

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**LEGISLATURE OF THE
NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

TUESDAY, 05 MAY 2026

[UNEDITED]

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we will now observe a moment of silent prayer or meditation.

-PRAYER / MEDITATION-

Thank you, Honourable Members, you may be seated.

Secretary, may you read the next order please.

TABLE STAFF: Order No.2; Minutes of the previous sitting.

2.1 Minutes of the 17th March 2026;

2.2 Minutes of the 31st March 2026.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I put before this House, the minutes of the 17th March for adoption. Does the House adopt the Minutes?

HOUSE: Yes.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I also put before this House, the minutes of the 31st March 2026 for adoption.

What is the point of order Honourable Sonakile?

HON. SONAKILE: Thank you Deputy Speaker. I am just worried where are the delinquent Members of the ANC. We get paid using tax payer's money, so can't sit in this House alone while others are playing games. So, ANC Members must come to the House.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: What is the point of order there?

HON. SONAKILE: I am worried that we are not going to quorate to be adopting those reports because Members of the ANC choose to play and not to honour their oath of office.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: For me to proceed with the sitting of the House, I have checked and satisfied myself that there is a quorum. I would not have looked at which Members of which political party are in the House or not. So, the Point of Order is out of order itself.

Chief whip.

HON. ROSHO: Can Honourable Sonakile withdraw issues of delinquent. We cannot allow to be disrespected and undermined by the Member, telling us that we are delinquent. Can he withdraw that.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Honourable Sonakile, can you withdraw the word delinquent.

HON. SONAKILE: Delinquent means someone who ...

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Can you withdraw the word delinquent?

HON. SONAKILE: What am I withdrawing?

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: The word delinquent from your excited statement. Just withdraw the word.

HON. SONAKILE: Ok. I withdraw delinquent and would use “unruly” Members of the ANC. Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, may we proceed. I have also placed before the House, the Minutes of the 31st March 2026 for adoption. Does the House adopt the Minutes?

HOUSE: Yes.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Members. All sets of minutes are duly adopted by this House. Secretary, read the next order.

TABLE STAFF: Order No. 3; Motions as per Rule 101.

3.1 Motions without notice as per Rule 106;

3.2 Notice of Motions as per Rule 107.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me draw your attention to Rule 106 (6), which states that a motion without notice must not contain any debatable aspects and where the motion without notice contains debatable aspects, it shall fall off as, at the discretion of the presiding officer or be converted to a notice of motion. Based on this Rule, I then request that

if a motion without notice is converted, a Member should formally table a notice of motion before the House.

Are there any Motions without Notice?

Thank you, Honourable Members. You are all noted. I hope I have not left anyone out.

Honourable Kodisang.

HON. KODISANG: Ke a leboga Honourable Speaker.

I hereby rise on behalf of Action SA in the North West Province to table a motion without notice. That this House notes the safe return of Mr Mazwi Kubheka, the Vosloorus spaza owner who reportedly presented himself at the Vosloorus Police Station on Saturday, 02 May 2026 after allegedly being abducted on 02 April 2026 following a dispute over business operations;

Further notes reports from his family and members of the community that he had allegedly faced pressure to sell his shop after taking over its operations when foreign-owned spaza shops were removed from the area;

Commends the sustained public pressure and advocacy led by Herman Mashaba, Action SA leadership and community voices that ensured that this matter received urgent national attention;

Recognizes that criminal intimidation, extortion and unlawful economic coercion targeting township and informal traders is not only a national concern, but an emerging reality in parts of the North West, where local enterprises increasingly face insecurity, weak enforcement and growing pressure within informal trading spaces.

Therefore, calls on all relevant authorities together with the South African Police Service, to:

Strengthen intelligence-led policing in township business hubs; increase visible policing in high-risk informal trading areas; and act decisively to prevent criminal intimidation, extortion and unlawful economic coercion targeting local entrepreneurs.

I accordingly so move.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Does any Member wish to respond to the motion?

None.

Honourable Sebegoe.

HON. SEBEGOE: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker. Honourable Deputy Speaker I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to table a statement commending the South African Police Service unannounced high-density operation, Shanela 2 from Friday, 01 May 2026 into the early hours of Saturday, 02 May 2026 in Rustenburg, within the Bojanala Sub-District in Rustenburg. In their strive to prevent and fight crime, the police in Bojanala demonstrated their unwavering commitment to tackle crime and restore public confidence with a continued well-coordinated crime fighting operations, Shanela 2.

This multi-disciplinary operation was supported by members from various units, including the provincial anti gang unit, provincial crime intelligence covert operations, K-9 Unit, provincial corporate communication, tactical response team, negotiators. It focused on the Rustenburg Central Business District and surrounding areas, focusing on crimes related to illegal fire arms and ammunition; undocumented foreign nationals, trio crimes and drug trafficking. Stop and search operations were also conducted in the Rustenburg CBD, Tlhabane, Boitekong, Phokeng and several night clubs were visited. During the operation, ten undocumented foreign nationals were found hiding inside the roof of a hardware premises of Fatima Bayat Street and four search warrants were executed. The ANC commends members of the SAPS multi-disciplinary force for their dedication and as communities to continue working with the police by providing valuable information that can assist in the fight against crime.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. Does any Member wish to respond to the motion?

None. Honourable Wallhorn.

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HON. WALLHORN: Thank you Deputy Speaker.

Namens die Demokratiese Alliansie neem ons kennis van die afsterwe vantwee Suid-Afrikaanse legends wat op hul onderskeie terreine uitstaande diens gelewer het: Jan Willkense en Mimi Coertse. Hul lewens en werk het nie net individuele prestasies opgelewer nie, maar ook die siel van ons gemeenskappe verryk en toekomstige generasies geïnspireer.

Jan Wilkens het sy loopbaan by 'n amateurklub in Carltonville begin toe hy nog in Standaard 9 (Graad 9) was. Sy toewyding en talent het hom na internasionale verhoogte in Engeland, Duitsland en Japan geneem. Oor dekades het hy duisende gevegte deelgeneem en talle oorwinnings behaal. Hy was bekend vir tegnieke soos die Boston-krap en verskeie rugbyspekers, en vir 'n benadering wat nederigheid, dissipline en respek vir die sport beklemtoon het. Die Demokratiese Alliansie erken sy bydrae tot die bevordering van stoeikuns en sportkultuur in Suid-Afrika. Ons betuig ons innige meegevoel aan sy familie, vriende en die breër sportgemeenskap. Jan Wilkens sal onthou word as een van Suid-Afrika se grootste stoeiers.

Mimi Coertse het 'n indrukwekkende internasionale loopbaan as operasangeres gehad en het opgetree by vooraanstaande operahuise en feeste, insluitend die Wiener Staatsopera en die Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, asook by belangrike Suid-Afrikaanse arenas soos die Johannesburg Stadsaal. Sy is veral bekend vir haar vertolking van die Queen of the Night in Mozart se Die Zauberflöte, en vir haar volgehoue werk om Afrikaanse kunsliedere en jong sangtalent te bevorder.

Haar nalatenskap lê in die kuns wat sy gedeel het, die internasionale deure wat sy vir Suid-Afrikaanse sangers oopgemaak het, en die generasies wat sy geïnspireer het. Ons bring hulde aan haar lewenswerk en betuig ons meegevoel aan haar familie, kollegas en die kunsgemeenskap.

Die bydraes van Jan Wilkens en Mimi Coertse strek verder as pryse en erkenings; hulle leef voort in die herinneringe, die verhale en die inspirasie wat hulle aan ander gegee het. Sport en kuns is bousteene van ons gemeenskapsidentiteit en kultuurerfenis. Dit is ons plig om hul nalatenskappe te eerbewaar en te bewaar.

Namens die Demokratiese Alliansie en in my hoedanigheid as woordvoerder vir Kunste, Kultuur, Sport en Rekreasie, betuig ek ons opregte meegevoel en dankbaarheid vir lewens wat Suid-Afrika soveel gegee het.

So stele ek dit voor.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Wallhorn. Does any Member wish to respond to the motion? None. Honourable Sonti.

HON. SONTI: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, I rise on a motion without notice to congratulate the Economic Freedom Fighters for hosting a successful and well-attended Workers' Day rally at Tlhapi Stadium in Marikana. The gathering of fighters, ground forces, workers and community members demonstrated not only organisational strength, but a deep and unshaken connection between the EFF and the people of Marikana.

This rally was not just an even, but a powerful political statement. It reaffirmed that Marikana remains a historic and symbolic centre of working-class struggle and that its people continue to identify with the militant and uncompromising stance of the EFF in advancing the interests of workers and the poor. The energy and unity displayed at Tlhapi Stadium send a clear message across the political landscape.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this successful mobilisation proves beyond doubt that Marikana is the home of the Economic Freedom Fighters. It is Marikana where the voice of radical economic transformations resonates the loudest and where the memory of the workers who lost their lives continues to inspire a new generation of fighters committed to justice and economics freedom.

There's no political party, especially those attempting to hide behind the credibility of trade unions, will displace the EFF from its rightful place in the hearts of the people of Marikana. Opportunistic formations may emerge, but they will not rewrite history nor disrupt the organic relationship that has been built through struggle, sacrifice and consistent presence on the ground.

We therefore commend the leadership, organisers and all ground forces of the EFF for delivering a disciplined, impactful and inspiring rally. We further call on the people of North West, particularly the Youth to register to vote the EFF on the 4th November 2026.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Sonti. Does any Member wish to respond? None. Honourable Sonakile.

HON. SONAKILE: Thank you Deputy Speaker. Deputy Speaker, I rise to note:

The tragic and senseless killing of Mr Manuel Gomez and Mrs Maria Gomez on 24 April 2026 at their business premises in Golfview, Mahikeng.

That the couple were well-known members of the local business community, who lost their lives while responding to a robbery at their family business.

The shocking brutality of the incident, in which armed suspects threatened, assaulted and ultimately murdered the victims in cold blood.

The broader climate of violent crime affecting communities and small businesses across the North West Province.

The commendable work of law enforcement agencies, including the Provincial murder and Robbery Unit and supporting teams, which led to the arrest of five suspects and the recovery of evidence linked to the crime.

That this House further notes:

The devastating impact of such crimes on families, communities and local economic activity.

The fear and trauma inflicted on residents of Mahikeng and surrounding areas.

The importance of intelligence-driven policing and community cooperation in bringing perpetrators to justice.

That this House resolves:

To extend its deepest condolences to the Gomez family, their loved ones and the broader Mahikeng community during this difficult time.

To strongly condemn in the harshest terms the brutality and lawlessness that led to the murder of two respected members of the community.

To reaffirm its support for law enforcement agencies in their effort to combat violent crime and ensure successful prosecution of those responsible.

To call on the provincial government to intensify crime prevention strategies, particularly to protect small businesses and vulnerable communities.

To encourage members of the public to cooperate with police by providing information that may assist ongoing investigations.

In conclusion, this House stands united in grief with the Gomez family and the people of Mahikeng. At the same time, we send a clear and unwavering message: such brutality against law-abiding citizens and business owners will not be tolerated. Justice must prevail and our communities must be made safe again.

I so move.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Sonakile. Does any Member wish to respond? Honourable Modise.

HON. MODISE: Thank you very much Honourable Deputy Speaker. As the African National Congress, we support the motion that was tabled and we urge the South African Police to follow the gangsters that are following the police who are investigating this case. Yesterday, early hours, the criminals followed that police woman to her house, unfortunately, the police came urgently and arrested them. We support this motion Honourable Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Modise. Honourable Dial.

HON. DIAL: Honourable Deputy Speaker I rise on behalf of the African National Congress...
[--interruption--]

HON. MOEMA: Speaker you jumped us...response.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May you take your seat Honourable Dial.

Honourable Moema, if you address a presiding officer, you rise and you must first raise your hand.

HON. MOEMA: You didn't recognise me Speaker because I must rise immediately after you recognise me.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Was your hand up?

HON. MOEMA: Yes.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Can you rise and address your matter.

HON. MOEMA: Thank you very much Honourable Deputy Speaker. As the EFF we join Honourable Members in sending the sincere condolences to the family and residents of Mahikeng and the North West at large for the loss of the Gomez family and we are saying we wish to see justice being done and we also want to warn police not to sleep on the job. They must do due diligence in this case and ensure that none of these criminals enjoy impunity.

Thank you very much Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. I am sorry I didn't recognise you. Honourable Dial, you can proceed.

HON. DIAL: Thank you Deputy Speaker.

I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to note and welcome the initiative by the Office of the Provincial Commissioner of Police in the North west under the leadership of Acting Provincial Commissioner, Major General Ryno NAIDOO, to officially launch drones

also known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, as part of efforts to strengthen the fight against crime.

This initiative represents a significant advancement in modern policing, as the deployment of drone technology will enhance real-time aerial surveillance, improve situational awareness and enable law enforcement agencies to shift from reactive to proactive policing strategies.

Honourable Speaker, the utilisation of this technology is particularly important in addressing crime in hotspot areas and supporting rural safety initiatives, where challenges such as vast distances and limited resources often hinder effective policing. The ability to monitor operations from a “bird’s eye view” will not only reduce response time but also serve as a strong deterrent to criminal activities.

This progressive step demonstrates the commitment of the South African Police Service in the North West Province to embrace innovation in improving safety and security for our communities.

We therefore commend the Office of the Provincial Commissioner and all stakeholders involved for this important initiative aimed at strengthening crime preventing and protecting the people of the North West Province.

We so move Deputy Speaker.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Does any Member wish to respond?

Honourable Kodisang.

