



**2-3**  
**COVID-19:**  
**Together, we**  
**will contain the**  
**Coronavirus**



**10**  
**Budget**  
**2020**



**16**  
**State to release**  
**700 000 hectares**  
**for Agricultural**  
**production**

Official newspaper of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

Vol. 01  
 Issue 09 2020

# in session



**If we work together, we will contain the Coronavirus: President Cyril Ramaphosa**

## Coronavirus: President Ramaphosa announces a 21-day lockdown

immunity because of HIV and TB, and high levels of poverty and malnutrition.

“I’m concerned that a rapid rise in infections will stretch our health services beyond what we can manage, and many people will not be able to access the care that they need. We must therefore do everything within our means to reduce the overall number of infections and to delay the spread of infections over a longer period,” he said.

He called on all citizens to “urgently and dramatically escalate their response to ensure that we flatten the curve” and prevent the spread of coronavirus. **2** ➔



*South Africa will enforce a three-week lockdown over coronavirus, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced. The South African National Defence Force will be deployed to support the South African Police Service in ensuring that the lockdown is implemented*

South Africa could face a “human catastrophe of enormous proportions if immediate, swift and extraordinary action” is not taken to protect all South Africans, said President Cyril Ramaphosa, as he announced the 21-day lockdown to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Addressing the nation, President Ramaphosa said the 21-day lockdown will begin at midnight on Thursday 26 March and conclude on 16 April, and that it was necessary to prevent “hundreds of thousands” of Covid-19 cases.

However, he warned that the number of Covid-19 cases will continue to rise. “It is clear

from the development of the disease in other countries, and from our own modelling, that immediate, swift and extraordinary action is required if we are to prevent a human catastrophe of enormous proportions in our country,” he said.

“Our fundamental task at this moment is to contain the

spread of the disease. Without decisive action, the number of people infected will rapidly increase from a few hundred to tens of thousands, and within a few weeks to hundreds of thousands.

“This is extremely dangerous for a population like ours, which has a large number of people with suppressed



➔ 1 “This is a decisive measure to save lives of South Africans from infection and save the lives of hundreds of thousands of our people. While this measure will have a considerable impact on people’s livelihoods, and on the life of our society and on our economy, the human cost of delaying this action would be far, far greater.

“The nationwide lockdown is necessary to fundamentally disrupt the chain of transmission across society. I have accordingly directed the South African National Defence Force to be deployed

to support the South African Police Service in ensuring that the measures we are announcing are implemented. All South Africans will have to stay at home.”

The lockdown follows just a week after President Ramaphosa declared a “national state of disaster, a measure proportional to the severity of the threat to our people, to our society, and to our economy”.

He had described the situation as “a grave emergency, far worse than experienced over the last century”. As a result,

he called on all South Africans to work with the government to expedite the end of this crisis.

The following essential services will be maintained during the lockdown:

- Electricity - stable power supply with no load shedding
- Water supply, sewerage and sanitation
- Information and Communication Technology – data centres, fibre optic infrastructure, towers and antennae.

In addition, President

Ramaphosa informed South Africans that “emergency measures” announced earlier will remain in place.

They include:

- travel bans on visitors from high-risk countries;
- mandatory testing, self-isolation or quarantine for South African nationals returning from these countries; and
- strengthening surveillance, screening and testing at ports of entry into the Republic.

Announcing that all shops will be closed during the

21-day lockdown period, President Ramaphosa said only “companies that are essential to the production and transportation of food, basic goods and medical supplies will remain open”. Pharmacies, laboratories, banks, essential financial and payment services, including the JSE, supermarkets, petrol stations, and healthcare providers will remain open during this period, while the “public health management programme will significantly increase screening, testing, contact tracing and medical management”, President Ramaphosa said. 🇿🇦

# MPs debate Parliament’s role during coronavirus pandemic

*The National Assembly (NA) recently held a debate on the coronavirus and South Africa’s readiness to deal with the pandemic. The debate was sponsored by the Democratic Alliance’s Ms Siyouyile Gwarube, writes Mava Lukani.*

Opening the debate, Ms Gwarube noted the panic that has set in across the world, as the coronavirus continues to wreak havoc, even in countries with strong health systems. She mentioned that 81 countries have confirmed cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

“Countries have gone into crisis mode, imposed travel bans and enforced quarantine measures, as they try to valiantly contain this virus. The disease indiscriminately attacks countries across the globe.

Therefore, we must understand the inherent weaknesses of the South African health system.”

Furthermore, Ms Gwarube said: “We should never unjustifiably spread fear. However, we should prepare for the worst. We know the state of our

healthcare outside an epidemic outbreak.”

She called on Parliament to assert itself as the main legislative arm of the state, understand the role bestowed to it by the Constitution, and take this role seriously. The epidemic has been declared a global public health emergency by the World Health Organisation, and therefore plans to deal with this matter should be tabled in the National Assembly for scrutiny, discussion and adoption.

“It doesn’t bode down well for the function of this House, which is enshrined in the Constitution, that the issues of national significance are discussed in the press before the oversight arm of the state has had an opportunity to engage these plans,”



said Ms Gwarube. She said the fact that the President notified Parliament of the government’s intention after the story was published undermines accountability and oversight.

It should be a priority of the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, Ms Gwarube urged, to

brief the National Assembly on the measures his department is taking to screen, test and possibly isolate and treat cases.

Also speaking during the debate, the Chairperson of the NA’s Portfolio Committee on Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo, told the House that in fulfilling its responsibility to ensure the health of all South Africans, the government established the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), a division of the National Health Laboratory Service, through an Act of

experienced the outbreak of listeriosis, arising from food contamination from two food processed meat companies. The NICD provided a superior technical advantage and laboratory infrastructure to overcome the spread of the disease, Dr Dhlomo told MPs, and provide conclusive evidence of the source of the outbreak. Similarly, during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, South Africa was the first country to offer assistance.

In anticipation of the arrival of the coronavirus, the

Parliament, the National Health Laboratory Service, Act No. 37, 2000. The NICD serves as the national resource of knowledge and expertise on communicable diseases, Dr Dhlomo explained, not only to South Africa, but also for other countries of southern Africa.

In 2017-18, South Africa

Department of Health has embarked on important preparedness measures to deal with the outbreak. “The South African government through the Department of Health is doing all that is possible to strengthen its health system to safeguard the public from the outbreak and other forms of infection,” added Dr Dhlomo. 🇿🇦

# Patients with TB and HIV also at risk from COVID-19, say MPs



Passengers disembarking at OR Tambo International

*March is tuberculosis (TB) awareness month in South Africa, a disease that causes hundreds of thousands of deaths every year around the world, including South Africa. To mark the 2020 TB awareness month, Parliament held a Joint Sitting to debate tuberculosis with the theme “United in the fight to end TB – A challenge to all”. Members of Parliament (MPs) from both Houses of Parliament, the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) expressed their views on how to fight this disease, writes Mava Lukani.*

Opening the debate, the Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla, said tuberculosis and coronavirus share some similarities, although they also differ in some respects. TB is caused by a bacterium, Mycobacterium Tuberculosis, while COVID19 is caused by a virus (the coronavirus). Dr Phaahla told MPs that TB is an ancient disease, while COVID19 was only discovered on 7 January 2020. “Whilst we know a lot about TB, we know little about COVID19. We have diagnostic tools and drugs to diagnose TB and cure it, including drug-resistant TB, we don’t yet have a cure for COVID,” he said.

