwellers are left flooded and devastated, year after year. Same disaster, different year.

Hon Speaker, this is not only a weather crisis. It is also a housing crisis, and that has been ignored for far too long. Thousands of residents across the Western Cape, 700 to be quite exact, still live in inadequate structures that cannot withstand heavy rain and strong winds, and not because they want to live there, but because they have no alternative housing opportunities available to them.

They are forced to live in these circumstances, and yet, this Government still cannot see the dire needs of our people, our residents. The very people this Government is responsible for and accountable for. The scale of the destruction

across the province is heart-breaking to say the least. In Khayelitsha alone, over a thousand structures were damaged, leaving thousands of residents displaced and standing knee-deep in water, trying to salvage what little they have left.

In areas like Philippi, Pelican Park, Vygie Laan and many other areas, homes were flooded. Roads became inaccessible, and families were left stranded in freezing conditions. In the Cape Winelands, communities such as in Paarl, Worcester and Franschhoek experienced severe flooding, road closures, and food shortages.

The N1 and Huguenot Tunnel near Worcester had to be shut due to the dangerous floodwaters, while agricultural land and vineyards in Robertson were completely submerged. The road closures across the province are now creating another crisis altogether. Major transport routes have been cut off due to floods and collapsed roads and rockfalls, preventing trucks from entering certain towns and communities.

This means that the food deliveries, medical supplies and basic necessities cannot reach many of the affected areas. In places like Witzenberg and surrounding towns, local shops have already started running out of bread and essential goods. Communities are now facing the very real threat of food shortages because of supply trucks simply unable to get through to them.

Hon Speaker, in many of these communities, people have lost everything, their

furniture, clothes, school clothes, identity documentation, food and appliances have been destroyed overnight. Some residents are now sleeping on wet floors and overcrowded halls with blankets separating them from the cold.

The question we must ask this Government today is simply: how are these people expected to survive now? Where do they go? How does a mother feed her children when floodwaters have destroyed the little groceries she had left? How does a pensioner rebuild a roof when they survive on social grants? How does a child return to school when their books, uniforms and belongings are under water?

This is a disaster on its own. When our schools have not been spared from this disaster, in Rosemoor, George, a local school sustained significant damage due to the storm, further disrupting education and creating uncertainty for learners already affected by displacement at home. This Government cannot continue acting surprised every winter while the same vulnerable communities drown in poverty and disaster year after year.

In George, the Karoo, Witzenberg and the Cape Winelands, many residents have suffered severe roof damage due to strong winds. Families are sleeping in cold, wet and unsafe conditions while trying to protect their homes with temporary materials which will not suffice for the winter that lies ahead.

We must therefore ask the serious questions to the hon Speaker: were municipalities adequately prepared? Were stormwater systems properly

maintained and regularly upgraded as it should be? And why are the same vulnerable communities forced to suffer the same destruction every winter?

Hon Speaker, I would like to bring under your attention the crisis of Witzenberg Community Municipality. Over 150 people currently need food, support in halls and private homes. All roads leading to the main town, Ceres, are closed either due to floods or rockfalls. It is so severe that local shops have run out of bread and basic necessities for residents to buy.

To make matters worse, there are little to no networks available. Electricity outages continue in and around the town, and thus, also, in many other towns in the Western Cape. Residents in the community have resorted to buying flour so that they can bake bread and give food to their families.

Furthermore, the communities are trying to locate an elderly man who has been missing since the floods. We can also speak of people in the province that lost their lives during this storm. It is sad and heart-breaking. May their souls rest in peace.

Hon Speaker, Government cannot continue reacting only after disaster strikes. We need long-term investments and housing infrastructure, and disaster preparedness, not short-term solutions that are effective for the municipalities, yet deeply burdensome on our people. Climate disasters are becoming more frequent and more severe, yet poor communities remain ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, your time has expired. Please take your seat.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, on your left-hand side of your screens, you will see that there is a timer. The timer is noticeable for all members to see. I please ask that you work with me with regards to the time as allotted on the Order Paper, or the Question Paper. I now recognise the hon member Wessels.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Hon Speaker, thank you very much. Over the past week, we witnessed relentless rain and gale-force winds, uprooting ancient trees, swollen rivers, washing away bridges and critical infrastructure, suffering immense damage. Entire families in George, Haarlem, Uniondale, Plettenberg Bay, Knysna, were cut off from essential services, and experienced prolonged outages.

† Tog, Speaker, soos die vloedwaters gestyg het, en die wind sterker geraak het, het iets anders selfs hoër gestyg. Die onbreekbaar gees van ons mense. Ons kan nie die rigting van die wind beheer nie, maar ons kan altyd kies hoe ons saamstaan om die storm te trotseer.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Yet, Speaker, as the floodwaters rose and the wind picked up, something else rose even higher. The unbreakable spirit of our people. We cannot control the direction of the wind, but we can always choose how we stand together to weather the storm.]

Hon Speaker, this was not an ordinary weather system. It has been classified as a National Disaster, and in parts, the worst flooding in more than 30 years. The most severe since the 1981 Laingsburg floods, with gale-force winds significantly worsening the impact.

In George alone, 258mm of rain was recorded within days. The Garden Route Dam rose from 41% to 84%, while Knysna and Plettenburg Bay experienced rainfall exceeding 200mm on already saturated ground. Yet, despite this, and because of sustained investment in infrastructure and preparedness, we are already moving into mop-up and recovery planning, from local to provincial level.

Hon Speaker, the human response to this crisis must also be recorded. In Calitzdorp, a baby was born in an area cut off by floodwaters. Through coordination between emergency services and medical teams, a video call was arranged with the mother. Support was provided, and both the mother and child were confirmed safe. A helicopter later extracted them to safety.

This is what a coordinated disaster response looks like. Lives protected, even under severe extreme conditions. Over the past nine days, there have only been

two fatalities, both due to fallen trees. Tree incidents in Knysna and at Fancourt. Importantly, no fatalities were recorded in informal settlements, reflecting the effectiveness of a coordinated disaster management and early intervention.

In addition, these areas are still partially isolated. More than 300 food parcels have already been delivered. Residents have been contacted and emergency radios were distributed where needed, to maintain communication in the worst-case scenarios.

Hon Speaker, DA-led municipalities acted before and during the crisis. Emergency personnel, engineers and disaster teams were deployed across all affected areas ahead of peak conditions. When electricity networks failed and communication towers were impacted, teams worked alongside SANRAL, Eskom and provincial departments to clear more than 81 affected roads and restore critical infrastructure as soon as the conditions allowed.

This is what a capable government looks like. Systems designed to absorb shocks and protect the human life. The formal response was strengthened by the extraordinary humanitarian effort, and today I want to thank the golden hearts of the Garden Route, the NGOs, the Neighbourhood Watches, businesses and volunteers who stepped out without any hesitation.

More than a thousand people are currently being supported in community halls across the district, receiving meals, mattresses, blankets, and essential care.

Hon Speaker, it must also be clearly said that during this crisis, misinformation and political distortion attempted to undermine the work of those on the ground. It is irresponsible to turn human suffering into a political theatre, while municipal workers are clearing roads and restoring access, and saving lives.

Disasters do not ask for voting cards. The rain fell on every community equally, and so did the response. The PA attempts to paint the Garden Route District Municipality and George Municipality as municipalities that were unprepared and absent during this disaster. But I hope they listen carefully to the contributions made in this House, because the facts clearly show that these municipalities acted decisively and continue to support communities throughout this process.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, point of order.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Unfortunately, the PA has chosen again to turn ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Wessels, please take your seat. Okay, the Table Staff has stopped the clock. Hon member Adams, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, the hon member cannot make false accusations against the PA about the PA saying that ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, you are rising on a point of order. You do

not need to tell me what your point of order is. You do not need to motivate or communicate your stance on the hon member Wessels's input. So what is your point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, I am bringing him to a point of order because he is lying. That is my point of order. You are a liar.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, that is not a point of order. But what is completely unparliamentary is you referring to an hon member of the House as a liar, and I ask that you withdraw that statement.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, he cannot say, he cannot cast aspersions of what the PA is saying. That he must retract, and I will retract saying that he is lying, but he must retract saying that our party is, he is saying that the Municipality was ill-prepared. They were prepared.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, the point of order that you raised was not a point of order. The hon member did not refer to a member. He referred to a political party, which is completely parliamentary. What is not parliamentary and against the Rules is you referring to the hon member Wessels as a liar. I ask that you unconditionally withdraw that statement.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, I withdraw it, but he must not cast aspersions. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Adams. Hon member Wessels, you may continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Instead of acknowledging the work done by the disaster management teams, emergency workers, volunteers and municipal officials, they would rather spread misinformation to the public. The people of the Garden Route do not need a political theatre. They need leadership, coordination ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Wessels, please take your seat. Hon member Adams, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, we have thanked the municipal workers for their hard work, so he cannot say that we did not thank them. ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, points of order are procedural in nature. Your point of order is a matter of debate, based on the input by hon member Wessels. That is not a point of order, and this is not a dialogue, hon member Adams, between you and hon member Wessels. This is hon member Wessels's opportunity to make his submission in terms of this debate. There are other parliamentary mechanisms at your disposal to challenge the content of any member's input in the House. That is not a point of order, and hon member Wessels, you may continue.

Mr D J WESSELS (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. †Agb Speaker,

wanneer 'n ramp van hierdie soort tref, lê die verskil tussen chaos en 'n gekoördineerde reaksie, waar die goeie DA-regering wat voorbereid is, vinnig optree en hulle gemeenskappe eerste plaas.

[Hon Speaker, when a disaster of this type hits, the difference lies between chaos and coordinated action, where the good DA Government that is prepared, acts quickly and place their communities first.]

If there are questions about the preparedness, then they should be directed to the trained emergency professionals and operational commanders who are on the ground managing these events in real time. Hon Speaker, let us also reflect honestly on the complexity. To say any system was fully prepared for a disaster of this scale, would be unfair to every emergency worker who had to respond in real time to the rapidly changing conditions.

What matters is that response systems functioned, were coordinated and saved lives under extremely difficult circumstances. As we shift from response to recovery, we must carry forward the unity we witnessed across government, civil society and communities. Infrastructure can and will be rebuilt through disaster grants and resilience planning, but the social cohesion shown during this crisis is something far more valuable.

Let us remain focussed on recovery, reject division, and ensure that the Garden Route is defined not by the severity of its storms, but by the strength of its people. Thank you very much.

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

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker. The African National Congress ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Oh, there we go. I was just making sure that I protect your time. You may continue.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Did you stop the clock?

The SPEAKER: I did indeed.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Okay, thank you hon Speaker. The African National Congress expresses its deepest condolences to the families who have lost loved ones, homes, livelihoods and dignity, as a result of the devastating floods affecting the Garden Route region in the Western Cape. The debate is opportune, and using the Garden Route to drill into the discussion of climate justice in this province, that a province that is hellbent to lead the majority with lies, smokes and screens, as we just listened to member Wessels.

An organised lie that masquerades behind sweet talk, sweet nothings, propaganda and rhetoric of not so clean governance, as indeed the human crisis of the most vulnerable of the citizens led by DA bears witness. Before the State of the Province, we crisscrossed ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Nkondlo, please take your seat. Hon member Walters, is that a point of order?

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA); Yes, hon Spelling, in the content of the speech, member Wessels was referred to as telling lies. I would like you to regard that as unparliamentary in terms of the Rules. If you can perhaps make a ruling.

The SPEAKER: Alright, I will do so. Hon member Nkondlo, did you refer to any member in the House as lying?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I am going to demonstrate, hon Speaker. I am not sure why you would allow somebody who is engaging with my content, not a procedural matter as you just ruled on member Adams.

The SPEAKER: No, absolutely, that is why I am putting it to you. Did you refer to any member in the House as a liar, or as lying?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): I referred to the content of the debate that is being discussed here, and my speech is producing evidence to that effect.

The SPEAKER: Alright, okay, so you did not? Am I correct?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): No, I did not.

The SPEAKER: Okay, that is all I needed to know. Hon member Walters, I will

refer to Hansard and come back to the House if there is a need for a ruling. Hon member Nkondlo, you may continue.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): During the State of the Province Address, we embarked on engaging communities. We were speaking to farmers, community members, health workers and others who were experiencing the devastating impact of drought, and already, these communities were indicating the shortages of water, affecting livestock, agriculture and jobs.

Today, only two months later, we are sitting in this House debating another disaster, devastating floods. What we are witnessing are two extreme weather conditions in the space of two months, severe drought followed by destructive flooding.

While the conditions differ, the consequences remain the same. Both disasters affect our economy, destroy infrastructure, place pressure on public resources, threaten food security, and hit poor and working-class communities the hardest. The reality is that climate disaster is no longer future possibilities. They are here. They are happening now.

Environmental justice philosophy teaches us that all people, regardless of race, income or geographic location, have the same right to a clean, safe and healthy environment, and equal protection from environmental hazards. Yet every disaster in this province exposes the same painful reality, It is always poor and working-class communities who suffer the most.

The proof of the lie of disaster resilience of this province as it was articulated, is in the lives of the most vulnerable that lost their lives, three of them, instead of two as was said by the previous speaker, just along the N1 to Worcester, by Rawsonville. This was reported widely.

23 people were rescued, while three others were tragically found dead on that flooded farm. These are farmworkers, and their inhumane conditions continue to be disregarded when raised in this House, receiving stone deaf ears from the DA leaders. Councillors are sent on a witch hunt in George to draw up lists of houses with roofs, damage to property and essentials that have been washed away. Yet, as we debate now, trunks of trees are still on roofs and on the roads in Thembaletu, and so, this is the lie that I was referring to.

The very councillors are dismissed and told that those living in RDP houses cannot receive support, as these are private property. Yet, this very Government, through CUSP, sends teams of public officials to support private businesses and commercial farmers during similar disasters. Kwanokuthula, a contaminated pond behind Juma(?) Street has overflowed during these heavy rains. A matter of failing sewer infrastructure and poor drainage systems that have been reported and ignored for years by the DA-led coalition in Bitou. 700 families in Cederberg municipalities have been directly affected, and the list is with the provincial disaster teams to respond to this crisis.

In Zawa-Zawa Informal Settlements in Bitou, it's been calling itself to be overlooked in support. So transparency of the disaster support is one issue that

must be exposed here in this debate. The floods have also caused severe destruction to infrastructure, directly affecting water reticulation systems and water catchment areas. Waste, sewerage and chemicals have contaminated parts of the environment, creating secondary health and environmental hazards for communities already traumatised by disaster.

Schools had to be closed, and in poor areas, they become alternative spaces in the absence of temporary shelters to displaced families. Hon Speaker, we had warned this Government after day zero, that unless meaningful climate adaptation and disaster preparedness measures were implemented, this province would face increasingly severe disasters. So there is no shock. We cannot be expected as if this situation is happening for the first time in this particular province.

The COVID-19 period further exposed the sectors of the Western Cape that are most vulnerable to disasters, and yet no earth-shaking rethink of policy design and solution bears witness to claims of evidence-based planning by this Province. History repeats itself first as tragedy and secondly as a farce, especially when the clowns have taken over the crown, leaving the empire to a circus, than a respected House with dual regard of responsibility of leadership.

We warned this Government when they were asked by National Treasury, like all other provinces and municipalities to review their budgets and trim the fat. The City of Cape Town as an example, and all other DA municipalities, cut the emergency kit funding, which anyway they were hopeless in utilising, as year

in and year out, they failed to assist communities ravaged by fires in Khayelitsha, in Hout Bay and other areas.

They went into their lies, claiming their money was taken by National Government, yet this was their own choice, and such was confirmed by the then Provincial Treasury's Head of Department. Lies have short legs, and today with informal settlements washed away, this Province has no intervention of temporary shelters needed in these emergencies, and will be blaming National Government.

Dunoon is another example of DA lies. In COVID times, the area was to be decongested by the DA, but it was busy, and playing politics with people's lives. That area remains overpopulated, and an obvious primary victim of such disaster and flooding. What we are speaking of now, is the direct consequence of absent planning, weak adaptation strategies and delayed implementation.

Disaster resources are increasingly being spent reactively instead of strategically. This creates a cycle of wasteful expenditure, where Government repeatedly pays for recovery instead of investing adequately in prevention and resilience. We must ask serious questions today.

Where is the Western Cape Climate Adaptation Funding reaching local municipalities? Are smaller municipalities receiving the technical engineering support they require to prepare for climate related disasters? Are municipalities adequately supported with infrastructure planning, drainage systems, flood

mitigation expertise and emergency response resources?

Municipalities are expected to respond immediately when disasters strike, yet funding and authority often remain centralised at provincial level. Municipalities cannot relocate vulnerable communities from flood prone areas without a provincial housing programme and coordinated intergovernmental support.

Instead of strengthening intergovernmental relations, the DA Government too often undermines coordination between spheres of government, creating unnecessary red tape that delays delivery and support to disaster victims.

The SPEAKER: Member Nkondlo, your time has expired.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you very much, hon Speaker. The recent weather conditions in the Western Cape have left devastating and long-lasting impacts on both infrastructure and people's lives, which in some instances sadly resulted in fatalities. Whilst the death toll of those who died as a result of floods continues to rise in the province, it is also sad to note that about 6 000 people have been left vulnerable and stranded as a result of severe weather

conditions, which often result in floods and damage to infrastructure.

More than 2 000 homes have been destroyed in the Cape Metro region alone, and the majority of people affected are those residing in informal settlements and in areas such as Mfuleni, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Dunoon and parts of Mitchells Plain, to list but a few.

These are poor people who are neglected by this DA-run City of Cape Town and Western Cape Provincial Government. Lack of access to suitable land and adequate housing opportunities for these vulnerable people have left them with no choice but to reside in unsuitable landscapes, which are susceptible to flooding.

Hon Speaker, the worst part is that emergency services in this province have either been slow or non-responsive in some instances, which also made the situation even worse. The situation in the Garden Route region has also been the same, with a lot of tree-falling and damaging people's houses, as well as infrastructure such as electrical lines, which often left people with power blackouts.

As we speak, areas such as Thembaletu and Conville in George, still do not have electricity as a result of power cuts, resulting from damage to infrastructure. It is also important to stress that municipalities in this province are also failing our communities. In terms of calm and quietness, our municipalities are failing to service infrastructure in the form of clearing storm

drains in order to make sure that there is a free flowing of water so that there are no floods.

Hon Speaker, there are a lot of trees which pose danger to electrical powerlines in the event of being blown by wind and falling. Municipalities are often aware of these trees and can easily identify them on a daily basis. But again, these trees are neglected to a point where they fall and damage powerlines, which result in power blackouts.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Cassiem, your time has expired. Thank you very much. I recognise the hon member Mbombo.

Prof N MBOMBO (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. Over the past few days, the Western Cape has endured severe and devastating weather conditions that have left communities traumatised, infrastructure damaged, and families grieving unimaginable losses. Before we speak about the roads, stormwater systems, emergency responses, or political accountability, we must first remember the human costs of this disaster.

†Simele siqale ngokukhumbula abo bathe baphulukene nobomi babo emva koko zonke ezi ngonxoxo sizenzayo ngoba kukho iintsapho ezisentlungwini, kukho abantu abangasenabazali, kukho uluntu olusazamana ukuphila emva kwale ntlekele.

[Translation of isiXhosa paragraph follows.]

[We are meant to keep in mind those who have lost their lives. There are families who are dealing with the pain of losing parents in this tragedy as well as people who are trying to rebuild their lives after this tragedy.]

We must think of the people like the late Phathiswa Mkunjulwa who tragically lost her life when the Bolt vehicle in which she was travelling was struck by a falling tree in Wynberg. We must also think of the people like mamma Gail Crause, a beloved finance employee at the Fancourt Estate in George, who lost her life after a tree fell on her in George on Monday.

In the Western Cape, we must be able to say, †ons voel jou pyn, en sal voortgaan om die gemeenskap te beskerm, en te ondersteun gedurende die moeilike tyd [we feel your pain, and will continue to protect and support the community during this difficult time.] Hon Speaker, these events remind us that this was a natural disaster of immense force beyond anyone's control. For that reason, we must be careful not to reduce human suffering for political contestation.

The key question is whether, when severe weather warnings were issued, Government acted with urgency, preparedness and coordination to protect lives. In my constituency of George, emergency preparedness meetings were convened on the 4th of May with all municipal directorates. Readiness measures were immediately implemented, including clearing stormwater systems, placing staff on standby, and preparing for rapid deployment.

A joint operation centre was established on the 5th of May, with regular

coordination meetings as conditions evolved, to ensure rapid decision-making. Public communication was continuously issued to keep residents informed and safe. In Uniondale and Haarlem, flooding disrupted water and industries and services, and in some cases, left communities inaccessible due to road damage.

Some areas remain difficult to access, while assessments continue. Despite these challenges, response teams continued working. Damage assessments and wellness checks were conducted with the assistance of the Garden Route District, and food was delivered to stranded residents. Relief measures including the opening of the halls in Pacaltsdorp and Uniondale, meal support through [Inaudible.] Hall and distribution of over 1 000 pieces of Gunplast material and more than 400 sandbags.

Social support intervention also provided more than 100 blankets, 130 mattresses and meals to affected residents in these areas, including [Inaudible.] and also [Inaudible.] Church halls, NGOs, Neighbourhood Watches and organisations such as Love George, stepped forward to support communities in need.

†Sifundile, Speaker, into ebalulekileyo kule ntlekele. Xa urhulumente, uluntu, NGO, kunye nabahlali besebenzisana, singakwazi ukumelane nemeko ezinzima.

[Translation of isiXhosa paragraph follows.]

[Speaker, we have learned a valuable lesson from this tragedy. When

government, the public, the NGOs as well as the community work together, then we are able to face challenges.]

Hon Speaker, we must acknowledge the difficult reality faced by emergency and infrastructure personnel during this period. There were instances where communities could not immediately be reached because roads had been washed away or blocked. There was damage to water systems, roads, electricity, infrastructure and even Eskom infrastructure. Various roads had to be closed to protect public safety, and some closures are still in place.

Yet, despite dangerous conditions, frontline workers continued to report for duty. Disaster management officials, traffic officers, firefighters, law enforcement personnel, engineers, social workers, electrical teams and road workers, all played a role in protecting the lives, and restoring the services under immense pressure. The House owes them our gratitude.

†Ndifuna ukubulela bonke bethunana abasebenzi, amapolisa, amagosa entlekele, abacimi-mililo, abasebenzi woomaspala, kunye namavolontiya. Umsebenzi wenu ubonise ubuntu nokuzinikele ekukhuseleni abantu bethu.

[Translation of isiXhosa paragraph follows.]

[We would like to thank all the workers, police officers, disaster relief officers, firefighters, municipality workers, as well as all other volunteers. Your work and determination was a display of human kindness in protecting our people.]

Hon Speaker, climate related disasters are becoming more frequent and more severe. This means preparedness, infrastructure resilience and intergovernmental coordination can no longer be viewed optional extras. They are essential responsibilities. Where improvements are necessary, they must be made honestly and transparently.