HON KODISANG: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker. As Action SA we stand to support the motion of congratulation to the SAPS or the Commissioner for having brought the drones and we say it cannot come at the right time now because of all that is happening within our communities, more especially the floods that are in North West at this stage where human beings are getting swept away by floods. So, the drones are coming up handy and we really appreciate what has been done for the Province.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Does any Member wish to respond? None. Honourable Moema. He is gone. Honourable Mosenogi.

HON. MOSENOGI: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to table a motion without notice welcoming the official opening and handover of the Shiela Clinic near Itsoseng and handover of 3 ambulances in Kanana.

The community of Shiela village now have a new healthcare facility which marks a significant step in improving healthcare access for residents in the region. The initiative is part of the broader effort to build a functional North West Province that serves all its citizens and leaves no one behind.

The handing over ceremony of Prescription spectacles to deserving patients, dignity towels, white canes (walking sticks) and three ambulances to the community of Kanana during the Thuntsha Lerole programme represent commendable service delivery.

As the ANC, we remain committed to ensuring that all our citizens are afforded the opportunity to receive dignified and quality health care.

As the compassionate and caring ANC government, we will ensure that we strive to achieve our constitutional obligations to provide our communities with live-changing health care services and ensure that we protect their rights to life through swift and adequate health provision.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Mosenogi. Does any Member wish to respond? None. Honourable Van Huyssteen.

HON. VAN HUYSSTEEN: Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members.

Let us today find unity in congratulating young Keelan Titus from Colridge, Naledi, who has made history by winning gold in the under 17 400m hurdles and being crowned the 2026 South African Champion.

This exceptional achievement is a moment of immense pride from the people of Colridge and the North west Province. through this young man's hard work and dedication, he has inspired all and shown that your circumstances do not determine your future, but instead your personal choices when opportunity presents itself.

As a House, we must acknowledge the role played by young Keelan's Primary School teacher, Mr Ammiel Smith. Mr Smith saw potential in Keelan from a young age and coached him to become the athlete he is today, from Primary School, all the way through to his High School career, till today. This type of dedication we must praise and encourage in our teachers in North West Province.

To Keelan Titus, I say; well done young man. Your commitment, discipline and humility have brought honour to the North West. Continue to apply the same resilience throughout the new doors opened by your miraculous achievement.

I thank you Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Van Huyssteen. Does any Member wish to respond to the statement? None. Honourable Sambatha.

HON. SAMBATHA: Honourable Deputy Speaker, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to welcome the launch of mobile hydrogen refuelling station in the province.

The Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovations, Dr Nomalungelo Gina, has officially opened the Rapid Prototype Training and Testing Facility and handed over the Mobile Hydrogen Refuelling Station at North West University's Potchefstroom Campus on Thursday, 30 April 2026.

This underscores a significant milestone in South Africa's Just Energy Transition, hydrogen economy development and net-zero carbon ambitions.

The mobile Hydrogen Refuelling Station was completed in February 2025 through a partnership between the HySA Infrastructure Centre of Competence and Toyota South Africa Motors.

The facility serves as a strategic platform to demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicle technologies and showcases locally developed intellectual property. It further strengthens collaboration between public and private sector partners and contributes to building an integrated hydrogen value chain in the country.

The Rapid Prototyping Training and Testing facility also located at the same campus is a partnership between DSTI, NWU and African Rainbow Minerals Mining. The facility forms part of HySA Infrastructure's strategic research and innovation platform and is designed to accelerate the incubation, development and demonstration of water electrolysis technologies.

Its focus includes advancing green hydrogen production, component innovation, system integration and the scaling of technologies from laboratory to pilot and industrial applications.

These ground-breaking initiatives represent a significant milestone in advancing hydrogen mobility in South Africa and support the decarbonisation of the transport sector in line with the Hydrogen Society Roadmap.

I Thank you Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Sambatha does any Member wish to respond to the motion? Thank you, Honourable Members.

Honourable Members, I want to bring to your attention Rule 106 (5); The time allocated to motion without notice on any Sitting day is limited to 30minutes. We have come to the 30th minute. We have exceeded the time. We are done with these motions.

Does the House adopt these motions?

HOUSE: YES.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Are there any notice of motions?

There are none.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Secretary, may you read the next order.

TABLE STAFF: Order No. 4: Statements

4.1 Statements by Members as per Rule 130;

4.2 Executive Statements as per Rule 130A.

HON DEP. SPEAKER: Does any Member wish to make a statement in terms of Rule 130?

Thank you, Honourable Members. You are all noted.

Honourable Rosho, your statement please. You have three minutes.

HON. ROSHO: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to table a statement joining the country in celebrating the 32 years of freedom and democracy.

The 27th April 1994 was not a gesture of magnanimity but a product of sacrifice and human resilience, the well-orchestrated destructive violence that gripped the country, the systematic and brutal apartheid killings, the death penalty, detentions without trial, the banning of the liberation movement, women and youth struggles, the Sharpville, June 16, Langa, Boipatong and other massacres under the apartheid security forces.

We are painfully reminded of the callous killing of comrade Chris Hani as an attempt to derail the negotiations and to plunge the country into anarchy.

This journey was a people's struggle against oppression, inequality and secondary citizenship.

As the country's flag flies high with pride, South Africa claimed its sovereignty and rightful place among the community of nations, forging new relations, contributing to global integration, international cooperation, progressive internationalism and inclusive multilateralism.

To reverse the legacy of apartheid, in 1996 the ANC government adopted a democratic constitution rooted in the culture of human rights as advocated by the Freedom Charter and the reconstruction and development programme to advance socioeconomic transformation by

elevating the people as the apex of development through a paradigm that is people centered and people driven.

South Africa has a resilient constitution that enjoins the state to provide basic services and a populace with a patriotic duty to partake in nation building and to defend the democratic state.

The vitality of this constitution is demonstrated by free, fair and regular elections where each citizen votes for the party of their choice.

Notwithstanding these massive achievements, the legacy of apartheid remains painfully obstinate with poverty, unemployment and inequality high.

The ANC will continue with progressive legislation to change the face of society, push back the frontiers of economic exclusion, indignity and restore land to its rightful owners.

We will continue to build a world-class health system through health infrastructure investment, training and new technology by introducing a single system by implementing the National Health Insurance.

The resolution of the electricity crisis is one among the many achievements of the ANC-led government.

The Independent Electoral Commission, Human Rights Commission, Commission for Gender Equality, Public Protector and other Chapter 9 institutions supporting democracy and Bill of Rights are the cornerstone of our constitution, with the constitutional court as the custodian.

Our commitment to nation building, the project of non-racialism, land ownership, equity distribution, wealth sharing, inclusive economic participation and non-seism continues amidst a neoliberal and right-wing anti-transformation agenda to perpetuate minority rule and privileges.

The agenda by anti-transformation proponents is in full swing, polarising the nation along racial lines, destroying our value system, heritage, constitution, country's flag, social fabric and sabotaging a dream of a country based on equality, freedom and justice.

The 27th April 2026 is a continuation of a chapter that infuses more determination and vigour in our commitment to build a peaceful country. As we celebrate this significant day, we do so in a sense of patriotic pride, reaffirming our allegiance to the constitution and the vision of the Freedom Charter. As we have declared in our 2026 January 8 statement, we will fix local government and transform the economy.

We reaffirm that we will defend our sovereignty and democracy.

I so move Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. Does the Premier or any Member of the Executive Council wish to respond to the statement? None.

Honourable Sonakile.

HON SONAKILE: Thank you Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, the DA wishes to commend the Deputy Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Honourable Sihle Zikalala, together with the MEC of Public Works and Roads in the North West, Honourable Elizabeth Mokuu for leading the implementation of Operation Bring Back in Potchefstroom.

This initiative to reclaim unlawfully occupied and highjacked state properties is both necessary and long overdue. It sends a clear message that government assets must be protected and utilised for the benefit of the people, not allowed to deteriorate into centres of criminality and lawlessness.

However Honourable Deputy Speaker, this intervention must not be a once-off event or a public relations exercise confined to one locality.

The reality across the province is stark. In towns such as Mahikeng, Klerksdorp and Rustenburg, there are numerous government buildings that have been highjacked, vandalised or abandoned, many of which have become hubs for criminal activity, posing a direct threat to communities.

The Democratic Alliance, therefore call the MEC and Department to:

- Expand Operation Bring Back across the entire province, prioritising known hotspots of illegal occupation;
- Fast-track eviction processes on the 29 properties already identified, ensuring that the rule of law is upheld;
- Strengthen coordination with law enforcement and Home Affairs to address illegal occupation and associated criminality; and

- Develop clear plans for the repurposing of reclaimed buildings, ensuring they are used for economic development, community services and support for NGOs.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, reclaiming state assets is not just about buildings, it is about restoring dignity, safety and accountability in our communities.

We welcome this step in Potchefstroom, but we insist that the same urgency and political will be applied across the province.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Sonakile. Does the Premier or any Member of the Executive Council wish to respond to the statement?

Honourable Mokua.

HON. MOKUA: Thank you Deputy Speaker. We want to assure this House as the Department of Public Works that it is agreed upon the three spheres of government that this programme has started and it is going to really cover the whole province as it is. So be rest assured, all those highjacked buildings and including land, every property under the state will be returned to its rightful owner.

Thank you very much.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Mokua. We will now go to Honourable Steenkamp.

HON. STEENKAMP: Honourable Deputy Speaker.

I rise today on a matter of grave concern in my constituency, Tsaing Local Municipality.

In 2024, the Democratic Alliance warned that Tswaing was on a dangerous path, plagued by irregular appointments, political interference and a complete breakdown in governance. We called for decisive intervention. Those warnings were ignored.

Today, we are confronted with the consequences: a corrupt scandal involving approximately R60million, linked directly to unlawful and irregular appointments of senior officials.

Investigation have now confirmed what we said all along, that these appointments were not only irregular, but part of a dangerously systematic pattern of maladministration.

Unqualified individuals were appointed and even promoted to senior positions. In one instance, an official was appointed without serving a single day in their original post, was immediately elevated to a senior acting role despite lacking the minimum requirements and remained there for years through irregular extensions.

This is not governance. This is patronage.

Even more concerning are reports of tens of millions spent on legal fees at inflated rates, raising serious concerns about possible kickbacks and abuse of public funds.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, Tswaing has been under Section 139(5) financial intervention since 2021. Yet, instead of recovery, we see continued collapse, salary payment delays, service delivery failures and now entrenched corruption.

This raises a critical question: where was the Provincial Government while the crisis was happening?

The failure is not only administrative, it is political.

The Mayor stands accused of approving unlawful appointments. Council has failed in its oversight duty and the province has failed to act decisively despite clear warning signs for years. The people of Tswaing are paying the price, through failing services deepening poverty and a municipality on the brink of collapse.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the time for excuses is over.

The DA calls for:

- Full accountability for all officials implicated in these irregular appointments;
- Immediate consequence management where wrongdoing is confirmed; and
- Serious consideration of escalating intervention to Section 139(7) as the province has already failed to restore governance in Tswaing.

We will not stand by while corruption robs our communities of dignity and basic services.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. Does the Premier or any other Member of the Executive wish to respond? Honourable Molapisi.

HON. MOLAPISI: Thank you very much Honourable Deputy Speaker. There is no need for a Member to be an alarmist. Some of the information you have alluded to, it is unknown to us. For your information, we have conducted an investigation in Tswaing, I don't know, where were you? You woke up today this morning and you want to take the glory. We are definitely addressing the issues of Tswaing. We know what is happening and we are acting. So, there is no need for you to be coming here raising issues as if the government and the Department in particular is not doing anything about that. You must go and make that call somewhere because we are acting. We know what is happening. Just for your information, we have instituted an investigation through 106. We have the report. We are addressing the matter, so don't jump the gun.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Molapisi. We will now go to Honourable Matshe.

HON. MATSHE: Honourable Deputy Speaker, I rise on behalf of the African National Congress to table a statement to congratulate the Congress of the South African Trade Unions, COSATU, the organisation of Elijah Barayi, Sylvia Benjamin and William Oliphant amongst others for a successful May Day celebration which was part of the intentional workers day. This celebration is part of 40th anniversary of COSATU for the achievements to the workers against all form of oppression and exploitation in this country. This happens amid the emergence of a new global order, a geopolitical shift in favour of progressive internationalism, solidarity and inclusivity against global aggression, against imperialism, against neo-liberalism and against working class exploitation.

In our context, it takes place in an environment of nation building, working against the attempts to subvert democracy, thereby undermining our sovereignty as a country by a right-wing act of misinformation, racial polarisation, attempts to reserve the achievements of our democratic state and the work that we have done to improve labour relations in South Africa. Against the work that we have done to ensure the development of the working class, decent work, living wage and inclusive economy that stands against racialism, sexism, as well as ensuring advancement in equality and justice.

As the African National Congress, Honourable Deputy Speaker, we have passed several progressive legislations starting with the Constitutions, the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act as well as many other progressive legislations. Today, as we honour COSATU for its successful celebrations, we acknowledge that a lot still needs to be done to advance the interest of the workers.

The 32 years of our democracy is a testament to the `brave struggle of the workers. In the face of opposition from employers who are still stuck in past. As the African National Congress, we will continue to regard workers as central to the work that we are doing. It is the wisdom of the struggle of the working class that will guide us in the socioeconomic transformation path. In this year of decisive action to fix local government and transform the economy, we call on all progressive forces, including the labour movement, to work with communities to improve service delivery, strengthen accountability, advance people centered inclusive growth and job creation.

I thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Than you. Does the Premier or any Member of the Executive Council wish to respond to the statement? None. Honourable Wallhorn.