Furthermore, Dr Phaahla said, there is a vaccine (BCG) that prevents TB that is nearly 100 years old, but there is no vaccine as yet for COVID19. TB and COVID19 are “both spread by droplets (coughing and sneezing), both affect the respiratory system and both can be prevented by public health measures, such as holding the crook of your

arm in front of your face when coughing and sneezing, using a tissue and washing your hands frequently with soap and water, or using hand sanitiser to halt the spread of the disease.

Dr Phaahla told the MPs that South Africa is one of 22 high-burden TB countries in the world, in which 700 in every 100 000 are afflicted with the disease. MPs were reminded that TB and HIV often go hand-in-hand and 60% of the people living with HIV also have TB.

According to Statistics South Africa, in 2016 TB accounted for 29 513 deaths out of a total of 456 612 deaths countrywide. But, added Dr Phaahla, the good news is that TB is curable, as South Africa has a world-class diagnostic tool, called the GeneXpert, and drugs that are free at all public health facilities.

He went on to say that South Africa is the world leader in several areas when it comes to TB, including research.

Despite these achievements, Dr Phaahla said that TB is largely a disease of poverty. This means that the government and Parliament must do everything they can do to reduce poverty levels in the country. The Department of Health alone cannot defeat TB.

Ms Haseenabanu Ismail of the Democratic Alliance likened TB to a serial killer that wanders through cities, towns, squatter camps and homes. He said TB is fond of the poor and the vulnerable, invading shacks where many are gathered around their meagre meals.

Ms S’lindile Luthuli of the Economic Freedom Fighters emphasised that it is mostly black people who are the victims of TB, particularly those who work in crowded spaces, such as mines. KwaZulu-Natal has the highest number of people living with the disease and people living in townships without proper sanitation are most at risk of contracting the disease.

Speaking on behalf of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Mr Mkhuleko Hlengwa said early diagnosis and treatment must be accurate, fast and effective. “We hear of many people acquiring drug-resistant TB because of inadequate treatment,” said Mr Hlengwa. Patients fail to adhere to proper treatment regimes, the wrong drugs are prescribed and substandard drugs are being used for treatment are some of the reasons for the poor treatment rate, he said.

Mr Hlengwa called for better-quality patient support programmes at all the health centres. Mr Hlengwa said the world is becoming more and more dangerous in terms of new strains of viruses developing, combined with increased international travelling. He said the eradication of TB requires a multi-sectoral approach and greater medical research and innovation. “Prevention through poverty alleviation is a good place to start in South Africa,” he stressed. 🌱



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Editor**  
Brent Simons

**Production editor**  
Mava Lukani

**Design and layout**  
Vishaal Lalla

**Copy editors**  
Jane Henshall, Vusumzi Nobadula

**Writers**  
Mava Lukani, Sakhile Mokoena, Abel Mputing, Felicia Lombard, Malatswa Molepo, Brent Simons, Faith Ndenze

**Photography**  
Mlandeli Puzi, Zwelethemba Kostile

**Distribution & subscriptions**  
Jacqueline Zils

**Publisher**  
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

**Printer**  
Vision Enterprises cc

**Section Manager: Publishing and Production**  
Shirley Montsho

**Copyright**  
INSESSION is published by the Information and Content Development Unit of the Parliamentary Communication Services of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. All material published is copyrighted and cannot be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher.

**EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES**  
**Telephone** 021 403 8738  
**Fax** 021 403 8096  
**E-mail**  
insession@parliament.gov.za  
**Subscriptions**  
jzils@parliament.gov.za  
**Post**  
PO Box 15, Cape Town, 8000

**OUR IDEALS**  
**Vision**  
An activist and responsive people’s Parliament that improves the quality of life of South Africans and ensures enduring equality in our society.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Strengthening oversight and accountability;
- enhancing public involvement;
- deepening engagement in international fora;
- strengthening cooperative government;
- strengthening legislative capacity.

**BOOK A TOUR**  
To tour Parliament  
**Telephone** 021 403 2266  
**Fax** 021 403 3817  
**E-mail** tours@parliament.gov.za



# We must work together to build a better South Africa

*President Cyril Ramaphosa expressed his optimism about South Africa's future when he responded to points raised by Members of Parliament as they debated the State of the Nation Address (SONA), writes Mava Lukani.*

During his reply, President Ramaphosa told Members of Parliament that South Africans have everything we need to take the country forward. "We have the means to build a better South Africa. We have the resources. We have the capabilities. We have the people. Yet we will not succeed unless we work together." On gender-based violence (GBV), President Ramaphosa said that since he announced an emergency response action plan last year, government and civil society made some progress, particularly regarding access to justice for victims and survivors. President Ramaphosa also read a message he received from a concerned South African citizen concerning an incident that occurred in the House during the SONA debate, in which one MP accused another of GBV:

"Dear President. I text you with a very heavy heart. I am most

saddened as a woman. The use of GBV as grist for the gossip mill in your Parliament is one that has weighed heavily on me. The weaponisation of GBV is an insult to the millions of women who are victims of this national crisis.

"I dream of a nation where our leaders use the platform to speak about solutions on GBV, gender inequality and femicide, as opposed to using it to settle political scores. This social crisis is a reality for many women, not just in our country, but all over the globe.

"The mention of a person who has passed away in Parliament yesterday evening was unjust, unnecessary and very spine chilling. It was raw and inconsiderate. I am deeply saddened by the manner in which the events unfolded."

He said the South African Police Services (Saps) has

confirmed that all police stations have sexual-assault evidence-collection kits.

"They have prioritised backlog cases related to gender-based violence and established a cold case task team.

Saps has analysed over 3 600 dockets on sexual offences, and more than 60% of these have been reopened for further investigation and referred to the Senior Public Prosecutor for decision," said President Ramaphosa.

We have appointed 200 social workers and are training health professionals and social service practitioners on post-violence care and trauma debriefing.

On the subject of service delivery, President Ramaphosa told MPs that he welcomed the broad support for the District Development Model as an intervention to improve

the pace, quality and reach of service provision.

He also welcomed the invitations from MPs to accompany them to see instances of service-delivery failure, but then invited MPs to also accompany him when the District Development Model is implemented in various areas.

"We must ensure that our visits to areas beset by service delivery challenges go hand-in-hand with developing plans to address these challenges. Our role is not merely to observe, but to mobilise all the capacity of the state, of business and communities to fix people's problems," said President Ramaphosa. Under the District Development Model, he said, all three spheres of government will coordinate and integrate their service delivery plans and budgets.

"Communities and businesses

will be able to guide developments taking place in their areas."

He announced that the President's Coordinating Council will meet shortly, which will bring together all the provinces, 44 districts and eight metros, to discuss the model and begin the process of devising one plan for the entire country.