†Masikhumbule ukuba umsebenzi wethu njengabameli boluntu kukuzisa ithemba, inkxaso, kunye nobunkhokheli ngamaxesha anzima afana nala.

[Translation of isiXhosa paragraph follows.]

[Let us remember that the work we do as members of the community brings hope, support as well as leadership during difficult times such as these.]

I want to end, hon Speaker, with this reminder. After every disaster, we can choose politics or people. Today, we choose people. The families grieving, the communities recovering and the frontline workers protecting lives. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Mbombo. Colleagues, there has been an apology from the hon member Michels, so I am going to go straight to hon member Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. It has been reported that the Garden Route District has experienced the worst flooding in 30 years. 300mm of rain, in some areas within a space of 72 hours. This is not the time to point

fingers or blame, but a time to join hands, and efforts to support affected communities, irrespective of political affiliation.

We think of those who are now hard at work, working around the clock to get our roads repaired and our infrastructure restored, especially those in the Disaster Management Centre. The storm was a bittersweet occurrence. It brought much needed water to the Western Cape, but unfortunately, the cause of great devastation and hardship too.

Hon Speaker, informal living conditions such as in informal settlements, do not meet the constitutional requirement of adequate housing. We call upon the Government to ensure that upgrading of informal settlements will achieve the Constitution's objective. I thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Mr K BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much, and good afternoon to you, hon Speaker. †Bismillah Hir Rahman Nir Raheem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.]

The Garden Route Region is one of the Western Cape's major economic hubs, driven by tourism, agriculture and finance. This region, despite some growth, however, faces significant socioeconomic disparities, such as high unemployment, a large youth population without education, and dependence on

public infrastructure.

It is therefore not surprising that the people worst affected by the floods, described as the worst in 30 years, are the poor and the vulnerable communities. Particularly impacted by the floods are those living in informal settlements, low lying areas, where inadequate drainage and structural vulnerabilities have increased the damage. In the City of Cape Town, the same disastrous situation is no different on the Cape Flats. ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Brinkhuis, your time has expired. Thank you very much.

Mr K BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I recognise the Minister of Social Development, Minister Londt.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker and hon members. I did touch on it last week, but I do think it is appropriate that we speak about all the lives that we have lost during the disaster. However, one that is very close to the hearts of the DSD family is the tragic accident where Ms Lauren Fredericks lost her life.

She did show incredible dedication right to the end, and her commitment to the team, but more importantly to the residents of the Western Cape, which she

served, must not be forgotten. It is a tragedy, but one in which we should remember her and what she did.

The silver lining that we have during these storms that caused havoc across the province, is that Government, private sector, and NGOs were coming together and helping those in need. We owe an immense gratitude to these selfless men and women who often put themselves at risk to protect and care for others. Hon member Nkondlo and hon member Adams complained about the weather causing havoc, and blaming the DA.

Now, it is well-known that the DA governs better than both the ANC and the PA. But the one thing that we cannot determine is the weather. Hon members Mbombo and Wessels however, said it well, that we need to do preparations well. That is the difference between where the DA governs and where the ANC and the PA govern. We do what is expected ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ... of competent government. What we can do is to prepare for disasters, which is what we did. [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member Nkondlo, is that a point of order?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Please always remind your Ministers, if they want

to address us directly, not through you, we shall do the same and respond to them. So if the hon Minister wants to address me, I am capable of responding to him. So he must address what I said in the debate, through you.

The SPEAKER: Absolutely, I will remind the Minister. Thank you very much. Hon Minister, can I please remind you to speak to me and not directly to any member? Hon Adams, is that a new point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, no, the hon member covered me. I was just about to say that he must speak through you. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Adams. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Speaker, I have been looking at you all this time, but I will continue looking at you, speaking through you, to do this piece. What we can do is to prepare for disasters, which is what we did. It is for this reason that we are able to assist residents who are most in need.

When I started this term, one of the gaps that we have seen is that short term relief before the SASSA relief stepped in, was in need. We went to the Treasury, and we got funding. Now we are funding five humanitarian relief organisations, with Sarofim Foundatoin, the Salvation Army, Community Chest of the Western Cape, Al-Imdaad Foundation and ForAfrika, to provide this post-disaster

support.

These organisations, together with many other organisations, do incredible work to ensure that when people are most in need, they get that support. Through you, hon Speaker, hon member Adams asked for transparency, but that is what we do on a daily basis. To date, 3 628 people across the Western Cape have been displaced, and are being housed in community halls. Over 800 on the West Coast, over 2 200 in the Cape Winelands, Garden Route 290, Overberg, 315.

It is this detail that we have got to a nuclear level that we will be able to tell the members to say:

“You are complaining that we are not doing the services, and we can go through the different municipalities. If we go through Beaufort West, we can tell you which organisations are helping in Beaufort West.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, point of order.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: The Al-Imdaad Foundation, ForAfrika, what they are doing in supporting the residents in Beaufort West. No matter how many people are ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member Adams, is

that a new point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, the hon Minister cannot cast aspersions here in the House. The community halls by us were not open for the people, and he is saying that it was. I do not want to call him a liar, but he must please not do that he is doing now. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, firstly, as I previously ruled, you cannot call any member, an hon member in this House a liar. That is the first point. The second point is, that a point of order is procedural in its very nature. You cannot rise on a point of order to debate the content of another member's input. That is not parliamentary. In actual fact, hon member ...[Interjection.]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, I am not debating. It is factual ...[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, I am on the floor. You cannot rise every time you disagree with the input or content of another member's contribution. Every member has a time allocated in terms of the Rules of Parliament. It is not the duty of the Chair to adjudicate whose input was correct or factually correct or incorrect. There are other mechanisms at your disposal to do that.

But I do want to warn you that these continuous points of orders on content, that is also not parliamentary. You cannot rise on a point of order to correct what you deem is not factually correct. It is not the Chair that determines the

correctness. If you want to challenge any input, there are other mechanisms, parliamentary mechanisms at your disposal. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you. Hon Speaker, through you, we need to be lenient to the hon member Adams. This is not the George Council Chambers. He is still trying to learn all the Rules. But you make a valid point. I am going to list specifically some of the places that people were housed at in George.

Thembalethu Zone 3 Hall, 26 people were housed there. In the Nudent Park Church, people were housed there. The Pacaltsdorp Hall, people were housed there. Uniondale people were housed. So, it is really concerning that we have a member in this House that is supposed to represent a constituency that does not even know what goes on in the front door. If there would be less time being spent on politicking and more time on getting to the substance of the matter, then maybe hon member Adams would not embarrass himself on a platform like this.

Be that as it may, hon Speaker, I do want to thank each and every member. Whether it is Local Government, whether it is Provincial Government, the representatives that we have from SASSA that do serve in the jobs as well, to make sure that we get the support there. To the NPO partners, the workers and the volunteers, it is incredible what gets done in this province. And when we say there is a whole of society approach ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker.

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

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): It is, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker, it becomes a trend for this specific MEC, who likes, when he disagrees with members, to actually attack their characters. You should rule on this, because this thing of speaking about the member in this manner, engage the content, leave the character of the member, because there is a procedure in this House on how, if you have got any issues about the character of the member, on how you deal with it. We cannot allow MEC Londt to always do this thing when he is debating. He must just grow up and learn how to debate.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, very much, hon member Nkondlo. I will revert to Hansard, and if there was any reflection on the character or integrity of a member, I will come back to the House with a ruling. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. As I was saying, we need to thank all the NPO partners, the workers, the volunteers,

all the frontline staff, from the municipalities, from Provincial Government, from DSD, Disaster Management, from the private sector, individuals that have gone out of their way.

The stories we have heard are incredible, and this is what makes this province work. It is the ongoing efforts to bring humanitarian relief to affected communities across Government. Now what we need to do is we need to take hands, support the departments that now rebuild what was destroyed by nature. I want to say thank you to everybody that does this incredible work. Thank you for the ongoing work that you are doing, and also, all the best in the rebuilding. Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Speaker. The ACDP wants to celebrate the unity shown when people facing difficulty or devastation or loss of life, where people, the human spirit comes together, irrespective of colour, irrespective of religion, rich or poor. Western Cape residents have shown that when we stand together, we can overcome anything.

But hon Speaker, the weather cannot be ordered in a neatly packaged parcel of sunny days or cloudy skies. The weather is extremely unpredictable and prone to sudden changes. But as the ACDP, we want to thank all role players, Disaster Management, Province, municipalities, volunteers, for assisting those in need.

As I say again, when we stand together, we can overcome anything. Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, hon Speaker. The Garden Route was just crowned one of the greatest road trips on earth, sold to the world through postcard coastlines, dramatic mountain passes and endless natural beauty. But behind the tourism campaigns and glossy travel photos, the same Garden Route is now drowning under devastation. As always, it is the working communities, the people who keep these towns alive long after the tourists leave, who are paying the highest price.

Plettenberg Bay, Knysna, George, Oudtshoorn, Mossel Bay, all battered by winter before winter has even truly begun. Flooding damage, fear, infrastructure, overwhelmed, communities left exposed. How can a region globally celebrated as a worldclass destination still leave its people so vulnerable every single winter?

We cannot continue building a country where only Metros are protected, while towns and villages are left to fend for themselves. These communities are not sidenotes to the economy. They are lifelines, and the people who live there deserve more than disaster response after the damage is done. They deserve safety, dignity and infrastructure that can withstand the climate reality we are

already living in.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Herron, your time has expired. Thank you very much. I recognise the Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Minister Bredell.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Speaker, I could speak at length about how the ANC and its coalition partners have spent the past 30 years running this country into the ground. But today is not the appropriate occasion for that. Instead, I want this House to understand the following today. Mother Nature does not care about your back-and-forth arguments here in Parliament .

The world out there is changing, and if we do not wake up, we are going to feel the consequences more and more. The world is changing in two ways simultaneously. Nature is responding to human impact through changing weather patterns and long-term climate change. People around the world are losing patience with divisional political parties.

Ordinary citizens no longer trust that we truly have their interests at heart. We see this in South Africa, we see this in America, and we recently saw it in England with the rise of the Reform Party, when established political parties
[Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat. Hon member Ngqentsu, is

that a point of order?

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): Is the MEC prepared to take a question? What we are interested is understanding the source of why [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: No, hon member, Ngqentsu, that is not how we do it. You have asked if the Minister is prepared to take a question? I will put it to the Minister, and then you can pose your question.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: No, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, are you prepared to take a question?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: No, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The hon Minister is not prepared to take a question. Hon Minister, you may continue.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: When established political parties speak about stability, people on the street hear that you are paralysed, and do not know how to deal decisively with problems. Hon Speaker, we can insult one another here in this House, and make clever political remarks. But the reality

is that people have died in the stormy weather in our province over the past few days.

At a time when trust in politics is extremely low, we must be the leaders who confront the challenges posed by disasters and climate change. While we are debating here today, there are rescue workers across this province risking their own lives to save others. While we are talking here, welfare organisations and volunteers are reaching out to isolated communities, providing shelter, hot meals, and dry clothing to people who are currently homeless, cold and soaked by the rain.

Hon Speaker, can we all, in this Parliament, agree to say a sincere thank you to these rescue workers, humanitarian organisations and everyone who supported them. During the December holiday period, my Department of Local Government worked seven days a week to prevent Knysna from running out of water.

The entire Southern Cape struggled under drought conditions, but Knysna suffered particularly severely. The drought had barely passed, when the Southern Cape was struck by the intense cold front, bringing flood, rains and gale-force winds.

Damage assessments still need to be completed, but I can certainly, I am certain that much of the work we carried out during the summer has now been undone by the floods, and winter has not even properly begun yet. This is the reality of

climate change, and how it will impact our part of the world in the future, the future we face in the Western Cape that will become warmer and drier, while at the same time experiencing more intense droughts, wildfires and floods. Hon Speaker, climate change is a global challenge, but all of us must play our part where we are. What is our role as politicians in this situation? Remember what I said earlier about trust in politicians being low across the world. Does your political party have a policy on climate change or are you spending all your time dreaming about king-making positions after the Local Government elections later this year?

The Western Cape Government acknowledged climate change and that is why we have developed a Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy Vision 2050. Our vision for the future is to become carbon neutral by 2050. We see the Western Cape as a centre of economic growth that is not developed at the expense of the environment.

We know that water security will become a greater challenge every year and that is why we have developed a long-term Water Resilience Plan 2025 to 2035. The objectives are to develop 350 million cubic metres of extra water source per year.; to reduce water consumption by 40 million cubic metres of water per year; to reduce non-revenue water in municipalities to below 25%; to improve blue-drop, green-drop and no-drop outcomes until 80% of our municipalities achieve the result at least of 95%; to ensure that all municipalities have master plans for water infrastructure and the management of associated assets.

We know that the roads and bridges damaged today must be rebuilt with climate change in mind. That is why the Department of Infrastructure developed the Western Cape Infrastructure Framework 2020-50(?). This plan specifically incorporates climate change into future planning.

Hon Speaker, our Provincial Disaster Management Centre is currently coordinating rescue operations across this province. The system works because there are strong institutions in our districts, working together with municipalities where damages and distress are being experienced. These structures are built over many years and this was only possible because we are able to appoint people with the right qualifications and create a stable working environment for them.

We cannot control nature, but it is a fact that stable municipalities with strong institutions are able to respond to disasters more effectively. At the end of the day, everything is about our people; the photographs, the videos, the stories of people who are currently homeless, wet and hungry, leave no one untouched. The challenges of poverty, unemployment and crime are thrown into sharp focus during disasters like this. I see it when I walk in poor communities.

Our country has enough money to solve most of these problems, but a few things need to happen. Everyone who can afford to pay for services must pay. There are too many people in South Africa who are not contributing their fair share. This applies especially to basic services such as water sanitation, refuse removal and electricity. Politicians in South Africa must stop stealing.

Corruption is destroying our country's future. If everyone contributes their fair share and if we can ensure that money reaches where it is supposed to go, without being stolen, we can do much more for our people. Everyone wants to live in a community that is clean, safe, and provided with reliable basic services such as water and electricity.

As the Western Cape Government, we want to provide this to every resident in our province as well. We are currently investigating the minimum prescribed basic services to which indigent households are entitled. I call this the dignity basket. I believe that the current allocation of water and electricity in this dignity basket is no longer aligned with reality and that we have to do more to give people the dignity they deserve.

We must also understand the broader benefits that come with access to basic services such as electricity, water and regular refuse removal. A community with street lights is safer and experiences less crime. In homes with electricity, children are able to do homework and study at night. This improves education outcomes and strengthens the future workforce. Access to clean and safe tap water improves health outcomes and reduces pressures on our healthcare facilities. The same applies to a clean environment where refuse is removed effectively.

Hon Speaker, this is not merely a debate about taxes, tariffs or affordability. It is a moral and ethical debate about whether we as a country can afford not to invest in the dignity of our people.

If I turn to some of the members, I want to thank the DA members for their input, their positive inputs. Also for hon member Christians. It is a beauty to see how our people can just work together, come together, support one another. I want to say to, hon member Londt, that your social workers are the silent heroes working behind the scenes, supporting families where nobody else goes into. I really appreciate all the people working together.

To hon member Adams, any municipality has designed their stormwater for 35 millimetres of rain per hour. That is the maximum it can take. After that, the road becomes the stormwater challenge and after that it just spills over ...[Interjection.]

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: If you start to talk about 100 millimetres of rain.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, please take your seat.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Yes..

The SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, is that a point of order?

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Speaker, you are really not protecting me. All of these hon members, they are not speaking through you to me. They are speaking

directly to me, but when I respond they want to call me names and stuff. So please, hon Speaker, protect me from this.

The SPEAKER: I note your point. I will remind the Minister. Hon Minister, please speak to me and not directly to the member, and hon members, this is the last warning to all members. Please address the Chair and not the hon members directly.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: It is online, so we look at the Chair. So sorry about that hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, through you to the hon member Adams, the stormwater design, he understands it. He was in a municipality. I have explained that. Municipalities are well prepared in this province, otherwise we would have lost even more people. Up to now we have lost 10 people. It is very sad, it is always very sad. We do not want to lose any lives, but I can tell you that we have saved thousands of lives.

If you look at the figures, just last night, during the night, we have saved in the West Coast, I think something like 72 people, that we managed to get out from farms, from rooftops, etcetera. I want also to mention the names of Eskom, SAPS, South Africa Defence Force, NSRI, our Social Services Department. These are really, hon Speaker, the silent heroes behind all of these operations. We sit day and night in the jock, working together, trying to support one another, helping one another.

So I disagree with hon member Adams. Our municipalities are well prepared.

There are certain things you cannot prepare for because we are busy rebuilding a country and there will always be a shortage of resources.

Through you, to the hon member Nkondlo, yes, we have lost 10 people, and it is very sad. We are going to deal with droughts and floods, but we do not just get a budget for that. You need a machine to prepare the country for that. You need the National Government to come to the table, whether we like it or not. So, actually, what we need to do is first fix the ANC disaster and then we will be able to fix climate change.

Hon Speaker, also, the cutting of the emergency housing scheme and shifting it or putting it at National is a big mistake, because currently nothing has happened and that is a National failure. The hon member Nkondlo should address it with her party and not come to the Western Cape Parliament, but support us in asking to send that funding back to the Province so that we can address and get to our people on the ground faster.

Hon people, hon Speaker, our emergency services. The hon member Cassiem mentioned that they were slow. I disagree fundamentally with that. They work through the night. They work all over this province. This storm hit the whole of the Western Cape, not the Garden Route, not Cape Town, but all five districts as well as the City of Cape Town. I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished over the last couple of days.

Hon Speaker, just to thank the hon members for participating in this debate.

Hopefully we will get through this stronger at the end of the day and it will help us to prepare for the next disaster, because it is not when it will hit us or if it will hit us, it is just when. Disasters will hit us and we need to keep on preparing and investing in our rescue services. I want, lastly, to thank Minister Baartman, the Finance Department. We must never underestimate the role that Finance plays when they allocate budgets, when they lead the debate on the budget to focus funding on the right area so that we can prepare, so that we can see to it that our people get the basic services that they deserve. So thank you, Minister Baartman, also from our side to the Department of Finance. I thank you, hon Speaker.

[Debate concluded]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, that concludes the debate in terms of Standing Rule 143.

I will now recognise the Chief Whip.

(Motion)

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Hon Speaker, I move:

That, notwithstanding the provision of Rule 20(1), precedence be given to the Subject for Discussion in the name of hon member Sayed as printed on

the Order Paper. I so move.

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

No objections, agreed to.

Hon members, we will now deal with the subject for discussion in the name of the hon member M K Sayed, as printed on the Order Paper. I recognise the hon member Sayed.

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION

The impact of narrow majoritarian decision-making on democratic accountability, public participation and legislative oversight in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, particularly in relation to holding the Provincial Executive accountable on matters affecting the residents of the Western Cape

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker, hon members, residents of the Western Cape. The ANC rises in this debate not to reject majority rule, but to defend our constitutional values. We accept that the DA holds the majority in this House, but no majority gives any party the right to weaken accountability, hollow out the sense of accountability and the right to weaken accountability, hollow out public participation, suppress

oversight, or to turn this Legislature into a shield for the Executive.

The South African Constitution is clear. The Legislature must ensure accountability and oversight over the Provincial Executive. It must conduct its work with due regard to representative and participatory democracy, to accountability, transparency and public participation. It also requires that minority parties must participate in the proceedings of this House and its committees, in a manner that is consistent with democracy. A majority may decide, but it may not suffocate. It may govern, but it may not silence.

What we are witnessing is not always the fact that we have oversight being abolished. It is more subtle than that. The DA is not abolishing oversight. It is hollowing it out. It happens when public participation is reduced to a procedural exercise. It happens when committees are managed in a way that protects the Executive. It happens when Opposition MPLs, especially women of colour, are victimised for robust oversight. It happens when the Rules are applied inconsistently, depending on who is speaking and whose interests are being protected.

The DA cannot go to court nationally, demanding meaningful public participation on the budget, while here at home budget processes are compressed, rushed, pushed online, and structured in a way that limits proper deliberation by MPLs and meaningful impact by residents. Public participation is not a live stream link. It is not a checkbox. It is not a feedback session after decisions have already been shaped. It is the right of

residents to influence decisions before they are taken. The double standards are clear.

In the Budget Committee, after the tabling of the budget by the Finance MEC, a representative of the Institute of Race Relations was invited to speak on their opposition to BBBEE, issues that were not directly related to what Provincial Treasury had presented on the day. Yet, he was entertained and the MEC was allowed to respond, but in the Standing Committee on Agriculture, when Naomi Betana of the Witzenberg Justice Coalition sought to speak on the situation of farm workers, during a discussion on the Agriculture Budget vote, she was refused on the basis that the matter was supposedly not related to the budget. So when certain voices are allowed in, while voices of the poor and working class are kept out, we must ask, whose participation is being protected and whose participation is being blocked.

To date, this Legislature has failed to convene public hearings on the Premier's Safety Plan, as promised. That is not meaningful public participation. That is gatekeeping.

Hon Speaker, the same pattern is seen in oversight. We stand in solidarity with hon member Windvogel. The Conduct Committee finding is an attempt to suppress an MPL for fulfilling her constitutional mandate. Conducting oversight, asking difficult questions, and exposing conditions at our health facilities that affect residents. All to protect the DA darling MEC Wenger. The answer must rather be to fix the conditions.

We also stand in solidarity with the hon member Herron, who was holding the Chair of the National Police Portfolio Committee accountable. Oversight is not misconduct. Accountability is not an offense. Committees should be the engine room of accountability, but too often committees are packed back to back. Presentations arrive late and there are few consequences for departments who frustrate proper preparation.

We must also reject the selective attempt to isolate this Legislature from matters of global importance when those issues expose the DA's uncomfortable double standards. When parties sponsor debates and raise matters, such as Palestine, as the Al Jama-ah did in the previous administration, those debates are deemed irrelevant to provincial oversight and blocked from discussion. Yet, global questions do have local consequences, especially in a province that is a strategic international key point.

The issue of speaking times also remains unresolved. From the beginning of this term, concerns were raised about the Rules of Order and the ability of smaller parties to participate meaningfully. We were told that this would be reviewed. This has not happened. The House does not belong to the DA or to the ANC only. It belongs to all parties represented here and to the people of the Western Cape. Proportionality must never be abused to make smaller parties' participation meaningless. At the national level Parliament makes every effort towards inclusivity. The Speaker of our National Assembly, Thoko Didiza, has ensured that all political parties serve on the Impeachment

Committee.

The recent severe weather has reminded us that accountability is not abstract. It is about whether Government plans properly, responds early, and protects communities. Yet this DA continues to avoid giving effect to the Western Cape Constitution's provision of a Provincial Commissioner for the environment. Such an office could assist this House with independent reporting on environmental risk, climate resilience, development pressures and disaster preparedness.

