

UNREVISED HANSARD

MINI PLENARY - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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*PROCEEDINGS OF MINI-PLENARY SESSION - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY*

*VIRTUAL SITTING*

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Members of mini-plenary session met on the virtual platform at 14:00.

The House Chairperson Mr W Horn took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence or meditation.

**RULES OF A VIRTUAL SITTING**

(Announcements)

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Good afternoon hon members who have logged on to this mini plenary. Let us firstly observe a moment for silent prayer or meditation.

Thank you.

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Hon members, before we proceed. I would like to remind you that the virtual mini-plenary is deemed to be in the precinct of Parliament and constitute a meeting of the National Assembly for debating purposes only.

In addition to the rules of the virtual sittings, the Rules of the National Assembly including the rules of debate apply. Members enjoy the same powers and privileges that apply in the sitting of the National Assembly. Members should equally note that anything said in the virtual platform, is deemed to have been said to the House and may be ruled upon.

All members who have logged in, shall be considered to be present and are requested to mute their microphones and only unmute when recognised to speak. This is because the mics are very sensitive and will pick up noise which might disturb the attention of other members. When recognised to speak, please unmute your microphone and connect your video where connectivity permits.

Members may make use of icons on the bar at the bottom of their screens which has an option that allows a member to put

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up their hand to raise points of order. The secretariat will assist in alerting the Chair to members requesting to speak.

When using the virtual system, however, members are urged to refrain or desist from unnecessary points of order or interjections.

Hon members, we shall now proceed to the order of this mini-plenary which is the: Debate on Vote No 37: Sport, Arts and Culture. Appropriation Bill.

To introduce the Bill, I will now recognise the hon Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Debate on Vote No 37 - Sport, Arts and Culture:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: The hon House Chairperson, Werner Horn - let me just switch on here.

Hon House Chairperson, the Deputy Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, the hon Peace Mabe, Ministers and Deputy Ministers

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present, the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Sport, Arts and Culture, the hon Joseph Mcgluwa, hon members, chairpersons and chief executives of our public entities, Director-General Khumalo and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture executive team, distinguished guests, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen, hon members, every government department exist to solve a problem. Some build roads, some keep us safe and some teach our children.

This department exist to answer different kinds of problems. Who are we and what are we becoming? You cannot build a country only with this concrete and steel. You must also build it with stories, with songs and games, contests and tournaments - with the things people remember, in their rocking chair. That is what we do here.

The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture has been allocated R6,617 billion for the 2026-27 financial year, to develop, transform, preserve, protect and promote sport, arts and culture. Through them to build a nation that is active, creative, winning and cohesive.

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Sport and recreation under Programme 2: Recreation, Development and Sport Promotion, we are allocated R1,341 billion.

With regards to LIV Golf, South Africa successfully hosted LIV Golf at Steyn City on 30 March 2026 of global media coverage and proving once more that our country can execute world-class events to world-class standards. The pipeline of future events this opens is as valuable as the tournament itself. The whole world covered LIV Golf. LIV Golf basically killed the unproved that we are a genocidal country. For all the players of LIV Golf were telling the whole world what a great country South Africa is.

With regards to the Fifa World Cup, the 2026 Fifa World Cup will be hosted across the United States, Canada and Mexico, is an opportunity we are treating as a strategic national moment not to be missed, not just as spectator sport, but we are deepening partnerships with host nations on tourism packages, commercial opportunities and knowledge exchange.

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Our support to Bafana Bafana and other national teams has been intensified because South Africa will be present on that stage and will present competitively.

Beyond football, we are using this World Cup to sure case South Africa's arts, culture and heritage through exhibitions, performances and cultural diplomacy across Mexico, the United States and Canada.

We have also launched a national supporter mobilisation campaign with our corporate partners, including the Lucky Fans Competition, to give ordinary South Africans to stand behind Bafana Bafana on the global stage.

We will honour the legacy of the 2010 Fifa World Cup - the only Fifa World Cup ever hosted in African soil - with South Africa's 2010 legends expected to face Mexico's 2010 legends in a commemorative Legends Match in Pachuca on 7 June 2026. The spirit of 2010 in lives on.

Looking further ahead, South Africa is not approaching the 2027 ICC Cricket World Cup which we are co-hosting with Zimbabwe and Namibia as a routine assignment. It is a national

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project. Infrastructure upgrades are underway at Wanderers and Kingsmead Stadiums and by using the tournament we accelerate transformation in the sport and leave a genuine development legacy in townships, townships and rural communities.

With regards to Olympics, on the Olympic front, work continues on Project 350. Our plan to send the largest and most competitive Team South Africa ever to Los Angeles in 2028. The department and SA Sports, Confederation and Olympic Committee, Sascoc, are working with provinces and federations being drawn in their respective roles together.

We are also continuing the work on our bid for South Africa to host the Summer Olympic Games in 2036.

I must add that Africa has never hosted the Olympics in more than a hundred years. This will be the first time an African country just like 2010 Football World Cup. We will host the Olympics.

With regards to federations and Video Assistant Referee, VAR, the federations support this year is R108,1 million directed to about 60 national sport federations with strengthened

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compliance and government requirements. I must add that compliance has really, really grown for a lack of a better word. Our federations that we have, have been without money; has truly done what we expected to do in the first place. So, our federations are really on the path to a full recovery.

Nearly two years ago when I took office I promised South Africa that we will give them a R118 million all the federations.

However, nearly two years ago when we took office, I promised South Africans that VAR will be rolled out. This department will ensure that it happens. I am very proud today that on Sunday the SA Football Associations in its National Executive Committee, NEC, meeting in Johannesburg, I agreed with SA Football Association, Sifa, that it would sign off on the finalisation of procurement of the equipment immediately with the money having been transferred to them earlier this year. The implementation of the roadmap clearly laid out. Having VAR in our league, cup tournaments and in the internationals can only raise the fairness of our game. It will also raise its quality; our players will learn that they need to earn their

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wins the hard and honest way and the country's most loved sport will be left far better off.

I have taken a lot of insults in as far as the timeframes it took to bring VAR but we did not want to bring the VAR we see other countries have, which is a truly imitation of the real VAR and bring the real deal. It is hard to find the kind the one we would have. We would match the best in the world. The VAR will be here. Gone are the days where corrupt referees give really, really give and take suspicious decisions. The VAR is here the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture we have delivered; it is here.

With regards to Ministerial Infrastructure Projects, beyond the conditional grants, this department has earmarked the R102 million for the delivery of Ministerial Infrastructure Projects this year. Four new swimming pools, long-needed upgrades to Eldorado Park and Mmabatho Stadiums, expanded combi courts and outdoor gyms and the Boxing Arena at the Orient.

Before we took office, this department was building no more than 10 outdoor gyms and 10 combi courts every year for a

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decade. We have now done more than three times as many gyms and soon will be ramped up considerably further. We have already doubled the physical of combi courts with a fivefold increase targeted for this year.

These are not abstract budget lines. These are facilities where the next generation of South African athletes will be discovered. We are serious about upgrading and fixing our facilities and about making sure that children have a place to play and people with talent can go and showcase their talent.

With regards our arts, culture and creative industries: Under Programme 3, Arts and Culture, Promotion and Development we are allocating R1,809 billion.