HON. WALLHORN: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

The Democratic Alliance welcomes MEC Tsotso Tlhapi's engagement with the Mmabana Arts & Sport Foundation and the handover of new programme equipment and minibuses. This is a welcomed first step, but equipment alone will not secure lasting impact, without a comprehensive strategy that includes training, community involvement and ongoing support,

the benefits of this investment may not be fully realised. Urgent, practical follow-through is required.

Accordingly, the DA proposes four immediate, integrated recommendations, each with a fixed outcome to ensure these investments translate into sustainable skills, access and governance:

- Fast-track refurbishment and publish a three-year implementation and maintenance plan. Outcome: within 90 days Mmabana will publish an asset register, name of custodians, allocate a maintenance budget, set a preventative servicing schedule and provide refurbishment timelines aligned to programme needs.
- Intensify marketing and establish an independent monitoring framework with quarterly public reporting. Outcome: launch a targeted outreach campaign and publish quarterly reports with clear indicators: enrolment, completion, asset utilisation and job-income outcomes, to enable transparent oversight and demonstrate increased community participation.
- Prioritise meaningful public participation and create a district access and rotation protocol to guarantee equity. Outcome: public a booking and rotation policy developed with community input; schedule minibuses for outreach and ensure measurable increases in participation from underserved rural and township learners.
- Urgently appoint a fit-for-purpose independent board and fund instructor upskilling with accredited training pathways. Outcome: appoint a capable board and have accredited short courses developed with Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) AND Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and delivered by certified instructors, operational with six months to link skills to local labour markets.

These measures will protect assets, broaden access, strengthen governance and turn training into real employment and enterprise opportunities.

The long-term success of Mmabana will depend not only on equipment and announcements but also on transparent governance, community inclusion and visible delivery on the ground.

The DA remains committed to exercise oversight to ensure that Mmabana is fully restored to its rightful place as a driver of opportunity, creativity and community development in the North West.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. Does any Member of the Executive Council wish to respond? Honourable Tlhapi.

HON. TLHAPI: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker. Let me just clock it. I am with Honourable Wallhorn and I agree and thank you very much for being with us as African National Congress to make sure that we refurbish Mmabana. Indeed, all those things that you have indicated, we do have plans and I will share with you the plans as to how far are we in terms of the refurbishment. The community is already there. When we started, we engaged with the community and we spoke to them and we told them that we are going to do this in phases. Thank you very much for making sure that as DA you copy from the African National Congress to make sure that we service our people. Maybe ke selo se sa gore re rotlhe ka mo gare.

Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Tlhapi. Honourable Matuane.

HON. MATUANE: Bosele Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Economic Freedom Fighters to condemn in the strongest possible terms the alarming increase and easy access to illegal firearms in the North West Province. our communities are under siege from a growing wave of violent crimes and the availability of unlicensed and illicit weapons continues to fuel bloodshed, lawlessness and fear among our people. It is unacceptable that in a democratic society, ordinary citizens must live in constant fear of gun violence while the state fails to decisively clamp down on the circulation of illegal firearms.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the recent tavern shooting in Kanana, Klerksdorp, is yet another painful reminder of this crisis. What should have been a place of social gathering became a scene of horror, where innocent lives were placed in danger due to reckless and criminal use of firearms. Incidents such as these are not isolated, they reflect a broader collapse in policing, intelligence and firearm control measures in our province. communities like Kanana are now

synonymous with violence, not because of the people, but because of the state's failure to protect them.

The EFF is deeply concerned about the sources of these illegal firearms. Many of these weapons are either smuggled across borders, stolen from legal owners, or, in some instances, leak from within state security structures themselves. This points to serious weaknesses in border security, policing oversight and corruption within law enforcement agencies. Without addressing these root causes, the cycle of violence will persist and worsen.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the impact of illegal firearms goes beyond physical harm. They destroy families, destabilise communities, and discourage economic activity. Young people, in particular, are drawn into cycles of crime and violence, robbing the Province of its future leaders and productive citizens. Women and children are often the most vulnerable victims in these violent environments, facing heightened risks in spaces that should be safe.

The EFF therefore calls for urgent and decisive action. The provincial government must strengthen collaboration with national law enforcement agencies to intensify operations targeting illegal firearms. There must be regular, intelligence-driven⁸ raids in known crime hotspots, stricter monitoring of firearm licensing processes and harsh consequences for those found in possession of illegal weapons. Furthermore, community policing forums must be empowered and properly resourced to work with residents identifying and reporting criminal activities.

In addition, the EFF calls for a transparent audit of all firearms within police custody and stronger accountability mechanisms to prevent leakage into criminal networks. Importantly, government must invest in social programmes that address the root causes of crime, including unemployment, poverty and lack of opportunities for young people.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the people of North West deserve to live in safe and secure communities. The continued loss of life due to illegal firearms is a direct indictment on the failures of the state. The EFF will forever stand with the people and demand a province free from violence, where schools, homes and streets are places of safety, not scenes of tragedy.

I thank you Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ke a go leboga Motlotlegi. A go nale leloko la komiti-khuduthamaga le le ka ratang go arabela statement se? ga leo. Ke a leboga. Re tla ya ko go Motlotlegi Steyl.

HON. STEYL: The Democratic Alliance calls on all North West residents, 18 years of age and older to ensure that they are correctly registered to vote in this year's local government elections on 04 November 2026.

The IEC ha announced the weekend of 20 – 21 June 2026 as the national registration weekend. The DA encourages all eligible voters to use this opportunity to ensure that they are correctly registered. There are 800 000 registered voters in North West that did not vote during the 2024 national general election.

Many of these stay-away voters believe that voting does not make a difference. Many of these voters also believe that politics do not matter. Today, the DA states unequivocally that politics matter and by not exercising your right to vote, it leads to the wrong kind of politics impacting your daily life.

The water crisis facing hundreds of thousands of North West residents is caused by the wrong kind of politics. The more than a million unemployed residents throughout North West are unemployed because of the wrong kind of politics.

The dangerous pothole-ridden roads are created by the wrong kind of politics. It is wrong politics decisions that cause raw sewage to flow down streets and poison communities. The rampant criminal onslaught that continues to terrorise North West residents, that robs them of their property, that tears communities and families apart through robbery, rape and murder is a result of the decisions of the wrong kind of politics.

It is the wrong political decisions that have made electricity unaffordable for most households; it is the wrong political decisions that see residents now pay almost R30 a litre for petrol today. So, when residents say they don't care about politics, politics has an impact on the quality of life and the access to opportunity they and their children will have.

There are 1.7million registered voters in North West. On Wednesday, 4 November 2026, they have an opportunity to take ownership over their lives, to reject the wrong kind of politics they have been subjected to by the ANC for the last 30 years.

There is an opportunity to vote for the right kind of politics. To vote for the DA, not because I stand here and can make a wild claim, but because 17million South Africans throughout South Africa, in the Western Cape, in Kouga in the Eastern Cape, in Midvaal in Gauteng, in Umngeni in KwaZulu Natal all voted for the right kind of politics. DA politics.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Hold on Honourable Steyl. Honourable Matshe, your hand was up.

HON. MATSHE: Thank you very much Honourable Speaker. I don't like order but if the rules of the House are being violated, I have a responsibility to rise. In terms of Rule 130(4), the rule says a Member statement must deal with one subject matter and may not contain debatable matters. What Honourable Member is presenting today are matters that from the beginning are debatable. I submit for your consideration Honourable Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, can I be allowed to preside over the sitting. The Rule as quoted by Honourable Matshe, I hope that Honourable Steyl does have his Rule book with him. I have concluded that the statement as raised by Honourable Steyl does contain debatable aspects. Therefore, I would request the Honourable Steyl to follow to the process of the Legislature for the matter to be debated in the House. It is a ruling Honourable Steyl.

HON. STEYL: Deputy Speaker, if you are going to make that ruling you will put yourself in a very difficult position because I can say the same for Mme Rosho. It is a Member Statement. A statement may contain a debatable matter. A member statement may contain debatable matters as per your own rules.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, may you please have order. Honourable Steyl, may you please take your seat. Honourable Members, may I correct the ruling I made. The Rule says the statement may contain debatable matters. Statements, not motions, may contain debatable aspects. So may you proceed with your statement Honourable Steyl.

HON. STEYL: Thank you Deputy Speaker.

DA politics that creates economic growth and jobs, DA politics that delivers clean water, sustained electricity supply, road maintenance, clean government and working hard to build safer, cleaner communities that we can all be proud of.

So, a vote in 2026, is a vote for either the DA's right kind of politics, or a continuation of the wrong, corrupt, self-serving politics of the ANC.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, DA e tshela thupa. Halala.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, order. Order Honourable Members. Honourable Members on my right, can you please have order. I don't know why you are campaigning in the House. You must go and campaign in the ground. don't campaign here in front of me. Honourable Members, does the Premier or any Member of the Executive wish to respond? None. We will now go to Honourable Van Huyssteen. Honourable Sambatha, you want to respond, sorry, I didn't recognise your hand.

HON. SAMBATHA: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker. In line with almost one-minute summary of a campaign theme, that statement must be rejected by the House. The statement by the Honourable Member must be rejected. Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, may I please bring your attention to the Rules, 130(5); After the conclusion of Member Statement, the statement is not put to House for adoption. That is the ruling.

Honourable Members, we now migrate to Honourable Van Huyssteen.

HON. VAN HUYSSTEEN: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, I table this Member statement on behalf of the Democratic Alliance to reflect on the reflect on the 2026/27 North West Provincial Budget tabled by MEC Kenetswe

Mosenogi. We see the urgent need to invest in infrastructure, health and social development, but the delayed adoption of the North West Budget Votes for the various departments is a serious concern for service delivery.

The MEC for Finance, Honourable Mosenogi tabled the budget on the 10th March 2026, known as the Provincial Appropriation Bill. Public Participation on this Bill was done in North West on the 13th March 2026. The new financial year started on the 1st April 2026. This House is only set to debate the various Departmental Budget Voted the week of 23 – 26 June 2026.

Currently, the North West government continues to operate without an approved budget. Under Section 29 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). Departments are allowed to spend up to 45% of last year's budget in the first four months, so services such as health, education and social development can remain uninterrupted. As a result, no new initiatives or policy changes may be undertaken until the budget gets approved, leading to delays, procurement freezes and compressed execution timelines.

This delay strikes at the heart of the Premier's pledges made at his State of the Province Address to launch new infrastructure and development projects. Our province cannot launch these necessary initiatives, which means their start dates will be pushed back to the second half of this financial year, risking rushed and ineffective delivery. This is simply a repetition of big promises, but a failure to deliver service to our communities are committed to overcoming.

Meanwhile, the Western Cape under the leadership of the Democratic Alliance has already adopted its 2026/27 Appropriation Bill after detailed scrutiny by the Budget Committee and a majority of lawmakers supported it despite opposition from the ANC and EFF. The Western Cape is therefore poised to introduce new plans without interruption. It emphasises our need as North West to finalise the budget adoption process to prevent more damage.

This Honourable Tlhapi, is perhaps an area where the ANC can learn from the DA. The DA is calling for better governance, stronger accountability and the fulfilment of promises to our people.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, the DA will rigorously monitor this budget's implementation...

[...INTERRUPTION...]

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Oliphant, can we please have order.

The DA will rigorously monitor this budget's implementation once it is finally adopted by this House towards the end of June and will hold this government to account, our province's future will depend on strong, transparent leadership that prioritizes service delivery.

I thank you Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, may we please allow ourselves to be led. Honourable Members, before I allow the Members of the Executives to respond, these are statements in order for Members of the Executive to respond to, but if we make statements which have a bearing on our own programme, because the Executive does not draft the programme of the Legislature, I am sure we are becoming unfair on Members of the Executive, because this issue should have been ventilated at the programming committee. Does the Premier or any Member of the Executive Council wish to respond?

Honourable Members, I now proceed to Executive Statement in terms of Rule 130(A).

The Premier is not present today.

Does any Member of the Executive Council wish to make an Executive Statement?

Honourable Lenkopane and then Honourable Morweng.

HON. LENKOPANE: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker.

Deputy Speaker, I rise to report to this House on a decisive intervention undertaken by the North West Province at the MINMEC of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, where we tabled a strategic agenda on the biodiversity economy and its alignment with legislative reform.

At the outset, we express our appreciation to MINMEC for affording the North West Province the opportunity to present this matter and to the Honourable Minister for the leadership and consideration shown in allowing our province to place this issue on the national agenda.

The North West Province went to MINMEC not as observer, but as a province determined to shape outcomes. We placed firmly on the table the reality that the biodiversity economy in our province is a living economic system, driven by business, supported by the private sector and sustained by communities and traditional leadership.

We spoke directly to sectors such as wildlife ranching, eco-tourism and the captive lion breeding industry which have in recent months experienced uncertainty and distress arising from the current policy direction of the IMTT.

Our message was clear; Legislative reform must not destroy what already sustains livelihoods. It must build, regulate and transform it.

For this in the captive lion breeding sector and the broader wildlife industry who felt uncertainty, pressure and instability, this intervention signals a shift. It affirms that the North West Province is actively engaging at nations level to ensure that their concerns are heard, that their role in the economic is recognised and that policy processes do not proceed without proper consultation and viable alternatives.

We made it clear that the correct path is one of regulated and sustainable use, aligned with the Constitution and existing legislation and that any approach that moves towards prohibition without economic replacement will have serious consequences for jobs, investment and rural economies.

This is about restoring confidence. It is about ensuring that industry, business, communities and traditional leaders know that their government is not distant from their realities, but is actively shaping policy in their interest.

The North West Province is repositioning the biodiversity economy as a driver of inclusive growth and transformation, and we will continue to lead in ensuring that legislative reform is both economically responsible and socially just.