When oversight is weakened, it is not the Opposition who suffers first. It is the people. The learner still waiting for placement. The family in a flood-prone settlement. The patient waiting for care ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed, kindly conclude.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... the farm worker whose voice is excluded. The community waiting for housing and the resident living under the daily threat of violence. A majority may control numbers, but it must not be allowed to control truth. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Thank you, hon member Sayed. Hon members, we will proceed. I now recognise the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The Western Cape Provincial Parliament operates on the fundamental principle that Government does not belong to one political party. This Parliament, just like all other parliaments, belongs to the people. Every resident of the Western Cape, regardless of who they voted for or whether they voted at all, has the right to be heard, represented and respected in this House. It is the right of all political parties represented in this House, to freely debate and to make representations based on their own party political manifestos and positions that they were elected on, but always in the best interests of all the people of this wonderful province.

Hon Deputy Speaker, over many years public representatives from the Democratic Alliance have worked hard to ensure that this Parliament remains a space that is safe, transparent and open to free and fair debate. Our members have always fought hard to ensure that this principle is embedded in the way this Parliament operates, in the way our committees function and in the manner in which legislation is developed.

The Western Cape Provincial Parliament has consistently worked to ensure that legislative decision making is open, transparent, participatory and inclusive. Public participation processes are not treated as a box ticking exercise. They are taken seriously because this Government understands that better decisions are made when the public is genuinely involved.

Can we do better? Absolutely. Especially when it comes to empowering more

members of the public to interact with and understand the various pieces of legislation that are presented at public hearings, but we must also take into consideration and recognise the hard work that is already undertaken by our parliamentary staff, who often operate with scant resources while taking on additional responsibilities. We have recently heard, in a portfolio chair's briefing, how often the issue of resource allocation for parliamentary activity is raised and this is certainly something that we need to address collectively.

Hon Deputy Speaker, when legislation comes before our committees, the public is always invited to make submissions. Hearings are advertised. Civil society organisations, community groups, academics, labour organisations, businesses and ordinary residents are given opportunities to engage directly with lawmakers where they wish to do so. Our Standing Committees travel to communities across the province to conduct public hearings and also conduct virtual hearings for those who are not able to attend. Are these processes compliant? Yes, they are, but compliance should not be our only benchmark. We can and we must continue to do better. I would encourage all members of this House to support me in the call for increased resource allocation so that we can expand the work of our Standing Committees and public hearing processes to reach more people.

Hon Deputy Speaker, it is also essential that we emphasise that Opposition parties are never silenced in this Parliament. All parties are treated with respect and given a wide berth to make their voices heard, in line with the Rules and decorum of this House. Whether members choose to abide by these

Rules is obviously their prerogative. Although for the most part, hon Speaker, I have enjoyed the collegial environment that you have helped to maintain in the 7th Parliament, which allows for robust debate without proceedings degenerating beyond control and certainly never the possibility of physical violence between members, as we have seen in some other legislatures. It is sad that we even have to mention the prospect of hon members of this House engaging in physical violence, but sadly this has become a reality in some parts of our beautiful country.

At the end of last year violence broke out in the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature after the uMkhonto weSizwe party lost a vote in the House. Members of that party disrupted proceedings and ended up in a brawl with police on the floor of the House. I am glad that members of this House are able to spar with one another through words and ideas and do not have to resort to punching each other.

Hon Deputy Speaker, in some parts of the country political parties have approached governance with the mindset that winning an election grants the governing party ownership over state institutions and that these institutions are only there to serve the interests of that political party and its friends, but in a constitutional democracy such as ours, the Government does not own the state, however much some political parties may wish this was the case. Governments are temporary custodians accountable to the people and not the other way around.

The DA will always defend the separation between party and State. We have done so in the past and we will continue to do so going forward. No one is above the law. Under a DA administration, Parliament will never become a rubber stamp for the Executive. Our committees must continue to exercise real oversight and challenge those in power where needed, regardless of whether those members of the Executive wear the same political colours as we do.

Hon Deputy Speaker, many South Africans no longer trust their leaders. Across our country people have become disillusioned with corruption, cadre deployment, and state capture. It is incumbent on all of us to ensure that the Western Cape continues to operate openly and accountably so that we can show the rest of the country that there is hope. The DA governs on the understanding that no party has all the answers. Good governance requires listening and we have to engage with all views and opinions in order to craft more effective legislation. The statistics show that the DA-led Western Cape continues to outperform many other provinces in governance outcomes, in clean audits, financial management and institutional stability. One of the main reasons for this is the inclusive approach towards decision making.

No institution is perfect and this Parliament must continue to deepen and broaden our democratic participation processes and improve public engagement. Legislation is meaningless if it does not respond to the needs of our citizens. Good governance cannot thrive without the opportunity for robust debate. Good governments are not afraid of criticism. In fact, they

embrace it. Any member of our Executive should be able to defend all aspects of their administration and should be able to take on valid criticism where it is warranted. Indeed, they have proven time and again that they are willing and able to do so.

The Democratic Alliance welcomes this debate as an opportunity to showcase the fantastic work being undertaken by this DA-led administration and to look constructively at areas where we all can do better. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Bryant. I recognise the hon member Stephens.

Ms D R STEPHENS (PA): Thank you, hon Speaker, hon members and our guests online. Today I rise on behalf of the Patriotic Alliance.

Democracy is about more than numbers or a shift in time, like we often tend to call it. It is not simply about who holds the majority in this House. Democracy requires accountability, transparency and meaningful engagement with the people we were elected to serve.

The role of this Legislature is to hold the Provincial Executive accountable on behalf of the residents of the Western Cape, the very residents that voted us into these positions, but when narrow political majorities are consistently used to dominate processes, silence alternative views and weaken oversight, then democracy itself is compromised. It defeats the definition thereof.

Hon Speaker, oversight is not an attack on government. Oversight is a constitutional responsibility as it ensures that public funds are spent responsibly, that departments deliver services effectively and that the concerns of our communities are taken seriously. Yet, many residents across the Western Cape continue to face daily struggles. Communities are burdened by unemployment, housing backlogs, crime, gangsterism, poor infrastructure and inequality. These are real issues affecting real people.

Hon Speaker, too often, when concerns are raised in this House or within committees, decisions are driven by party political interests rather than the best interests of the people. Public participation processes sometimes become procedural exercises instead of meaningful opportunities for communities to shape decisions that affect their lives. It has become a tick box exercise, which is unacceptable.

Hon Speaker, the people of the Western Cape expect this Legislature to be independent, fair, and people-centred. They expect us to ask difficult questions and to ensure that the Executive is held accountable at all times. This Legislature merely protects the Executive instead of scrutinising it. It fails the very people it was elected to represent.

We must strengthen oversight. We must protect democratic participation. We must ensure that all voices in the House, all voices across our communities, are respected and heard, not a selective few. Hon Speaker, democracy is stronger when accountability is protected, not avoided. The

residents of the Western Cape deserve a Legislature that serves the people before party politics, and I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Stephens. I recognise the hon member Cassiem.

Ms A CASSIEM (EFF): Thank you, hon Speaker. This is an important topic which not only affects our people in the province but also affects us as members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, insofar as holding the Provincial Executive to account is concerned.

Our constitutional design is made in such a way that citizens of this country and province, by extension, elect political parties to represent them in institutions such as this Provincial Parliament. The Premier of this province then elects members of this Provincial Executive from amongst members of the institution who serve at his behest but still remain accountable, together with the Premier, to members of this House and by extension, the public who might either have voted or not voted.

Hon Speaker, this debate is a reminder to those in the opposite benches in blue that the mandate flows from the Constitution itself and the duty is that of holding the Provincial Executive to account, including the Premier.

Our colleagues from the opposite benches of the House must constantly be reminded that they are duty-bound to serve the interests of the communities

by holding those who control the levers of government to account. Political party patterns amongst the DA members must not be the reason why they go soft on the political party members running the operations of the Executive. This also applies to the Premier of this province. If the Premier violates the ethics code it is the responsibility of the relevant committee and this House to hold the Premier of this province to account, without any fear, favour or prejudice to the Constitution of this country and the people of this province.

Hon Speaker, the Western Cape is in a disastrous situation when it comes to crime because those who are in the same party with the Premier of this province are scared to tell him that his Safety Plan Policy is flawed and out of touch with reality and that it is part of the reason why millions of rands are being spent with little to no results to show for it.

Today we have a housing backlog in this province because of our colleagues in the opposite benches, who are quick to defend the member of the Executive responsible for provincial infrastructure and who continues to fail the people of this province. It is a shame for those who have taken an oath in this House to promote the efforts of the Constitution and to act on behalf of the citizens, to hold the Executive to account, only for them to later serve as protectors of this Provincial Executive and not the people of this province.

[The Deputy Speaker takes the chair]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Cassiem. I have noted the

following speaker is not on the online platform. We will proceed and I will recognise the hon Kaizer-Philander.

†Me W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Dankie Adjunkspeaker. As 'n mens vandag na die Opposisie luister sou 'n mens vergewe kon word as jy dink dat die Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Wetgewer 'n geslote geheime instelling is wat sonder toesig funksioneer en niks kan verder van die waarheid wees nie.

Die Opposisie se argument is nie net swak nie, dit is hemel-ver van die werklike belewenis van hierdie Huis, want as daar een provinsie in Suid-Afrika is waar deursigtigheid, toesig en verantwoordbaarheid daadwerklik toegepas word is dit hier in die Wes-Kaap.

Die DA hardloop nie weg van toesig nie en ons verwelkom dit. Daarom is die komiteevergaderings oop vir alle lede en die publiek, word oorsigbesoek gereeld en sonder hindernisse uitgevoer. Word departemente gereeld voor Staande Komitees tot verantwoording geroep. Word parlementêre vrae op rekord beantwoord. Word jaarverslae streng ondersoek en is openbare deelname 'n mandaat in die wetgewende proses, en laat ons eerlik wees, die Opposisie neem selfs deel aan hierdie prosesse, dag in en dag uit en dit is waarom dit ironies is, eintlik verbasend is, dat daar nou in hierdie Huis opgestaan word en beweeword dat verantwoordbaarheid hier nie bestaan nie. Daardie bewering weerspieël nie die werklikheid nie. Dit beledig dit. Dit is eerlikwaar 'n politieke bluf.

Adjunkspeaker, Suid-Afrikaners weet hoe die ineenstorting van aanspreeklikheid werklik lyk en ons hoef nie te spekuleer nie. Ons sien dit. In die Oos-Kaap, onder ANC-bewind, het die Premier self meer as 1 400 gevalle van finansiële wangedrag oor provinsies en hul departement erken. Meer as 1.5 biljoen gekoppel aan onreëlmatige uitgawes, vrugtelose en verkwistende besteding, bedrog, verlies van bates, misbruik van staatseiendom en 'n versuim in finansiële openbaarmaking. R5.1 biljoen geagte Adjunkspeaker. Die syfer verteenwoordig gesteelde geleentheid, die erosie van dienslewering, waardigheid en ontwikkeling en dit kon ongeveer 20 000 RDP huise vir behoeftige gesinne gelewer het, en watter aanspreeklikheid het gevolg? Baie min. Ondersoeke sleep vir jare aan. Amptenare bly in verantwoordelike posisies terwyl gemeenskappe agtergelaat word.

In ANC-Gauteng ervaar inwoners steeds ineenstortende gesondheidsfasiliteite, verkrygende skandale en mislukte infrastruktuur ten spyte van verskeie laat toesig wat blykbaar nie herhaalde mislukkings kan voorkom nie. In ANC-KwaZulu-Natal het politieke onstabiliteit en bestuursmislukkings dienslewering en openbare vertrouwe in staatsinstellings herhaaldelik ondermyn. In die ANC-Vrystaat onthou Suid-Afrikaners steeds die asbesskandaal waar fondse wat bedoel was om gevaarlike dakbedekking by kwesbare huishoudings te verwyder na bewering verlore gegaan het in 'n web van korrupsie en politieke verbintenisse en dit agb Adjunkspeaker, is hoe mislukte aanspreeklikheid lyk. Dit is wat gebroke toesig oplewer, en toe kom diegene, wie se kollegas oor hierdie uitkomstige voorsit, hierheen om aan

hierdie Huis oor deursigtigheid te preek.

Die teenstrydigheid word selfs meer duidelik wanneer ons dit nasionaal bekyk. Dit is dieselfde ANC wie op hulle hande gesit het oor bewerings rondom luukse voertuie wat, na bewering, met nou afgedankte Minister Tolashe verbind word. Voertuie wat glo op die name van familieledere geregistreer is en nie behoorlik verklaar is nie. Dit is dieselfde ANC wie se eie personeel oor onbetaalde salarisse betoog het. Dieselfde ANC wie se Sekretaris-Generaal openlik erken het dat daar salarisagterstande binne sy eie organisasie bestaan.

Geagte Adjunkspeaker, laat dit insink. 'n Regerende party wat sukkel om sy eie werknemers te betaal probeer hulself nou as die toesighouer van aanspreeklikheid in hierdie land posisioneer. Die ironie is nie subtiel nie. Dit is oorweldigend. Die DA-geleide Wes-Kaapse Regering maak nie aanspraak op volmaaktheid nie, maar wat ons wel is, is 'n funksionerende toesig, funksionerende instellings, funksionerende stelsels, verantwoordbaarheid. Wanneer probleme opduik word dit openlik gedebatteer.

Adjunkspeaker, departemente word voor komitees geroep. Verslae word sonder vrees of enige guns ondersoek. Die Ouditeur-Generaal se bevindinge word opgevolg en lede van hierdie Huis, insluitende die Opposisie, is vry om die uitvoerende gesag sonder hindernisse te bevraagteken. Dit is nie rolspel nie. Dit is demokrasie in aksie. Dit is aanspreeklikheid, nie slagspreuke nie.

Nie selektiewe verontwaardiging nie.

Die mense van die Wes-Kaap is nie verward oor wat hulle sien nie. Hulle verstaan die verskil tussen regerings wat regeer en regerings wat mislukkings verskoon. Administrasies wat rekenskap gee en administrasies wat onreg beskerm deur politieke skuiling.

Adjunkspeaker, terwyl die Opposisie voortgaan om die waarheid in hierdie Huis te verdraai sal die DA gefokus bly om dit wat werklik saak maak mee voort te gaan en dit skoon bestuur, grondwetlike toesig, betekenisvolle openbare deelname en dienslewering aan die mense van hierdie provinsie lewer, want aanspreeklikheid word nie deur toesprake bewys nie. Dit word bewys deur stelsels wat werk, instellings wat funksioneer en uitkomste wat mense se lewens verbeter en ditis presies wat die DA-geleide Wes-Kaapse Regering steeds demonstreer. Ek dank u, Adjunkspeaker.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Thank you, Deputy Speaker. If one listens to the Opposition today one will be forgiven if you think that the Western Cape Provincial Legislature is a closed secret institution functioning without oversight, and nothing can be further from the truth.

The Opposition's argument is not only weak, it is heavens away from the real experience of this House, because if there is one province in South Africa

where transparency, oversight and accountability are actively applied it is here in the Western Cape.

The DA does not run away from oversight and we in fact welcome it. Therefore all committee meetings are open to all members and the public and oversight visits are conducted regularly and without hindrances. Departments are regularly called before Standing Committees for full accountability. Parliamentary questions are replied to on record. Annual reports are studied strictly and public participation is a mandate in the legislative process, and let us be honest, the Opposition even participates in these processes, day in and day out and it is why it is ironic, even surprising, that now in this House it is alleged that accountability does not exist here. That allegation does not reflect the reality. It offends it. It is truly a political bluff.

Deputy Speaker, South Africans know what the collapse of accountability really looks like and we do not have to speculate. We see it. In the Eastern Cape, under ANC control, the Premier himself acknowledged more than 1 400 cases of financial mismanagement across provinces and their departments. More than 1.5 million linked to irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful spending, fraud, loss of assets, abuse of state property and neglect of financial declaration. R5,1 billion on the table, Deputy Speaker. The figure represents stolen opportunity, the erosion of service delivery, dignity and development and it could have delivered around 20,000 RDP houses for indigent families, and what accountability has followed? Very little. Investigations have been dragging on for years. Officials remain in

responsible positions while communities are left behind.

In ANC Gauteng the inhabitants still experience collapsing health facilities, supply scandals and failed infrastructure in spite of various late oversights that obviously cannot prevent repeated failures. In ANC Kwa-Zulu Natal, political instability and management failures repeatedly undermined service delivery and public trust in state institutions. In the ANC Free State, South Africans still remember the asbestos scandal where funds allocated to remove harmful roof covers at vulnerable households allegedly were lost in a web of corruption and political associations, and that, hon Deputy Speaker, is what failed accountability looks like. That is what broken oversight delivers, and then those whose colleagues are overseeing these outcomes came here to preach to this House about transparency.

The contradiction becomes even more clear when we look at it nationally. It is the same ANC who sat on their hands about allegations around luxury vehicles that allegedly are now linked to the fired Minister Tolashe. Vehicles that apparently are registered in the names of family members and not declared properly. It is the same ANC whose own staff protested about unpaid salaries. The same ANC whose Secretary General openly acknowledges that there are existing salary arrears within his own organization.

Deputy Speaker, let it sink in. A governing party that struggles to pay its own employees are now trying to position itself as the overseer of accountability in this country. The irony is not subtle. It is overwhelming. The DA lead

Western Cape Government does not claim to be perfect, but what we are is a functioning oversight, functioning institutions, functioning systems, accountability. When problems arise, it is openly debated.

Deputy Speaker, departments are called before committees. Reports are investigated without fear or favour. The Auditor General's findings are followed up and members of this House, including the Opposition, are free to question the executive authority without hindrances. It is not role-playing. It is democracy in action. It is accountability, not slogans. Not selective indignation.

The people of the Western Cape are not confused about what they see. They understand the difference between governments that govern and governments making excuses for failures. Administrations that account for and administrations protecting injustice through political cover.

Deputy Speaker, while the Opposition continues to twist the truth in this House, the DA will remain focused to continue with that which really matters, and that is clean management, constitutional oversight, meaningful public participation and service delivery to the people of this province, because accountability is not proven through speeches. It is proven through systems that work, institutions that function and outcomes that improve people's lives and that is precisely what the DA led Western Cape Government still demonstrates. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, member Kaizer-Philander. I recognise the hon member Marais.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. There is a powerful biblical proverb that says pride comes before a fall, and some political parties suffer from pride and this inflated sense of political superiority has played itself out in the following ways. The DA majority in the Western Cape Government refused to appoint a Children's Commissioner back in 2009 in terms of the Western Cape's Constitution.

Through effective oversight by Opposition parties this demand was eventually acceded to on the 1st of June 2020. Thanks to effective political oversight and political pressure by Opposition parties, including the Freedom Front Plus, a minority party.

Another example, hon Speaker, is the DA's consistent electioneering comments such as, and I quote, "Do not waste your vote on a small party", hon Speaker, knowing full well that when they were still the Democratic Party they themselves were a small party. The DA does not believe in sharing power and collective wisdom. They prefer to govern alone. In a PR system, no vote is wasted, but political parties receive the proportion of seats of the votes that they get in the House. They represent voices in the community and in their constituencies.

Recently the High Court judgment against the DA led City of Cape Town

relating to fixed charges that the DA forced on ratepayers, serves as further evidence of their pride and arrogance.

Hon Speaker, they ignore public outcry, they discard minority party views and eventually they have been cautioned by the High Court and found to have implemented unlawful and unconstitutional measures. No one holds a monopoly on wisdom, a once famous leader said. In closing, coalitions are here and we must agree to work together and find consensus in the interest of our communities. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Marais. I recognise the hon member Brinkhuis. I have noted that the hon member Brinkhuis is not on the platform. I recognise the hon member Christians.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. The ACDP believes that meaningful public participation is fundamental to a healthy and functioning democracy. This Provincial Parliament must remain a dignified platform where residents are heard, respected and included in decisions that may affect them directly, which affect their families, which affect their lives.

They must have a say and the say that they have is when we have more opportunities for public participation, getting out to communities that only see Provincial Parliament, National Parliament, and Councils on TV. As the ACDP, we applaud what Parliament has done to get to communities, but I think more should be done to get there.

Hon Deputy Speaker, maybe another thing is voter apathy. People vote and they do not see changes and that is a major problem. Many people still do not know the difference between National Parliament, Provincial Parliament and Local Government. They address matters that are supposed to be for Local Government on a Provincial Government level. I do not know, maybe it is a lack of education, but maybe Provincial Parliament will have to do more to ensure that our people are educated when it comes to the services that the Provincial Government renders to our people.

Another important thing, is that when you, as a party, govern, you must make sure that, when you are the Legislature and Executive, that there is enough oversight over the Executive. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Christians. I recognise the Chief Whip, the hon member Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Transparency, and public participation in the legislative process lie at the heart of our democracy. As the Chief Whip of the DA in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, I am proud to declare that our commitment to these principles is unwavering.

The DA-led Western Cape has set the gold standard for open, accountable governance. We have opened the doors of this Parliament, inviting the public to witness the workings of their elected representatives firsthand. Our

committee meetings are forums for robust public engagement and we have actively sought out the input of citizens and stakeholders through regular public hearings and consultations, but we have not stopped there. The Western Cape Parliament has embarked on an extensive program of public education and outreach, hosting workshops and information sessions across this province. We have empowered our citizens to hold their government accountable. This is what true democracy looks like.

Sadly, the same cannot be said for ANC-governed provinces. Transparency and accountability have become mere buzzwords, concealing a culture of secrecy and impunity. Former National Assembly Speaker, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, herself admitted that the ANC abused its majority to shield President Ramaphosa from scrutiny in the scandalous Phala Phala case. This is a mockery of our constitutional order. The same ANC whose NEC last night decided it will again close ranks over Phala Phala and rally behind Ramaphosa.

The ANC's track record speaks for itself. From the PPE corruption scandal in Gauteng to the Estina Dairy Project in the Free State, the ANC has consistently put its own interests above those of the people.

In contrast, the DA-led Western Cape has shown that clean governance and accountability are imperative. Our commitment to transparency is evident in our unqualified audits and open tender processes. We have leveraged technology to make information more accessible, live streaming our

committee meetings and publishing all reports online. This is what it means to put the interests of the people first. The DA understands that transparency and public participation are the lifeblood of our democracy. We will never sacrifice these principles for political expediency.

As we move forward, let us reaffirm our commitment to open, accountable governance. Let us work together to strengthen our oversight mechanisms and amplify the voices of our citizens. The Western Cape will continue to lead the way. The choice is clear. We can either follow the ANC down the path of corruption or we can embrace the DA's vision of a transparent, accountable government that truly serves all the people of this province.

The Western Cape stance is unambiguous. We will not waver in our commitment to these sacred principles. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Bosman. I recognise the hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Narrow majoritarianism corrodes democracy by stifling debate and shielding public reps from accountability.