With regards to the Cultural and Creative Industry, CCI, Sector Clusters on 30 March 2026, at Nirox Sculpture Park in Krugersdorp, we officially launched the 17 CCI Sector Cluster Organisations. This is 30 years of frustration and being answered with structure.

The clusters have boards. They have signed declarations of accountability. They will have shared office space and shared

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services. People agitating on behalf of creatives for the first time with institutional weight behind them. Our creatives have waited long enough. The clusters are not the end of that wait - they are the architecture through which the waiting ends.

With regards to Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme: The department has secured nearly R400 million from the Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme Phase 7, implemented through four entities. The National Arts Council, the National Film and Video Foundation, the National Museum and the National Heritage Council.

Provinces that have historically received less are being prioritised. We are expecting investment to create 10 000 OF work opportunities in the creative sector this financial year. The Cultural and Creative Industry Programme has already supported a 125 organisations and practitioners, while the Touring Ventures Programme has enabled 26 organisations and practitioners to carry South African culture to the nine countries as cultural ambassadors.

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Amapiano is not waiting for a policy framework. It has already captivated the whole world. Our job is to build the infrastructure so that the next wave of South African artists does not succeed, despite the system but because of the system.

With regards to entity oversight: Hon members, strengthening oversight over our public entities has become one of the central priorities of this Ministry. Over the past month the Department's Crack Team has worked intensively across entities to identify governance, weaknesses, financial risks, operational blockages and institutional failures that have too often being allowed to continue for years without decisive intervention.

Last Thursday, I convened all board council chairpersons to present a clear roadmap for the future of governance within this portfolio. The message was straightforward. Oversight structures must become active centres of accountability, not ceremonial structures that meet quarterly, while institutions decline. Board members must know the deference between governance and interference, between oversight and silence, and between loyalty to individuals and loyalty to the law. The

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objective is simple, public entities that are stable, ethical, functional and capable of delivering measurable value for our country.

Of special mention is that Robben Island infrastructure is advancing with its capital projects underway. The first phase of the Nelson Mandela Prison House is being prepared for opening in July 2026.

Under Programme 4 Heritage Promotion and Preservation, we are allocating R2,192 billion, including R1,718 billion transferred to provinces for community library services. Supporting 18 new and upgraded library facilities throughout the country this year. To promote access to information and to reading and to instil the culture of reading and writing particularly among young people.

With regards to repatriation and restitution: Our repatriation programme is not slowing down. On 23 March 2026, His Excellency President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa and I led the reburial of 63 of Khoi and San ancestral remains in Steinkopf in the Northern Cape. This was part of restorative justice after these remains were acquired during colonialism to

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promote racist pseudoscience. In April, we returned the Zimbabwean's soapstone bird - a cultural and spiritual emblem of profound importance - alongside eight ancestral human remains, to Zimbabwe. This was an act of partnership and restitution that reflect who we choose to be as a country.

We will be extending our efforts to return every unethical and historical artifact which we have many off or human remains in our museums because we cannot call on the West to return the hundreds of thousands of pieces in their collections that, by rights they should not possess, if we do not lead by example on our own continent.

When it comes to bringing back the remains of our fallen heroes, technical teams have been visited Lesotho. Our 2026-27 focus extends to Angola, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe. There are still thousands of our heroes buried on foreign soil. We will not rest until they have reached their final rest.

With regards to Mandela Collection on Robben Island: The Nelson Mandela collection gifts ranging from children's drawing to diplomatic objects from heads of state who are declared specially protected heritage collection by SA

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Heritage Resources Agency, Sahra, on 30 March 2026. We celebrate this formally on the National Museums Day, 18 May at the Bhunga Building in Mthatha.

With regards to legislative review and naming: Hon members, we are reviewing the National Heritage Resources Act which is now 27 years old and overdue for reckoning with the present. The National Policy Framework for Heritage Memorialisation will be finalised this year. A Heritage Masterplan is being developed.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Minister, your initial 15 minutes has now expired. You have five minutes at the end. If you continue now, I want to say it will be eaten. It is in your hands whether you are taking it at the end.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Hon House Chairperson, I will take one minute of the five minutes. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Please continue.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Hon members, I have been asked many times: What I measure success for this

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portfolio is? It is not the events we host or how many facilities we open though those matter. It is not the awards our athletes and artists win though they inspire us all. The measure is whether the child in Khayelitsha gets to play hockey, whether the child in Lusikisiki gets to walk into a library and find the book written in her language, about her people, whether a musician from Mamelodi or Eldorado Park or Mitchells Plain can make a living from her talent without being exploited. For there are finally institutions standing in her corner. We are not there yet but we are closer than we were. With this budget, we are taking another deliberate step. Thank you so much, hon House Chairperson. I will pause right there.

Ms M L MMOLOTSANE: Hon Chairperson, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers, hon members and fellow South Africans, good afternoon. Today, as the ANC, we rise in support of Budget Vote 37, a vote that sits at the heart of our national identity, our liberation memory and the transformation of our creative economy. The ANC affirms its support for this vote, not as a rubber stamp but as a movement that demands everyone translate into a more inclusive, vibrant and protected cultural and sporting landscape for our people. The department

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has been allocated R6,6 billion for 2026-27, from R3,6 billion. This growth is welcomed, but in real terms, the medium-term outlook is tight. Every priority within this vote must be defended, sharpened and protected from drift.

The creative industries are a strategic lever for radical economic transformation. This being in line with our ANC 55th National Conference resolution, the Mzansi Golden Economy remains our primary engine for jobs and growth for this sector. In 2026-27, they received R680 million. The 2025-26 year showed both promise and strength of the Mzansi Golden Economy, MGE. Beneficiary approvals exceeded budget projection, forcing internal reprioritisation. We must respond with scale, not retreat.

The ANC calls on the department to review and expand MGE funding parameters so that the programme matches the talent knocking on its door, not the company that will be registering today and tomorrow getting the funds. This requires that National Arts Council and National Film and Video Foundation move from parallel silos to a single-window logic. The Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme transfer to the National Arts Council and National Film and Video Foundation

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must be structured around memoranda of agreement finalised early in the financial year, ending the recurring mid-year delays that stuff practitioners of cash flow.

South African stories must remain the cornerstone of our airwaves. The department must actively pursue the resolution requiring the public broadcaster to increase local content on television and radio in direct support of South African artists. However, local content quotas alone will not put bread on the table of a working artist. We must speak plainly about working conditions in the creative sector. For too long, our artists have been treated as informal workers without the safety net afforded to other sectors.

They carry the cultural weight of this nation on shoulders that receive neither pension nor unemployment insurance nor predictable income. The ANC, therefore, calls on the department to expedite the investigation into a basic salary and compensation framework for artists to address the ongoing exploitation that this committee has repeatedly placed on record. Allied to this, Intellectual Property Protection must be enforced so that creators retain the value of their work across all its commercial lives.

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When a production is brought back, repackaged or rebroadcast, the artist, the writers, musicians and the crew who created that value must be shared in it. Repeat fees and residual rights are not a luxury, they are a basic standard of fair compensation in every mature creative economy. This must become a basic standard here at home. A South Africa that exports its stories cannot continue to import poverty into the home of those who tell their stories.