If we remove what sustains livelihoods, we must clearly demonstrate what replaces it. Further to this, we congratulate the Honourable Speaker for tabling transformational legislation before this House, including the Biodiversity Management Bill and other related bills that advance revenue enhancement, economic improvement and inclusion such as the Gambling Tax Bill and the Consumer Affairs Bill.

We also wish to inform the House that the MEC has declared the 1st May as the official commencement of the hunting season in the province. In this regard, the Department has introduced a new electronic permitting system that enables investors, traditional leaders and all applicants to access services efficiently.

A dedicated response team has been established to address any challenges experienced on the system and we are pleased to report that the first permit has already been successfully issued without any complications. This demonstrates that we are firmly moving in the direction articulated by the Honourable Premier.

This new system is aligned with the approved regulatory framework and supports the province's broader agenda of revenue enhancement and economic growth.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Lenkopane. Does any Member wish to comment on the Executive statement? Honourable Rosho.

HON. ROSHO: Thank you very much. As the African National Congress, we welcome the work, the Statement, but also welcome the work that is done, especially around the permitting system that is going to be used. I think that is a new game changer in the environment and we appreciate that because it will expediate the applications and the turn-around time. One of the issues Honourable MEC, I think you are done with dry-run because it is important that as and when game farmers, wild life in the industry apply, they are able to get feedback on time so that we are not getting complains in our portfolio committee, but we welcome as the African National Congress. That is the mandate of the ANC. We are happy that you are on course, you are actually reinforcing revenue collection.

Thank you very much Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Morweng.

HON. MORWENG: Thank you Deputy Speaker.

I stand before your august to express condolences to the family of Sere at Lokgabeng Village near Mokasa in Taung. The family of the 12-year-old child swept by the floods following torrential rain in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District. These children were reportedly playing

outside around 17:30 on Sunday afternoon when she was swept by low current and drowned. The police were called and the divers later discovered the lifeless body of a child.

Honourable Speaker, this is the situation unfolding before our very eyes in the District of Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati. This began last week as some of the arterial roads were undrivable as a result of the heavy rains. The widespread flooding has also led to the closure of N14 between Vryburg and Kuruman in the Northern Cape; N18 between Vryburg and Taung which was also closed has since been opened and is now trafficable. The situation, Honourable Deputy Speaker is that many villages in the western part of Greater Taung Municipality are inaccessible. Villages that have now been completely cut-off include Kgomotso, Mmadithamaga, Gataote, Spitskop, Mmamutla, TShoseng, Buxton, Mokasa. The situation has been exacerbated by the collapse of the local bridges having been submerged almost for a week. The major arterial amongst these is the Mokgare bridge on the road between Taung and Rivelo.

One biggest challenge is still being experienced in N14, particularly between Vryburg and Kuruman, is that despite advisories and warnings, some motorists continue to ignore all these things. The Department alongside other sister departments including education, health and Public Works as well as the disaster management and the district municipality have been having regular engagements to manage the situation as best as they can.

Meanwhile, as the Department we have stationed traffic officers for 24 hours at the submerged section of N14 between Vryburg and Kuruman as we have seen the South African Weather Services predicting more rain from today and this will worsen the situation.

I hereby once more calling on the House to take consideration of the situation and consider the situation as dire.

Thank you very much Deputy Speaker.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Morweng. Does any Member wish to comment on the Executive Statement? Honourable Moema.

HON. MOEMA: Thank you very much Honourable Deputy Speaker.

We also note the submission made by Honourable Morweng and also, we are saying it collaborates our long-standing argument as the EFF that we must be able to build state capacity because these tenders that are doing our roads, they are not doing any justice. From time to time the very same roads get collapsed as and when there are heavy rains. They are unable to sustain natural cause of these disasters. We are saying that going forward, this government must now consider developing internal capacity and ensure that the state is able to build proper infrastructure so that we do not find ourselves in situations where we are losing lives as a result of poor infrastructure.

Thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Moema. A Member of the Executive Council cannot respond to a statement. I think those were the only two statements. Honourable Lenkopane, your hand is up. You had an opportunity to make a statement. Why is your hand up? You rise and address the Deputy Speaker.

HON. LENKOPANE: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker. I had two statements, so I did not know whether I should table at the same time Speaker. The Rules so allows. Thanks.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: If you are asking for a permission from the Deputy Speaker, just say that you omitted to make your second statement. You are allowed.

HON. LENKOPANE: Thank you Honourable Deputy Speaker for your progressive leadership.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, today is not an ordinary day in this House. It is a moment of history.

We rise to recognise and commend the North West Provincial Legislature through its portfolio committees for tabling, processing and concluding engagements on important Bills before this

House. These include the North West Biodiversity Management Bill, the North West Gambling and Betting Taxes Bill and the North West Consumer Affairs Bill.

What makes this moment historic is that these Bills are not just new laws. They are correcting and reforming legislation that has been with us since the early years of our democracy. For many years, we have operated within frameworks that no longer speak to the realities of our economy and the challenges our people face today.

Today, this House is changing that. The Biodiversity Management Bill allows us to protect our environment while also opening up opportunities in the biodiversity economy, creating jobs and supporting communities.

The Gambling and Betting Taxes Bill strengthens our ability to generate revenue as a province so that we are better able to fund development and respond to the needs of our people.

The Consumer Affairs Bill protects our people, promotes fairness in the marketplace and ensures that more South Africans, especially emerging businesses are able to participate meaningfully in the economy.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, taken together, these Bills show that we are serious about reform. They give government the tools it needs to respond to an ailing economy, to drive inclusion and to open up opportunities for many more of our people. They also reflect a Legislature that has listened to the people through consultations and public participation, ensuring that these laws are grounded in the lived realities of our communities.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, this House has chosen not to remain with outdated laws, but to move forward with courage and purpose. that is why we say today, history has been made.

I thank you.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Lenkopane. Does any Member wish to comment on the Executive Statement? None. We are done with the Executive Statements.

Before we go to the next item, Honourable Members, may I plead that we be very sensitive on the issues that we are rising in the House.

The Honourable Morweng raises the issue of a life being lost, the issues of the roads being wiped due to the heavy falls. The issue of the bridge between Taung and Rivelov which is serious

matter because people can't move. So, it does not need for us to politicise the matter because factually, the bridge between Taung and Rivelo, because I am from there has not been built by this government, but it is a serious, a life has been lost, can we not politicise that matter and be sensitive for once as Members of the Legislature. So, let us be factual, be sensitive instead of us saying condolences to the family, we are playing to the gallery. I don't think that it does help in any way.

HON. MOEMA: Speaker? Speaker?

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Having said that; Honourable Moema.

HON. MOEMA: We can't sit and allow you to accuse us. We did say that we note the submissions. The reason we are saying we are noting is because there are genuine submissions and we saying we are agreeing. And we are saying we long made submissions to say let's work with seriousness on dealing with the issues of internal capacity and proper development of our infrastructure as a province. It's about time we take our infrastructural development very seriously.

Any country, any province that wants to progress, we must look at what China are doing. They are able to build or develop sustainable infrastructure. So because Honourable Morweng raised an issue, we must not be able to now speak to the issues of development. We are speaking to development and we do take note that it is a bad thing that really happened and we do sympathise with the family.

So you can't accuse us while ourselves we did say that we note the submissions, there are genuine submissions but also we then said it's about time that our government wakes up. Because it can't be correct that from time to time we loose lives as a result of bad infrastructure whether through accidents created by potholes, whether through rain that wipes away our roads. So it can't be correct that you accuse us and we sit here and listen to that.

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: You are not being accused of anything. Just take your seat Honourable Member. Thank you, Honourable Members. Secretary, may you please read the next order.

TABLE STAFF: ORDER NO. 5 ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, reports have been tabled through the ATC and referred to the relevant committee for scrutiny and further processing. Committee reports were also tabled through the ATC. Does the House adopt the committee recommendations as House resolutions? Does the House adopt the committee recommendations as House resolutions?

HOUSE: Yes.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, committee recommendations are now resolutions of this House. I've been informed by the Chief Whip that the DA has withdrawn the debate on the notice of motion as tabled by Honourable Van Huyssteen on the 3rd March 2026. This means that the House will only debate the notice of motion tabled by Honourable Dabampe. Secretary, may you read the next order please.

TABLE STAFF: ORDER NO. 6 DEBATE ON WORKER'S DAY

HON. DEP. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Worker's Day is observed annually on the 1st of May to celebrate workers' rights and the role of labour movements in democracy. This year Worker's Day was celebrated under the theme: "Uniting workers for economic liberation and rights particularly against rising costs and for better conditions." I now call on Honourable Mokua to lead the debate.

HON. MOKUA: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker and greetings to the House. Workers' Day is a day where we get the opportunity to reflect on the struggle of workers and pay homage to those who contributed to the fight for humane working conditions, fair labour practices and equality in the workplace.

Workers are the backbone and the creators of the economy in their physical and their mental wellbeing is very much key to the country's economy and growth and development. Hence, we recognize the importance of this day that is celebrated in their honour.

This year we commemorate this day under the theme: "Uniting workers for economic liberation and rights particularly against rising costs and for better conditions." This theme emphasises the fight against exploitation of workers, the rising cost of living and advocates for job security as well as safer work environment for workers.

These key areas are important to focus on in an era where some workers are still being exploited and paid low wages and many have to contend with the high cost of living. It cannot be right that workers are forced to make hard choices of either spending their hard-earned money and rising transport costs to access the place of work or on essentials such as food.

On this Workers' Day, we remember the thousands of workers who participated in the general strike that began in the 1st May 1886 and culminated in the Hay Market Affair on the 4th of May of the same year. Their demands for an eight-hour work shift improved working conditions and better wages played a significant role in improving the humane working hours and scholar conditions workers that they were subjected to.

We further salute the 30 unions who in December of 1986 met in Durban to do away with fragmented approach to the fight for worker's rights by forming one united movement which is called COSATU. Even after these gains, black workers still continue to be exploited with white workers enjoying more conducive working environment than the natives.

Despite the milestone achieved, the fight for the total rights of workers is far from over. Our key message is that realisation of the rights of workers can only be achieved through the collaboration of law makers, government officials, organised labour, business and as well as workers themselves as the main drivers of the economy.

As we acknowledge the inevitable of the emerging of the fourth industrial revolution, we also say workers should not be left behind. They still need to be protected. There should be no mass

job losses due to the inception of artificial intelligence. Instead, it should be used to further develop their skills as we also have the Skills Development Act.

Honourable Members, we also need to recognise the critical role that organised labour played in the fight for worker's rights. The apartheid system thrived on cheap labour where workers had to contend with the migrant labour system, job reservation, poverty wages and oppressive laws. Throughout the struggle, trade unions were an important force of resistance. In the 1980s COSATU organised mass strikes against new labour laws and workers emerged a strong political force.

Through the hard work of the men and women leading the various unions in the past, the current eras workers have now the following rights: Collective bargaining, protection against unfair treatment, workplace occupational health and safety, collective voice of influence, workplace policies and address grievance more effectively and efficiently, fight discrimination, legal representation and advocacy during dispute in the CCMA hearings.

Great strides have been to realise the rights of the workers including the introduction of key legislation. Several key legislative acts have been adopted to give effect to the rights ensuring safe, equitable and fair treatment in the workplace. The core labour legislative frameworks that have been established thus far: Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75, 1997, Employment Equity Act 55, 1998, Occupation Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, National Minimum Wage Act of 2018, Compensation of Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993, Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2020, 2001 Skills Development Act 97 of 1998.

With these pieces of legislation in place, workers have the right to fair treatment and cannot be dismissed for seeking a fair deal or participating in legal strikes. They have the right to demand proper work facilities, safety equipment and a work environment free from hazards. This legislation also protects domestic workers and farm workers and further outline specific sectoral minimum wages.

Despite our achievements there are still challenges that workers are still grappling with. These include the rising cost of living, job losses and high employment of foreign nationals in some sectors of the economy that do not require specialised skills. We also have struggle with the low representation of women in senior and management positions in some sectors as well as work environments that do not comply with Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Furthermore, the rate of unemployment especially among the youth is also a cause for concern which is also aggravated by the high rate of job losses experienced by the county. As a way to address some of the aforementioned challenges, President Cyril Ramaphosa in his State of the Nation Address this February acknowledged that costly and complicated regulations prevent companies from growing and increasing job opportunities.

He added that in an effort to simplify business regulations and compliance, the state is working to ensure that companies, entrepreneurs can focus on growth, innovation and job creation. As a result, the President has established a dedicated team to work on improving the business environment. With this initiative, government will be implementing measures to reduce red tape in priority areas that include among others the mining rights system, visas and work permits, early childhood development as well as informal sector.

The recent appointment of 10 000 labour inspectors together with 20 000 inspectors' interns will support stability and fairness, you know, ensuring that the labour market is complying with the legislation. This increase in inspectors will ensure improved compliance by employers to the required health and safety standards.

National labour migration is at different stages of consultation with the aim to regulate employment of foreign nationals in our country through quotas and sector restrictions. Government has declared that 2026 the year of putting youth South Africans to work in honour of the 1976 Youth Day commemoration.

Through the labour activation and strategic interventions across the provinces, government is aggressively tackling unemployment at that particular level. To date nearly 3.4 billion worth of contracts have been landed to lap in implementing in various provinces including the North West to the benefit of 1 18 225 beneficiaries by injecting significant investment into job creation and skills development.

We are ensuring that the dignity of work is accessible to more South Africans especially to the youth. We should do away with casual work and labour workers, and we should ensure equal pay for equal work. We implore on employers to conduct wage negotiations in good faith, taking into consideration the inflation and the rising food prices. We need to promote industrialisation and focus on development of township economy. As COSATU will always say, injury to one is injury to all. Aluta continua. Thank you very much Deputy Speaker.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Moku. Now we call Honourable Botswe, 10 minutes.