The DA cried foul, when the ANC used its majority in the National Assembly in 2022, to reject the Section 89 Phala Phala report. Yet, the same DA routinely uses its majority in this House to muffle alternative opinions and

avoid questions. The DA's approach is not unlike the filibuster strategy developed in the United States in the early 1800s by conservative senators to thwart civil rights legislation. By speaking for hours or even days senators prevented bills from being taken to a vote.

Here members of the Executive have developed the practice of abusing their unlimited time to respond to oral questions, to run down the clock and avoid follow-up questions and debate.

In November 2024, I addressed a letter to the Speaker and the Secretary of Parliament, requesting intervention. I said a practice was developing where some members of the Executive were effectively filibustering in order to consume the 60 minutes allocated in terms of Rule 203.2 and restrict the number of questions. That practice has since become more entrenched.

The DA claims liberal values, but it is a fundamental principle of liberalism that the Executive branch remains accountable to the Legislature, regardless of the size of the ruling majority. It claims liberal values but practices Executive dominance, smugly and cynically. We saw it again just last week when the acting Premier used the full 20 minutes allocation to mock the rare opportunity for members to ask questions without notice.

Members of the Executive are paid well to be accountable, transparent, and honest. An Executive that believed in the work it was doing, its policies and impact, would regard question time as an opportunity to shine. Why then the

need to obstruct and obfuscate? Last week's concord lesson to the National Assembly on accountability should be required reading for the members of this Western Cape Executive. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Herron. I recognise the Chief Whip of the Official Opposition, the hon member Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you. Hon, Deputy Speaker, we are in a democratic dispensation. The DA must realise gone are the days of oppression where the boss decides on how to speak to his boytjie. The mentality of the White people that they are the only clever human beings ever on this planet was voted out and defeated already in 1994.

In this House we had the practical experience of seeing this in the benches of the DA, where we were debating on crime a few weeks ago. Members of colour that are affected and understand the concept of being from the Cape Flats have been deprived of participation. We had to sit for a long 60-minute debate, listening to people fumbling, clueless of what the causative factors are, rather focused on convictions which are not solving the problem.

The Eastern Cape Legislature taught us a lesson here early last year; the value of a democratic participatory Parliament, where its Opposition parties get valuable time to speak, regardless of how many seats they occupy. What the DA must learn is that the Opposition views are the backbone of an effective Parliament, but soon and very soon, hon Deputy Speaker, I am

telling you, the DA will learn arrogance is about to cost them big time.

The DA will protect an individual's rights on a simple issue of oversight, protecting their own blue-eyed boys and blue-eyed girls. Since when, hon Deputy Speaker, does this House not know that unannounced visits are not reported to the Executive? Hence, they are called unannounced. In this House the majority is used to weaponise, to silence opposition. The best way for them to silence opposition, they use their majority.

Hon Deputy Speaker, let me tell you for free today, in case you did not notice, the Community Safety Department has no role in place with the crime within this province. The Department of Health has taken a deep dive to the ground because of the current MEC. On record, Social Development has become a department of SWIMS.

†Hierdie skande moet reggemaak word, want alles in die naam van beskerm sekere LURre. Wat maak hulle so spesiaal? Ek vra maar net, wat maak vir hulle spesiaal? Omdat hulle openlik die reg kry om lede te minag? Hier is geen bewerings wat ons bring nie, maar ons bring feite, Adjunkspeaker.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[This disgrace must be rectified, because everything in the name of protecting certain MECs. What makes them so special? I am just asking, what makes them special? Because they openly receive the right to disregard

members? Here are no allegations that we bring, but we bring facts, Deputy Speaker.]

One asks oneself, when the DA meets behind closed doors, do they take time to compare the 6th to the 7th Administration's performance? Or is it just a matter of clamping down on democracy to ensure any view raised by the ANC, does not see the sunlight?

Hon Deputy Speaker, white supremacy, we have seen. There is a specific MEC of Social Development that thinks he has the best birth that the Chambers have ever seen. While people are suffering, there is nothing that we can see in the Department of Social Development that is prospering since this 7th Parliament. The only thing we know about Social Development is SWIMS. It is nothing close to where it is needed to be. At the centre of any functioning democracy lies a simple but profound principle; those who exercise executive authority must be subject to continuous and meaningful effective oversight.

This is not a political preference, hon Deputy Speaker, it is a foundational doctrine in democratic theory, rooted in the separation of powers and the system of checks and balances that safeguard democratic governance. A legislature that cannot check the Executive, ceases to be a legislature in the true sense. It becomes a subordinate, it becomes compliant and ultimately it becomes captured and this is where we are heading. We are there already. Let me not even say we are heading there.

Our Constitution speaks with clarity and purpose. Section 104 vests the legislative authority of a province in a Provincial Legislature, not in the Executive, not in Cabinet, but in this House. Section 114 goes further and places a firm obligation on this institution to ensure that the Executive is accountable and to maintain effective oversight over the Executive authority and all organs of state. These provisions are not symbolic, they are binding. They define the character, the authority and the responsibility of this Legislature. We will not shy away from challenging the DA when it comes to oversight. We will continue. That is why we got elected to be here.

Hon Deputy Speaker, measures against these constitutional standards, the reality before us, are deeply concerning. What we are witnessing is not robust oversight, it is managed accountability, carefully controlled, procedurally contained and politically constrained. One of the clearest manifestations of this is the growing pattern of filibustering by the Premier and members of the Executive. They increasingly provide long evasive responses that consume the limited time available for scrutiny, while avoiding the substance of the questions being asked. You ask a question, a direct question and you are taken into a 32-page book, not addressing the question that is raised. †Nisezolula nje ndiyanithembisa namhlanje, nizobuyela kuthi nithi sasitshilo. [You will do the same thing again today and you will come back to us to tell us that we were right.]

In well-functioning democracies, such as the UK Parliament and the German Bundestag, this would not pass without intervention. Presiding officers

enforce relevance, precision, and accountability, because they understand that answering questions is not a favour, it is a duty. Here, however, evasion is tolerated. It is just a free for all. It has become normalised because it serves a political purpose. It allows the Executive to appear accountable, while in reality they are avoiding accountability.

Equally troubling is the manner in which the Rules of this House are applied. There have been instances where Presiding Officers have shown signs of partisanship and a troubling lack of independence. Rules are not always applied consistently or fairly. Instead, there are too many moments where they are selectively enforced, in ways that silence dissent and constrain Opposition members and shield the Executive from accountability. We have seen how these Rules can be used to discipline those who raise uncomfortable truths, while at the same time cushioning those who must account.

We will not forget the moment in this House when the hon ...[Interjection]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...MEC Meyer ridiculed members of the Opposition and used language that was plainly insulting by calling us stupid. Yet, the Deputy Speaker ruled that conduct to be parliamentary. That ruling did not protect the integrity of the institution.

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

†Die HOOFSWEEP VAN DIE OPPOSISIE: Ons gaan nie ophou nie. Ons gaan aanhou. Dankie, Adjunkspeaker.

[The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION: We will not stop. We are going to continue. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.]

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, there are still 20 seconds left.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time is up already. It is red, hon member Windvogel. When the time is blue, it will indicate such. I allowed overtime for the hon Chief Whip to ultimately conclude. We will now allow the final speaker on the subject for discussion debate, and I recognise the Minister, Minister Wenger.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Today we are debating a serious topic, but unfortunately much of what we have heard from the Opposition is a familiar set of accusations dressed up as principle. We are told that the DA has used its majority to undermine accountability, weaken public participation and obstruct oversight to protect the Executive, but Deputy Speaker, words are easy. Accusations are even easier. Noise does not simply become truth because it is shouted loudly.

The fact is the Western Cape Government has nothing to hide. We report to this Parliament, appear before committees and answer questions

...[interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister, apologies. There is a point of order. The clock will be stopped. I recognise the Chief Whip of the Official Opposition, hon member Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Can the MEC take a question as to why we have to account to her when we do oversight unannounced?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Bans, your phrasing indicated that you are wishing to ask a question to the Minister. Let me check with the Minister if she is willing to take a question. Minister, are you willing to take a question from the hon member Bans?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: No, but I will address her concerns in my speech.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much. The Minister is not willing, at this stage, hon member Bans, to take a question and she has commented in that regard. Minister, it is 07:19 and you may commence.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: We answer parliamentary questions in this House and in the NA and in the NCOP, we participate in debates, engage with independent oversight bodies and communicate openly

with the public. In fact, we are the only government, perhaps in the world, to have open sessions monthly where anyone can speak to a member of the Executive.

We are also honest about the challenges and we are equally clear about the work that we are doing to address them. The Opposition may not agree with our answers. They may not like our policy choices, but disagreements are not the same as obstruction. Not getting the political outcome you want is not proof that democracy is failing.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA does not pay lip service to democratic principles. We believe in the rule of law. We believe in accountable government. We believe in public institutions and want them to work, not as theatres for political performance, but as instruments that serve the people. When we talk about narrow majoritarianism used to avoid accountability, the ANC does not have a very good track record. On Phala Phala, an ANC majority blocked impeachment proceedings against the President, instead of allowing Parliament to test findings. The majority simply shut it down. Just like they did with President Zuma's fire pool in Nkandla.

On public participation, mere lip service was paid on the NHI Bill in the NCOP. One of the most far-reaching and controversial pieces of health legislation in our democratic history was pushed through a process that failed to consider the voices of residents. The Select Committee did not consider a single amendment to the Bill specified in provincial negotiating mandates

and public inputs. Where was the outrage from the Opposition then? Hon Deputy Speaker, the DA does have a majority in the Western Cape and it is a mandate given to us by the people of this province, through democratic elections. For 17 years the residents of the Western Cape have placed their trust in the DA to govern according to our values, clean government, accountability, delivery and respect for the Constitution and we honour this by governing responsibly.

The Western Cape is the only provincial legislature in the country that has questions to the Premier where randomly selected members can ask the Premier questions, without notice, and importantly where a member of the Opposition must have the first question.

During my time as Chief Whip, the DA led a motion to allow minority parties more time when they sponsor debates than they would ordinarily receive under strict proportional allocation. In this Parliament, the Chairpersonship of SCOPA is offered to a member of the Opposition, one of only three provinces in the country that does that, and in crisis ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister your clock will be stopped. There is a hand raised. Hon member Sayed is that a point of order?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No. I want to know whether the MEC for Health is willing to take a question on when exactly ... [Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed ...[Interjection]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ... questions to the Premier without notice started in this Legislature. It did not start during the time of the DA. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayeed, hon Minister are you willing to take a question from hon member Sayed?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: No, Deputy Speaker. I have got lots more to say.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much hon Minister. Hon member Sayed, the Minister is not prepared to take a question at this stage, as she is completing her speech input. Hon Minister, there is now four minutes and 37 seconds remaining.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you. And in crisis, like the Covid-19 pandemic, the WCPP was among the first legislatures in the world to hold a virtual full sitting of the House with public access in real time, and I am so proud to have been part of that. Within less than a month, as DA backbenchers, we led accountability and ensure that legislative oversight could continue. This is not the behaviour of a party who wants to silence oversight, this is a party strengthening it, but oversight must also be responsible. Members do not have unfettered powers to arrive at any public

facility, at any time, in any manner, and demand privileged access without process. That is not obstruction, that is governance. Rule 95 of the Standing Rules of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament states that when committees, and by extension members, request officials to attend a meeting or to provide documentation, like during oversight visits, the Provincial Minister must be informed.

This is a longstanding practice and it has been there for a very long time. We have had instances where members of this House have misrepresented themselves, which the Conduct Committee agrees is unacceptable. We have seen political actors, with no lawful mandate to conduct oversight, arrive at health facilities, claiming to do so, disrupting services and placing additional pressure on already strained frontline services and teams.

We have also seen videos recorded inside health facilities despite clear rules prohibiting this, with staff members subsequently exposed to harassment, intimidation and real personal harm. Hon Deputy Speaker, oversight is essential in any democracy but oversight must be done responsibly and with respect for both patients and healthcare workers. When political theatre begins to interfere with patient care and compromises the safety and dignity of staff, then we have crossed a line that no responsible legislature should ever defend. But let me be very clear, my role ...[Interjection]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Speaker, Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister there is now ...[Interjection.]

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Hon Deputy Speaker, actually, I would also like to raise a point of order in that in these virtual sessions interjections are not permitted.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: No, no, no. This ...[Interjections.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): This is not your House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members ...[Interjections.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, we cannot be bullied.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I have the floor. Hon members this is the final input in this particular subject for discussion. There has already been two particular points of order dealing with whether the hon Minister is willing to take a question. That has been responded to. I will now see the hon members in the hands that have been raised, but like we have indicated and the Speaker did in the very beginning, interjections are not allowed during virtual sittings and that rule has been ultimately approved by the entire Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

So let me first see the hon member Sayed, the hon member Walters and the hon member Bans in that order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members ...[Interjections.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, thank you.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): My hand has been up, hon Deputy Speaker, before you allowed everybody, my hand has been up and I want to address you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Nkondlo, from my side I see a number attached to a hand that is raised. I now look at my screen and I see you were number four and that hand is no longer there at the moment. So I see hand 1, 2 and 3, the hon member Sayed, Walters and the hon member Bans.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): And myself, my hand is up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed?

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, you see what you are doing there is just reinforcing what we have raised in this debate. How can the hon member Nkondlo's hand no longer be recognised, and let us not use technicalities to be playful here, but okay, I am glad you

are now recognising hon member Nkondlo.

Hon Deputy Speaker, two things. I have posed a question inside of the chat, it was not responded to: whether IT can investigate as to why the video footage or image of my speech was not relayed onto the You Tube, nor onto this very platform, while I was in the Chamber, but other members ...[interjection]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed ...[Interjection.]

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: ...of other political parties had it relayed. Number 2 ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Sayed ...

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Yes, Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now 16:21. A response was posted in the group at 16:17, prior to your input.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Okay, no that is fine, then I am covered on that one. On the second one, as a point of order, and also a question, is it parliamentary, is it within the Rules for the speaker, while the speaker is on the floor, to raise a point of order? The hon member Wenger raises a point of order whilst she is speaking. It does not make sense to me,

thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I would want you to make a ruling on what I am going to say now. The hon member Wenger misleads the House on unannounced visits saying that members of Parliament must report to her. We cannot allow this to not be ruled on in this House, otherwise this democracy will be clamped down on us for a very long time, so we must not lie to each other here, please can you make a ruling on ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Bans.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: They are not here deployed by Mireille Wenger

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see the hon member Walters.

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I would like to raise the point of order that Minister Wenger wanted to raise, that interjections are being made contrary to the Rules of virtual sittings. A number of those interjections were in fact made by members who did not raise their hands and perhaps it is something that could be looked at afterwards but I would like to make that point of order so that it does not come from the speaker on the

floor, thanks.

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

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Hon Deputy Speaker, I agree with hon member Bans that we should not mislead the House here and I would then ask that you do look at the Hansard. I never once said that anybody should report to me, so that would be great if we could clarify that. May I continue?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, before you continue ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, when do you rule on matters and allow hon Wenger to answer members? What is this arrogant ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Nkondlo, I have not recognised you, your hand went down again, I am looking at my screen. I have not recognised you. Are you raising your hand? I will now take the hon member Nkondlo and then the hon member Bosman.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Deputy Speaker, I raised my hand here and you said you saw me but you stopped at hon member Walters and you allowed hon member Wenger to then speak. You do not rule, which is your responsibility. Every other member when they raise something and interject

for you to rule. At what point do we have hon member Wenger being the person who then rules on matters beyond yourself?

Stop this thing of allowing yourselves in the DA to be managed and bullied. The very thing that we are debating is exactly what is happening here.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Nkondlo, you are ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon member Wenger wants to answer, wants to be the referee and the player and misquote the Rules of this House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Nkondlo, you are ultimately casting aspersions on the Presiding Officer. I would once again direct members that this particular chat and raise your hand function, if any particular member is raising a point of order that particular member should put on their signal to raise their hand and keep it up.

If I am sitting in this particular chair or the Speaker himself, if a hand is lowered, we ultimately then take an understanding that you are no longer wanting to raise that point of order as it has already been covered. That has always been the convention, and I trust that members will adhere to that particular process. The final point I will take here before we proceed is the hon member Bosman.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much hon

Deputy Speaker. The Chief Whip of the Opposition has implied that the hon Minister is misleading the House and such an accusations can only be brought through Rule 59 (2) by way of a substantive motion. The member has not done that and the Minister did not mislead the House.

I also want to bring to the attention of the House that any member of this House, including a Minister, is entitled to raise a point of order and I would ask that you please remind members that Ministers are first and foremost members, so they are entitled to do that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Chief Whip. I will at this particular time indicate that on hon member Sayed's point of order in terms of the chat function that has been responded to, he has also then responded in that regard. In terms of the comment made by the hon Bans, we will then look at the Hansard and revert back to the House if need be. Hon members, I would want to again remind members that we are ultimately on this virtual sitting, there are adopted Rules that we need to follow and we need to ensure that the proceedings of the House ultimately go ahead.

So yes, if any member is feeling that there is a Minister or a member misleading the House they must do that via a substantive motion at this particular stage but let me for the final time now see the hon Sayed and the hon Bans.

The LEADER OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Hon Deputy Speaker, I

know we do not want to also prolong such things unnecessarily but I just want to on this one; you had ruled, but now the hon member Bosman is misleading the House when he calls upon you to teach us that MEC's or Ministers are also members of the House. Nobody denied that.

The point of order I was raising was a sitting speaker, whether that sitting speaker is an MEC or a Leader of the Opposition or a Chief of a Minority Party, I was referring to a sitting, to a speaker who is currently speaking, not an MEC. He must not twist words here to try to ridicule. This is essentially why the House is descending into chaos and why democracy is being undermined by this Democratic Alliance. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I take your view. If any particular person that is listening – I trust that we will be able to proceed and I will now see the hon member Bans and then proceed from there, as I have already indicated I am not going to entertain further hands in this regard. Hon member Bans?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION: Respectfully, hon Deputy Speaker, I have raised a point of order to say that the MEC is misleading us. The onus is on you, as the Deputy Speaker that is presiding, to decide whether what I heard is wrong or it is right. The Chief Whip of the DA cannot come and make decisions on your behalf when he undermines your seat as your party. What does he expect us to do? Because he is undermining you as a Deputy Speaker, he is making rules, he must be a Speaker if he wants to be a Speaker and not come and speak on our behalf here.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Bans thank you so much. We will now proceed and I will recognise the Minister but once again indicate that if any member is wanting to bring a substantive motion members are aware of the Rules and the procedures that they need to follow in that regard. Hon Minister you may now proceed, I see there are two minutes and 41 seconds remaining.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I think the DA could learn some filibuster lessons from the ANC. So as I was saying, when political theatre begins to interfere with patient care and compromise the safety and dignity of staff, then we have crossed a line that no legislature should ever defend.

Let me be clear my role is not to be an obstacle to oversight, it is to welcome and to enable it and that means ensuring that departmental officials are available and can plan for continuity of care that visitors identify are verified so that we can protect the dignity of patients, while respecting the rights of elected representatives to scrutinise Government. Members of this House know this, I have assisted in arranging oversight visits for members across party lines. I have assisted members from the National Parliament and where members engage the process works. In one instance I had to ask a member's position to move their visits to the following day as the hospital was being audited by the Health Standards Compliance and the facility just did not have the capacity on that day.

By contrast Deputy Speaker, when I chaired the Standing Committee on Policing, and hon member Christians will remember this, we did experience real obstruction. In our cluster week we notified SAPS of our visit to the Training College in Paarl, weeks before hand, again the week before and 48 hours before we arrived, but when we arrived we were refused entry, the gates were locked in front of us. So it is clear that the ANC simply does not practice what it preaches. Accountability is not measured by who shouts the loudest, oversight is not strengthened by disrupting services or placing staff and patients at risk.

This Government will continue to account and answer questions, but we will not confuse democratic accountability with political theatre. The Opposition raises issues about how women parliamentarians are treated, but I would encourage them to have a long hard look in the mirror, because when you refer to a woman politician as ‘darling’ and ‘princess’ that is coded sexism, it does not respect female politicians and such remarks perpetuates sexist stereotypes that have no place in this House.

The people of the Western Cape deserve a government that is stable, transparent and focused on service delivery. They also deserve a parliament that conducts oversight seriously, responsibly and in the best interests of the public and that is the standard, Deputy Speaker, that we will uphold. Thank you.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): We shall not be told by you how to do our

oversight.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Minister, I recognise hon member Windvogel before I indicate that that concludes the debate.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): No, Deputy Speaker, I just want to check with the MEC if she is prepared to take a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister has already concluded her side, she has already concluded her side and we will now proceed, hon member Windvogel. Hon members in terms of the Rule that concludes the debate on the Subject for Discussion in the name of hon member Sayed, we will now proceed in terms of Rule 197 in terms of the Interpellations that are printed on the Order Paper and the Question Paper. I recognise the hon Minister, Minister Bredell

INTERPELLATIONS

Environment: biological plunder of

1. Mr D W Bryant asked the Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning:

Recent briefings have laid bare the staggering scale of biological plunder in the Western Cape with over 2,5 million poached indigenous plants and

millions of seeds seized since 2018. Despite these law enforcement successes, the low rate of high-level convictions remains a critical obstacle to dismantling international criminal syndicates:

(a) What specific steps can be taken to raise the profile of environmental cases in the provincial justice value chain to ensure they are prioritised alongside other categories of organised crime and (b) what is his and the department's position on the establishment of specialised environmental crime courts and dedicated environmental prosecutors to ensure that poachers are met with appropriate judicial consequences?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Hon Deputy Speaker, the hon member correctly highlights the extraordinary scale and sophistication of biodiversity crime in the Western Cape. Since 2018 authorities have ceased huge numbers of illegal harvest, indigenous plants and seeds. The volume of these illegal operations is evidence of the highly organised and transactional criminal economy targeting our unique floral kingdom.

While enforcement operations have yield significant seizure and arrest the hon member is equally correct that the rate of high-level convictions, particularly those targeting organisers, financiers and exporters remains a critical constraint in dismantling these syndicates. Addressing this challenge requires a systematic multi-agency response across the entire justice value chain for investigations through the prosecuting and sentencing. The

department, together with its entity, CapeNature, provincial and national partners is pursuing and supports the following key interventions, elevating environmental crime as organised crime.

In other words environmental crimes, particularly plant poaching, must be consistently recognised as treated as serious organised criminal offences, not as a minor or isolated regulatory infringement. There is a growing body of knowledge and evidence on these criminal syndicates, including their operations across borders on the continent and globally.

Secondly, strengthening inter-agency coordination, effective prosecution depend on seamless collaboration through CapeNature's compliance and to enforcement officials, SAPS specialised unit, the Hawks, Directorate for Priority Crime investigations and the National Prosecuting Authority. To this end the department supports the establishment and strengthening of joint operational task teams and secondly early involvement in prosecuting in complex cases to guide evidence gathering and case strategy.

Thirdly, improving case quality and evidence standards, one of the key barriers to successfully prosecuting the high levels is the quantity and quality and complexity of evidence required to prove organised crime.