"Through such collaboration, we will consolidate our approach to government as an interdependent and interrelated system. We continue our efforts to change the spatial architecture of our past, promoting development in areas that have long been neglected," he said. Some members of the opposition discouraged the development of the new cities, as proposed by President Ramaphosa during SONA. They urged the President to instead ensure that existing ones are improved.

However, in his reply to the debate, President Ramaphosa said the development of a new city around Lanseria will provide a model for building new cities elsewhere in the country, in high growth areas such as Lephalale or in areas with great potential like the Northern Cape. 🌱

# ‘Building a capable state and placing our economy on the path to recovery’



*President Ramaphosa appeared before a Joint Sitting of Parliament to deliver the State of the Nation Address (SONA) where he highlighted government’s progress since last year’s address and plans for the future, writes Mava Lukani.*

Delivering SONA 2020, President Ramaphosa said over the course of the past two years of his presidency, government leadership, has worked to “forge compacts among South Africans to answer the many challenges before us”. One such compact was a jobs summit, which brought labour, business, government and communities together to find solutions to the unemployment crisis. “We continue to meet at the beginning of every month, the Deputy President and myself, to remove blockages and drive interventions that will save and create jobs ... We have brought business, labour and government together to craft master plans for those industries that have the greatest potential for growth.”

The various spheres of government have also joined with other state entities and with business associations and community groups to form a new district development model (DDM) that “is fundamentally changing our approach to local development”.

Progress has been slow, but over the last two years “we have worked to stabilise the economy and build a foundation for growth. We

have been deliberate in rebuilding institutions and removing impediments to investment. We have acted decisively against state capture and fought back against corruption,” he added.

SONA 2020 is about the critical actions “we take this year to build a capable state and place our economy on the path to recovery. This year, we fix the fundamentals. We pursue critical areas of growth and we ensure excellence in planning and execution in government”.

To strengthen the capacity of the state and increase accountability, President Ramaphosa announced that he would be signing performance agreements with all government ministers before the end of February this

year. These agreements will be based on targets contained in the Medium Term Strategic Framework and will be made public, so that the people of South Africa can hold those who they elected into office to account.

“It is a culture where corruption, nepotism and patronage are not tolerated, and action is taken against those who abuse their power or steal public money. Since I took office, we have built capacity in the Presidency and elsewhere in the state to fast-track progress on a clear list of urgent reforms,” he said.

In his most recent SONA after the 2019 general elections, President Ramaphosa committed to: “... address the fundamental challenges that

have been in place for some time now. The government adopted the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012 to guide the national effort to defeat poverty, unemployment and inequality. However, with 10 years to go before we reach 2030, we have not made nearly enough progress in meeting the NDP targets.”

Unless this government takes extraordinary measures, “we will not realise Vision 2030”. Government has therefore committed to prioritise. “We need to focus on those actions that will have the greatest impact, actions that will catalyse a faster movement forward, both in the immediate term and over the next 10 years,” President Ramaphosa emphasised. 🇿🇦



## Parliament Amends its programme due to COVID-19

At a special meeting on Tuesday 17 March 2020, between Presiding Officers, chief whips and party representatives to discuss the parliamentary programme and to receive a briefing on institutional arrangements in the light of the President’s announcement of a national state of disaster, as a result of Covid-19, Parliament amended its programme.

This meeting agreed that a sitting of the National Assembly on Wednesday, 18 March at 11:00 will consider the following matters, which have specific time-frames and require consideration by the Assembly:

- Division of Revenue Bill [B3 – 2020]
- Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B13B – 2019]
- Draft notice and schedule determining the rate at which salaries are payable to magistrates annually
- Draft notice and schedule determining the rate at which salaries are payable to Constitutional Court judges and judges of other courts annually

The Presiding Officers encouraged all members, staff and visitors to take the necessary personal precautions in order to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

Parliament also put in place various preventative measures against the Coronavirus, including sanitisers, screening checks for members, staff and visitors as well as a medical support team.

At the conclusion of the sitting on Wednesday 18 March, the business of the Assembly, which includes sittings of the House, committees and public hearings, were suspended until further notice.

The last sitting of the National Council of Provinces was held on Thursday, 19 March and its business will also be suspended until further notice.

**Parliament will also be closed to the public until further notice.**

**Arrangements are also being made to reduce the number of staff members in the precinct in line with the President’s declaration of a national state of disaster.**

**Parliament calls on all citizens to adhere to the rules and regulations governing the lockdown and to support our country in defeating this pandemic.**

## New plans to combat crime and corruption

*The fight against crime and corruption is one of the government's priority focus areas, during the State of the Nation Address (SONA), the President updated the nation on the crime-fighting strategies announced by him the previous year while making new commitments, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

New plans to enhance the fight against crime and corruption included the establishment of a Crime Detection Academy, which he said will improve the quality of general and specialised police investigations. International benchmarking, research and feasibility studies are underway to identify best practices, from agencies such as the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the police service of China, the United Kingdom and Algeria.

In addition, to improve the quality of general and specialised South African Police Service (Saps) investigations, the government is busy establishing a crime detection university in Hammanskraal. "Following the graduation of 5 000 police trainees last year, 7 000 new police trainees have been enlisted this year to strengthen local policing," said the President.

The President also promised to amend the Domestic Violence Act "to better protect victims in violent domestic relationships, and the Sexual Offences Act, to broaden the categories of sex offenders whose names must be included in the National Register for Sex Offenders. We will [also] pass a law to tighten bail and sentencing conditions in cases that involve gender-based violence."

To support the growth of the tourism industry, President Ramaphosa said Saps will increase visibility at identified tourist attraction sites, train tourism safety monitors and establish a reserve police capacity to focus on the policing of tourist attraction areas. The President also mentioned decisive action

against state capture and the fight against corruption. "I have prioritised our response to the growing problem of criminal groups that extort money from construction and other businesses. Specialised units, bringing together Saps and the National Prosecuting Authority, are mandated to combat these crimes of economic disruption."

President Ramaphosa said the battle can only succeed if it is taken on by all society. "We therefore welcome the work of the joint government and civil society working group charged with developing a national anti-corruption strategy and implementation plan, which is close to completion of this phase of its work".

During the debate on SONA, Ms Dorries Dlakude, who is the Deputy Chief Whip of the African National Congress (ANC), said the ANC was convinced that there has been progress in the fight against crime and corruption.

"During SONA 2019, the President promised to strengthen law-enforcement agencies' capabilities in order to fight corruption and crime. We have seen the National Prosecuting Authority and the Anti-Fraud Unit recovering R12 billion from the proceeds of crime. We have also seen the conviction rate increasing in cases of organised crimes. This demonstrates the undivided commitment by the government to eradicating corruption," she said.

In the same debate, Mr Ahmed Shaik-Emam of the National Freedom Party accused the President of "failing to deliver" on a promise he made in last year's SONA that there

would be no bail for rapists and murderers. "You promised South Africans that there will be no bail for rapists and murderers, but what have you done? Nothing. Go out there and make sure there is no bail. 80% of the crimes are committed by repeat offenders, so why are the repeat offender free to roam the streets? Leave them where they belong."