Our heritage institutions are the custodians of our liberation struggle and collective memory. Robben Island Museum, Iziko Museum and Freedom Park cannot thrive on history alone. They require a modern and balanced funding model. Capital projects too often overshadow operational requirements and recent adjustments have had to shift capital budget to operational support as a workaround. The ANC advocates a liberate policy shift, adequate operational funding for day-to-day curation, research and maintenance balance with capital that needs not come at the expense of the experts and staff who make these sites come alive.

We further call for the resistance and liberation heritage route to be expedited, inadequately funded and sequentially

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completed as a national priority. And, we call for a dedicated, adequately resourced digitisation programme so that our archives and cultural treasures are protected from disaster, time and neglect. The Pan SA Language Board, PanSALB must be adequately and predictably funded. Its allocation cannot keep being shifted during adjustment and indigenous language publication and promotion must be strengthened.

We further call for the revival of cultural attaché posts in selected embassies in partnership with the International Relations so that South African arts and culture take their rightful place on the global stage. The social cohesion and nation building mandate, given its constitutional and political significance, must be ring-fenced within Programme 3 and shielded from routine reprioritisation. In a society still healing, social cohesion programming deserves the same seriousness as any infrastructure project.

Support for this vote does not mean silence on its weakness.

As the portfolio committee has observed, performance indicators in the annual performance plan have moved unevenly from 45 in 2024-25 down to 25 and back up to 34 and certain targets are not yet adequately aligned with the department's

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stated priority. We'll never allow where the money will be shifted as when anyone wishes to do so. The ANC, therefore, support the call for a revised annual performance plan that strengthens the link between every rand spent and measurable services delivery output.

We also align ourselves with the committee's concern about ad hoc projects implemented outside the annual performance plan. We urge the department to ensure that future interventions are strictly aligned with the approved plan and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework. Reprioritisation must follow Treasury regulations and Parliament must be respected, not bypassed. Where governance has faltered at our entities, including the regression at Robben Island Museum, we expect turnaround plans, consequence management and quarterly reporting back to this House.

Finally, the ANC restates its position in calling for the eventual split of the department into two entities under one Ministry to relieve competing mandates and give both sports and arts the focused leadership they deserve.

*Sesotho:*

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Modulasetulo, ...

*English:*

... the ANC supports Budget Vote 27.

We support it because culture is currency, because our artists are workers, because our heritage is our spine and because sports, arts and culture properly funded and properly governed remain among the most powerful tools we have to build a united, educated, active and dignified South Africa. However, our support carries a demand that this budget reach the hands that make the work, the artists in the township, the curator in the museum, the writer in the writer's room, the technician behind the cameras and the language activist in the rural school. They are the reason this vote exists.

Let this be the year their value is no longer measured by applause alone, but by a fair, professional and protected place in our economy. That is why as the ANC, we call all the activists in this sector to come and register for the upcoming elections and vote for the ANC. The ANC that cares for what they are doing. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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Mr G MOTAUNG: Chairperson, and hon members and people of South Africa, today, the MK Party rises with profound disappointment and concern regarding the continued shortcomings within the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. Having carefully considered the Annual Performance Plan and Budget Vote No 37, we state our position clearly. The MK Party rejects the Budget Vote NO 37.

Chairperson, year-after-year, this department presents ambitious plans, polished presentations, repeated commitments to transformation, social cohesion, youth employment and job creation. However, the lived reality of ordinary South Africans tells a different story. Across rural communities, villages, townships, young people continue to play sports on dusty fields and unsafe facilities. Artists and creatives struggle to sustain themselves financially. Libraries and community walls remain neglected. While countless talented women, youth and persons with disabilities in rural areas are denied opportunities to support their necessary realised potentials. Despite these realities, government continues to present this as a progress.

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This is not a meaningful transformation. It appears as progress without tangible delivery. Although the department has allocated R6 62 billion, the impact of inflation means that the budget is effective, shrinking its real terms. The department, therefore, is expected to address growing challenges within increasingly constrained resources while communities continue to deteriorate.

One cannot grow the creative economy while underfunding it. One cannot develop athletes with sports infrastructure collapsing. One cannot empower youth and young people through rhetoric alone. South Africans cannot build studios from promises. Young athletes cannot compete in speeches and presentations that are being delivered in Parliament.

It is very concerning that more than 80% of this budget is directed towards transfers and subsidies. Yet, ordinary South Africans continue to see little meaningful impact at our community levels. Billions are being allocated, yet poverty remains. Budget increases, yet opportunities decline.

Programmes are announced, yet implementation is absent. This raises a serious question. Where is accountability? Where is the sense of agency? Where is the leadership? South Africans

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are increasingly frustrated with these annual reports that suggest success while communities continue to experience neglect and decline.

The department speaks extensively about job creation, yet many of the opportunities referenced are temporal, short-term, and unsustainable. Our youth require more than temporary relief. They require sustainable opportunities, meaningful investment, access to funding, proper infrastructure, and a government that genuinely believes in their potential.

Instead, the Annual Performance Plan presents a recycled commitment without measurable improvement. Young people are frequently referenced in policies, yet too often neglected in practise. Township talent remains undisclosed because facilities are neither complete nor existent. Rural artists remain invisible because support does not reach them. Young athletes continue to struggle because development programmes remain weak and unfunded.

Governance within the departments remains a matter of concern. Weak oversight, insufficient monitoring, delayed implementation, and the absence of consequential management

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continue to undermine the department objectives. Public funds must be translated into public benefit. If billions are spent while communities continue to suffer, then the government has failed. A government that fails its artists silences the voices of its people. A government that fails its athletes weakens the nation's pride. A government that fails its youth compromises the future of the nation itself.

Chairperson, the reality is that the sector cannot continue to be led by the necessary expertise, visions, and understanding required to address the challenges effectively. The department continues to struggle under leadership that appears to disconnect from the lived reality of artist-athlete federations, libraries, and rural communities. The consequences are visible across the country.

Facilities remain incomplete. Projects remain delayed. Communities remain neglected. Promises remain unfulfilled. Transformation cannot mainly exist in annual reports and policy documents. Transformation must be visible in villages, visible in townships, visible in libraries, visible in stadiums, and visible in the daily lives of our ordinary South Africans. Until rural communities have success to proper

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facilities, until artists are able to sustain their livelihood through their talent, until young people receive genuine opportunities rather than repeated promises, this department cannot claim success. South Africans are tired of plans without progress, budgets without impact, and promises without accountability.

History will not judge this department by the quality of its presentations in Parliament. History will judge it by the condition of the communities it continues to neglect. The people of South Africa are not asking for a miracle. They are asking for competent governance, ethical leadership, accountability, and effective service delivery. Unfortunately, this Annual Performance Plan fails to provide state fundamentals.

Therefore, on behalf of the MK Party, we say we reject this Budget Vote 37. Strong accountability and consequence management are needed. Sustainable and permanent job creation is needed. Increased investment in sports infrastructure, meaningful support for artists, and a creative economy. Effective youth development programmes, equal job opportunities for rural areas and township communities.

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Leadership with experience and expertise in the sector is needed. Service delivery that produces measurable impact in the community is needed.

The people of South Africa deserve better than this continuous recycle of underperformance and unmet promises. In conclusion, the sector ... [Time expired.]

*IsiZulu:*

Gwaza! Gwaza Mkhonto, gwaza!