HON. BOTSWE: Honourable CoC, leaders of the economic emancipation movement, Members of the Executive Committee, fellow Members of this Provincial Legislature. Honourable CoC, this debate is a celebration of all citizens of the North West who wake up before sun rise every day or return home in the morning from working through the night for the ability to support themselves and their families.

We celebrate those with their different uniforms who gather at the government buildings, universities, malls, mines, hospitals and heritage sites to keep us and our properties safe. We celebrate those who grace our workspaces from 7am to ensure that we are working in a clean environment and continue to keep our facilities clean throughout the day.

We celebrate those who work in dangerous conditions where there is no sun, those who serve us at the filling stations, retail stores, food outlets, and at the taxi ranks and institutions of higher learning. Honourable CoC, we also take this opportunity to remember all those citizens and youth of the North West who spend their days looking for employment, hoping for the ability to provide for themselves and those looking to them for provision. We remember the unemployed graduates who sacrificed long, sleepless nights to obtain their qualification, only to find themselves seated at home, desperate for any work.

Honourable CoC, they are not forgotten. This debate on Workers Day is very close to our heart as the EFF, and we have always displayed our affection towards the working class without any shame. When the current President of the ANC and South Africa ordered the police to open fire at workers who were simply asking for an increase in their wages in Marikana in 2012, it is the EFF that stood firm and fought for those workers who survived the massacre and those who lost their lives to obtain justice. A fight we will never neglect.

Last Friday, the 1st of May 2026, the EFF gathered at Tlhapi Stadium in Wonderkop, Marikana to celebrate Workers Day with the people of Marikana and to ensure that they are not forgotten, that the lives of their sons and brothers were not lost in vain. The people of Marikana form part of the DNA of the EFF hence we have carried and celebrated with them since our inception in 2013, 13 years back.

In his address, the President and the Commander in Chief did not mince the words when he educated all attendees and viewers of the rally on what makes a city, and Rustenburg should have been one of the most flourishing cities in the North West. Even Ditsobotla because of in Ditsobotla we have lime, but those who are in positions of power like Honourable Member here have been selling our resources out from under our noses without any real investment in our communities.

That is why, today, the stench of sewage has become a familiar scent around our homes and communities. It is this reason why waiting in a long line with buckets to collect water has become part of our daily routine in order to bath and cook. It is why the hope that came with working is slowly fading because of how impossible is the inflation rate. Five kg of meal costs almost R100.

However, Honourable CoC, we are not people without hope. This year on the 4th of November, we are presented with yet another opportunity to effect change for a tomorrow that does not continue to force us into poverty and dilapidation. Our people have the opportunity to vote EFF into power without wondering what the capabilities of the EFF are.

We have seen that the EFF municipalities have been held accountable, have been cleaned and made safe. We have seen that, with the EFF, academic debt that was used as a weapon to keep black students from graduating is a thing of the past. We have seen that, with the EFF, expensive data expiring before being used upon is a problem we no longer have.

We have seen that, with the EFF, the security guards, the cleaners, the gardeners will now be employed directly by government entities. We have seen that, with the EFF, NSFAS and the SETAs have been blocked from continuing their corruption without any interruption. We have seen Honourable MEC, with the EFF, that South African Qualifications Authority will be stopped from collecting fees from unemployed professionals.

These are only few examples, but a clear indication of the heart of the EFF and the kind of South Africa we fight endlessly to live in. It is an indication of the kind of life we envision our people living, where no one is left behind or held back by systems that were intended to make succeeding as hard as it is today.

For the past 32 years, the ANC has played along with this system, but the EFF has been at the forefront of dismantling it one chunk at a time. The EFF prides itself with the voice it continues to afford the workers of South Africa, and those of the North West. We remain resolute on

ensuring that those who are often looked down upon are recognised as humane and deserving of the freedom our ancestors fought for not the one we have been witnessing for the past 32 years.

In closing, we wish to make it clear to the people of the North West that the EFF is available for election on the 4th of November 2024. Our working suits are ready, and our boots are strapped to serve our communities. We are ready. We are ready and we are ready to foster significant change in the lives of our people.

Honourable CoC, tla ke tseye tshono e go go ... *[INAUDIBLE]* ... Re tlhoka gore letsatsi le letsatsi ha re tsena moo, o nne o tseye sengwenyana o re checke. Batho ba itsheetse. Notagi e re e bonang mo gompiono ke e e feteletseng. Ke a leboga.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Botswe. Let me call Honourable Steenkamp. You have nine minutes Honourable Member.

HON. STEENKAMP: Sometimes the truth really hurts. Honourable CoC, Honourable Members and then most importantly the people and the workers of the North West. Today as we celebrate Workers' Day, we do not just celebrate labour, we confront a hard truth. For too many people in our province, there is no work to celebrate. Workers' Day has become a painful reminder that millions of South Africans do not have. They do not have a job, they do not have an income which means they do not have a future.

In North West, unemployment is not just a statistic, it is a lived crisis. It is the young graduate sitting at home in Mafikeng with no opportunity. It is the farm worker in Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati losing income due to poor government support. It is the small business owner in Tswaing, forced to close shop because of collapsing service delivery.

And let us be honest, MEC, this is not accidental. This is the direct result of years of failed governance, corruption and economic mismanagement by the ANC. The fundamental difference between the ANC and the DA is that the ANC has it fundamentally wrong. They believe it is the government's job to create jobs. But in a true democracy and in a functioning economy, government does not create the jobs. Government must create the conditions for jobs to be created.

It must build infrastructure, it must ensure reliable electricity and water, maintain law and order, root out corruption and it makes it easier for businesses to grow. Because it is the private sector, the small businesses, and entrepreneurs who are the real engines of job creation. And when government fails in its role, jobs disappear.

The DA has put forward a clear and credible plan to fix this. A plan to unleash enterprise; grow the economy; and create jobs; but more importantly, it restores something far more powerful than statistics: Hope. Because a job is not just about income. A job is about dignity. It is about a parent being able to provide for their children. It is about independence and it is about self-worth. When government fails to grow the economy, it strips people of their dignity.

We cannot speak about jobs without speaking about corruption because corruption is not a victimless crime. Every rand stolen, Honourable Members, is a road not fixed; is a business not supported; and is a job not created. The DA believes that clean government is pro-worker policy.

Service delivery equals economic growth. There is no economic growth without basic services. How do you run a business without water, without electricity or functioning roads? You don't. Crime is another silent job killer. Businesses cannot operate in fear. When infrastructure is vandalised, trucks are looted, and farms are unsafe, it is economic sabotage.

The DA has a vision for North West. And I want you to take the time and really imagine a North West where small businesses are supported, and not suffocated; where young people can start businesses without red tape ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Honourable Steenkamp, can you sit down a little bit? There is a hand there. Honourable Oliphant.

HON. OLIPHANT: Thank you very much Honourable CoC. I wanted to just ask the Honourable Steenkamp if this debate is generated on AI? If she can perhaps respond to that. Thanks.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Continue Honourable Member.

HON. STEENKAMP: Honourable Oliphant, please go have a look at the recordings and then put it into AI and you tell me.

HON. OLIPHANT: You are not listing any facts, no facts.

HON. STEENKAMP: Right, so imagine a North West where small businesses are supported and not suffocated, where young people can start businesses but without the red tape, where farms are productive and protected; where tourism sites are maintained and thriving and where municipalities actually deliver services.

Sustainability of the future and when we look at this, economic growth must also be sustainable. We must protect our environment, invest in renewable energy, and support agriculture responsibly. Workers' Day should not be a reminder of failure. The DA believes in a North West where every person who wants to work, can work.

And while there is noise and people are shouting from this side of the House, the truth is that those who want to work should be able to work. So colleagues let us restore dignity, let us restore growth. And most importantly, Honourable Oliphant, let us restore hope in this province. I thank you.

HON. OLIPHANT: ANC is the only hope, the hope for this country. The ANC is the only hope.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Steenkamp. You have saved minutes. Now call Honourable Dial. Honourable Dial you have ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. OLIPHANT: E e shortang ka di-facts.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: You have nine minutes Honourable Dial.

HON. DIAL: Honourable CoC, thank you very much. Thank you very much and greetings to Members of the Legislature, Members of the Executive, organised labour, worker formations, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, today we observe Workers' Day not as a ceremonial date on the calendar, but as a living pledge to the men and women whose labour sustains our economy, delivers our public services, and keeps our communities functioning under the often-difficult conditions. We gather under a clear and urgent theme: Uniting workers for economic liberation and rights against the rising cost of living, against exploitation, and for a decent work and dignity.

Workers' Day was formally recognised as a public holiday after the dawn of democracy, first observed nationally in 1995 as part of reclaiming the history of struggle that shaped our freedom. But the struggle of workers' rights did not begin in 1994, and it did not end there either. It is a struggle deeply rooted in the resistance to injustice, inequality and racial capitalism.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, South Africa's labour movement has always been central to the broader liberation struggle. A defining moment in the history was the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions launched in December 1985 when 33 unions came together to form a single, non-racial, democratic workers' federation committed to worker's control and social justice. Born in the heat of apartheid repression, COSATU united workers across industries and became a vital pillar of resistance linking workplace struggles to the fight for democracy, dignity and equality.

COSATU's founding principles: Non-racialism, worker control, a living wage, and one industry, one union, were not abstract ideas. They were practical tools to confront exploitation, poverty wages, and unsafe working conditions.

In the year marking the 30th anniversary of our Constitution, we reaffirm that workers' rights are constitutional rights not secondary or optional rights. These include the right to organise, to bargain collectively, to work in safety and to earn a wage that sustains life and dignity.

Yet today, many workers are under severe pressure. Food prices, transport costs, electricity tariffs and municipal charges consume a growing share of their wages every month. A wage increase that does not keep pace with the cost of living is not progressive, it is a pay cut in slow motion.

This pressure is worsened by unfair deductions, particularly in municipalities. Many workers see their payslips eroded by third party payments often through debit orders or deductions that are poorly explained, incorrectly authorised, or abusive in practice. These deductions undermine collective bargaining gains, weaken household resilience, and trap workers in cycles of debt.

A caring government cannot look away while workers' wages are silently stripped away before they reach their families. We must strengthen oversight, enforce consistent requirements, and protect workers from predatory practices that hide behind technical legalities.

Workers' Day also compels us to confront unsafe and insecure workers. From mines to farms, from factories to hospitals, no worker should risk life or health for a wage. We must intensively inspect, enforce occupational health, safety standards, and hold employers accountable when profit is placed above human life.

We must also confront the growth of precarious work, labour brokering abuse, rolling contracts, platform work without protection because a worker without security cannot plan a future, and a society built on insecurity cannot be stable. The world of work is changing rapidly. Technology and artificial intelligence are shaping how labour is managed and monitored.

While innovation must improve productivity and safety, it must never erase dignity. No worker should be hired, disciplined and dismissed by algorithms alone. Human oversight, transparency and fairness must be guaranteed. We therefore support the call for a worker dignity right charter anchored in retraining data protection, limit on surveillance and fair rules for automated decision-making affecting employment.

In conclusion, Honourable Chair of Chairs, unity must produce action. Let us unite workers across all sectors, formal and informal, young and old, urban and rural. Let us defend wages against cost of living and unsafe and degrading work, stop exploitative deductions and open real pathways for young people into decent jobs.

We acknowledge the role of workers in building our economy and our country. South Africa's wealth was created by hands that too often were left empty when sickness and old age came.

A just society is one that honours the contribution, not only in words, but in policy, practice and protection.

Let us build an economy where those who work can live, raise families, and plan their lives with dignity. Our global liberation struggle icon, the founding father of our democracy, Nelson Mandela once said, "to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom for all." I thank you very much Chairperson of Chairpersons.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Dial. Honourable Kodisang. You have four minutes Honourable Member. Switch on Mama.

HON. KODISANG: Thank you. Motlotlegi CoC, Batlotlegi mo gare ga Ntlo, baagi ba Bokone Bophirima. As we mark Workers' Day, re tshwanetse go gopola the generations of workers, trade unions, and labour activists who marched, protested, and sacrificed for the rights many now enjoy. Fair wages, safe working conditions, and dignity in labour.

This day is not just a public holiday, Honourable CoC, ke letsatsi la go tlotla maiteko a badiri and to commemorate the global labour movement that fought for justice and dignity in the workplace. As Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us, I open quote: "All labour that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance." Yet today, boammaruri bo botlhoko.

Twenty-three million South Africans are living in poverty, surviving on less than R1 300 per month. Twelve million South Africans cannot find work or have given up looking for work altogether. Here in North West, unemployment stands at over 50%. And even those who are employed are experiencing wage stagnation while the cost of living continues to rise. Seno ga sa tshwanela go amogelwa.

Honourable CoC, in his State of the Province Address, the Premier projected over 3 500 jobs from the Mahikeng Student City alone, how far are we with that projection? What does Workers' Day mean to a graduate who cannot find employment? What does it mean to a parent who works every day, yet still cannot provide adequately for their family?

This is not just an economic crisis. It strips off human dignity. When people are denied work, they are denied dignity. When wages are stagnant, poverty deepens. When unemployment

rises, inequality becomes entrenched. South Africa has the talent. The North West has the potential. What we need is leadership that creates jobs, supports small businesses, invests in skills development, and builds an economy that works for all.

Workers' Day must be more than commemoration: What is Workers' Day without a working society? Because the greatest tribute we can pay to the labour movements of the past is to build a North West where every citizen has the dignity of meaningful work.