He also advised that the government must not be selective when dealing with corruption, and should stop focusing only on state capture and the Zondo Commission. "You are saying nothing. Not even the Minister of Finance is willing to do something about the corruption where we are losing R240 billion annually," he said.

Taking part in the SONA debate, the Minister of Police, Mr Bheki Cele, provided more details in the fight against crime and corruption. In the continued strife to disrupt the illicit economy, Mr Cele said police have conducted successful crime-prevention operations that focused on organised crime activities.

He said millions of rands worth of counterfeit goods have been confiscated, with the biggest proportion confiscated in Johannesburg, which occupies the biggest slice of this illicit market. "In relation to fighting the scourge of drugs that continue to destroy the lives of especially the youth, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation or the Hawks in the past three-quarters dismantled 32 clandestine drug laboratories, arresting 66 suspects in the process," said Mr Cele. 🌸



## Scopa must deal decisively with Eskom's debt

*The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa) was informed by the Minister of Public Works, Ms Patricia de Lille that, from 1 April 2020, national departments and municipalities will be responsible for paying their own Eskom accounts, writes Faith Ndenze.*

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure was in Parliament to brief the committee on its plan to address Eskom's debt. The department itself has a R2.6 billion fluctuating overdraft, that is not in compliance with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), as a result of late or non-payments from line departments and municipalities.

Briefing the committee, Ms De Lille said: "When the Auditor-General, in one of his management letters, raised a concern about this overdraft, it is then that we said we cannot as the department get a qualified audit because of other departments. We then agreed to shift it to the relevant departments. The overdraft is a concern, as it is not complying with the PFMA."

The Director-General of the department, Adv Sam Vukela, supported this statement by adding that the department will not pay for services incurred by line departments that do not pay for services. "We have taken a decision that all the line departments should take over the responsibility of paying for their own services to municipalities.

“When the Auditor-General, in one of his management letters, raised a concern about this overdraft, it is then that we said we cannot as the department get a qualified audit because of other departments. We then agreed to shift it to the relevant departments. The overdraft is a concern, as it is not complying with the PFMA.”

**Ms Patricia de Lille, Minister of Public Works**

Another decision that we are going to take is that if the line departments do not pay us, we are not going to pay. The after effects will be that if Eskom or a municipality takes a decision to cut services, they will cut directly to that line department,” he said.

The department was flagged by Eskom as the biggest offender when it presented the list of entities that owe money to Eskom to the committee in December 2019. Scopa was informed that the department owes Eskom about R3 billion. However, the department disputes that claim and is confident that it owes much less.

Scopa member Mr Bheki Hadebe lamented the lack of consistency in the reports from the various stakeholders about the government debt owed to Eskom. He said: “I don’t know what to make of the report from the department. On 4 December 2018, when we met with the Inter-Ministerial Task Team (IMTT) together with Eskom and the South African Local Government Association (Salga), we took a decision to call the biggest offender, which is the department.

“Today we are told that we are crucifying the wrong Jesus. This means that Eskom, Salga and the IMTT lied to us. What we were told in that meeting, and what we have been given is very different,” he added.

The Chairperson of Scopa, Mr Mkhuleko Hlengwa, expressed concern with the confusion arising from the presentations, but stressed the need to tread carefully while dealing with this matter. “Seated here, my challenge is what do we make of the report given to us in December last year? Because Eskom, Salga and National Treasury did not mention, in listing the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure as the offender-in-chief, that there were engagements going on between them. Whilst we are concerned about that, we also need to tread carefully, so that we do not accept anything including, but not limited to, what the department itself has said as the gospel truth until such time that we have all the parties together,” he said.

Mr Hlengwa stated that it is difficult for the committee to formulate a clear picture of Eskom’s debt, because of issues of reliability that concern to Scopa. He added that, had the IMTT fulfilled its role, the confusion could have been prevented.

“At the heart of this is the total collapse of the IMTT, which was supposed to have sorted this mess out and it did not do so. Had the IMTT had its finger on the pulse, it would have been able to clear the wood so that the playing field and the accountability could be done. Ultimately, that is where the failure was. By bringing the parties together, it should have been able to deal with these things,” he said. 🌹

## President calls on traditional leaders to strengthen their custodianship of culture

*President Cyril Ramaphosa used his address during the official opening of the National House of Traditional Leaders (NHTL) to warn against the abuse of cultural practices and urged traditional leaders to strengthen their role as custodians of culture, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*



President Ramaphosa addressed the annual opening of the NHTL in Parliament when he raised concerns about the high number of young men who die every year while undergoing customary initiation, which involves circumcision.

“Customary initiation is a rite of passage for our young people to manhood and adulthood, but it has become increasingly infiltrated by unscrupulous people and many young men are being maimed or lose their lives. We need to address the abuse of cultural practices that results in the violation of human rights. This includes abductions to initiation schools.

“It cannot be that every year we sit here and say the same thing about more needing to be done but the death toll continues to rise. We urge traditional leaders, as

custodians of culture, to take this cultural practice back into your hands and improve it accordingly.” He further called on traditional leaders to work with the South African Police Service to ensure that those who are involved in these unscrupulous practices are arrested and charged.

The Customary Initiation Bill currently before the National Council of Provinces is expected to regulate the practice of customary initiation, once it becomes law. He also told the traditional leaders that the government was implementing the District Development Model in three districts and will continue to roll it out to cover all 44 districts and eight metros.

President Ramaphosa’s speech was later debated by the traditional leaders. They took the opportunity to voice their frustration and unhappiness

about their benefits, roles and functions, among other things. Inkosi Mweliso Nonkonyana, the Chairperson of the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders, called for the amendment of chapters 7 and 12 of the Constitution. He also complained about the district model approach: “Yes we have been consulted on the district model, but how can we be weak partners? There is no way municipal councillors can be our bosses. We are their bosses. The money must go to traditional authorities.”

In the debate, the President of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa, Kgoshi Mathupa Mokoena, also raised a concern about the role of traditional leaders in the district model. “Our request is that our role as traditional leaders be clarified in the district model. How do we get involved as Amakhosi?” asked Kgoshi Mokoena. 🌹

# Workshop highlights Parliament's role in International Relations

*Parliamentary diplomacy is one of the priority areas of any Parliament, said the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms Thandi Modise, in her opening address to the Parliamentary Group on International Relations (PGIR) workshop that took place in Parliament recently; writes Abel Mputing.*

In accordance with the Joint Rules of Parliament (Joint Rule 132(24)), the PGIR must meet annually with members appointed by the House to serve in international parliamentary bodies and members of all sub-structures of the group, as well as the chairpersons of the parliamentary committees dealing with international relations and cooperation, and trade and industry to determine strategy and evaluate Parliament's international relations.

The theme of the first PGIR Workshop for the sixth Parliament was: "Strengthening the PGIR for effective parliamentary democracy". The main aim of the workshop was to inform newly elected Members about Parliament's international role during the sixth term, including the policies and structures established to guide

role in overseeing and shaping foreign policy, in contributing to a world that embraces the principles and values of democracy and human rights culture, and in determining the shape and form of our country's foreign policy".