Fourthly, building institutional capacity within CapeNature. Hon members will be aware the enforcement capacity has been under pressure in this regard. CapeNature has recently advertised two critical long-standing

vacancies since 2023, namely the compliance specialist and the enforcement specialist.

Filling these longstanding vacancy posts is a priority intervention to ensure that cases entering the justice system are robust, well supported and capable of sustaining more complex prosecution and that staff involved in these cases are properly trained, equipped and capacitated. While this is a positive start there remains a growing need for additional human capacity owing to the volume and the complexity of these crimes, I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister your time has expired, I recognise the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. Thank you to the Minister as well for that response. Minister, as you would agree, and you have mentioned the scale of international poaching syndicates, is immense and it includes not only plants but as we recently heard in our Standing Committee also many other species, from abalone to pangolin and even exotic insects that are being transported illegally, mainly to the Far East, and you correctly state no single institution can tackle this crisis on its own.

So yes, we need stronger intelligence sharing between our agencies, we need coordinated investigations and prosecutions that target not only the individual poachers but also the criminal syndicates and international buyers

driving the trade.

We need improved monitoring in our ports of entry and stronger cooperation with international authorities to disrupt the trafficking routes and the online illegal market places. Importantly we must also make use of the extensive local knowledge and expertise that already exist within the Western Cape. Conservation scientists, our sand researchers, the CapeNature officials as you have mentioned, even our farmers, landowners, rural communities, they all possess invaluable understanding of the eco-systems and the criminal patterns effectively, so it is very heartening to hear the steps that you are taking, Minister, to increase collaboration and coordination.

In many of our rural areas local residents are often the first to observe suspicious activity or identify the poaching hotspots and their knowledge of the landscape is unmatched. Farmers and landowners in the same vein understand where vulnerable species occur and our scientists can identify which populations face the greatest risk. The conservation officials understand ecologic consequences of habitat destruction.

So Minister, I would agree, their expertise must directly inform enforcement strategies, conservation planning and public awareness campaigns and our communities must not simply be treated as bystanders, they must all become active partners in protecting the national heritage that belongs to all our South Africans. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon member Bryant, I recognise the hon member Stoffel.

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): Thank you hon Deputy Speaker. This interpellation raises an important issue but it also exposes the deeper weakness in how the DA Government is managing the environmental protection in this province. Yes, we are seeing increasing uncontrol of poached plants and seeds, but where are the convictions? Where are the syndicates being dismantled? What we are seeing is a system that catches those at the bottom while those who organise and profit from this criminal economy continue untouched, but this problem goes beyond poaching, the DA-led Government is ailing more broadly in its responsibility to protect the environment. We see ongoing land-invasion, environmentally sensitivity areas, weak enforcement against illegal developments and a lack of decisive intervention where our natural resources are under threat.

This reflects a government that reacts rather than leads. We must also recognise that many of those arrested for poaching are vulnerable individuals driven by poverty, whilst the real masterminds operate through organised international networks. The ANC believes that what is missing is clear leadership, coordination and accountability.

We therefore call for the establishment of a Provincial Environmental Commissioner and an office that will coordinate enforcement, work closely with the National Prosecution Authority, engage institutions such as South

African National Biodiversity Institution and to ensure that environmental protection across poaching, conservation is treated with the necessary and seriousness it deserves. Without that level of oversight we will continue to see arrests without justice and environmental degradation without consequences.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, your time has expired, thank you very much, your time has expired.

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): The people of the Western Cape deserve better, thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member your time has expired. I recognise the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you very much , Deputy Speaker. It is good to hear the ANC talking about convictions, we were told earlier that there was too much focus on convictions, but I fully agree, we should be focusing on convictions and one of the challenges that we have with dealing with environmental crime is the many pieces of legislation that exist disparately that make it difficult sometimes to ensure that prosecutions are effected and that convictions take place.

The consequences of plant poaching are devastating, and my conservation authorities have already warned us that several species of *Conophytum*,

which is a tiny succulent plant endemic to the Western Cape and the Northern Cape have already become functionally extinct in the wild as a direct result of poaching. Entire populations have simply disappeared from their natural habitat. Species that survived for thousands and in some case millions of years are now being wiped within a matter of seasons.

Critically endangered species such *Haworthia Evescence* near Worcester continue to face severe pressure from illegal harvesting. Rare species of *Anacampseros*, *Dadlaya* and *Clivia Mirabilis* most notoriously are also increasingly targeted due their rarity and the high value among collectors. We were told at our recent portfolio committee meeting that these plants fetched thousands and thousands and thousands of rands being sold on international markets in the Far East, and what makes this particularly tragic is that many of these plants grow extraordinarily slowly, some takes decades to mature and once entire populations are removed from the wild their recovery may take generations if recovery is even possible at all. In some areas poachers are removing not only mature plants but the seedlings and the surrounding soil, leaving eco-systems permanently damaged.

If we fail to act decisively now our future generations may inherit only photographs of these extraordinary plants rather than living eco-systems and that would represent not only an environmental failure but a moral one as well. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon member Bryant, I

recognise Minister Bredell?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Ja, I want to thank hon member Bryant for putting this on the table, it is something very close to my heart as well, it is something that we struggle with. Over the years we managed, and the hon member Stoffels mentioned, that we managed to catch some, a lot of these people, but the prosecuting arm is a problem and I don't want to go into it but we can just think for ourselves who is responsible for the prosecuting part of this.

So training, sensitisation of the justice system is a process that we are busy with, to sensitise prosecutors as well as judicial officers of the ecological, economic and international dimensions of biodiversity and biodiversity crime. I will also maybe today send you my whole answer because I have just taken bits and pieces out of it. I agree that the hon member raises an important policy question regarding specialised environmental crime courts and dedicated prosecutors. Our position, we are busy discussing this with CapeNature as well as we support this principle; the practical and logistical considerations we need to work that out with the prosecuting authority and ja, by working closer together through all the legal arms we will get more people in front of the courts. Obviously this has become a big issue of wider spread crime, not only environmental crime but as you mentioned hon member the poaching of abalone and even you can connect drug smuggling etcetera with this. These are big syndicates, now what makes this also very

problematic and therefore you need hands on the ground and therefore you need more sectors involved within the monitoring of our environment because of the huge, vast areas where the plants grow.

So we are busy with this whole process, we had a couple of successes but the prosecutors need to get on board and need to help us. With that I thank you for putting this on the table and I will send you the complete answer also, thank you very much.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very hon Minister. Hon members that concludes Interpellation one as printed on the Question Paper, we move on to Interpellation two and I recognise the Minister of Health and Wellness, Minister Wenger

Mitchells Plain Hospital: capacity standards

2. Mr B N Herron asked the Minister of Health and Wellness:

Given that the GF Jooste Hospital was decommissioned and that facilities, such as the Mitchells Plain Hospital, were intended to absorb demand for health services and to improve access to care:

- (1) What are the various patient or hospital capacity standards for Western Cape hospitals;

(2) whether the Mitchells Plain Hospital operates within these standards?

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you hon Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the hon member for the question. In response, part 1, the term patient or hospital capacity standards can refer to several related planning and operational measures. The Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness does not apply a single standalone capacity standard to all hospitals. Capacity is assessed according to the hospital's role and level of care, its approved service package, infrastructure, beds, staff, utilisation, referral pathways and quality and safety indicators.

These measures include, amongst others, infrastructure norms and standards, including approved beds, clinical space, safety and maintenance and functional suitability, bed utilisation rate, bed density, average length of stay, in-patient separations, out-patient activity and emergency centre activity. Staffing availability and skills mix, the approved service package and role of the hospital within the referral pathway. Theatre, diagnostic and specialist service availability where applicable. Patients experience of care, complaints, safety and clinical governance indicators and broader population needs, geographic access, disease burden and referral pathways.

So hospital capacity must be understood within the broader health service platform, this is especially important in the Metro where hospitals, emergency centres, primary healthcare facilities, EMS and referral services function is part of an inter-dependent health eco-system.

In response to part 2, Mitchells Plain Hospital is a District Hospital and operates within its approved role and service package in the Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness Service platform. Mitchells Plain Hospital operates in a high demand environment and its capacity must be understood within the broader Metro health platform. While I was not an executive at the time I understand that a range of measures were implemented to mitigate the impact of the decommissioning of G F Jooste Hospital, including the redistribution of services to other facilities, including Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha Hospitals, expansion of capacity at existing hospitals, including additional beds, strengthening of emergency and specialist services at alternative sites.

These interventions were designed to continue access to care and in several instances improved access to higher levels of care for the affected communities. The Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness continues to monitor Mitchells Plain Hospital through routine operational, quality, infrastructure and service delivery indicators. Where pressure points are identified these are managed through measures such as bed management, discharge planning, referral pathway coordination, staffing allocation within available resources and infrastructure maintenance or improvement where required.

Beyond this the independent Office of Health Standards Compliance, or OHSC established under the National Health Amendment Act to monitor and enforce compliance with prescribed health norms and standards, conducted

an inspection at Mitchells Plain Hospital last year, being in 2025. The OHSC found the hospital to be compliant with the regulated norms and standards and has issued it with a certificate of compliance. Thank you.

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

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I think it is obvious that this question was raised as a consequence of complaints that I had received around the capacity of the Mitchells Plain Hospital and the extra burden on the Mitchells Plain Hospital given the decommissioning of the G F Jooste Hospital and I have attempted to do an oversight visit at the Mitchells Plain Hospital. I gave the hospital the courtesy of notice that I would like to visit them, because I did not want to be disruptive, as the Minister spoke about earlier in the subject matter for discussion and I was told I could not visit without the MEC's permission and that is plain and simply unconstitutional. Is the Democratic Alliance, that has made the point over and over again that the only way to conduct or to be effective in doing oversight visits is to do them unannounced, and when I gave the hospital an opportunity to accommodate me I was referred to the MEC's office to make the arrangements for an oversight visit. That is not how a democracy works and it is not how the Democratic Alliance understands how democracy works, but nevertheless let me get onto the subject matter.

Mitchells Plain Hospital has roughly 420 beds but serves a catchment that

has increased to 1.5million people, so the hospital is constantly operating at a capacity of between 90 and 100% and when a hospital operates above 85% there is no room left for emergencies and people who are severely injured or critical have nowhere else to go and people are unfortunately at risk. In an area such as Mitchells Plain heavily affected by gang violence, emergencies are not uncommon, they are a part of daily life. People are therefore left waiting in overcrowded rooms for hours, 26 hours someone told me. Some never even get a bed. Others are sent home with pain, fear and uncertainty because the system simply cannot cope. The MEC claimed the G J Jooste Hospital was, and I quote:

“...significantly overburdened and had a limited-service scope and that the decommissioning coincided with the development of new healthcare facilities including Mitchells Plain Hospital and Khayelitsha Hospital which expanded access to services and provided more comprehensive and higher-level care to the broader population.”

But that is not what the people of Mitchells Plain and surrounding communities are experiencing. Healthcare is a constitutional right and a basic human right; merely having a hospital building does not fulfil that right, you need a functional hospital. Healthcare is not a passive act, it requires staff resources, bed, equipment, dignity and urgency and so for the so-called best run province far too many people are struggling to gain access to basic human rights and human dignity. Waiting hours for a bed that never comes is not the produce of a well-run province. It is a province of a

government that has become comfortable with human suffering, comfortable with overcrowding and comfortable with failing work in class communities. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon member Herron. I recognise hon member Booysen.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Hon Speaker, the question before this House is not about individual facilities such as Mitchells Plain [Inaudible.] respond for a growing population and a rising demand for care. Healthcare does not exist in a static environment, population expand, migration patterns shift and the burden of disease changes over time. A functional health system must therefore constantly adapt, not reactively but through deliberate planning and ongoing capacity management.

In the Western Cape capacity planning is guided by structured demand modelling, this includes population growth projections, utilisation trends, clinical burden profile and facility levels to anticipate pressure points and response before services are overwhelmed. Capacity is not defined by beds alone, it includes staffing levels, emergency units, theatre utilisation, the diagnostic turnaround times and the efficiency and referral pathway across the entire [Inaudible.]. Speaker when a facility such as G F Jooste Hospital is decommissioned it forms part of a managed service rendition. The amount is redistributed across the surrounding facilities, including Mitchells Plain. Support [Inaudible.].

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Booyesen I am not sure if it is just us ...[Interjection.]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): ...to ensure continuity of care.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Booyesen, we are not able to hear your contribution, so the Minister that must respond to your contribution ...[Interjection.]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Yes, Deputy Speaker, can you hear me?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, we can hear you now, I do not know if it is your connectivity but you are not audible so the Minister is not able to hear your contribution in order to respond, so I am just highlighting that to you just for the record. Hon Booyesen you may continue.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): We have connectivity problems, my apologies Deputy Speaker, indeed so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Booyesen, you may continue.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): Am I audible now?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you are.

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): When a facility like D F Jooste Hospital is decommissioned it forms part of a managed service transition. Demand is redistributed across surrounding facilities including Mitchells Plain, supported by strength and primary services, improved referral coordination and system wide adjustment to ensure continued [Inaudible.] care. The objective ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Booyesen, your time has expired [Interjection]

Mr M BOOYSEN (DA): ...to your patients but your technical service, quality ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Booyesen, your time has expired, thank you very much. I recognise the hon member Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The truth is simple, the DA closed G F Jooste Hospital without a credible plan for the patients itself, there was no proper funded transition, no adequate replacement facility and no honest assessment of pressure that will fall on surrounding hospitals. I also want to understand whether the MEC agrees that Rule 95 of the Standing Rules of the Western Cape Provincial Government is a procedural notification requirement and not a limitation on the constitutional oversight mandate of members of the Provincial Parliament and if not why not, if so whether the Department of Health and Wellness has

at any stage interpreted Rule 95 as requiring members to obtain permission from the MEC or the department before conducting oversight visits.

Today our community is paying the price, for more than a decade, the people of Manenberg, Gugulethu, Nyanga and the broader Klipfontein corridor have been left without a hospital of their own. Patients are forced into Mitchells Plain Hospital and Khayelitsha District Hospital and a clinic in Heideveld, all of which are overwhelmed and operating far beyond capacity. These are district hospitals and a clinic, yet they are expected to function like a regional hospital. They deal with complex trauma, rising patient numbers and referral level care without the resources and staff or infrastructures required.

Let us correct the record, Mitchells Plain Hospital and Khayelitsha District Hospital were planned and developed under the ANC to extend access to healthcare. The DA inherited this system and cut ribbons but has failed to strengthen the system under growing demand. The DA itself admits that a regional hospital is needed in the Klipfontein corridor, yet there is still no delivery, only plans and delays.

One of these facilities, Mitchells Plain or Khayelitsha District Hospital must be upgraded into a fully resourced regional hospital, with the beds, specialists and funding requirements. What we have now ...[Interjection.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Windvogel your time has expired.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...is unacceptable.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Windvogel, your time has expired, thank you very much, I recognise the hon member Herron.

Mr B N HERRON (GOOD): Thank you, on Deputy Speaker. I must disagree with hon member Booysen, capacity must be defined by the number of beds, especially when a hospital turns patients away because it doesn't have a bed, that's the very definition of capacity. A hospital built for 150 000 people is now serving 1.5million people, you don't need to be an expert to understand that that is a failure of healthcare governance, more especially when the Government closed a functional major hospital with amongst the bed trauma units in the world and doesn't rebuild it for over a decade.

We have just lived through one of the worst storms in the province's history, entire communities were flooded, roads collapsed, homes were damaged and people were left terrified and if this Government is serious about being winter-ready then that preparation cannot begin and end with holding press conferences, because hospitals need to be ready too, because when storms hit, when roads flood and when violence escalates, accidents increase, when vulnerable people become displaced and sick, hospitals become the frontline of survival and the Mitchells Plain Hospital was not ready. The Hospital already experienced a power outage and winter hasn't even begun.

When a single major weather event can destabilise critical infrastructure this

early into the season what exactly is the plan for the months ahead, what happens during the next storm, what happens when lives depend on equipment, lighting, emergency systems and functioning wards, and this power outage did not happen in isolation, it happened in a hospital already struggling with severe capacity pressure.

Mitchells Plain Hospital operates at 0.28 beds per 1 000 people, the recommended benchmark is 2.5 to three beds per 1 000 people. This alone is a huge safety risk and now the people must operate in the dark. We have also heard complaints from members of the public about unprofessional behaviour and poor treatment. Let me be clear, healthcare workers are themselves operating under impossible conditions. Many are overworked, understaffed, emotionally exhausted and expected to carry the burden of a collapsing system on their backs. So when a healthcare system is pushed beyond its limits for years, dignity breaks down for staff and for patients and this is the real issue here, this Government continues to speak the language of excellence while communities experience the reality of decline.

The MEC speaks about infrastructure and statistics but people experience fear, overcrowding darkness during power outages and endless waiting rooms. The healthcare system cannot call itself successful when basic functionality feels uncertain, and it certainly cannot boast about being ready while working class communities are made to feel invisible every time they walk through the doors of a public hospital. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thanks very much hon member Herron, I recognise the Minister, Minister Wenger.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The reality is that neither I nor the Department of Health and Wellness are under any illusions about the pressure facing the healthcare platform and the service is not always what we would like it to be. Many of the pressures stem from factors that are beyond the control of Provincial Government, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the growing burden of disease and years of fiscal austerity.

At the same time where matters have been within our control the Department has worked relentlessly to strengthen the healthcare system. We have expanded and upgraded infrastructure, implemented systems to improve efficiency and patient flow, and strengthened referral pathways and we sought to distribute pressure across the broader healthcare eco-system as effectively as possible.

As mentioned before a range of measures were implemented to mitigate the impact of the decommissioning of G F Jooste Hospital. However, since then the population has increased significantly and demand for services is rising, and that is why the Western Cape Government continues to invest in major infrastructure projects, including the new Metro West Regional Hospital. The project is currently in stage 2, the concept design phase, and earlier this year underwent peer review by both the National Department of Health and

the IDMS Gateway review process. The design was approved providing further assurance that the project is progressing. The hospital is planned to provide more than 400 beds and will play a critical role in strengthening healthcare services in the Metro.

The timeframe attached to this Regional hospital reflects the scale and complexity of the project including funding availability, planning and design processes, as well as land readiness requirements and the need for coordination with municipal services and infrastructure. We are also redesigning acute and emergency services, especially for EC's under the most pressure and that is a project that is underway currently, to ensure the provision of the right care at the right time in the right place for the right price, putting people first across the acute care eco-system.

And now Deputy Speaker, I would like to address the issues of oversight. Constitutional oversight powers should be balanced with operational requirements, especially in healthcare facilities because we have vulnerable people in our hospitals. The National Health Act requires that hospitals provide access to health services and hospital managers actually have an obligation to prioritise patient care and facility integrity, therefore the notice of an oversight visit helps to make sure that we have contingency plans in place so that services are not interrupted. It is not about permission, it is about information so that we can put systems and plans in place.

At the same time Standing Rule 95 requires informing the responsible

Minister when meeting an official or requesting documentation, and that is all we are asking, to be informed, not to request permission. Hospitals are protected environments gearing for vulnerable patients and patient privacy and confidential medical information must be safeguarded. The hospital facilities and the managers have to verify who is visiting a facility, because members are actually requesting privileged access to sensitive spaces that an ordinary member of the public does not have and they, officials, have a duty of care to verify who is visiting. They do not know necessarily who MPP's are but I do, so I help with this verification to streamline your visits.

The checking that the visit is valid, not that it is allowed, that is not the question. No one would expect unrestricted access to schools or police holding cells without a verification process and the same applies here and that is all we are saying. To the hon member it would have taken exactly the same amount of time to email me instead of the official and within 24 hours the member would have received a confirmation of who would be meeting him and guidelines on visiting facilities and we would have been able to put continuity of care plan in place at the facility. He was not told he was not allowed to visit, that is completely incorrect, he was simply told to liaise with my office but he declined to do so. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Minister your time has expired. Thank you very much. Hon members, that concludes Interpellations in terms of Rule 197, we will now move on to Questions for Oral Reply in terms of Rule 202. I wish to advise hon members that once the hon Minister has started the reply

to the oral question as printed on the Question Paper, hon members must use the chat facility for the sitting to indicate that they want to ask a follow-up question. There are four opportunities for follow-up questions but the hon member who has posed the initial oral question as printed on the Question Paper will have the first opportunity for a follow-up question and thereafter other hon members may then use the remaining opportunities to ask the following questions if they so wish.

I recognise the Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Hon Speaker as agreed by members our questions are 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 15 and 17 will stand over until the next sitting.

[Questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 8, 13, 15 and 17 stand over]

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, just for your information we move onto Question number 3, and those are questions that stood over from Thursday the 7th of May as agreed to by House and I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

Questions standing over from Thursday, 7 May 2026, as agreed to by the House:

Municipalities, clean audits: assistance provided to

3. Mr D W Bryant asked the Minister of Finance:

(a) To what extent has the support provided by her Department led to clean audits achieved by municipalities in the province and (b) what type of (i) financial and (ii) technical assistance has been provided to municipalities in order to strengthen their financial governance?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker, and thank you to the member for agreeing to hold the question over so that I am in the sitting in order to answer it. The answer is as follows; the Western Cape Provincial Treasury acknowledges the positive audit outcomes achieved for the 2024/25 Municipal Financial Year. Twenty municipalities attained clean audits, five received unqualified audit opinions with other matters and a total of 25 municipalities achieved thus the globally recognised benchmark of an unqualified audit opinion. I am particularly very proud of Beaufort West having moved into an unqualified with findings audit. This is the first time since 2016, so congratulations to Beaufort West, it is not perfect, there is not always sunshine and roses but it is good to see that things are improving.

These outcomes are the result of sustained commitment by the Minister for Councils and Administrations, supported by structured collaborative governance interventions led by the Provincial Treasury in partnership with the Department of Local Government. Our shared approach is anchored in the

principles of the Municipal Finance Management Act, cooperative governance and a culture of proactive financial oversight and accountability.

In terms of part A, Provincial Treasury's local government accounting support interventions have contributed materially to improved audit outcomes, including the achievement of clean audits, by addressing systemic weaknesses in financial management, reporting and governance. It must however be emphasized that audit outcomes remain the primary responsibility of municipal councils and their administrators. Provincial support serves to enable, strengthen and sustain municipal efforts.

The following coordinated support initiatives have directly contributed to improved audit performance. Annual financial statement consistency workshops, this expanded from a provincial to a national conference under the Western Cape Government coordination. This initiative has reduced material misstatements by systematically addressing root causes of accounting errors and governance failures. Material misstatements are the time recourse of a municipality not achieving a clean audit.

The second one is audit readiness engagements, these are conducted prior to each audit cycle to ensure municipalities are prepared for the annual audit, with corrective measures implemented either in the current or following financial year. Weekly provincial Audit Steering Committee meetings, these forums enable rapid identification and resolution of transversal audit issues by convening the relevant technical and governance officials in real time.