Action SA would also like to encourage and remind workers across the North West to register to vote on the 20th and 21st of June 2026 and to go and vote and vote Action SA on the 4th of November 2026. Re a leboga.

HON. OLIPHANT: Re batla relaxer ya Black Like Me. Ha re batle dilo tse dingata, re batla relaxer ya Black Like Me. Busang dilo tseo.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable. Now I'll call Honourable ... *[INTERJECTION]* ... Order Members!

HON. OLIPHANT: Re batla factory ya relaxer, factory ya relaxer. Re batla yone.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Lo a rasa! Honourable Tlhapi! Honourable Lenkopane! Honourable Lenkopane, Honourable Tlhapi, Honourable Oliphant, re mo tlung. Hee didimala! Honourable Sebegoe, you have 10 minutes.

HON. SEBEGOE: Thank you very much Honourable Chair of Chairs, Honourable Members of the Legislature. Honourable Chair of Chairs, history has shown us that every right gained by workers was born out of struggle and collective action. This profound statement underscores the famous quote ascribed to the escaped enslaved person, American author and advocate for human rights who later advised President Abraham Lincoln to abolish slavery, Frederick Douglass, who had noted that, "power concedes nothing without a demand."

Today, Honourable Chair of Chairs, we honour the workers of our province and our country, the men and women who keep hospitals running, teach our children, produce our food, build our roads, and power our economy. We also speak to the hard-fought truth facing working families: The rising cost of living is shrinking pay packets and stretching households to breaking point.

International Workers' Day was born from the struggle for humane hours, safe work and fair pay. Its message remains clear: Economic liberation is not a slogan, it is the right of every worker to earn enough, to live with dignity, to work without fear, and to have a voice strong, democratic organisation.

In South Africa, Honourable Chair of Chairs, the trade union movement stood at the forefront of the fight against apartheid, organising on the shop floor, resisting exploitation, and linking the struggle for political freedom to the struggle for workers' rights. That unity helped secure the democratic breakthrough of 1994.

We ended legislated racism in the workplace and affirmed that every worker deserves dignity, fair treatment and equal opportunity. But dignity must also be felt in everyday working life. In safe workplaces, predictable hours, fair discipline, protection from harassment, and the strict enforcement of labour laws for every employer, whether public or private.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, since 1994, our democracy has expanded access to water, electricity, health care, education and housing for millions. Yet the promise of freedom is incomplete while workers must still choose between transport and food, between rent and school needs. The task before us is to unite workers and communities to defeat poverty, tackle inequality, and build an economy that works for those who labour.

On this May Day, Honourable Chair of Chairs, we stand with the working-class movement, COSATU, and workers across our country. Our theme is clear: Uniting workers for economic liberation and rights against the rising cost of living and for better working conditions. This means fighting for wages that keep pace with prices, defending collective bargaining, stopping exploitative labour practices, and ensuring that every workplace respect health, safety and dignity. As we affirm: An injury to one is an injury to all.

Workers' rights, Honourable Chair of Chairs, cannot exist only in law books; they must be enforced in every workplace. Economic liberation will not be achieved through policy alone;

it must be felt where workers earn their living: On farms, in factories, in shops, or on construction sites and in the homes across our province.

That is why a strong, visible and effective labour inspectorate is essential. Labour inspections are the frontline defence of workers' dignity. They are the means through which the state protects workers from abuse, enforces compliance, and ensures that dishonest employers do not profit through exploitation.

Too many workers are still unpaid, overworked, exposed to unsafe conditions, or dismissed unfairly. These abuses thrive where inspections are weak and where employers believe they will not be held accountable. This must change.

A major challenge we must confront is the continued existence of unregistered workplaces and unregistered workers. Informality is often deliberately used to evade labour laws, deny workers benefits, and escape responsibility. Registration is not bureaucracy, it is the foundation of decent work, workplace safety, social protection and fair pay. No employer must be allowed to operate outside the law while workers suffer the consequences.

We must also speak clearly and responsibly about illegal labour practices involving undocumented and foreign workers in our province. Let us be unequivocal: The problem is not workers seeking survival and opportunity, the problem is employers who exploit vulnerability to undermine wages, avoid compliance and divide the working class.

All workers, regardless of nationality, are entitled to protection from abuse, unsafe conditions and wage theft. At the same time, no employer may be allowed to use illegal employment practices to bypass minimum wages, health and safety standards, UIF contributions or employment equity requirements.

When this happens, it weakens the collective bargaining, destroys decent work, and drives down conditions for everyone. This practice is not job creation, it's exploitation. And it must be confronted through coordinated labour inspections, enforcement action and the consistent application of the law, without fuelling division among workers.

Workers must never be turned against one another. Exploitation anywhere lowers standards everywhere. Strong labour inspections are also essential to protect workplace safety. No worker should leave home unsure whether they will return safely. Workers must never be forced to choose between earning an income and risking their lives. The right to a safe and healthy workplace including the right to refuse dangerous work is non-negotiable.

Since 1994, Honourable Chair of Chairs, South Africa has built a strong framework to protect workers' rights, including constitutional protections, the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, occupational health and safety laws, employment equity measures and the national minimum wage.

Our task now is to make these rights real in every workplace through enforcement. Economic liberation requires a capable state that inspects workplaces, protects whistle-blowers, disciplines non-compliant employers and ensure that vulnerable workers are not trapped in low pay, insecure jobs and unsafe conditions.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, our mandate remains to transform workplaces, narrow inequality and ensure that growth benefits those who labour. This means confronting casualisation, labour broking abuses, unsafe work, wage theft and exploitation in all their forms. Worker unity must translate into practical victories, safer work, better pay and a fair share of the wealth workers create.

We therefore welcome the targeted employment of 10 000 labour inspectors and the 20 000 interns by the compassionate and caring ANC-led government as a positive step that will contribute towards job creation. It will also contribute towards ending casualisation, unfair labour practice, employment of undocumented foreign nationals within the agriculture, domestic as well as hospitality sector.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, in conclusion, as we move towards the 2026 Local Government Elections, we call on all workers to organise, mobilise, participate fully in democratic processes in order to defend their hard-won workers' rights. Thank you.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Sebegoe. I'll call upon Honourable Mokua to close the debate of Worker's Day. Honourable Mokua you have five minutes.

HON. MOKUA: Thank you very much CoC. I think five minutes is too much. I must agree that the House agrees that workers' issues can no longer continue to be postponed or to be delayed any further. The House unanimously agree that worker's conditions need to be improved and they need to be improved in all sectors.

It must be known that workers' rights necessarily are human rights and they must really be taken care of in all sectors. Yes including in farming communities because if you look currently the farming community needs a very serious attention where workers they are not given holidays as expected, they are not given protection as expected, they are not.

The labour laws are just trampled upon. And I mean this is something that we cannot grandstand with. We cannot come and be rhetoric talking about workers' issues but we must make sure that they are addressed to the latter. Workers currently especially domestic workers, bullterrier dogs are released on them when they are looking for their, especially in Potch, the area of Potchefstroom, yes.

So we need to protect workers in all spheres and all sectors. So we must agree that the registration of all workers in South Africa is required by law. Domestic workers in most households are not registered and therefore their health and safety issues are not considered. So we must make sure that those you know are observed by all sectors because by not doing so, it means we are rolling back the hard earned struggles of workers and that they have worked hard to achieve.

I think we are in agreement. I think Honourable Steenkamp we are in agreement that worker's issues and worker's rights must be observed. And I think Honourable Kodisang also stressed on that. Unfortunately, Honourable Botswe is raising his issues. I don't know I think it is maybe from the AI as it was earlier alluded because the issues that are raised by Honourable Botswe they need proper research so that we can contextualise.

What is important is for us to find common areas so that we can come up with common resolutions. Thank you very much CoC.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Mokua for closing the debate.

HON. OLIPHANT: We'll direct that congress.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Now we are going to another item. Secretary, can you read?

TABLE STAFF: ORDER NO. 7 DEBATE ON NOTICE OF MOTION AS PER RULE 107

7.1 The vetting of scholar transport operators and bus drivers across the North West Province

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much. Honourable Members, during the sitting of the 3rd March 2026, Honourable Dabampe tabled a notice of motion in terms of Rule 107 for the House to debate the vetting of the scholar transport operation and the bus drivers across the North West Province. I will now call Honourable Dabampe to lead the debate. Honourable Dabampe you have 10 minutes Honourable Member.

HON. OLIPHANT: Kgale ke sa mo utlwe waitse.

HON. DABAMPE: Thank you very much Honourable CoC. Ke tseye tshono e go dumedisa boeteledipele ba EFF gammogo le maloko a bone, Honourable Members of the House, magosi a rona a Bokone Bophirima le baagi ba rona ba Bokone Bophirima, ke re dumelang.

We must be very careful not to sanitise this discussion, because the moment we reduce scholar transport to a mere technical issue of contracts and compliance, Honourable Morweng, we would have lost sight of what is actually at stake. This is not merely about transport. It is about whether the state in the North West can be trusted with the lives of children from villages, from farms and from townships. And Honourable CoC, that is the question before this House.

Across this province, in places like Ratlou, in places like Tswaing, in places like Taung and deep rural parts of the province in Ngaka Modiri, in Dr Ruth, in Bojanala and Dr KK, a child wakes up before the sunrise to prepare for school. They do not choose the bus. They do not choose the driver. They do not choose the system. The state chooses for them. And in that moment, the state makes an implicit guarantee that this child will be safe. The difficulty is that this guarantee does not exist in practice.

The findings of the South African Human Rights Commission did not introduce a crisis. They confirmed a long standing one. A system where the driver vetting is inconsistent. A system where vehicles comply on paper but fail on the road. A system where monitoring exists in reports, but not in reality. When these conditions repeat themselves across districts and over the years, we are no longer dealing with isolated failures. We are dealing with a breakdown of governance discipline.

Honourable CoC, one of the most serious issues before us is structural. The Service Level Agreement, as it stands, does not decisively enforce the vetting of drivers. We have constructed a system where the condition of the vehicle is subjected to a tick in the box, but the identity and background of the person entrusted with the lives of children is not held to the same standard. That is a dangerous design flaw, because the vehicle does not decide how it is driven. A person decides.

When this House conducts oversight, what do we find? Those that don't normally attend oversight, let us briefly tell you, Honourable Nathan. In Ngaka Modiri Molema, we find non-compliant vehicles are in operation. In Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati, similar conditions persist. Even cases are opened. We have expired discs, we have unroadworthy buses. We have drivers whose backgrounds are unknown to the state. The issue is no longer whether the department is aware, it is whether the department is willing to act.

Honourable CoC, just two weeks ago in Mahikeng, scholar transport came to a halt. Drivers and operators indicated that they could no longer continue transporting learners because they had not been paid for services already rendered and that they too could not afford fuel or to maintain vehicles due to non-payment. The EFF believes that this cannot be accepted. A government that fails to meet its own contractual obligations, Honourable Mosenogi, destabilises the very same system it claims to regulate.

When operators withdraw, it is the learner in a village who misses school. When the routes collapse Honourable Sambatha, it is the poor child who is left behind. The Department cannot fail to pay then behave as though the crisis belongs only to operators. A province that cannot pay, that cannot monitor, that cannot vet, that cannot enforce is not managing scholar transport, Honourable Tsotso.

Honourable CoC, this brings us to the question of building provincial capacity. Can the province verify every driver transporting learners? Can it maintain a credible, updated database of operators and vehicles? Can it monitor compliance beyond paperwork and reporting? Can it

ensure that payments are processed timeously? These are just basic functions of a capable government which clearly the North West Provincial Government, Honourable Bitsa, is incapable of delivering. If the answer to this question ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Honourable Dabampe. Honourable Dabampe.

HON. DABAMPE: Yes?

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: We don't have Honourable Tsotso, we don't have Honourable Bitsa in this House. We have Honourable Tlhapi and Honourable Lenkopane.

HON. DABAMPE: No, it's not Members of the House. It's people that I know in the streets. Not them.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Okay.

HON. DABAMPE: Yes. If the answer to these questions is inconsistent, then we must accept that the province does not have the capacity it claims it has. And that the lack of capacity has direct consequences for the safety of learners. Honourable CoC, we must also locate this issue properly within the broader constitutional framework.

The very same people who claim to have fought apartheid, bo Honourable Smuts Matshe, say no they fought apartheid, they fought Bantu education but till today they are continuing with a system that made our people not to go to school. For a child in a rural area, scholar transport is not convenience. It is the bridge between the right to basic education and the ability to realise that right in practice.

The very same people who fought Bantu Education are denying our children the right to education through the failing of this scholar transport. If that bridge is unstable, then the right itself becomes unstable. So, when scholar transport fails, access to education is not simply

inconvenienced, it is undermined. Because this system carries largely the children of the working class and the poor, it is allowed to deteriorate over time.

Honourable CoC, we must restore a simple, non-negotiable standard. No child must be placed in a vehicle where the state does not know who the driver is. No child must be transported in a vehicle that would not be accepted for the children of those in positions of power. No system that fails to meet these basic standards can be defended.

The interventions required are clear. Driver-vetting must be mandatory, and centralised and continuously verified. The Service Level Agreement must be amended and enforced without any delay. All outstanding payments must be settled urgently to stabilise the system. All drivers and operators should be vetted if they have any criminal record, whether they are on the sex offenders register and whether they have any physical or mental health conditions.

We need weekly scholar transport registers to check the stats of these buses that have passed through traffic. Traffic must have the capacity to generate reports that are able to check if the driver has got a history of reckless driving, of driving under the influence and if they have got speeding tickets. We don't need bo Michael Schumacher driving our kids.