This responsibility "should not, as before, be seen as a purvey of the executive alone. Nor should we allow a situation where we just rubberstamp all the treaties that the executive enters into. We need to scrutinise them before they are entered into". In fact, "there is a need for a more robust oversight role by parliamentarians over these treaties, to hold our executive accountable".

This undertaking is more significant in an "era in which there is an escalation of threats to our wellbeing emanating from climate change, deprivation, terrorism and

**"We want a foreign policy based on lasting solutions that would be achieved through the promotion of democracy, justice and observation of international law."**

**Ms Thandi Modise,  
Speaker of the National Assembly**

and support it, as well as the outstanding business of the fifth Parliament that requires consideration.

Addressing the workshop, Ms Modise urged parliamentarians to take this portfolio seriously, as it provides them with an opportunity to play a "valuable

conflicts". As representatives of the people, Ms Modise said: "We should have a role in this regard, or we would not be fulfilling our constitutional mandate of ensuring that those who elected us live in a safe and peaceful world, and political systems that cushion them from the ravages of



G20 Parliamentary Summit

poverty, hunger and diseases."

The task of parliamentarians, Ms Modise said, is to entrench the values of ubuntu around the world. This is because ubuntu embodies the virtues of democracy and human rights, which are mechanisms of promoting peace and prosperity.

The greatest challenge, she argued, is the changing of the world order in a post-Cold War era. "Now there are new transnational agendas that challenge the effectiveness of the policies of nation states. As representative of the people, we can use our bilateral and multilateral forums and treaties to safeguard the interests of our citizens," she said.

She also noted the significance of these forums for enhancing relations between countries and the parliaments of nation states. "Through our involvement in these forums, we learn and get to understand the art and practice of parliamentary diplomacy. We get to embrace the system of methods that would enable us to achieve mutually satisfying resolutions that would benefit our citizens," added Ms Modise.

"We learn from them how to hold the government accountable in dealing with

foreign policies. But the challenge remains that we deal with complex policy regimes that impact on our citizens with limited resources. What do we do? Do we cut on other bilateral and multilateral activities or not? That is a matter that we need to consider carefully. For although there are many challenges, resources are shrinking. That is a reality we have to deal with as parliamentarians," she opined.

"We want a foreign policy based on lasting solutions that would be achieved through the promotion of democracy, justice and observation of international law."

Turning her attention to the southern African region, Ms Modise noted the progress achieved in a resolution to turn the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum into a legislative body. "This would help to domesticate our trade and legislative agreements. And unlike before, we can begin, as a region, to set a peaceful dialogue between our local, continental and global spheres as a collective and with one united voice – without any fear of contradictions."

In his address to the workshop, the House Chairperson of

International Relations at the National Assembly, Mr Madala Ntombela, stated that parliamentary diplomacy has both an internal and external focus, in that it "empowers Members of Parliament to learn and to understand how other parliaments hold their executive accountable when it comes to foreign policies".

Internally, these engagements "help in empowering us in dealing with domestic law-making processes. These are imparted to us through study visits and other forms of bilateral and multilateral engagements".

He further elaborated that the PGIR remains "a strategic platform in facilitating our Parliament's engagement with others and in tabling of diplomatic reports that need consideration by our Parliament".

A failure of the PGIR, however, is that its work does not yet "form part of Parliament's official programme. This needs to be attended to if Parliament were to play an effective role in global arena".

This is imperative because the "PGIR has a legacy report that it should consider, that would impact on the work of the sixth Parliament." 🌹





Also speaking during the briefing, the PBO's Deputy Director of Economics, Dr Seeraj Mohamed mentioned several constraints including, "structural, cross-cutting industrial and sectorial economic constraints, mass unemployment, widespread poverty, inequality and poor levels of investments".

He is of the view that current economic challenges do not necessarily need continued fiscal consolidation, but a counter-cyclical stimulus. According to him, that would "not necessarily involve cuts in tax, which could possibly go offshore, but, among other things, strategic borrowing that would inject the much-needed boost to the economy".

The slump in the economy has led to reduced household consumption and increased debt, said PBO economic analyst, Ms Fatsani Banda. "This has had a negative impact over time on savings, debt-servicing costs and household debt on many South Africans."

Giving us a picture of trends in South Africa's unemployment rate, Dr Mohamed said: "the total investment growth from 2010 to 2015 was driven by services, but services investment declined from 2015 to 2018. As a result, total investment declined from 2015 to 2018, hence the spike in unemployment rate."

The year-on-year decline in tax revenue collection is worsened by growing unemployment as more employers continue to lay off their staff, according to PBO Deputy Director of Finance, Dr Dumisani Jantjies. This has left us with less revenue to fund service delivery priorities.

In conclusion, Ms Orlandi re-emphasised that the "planning for the 2020 Medium Term Expenditure Framework marks the beginning of a new five-year planning and budgeting cycle and Parliament has a critical oversight role to play in this regard".

## Parliamentary Budget Office: tax revenue collection is worsened by growing unemployment

*The current economic downturn has necessitated the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) to present to the parliamentary portfolio and standing committees on finance an integrated planning and budgeting process to use resources more efficiently to realise the socio-economic priorities identified in the 2020 State of the Nation Address, writes Abel Mputing.*



the funding priorities of the 2020 Budget Speech. Committees would therefore be expected to "approve or make recommendations for amendment thereof. And to monitor and evaluate processes during the implementation stage thereof," she said.

The Department of Performance Management and Evaluation is critical in this process because of its "roles and responsibilities in integrated planning and budgeting, that include, among other things, the coordination of the collection of performance information of departments. And the standardised programme structures and performance indicators and policy directives".

In addition, the strategic direction of planning and budgeting emanates from the State of the Nation Address (SONA), which is aimed at fixing a range of competing issues dogging the economy.

One response to these challenges, announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in the address, is the proposed University of Science and Innovation in Ekurhuleni to "address the dire shortage of skills in the country. The development of a master plan for the automotive industry, clothing, textile, poultry, sugar and steel plants", Ms Orlandi said.

The PBO presented various scenarios to the two committees that they should look out for when conducting their oversight over the budget. "Our presentation

is meant to assist these committees with the legislative element of the budget process. A critical factor in the planning cycle is the alignment of resources with policy intent,"

said the Deputy Director of Policy in the PBO, Ms Neli Orlandi.

The 2019 Medium Term Budget Statement provides

## Government to propose law to stop excessive salaries in public entities – Mboweni

*Mr Tito Mboweni, the Minister of Finance, has told Parliament that the government will propose a law to stop excessive salaries in public entities and accelerate plans to merge and consolidate some of these entities, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*



He also reiterated his concern about the bloated public sector wage bill, which he said would have to be adjusted by about R160 billion over the medium term. Mr Mboweni

also announced, during his 2020 Budget Speech, that the government was moving forward with reforms to the procurement system, with a focus on value for money and

maximising the quality and quantity of services.

“Cabinet approved the publication of a new Public Procurement Bill.