Mr J J McGLUWA: House Chairperson, sports arts and culture are not luxuries in South Africa. They are lifelines of nation-building, economic growth, youth development, and social cohesion. That is why this department must invest more in programmes that focus on social cohesion and young opportunities. The department must create a diverse, socially cohesive society with a common national identity while also increasing the economic impact of the sector.

The Democratic Alliance supports these goals. We support young athletes and artists in rural towns who dream of representing South Africa. We support preserving our heritage, promoting

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all official languages, and ensuring that culture belongs to every South African, not only to those politically connected. We support these ideals, which should also imply zero tolerance for failure. This budget allocates R6,62 billion to the department for the 2026-27 financial year.

Yet, despite this massive allocation, Minister Gayton McKenzie and his department preside over collapsing sport facilities locked up libraries, neglected heritage sites, and unemployed artists. In my constituency in the Northwest, I have seen it myself. The Rustenburg Cultural Centre and Olympia Park Stadium, there is nothing to boast about. Go see for yourself. Budget on paper means nothing. Communities need working facilities.

In the Northwest, no stadium is compliant to host a PSL game. Although the PSL approved Olympia Park to host top-flight matches, safety and structural issues remain. On 22 September 2025, both the Minister and Deputy Minister committed to fixing Mabatho Stadium and facilitating the allocation of R13 million over the MTEF for urgent repairs, including the soccer field, athletic track, VIP areas, and ablution facilities. Eight months later, Minister, Dololo. Nothing has

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happened. We need safe sporting environments, not empty promises. We need children playing sports after school instead of falling prey to drugs and gangsterism.

The department boasts about job creation through the Mzansi Golden Economy and Public Employment Programmes, but economic growth cannot exist in a swamp of bureaucracy, delayed payments, and administrative incompetence. The departments talk about transformation and inclusivity, but in practise, opportunities are hoarded, centralised, and ended to the politically connected. Heritage promotion and preservation, along with recreation development and sport promotion, receive little more than R4 billion.

Artists, even organisers, athletes, and federations are left waiting months for payment. Funding processes are inconsistent and insufficient. Funds owed to Sasko are one example. The Soweto Marathon is another, where millions of Rands in prize money remain unpaid. Minister McKenzie must explain why his department continues to fail the very people it claims to serve.

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The recent National High School Athletics Championship event was a total disaster. The Minister promised heads will roll. I praised him for that, but nothing has happened yet. We call upon the department to commit itself to clean governance, transparency, and accountability. Governance required clean audits, professional administration, and an end to cadre deployment and political interference. When Bafana Bafana wins, when the Springboks play, when young athletes excel internationally, the nation stands together. But unity cannot be a once-off event.

The government must invest consistently in grassroots development. Too many talented young people are lost because facilities are broken, coaches are absent, and resources never reach the communities they intended to. Infrastructure development is identified as a strategic priority. Yet rural communities and township areas still lack basic sporting and cultural infrastructure and coaches.

Libraries are underutilised, community halls degenerate. Sport grounds are unsafe, and heritage sites with tourism potential are left to rot. If managed properly, the sector could stimulate tourism, create jobs, and restore community pride,

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but only if implementation improves, and right now, implementation is failing this department's leadership.

Hon members, South Africa's sports, arts, and culture sector is overflowing with talent, resilience, and potential.

Therefore, we will not keep quiet when athletes are unpaid. We will not keep quiet while our players have to do long trips on buses while administrators sip champagne in business class.

We will not keep quiet until Joseph Seutloali and Gerda Steyn are paid their prize money for the Soweto Marathon. We will continue to support initiatives that generally empower communities, create opportunities, and strengthen social cohesion, and we will also continue to demand accountability, measurable outcomes, and value for money.

Finally, it is clear that it isn't only SA Football Association, Safa, and the Premier Soccer League, PSL, that need VAR but also the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, so that we can get a clear replay of where funds were irregularly spent, fruitless and wasteful expenditure occurred and where questionable appointments were made, so that we can

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go back and correct these wrong decisions. The DA reserves its right. I thank you.

Mr E MTHETHWA: House Chair, it was in this House that the Minister previously dismissed concerns raised by the EFF as opportunism and personal industrial virtues. Today the findings emerging from the Cultural and Creative Industries Federation of South Africa, CCIFSA, forensic investigation, expose the danger of that arrogance and political dismissiveness. What the Minister sought to dismiss as a personal privilege has now developed into a serious governance ... [Inaudible.] ... involving allegations of maladministration, irregular processes and failures of accountability within the department and associated structures.

House Chair, Parliament cannot allow illegitimate oversight concerns to be ridiculed only for forensic findings to later confirm governance failures within the very institutions that were being defended. Accountability cannot be selective.

The portfolio committee and this House must insist on consequence management against all officials implicated in

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governance failures, irregular processes and administrative misconduct. This includes senior officials who occupy key decision-making positions during the period under investigation, including the current director-general, Dr Cynthia Khumalo, the former deputy director-general, DDG, Vusi Ndima, and former director-general, Vusumuzi Mkhize. Serious questions remain regarding oversight failures, noncompliance agreements and governance breakdowns identified in the forensic investigation.

House Chair, the EFF rejects this Budget Vote. This budget once again reflects a department that is more concerned with administrative compliance and prestige projects than with transforming the lived realities of ordinary South Africans in sports, arts and culture. The department may speak about transformation and social cohesion, but the report before this House tells a different story. The same report admits that school sport participation declined because provinces could not afford or could not adequately fund the participation in the championships and programmes.

That means that South Africa today, talent is increasingly determined not by ability or hard work, but by whether a

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province can afford transport, accommodation and implementation. A child in Lusikisiki, Giyani or deep rural villages across the country may possess extraordinary athletic or artistic talent, but without facilities, equipment and structured programmes, that talent dies long before it reaches national level.

House Chair ... [Inaudible.] ... and rural schools continue to lack proper sporting fields, libraries, art centres and cultural infrastructure, while historically privileged schools continue to enjoy advantages accumulated over generations. This House cannot celebrate transformation while young people still train on uneven grounds, perform in broken community halls and study in schools without proper sporting and cultural facilities.

The report itself raises concerns regarding persistent infrastructure delays and understanding on capital assets. Every delayed sports facility, unfinished library and abundant infrastructure project represent another community denied opportunity, dignity and development. The continued delays surrounding the Sarah Baartman Centre of Remembrance are particularly unacceptable. Government cannot continue to speak

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about restoring African dignity, while projects linked to the historical memory of African people remain delayed year after year.

House Chairperson, the budget continues to prioritise elite sporting interests and commercially attractive events, while grassroots development remains weak and inconsistent. The department speaks proudly about attracting events such as Formula 1 and LIV Golf. While such events may generate temporary economic activity, they cannot substitute for a developmental agenda rooted in mass participation, youth development and sustainable transformation. A developmental state must produce talent instead of merely hosting debates.

The report before Parliament also highlights continuing governance concerns within entities and federations associated with the department. Parliament itself has warned that apparent compliance may conceal deeper governance failures.