And a single accountable provincial mechanism must be established to manage scholar transport without fragmentation because currently the Department of Transport shifts the blame to the Department of Education. Department of Education shifts the blame to the Department of Transport. That clearly shows that there's serious fragmentation.

Honourable CoC, government cannot behave as though acknowledging a problem is the same as resolving it. They will come here and say no we know about this, but they have not done anything about the very same problem that they will be acknowledging because delaying resolving this problem exposes children to risk every day.

Re tshwanetse go tsaya maikarabelo ka botlalo. Because when that child steps into that vehicle in the morning, they are not making a choice. The state has already made that choice for them. And if the choice places them at risk, then the responsibility ... [INTERJECTION] ...

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: As you wrap up Honourable Member.

HON. DABAMPE: It cannot be redirected and it cannot be denied ...
[INTERJECTION] ...

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: As you wrap up.

HON. DABAMPE: Honourable CoC, I already concluded. Thank you very much.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you Honourable Dabampe. I'll call Honourable Morweng.

HON. MORWENG: Thank you very much CoC. Let me take this opportune moment to greet you. Greet the Deputy Speaker Honourable Collen Maine, greet the Premier of the province in absentia and then greet Members of the Provincial Legislature, bagaetsho dumelang.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Dumela rra.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Honourable Speaker, next week on the 10th of this month, it will be exactly 32 years since the former President Nelson Mandela left us with immortal words uttered at his inaugural speech as South Africa's first democratically elected President. This following the all-inclusive election which we were celebrating this milestone just a week ago as a Freedom Day on the 27th of April.

At the Union Buildings in Pretoria, on the 10th of May, President Mandela had been elected through a democratic process, had this to say and I quote: "Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long must be a born society of which all humanity will be proud of. Our daily deeds as ordinary South Africans must produce an actual South African reality that will reinforce humanity's belief in justice, strength and its confidence in the nobility of the human soul and sustain all our hopes for glorious for all."

Three decades later, it is tempting to take for granted all sacrifices that have given to our democratic state we have today. Our rights are protected under constitutional democracy which promote inclusivity, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, national unity, social cohesion. We have made a significant progress albeit challenges here and there in transforming and developing our nation.

The value of our human dignity, non-racialism, non-sexism, and the rule of law remain paramount in our nation. We have considerate leadership that despite continuous socio-economic challenges, they have been sympathetic in the face of the plight of our citizens.

Honourable Members, it is in the light of this profound message by former President, that as the department we have been mandated amongst others to provide transportation for learners in public schools across the province. This is guided by the National Learner Transport Policy which was developed in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education in 2014 to address the challenges of accessibility and the safety of our learners.

I hope you are able to comprehend Honourable Dabampe. Working with the Department of Basic Education, we have not been pointing fingers to one another as you were purporting here in your debates. The government had at the time established that as a result of sparse development by the pre-1994 government, ability for learners to access education was hampered by the long distance that had been travelled to get to school, threats to their safety and security, and the cost of transport.

Currently the department has of January 2024, contracted 381 operators to transport 65 121 learners to 358 schools in all our districts in the province. Though well intended, Honourable CoC, the service has not been without challenges. Some of the operators have been abandoning the routes without informing the department. And more often we will only get to know when there are protests by communities.

From our side there have been delays in payments as a result of combination of factors. One is that the budget is inadequate and the other is that some operators are not sending invoices monthly as per the service level agreement. Other than just overloading learners, other challenges include frequent use of unroadworthy vehicles with mechanical faults.

As a result of these contraventions of the service level agreement, we have terminated close to 100 operators. I hope you are also comprehending Honourable Dabampe as you were questioning what is it that the department has done. We have terminated close to 100 operators.

I hope you are capturing quite correctly because at times you lose focus and become excited unnecessarily.

In March and April, May 2025, the South Africa Human Rights Commission began investigating challenges facing the provision of scholar transport, Honourable CoC, in the province. Amongst the findings of the HRC are the following: (1) Allegations of persistent and systematic failures in delivery of scholar transport programmes in the North West.

(2) The failures including depravation of scholar transport to qualifying learners resulting in learners having to walk long distances to schools, arriving late to classes or dropping altogether.

(3) Other challenges include overloaded transport, the use of unroadworthy vehicles, late deliveries and collection by service providers, multiple trips, the lack of supervision of learners during scholar transport.

(4) The exclusion of certain categories of needy learners from the scholar transport system, the lack of provision of scholar transport for extra classes and other extracurricular activities. (5) Non-vetting of transport drivers, the lack of reasonable accommodation of learners with disability and other forms of non-compliance by service providers. The HRC report went on to indicate that as a result of these challenges, there is what you call disproportionate burden that scholar transport challenges pose on the poor.

The report went further to indicate the following, and I quote: “While the cause of these challenges are many, some of the root causes for the identified challenges include budget insufficiency, budget mismanagement through payments for services not rendered and the payment for high kilometres rates compared to the other provinces, inadequate monitoring and tracking, inadequate contract management enforcement, corruption with some service providers presenting different vehicles for purpose of roadworthiness testing than those actually in use of transportation on daily basis, past payments delays, poor condition in planning and implementation of the scholar transport, lack of thought and consideration of the impact of decision on learners in the implementation of the programme.

These factors as per the report impacts negatively on the leaners as they end up walking long distances to school in unsafe conditions. Honourable Members, this then called for concerted effort to ensure that we know who are transporting our children. The vetting of operators and drivers is not merely an administrative requirement, it is a legal, safety and governance imperative.

Recurring compliance failures, service level agreements breaches and HRC findings demonstrate weak vetting processes. This directly compromises learner safety, financial integrity and service projection. Vetting is therefore an essential tool to protect learners ensuring value for money and strengthening governance. It must be continuous, enforceable control mechanism.

Remedial action henceforth will include the following in the service level agreement: (1) All operators must possess valid contracts with the department. (2) Drivers must be properly licensed, fit for transport learners. (3) Compliance with statutory requirements such as permits, roadworthiness and insurance. (4) No foreign national must be allowed to drive a scholar transport vehicle. (5) Operators to provide proof that their drivers are not on the national register for sex offenders. (6) Operators must provide the department with a code of conduct for drivers.

The above will be achieved through a comprehensive vetting framework and this should be continuous and not only a once-off process. Honourable Members, an unknown author once said and I quote: “Your willingness to show up changes it makes us a little breather each time.” However, it is an internal diplomat and historian Niccolo Machiavelli who contextualised the above when he said and I quote: “Where the willingness is greater, the difficulties cannot be great.”

The question for us is are we willing? Yes of course, as the department we are willing but as the Setswana idiom continues to say: Kgetsi ya tsie e kgonwa ka go tshwaraganelwa. African proverb continue to go further and say and I quote: “If you want to go faster go alone, but if you want to go far, go together.”

We are willing to work with other progressive stakeholders including the community that must continue to alert us when issues of this nature continue to occur in our communities. With that being said Honourable CoC, I want to thank you very much. Thank you very much.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Morweng. Now I'll call Honourable Sonakile, nine minutes.

HON. SONAKILE: Honourable CoC, good morning. At first glance, this motion by the EFF may seem necessary. However, if you are regular to the Portfolio Committee on Community Safety and Transport Management, you will know that this matter has been placed on the PC agenda following our oversight in Ganyesa where we found drivers who were not compliant and who ran away and following the HRC report.

Honourable CoC, the real failure is not that we must debate vetting. The real failure is that in 2026 vetting is still not absolute, continuous and beyond question. We must highlight that when we deal with this issue, we are not dealing with ordinary service providers, we are dealing with men and women entrusted daily with the lives, dignity and safety of children. This must not be treated as just logistics. It is child protection on wheels.

Honourable CoC, let us ground this debate in reality. South Africa records over 50 000 sexual offenses annually, many involving children. According to UNICEF and child protection organisation, 1 in 3 children experience abuse before the age of 18. The South African Police Services continues to show that sexual offenses against minors are among the most underreported crimes.

Now place that reality inside scholar transport. It's a confined space; there's no constant supervision and a power imbalance. That is a high-risk environment if not tightly regulated. What the SLA of the department gets right, Honourable CoC, the department will argue correctly so that vetting exists. And indeed, the SLA provides for valid driver's license and PDP, certified vehicle roadworthiness, submission of driver documentation, an affidavit confirming drivers are not on the national register for sex offenders, a code of conduct that prohibits inappropriate contact, sexual comments, substance abuse and exchange of personal details.

These provisions are clearly outlined in the SLA, but CoC the presence of clauses does not equal the presence of safety. And the HRC report on systemic challenges in our scholar transport system is correct in its findings. Where the system fails, when we interrogated the SLAs properly, five critical weaknesses emerged.

(1) Vetting is once off, not continuous. A driver is vetted at the start and then left unchecked. This needs to be looked into. There is no requirement for periodic criminal checks, ongoing monitoring and automatic flagging system. A person can become a risk after appointment and remain responsible for children.

(2) Affidavits are treated as verification. The SLA relies more on self-declaration that a driver is not on the national register of sex offenders but let us be honest that is not enough vetting. That is just simply putting place on trust. There is no obligation for independent verification and cross checking with the Department of Justice and SAPS.

(3) There is no behavioural or psychological screening. There is no assessment of suitability to work with children, no psychological screening and no structured vetting of temperament and yet these drivers operate daily in close proximity with learners. (4) No mandatory child protection training. The SLA assumes compliance but does not enforce preparation. There's no requirement for drivers to be trained of child safeguarding, appropriate boundaries and recognising and reporting abuse.

(5) It is more reactive not preventative system. The penalties in the SLA focus on late arrivals, vehicle defects and more administrative failures but when it comes to child safety violations, the system acts after the fact. And there is also no empowerment of parents or learners in that there must be a formal reporting hotline or anonymous complaint mechanism. What we must change urgently CoC if we are serious about protecting learners, then the SLA must evolve and the recommendations of the HRC as well as the Portfolio Committee must be implemented.

We have called for continuous vetting. We have called for verification of clearance; we have called for a central driver database. We have called for mandatory child safety training, real time monitoring which at least the department has promised that it will bring into effect in this financial year.

We have called for zero tolerance enforcement, and this must go beyond just departmental officials but also the traffic officials who in most instances are the ones who are allowing wrongful acts to be undertaken. We must also ensure that there is community oversight. This can be achieved by anonymous reporting channels as well as school level monitoring structures.

Honourable CoC, in closing, allow me to conclude now not only as a Member of this House but also as the chairperson of the Portfolio Committee overseeing this department. When a parent places a child onto scholar transport, they are not entering into an agreement, they are placing their trust in the state. And that trust cannot be managed only through paper work, affidavits or compliance checklists.

It must be protected through systems that are continuous, verified and uncompromising because the moment we lower the standard even once, we are not failing a process, we are failing a child. And that is a failure no government should ever be allowed to justify. CoC, compliance is not enough. Certainty is required. I thank you.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Sonakile. Now Honourable Groenewald is not there. Yes. Let me call Honourable Oliphant. Honourable Oliphant.

HON. OLIPHANT: Nna ke hlompha bagolo. Jaanong ga ke tlo go arabisana le bagolo. Good morning, Chair of Chairs, Honourable Members, the Premier in absentia, Deputy Speaker, Members of the Legislature. Fundamentally the question that Honourable Dabampe asks is can the government be trusted with the lives of children? And when I look at him, I see a product of democratic government, and I can only say that the government has been trusted with your life and therefore the results are consequent.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, the African National Congress' longest serving President, the incorruptible and ethical leader, Comrade Oliver Reginald Tambo reminds us that a country that does not value its youth does not deserve its future. I have already made an example of a youth that we have been entrusted with.

Today, the profound statement must guide us as we debate the vetting of scholar transport operators across the North West Province. This debate is not about contracts, Honourable Sonakile, it's not about kilometres and invoices. It is about whether the democratic state is able to protect a child in a village, on a farm, in a township, and in every rural community where distance still stands between poverty and opportunity.

The Freedom Charter declares that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened. For many children of the North West, those doors are not reached by walking across paved streets. They are reached through long gravel roads, early mornings, crossings, and households that cannot afford daily transport costs.

Scholar transport was therefore created because these previously disadvantaged individuals were deliberately excluded or placed far from services, quality schools and economic

opportunity. You would remember that there used to be big white buses and we would just look at them and they would pass going to Model C schools. And we were all not able to get onto them because our schools we had to walk to. Things have changed and the ANC government has provided.

This is a practical instrument of redress. Today, this initiative, Honourable Dabampe, supports 65 121 learners through 381 contracted operators, transporting learners to 358 primary and secondary schools in the province. And none of those buses or transport says whites only. These are not numbers; they are children of workers, farm dwellers. They operate in villages, townships and poor households who depend on government to carry them safely to education.

We must acknowledge the work already done by the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management within the programme: Transport Operations. There has been clear progress in prioritising subsidised transport services, particularly scholar transport, as a key area of focus. This does show the deliberate effort to direct resources toward programmes that directly impact the daily lives of our people, especially learners who rely on government support to access education. It's impact service delivery Honourable Steyl.

The Department has also strengthened its operational performance, ensuring that core transport programmes are implemented consistently and that resources are aligned with service delivery priorities. This marks an important step forward toward building a more responsive and effective transport system in the province.

Honourable Chair of Chairs, the ANC does not come to this House only to celebrate expenditure. We come to ask a deeper question: Has that expenditure actually translated into dignity, safety, reliability and value for money for our people? The reality on the ground tells us that there are challenges, Honourable Sonakile as the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee. Not all planned routes were successfully serviced, we know that. Not all schools that were meant to benefit from the programme were reached, we know that.