We will accelerate merging and consolidating public entities. We will propose a new law to stop excessive salaries in these public entities, and we will also deal decisively with the excessive high cost of leasing government buildings,” said Mr Mboweni.

He said the total consolidated government spending is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 5.1%, from R1.95 trillion in 2020/21 to R2.14 trillion in 2022/23. This, he said, was mainly due to mounting debt-service costs.

Non-interest spending declines on average over the MTEF (Medium Term Expenditure Framework) in real terms.

“Today we announce a net downward adjustment to the main budget non-interest expenditure of R156.1 billion over the next three years, relative to the 2019 budget projections.

He said the total reduction was mainly the result of lowering programme baselines and the wage bill by R261 billion. “These are partially offset by additions and reallocations of R111 billion. Of this, more than half, or R60 billion, is for Eskom and South African Airways.”

Mr Mboweni said while some of these savings were good for the fiscus, “in many cases we are also making difficult and painful sacrifices”.

“We shall undertake spending reviews to ensure that we achieve this objective. The second part is adjustments on the wage bill by about R160 billion over the medium term. Once we get wage growth, corruption and wasteful expenditure under control, we will focus our attention on hiring in important areas such as education, police, and healthcare. We can hire strategically, and better match skills with opportunities,” Mr Mboweni explained. 🌹

## Relief for citizens, no VAT or tax increases

*The South African economy is predicted to grow by a disappointing 0.9% this year, with inflation averaging 4.5%, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni told Members of the National Assembly when he delivered his 2020 Budget Speech, writes Sakhile Mokoena.*

Mr Mboweni said achieving economic growth and higher employment levels requires a plan, and that over the next 18 months, the economy should get a number of jump-starts. He said these jump-starts will include, among other things, “the reform agenda led by the President, lower inflation, the interest rate reduction earlier this year, the recent gains in platinum group metals’ prices and the impending change to the electricity regulatory framework”.

According to Mr Mboweni “new tax increases at this time could harm the economy’s ability to recover”. To this end, and to stimulate economic activity he announced that government

had decided against increasing value added tax (VAT), pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) or other personal income taxes.

In some instances, taxpayers will now pay even less tax. Mr Mboweni added, “our income tax system is progressive, and the adjustments reflect this. Someone earning R10 000 a month will pay 10% less in tax. Someone earning R100 000 a month will pay about 1.5% less. We are also proposing broadening the corporate income tax base,” he said.

“With growth of 3.5%, sub-Saharan Africa is forecast to be the second-fastest growing region in the world. Against this backdrop we forecast that

the South African economy will grow by 0.9% and inflation will average 4.5% in 2020.

Persistent electricity problems will, however, hold back growth. Over the next three

years, we expect growth to average just over 1%.

Therefore, a stable supply of electricity will be our number one task,” added Mr Mboweni.

Mr Mboweni presented the budget and also tabled the Division of Revenue Bill, the Appropriation Bill, 2020 budget review, 2020 estimates of national expenditure, as well as tax proposals for the year 2020. 🌹



# Modernisation of network industries and the restructuring of SOEs



*Finance Minister Mr Tito Mboweni's budget speech was presented in the context of the socio-economic challenges facing South Africa, writes Abel Mputing. The Minister began by pointing out how the economy has contracted over the past decade. Nonetheless, despite poor growth, Mr Mboweni said, South Africa remains the most diversified economy on the continent and he presented a strong plan for future growth.*

One proposal is the modernisation of network industries and the restructuring of state-owned enterprises (SOEs). "Government will do whatever it takes to ensure a stable electricity supply ... it is our number one task," the Minister said. "To this effect, government has allocated R230 billion over 10 years to achieve the restructuring of the electricity sector."

A lasting solution to energy challenges hinges on "determinations to implement the Integrated Resource Plan of 2019". This will be finalised shortly, once the National Energy Regulator has agreed to the plan. In addition, government has announced that municipalities will be allowed to buy energy from independent suppliers.

As for South African Airways, Mr Mboweni mentioned that business rescue will "lead to a radically restructured airline". In the budget, government has allocated R16.4 billion to settle

SAA's guaranteed debt and interest. Government is also committed to open up new markets, promote regional integration and contribute to economic growth in terms of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, which South Africa is a signatory to.

This is linked to an industrial strategy, which will include "an innovation fund, which will be capitalised with R1.2 billion over the next three years, an industrial business incentive worth R18.5 billion, which will create and retain approximately 56 500 jobs.

An additional R107 million is reprioritised for the refurbishment of 27 industrial parks in townships and rural economies. And R6.5 billion is allocated for small business incentive programmes of which R2.2 billion will be transferred to the Small Enterprise Development Agency."

**"Government will do whatever it takes to ensure a stable electricity supply ... it is our number one task."**

**Mr Tito Mboweni  
Minister of Finance**

To streamline all these strategies, the minister advocated that the cost of doing business in South Africa should be lowered. To this end, "the BIZPortal will provide a streamlined way to register a new business with the CIPC, SARS, the UIF and the Compensation Fund in one day."

The agricultural sector will also play a critical role in boosting economy and "Government has allocated R495.1 million to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to improve compliance with biosecurity and support exports." 🌱

# More spending on health and education

*Minister of Finance, Tito Mboweni, said the government will be allocating more money on learning and culture and health areas. Learning and culture currently receives R396 billion followed by health that receives R230 billion, and social development with R310 billion, writes Mava Lukani.*



In his State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa said his government has noted the enthusiastic support from South Africans during the public hearings on the National Health Insurance (NHI), and based on that, the government is putting in place mechanisms for its implementation after the conclusion of the parliamentary process.

In preparation for the NHI, he said the government has already registered more than 44 million people at more than 3 000 clinics in the electronic Health Patient Registration System, and is now implementing this system in hospitals. It is also in that context that health is identified as an area for more spending.

President Ramaphosa said: "A fundamental condition for growth and development is a healthy and productive population, with access to quality, affordable healthcare."

In the education sector, Minister Mboweni said investment will go to new schools, to replace schools that are constructed with inappropriate materials, "and providing them with water, electricity and sanitation".

He said: "In 2020/21 the maths, science and technology grant will introduce coding and robotics to learners from Grade R to Grade 3 as announced by the President. Transfers to provinces support schooling for 13 million children and healthcare for 49.1 million South Africans," he added.

The Department of Higher Education and Training will reallocate existing funds to undertake a feasibility study for the establishment of a new university of science and innovation in Ekurhuleni. 🌱

# Citizens want urgent implementation of NHI in all provinces

*The Portfolio Committee on Health has conducted public hearings on the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bill in the Eastern Cape, North West, Free State, Western Cape and Gauteng. In all these provinces, people called for the urgent implementation of NHI because they hope it will translate the constitutionally enshrined right to health of each and every South African into real access to quality healthcare services to everyone, irrespective of each person's financial position, report Felicia Lombard and Malatswa Molepo.*

At all the communities where the Portfolio Committee on Health conducted public hearings on the National Health Insurance, people were clear about their frustration on the challenges facing the current health system, which they called "disastrous".