The concerns surrounding institutions linked to the National Arts Council, Athletics South Africa and both in South Africa demonstrate that the governance crisis within the sector remains unresolved. Under the ANC-led Government of National Unity, ordinary South Africans continue to experience

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exclusion from meaningful participation in sports, arts and cultural development. For these reasons, the EFF rejects the Budget Vote 37. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms B E MACHI: Hon House Chairperson, the IFP acknowledges this Budget Vote and emphasises that sports, arts and culture are not luxuries reserved for the privileged few, but essential pillars of nation-building, social cohesion, youth development and economic participation. Vote 37 must be viewed not just as an expenditure item, but as an investment in the soul and future of our nation.

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture is responsible for preserving our heritage, promoting national identity and creating opportunities for South Africans, particularly young people, to participate in the sports and creative economy. We acknowledge the department's efforts to achieve a significant number of its nonfinancial targets during the 2025-26 financial year. However, we remain concerned about persistent weakness in implementation and financial management.

The portfolio committee report highlights continued delays in infrastructure projects underspending on capital assets and

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government's concerns with federations and entities. These challenges undermine service delivery and deny communities access to facilities and programmes that could transform lives. The delays surrounding the Sarah Baartman Centre of Remembrance remain particularly unacceptable. Such projects are not simply infrastructure developments. They are symbols of historical justice and cultural preservation. Communities cannot continue waiting while bureaucratic inefficiencies delay completion year after year.

We are equally concerned about the ongoing challenges facing school sports. Sports remain one of the most effective tools to combat crime, substance abuse, gangsterism and social fragmentation among young people, especially in rural and township communities. Therefore, the IFP calls for stronger oversight of sporting federations and public entities. Government instability in separation threatens athletes' development and damages South Africa's international sporting reputation. Accountability, transparency and professional administration must become non-negotiable standards. At the same time, the arts and creative sector must be recognised as drivers of economic growth and employment.

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Thousands of artists, performers, film-makers and cultural workers continue to face financial insecurities despite contributing immensely to our nation's identity and economy. Funding support must become more accessible, transparent and inclusive, especially for emerging artists in rural areas and small towns. Therefore, we call on the department to prioritise efficient spending, acceleration, infrastructure delivery, strengthening overnight mechanisms and ensure equitable access across all provinces and communities.

South Africans deserve a sport, arts and culture sector that is professional, inclusive, transformative and capable of restoring pride and unity in our nation. Considering the matters raised above, the IFP supports the Budget Vote. I thank you, House Chairperson.

Mr M V DANIELS: Chairperson, and good afternoon to everybody, all protocol observed. South Africa, let me take this opportunity to take you into confidence and behind the scenes. What you don't know is that the very same people in this committee who are rejecting the budget are the same people who constantly advise for the head of the Minister to roll and want the Minister removed. But when you look at the Minister,

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he's forever jovial, happy, doing his work, and knuckling down. [Inaudible.]

Now that I've taken you behind the scenes, I want us to appreciate the work done by the Minister and the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and therefore the PA is in support of Vote 37. Some people are not just doing oversight; they come there with hidden agendas.

It is odd to hear that the hon Motaung from the MK Party, who comes from KwaZulu-Natal, talks about not supporting the budget while he saw the infrastructure being ruined, and vandalised during the last oversight they did in KwaZulu-Natal. I want to thank the Minister for the increment in the budget that he has made to the Sports Trust. That is so important.

The foresight and the progressive ... [Inaudible.] ... behind it, to put these facilities where there are schools, because it's a safer option, and it secures much longer usage for the kids, as opposed to having it in open fields.

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Hon Chairperson, President Ramaphosa, during the state of the nation address, framed the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture and heritage sector as a cornerstone of national strength and a primary driver of social cohesion. The President called for the nation to draw on South Africa's cultural diversity and constitutional values to ensure that 2026 is a year of transformative change.

When I see all these attacks coming, I cannot help but also single out one of our DA members, the hon Potgieter, who is the campaign manager for a mayoral candidate in Johannesburg, Hellen Zille, ... [Inaudible.] ... and searching and coming with frivolous attacks.

If we talk about school sports, which falls under a DA Minister, let's see what transpires in that department. I hear about sporting events in the North West that didn't happen, but we cannot just blame the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture for those things. [Inaudible.] There is the hon Mthethwa. I want to acknowledge the hon Mthethwa for the resilience in CIFSA, Cultural and Creative Industries Federation of Africa, where he spoke - the Minister must get recognition for listening to the portfolio committee.

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The Minister went and uncovered through a forensic investigation, R51,8 million fraudulent activities that happened in that department ... [Inaudible.] ... before the Minister even took office. We have to thank the Minister for bringing the trailblazer in Cabinet, dealing with corruption decisively. Your attributes, Minister, yields hope for South Africa, having uncovered corruption and the wasteful expenditure of companies such as CIFSA to ... [Inaudible.] ... R8 million. We commend you, hon Minister, and keep on shining the light for South Africa. You are indeed the Minister of happiness.

Thank you, Chairperson.

Mr R A P TROLLIP: House Chairperson, we are here today to debate Budget Vote 37, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, a department that should be a source of national pride, unity and opportunity, and a department that creates rocking chair memories.

Instead, it has become synonymous more with instability, controversy, and poor governance. Hardly a month passes without another scandal, another governance failure, or

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another report exposing dysfunction within entities that fall under this department.

If it is not allegations surrounding the ongoing protectionism of the SA Football Association, SAFA, President, then it is concerns about the opaque allocation of funds to arts programmes. If it is not that, then it is the ongoing chaos at Athletics South Africa, where leadership battles and instability continue to overshadow athletes and threaten the future of iconic events like the Soweto Marathon.

These are symptoms of a department influx. While the Minister travels the country celebrating supposed Government of National Unity, GNU, successes and applauding the President at every opportunity, the institutions under his watch are deteriorating. The people who rely on this department, artists, athletes, sports federations, community clubs, and young South Africans searching for opportunity are the ones paying the price.

Hon Speaker, sport and culture are not luxuries. They are essential tools for nation building, social cohesion, and economic opportunity. In many opportunities, the local sports

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field keeps children away from drugs and crime. Community arts programmes give young people purpose, identity, and hope.

Yet under this GNU government, these sectors are treated as afterthoughts, and they are made to feel - regardless of how little support they receive, that the department is doing them a favour. We continue to see underfunded facilities collapsing, infrastructure and community programmes that receive promises instead of support. Talented athletes are forced to fund their own careers. Not the scenario required to host the Olympic Games, hon Minister.

Artists struggle to access transparent funding opportunities. Federations are left to fight internal battles. Robben Island faces ongoing challenges. Hon Minister despite your department's failures, our sportsmen and women, artists and cultural groups continue to outperform with excellence on the international stage.

They continue to raise the South African flag high, showcasing the immense tarrant pool and resilience that exists within our country. They succeed despite government, not because of it.

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So please don't come and claim easy victories about being the Minister of happiness in this Parliament.

Our athletes carry the South African flag proudly on the international stage. Our musicians, actors, and artists continue to showcase world-class talent, but too often their success comes through personal sacrifice, private support, and individual determination, rather than meaningful assistance from government.

ActionSA believes South Africans deserve better. I can't believe that the ANC representative would use this department as a reason for people to vote ANC. We need a department focused on accountability, transparency, and delivery. We need proper oversight of sporting federations receiving public funds. We need fair and transparent arts funding processes. We need investment in grassroots sports and cultural development, not endless headlines about corruption and maladministration and one new pipe dream after the other.