Multiple departments and key institutions or role players in the Western Cape Government attend these committee meetings. Observer role in municipal audit steering committees upon invitation; Provincial Treasury provides real-time access to audit complexities offering on the ground supporting during the audit process.

Quarterly monitoring of audit action plans, findings are formally reported to municipalities and the National Treasury, reinforcing consequence management and accountability for remediation. Analysis and distribution of a sanitised consolidated management report together with an in-depth analysis of findings. This assists municipalities in identifying transversal audit findings and emerging audit focus areas enabling pre-emptive corrective action. The GRAF update training and mSCOA support, continuous capacity building ensures compliance with evolving accounting standards and the municipal standard charge of accounts, IGR support forums, which includes the Municipal Accountants Forum, the Accounting Working Committee and CFO forums. This keeps finance officials informed of latest developments, fostering peer learning and consistent application of MFMA requirements and inputs into key national forums and meetings including National Treasury and the Accounting Standards Board.

These interventions have strengthened governance, improved financial statement quality and reduced the prevalence of material findings. Nevertheless clean audits remain a testament to municipal leadership and internal controls which Provincial Treasury supports but does not replace. Sub-

section (b)(i), Provincial Treasury does not directly disburse grants or project funding to municipalities specifically for audit support, instead our financial assistance is delivered through funded training and capacity building programmes including GRAP update training, which is fully funded by Provincial Treasury to ensure municipalities remain compliant without bearing the cost burden. National Annual Financial Statements consistency workshop coordination, financial and logistics resources provided by the Provincial Treasury to enable this conference at no cost to participate in municipalities and support forums, the CFO Forum, Accounting Forum and Accounting Working Committee which is funded and facilitated by Provincial Treasury to provide continuous no cost access to technical updates and peer learning.

The Provincial Treasury's local government accounting investment in structured training workshop coordination and ongoing technical support represent significant financial assistance in kind, aimed at reduced municipal exposure to audit risks and associated financial consequences of non-compliance. Provincial Treasury additionally provides direct funding to municipalities through the financial management capability grant. Some of the projects funded through this grant assist municipalities to respond to findings raised by the Auditor-General, but that is never the sole purpose of a grant allocation. For example in 2025/26 this grant funded Asset Management Projects in two municipalities. While this work will help to address findings made the ACSA, improving asset management is a priority in its own right and forms part of Provincial Treasury's broader mandate to support improved financial governance. Provincial Treasury is cognisant that improved financial

governance should in due course lead to improved audit outcomes.

Subsection b)(2), the following forms of technical assistance form the core of Provincial Treasury's Local Government Accounting Municipal Support Model, financial management support, which is daily operational support via the dedicated helpdesk. The email address is pthelpme@westerncape.gov.za, which addresses: accounting, auditing, legal and regulatory matters; audit preparation support; audit readiness engagement; pre and post submission review of the annual financial statements and holding an observer status in municipal audit steering committees; governance and compliance support; quarterly monitoring of audit action plans; analysis of transversal findings and distribution of the Consolidated Management Report analysis to identify new audit focus areas; training and capacity building.

This is the GRAP audit training; mSCOA support and structured learning through the Municipal Accountants Forum; Accounting, Working Committee and CFO forums; financial statement review processes. This is the formal review of AFS prior to submission to the Auditor-General and again after submission, enabling municipalities to institute corrective measures within the current or next financial year.

The MFMA compliance monitoring, which is weekly provincial audit steering committee meetings, from the beginning of September to the end of November, to evaluate transversal issues and mobilise the right technical and governance officials for rapid resolution; data analytics and benchmarking; the use of the

sanitised consolidated management report analysis to benchmark municipal performance and identify recurring or emerging audit risks; support forums and workshops such as the National AFS Consistency Workshop, the CFO Forum, the Accounting Forum and Accounting Working Committee, as mentioned previously. This is all structured to ensure municipal portfolios remain abreast of latest developments in accounting and mSCOA.

In conclusion, the Western Cape Provincial Treasury remains unequivocally committed to sustaining and deepening municipal financial governance, accountability and clean administration through structured intergovernmental collaboration with our sister department, the Department of Local Government.,

By maintaining a proactive evidence-based support model, we will continue to strengthen a clean governance culture across all municipalities. Our support evolves in line with emerging risks, audit findings and the changing regulatory environment, always respecting that the ultimate responsibility for audit outcomes rests with municipal councils and administrations.

The positive 2024/2025 audit outcomes provide a strong foundation and we will build on this through continued vigilance, capacity building and cooperative governance. Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker and thank you to the hon Minister for that response. Hon Minister, thank you for stepping in to assist these municipalities that are failing and filling the gap where the political leadership has failed. But you know, the Province cannot keep being expected to save failing political administrations.

My question to you, then, as a follow-up, would be, how important is it to have a stable political municipal administration that prioritises financial diligence and forward planning and is able to interact with your office on a regular basis in a coherent fashion?

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): That is a new question.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, in terms of the Rules, interjections are not allowed. This is the last warning. The Deputy Speaker has indicated, I have indicated. You cannot switch on your microphone and just make comments. That is completely against the Rules. Hon Minister?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker. In terms of the how that affects audits and the importance of a stable political administration, I would like to say absolutely. What we often see is that when certain decisions are made in Council, that filters down into the administration.

So often something does not start with a financial problem. It more often than not starts with a decision being made ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): My hand is up, hon Speaker.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: ... that results in a financial problem. When we see some of the outcomes of the audits, we often see this. For example, when you see continued vacancies in the MM position, in the CFO position, that often we also then see ...[Interjection.]

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): What should we do when there is no answer, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Hon member, I will recognise you after the Minister has completed. I assume that that was to ask a follow-up question?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): No, it is not.

The SPEAKER: Okay, is that a point of order?

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): That is the problem of virtual sittings, hon Speaker, because you do not see us in front of you that our hands are raised. Hon Speaker, what do you – you must make a ruling. This is a completely new question and we need to understand this, so that when we ask questions, we are treated by your same ruling because this is a completely new question that

member Bryant raised as a follow-up to the MEC. You can go back and read it yourself.

The SPEAKER: Okay. hon member, as has been my ruling for the last three and a half years from the Chair, I do not dictate to the Minister how he or she responds to the question posed. If the Minister is not able to respond because it is a new question in their view, then the Minister would indicate so. It is not for the Chair to dictate on how it should be responded to. So if the Minister is prepared to respond to the question, then it is entirely up to the Minister.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Haibo.

The SPEAKER: As has been my consistent ruling for the last three and a half years. Hon Minister, you may continue.

MINISTER OF FINANCE OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker. I was speaking about, for example, when you often see MM and CFO vacancies and how that results in regression in finances. And sometimes you also see that coming up in the respective audits. I was speaking earlier about how sometimes a decision in a Council will eventually result in a financial problem, and in this, you also sometimes see it coming out in audits. For example, councils have the ability to make policy. So if you make policy that has financial impacts and does not take things like deficits and surpluses into account, you could, for example, end up in an unfunded budget.

This is why it is always so important that politics does not intervene with administration and administration likewise does not intervene in politics; that we all are cognisant of what our respective roles are so that we do not end up in situations where our financial decisions then result in qualified or adverse or disclaimer audits, for example. Thank you so much.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much to the hon Minister. Hon members, are there any further follow up questions on that question? I see no further follow ups. That concludes the questions on Question number three. We move on to Question number four. And I recognise the hon Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Minister Bredell.

Nature reserves

4. Mr D W Bryant asked the Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning:

In the light of the recent proclamation of 13 new nature reserves in the province:

(a) What is the department's progress with the international "30 by 30" conservation target and (b) how is he and his department ensuring that the rapid expansion of the provincial protected estate is matched by a proportional increase in law enforcement and monitoring capacity?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you to

the hon member for the question. CapeNature is actively pursuing the international 30 x 30 conservation targets and is adding all new proclaimed natural nature reserves' hectares to the Protected Area Estate Register. This is in line with the Western Cape Protected Area Expansion Strategy 2025. These nature reserves include both provincial nature reserves and stewardship sites. CapeNature had planned to add 25 000 hectares over the past five years. As of 31st of March 2026, the actual realised target was surpassed by a figure significantly totalling 146 422.5 hectares.

The b) part of the question with regards to privately owned nature reserve stewardship sites, there has been no increase in staff as landowners assume responsibility for managing their land for conservation and compliance through approved management plans. More broadly, CapeNature is in the process of appointing two compliance officers and a compliance specialist to strengthen compliance function.

Furthermore, one contract landscape compliance post has been made permanent. CapeNature has also improved cooperation with the SAPS Stock Theft and Engagement Specialist Unit in the Western Cape to facilitate law enforcement and policing across conservation landscapes and has decentralised investigation capabilities to these landscapes. More human capacity to develop management plans and to monitor compliance may be motivated as the need grows. I thank you.

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

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you very much, Minister, It is fantastic to hear the steps that are being taken to expand our nature reserves and the stewardship that you are overseeing when it comes to CapeNature. I just want to find out, Minister, from you, are you aware of similar programmes taking place elsewhere in the country at this scale? Thank you.

MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you, hon member Bryant. Thank you for the follow-up. No, I am not aware of similar programmes. This is a big effort from our side to protect and to get land into the conservation space with the help of the landowners and I think future generations will benefit from the work we are busy doing.

The actual strategy behind this, hon Bryant, is to start to link conservation estates or stewardship programmes, so that game can start to roam again all over our province. Through us working with the private sector and signing these agreements with them, we can start to plan and to plot long-term conservation estates throughout this province. So, I am very excited about this. Yes, it will take long, but we manage it as well as possible, and there is also a lot of work going into this. If you see the agreements and the documentation behind this, it is a lot of work, but I am very proud and I am very grateful for the success.

Currently, CapeNature is managing more than a million hectares of conservation estate. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, are there any further follow-up questions on that question? There seems to be no further follow-up questions. That concludes Question number four. We move on to Question number ten, and I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker, and I also want to thank hon member Stoffel for agreeing to hold the question over for this sitting so that I am able to be here. The answer is as follows. The Western Cape Government is concerned with the affordability pressures facing all households, especially low income and vulnerable groups.

Section A: the most important protection for all indigent consumers is that they receive a lifeline amount of basic services for free. National norms provide for a minimum of six kilolitres or kL of potable water and 50 kilowatt hours of electricity per indigent household, with sanitation and refuse removal support varying across municipalities.

This is funded through the Equitable Share, and although the subsidy provided does not always cover the actual cost of providing free services, Western Cape municipalities still provide free services to more than 370 000 registered indigent households, according to the data from the 2024 indigent registers.

This ensures our most vulnerable have access to basic services but our concern does not stop there. Provincial Treasury wants to ensure municipal bills are affordable for all. However, we have to face the fact that many of the drivers of higher municipal costs are set by national structures and are beyond the powers of individual municipalities or the Province to address. The two biggest costs facing municipalities are bulk electricity, where NERSA has allowed Eskom a 9.1% increase this year, and wages, where SALGA has signed an agreement for 4.75% this year, plus a notch increase of a further 2.4% that is applicable to most municipal workers.

Municipalities have no choice but to pass these high input costs on to consumers or face financial ruin themselves, which is clearly not in anyone's interest if we want sustainable services.

Subsection (b), the Western Cape Government continues to work closely with municipalities to improve efficiency and contain costs, with the aim of limiting tariff increases, where possible, while maintaining cost-reflective and sustainable service delivery. This includes targeted support through initiatives such as the Strategic Integrated Municipal Engagements, where Provincial Treasury provides detailed municipality-specific feedback on draft budgets.

Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member Stoffel? Hon Van Wyk?

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker. I have a question to the Minister. While the rising costs of bulk electricity and water are largely driven by national entities like Eskom and NERSA, what avenues do municipalities have to offset these higher charges on residents? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Minister?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much to hon member Van Wyk. So, on the offsetting of higher charges there are different options, and they are not limited to the ones that I am mentioning here today. So, National Treasury always encourages municipalities to make sure that the cost of the item that you are supplying is covered.

So, for example, with electricity, we assist municipalities with cost of supply studies, particularly where they are not able to afford it themselves. Between the Department of Local Government and Provincial Treasury, we are able to help municipalities with these cost of supply studies. The unfortunate part is if NERSA pushes the amount up, and in this particular case this year, NERSA has pushed it up by 9.1%, you have to calculate that into your costs. So, if your municipality also then does not have surpluses, then it is very difficult to absorb that extra cost that is onto your books, because you have to pay it. You cannot say, no, I am not going to pay that 9.1% to NERSA.

And when it comes to, for example, wage agreements, you also cannot say, no, you are not going to pay because it is a collective wage agreement, so you end

up passing on that cost to customers. Obviously, if the increases from those institutions are more in line with inflation, then you would not be passing that above inflation cost onto residents.

Other things that municipalities can do, is many municipalities are exploring alternative energy in their municipalities. For example, Hessequa has also been supported by the Province in terms of alternative energy solutions. And all of these energy programmes in our energy plan are really to help municipalities to be able to bring energy costs down. We might not have load shedding currently, but it is so important that we continue making sure that we implement our energy plan and continue working with municipalities so that we can find affordable ways to bring that energy cost down.

Similarly on water. If I remember correctly, energy and water specifically, despite the national norm being six kilolitres, for example, for the norms and standards, the City of Cape Town, for example, gives 15 kilolitres for free and despite the norm being 50 units for energy, the City of Cape Town gives 60 for free. So they are even above the national norms and standards regarding the provision of free basic services that they provide to indigent households. And there are also other municipalities in our province that also provide free basic services above the national norm of 50 kilowatts and six kilolitres.

And I also want to just thank our sister department in the Department of Local Government that is currently embarking upon identifying how we can really implement a basket of services in municipalities. They released recently the

findings of the Basket of Services Research Project. The study, for example, serves as a critical update to the 2019 report and really speaks to what exactly the minimum amount of free basic services for indigent residents should be in terms of our Constitution.

Part of the suggestions of that report indicated, for example, with water, made the suggestion of increasing free allocations to 10.5 kilolitres per household to better reflect health and hygiene needs. It also recommended moving towards a 150 kilowatt per month threshold to support modern household requirements, but also recommended recognising connectivity, internet access, which is currently not in that National Treasury Equitable Share formula for local government as an essential service for enabling job seeking and educational advancement.

The department will continue with the municipal engagements with interdepartmental collaboration, and also making sure that if we move to this new basket of services, that there is phased implementation so that we can prioritise long-term financial sustainability of municipalities while ensuring that such a dignified basket remains a foundation for human upliftment.

So we will continue working with municipalities on that, and I am hoping that that will be fruitful work that will really benefit the people of our province. Thank you, hon Speaker.

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

Ms B N STOFFEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Speaker, and thank you, MEC, for the response. My follow-up question is: in terms of the indication by the MEC of the beneficiaries of this indigent register. Does the MEC think there is enough being done pertaining to that within the Western Cape when it comes to our poor people who cannot afford – is there enough being done from the municipalities towards that right of our people? [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Can I please ask that the hon member be muted? Hon Minister, again, I am not going to dictate how you answer that question, but what is against the Rules is to request a Minister to express a view, hon member Stoffel. So you have asked, is it the Minister's view that... But Minister, I will not dictate how you respond to that.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker. I will try to keep it objective and not break your Rules. In terms of municipalities, and while I know that our sister Department of Local Government is able to maybe provide a summary of the provision of the current free basic services, I will just give some of the examples that I know of.

So the national norm obviously is the six kilolitres in terms of water and then in terms of electricity, the national norm is 50 kilowatts. And that is not just for municipalities in the Western Cape, that is for all municipalities. So then

when you look at the Local Government Equitable Share, the money that you receive as a municipality from National Government, that is in terms of that Local Government Equitable Share.

So when National Treasury puts that formula together for municipalities, they will not consider the fact that you may be giving your residents 10 kilolitres or 15 kilolitres of water or 60 or 70 and so forth of kilowatts of electricity, they will only take the national norm into account, which is the 50 and the six. Despite that, there are many of our municipalities that give above the national norm to their residents. The one that I mentioned earlier, because the question specifically related to the City, was that the City is giving 60 kilowatts in terms of electricity and then the 15 kilolitres in terms of water. I always encourage people that if they qualify for the indigent services, to please make sure that their documents are up to date with their municipality so that they are able to get those free basic services. And your indigent household policy is determined at a Council level. There is obviously a recommendation from National Treasury and many municipalities do give, they almost say that you qualify as an indigent household in many municipalities even above that national recommendation.

So I do think many of our municipalities do give above what the national norm is and in terms of their policies also above recommendations. And then also I mentioned earlier the new research that the Department of Local Government has done. They released their findings of that Basket of Services Research Project and part of their research suggestions included what I mentioned

earlier, to increase free allocations to 10.5 kilolitres per household. So that means we would lobby for it going from 6 to 10.5, as a minimum.

Then a second recommendation was to move to 150 kilowatts monthly threshold. So that would then mean we would have to lobby National Treasury that the subsidy goes from 50 to 150. And then the new recommendation, that is not taken into account currently, is connectivity. And that is in order to recognise how internet access is really actually an essential service to enable job seeking and educational advancement and obviously because these things need to be done in a manner to ensure that it is financially sustainable, because we do not want to push municipalities into unfunded budgets, and we do not want to push municipalities into a situation where they are actually not able to afford it. So that is why there must be municipal engagements. We need to be able to understand granular factors of tariff calculations, ensuring that proposed increases in service levels also do not compromise that municipal financial health.

I mentioned earlier interdepartmental collaboration. We have to work with the different sector departments also to explore how we can really make sure that there are enough resources on the table to be able to implement this and that we must also focus on sustainable implementation.

So even if we are able to get this right we might need to phase in implementation to make sure that we are able to balance that long-term financial sustainability of municipalities with the foundation of human

upliftment because, like I said earlier, the last thing we want is to push municipalities into a situation where they are not financially sustainable. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much hon Minister. Hon members, the next hon member is hon member Marais and then hon member Nkondlo. Hon member Marais?

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you very much, hon Speaker and thank you to the Minister. I just wanted to know, in terms of this particular question; it is very focused on the lower income households, but simultaneously we find that the middle-income households are also under tremendous pressure in terms of access to affordable water, electricity and services. I wanted to know whether the department is also looking at a possible financial model in order to provide a basket of services that is affordable for middle income households that are also experiencing financial pressure with higher than inflation increases on an annual basis? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon member. Hon Minister?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much. Absolutely, hon Speaker. It is so difficult when it comes to the middle income grouping and families and really, thank you hon member Marais for that question.

Something that we need to have a look at in South Africa is to ask ourselves whether the complete financial model for municipalities – and this is now all municipalities in our country together – is still sustainable. Are we really making sure that this financial model we are currently implementing is still valid in terms of how municipalities are funded and that is whether it is the Equitable Share, whether it is the Conditional Grants that they are getting, whether it is the cost of the particular service that they are providing. Not every municipality will, for example, have the same energy programme, not every municipality will have the same water programme. So you will see varying costs for particular services across municipalities because if you are in the Northern Cape you might be prioritising different energy and water programmes than that of the municipalities in the Western Cape.

We have an Energy and Water Council as chaired by the hon Premier and our municipalities are also part of this Energy and Water Council, and this is linked to our Energy and Water Programme in the province as well, and the reason we have this Energy and Water Programme really is we want reliable energy. We said in our Growth for Jobs plan that we want to get to 5 200 megawatts by 2035, and we also said that we want to bring in additional 320 million cubic metres of water in our province, but it cannot just be reliable, it must also be affordable.

So we want municipalities to also put on that lens of affordability and it is very difficult because not every service within energy, not every service within water and so on, necessarily has the same cost attached to it.

So I really do think that at a national level we have to ask ourselves whether the financial model for municipalities and how we allocate funding as a country and how we cost different services are still sustainable. That is the first part.

The second part is, because the hon member really focusses on the middle income specifically, the middle income families really have been pushed to the brink really, for lack of better terminology. We know in many countries that it is so important to grow your middle class and we do that through growing the economy, through making sure we bring more people into jobs because we want people to move up that opportunity ladder so that someone else again can benefit from, for example, an indigent grant. We do not want you to remain on an indigent subsidy or indigent grant because we want you to be able to get a job, to be able to contribute to, for example, increased income taxes and so on.

Middle income families are really struggling in our country. I am very grateful for the National Government to have provided relief to households, to residents and to businesses on the fuel levy, for example, it has been a very tough time for South Africans and I am hoping that in this conversation with municipalities and with provinces as well, you also know I am always speaking about the Provincial Equitable Share and how provinces are funded, and I am hoping that the three spheres of government can get together now with this programme of the White Paper and how are we really checking, how are we costing everything, so we can have an honest conversation about is the model still holding up. Any suggestions, hon member Marais, that you have, we always take those into consideration as to what are those key aspects that we can make

sure that we have reform in energy, that we have reform in water, but similar to the fuel levy, for example, that we have reform in transport so that we can have affordable services to get our people home, to get our people to school safely as well. Thank you.

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

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Hon Speaker, I have withdrawn my questions with that long answer of the hon Minister to give space to others. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon members, is there anyone else for that final opportunity? If not, then we – hon member Marais, is that a follow-up?

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Speaker. I want to thank the hon Minister for her reply because it is important that we try and find that sweet balance between providing for the poor, the subsidised services they need and then of course on the other hand those who actually pay a bit extra to subsidise.

The SPEAKER: Hon member Marais, is there a follow-up question?

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Sorry, hon Speaker. So I just wanted to tell the hon Minister thank you, I will take up the offer and I will get back to the department and to her. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. That brings us to the end of that question. We move on to the new questions under Question 3 as printed on the Question Paper and I recognise the hon Minister of Finance, Minister Baartman.

New questions

Municipalities: legislative and regulatory reforms

3. Ms L D van Wyk asked the Minister of Finance:

With regard to the ongoing efforts to enhance municipal infrastructure resilience through private sector participation and regulatory reform:

- (1) What progress, if any, has been made with legislative and regulatory reforms to enable municipalities to enter into longer-term contracts (of 10 to 15 years) for the (a) operation and management of water and sewerage works and (b) procurement of renewable energy;
- (2) to what extent do current regulations that govern public–private partnership arrangements and any regulatory relief measures prove to be practically implementable at municipal level?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, hon Speaker. In response to the question I will start with sub-section (1). Existing legislation already provides municipalities with an enabling framework to enter into longer-term contractual arrangements. In particular Section 33 of the MFMA regulates contracts that

impose financial obligations beyond the three year Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, while the Municipal Systems Act provides for long-term service delivery agreements and external service delivery mechanisms. Together these provisions enable municipalities to conclude longer-term agreements subject to strict governance, affordability, public participation and value-for-money requirements.

In the water sector current reforms are primarily focused on strengthening the governance and regulatory framework for long-term operating and management agreements through proposed amendments to the Water Services Act, including improved regulation of water service providers and stronger oversight arrangements.

In the electricity sector significant progress has been made through the Electricity Regulation Amendment Act, which creates a more enabling framework for municipalities to procure electricity from independent power producers, participate in wheeling arrangements and enter into longer-term power purchase agreements where appropriate.