They hope the NHI will be a good replacement. Furthermore, they said instead of the current public healthcare system offering healthcare services, it has become the symbol of death as people die at the crumbling clinics and hospitals in gruelling long queues, waiting for medical attention.

In the Eastern Cape, the people told the committee in no uncertain terms that the time for discussions and mobilisation of views on the Bill is over. "Now is the time for implementation," they said.

The residents have a view that the implementation of the NHI is being delayed, which compromises the good intentions of the NHI.

Making his oral submission on the Bill in Mthatha, Mr Paseka Nontshiza said: "Our people are left on the fringes of healthcare, dying out there of treatable ailments and because of poverty they are unable to access quality treatment."

Ms Zandile Phakathi of the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality said she supported the NHI because it stands for the achievement of the progressive rights of a universal healthcare system that are internationally recognised as human rights. "We say healthcare is a human right that everyone is entitled to. We are further saying that this right should not depend on a person's financial standing," Ms Phakathi said.

Dr Dhlomo appreciated the commitment shown by the South African Medical Association on the Bill in Mthatha, a commitment he said makes it clear that they are willing to work with the government and health stakeholders to effectively deal with the teething problems that were experienced when the NHI was piloted in the OR Tambo District Municipality.

In the Free State, the majority of those who expressed support for the Bill also emphasised the importance of a well-functioning public healthcare system, especially at primary healthcare level. The residents of Mangaung District told the committee that the NHI is important for ensuring universal healthcare coverage, as per the World Health Organisation's Alma Ata Declaration of 1978. In

the Fezile Dabi and Mangaung districts, the people called for the reintroduction of health inspectors that will ensure that healthcare facilities are up to standard and render quality healthcare services to the people.

Some representatives of the people living with disabilities emphasised that their daily specific needs are enshrined in the Bill of Rights but the current public healthcare system denies them those rights.

their pessimism for the failure of an NHI-funded healthcare system.

Representatives of traditional healers organisations emphasised the need to include the indigenous healthcare system in the scheme and to recognise the important role of traditional healers in the NHI legislation to ensure that the envisaged healthcare system is inclusive.

In the Western Cape, the majority of West Coast

Organisation, said traditional healers support the Bill and want to ensure that the traditional healthcare system is also included in the NHI legislation.

All the traditional healers' representatives emphasised the fact that traditional medicine is regarded as mythical medicine, yet it helps the African people. "Powerful Western countries import plants from Africa, produce medicine and export that medicine to Africa in modern



**NHI public hearing**

In the North West, the people urged the committee to ensure that the governance system on the implementation of the NHI is strengthened to deter and protect the fund against corruption. On the creation of boards that are envisaged in the Bill, the residents called for boards that will be representative of the people on the ground, and boards that will promote public involvement in the implementation of the NHI.

The people who opposed the NHI in the North West Province's Rustenburg area cited the current problem of the failure of state-owned entities such as Eskom, South African Airways and Prasa as a point of reference with regard to the failed state-led intervention, as the basis of

residents told the committee that the NHI is much-needed in their district. They highlighted their frustration with the current public healthcare system, which they said fails to assist them, they called for the speedy implementation of the NHI.

They told the committee in their oral submissions that there is a large population of farm workers in their region who cannot afford the expensive profit-driven medical aid schemes. They also told the committee that they are turned away at times at the usually overcrowded public hospitals on the grounds of the unavailability of nurses.

In the Khayelitsha leg of the hearings, Ms Esther Mbanyaru, who is the Chairperson of the Khayelitsha Traditional Healers

form," said Mr Sihleli Nxasana, who is also a Khayelitsha-based traditional healer.

In the Gauteng's Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality region, participants emphasised the need for effective governance, as well as performance monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the benefits of the NHI are felt by all across the country – and to ensure that the fund doesn't follow the same route as other state-owned entities because of corruption.

The committee will now engage stakeholders and organisations that made written submissions to it, and that will form the last phase of public participation on the Bill at the National Assembly level. 🌹



# ‘More work still needs to be done regarding the remuneration of public office bearers’

*The Speakers’ Forum, an organisation of the Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the National Assembly and all the provincial legislatures, as well as the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), recently considered a range of issues including methods to make governance, administration, oversight and public participation more effective and accountable, writes Abel Mputing.*

High on the agenda was a presentation on the remuneration of public office bearers, commissioned by the Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers and undertaken by remuneration specialists 21<sup>st</sup> Century Consultants. The commission arose because there is no standardised methodology to determine the remuneration of office bearers in the legislature.

21<sup>st</sup> Century’s Dr Mark Bussan, said: “The benchmarking of profiles and grading of jobs of presiding officers of legislatures was to ensure that they are remunerated fairly in relation to their respective roles.” He was pleased to note that updated job descriptions are now available and there is a repository of 35 graded jobs.

Remuneration benchmarking now considers the length of service of each office bearer,

and his or her contribution to the sector, Dr Bussan noted. He admitted, however, that more work still needs to be done to address existing disparities.

The remuneration of the President, Deputy President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker and the Chief Justice were kept unchanged in the study. The reason for this, he said, is that “the benchmarking of the correlation between the four was kept, because it’s a globally acceptable remuneration benchmark that we should not tamper with”.

One fundamental principle should be adopted, he said, is that “there should be no disparities in remuneration between a Speaker who presides over a bigger or smaller province”. This is because there is no difference in their job description, as they are both charged with tasks prescribed by the Constitution.

Therefore, “their jobs should be seen as equally hard and complex”.

A contestation on this ensued, with the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Lechesa Tsenoli, suggesting that a working group should address this issue. It was agreed that the working group should relay its resolutions to the commission so that they can inform the basis of its remuneration of office bearers,

and the profiling and grading thereof, as some of the matters raised could not be resolved.

It was thought that further deliberation and engagement would clarify the reasoning regarding the current remuneration profiles and grading of office bearers at national and provincial level.

According to the projections of the study, the entire process of remuneration adjustment

will cost the National Treasury approximately R93 million.

In his concluding remarks, the chairperson of the session, the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Mr Amos Masondo, emphasised that the views expressed by various office bearers will help to resolve existing remuneration disparities in the sector. Legislatures must collate their suggestions and send them to the commission. 🇷🇸



# Committees in Brief

**The Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises** expressed concern about the performance of state-owned enterprises (SOEs). The committee received a presentation from the Department of Public Enterprises on its third-quarter performance for 2019/20. The committee was concerned to hear that all SOEs are loss-making, with the exception of the South African Forestry Companies Limited (Safcol).

The committee heard that Transnet's overall shareholder compact performance has dwindled from 49% in the first quarter to 41% in the second quarter, and 32% in the last quarter of the period under review.

**The Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports and Arts and Culture** resolved to postpone its meeting with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) on the grounds of the late submission of the required documents to the meeting that was planned to take place in Parliament.

The committee expressed its extreme disappointment with the management of NSFAS and said that its failure to submit the documents on time deprives members of

the committee an opportunity to fully scrutinise the documents and prepare for the engagement with NSFAS, and that according to them, is a blatant disregard of accountability.