Most importantly, we need leadership that understands that sport and culture are not political tools for public relations

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campaigns, but powerful vehicles to uplift communities and take children off our streets and unite our country.

We call on the Minister to ensure improvement in his department that will enable him to deliver his targets and for the department to fulfil its obligations. We really want to support this report and the budget on condition that our concerns are addressed.

Thank you, House Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Hon Chair, ... shit ... [Inaudible.] Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, hon Gayton McKenzie, chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Sport, Arts and Culture, hon McGluwa, hon members, ladies and gentlemen. The year 2026 is a special year in the history of South Africa. Thirty years ago, the South African Constitution was hailed as the model Constitution ever in the world.

There are many events that led to that memorable day of 10 December 1996. The 1956 Women's March of more than 20 000 to the Union Buildings protesting against past laws. This year marks 1976 youth uprisings, where the young people of this

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country said, enough is enough of being forced to learn in a language of their oppressors. Hon Chair, sorry, I opened the wrong document. Is there any... Can you send? [Inaudible.]

An HON MEMBER: Sent.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Oh, shit! ... [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Deputy Minister, you are both visible and audible.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Did you send the last ... [Inaudible.]

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Sorry, because I was not... I thought I was coming after another person. I apologise for that.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Mente, please don't unmute and just speak. I'm able to see when you raise your hand, but do you want to be recognised?

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Yes, Chair. Chair, can we move to the next speaker? The Deputy Minister is not ready. We can't be subjected to this.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I'm ready, Chair. I'm ready.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Okay, thank you. Hon Mente, the Deputy Minister has ... yes, please continue. Your time is moving along.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: There are many events that led to that memorable day on 10 December 1996. The 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings and the 1976 Youth uprisings. It is against this background that I rise in this House, not only to support the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture budget, but to say to South Africans, this Department is committed to carry the baton of the 1956 Women's March and the June 16 Youth uprising as we reflect on the strides we

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have made as a country to advance the ideals of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist society.

We commemorate the 70th anniversary of the women's march. We will accelerate and increase the women's development programme through various partnerships. As we present Budget Vote 37 of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture 2026-27, a document that is not only a financial plan, but also a reflection of the department's priorities and commitment to the sustainable development.

In the 2026-27 financial year, the department received a total budget allocation of R6,6 billion. This allocation is the outcome of a prudent fiscal policy implementation while enabling conditions for the rollout of sports and cultural programmes for investment and job creation sector. Who can forget 30 years ago when Bafana Bafana won the Africa Cup of Nations? This win boosted the national pride, unity and identity, promoted social cohesion and inspired the youth.

As we commemorate this milestone this year, we also acknowledge some achievements by women in sports. Banyana Banyana qualified for 2026 Women's African Cup of Nations,

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Wafcon. The Proteas Women qualified for the International Cricket Council, ICC Women's T20 World Cup. South Africa's netball team has achieved significant success in recent years. The women's national hockey team stamped their authority in Africa by retaining their African championship title for the eighth time. The Springbok Women made history when they reached the quarterfinals of the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup for the first time.

We congratulate Gerda Steyn who won the Two Oceans Marathon, a record of seven times, making her the only person to do so. To strengthen the policy on women in sports, Department of Sports, Arts and Culture will host women in sports dialogues and to make sure that the policies that we formulate are informed by lived experiences of the women in sports.

As we continue to celebrate 30 years of the signing of the Constitution as part of building a united and conscious nation, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture is embarking on a programme called Patriotic Fridays across our country. This programme is designed to instil a deep sense of patriotism, civic responsibility and national pride among our young people. We will have these programmes in our honour of

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the youth of South Africa that took the streets in 1976 and lost their lives in the fight for freedom and justice.

The advancement of women in arts and culture remains central to our transformation agenda. As we commemorate 70 years of the historic 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings, we will have activities that celebrate and honour women in arts and culture, culminating with a women's concert featuring Brenda Fassie, as we commemorate 22 years of her passing. The time for tokenism is over. South African women in the arts are not asking for a seat at the table; they are building new tables, and this government will stand firmly with them.

We will strengthen cultural and heritage exchange programmes with Southern African Development Community, SADC countries that stood in solidarity with South Africa during the struggle against apartheid. I would like to take this time and honour Professor Pitika Ntuli for being awarded an honorary doctorate of language practice from the Tshwane University of Technology.

The National Language Summit in March 2026 produced the Tsegwa Declaration and established a national task team to drive a

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unified language policy framework. The introduction of the Official Languages Amendment Bill seeks strengthen the use of official languages in national government and departments, national state entities and national state enterprises, and to include South Africa's Sign Language in its jurisdiction.

The 19 October 2026 marks the 40th anniversary of the plane crash that claimed the life of Mozambican President Samora Machel and 34 of his countrymen and women. The commemoration of the death of President Machel and his staff plays a significant role in keeping the memory of those who selflessly laid their lives for the liberation of the people of Southern Africa. The two countries should strive to strengthen their people-to-people relations. The Mbuzini tragedy transcends the boundaries of time and geography, standing as a lasting symbol of regional solidarity and shared liberation history.

We will continue to host the commemoration of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, a historic engagement that remains one of the most defined moments in the struggle of liberation of the African continent. For the first time in South Africa, we will celebrate with the Cuban people the Nelson Mandela-Fidel Castro World Peace Race Walk. As we mark the Fidel Castro

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centenary, we will also continue to commemorate the Matola Raid, Botswana and Lesotho raids in remembrance of the heroes and heroines who laid their lives for our freedom.

Our museums must not exist in isolation. They must be deliberately positioned at the centre of economic activity and cultural tourism. We must learn from global leaders such as France, where museums-driven tourism is not an afterthought, but a cornerstone of the national tourism brand, attracting millions of visitors and generating significant economic values.

This is precisely why we must prioritise investment in institutions such as sports museums, not only to preserve and celebrate our rich sporting heritage, but to unlock its full potential as a driver of tourism, job creation and inclusive economic growth. As part of the restoration of the Wesley Church and the Winnie Mandela Museum, we are committing to ensuring that our heritage institutions are not stand-alone sites, but are fully integrated into arts, culture and tourism value chains. Through this approach, we will aim to position our museums as catalysts for economic activity, community development and inclusive growth.

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As such, a great investment, the Long March to Freedom exhibition is currently located in a remote, inaccessible location. I urge the Western Cape government to work with the foundation and relocate it to the Waterfront economic precinct, which is the hub of the tourism and economic activity in Cape Town.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister for hosting a successful LIV Golf international tournament and say that this is not just a financial exercise, it is a strategic plan for our sector's development. By understanding the rationale behind each decision, we can work together to ensure that public resources are used effectively, transparently and in the best interest of all South Africans. Hon Chairperson and hon members, I hereby support and put this budget to this honourable House for approval. I thank you.

An HON MEMBER: Malibongwe Deputy Minister. Malibongwe! Long live the Deputy Minister, long live!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Order hon members. I see the hand of the hon Clarke.