In some cases, schools were incorrectly included, others did not meet policy requirements, and some identified needs were not addressed. There were also administrative shortcomings, including duplication of information and failures by operators, to submit required documents. These are developmental challenges and are being addressed. We know that.

These are not minor technical issues. They speak directly to weaknesses in planning, coordination, and accountability. More importantly, they highlight why the vetting of scholar

transport operators must be strengthened, made continuous and enforced without compromise. We know that and that is happening.

Our people in the North West expect government to check before it contracts, monitor after it contracts, and act when contracts fail. As the ANC, transformation must open opportunities for local and emerging operators, including women, youth and people with disabilities. And those are the competing issues that we've got to deal with, and we do deal with them. We also expect better from our operators and the honesty that comes with the responsibility.

Whilst we are transforming the sector, we must never be abused and allow unsafe vehicles, false claims, missed routes or weak administration. The January 8 Statement of the ANC calls for a capable, ethical, developmental state. That means no operator must carry our children without proof of company registration, tax compliance, insurance, operating licenses, route capacity, vehicle fitness and a clean performance record. These are things that must be done and they must be done correctly.

Going forward, the Transport Operations budget base must be used with sharper controls. Honourable Morweng has already spoken to this. The Department must establish a centralised operator vetting database, linked to CSD, licensing records, vehicle testing stations, insurance documents and past performance records. Every SLA must become a living instrument, not a document signed and forgotten.

Quarterly compliance audits, unannounced route inspections, some of them already have started happening, school-based verification, strict penalties for late trips, overloading, unsafe vehicles and non-submission of required documents must become standard practice. Operators who repeatedly endanger learners or submit false information must be removed and blacklisted.

Scholar transport is not charity. It is a democratic gain. An operator who cannot comply with the law must not be allowed to carry the future of our province, its youth. Vetting protects the learners, protects the public purse, and protects the credibility of government. The Freedom Charter says the doors of learning and culture must be opened. Those doors cannot be open if the vehicle that must carry a learner to school is unreliable, or if the operator receiving public funds cannot account for the service.

Let the children of Mahikeng, Taung, Ganyesa, Moretele, Rustenburg, Madibeng, Zeerust, Matlosana and every other rural village know that the ANC sees them. Let every compliant

operator know that there is room in this economy. Let every non-compliant operator also know that these are the lives of our children and they are non-negotiable.

Honourable Dabampe, therefore the question is answered. The ANC government can be trusted with the lives of our children just like it has been entrusted with your life. I thank you.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Oliphant. Now call Honourable Kodisang cause Honourable Tsholo is not present. Honourable Kodisang, you have four minutes Madam.

HON. KODISANG: Thank you Honourable CoC. In February, a scholar transport bus carrying over 71 learners overturned on the road between Sleepsteen and Gerdaau Farms, near Coligny. The cause was shocking. The steering wheel broke off while the vehicle was in motion. Honourable CoC, that is not an accident of chance, that is a failure of basic safety oversight.

How does a vehicle carrying 71 learners reach the road in that condition? Who inspected it? Who approved it? Who signed off on its roadworthiness? And what does it say about our vetting system when such a vehicle is entrusted with children? Even more concerning, the Department only reacted after the incident, with the MEC indicating the service provider's contract would be terminated. But termination after the fact is not prevention. It is damage control after learners have already been put at risk. How many more incidents should we experience?

Honourable CoC, this is not an isolated case, to a point where the South African Human Rights Commission found the North West scholar transport to violate human rights with failures including unroadworthy vehicles, weak compliance enforcement, and poor monitoring systems. Directives from the Commission to COSATMA and the Department of Education included developing a cost and time bound remedial plan to address fraudulent practices, supervision of learners during transport and monitoring of unsubsidized scholar transport.

So we must ask: Are we learning anything from these tragedies? Or are we waiting for the next one? Action SA believes this cannot continue. We need an immediate province-wide audit of all scholar transport operators. We need compulsory and ongoing roadworthiness inspections, not once-off checks. We need independent vetting of all drivers and operators, including

criminal and compliance screening. And we need full transparency, so parents know whether the vehicles carrying their children are safe.

Scholar transport is not a contract opportunity. It is a constitutional responsibility. Bana ba rona ba tshwanetse go goroga kwa sekolong ba bolokesegile. Anything less is unacceptable. I thank you CoC.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Kodisang. Now I'll call upon Honourable Rosho. Honourable Rosho you have 10 minutes.

HON. ROSHO: Ke a leboga Honourable CoC. And let me acknowledge all Members who are today attending the sitting. Honourable CoC, American political philosopher and revolutionary, Thomas Paine once opined that, I open quote: "Those who want to reap the benefits of freedom must bear the fatigue of supporting it." These words speak directly to the matter before us today.

Freedom is not only celebrated in songs and speeches. Freedom is supported by the daily work of making sure that a child in a rural village can reach school safely, on time, and with dignity. Today we debate the vetting of scholar transport bus drivers, the men and women who sit behind the wheel and carry the hopes of our people every morning and every afternoon.

The Freedom Charter says the doors of learning shall be opened. But in the North West, especially in rural and previously disadvantaged communities, the door of learning is often many kilometres away from home. Apartheid spatial planning left poor families far from services, schools and opportunities. Poverty still means that many households cannot pay for private transport.

Bad roads, long distances and unsafe walking routes still place children at risk. Scholar transport therefore exists because democracy must remove the burden of distance from the shoulders of poor learners. Behind each learner is a family that trusts the state not only to provide a vehicle, but to ensure that the person driving that vehicle is fit, is licensed, disciplined and safe around children.

We acknowledge the department's achievements in overall performance, alongside strengthening financial discipline and responsible utilisation of public resources. And I think

we must be able to acknowledge the great strides the department is trying to advocate and advance. The Transport Regulations Programme, which plays a critical role in licensing, vehicle fitness, driver compliance and law enforcement, has shown notable progress in both performance and expenditure management. This demonstrates the growing capacity to regulate the transport environment effectively.

Its enforcement work has also improved significantly, with increased operations targeting speeding, vehicle compliance, and road safety enforcement. Honourable Kodisang, I think we've noted incident as well as African National Congress, but we say that as the ANC-led government led by our deployee in the form of the MEC, chairman of the ANC youth league. He's hard at work making sure that there is compliance and there's also consequence management. Hence, he has actually introduced a system of termination of non-compliant contractors.

These efforts have strengthened visibility on the roads and contributed to safer driving behaviour across the province. In addition, the department expanded its road safety education programmes, reaching more schools and directly engaging learners. This is important in building a culture of safety from a young age and ensuring that the road safety becomes a shared responsibility within our communities.

These achievements by the department they show that there is a deliberate intent to strengthen systems but also ensure that there's law enforcement capacity and there is continuous road safety programmes and that can be used to strengthen the vetting of scholar transport drivers.

Madam CoC, a safe transport system is not built by statistics only. If we are concerned about the condition of buses, we must be equally concerned about the person driving them. A roadworthy bus in the hands of an unvetted, reckless, tired, unlicensed or unsuitable driver still places children in danger.

Driver vetting is not a once-off administrative exercise. It is a child protection measure. It must confirm a valid driver's licence, a valid Professional Driving Permit, medical fitness, criminal screening where legally applicable, driver history, accident record, route knowledge, training in learner safety, and compliance with a code of conduct. The state cannot allow anyone to transport learners without knowing who they are, whether they are authorised, and whether they understand the responsibility of transporting children.

The mood is clear; people are tired of weak systems that react after tragedies and we appreciate the good work that is being done by the MEC Morweng, the MEC for COSATMA. Parents want prevention, we agree Honourable Kodisang. Teachers want punctual learners. Communities want drivers who respect children and obey the law and protect life. The ANC's policy position is that the child must be placed at the centre of development, and no driver should be placed on a route without a current compliance profile. And we welcome the work that is being done by the Honourable MEC.

Training must also be compulsory. Every scholar transport driver must undergo refresher training on child safety, emergency response, respectful conduct, road discipline, fatigue management and rural route risks. Operators must be held responsible for the drivers they appoint, and any driver who endangers learners, falsifies documents, drives under the influence of alcohol, or repeatedly violates traffic law must be removed immediately. And that is the posture that the MEC has resembled and demonstrated.

In conclusion, Madam CoC, the person behind the wheel carries more than passengers; they carry the future of the North West. A child may forget the road, but the state must never forget its duty to make that road safe and that's what the ANC advocates for. Let the road to school be a road to freedom, not a road of risk. Let every parent know that when government says scholar transport, it means safe transport. Let every driver know that our children are not cargo; they are the promise of democracy.

As African National Congress, we welcome the motion of notice to be debated. We appreciate that but we are alive to the matters that you have raised Honourable Dabampe and there are corrective measures. And we must commend 32 years in our democratic state. There are changes, major changes that has benefited most of our children and I hear that Honourable Oliphant has said even yourself.

We are appreciative to have a young person like yourself, a Member of the Legislature, a public representative who's alive to the challenges that are confronting us. And we are working together to ensure that there are corrective measures. I thank you Madam CoC.

HON. OLIPHANT: A product of democracy, a child of the ANC.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you Honourable Rosho. Honourable Dabampe ...
[INTERJECTION] ...

HON. OLIPHANT: They have always been in safe hands.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: You have five minutes Honourable Member.

HON. DABAMPE: Thank you very much CoC. You know Honourable Whip o batlile o nkgatla man, kore o batlile. The only thing e o sa nkgatlang ka yone ke gore o praise the very same person who is presiding over the department that is failing our children, that is failing our communities. Your deployee's government ke yone e e dirang gore bana ba rona ba ska nna le transport. Your deployee's government ke yone e e dirang gore bana ba rona ba tsene lata, bana ba rona ba nne le di-accident.

You are saying the road spatial many kilometres, we fully agree that the distance is very huge but the creation of this distance, 32 years later you cannot blame the apartheid government. We acknowledge that is why we are not in coalition with the collaborators and the DA and FF Plus, that is why we are not in coalition with them but ANC in coalition with DA and FF Plus they are still not building schools for our children.

Honourable Kodisang, you are very clear on your standing on issues, and we fully agree with you that the accidents they are not an isolated situation. They are part of the crisis that are in the ANC, DA and FF Plus-led government. Honourable ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. OLIPHANT: The EFF is also in the ANC government.

HON. DABAMPE: Nathan, I think Honourable Sambatha must take you through Umgabolo because this motion is not about expenditure. If you want a motion of expenditure, bring it yourself. Don't talk about expenditure when we are dealing with serious issues. You have been paying unroadworthy vehicles, you have been paying wrong operators, and I think

you should be taken through Umgabolo and I know that Honourable Sambatha is having proper things, take you through Umgabolo.

You are saying you see children of North West, you are correct. You see them without transport, you see them without schools, you see them without roads, you see them without any work. You and Honourable Sonakile cause Honourable Sonakile comes and say no this motion, what, what. If you wanted this motion, akere in the House you raise your hand and put the motion so there's no problem of you saying yeah no lo nshayile 10-0, I wanted to bring this progressive motion.

Honourable MEC, the only progressive forces here it's us. That is why we brought this motion. We are happy that you want to work with us, ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. OLIPHANT: Hee, wa e senya jaanong. Wa senya.

HON. DABAMPE: We are very happy no you want to work with us mare o tshaba go bua. Just say that no EFF I want to work with you in resolving this crisis. I want to work with you in ensuring that there is termination, in ensuring that there is capacity because of we've got plethora of capacity, and we can see that there is shortage ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. OLIPHANT: O bua ka Botswe. Botswe ha a na capacity.

HON. DABAMPE: But we can easily assist. It is Nelson Mandela who said that: "If the ANC does to you what apartheid did, you must do to the ANC what you did to the apartheid government." That is our people on the 4th of November and any date of elections, they'll vote for the Economic Freedom Fighters.

HON. OLIPHANT: Ha ba ka bona Botswe, ha ba tle go vote niks.

HON. DABAMPE: Termination does not change the fact that till to date you have hundreds of operators who are not in compliant. You still have buses that are unroadworthy cause the terminations that you have done, it's just a drop in the ocean. We appreciate it but it's a drop in the ocean.

MEC a re yoh, yoh, I'm shocked that ke na le go tsoga hela ke utlwa gotwe there's no bus. It means that the MEC is not on the ground. The MEC is shocked, kore this government is shocked. Every time there's a problem of scholar transport, yoh, yoh, we are shocked. It means the government is not on the ground. The government does not know what is happening on the ground but as the EFF, as progressive forces, we already gave you solutions. And we are happy that you reiterated on our solutions. You didn't have them.

I saw you writing with a pen there that no I'm taking this solution of the EFF because the EFF is the only progressive organisation. It is the only organisation that fights for the rights of the children. It's a pity she's not here because in actual fact we would not want scholar transport, we want schools to be built in each and every village, in each and every township, in each and every farm, we want a school there ... *[INTERJECTION]* ...

HON. OLIPHANT: You have never run government. Ngwanaka, you have never run government.

HON. DABAMPE: So the sooner Honourable Motsumi deals with the issue of building of schools, the better. So we are very happy Honourable CoC that in essence the Members agree that the EFF with its progressive motion they'll support it and they'll ensure that Honourable Morweng does not only arrest, arrest, arrest but also provide scholar transport, provide safe scholar transport and that Honourable Mokua builds proper roads as the Department of Public Works. Thank you very much CoC.

HON. OLIPHANT: Debate e changile ngwanaka. Re mo ditseleng yaanong.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Dabampe.

HON. OLIPHANT: Debate e changile ngwanaka.

HON. CHAIR OF CHAIRS: Thank you very much Honourable Members. This concludes the business of today. The sitting is adjourned until di-19 May. Thank you very much.

HOUSE ADJOURNED AT 12:10!