The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Elleck Nchabeleng, said: "You expect us to scrutinise the documents within minutes, yet you took days to compile the presentations. NSFAS officials are not serious about addressing the many challenges faced in the education sector."

**The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Transport**, Mr Mosebenzi Zwane, has said appropriate measures need to be taken

in order to protect the rail infrastructure and all assets belonging to the Passenger Rail Agency of SA (Prasa).

He said the amount of money the government is losing on a daily basis due

to the vandalism of the rail infrastructure by vandals who have made it a habit to burn trains, was alarming and concerning.

Twenty-four trains were reportedly burnt in the Free State at the beginning of February. He said although there seemed to be no link that has been established so far, however the Free State train burning incident followed numerous train burnings in and around Cape Town.

**The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education**, Ms Bongwiwe Mbinqo-Gigaba, welcomed the 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results which she said showed a pass rate of 81.3%, and a percentage she said confirms a great deal of hard work by learners, teachers and all other stakeholders within the sector.

"We applaud the continued hard work by all the

stakeholders that have made an investment in the form of time and other resources in ensuring that our children have a solid and adequate foundation in relation to education, which will guarantee them a better future. We also applaud the successful learners and encourage those that have failed to try again as they have the potential to succeed," Ms Mbinqo-Gigaba said.

**The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology** has called on university students to desist from damaging university property when they engage in protest actions.

Violent protests have occurred and brought the registration to a halt at the universities of KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape recently. The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Philly Mapulane, said the reports of the destruction of property at the University of KwaZulu Natal were concerning and needed urgent attention.

**The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa)** believes that all relevant

governmental and municipal stakeholders responsible for the escalating debt owed to Eskom should appear before it jointly. This is necessary to determine an appropriate way forward and to verify the amount of debt still outstanding, as there are differences about how much is still owed.

Scopa called the department for a briefing based on the information received from IMTT, which claimed that the Department of Public Works is the biggest debtor, owing Eskom R3 billion in June 2019. The department told Scopa that this amount was incorrect and that, in fact, it owes much less than this.

**The Select Committee on Petitions and Executive Undertakings** will soon be able to respond to Mr Votani Majola's petition that was submitted to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) where he claims that his nation, the Thembuland Royal Empire, were the original owners of the land covering the whole of South Africa.

The petition was submitted to the NCOP in 2018 and referred to the select committee for further processing and consideration. In processing the petition, the committee invited the petitioner and other stakeholders for further inputs before compiling a report, which will soon be tabled and debated in a sitting of the NCOP.

**The Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communications** expressed its concern on governance challenges that riddle the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (Usaasa).

Usaasa appeared before the committee recently at Parliament, to brief the committee on the South African connect project and the general availability, and accessibility of broadband services to South Africans across provinces as per the entity's mandate. 🇿🇦



# Regulations set out to stop the spread of the COVID - 19 virus and minimise its effects.

Parliament calls on all citizens to abide by these regulations.



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**1 REGULATION**

**TREATMENT**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

No person with COVID-19 confirmed or suspected, may refuse medical examination, prophylaxis, treatment, isolation or quarantine

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**2 REGULATION**

**ALCOHOL**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

The sale, dispensing or transportation of alcoholic beverages is prohibited between 6pm-9am Mon-Sat; Sun/public holidays 1pm-9am

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**3 REGULATION**

**SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC VISITS TO:**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

Correctional Centres, Detention Facilities, Holding Cells; Military Detention Facilities; Dep of Social Development facilities for 30 days, may be extended

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**4 REGULATION**

**ECDs**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

Early Childhood Development Centres, closed 18 March - 15 April 2020, it may be extended

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**5 REGULATION**

**FAKE NEWS**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

Anyone that creates or spreads fake news about COVID-19 is liable for prosecution

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**6 REGULATION**

**GATHERINGS**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

Restricted to under 100 people

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**7 REGULATION**

**EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT POLICY**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

Accounting Officer, Dep of Public Works authorise other Deps to identify & establish quarantine sites; Accounting Officer, Municipality identify sites; Accounting Officer, Dep of Health procure resources (48hrs), recruit & train professional health workers (24 hrs)

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**8 REGULATION**

**AUTHORITY TO ISSUE DIRECTION**

WHAT IS A NATIONAL STATE OF DISASTER?

...to address, prevent, curb the spread of COVID-19 virus by The Ministers of Justice & Correctional Services, Basic & Higher Education, Police, Social Development and others

cooperative governance & traditional affairs  
Department: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# State to release 700 000 hectares for Agricultural production, says President

*President Cyril Ramaphosa says government must expand the agriculture and agro-processing sector by supporting key value chains and products, developing new markets and reducing the country's reliance on agricultural imports. In his 2020 speech, President Ramaphosa announced some of the strategies on agriculture his government has applied since his 2019 June SONA, writes Felicia Lombard.*



President Ramaphosa stated that agriculture is one of the sectors of the economy with the greatest potential for growth. To accelerate this potential, he highlighted some of the methods his government will use to address various challenges facing the industry. One of these is the development with farmers

and industrial users of a sugar master plan to address job losses in the industry. This plan is expected to be finalised soon.

One such strategy is the poultry master plan to support chicken farmers and processors, which not only saved 54 000 jobs, but also created new ones. This

plan has now been completed. He told Members of Parliament that to further support the local industry, a new poultry import tariff adjustment will be implemented.

The government also hopes that the implementation of key recommendations from the Presidential Advisory Panel on



Land Reform and Agriculture to accelerate land redistribution, expand agricultural production and transform the industry, will yield the expected results.

President Ramaphosa reported that "to date, we have released 44 000 hectares of state land for the settlement of land restitution claims, and this year we will release about 700 000 hectares of state land for agricultural production". In doing so, priority will be given to youth, women, people with disabilities and those who have been farming on communal land and are ready to expand their operations for training and allocation of land. This will be supplemented further by a new beneficiary selection policy, which includes compulsory training for potential beneficiaries before land can be allocated to them.

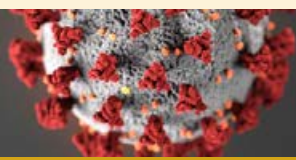
The President also reported on the severe drought that has hit many provinces across the country and which has resulted in the loss of crops,

livestock and many livelihoods. "Working with the Agricultural Research Council and other scientific and agricultural bodies, we have developed drought mitigation strategies that focus on developing drought-resistant seeds, planting and storing fodder, removing of invasive plants and management strategies to prevent soil degradation," he said.

He also told the Joint Sitting that hemp and cannabis products for medicinal purposes will receive government attention. "We will open up and regulate the commercial use of hemp products, providing opportunities for small-scale farmers, and formulate policy on the use of cannabis products for medicinal purposes, to build this industry in line with global trends."

Regulatory steps on these products are expected to be announced very soon by the relevant ministers. 🇿🇦

## WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS:



Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people.

Source:: World Health Organization (WHO)



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM GETTING SICK

### Wash your hands

After coughing or sneezing, when caring for the sick, before, during and after preparing food, before eating, after toilet use, when hands are dirty after handling animals

Source:: World Health Organization (WHO)



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# 24HR NICD HOTLINE 0800 029 999