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Mrs M O CLARKE: Chairperson, I would just like to raise an issue in terms of the Deputy Minister's language. I believe she used twice, and if you could check on Hansard, the word "shit", which I don't think is very parliamentary. Thank you Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Yes, thank you. Hon Deputy Minister, even though you, at that point in time, I want to say you muttered some words, I'm quite sure I also picked up those expletives. So, you are sensitised to the fact that that is unparliamentary language. I don't know whether it will serve much purpose to ask you to withdraw that at this point in time, but please don't repeat that type of language in the House again. Hon members, I will now hand over to the hon Labuschagne.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Chairperson, the ACDP welcomes the recommendations contained in the Budget Vote on Sports, Arts and Culture that has been allocated the total expenditure estimate of R6,3 billion, with R507,4 million going to administration, R162 million going to recreation development and sports promotion, and over R5 million going to transfers

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and subsidies, reflecting heavy reliance on funding agencies, councils and provincial programmes.

Many in the nation would have been happier if there was an allocation to help restore and build more amenities and sports facilities, particularly in townships, so that children are kept busy with sports after school and so that drugs cannot be an attraction to children who will be busy with sports after hours. Sports facilities are disparately needed in townships.

And the ACDP would also like at the beginning speak about the importance of restoring of school sports so that children will grow up being disciplined and being fit- and also looking forward to their professional days to come.

The ACDP also believes sport and culture are not luxuries, but they are a part of building a nation. Yet, the question remains if the department is doing its job well and the answer is not certain.

A broad mobilisation of artists and creatives marched a year ago to highlight failures in funding pipelines, corruption in arts councils, and the exclusion of grassroots practitioners

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from departmental support. They said the department was no longer fit for purpose. Programmes were stalled. Funding pipelines had collapsed, and institutions were being run by individuals with no demonstrable knowledge, credibility, or commitment to the creative industries.

The protest coincided with growing public anger over irregular expenditure in cultural bodies and the perception that Minister's leadership was worsening instability. The May 2025 protest gave voice to frustrations that later became amplified in social media campaigns, petitions, and debates in this House.

The ACDP welcomes investment in community gyms and play parks; R54 million for 30 facilities. But we also know that many sports clubs are struggling with poor facilities and late payments. The Minister himself admitted that federations have been "running their sports out of the boots of their cars". Which is not acceptable.

On arts and culture, the Department speaks of heritage and libraries, with nearly R2,8 billion allocated to heritage

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promotion and preservation, yet those creating that heritage can't get funding. Thank you mam. [Time expired.]

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Chairperson, the department is entrusted with leading the development and transformation of sport, arts and culture sector in South Africa. Its responsibility is not only to support athletes and artists, but also to promote social cohesion, preserve our cultural heritage and expand opportunities for young people across the country.

However, the department continues to face serious challenges. These include delays in the implementation of projects, failure to meet administrative targets and ongoing financial irregularities. These shortcomings weaken the department's ability to fulfil its constitutional mandate and deliver meaningful support to the people who depend on it.

Against this backdrop, the Minister recently announced plans to send selected fans, artists and dancers, influencers and podcasters, chefs, and journalists to the upcoming Football World Cup in the United States of America. While initiatives that promote South African talent, tourism, and cultural exchange on the international platforms should be welcome,

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there must also be a balance and accountability in how the resources are allocated.

At a time when many emerging athletes and artists still struggling to access basic funding, training facilities, and developmental support, it is important that international representation does not come at the expense of local investment and grassroots development.

The consequences of weak leadership and poor planning are visible across the country. Many public schools, especially in rural provinces such as Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Eastern Cape, still do not have adequate sports facilities. This limits talent development and deprives many young people of positive extracurricular activities that could help steer them away from substance abuse, crime, and social instability.

South Africa's creative sector has also suffered from inconsistent leadership and a lack of long-term vision. For too long, arts and culture funding has often been directed towards short-term publicity initiatives instead of sustainable sector development programs. The result is that many talented artists continue to work without proper

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protection, fair compensation, or adequate institutional support.

At the same time, the cultural component of the department is frequently overlooked. Indigenous languages and cultural heritage require active preservation, and investment if they are to survive for future generation.

This department requires meaningful reform in our view. We need service delivery model that gives equal attention to sport, arts and culture. We need more sporting facilities, community parks and creative spaces. We must also strengthen protection of actors and artists while reimagining libraries as modern community hubs that support art programmes creative studios, poetry platforms, and cultural preservation.

If properly supported, these spaces can become centres of opportunity, innovation, and community development for the next generation. Thank you, Chair.

*Xitsonga:*

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu ...

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*English:*

... it was the late Nelson Mandela who reminded us that:

Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people.

These words continue to define the spirit of our nation. When the Springbok team takes to the field, South Africans unite behind coach Rassie Erasmus and the boys in green and gold. The same is true when the Proteas, our cricket national team, represents the country. This year, the South African national soccer team, Bafana Bafana, will proudly fly our flag high at the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, Fifa, World Cup, hosted in Mexico and the United States.

We want to see the Bafana Bafana jerseys won proudly every Friday across the country as a symbol of unity and patriotism. As RISE Mzansi, we wish Bafana Bafana well for the World Cup, they are indeed the pride of the nation.

But Minister, beyond the glory on television screen, this department must fundamentally shift its focus to grassroots sports development and the promotion of arts and culture at

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local level. Community sports fields, school sports programs, local arts centres, and township talent development remain underfunded.

Women's sports in particular still require far greater investment and support. At times, the optics suggest that we may have our priorities wrong. South Africans are asking serious questions when they see money being spent on flying artists and supporters to the Fifa World Cup, while local sports federations and community programs struggle for resources.

Were corporates approached to sponsor these trips, or is the burden carried entirely by the taxpayer? Those are legitimate questions that deserve answers.

Sport can unite society for good. But it can also unite society around destructive habits. The explosion of online gambling and sports betting has created a growing gambling addiction crisis, particularly among young people. Sports betting is now normalized daily through advertising and celebrity endorsement.

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Minister, countries across the world have shown how sport must become part of the fight against gambling addiction, and we must not fall behind. Our celebrated sportsmen and women must educate society about the dangers of gambling addiction, broken families, death, and declining productivity, not encourage gambling every day. That is the immediate cause that this department must champion with agency and conviction.

Let sports, arts, and culture remain a beacon of hope, inspiration, and unity in our country.

*Xitsonga:*

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Chairperson, fellow beloved family of South Africans, fellow esteemed hon Members of Parliament, hon Ministers, and our hon Chairperson of Sport, Arts and Culture, also to our esteemed members of our Sport, Arts and Culture Portfolio Committee.

In the name of Almighty, the most gracious and the most merciful, Al-Jamaah supports Vote number 37 on Sport, Arts and Culture, whilst emphasizing that this department must become a

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true vehicle for nation-building, youth empowerment, and social cohesion.

Al-Jamaah believes sports is power in building unity in our beloved country. Sports, arts, and culture are instruments to fight poverty, gangsterism, drug abuse, and social decay affecting many of our communities. Investment in community sports facilities, libraries, arts programs, and cultural initiatives must reach neglected townships and rural areas where talented youth are often forgotten.

At the same time, Al-Jamaah calls for security of all sporting facilities that are deteriorated presently. We further call for greater support for local artists athletes, heritage institutions, and indigenous cultural programs that preserve the rich diversity and identity of South Africa. Unity in diversity.

Government must ensure transparency, accountability in the allocation of funding so that resources benefit ordinary people, not only connected individuals.

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Al-Jamaah believes sports and culture have the power to unite our people beyond race, beyond religion and beyond class, and to restore dignity, hope, and opportunity to future generations and to the sports world.