Sub-section (2). At municipal level National Treasury is currently reviewing the Municipal PPP Regulations to improve regulatory clarity, streamline approval processes and make the framework more practical for infrastructure projects in sectors such as water, sanitation and energy. A number of municipalities are already exploring PPP concession arrangements and other long-term service delivery models to address infrastructure and energy

resilience challenges.

The primary constraint, however, remains implementation capacity at municipal level. Many municipalities lack the technical, institutional and transaction advisory capacity required to structure and manage complex long-term agreements, while PPP processes can also be resource-intensive, particularly for smaller and financially constrained municipalities. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I recognise the hon member Van Wyk.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Thank you, hon Speaker, and thank you, hon Minister, for that response. I think just in addition to that, how is the Provincial Treasury assisting municipalities to develop feed-in tariff structures that are both fiscally sound and attractive enough to incentivise households and businesses to sell power back into the grid? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Van Wyk. Hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you so much, hon Speaker. While we do not directly assist municipalities with developing some of those feed-in tariffs, we do help municipalities with things like cost of supply studies in energy where they request our assistance, and we do this in collaboration with the Department of Local Government.

What we also do, and this is specifically not the Provincial Treasury, but the Western Cape Government through the Energy and the Water Council, municipalities can also apply for assistance through the respective programmes for technical, institutional and transaction advisory capacity.

I know it is not just the Department of Local Government that also assists the municipalities with this, they also get a lot of assistance from the Department of Infrastructure also when it comes to technical assistance. The reason for this is sometimes they just need that little bit of extra capacity to structure or to manage the agreement, sometimes to be able to put their business plans together. Some of these business plans for the projects that they have are very complex and you need that specialised technical expertise in order to be able to put that type of documentation together, for example, if you are going to apply for a BFI you need to be able to do that preparatory documentation, for example, your pre-feasibilities, your feasibilities and so on.

So there is also the ability through the BFI to apply to either ISA or the DBSA or IFC, for example, for technical assistance as well, but where we are able to we attempt our best to help municipalities with those technical assistance. If there is a municipality that requires specific assistance they are also welcome to contact myself or hon Minister Bredell or the Chair of the Energy and Water Council, which is the hon Premier in this regard, and we will do our best as a Provincial Government to assist wherever we are able to, or to refer the municipality to the correct avenue in this regard. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, are there any further follow-up questions? If not, we move on to the next question, Question number 3, and I recognise the hon Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Planning, Minister Bredell.

Water Resilience Strategy

4. Mr D W Bryant asked the Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning:

We are now more than six months into the ten-year Water Resilience Strategy:

(a) What are the key early milestones achieved with the implementation of the Water Resilience Strategy and (b) what are specific examples of communities already benefiting from these interventions?

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you to hon member Bryant for the question.

We have completed the first version of the Water Resilience Implementation Plan for all five provincial districts by March 2026. These plans translate the strategy into practical district-level and municipal-level interventions and set out the funding pathways for implementation. We have also established a

structured process to update these plans over the next three years through direct engagement with municipalities, the Department of Water and Sanitation, the Department of Infrastructure and the Department of Agriculture, as well as MISA and other partners.

In addition we have completed several projects under the department's Geohydro Programme, which supports the strategic focus on diversifying water sources and augmentation water supply. This includes completion of Version 1 of the Klein Karoo Water Supply Scheme, as well as groundwater investigations, wellfield development, emergency supply interventions and technical advisory work across municipalities such as Bitou, Swellendam, Prince Albert, Cape Agulhas, Beaufort West, Matzikama, Laingsburg and Knysna.

The part (b) of the question. Several communities are already benefiting from these early interventions in Knysna. Drought response measures implemented during December 2025 have supported short-term supply stability. In Vanrhynsdorp additional borehole investigations have strengthened local municipal water availability. Emergency interventions, including the Klaarstroom Water Supply Project, have been identified for implementation through Water Resilience Grants.

For the 26/27 financial year, through the Water Resilience Grant, we have allocated R40,5 million towards the Western Cape municipalities for the implementation of priority projects identified through Water Resilience

Planning. This funding will support emergency supply measures, groundwater development and other resilience building interventions across vulnerable municipalities and towns. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and thank you again to the hon Minister for that very comprehensive response.

My question to the hon Minister is to ask what will be implemented next in relation to the Water Resilience Strategy going forward and how will that further benefit communities?

The SPEAKER: Hon member, you are allowed one follow-up question. I will give you another opportunity, so only that ...[Interjections.]

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Yes.

The SPEAKER: ...first part of the question ...[Interjections.]

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Of course.

The SPEAKER: ...hon Minister. Hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Sorry, sorry, hon Speaker. Thank you to the hon member for the follow-up question.

Yes, the Water Resilience Plan, we have actually started off with this plan, hon member, by looking at the infrastructure within each municipality. We work very closely with the universities to determine exactly the backlog. I think if you look at the newest or the latest National Water and Sanitation Department's Green and Blue Drop and No Drop Report, you will agree that although the Western Cape municipalities are better off than the other municipalities, we are still in trouble.

So we had to come up with a plan and water is a long-term plan that we need to put in place. You will get droughts, you will get times of good winters and good rains, but it is a cycle and you need to understand the working of this. So, for instance, if you design a dam you need to look at three times the capacity so that you actually buy time for three winters.

Now during these kinds of discussions we then decided to first of all look at the backlog in the infrastructure in the municipal space. So with our geohydrologists, our engineers, Stellenbosch University, we went into each municipality to look at the backlog of infrastructure. We will agree that all our municipalities sit with old infrastructure, it causes a lot of leakages, a lot of water losses, etcetera. In some municipalities they speak of water losses up to 70%. That is completely unacceptable, but then you must also break down the water losses, or the non-revenue water, into the 6 kilolitre that we give for free.

That is the right of every citizen to get that 6 kilolitres.

Then there are leakages. That is unacceptable. So you have got a War on Leaks Programme to deal with that. We have implemented it with huge success in Prince Albert. We are going to try and see if we can expand that now to Beaufort West as well, and we also work with National Water on these kinds of programmes, as well as Treasury, but to understand the backlog is crucial.

Then to understand and take some of our other studies, like the Growth Potential Study for towns, to look at the economic growth that you need in that town to push down our poverty levels. So if in a town like Stellenbosch we expect a 4% economic growth and a 4% population growth, we plot that on a graph and we can then sit with the municipality and say, "Okay, currently this is your water, the backlog in your infrastructure. So this is the kind of budget that you need to put to address the backlog. This is the kind of water that we need or what you have got, and this is the water that we need to address population growth and economic growth, and that is your shortfall, and where is that shortfall going to come from?" It is either reclamation, it is recycling, desalination in some areas and other areas it is underground water.

Then we sit with the municipalities and work through that programme and then the municipalities can determine their budgets on this, and also the applications that they need to put in through Province to National to get extra funding for some of these big kind of projects.

So this is a complete plan. We are now in the phase where we send officials to the municipalities to train the municipal staff on this programme because you can just imagine, hon member, the back office, and actually we must come and explain this also to your Standing Committee, how the back office works within this programme.

Then the leaders that have been elected, if they stay true to this programme then they will not run out of water. So I am very excited. Currently we have very good feedback back on this. It is a plan in progress and we will need to keep on building, and by doing this by 2035 we will be out of trouble.

We also then work very closely with industry and also international partners because this programme will also spill over to our sewage works because as we are in trouble with water, you can read in the National Report, we are in trouble on sewage as well.

So on Green Drop, on Blue Drop, as well as No Drop, we are in trouble, but this kind of plan will help us to get out of trouble and therefore it speaks directly to the next programme and that is the CDAF Programme that we run, where we guide municipalities and we take five municipalities that we put a joint application in. We do a financial assessment on their shortfalls, on their needs, because we have realised also during this process that the international market, the investors, they do not want to come with R10 million and R20 million projects, they want to start off with a billion rand kind of projects.

So we take four or five municipalities, we combine the projects and we try to get them then market ready, and my colleague in Finance will tell you we take it from feasibility to bankability, and as soon as you have got that basket of bankable projects then we can also go to the private sector because it would have gone through the whole process.

Currently there are five municipalities: Swartland, Saldanha Bay, Overstrand and Stellenbosch, that have joined in four projects, that they will be ready, I think, in November this year to go to the market, and then there is another R3,3 billion of projects that we combine.

Now what we have also now learned is that municipalities start to understand that if their financial management and their audits are not in a good state then the banks will not sign off on it, then they will not attract private funding.

So we know to get out of trouble we need private investment, we need private sector to take hands with Government and if we then cannot produce the right statements, financial statements, then that will fall through.

So it is crucial for municipalities to play their part and to come to the table, but that is where we currently stand. We are on our way and it is also a work in progress. So we will keep on having water days where we include all the sectors and bring them with us and take them with us and work very closely obviously with our municipalities.

When you work towards the Central Karoo area then obviously your extra source will be groundwater, and that is, if you read the newest Climate Change Report, the problem with that is long-term. With climate change the boreholes do not replenish as they should and that can create a problem later on for us, but it is something that our geohydrologist is keeping a close eye on. With that, thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon member Bryant, I see you have another follow-up question. Hon members, there are 34 seconds left for question time, so I am not going to allow you that opportunity, hon member Bryant, because you will not have an opportunity to get the answer.

So, hon members, that is the end of Questions for Oral Reply and outstanding replies will be printed in Hansard. We move on to Statements by Members in terms of Rule 145 and I recognise the DA.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Can I proceed, hon Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Yes, you may. You may continue.

Mr T C R WALTERS (DA): Hon Speaker, a global oil crisis has pushed diesel prices to record heights. This volatility creates a direct threat to the national grid because Eskom depends on expensive diesel power turbines to supplement

electricity generation during peak periods.

As these fuel costs skyrocket South Africans are facing a double burden of high tariffs and an uncertain supply of electricity. The Western Cape stands alone as the only province with a comprehensive forward-thinking plan to solve this crisis.

The Western Cape Energy Resilience Strategy focusses on local independence and bold innovation. We are ending the era of total reliance on a failing national monopoly. By enabling municipalities to purchase power directly from independent producers we are creating a competitive market that drives electricity prices down, and provides a local buffer to absorb global and national energy supply shocks.

The Western Cape Government's support enables municipalities to purchase their own electricity from the independent power producers and provides a blueprint for a modern functional economy. We are replacing expensive imported fuels with affordable local renewable energy. This approach ensures that the Western Cape residents will receive more reliable power at a lower cost than the rest of the country.

We refuse to be victims of national energy failures and global uncertainty. We are pioneering a sustainable future where businesses grow and homes stay bright. The Western Cape is leading the way to true energy freedom.

[The Deputy Speaker takes the Chair.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Walters. I recognise the ANC.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): The Western Cape High Court's ruling declaring the City of Cape Town's fixed tariffs unlawful and invalid is a significant victory for residents who have for months raised concerns about the affordability, legality and fairness of the DA-led Administration's tariff model. The Court found that the City's charges relating to water sanitation and city-wide cleaning were inconsistent with the Constitution, national legislation and the City's own tariff bi-law.

Our constitutional democracy continues to affirm the correctness of the democratic project as the judgement reaffirmed a simple but critical principle, that no government is above the law. At a time when working class and middle class households are already under immense financial strain, the DA-led City used its majority to impose and approve the 2025 budget based on an unlawful tariff model that placed additional burden on residents, whilst attempting to disguise them as legitimate service charges.

The judges further told the City failed to adhere to the procedures requiring to impose a property rate and had not adopted a rates policy, which needed public participation and comment. Again the judgement reminded this DA Administration, that has been notorious in undermining public participation, of

what is contained in the preamble of our Constitution, that government shall be based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law.

The judgement exposed that good governance is not simply about balancing budgets or public relations campaign, it is about lawful, transparent and people-centred administration. The fact that residents and civic organisations had to approach the courts to stop this unlawful tariff reflects a serious failure of leadership and accountability.

The people of Cape Town deserve a government that governs with the law and places the interest of residents above political arrogance and financial experimentation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Nkondlo. I recognise the PA.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Speaker, today I rise on the matter of the Western Cape monitoring in support of Municipality Amendment Act, an Act which was introduced to support, strengthen and monitor struggling municipalities.

†Agb Adjunkspeaker, die vraag ontstaan egter wat is die meetbare uitkomst vir gemeenskappe en inwoners wat deur hierdie herstelplanne gehelp word? Die doel kan nie wees om gemeenskappe en inwoners te benadeel ten opsigte van

projekte, geleenthede en dienslewering nie.

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraph follows.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, the question arises, however, what are the measurable outcomes for communities and inhabitants that are assisted by these recovery plans? The aim cannot be to disadvantage communities and inhabitants with regard to projects, opportunities and service delivery.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, Local Government elections are approaching and with that comes responsibility of proper governance and accountability. There will need to be proper hand-over reports for incoming councils so that governance can continue where intervention is still required.

†Ons doen 'n beroep op munisipaliteite en burgemeesters om volledige en korrekte oorhandigingsverslae in te dien. Dit moet die werklike weergawe wees van die stand van sake sodat nuwe rade en inwoners nie benadeel kan word nie. Dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker.

[We call on municipalities and mayors to submit complete and correct handover reports. It must be a true version of the state of affairs so that new councils and inhabitants are not disadvantaged. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I recognise the DA.

Mr L D VAN WYK (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, the recent weather frontal

systems that pounded our province this past week have left an indelible mark on our landscape and our people. With multiple rainfall records shattered and thousands of residents displaced and facing damage to houses and personal losses, the sheer scale of the destruction paints a sobering picture of our heightened vulnerability as we are reminded our nature is able to wreak havoc every few decades.

We moved rapidly from drought conditions to damage and massive scarring resulting from rain, flooding, wind that has affected so many of us. Examples range from the collapse of gabions, severe damage to roads and passes, bridges being topped over, trees being uprooted, houses and buildings damaged and/or stripped of roofs, submerged farmlands, roads being closed, electricity and water reticulation networks being disrupted.

As sunshine returns the daunting task of rebuilding looms large. For those without the safety net of insurance the path to recovery is steep. However, in adversity we see the unbreakable spirit of the Western Cape. Our provincial departments and municipalities will be under pressure to execute emergency repairs while also making claims for disaster relief.

I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to first responders, Government officials, civil society, NGOs and community leaders. Their tireless around-the-clock efforts ensure that our most vulnerable were not left behind. This crisis has exemplified a whole-of-society approach where the Provincial Government, local municipalities, private businesses and ordinary citizens have stepped up

to provide relief.

As we pivot from disaster response to reconstruction we must carry this spirit of collaboration forward. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I have double-checked the system. I see the EFF not in the meeting, the NCC not in the meeting. We will then proceed to the ANC.

An HON MEMBER (ANC)]: Hon Deputy Speaker?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are audible.

Ms R WINDVOGEL(ANC): Yes, thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. †Agb Adjunkspeaker, die onlangse storm wat die Wes-Kaap getref het, het weereens diepe kwesbaarheid blootgelê waarmee duisende inwoners in die *informal* nedersettings te kampe het. Dis veral bejaarde inwoners wat dikwels tydens ramp tye vergeet word.

Ons neem met ernstige kommer kennis dat die oorstroming minstens 26 *informal* nedersettings regoor die Wes-Kaap geraak het, met meer as 10 700 strukture wat beskadig is en meer as 41 000 mense wat geraak is. Agter hierdie syfer is gesinne wat oornag hulle huise en besittings, waardigheid en gevoel van veiligheid verloor het.

In gemeenskappe soos Imizamo Yethu in Houtbaai, Nyanga, Philippi, Kraaifontein, Tuinroete, Mitchells Plain, Greyton, Swellendam, Madiba Park, inwoners van die ergste getrefdes. Baie ouer persone het gestrand geraak in koue, waternat huise en nie in staat om hulle self te beskerm of veilig te ontruim nie. Sommige het medikasie, beddegoed, identiteitsdokumente en toegang tot noodsaaklike ondersteuningstelsels verloor. Dit is toestande wat geen bejaarde persoon hoef te verduur in 'n provinsie wat aanspraak maak om prioriteit te gee aan menswaardigheid en rampsvoorbereiding nie.

Hoewel ons die pogings van noodpersoneel, vrywillige gemeenskapwerkers, organisasies en gewone inwoners wat ingespring het om geteisterde gesinne te help, herken, het die Provinsiale Regering se reaksie weereens ernstige tekortkominge in voorbereiding uitgewys, koördinasie en dringendheid aan die lig gebring.

Na 'n jaar word kwesbare gemeenskappe aan dieselfde verwoestende siklus van oorstroming, ontworteling en ontoereikende ingryping onderwerp. Hierdie *crisis* vereis meer as tydelike verligting, dit verg meer ...[Tussenwerpsels.]

[Translation of Afrikaans paragraphs follow.]

[Hon Deputy Speaker, the recent storm that hit the Western Cape again exposed deep vulnerability that thousands of inhabitants in the informal settlements have to deal with. It is especially the elderly inhabitants who often are forgotten during times of disaster.]

We note with great concern that the floods affected at least 26 informal settlements across the Western Cape, with more than 10 700 structures that were damaged and 41 000 people that were affected. Behind these figures are families that overnight had lost their homes and possessions, dignity and feeling of safety.

In communities such as Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay, Nyanga, Philippi, Kraaifontein, Garden Route, Mitchells Plain, Greyton, Swellendam, Madiba Park, inhabitants were some of the worst hit. Many older people were stranded in freezing, soaked houses and were incapable of protecting themselves or safely evacuate. Some lost medication, bedding, ID documents and access to essential support systems. These are conditions that no aged person needs to endure in a province that claims to prioritise human dignity and disaster preparation.

While we acknowledge the efforts of emergency staff, volunteer community workers, organisations and ordinary inhabitants who stepped in to assist affected families, the Provincial Government's reaction once again showed serious shortcomings in preparation, coordination and urgency.

After a year vulnerable communities are subjected to the same devastating cycle of floods, displacement and inadequate intervention. This crisis requires more than temporary relief, it requires more...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly conclude, hon member.

†Me R WINDVOGEL(ANC): ...beslissende belegging in rampbestande infrastruktuur, verbeterde dreineringsstelsels, waardige behuising en klimaat adaptasie maatreëls wat kwesbare ...[Tussenwerpsels.]

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...decisive investment in disasterproof infrastructure, improved drainage systems, dignified housing and climate adaptable measures that prioritise ...[Interjections.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much ...[Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...gemeenskappe prioritiseer. Bejaardes en armes, diegene wat ...[Tussenwerpsels.]

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...vulnerable communities. The aged and the poor, those who ...[Interjections.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member ...[Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...in informele nedersettings woon, kan nie elke winterseisoen die las van ...[Tussenwerpsels.]

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...live in informal settlements, cannot every winter season bear the burden of ...[Interjections.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member ...[Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...die regering se mislukte [Onhoorbaar.]

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ... the Government's failed [Inaudible.]]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member ...[Interjections.]

†Me R WINDVOGEL (ANC): ...dra nie. Baie dankie, agb Adjunkspeaker.

[Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. We actually exceeded by 30 seconds. I will remind hon members again of the time limit of two minutes. I now see the Freedom Front Plus.

Mr G P MARAIS (FFP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. On behalf of the Freedom Front Plus I wish to convey our condolences to families who have lost loved ones during the extreme weather conditions, where gale-force winds and heavy rain resulted in a number of fatalities and extensive damage to properties. Time brings healing, but it can never restore life to how it used to be with those who have passed away.

We welcome the declaration of the State of Disaster that will allow for financial and additional resources and greater collaboration between the State, the Western Cape Government, NGOs and affected municipalities, to rebuild areas that were badly affected. This is a time to work together across race, across political affiliation, to lend a helping hand to our neighbours and friends and our communities who have lost and who have suffered loss.

We also call on businesses who have the capacity to help where possible to allow for much-needed building materials, even at cost price, in order to help and rebuild people's lives, their homes and preserve their dignity.

We wish to raise our concern about the number of fallen trees that have resulted in the deaths of many, and we call on municipalities to implement extensive measures to ensure duty of care and removal of potentially dangerous trees in their jurisdictions, and on regular commuter routes that are being travelled on.

We call on the members of the community to take hands during this time, not to point fingers, but to find solutions and we pray for the safety of our Disaster Management Centre teams as they process the intervention measures to ensure that we rebuild our communities and prepare for the awaiting winter season. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Marais. I recognise the DA.

Mr P JOHNSON (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Democratic Alliance I rise to express our sincere appreciation to the Western Cape Education Department for its swift and decisive action in protecting the lives of teachers and learners during the recent severe weather conditions.

Schools are places where children are entrusted to the care of the education system and during this period that responsibility was met with urgency and professionalism.

We commend the department for promptly issuing safety alerts, coordinating school closures where necessary and ensuring that precautionary measures were implemented timeously to safeguard both learners and educators.

We also extend our gratitude to principals, teachers, school governing bodies and district officials, who acted with care and discipline under difficult and rapidly changing conditions. Their actions ensured that safety remained the top priority.

This situation highlights the importance of preparedness and strong coordination between schools and Government during emergencies. We encourage continued strengthening of disaster response systems to ensure schools remain safe spaces even in increasingly unpredictable weather conditions. To all who played a role in protecting lives during this period, thank you very much.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Johnson. I recognise the Al Jama-ah.

Mr K BRINKHUIS (AJA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. †Bismillah Hir Rahman Nir Raheem. [In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful.] The Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam, [peace be upon him] said [speaking in the vernacular] spread greetings amongst yourselves. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Brinkhuis. I recognise the ACDP.

Mr F C CHRISTIANS (ACDP): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. On behalf of the ACDP I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those churches who opened their doors today.

Yes, today is a significant day in the Christian calendar. Today we as Christians all over the world and all over the earth celebrate Ascension Day.

Ascension Day is 40 days after Easter. This holy day commemorates the Christians' belief in Jesus Christ's physical ascent into heaven as described in the Bible in Luke and in Acts.

This was the end of Jesus's earthly ministry. Sadly, and I must say sadly, this holy day is no longer a public holiday, but as the ACDP we will, with millions of Christians, celebrate this day.

So we want to honour those churches, those schools who closed their doors today in order to celebrate Ascension Day. I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Christians. I double-check that the hon member Herron is currently not present. Hence we will proceed to the DA.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. The recent storms have left a trail of destruction across parts of the Western Cape and other affected provinces, displacing families, damaging homes and placing immense pressure on already vulnerable communities.

In moments such as these Government cannot afford fragmentation or delay. Disaster response must be swift, coordinated and centred on the needs of those most affected. That is why the Democratic Alliance is calling on the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs together with the National Department of Social Development, to urgently intensify and properly coordinate disaster relief efforts across all impacted areas.

The National Department of Social Development carries a critical humanitarian responsibility in times of crisis. It must step forward decisively, not only to coordinate emergency social relief, but to fast-track social relief of distress support and work closely with SASSA to ensure that grant-dependent households are not left without support when they need it most. Special attention must be given to children, older persons, persons with disabilities and all vulnerable groups who bear the greatest burden in disasters of this nature.

At the same time the Western Cape has once again demonstrated the importance of partnerships in crisis response. We acknowledge and commend the work of the Provincial Department of Social Development, local municipalities, NGOs, faith-based organisations and community structures, that have already mobilised significant relief on the ground.

Initiatives such as the Cape Care Fund together with coordinated humanitarian partnerships, continue to play a vital role in delivering food, blankets, shelter assistance and psychosocial support where it is needed most.

A deep appreciation must go to emergency personnel, municipal workers, social workers, volunteers and all frontline responders who continue to serve under extremely difficult conditions.

Hon Deputy Speaker, our commitment is clear, no affected community should be left behind and no vulnerable household should be left without support ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Time.

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): ...during this crisis.

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

Ms W F KAIZER-PHILANDER (DA): Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member Kaizer-Philander. Hon members, in terms of Rule 145(6) I now give one or more members of the Executive present an opportunity to respond to Members Statements for not more than five minutes collectively. Do I see any member of the Executive? I

will do a final call. Is there any member of the Executive taking up the opportunity in terms of Rule 145?

We will then proceed, hon members, to Rule 151. In terms of Rule 151 all notices of motion by members are required to be delivered to the Secretary for placing it on the Order Paper. These motions have duly been submitted and published on the Order Paper below the line.

MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

Mr M B NQGENTSU (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the growing tension between urban development and heritage preservation in the City of Cape Town, particularly in the light of recent concerns raised regarding proposed high-rise developments in the historic CBD and surrounding heritage precincts.

[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 the devastating impact of the recent severe weather conditions and storm damage across the Western Cape.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the alarming rise in cases of missing children in the Western Cape.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Mr M B NQGENTSU (ANC): I give notice that I shall move:

That the House debates the escalating crisis of gang-related violence and murders in the Western Cape, particularly in crime hotspots across the Cape Flats.

[Notice of Motion as printed on the Order Paper.]

Hon members, we proceed in terms of Rule 150. I would like to inform you that in terms of the Standing Rule 150, Motions without Notice, condolence and congratulatory were submitted to the Programming Authority prior to the plenary on 12 May 2026. Hon members are also reminded that Motions without Notice pertaining to congratulatory and condolences that have not been processed by the Programming Authority will not be allowed in this sitting.

I have been informed, hon members, that in the Programming Authority meeting on 12 May 2026 political parties submitted the names of 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 the purposes of the Minutes, call out the hon members whose names have accordingly been submitted and approved. The following members' motions have been recommended for approval by the Programming Authority: hon member Kamfer, hon member Van Minnen, hon member Masipa, hon member Van Minnen, hon member Masipa, hon member Van Minnen, hon member Masipa, the hon member Lekker, hon member Bans and hon member Ngqentsu.

I now put these motions duly submitted and approved by the Programming Authority to the House. Hon members, are there any objections?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: No objections.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you so much, agreed to. The motions will appear in the Minutes of the Proceedings and in Hansard in each individual hon member's name as if that hon member had read them aloud.

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr F KAMFER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes with profound sadness the tragic passing away of Lauren Fredericks, a 37-year-old social worker employed by the

Department of Social Development, who lost her life in Knysna after a tree fell on her parked vehicle during the severe storms and flooding that are affecting parts of the Western Cape; further acknowledges the heartfelt tributes describing her as a selfless and compassionate individual who dedicated her life to serving and uplifting vulnerable members of society through her work as a social worker; and conveys deepest condolences during this painful time to her family, friends, colleagues and all those whose lives she touched.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep sadness the passing away of Lorenzo Darries, a cherished broadcaster and beloved voice on the airwaves of the Good Hope FM; further notes that Lorenzo Darries spoke openly and courageously about his battle with heart disease, inspiring many through his honesty, resilience and humanity; acknowledges the heartfelt tributes that continue to pour in from colleagues, friends, listeners and members of the broader community, reflecting the profound impact he had on countless lives; remembers Lorenzo Darries as a vibrant broadcaster, a passionate colleague and a proud son of Cape Town who gave his talent, time and energy to the station and the city he loved; and conveys sincere condolences during this difficult time to his family, friends, colleagues and loyal listeners.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): I move without notice:

That the House congratulates Muizenberg skateboarder Jean-Marc Johannes on his historic performance at the DBKU International X Games in Malaysia, where he secured an impressive fourth-place finish; notes that this achievement, as part of the Urban World skateboarding series, marks the first time that a South African athlete has appeared at this prestigious international competition; commends Jean-Marc for his continued excellence on the global stage and for serving as an inspiration to young athletes in Muizenberg and across the Western Cape; acknowledges his role as a trailblazer for South African skateboarding; and celebrates his success in putting the province's sporting talent on the map in the international Urban World series.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): I move without notice:

That the House notes the farewell held on Wednesday 29 April 2026 for State Prosecutor Karien Theron at the Somerset West Regional Court on her retirement after more than three decades of dedicated service to the South African justice system; acknowledges her remarkable 35-year contribution to the administration of justice and her steadfast

commitment to upholding the rule of law; recognises the important role that she played in serving the people of the Western Cape through her work as a prosecutor and her dedication to fairness, accountability and justice; commends her professionalism, integrity and tireless service throughout her distinguished legal career; and wishes her well with her retirement and expresses gratitude for the lasting impact that she has made in the justice system and the broader community.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr N P MASIPA (DA): I move without notice:

That the House congratulates the 021 Movement Dance Crew on the launch of their free Saturday dance classes at the Bridgetown Community Centre, providing a safe and creative sanctuary for the local youth; notes that this initiative focuses on empowering young people through fitness and discipline, while building essential life skills, such as teamwork and self-expression, in a structured community environment; and commends the crew for their recent competitive success, qualifying to represent South Africa at the Global Dance Supreme competition in Bangkok, Thailand.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): I move without notice:

That the House congratulates champion paddler Kira Bester on her outstanding achievement over the Freedom Day long weekend, where she completed a remarkable double by winning both the National Ocean Racing Trials and the prestigious Prescient Freedom Paddle around Robben Island; acknowledges the grit, determination and resilience she displayed in competing and excelling while racing under difficult weather conditions; recognises her achievement as a testament to the strength and excellence of South African athletes, particularly in the sport of surf ski and ocean paddling; commends her dedication to her sport and the inspiration that her performance provides to aspiring athletes across the country; and wishes her continued success in her future sporting endeavours and in international competitions.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms N P MASIPA (DA): I move without notice:

That the House congratulates Puglia Cheese on its burrata being named the South African Dairy Product of the Year at the 2026 South African Dairy Awards; notes that this prestigious recognition highlights the exceptional quality of the Western Cape's agri-processing sector and reinforces the province's reputation as a hub for artisanal excellence and world-class food production; and commends the Puglia Cheese team for their dedication to innovation and for setting a national benchmark that stimulates economic growth and job creation in our local dairy industry.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes with profound sadness the tragic killing of Shakur Makda, aged 25, who was shot and fatally wounded on 30 April in Eagle Park; notes that he aspired to become an imam and was regarded by those who knew him as a young man committed to his faith and community; and conveys deepest condolences during this painful time to his family, friends, loved ones and the broader Eagle Park community.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Ms A P BANS (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and commends Bertram Macmahon of Matroosfontein on successfully completing his inspiring mission to run 15 km each day for 15 consecutive days in support of greater access to rehabilitation services in the Western Cape; further acknowledges his efforts to raise awareness about the urgent need for accessible and adequately resourced rehabilitation facilities, particularly for vulnerable communities battling substance abuse and addiction; and notes that his determination and advocacy serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of investing in rehabilitation, recovery and

community support systems to restore dignity and hope to those affected by addiction.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

Mr M B NGQENTSU (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and commends Officer Winston Sims of Westridge for his outstanding dedication to serving the community both in and out of uniform; further acknowledges his recent efforts in recovering a stolen cell phone through swift action and determination, demonstrating professionalism and commitment to public safety; recognises the meaningful work that is carried out by his family-run non-profit organisation, MAD4Life (Making a Difference) NPC, based in Bayview, which continues to bring relief and dignity to vulnerable families across the Cape Flats; particularly commends the organisation for donating 55 blankets to the Lentegour Soup Kitchen at the New Apostolic Church, which provides meals to hundreds of people weekly; and notes that his service reflects the spirit of compassion, community upliftment and active citizenship that strengthens and inspires our communities.

[Motion as printed in the Minutes.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, I will now afford the opportunity to

members to move Motions without Notice as per the Standing Rule 150(3)(d). This could also include motions without notice that were not approved in the Programming Authority meeting. Hon members are now reminded that the 30 minute as per Standing Rule 150 will now start. I recognise the hon member Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes that 12 May 2026 marks International Nurses Day, celebrated globally under the theme, “Our Nurses, our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives”; further notes that nurses remain the backbone of the healthcare system, serving on the frontlines in clinics, hospitals, emergency centres and communities across the Western Cape; acknowledges the dedication, compassion, resilience and professionalism displayed daily by nurses despite increasing pressures on the public healthcare system, staff shortages and growing patient numbers; further recognises the sacrifices made by nurses who continue to serve communities with dignity and care under difficult conditions; commends all nurses in the Western Cape and throughout South Africa for their invaluable contribution to public health and community well-being; also notes with concern the ongoing challenges facing nurses, including staff shortages, increasing workloads, delayed professional development opportunities and resource constraints within the healthcare sector; acknowledges that quality healthcare cannot be achieved without adequate

support, staffing and investment in frontline healthcare workers; therefore welcomes efforts to expand healthcare personnel in the Western Cape, including the planned appointment of additional nurses and frontline healthcare workers announced in the 2026/27 Provincial Health Budget; calls for sustained investment in nursing education, workplace safety, mental health support and improved working conditions for all nurses. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? Am I audible on the side of ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes, you are, hon Deputy Speaker.

An HON MEMBER: Yes.

An HON MEMBER: Yes, you are.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Yes, we can hear you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. There is then no objections, agreed to. Before we proceed in terms of the second motion without notice, I see the

hon member Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Yes, I have a got a notice for motion that was not approved, can I go ahead?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Adams, I have received a list via the Table Staff. What I will do is I will double-check with them whether your name is indeed, or whether yours has been submitted. I will revert back to you soon. We will proceed. Hon member Windvogel.

Ms R WINDVOGEL (ANC): Thank you so much, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with serious concern the growing pressure on blood stocks in the Western Cape following severe weather disruptions and increased strain on healthcare services; further notes that the Western Cape Blood Service requires approximately 700 units of blood daily to maintain a stable supply, yet blood group stocks, particularly O-negative and O-positive, have dropped to critically low levels; acknowledges that severe weather conditions, school closures and the temporary cancellation of blood donation clinics have negatively affected blood collection efforts across the province; further recognises the essential role played by voluntary blood donors, healthcare workers and the Western Cape Blood Service in ensuring that hospitals are able to provide life-saving treatment and emergency care to residents; therefore calls on all eligible residents

of the Western Cape to come forward and donate blood in order to help stabilise blood supplies and save lives; expresses appreciation to all regular and first-time blood donors who continue to demonstrate solidarity, compassion and active citizenship during times of crisis. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? There are no objections, agreed to. I agreed to hon member Lekker.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep concern the severe weather conditions affecting large parts of the Western Cape following the South African Weather Service's Level 8 warning for disruptive rainfall, flooding, damaging winds and dangerous sea conditions across the province; further notes that heavy rains, strong winds and flooding have caused extensive damage to homes, infrastructure and personal property across the Cape Metro, including the Cape Flats, townships, informal settlements; further notes that the adverse weather conditions have resulted in flooded roads, damaged infrastructure, electricity outages, fallen trees, mudslides, flooded homes and the displacement of residents in both formal and

informal settlements, leaving many families vulnerable and exposed to harsh weather conditions, with some losing their belongings and access to basic necessities; acknowledges the efforts of the disaster management teams, emergency services, healthcare workers, community organisations, humanitarian organisations, volunteers and local residents who continue to provide support and assistance to affected communities during this difficult period; expresses solidarity with all families and communities impacted by the severe weather conditions and calls on residents to remain vigilant, follow official safety advices and avoid unnecessary travel in high-risk areas; further calls on all spheres of government to ensure coordinated disaster relief, rapid emergency response and the urgent provision of humanitarian assistance, including temporary shelters, food, blankets, sanitation support, electricity restoration and infrastructure repairs to affected communities; calls for accelerated investment in disaster-resilient infrastructure, improved drainage systems, safer housing and long-term interventions aimed at protecting vulnerable communities from recurring climate-related disasters in the Western Cape. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? There are no objections, agreed to. I again recognise the hon member Lekker, but before you go, hon member Lekker. Hon member Adams, I can confirm that your motion was submitted in time and it will be slotted in at number 13, which is the last motion without

notice for today. I recognise the hon member Lekker.

Ms P Z LEKKER (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with deep concern the devastating shack fire at the Thabo Mbeki informal settlement in Lower Crossroads, Philippi East, in Ward 35, on Saturday, 9 May 2026, which destroyed at least eight structures and left more than 25 residents homeless; further notes that many affected families lost all their belongings, including clothing, food and personal possessions, and now face extremely difficult conditions amid severe weather and ongoing heavy rains in the Western Cape; acknowledges the efforts of community leaders, residents, emergency responders and humanitarian organisations assisting displaced families during this difficult period; expresses solidarity with all affected residents, particularly vulnerable families, women, children and unemployed persons who now face the challenge of rebuilding their lives with limited resources; calls on all relevant authorities to provide urgent humanitarian relief, including temporary shelter, food parcels, blankets, clothing and building materials to affected families; further calls for accelerated interventions for improved fire prevention, disaster response and access to safer housing and basic services in informal settlements across the Western Cape. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No objection, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon member Ngqentsu.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes with grave concern reports indicating that the working class communities in Western Cape continue to record the highest number of gang-related murders and drug-related criminality; further notes with alarm the deepening shortages of police personnel, detectives and specialised crime-fighting resources in some of the province's most violence-affected areas, undermining efforts to combat violent crime and ensure community safety; acknowledges the devastating impact of gang violence on residents, particularly women, children and young people, who continue to live in fear amid daily shootings, extortion, substance abuse and the loss of innocent lives; recognises the efforts of law enforcement officers, Community Policing Forums, Neighbourhood Watches, anti-crime activists and civil society organisation working tirelessly to restore safety and stability in affected communities despite limited resources; calls on the DA-led Government and the South African Police Service to urgently address policing shortages, strengthen detective capacity,

improve intelligence-driven operations and ensure equitable allocation of policing resources to high-crime areas in the Western Cape; further calls for strengthened social interventions, youth development programmes, anti-drug initiatives and economic opportunities aimed at addressing the root causes of gangsterism and violent crime in vulnerable communities. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: Objection.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is an objection, the motion will be printed on the Order Paper. Hon member, you may go again.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): I moved without notice:

That the House notes with grave concern reports alleging that confidential medical information belonging to thousands of members of the South African Police Service in the Western Cape has been exposed and circulated publicly, potentially affecting approximately 2 978 SAPS employees; further notes that the alleged disclosure reportedly includes highly sensitive personal and medical information relating to absenteeism

management, leave administration and sick leave matters; condemns in the strongest terms possible any unlawful disclosure or mishandling of confidential employee information, particularly sensitive medical records, which constitutes a serious violation of the constitutional right to privacy, undermines trust within the workplace and places affected employees at risk of stigma and discrimination; further acknowledges the seriousness of the implications this incident may have for labour relations, information security and institutional accountability within SAPS; therefore calls on the relevant SAPS authorities to urgently investigate the alleged breach, ensure accountability for those responsible, provide support to affected employees and implement stronger measures to safeguard confidential information and prevent any recurrence of such incidents; calls on the Standing Committee on Police Oversight and Community Safety to urgently engage SAPS leadership on the matter in order to ensure proper oversight, transparency and accountability regarding the alleged information breach and the remedial steps being undertaken. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

HON MEMBERS: No objection, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. Hon member, your final motion.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): I move without notice:

That the House notes and welcomes the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) for hosting a successful International Workers' Day celebration on 1 May 2026; acknowledges that International Workers' Day in South Africa remains an important platform to celebrate the many hard-won rights of workers, including the eight hour workday, the right to form and join trade unions, and the right to collective bargaining; further acknowledges that the 2026 International Workers' Day celebration took place in Paarl, Boland, an area where exploitation and eviction of farm workers in particular by White farm owners remain prevalent, and also where the use of undocumented foreign nationals as cheap labour continues; calls on all working-class organisations in the Western Cape and across the country to unite and intensify the struggles against the exploitation of workers in all sectors of our economy. The first and urgent task is unionisation of foreign nationals by progressive registered South African trade unions. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

HON MEMBERS: Objection.

An HON MEMBER: No objection, hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is an objection.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): No, apologies ...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion will be printed [Inaudible]

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): ...apologies of White farmers. I am not surprised.

An HON MEMBER: Object.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will be printed on the Order Paper.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): I am not surprised.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, we will proceed.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): Apologies of White farmers ...[Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Object.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): ...are object by their beneficiaries
...[Interjections.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Ngqentsu ...[Interjections.]

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): ...of exploitation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: ...you are currently out of order.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): [Inaudible.]

An HON MEMBER: Hon Deputy Speaker, a point of order.

An HON MEMBER: Object.

Mr B M NGQENTSU (ANC): You are beneficiaries.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are out of order. I will – hon members, we will proceed and I recognise the hon member Nkondlo.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I ...[Interjections.]

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask for the clock to be stopped. I recognise the hon member Bryant. Did I hear your voice, sir?

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Yes, you did, hon Deputy Speaker. There was just an allegation made. Firstly it was out of order and certainly not in line with the

protocols that had been set out, but referring to hon members as apologists for White farmers. It is completely out of order and I ask that you request that that be retracted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member Bryant, what I will do is that I will revert back to Hansard and return back to the House in that regard. With all the talking between the lines I did not hear clearly, but I will then apply my mind and revert back to the House. Hon member Nkondlo, you may go ahead.

Ms N D NKONDLO (ANC): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House welcomes the launch of the R300 million Construction Fund by the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), aimed at improving access to finance for emerging contractors and small businesses in the construction sector; notes that many Black-owned, women-owned and youth-owned contractors continue to face barriers in accessing funding, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation through unfair sub-contracting arrangements and delayed payments by larger construction companies; commends the Minister of Small Business Development, Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, for advancing this important intervention to promote economic transformation and broader participation in infrastructure development opportunities; further notes that this facility will enable emerging contractors to participate more meaningfully in major

infrastructure and capital projects aimed at growing the economy and rebuilding South Africa's social and economic infrastructure; calls on the CIDB, BCCEI and the BIBC to strengthen oversight and take firm action against companies that exploit subcontractors, violate labour laws and unlawfully employ undocumented foreign nationals in the construction industry. I so move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon member Bryant.

Mr D W BRYANT (DA): Hon Deputy Speaker, I move without notice:

That the House notes the tireless and courageous work of our frontline workers during the past few days as the Western Cape experienced severe weather conditions, including heavy rainfall, flooding, strong winds and dangerous road conditions; acknowledges that many of these officials acted swiftly and selflessly, often placing their own lives at risk in service of protecting residents and responding to emergencies across the province;

further notes the exceptional work of the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, working in conjunction with provincial departments, municipalities, emergency services, law enforcement agencies, humanitarian organisations and volunteers, in ensuring that critical decisions were made collectively and efficiently in the interest of safeguarding communities, protecting infrastructure and coordinating relief efforts during this difficult period; recognises all those involved for their dedication, professionalism and commitment to serving the people of the Western Cape during a time of crisis. I hereby move.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No objections.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon member Booyesen. Hon member Booyesen? I will come back to hon member Booyesen. I recognise the hon member Mombombo, Professor Mbombombo.

Ms N MBOMBOMBO (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with concern the severe storm damage experienced

in and around George over the past few days, which caused significant disruption to road infrastructure, mobility routes and surrounding communities; further notes the prompt and coordinated response by the George Municipality, together with the Western Cape Government and emergency response teams, in assessing damage, clearing affected routes, implementing safety measures and restoring access to impacted areas as swiftly as possible; recognise all officials, engineers, disaster management personnel, road workers and emergency services involved for their professionalism, dedication and commitment, ensuring the safety and mobility of residents during these challenging weather conditions. I so move, thank you.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? There are no objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon member Van Minnen.

Ms B M VAN MINNEN (DA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House welcomes the Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness' R4 million repair and renovation project currently underway at Helderberg Hospital; notes that construction commenced in mid-April 2026 and forms part of the Department's 2025/2026 infrastructure

programme aimed at improving healthcare facilities and patient environments across the province; further notes that the project includes the replacement of roofing at the hospital's administration building, as well as the phased replacement of vinyl flooring across key hospital passages and clinical areas; furthermore notes that the Department is implementing the project in carefully planned phases to minimise disruptions to healthcare services and ensure continued patient care during the renovation period; recognises that ongoing investment in healthcare infrastructure is essential to maintaining safe, functional and dignified healthcare environments for both patients and healthcare workers, and reaffirms its support for initiatives that strengthen public healthcare services across the Western Cape. I thank you.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice? There are no objections, agreed to. I recognise the hon member Booysen. I recognise the hon member Adams.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Hon Deputy Speaker, am audible?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may go ahead, you are audible.

Mr B ADAMS (PA): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. I move without notice:

That the House notes with serious concern reports that the greater George area is currently operating with only three ambulances to serve a rapidly growing population and the surrounding communities; further notes that ambulance shortages place lives at risk, increase emergency response times and place immense pressure on healthcare workers and emergency personnel; acknowledges that poor and vulnerable residents are often the hardest hit by delays in emergency medical assistance; therefore resolves that the Western Cape Government urgently provides clarity on ambulance capacity in George, presents a turnaround plan to improve emergency response services, and prioritises the immediate deployment of additional ambulances and personnel to the Garden Route region. I so move, hon Deputy Speaker.

[Motion as moved by Member.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the motion being moved without notice?

An HON MEMBER: No objection.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. A final call, I recognise the hon member Booysen. Hon member Booysen? Hon members, earlier on the hon member Booysen indicated regarding the situation in Bitou and that there are intermittent technology difficulties.

That will now conclude Motions without Notice. The Secretary will now read the next Order of the Day.

ORDER OF THE DAY

The SECRETARY: Consideration of the Report of the Rules Committee dated 6 May 2026 on the change in membership of the Pension Fund Board of Trustees for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Secretary. I now recognise the Chief Whip.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker. I move that the House considers and adopts the Report of the Rules Committee dated 6 May 2026 on the change in membership of the Pension Fund Board of Trustees for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, namely the appointment of the hon member D Wessels as Trustee and hon member A W Bredell as the alternative Trustee. I so move.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, are there any objections to the report being adopted?

An HON MEMBER: No objections.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no objections, agreed to. Hon members,

that will conclude the business of the day. The Secretary will now end the meeting and all hon members will be exited from this platform. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 18:58.