Let us recognize and feel the adrenaline. Let us feel the energies to build sports to its optimum best. Let us not shortchange and deprive our young upcoming sportsmen. I thank you. And I end off with the wonderful words, in our House, as always ...

*IsiZulu:*

Malibongwe!

*English:*

Thank you.

Dr L W MAHLATSI: Chairperson ...

*Sesotho:*

... kgotso, Maafrika.

*English:*

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Hon members, Vote 37 carries the soul of the nation. Our stories, creativity, heritage and youth development through sport. Yet this budget reveals a pattern of symbolism without structural support for communities. The crisis at the National Arts Council exposes the weak grants governance, delayed payments and instability that left artists without income and dignity. The department continues to prioritise monuments over living heritage while township theatre lacks equipment.

Rural artists have no studios and community sport grounds remain neglected. Elite and event-driven spending dominates while the classroom facility decay. This produces a spatial inequality that sport and culture should be correcting. Even more concerning is the quiet exclusion of disabled children from sport development. This vote shows a little evidence of dedicated infrastructure, trained coaches, adapted equipment or inclusive programme to ensure that children with disability participate meaningfully in sport. A nation that celebrates sport cannot exclude some of its most vulnerable children from the playing field. The government weaknesses within funding entity reflect an oversight failure that this House cannot ignore.

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We do not oppose sport, art and culture. We oppose a budget that funds symbolism over sustainability, events over infrastructure and exclusion over inclusion. The UAT opposes Vote 37.

*Xitsonga:*

Khanimambo!

Ms L R POTGIETER: Hon House Chairperson, firstly, the hon Daniels should probably refrain from making false statements in Parliament. Being in the DA doesn't make me Helen Zille campaign manager any more than being in the PA makes in Minister McKenzie's spokesperson.

But if Helen Zille's name is the first it comes to mind when questions of accountability are raised, that probably tells South Africans everything they need to know. In any event, there is a clear difference between vision and chaos. Minister Gayton McKenzie seems to believe that the more prolific and louder the announcement, the less anyone will notice the absence of planning, accountability or basic financial discipline.

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What we have witnessed over the past year is not strategic and vision-oriented leadership, but rather chaotic improvisation with public funds. Last year, the Minister tried to shift more than R82 million away from sporting federations, severely slashing their funding, to pursue a Video Assistant Referee, VAR, system that was never properly researched, budgeted for, agreed to by the Premier Soccer League, PSL, or transparently presented to Parliament. When the portfolio committee posed questions, the department often handedly stated that they had exclusive authority to transfer funds outside of parliamentary budget procedures.

Can you imagine the arrogance of such a statement? Imagine believing that parliamentary oversight is an option.

Meanwhile, the National Treasury intervened and instructed the department to return the money to federations. The result? The department only reallocated R20 million and returned federation funds.

But because it was so late in the financial year, many federations could not utilise it. Yet despite these cuts to federations, the Minister still has the boldness to stand before South Africans and promise to send 350 athletes to the

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Olympic Games. It seems we are now funding Olympic dreams through performance of PowerPoint presentations and empty press conferences. While in reality, the Minister spent the year undermining the very federations responsible for producing these athletes, justifying it through vague statements of non-permanent executive structures and unfounded claims of non-compliance. At the same time, the SA Football Association, Sifa, with one of the most permanent and highly paid executive structures in South African sport, received additional funding, not for the development of grassroots football or facilities, but for unpaid salaries and VAR. It is worth noting that there is nothing wrong with the department of Sifa pursuing the VAR cause.

The DA supports modernisation in sport. But there is a massive difference between implementing a professional system within a budget and implementing one recklessly for the sake of a political headline. This pattern keeps repeating itself.

Apparently, Cabinet approved R100 million in hosting fees for LIV Golf on condition that sponsors would cover the amount but only secured approximately R15 million in sponsorship. This means that someone, somewhere, had to absorb about R85 million

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shortfall, but neither the Minister nor the department can answer this effectively.

While chasing flashy international events, the Minister completely failed to support local events that contribute to the economy.

The Corona Open in Jeffreys Bay, for example, an event that contributes approximately R150 million to the local economy, lost its funding. The situation becomes more concerning in the arts sector. The Minister abruptly withdrew support from long-standing festivals across multiple provinces. Festivals that collectively generated close to R1 billion in economic activity that were left without critical financial support. There was no consultation, no transition plan, and no impact assessment. They were simply told to apply to the Mzansi Golden Economy Programme, where the Minister installed the PA's national spokesperson as its chairperson. These applications were then reportedly rejected without even being opened, while newly registered entities, deregistered entities, ghost companies, or organisations with virtually no digital footprints allegedly benefited.

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Just recently, the Minister announced that citizens would be footing the bill for artists, journalists, podcasters, chefs, former players, and political staff to attend the Fifa World Cup, with no proper explanation of what that budget looks like. The Minister also claims sponsorships have been secured for so-called superfans.

It is ironic that the Minister initially criticised and rejected these exact initiatives, but apparently, they become acceptable once he controls the guest list. Alongside all of this, a continuous and deeply worrying trend has emerged. Active political members of PA have been appointed to boards and governance structures across the department, raising serious questions about cadre deployment.

Most concerning is the creation of the Creative Industry Cluster Organisations, which replaced an internal structure with approximately 17 different boards. We were told they would improve efficiency and support the creative economy, instead whispers and allegations are already surfacing that some individuals linked to these boards participated in adjudication processes involving projects in which they are actively involved and or where the PA is contesting by-

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elections. An allegation that the Minister has himself refused to answer in written questions. If this is true, it represents a deeply unethical blurring of the line between state resources and political interests.

Public arts and culture funding cannot become a parallel political deployment network or a mechanism for awarding party insiders or political useful organisations. Every rand diverted towards patronage as a rand taken away from genuine artists, athletes, community programmes and cultural development.

South Africans love sports, we value arts and culture, but we are getting increasingly tired of the Minister's grand announcement without plans. The DA believes in professional administration, transparent procurement and merit-based funding that opens doors for athletes and artists and preserves our rich history. Right now, the biggest performance in South Africa is not happening on a field or in a theatre, it is happening inside this department and unfortunately taxpayers are paying for every single minute of it.

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The DA therefore reserves its rights on this budget, and we expect that these matters be addressed in the current budget processes. I thank you.

Mr G D KGABO: Chairperson, let me pass my greetings to the members.

Sports is not a luxury, it is a constitutional obligation, a developmental instrument and when properly funded, a liberator of young people from poverty, crime and exclusion. It is against this understanding that I rise today to engage this budget on behalf of the African National Congress.

Chairperson, let me be frank. The annual performance plan before this House reflects ambition but unfortunately, ambition in the absence of credible resourcing is simply aspiration written on a government letterhead. Hon Minister, how do we respond to the community of the North West when there is not a single stadium that can host the Premier Soccer League match? How do we expect the grassroots development of sports when the budget allocation for sports infrastructure has drastically decreased?

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The total allocation for Budget Vote 37 in the 2026-27 financial year is R6,62 billion. Of that, Programme 2: Recreation Development and Sport Promotion receives R1,34 billion, which is almost 20,3% of the total budget. In real inflation-adjusted terms, Programme 2 grows by a mere 2,3% nominally and just 1,1% cumulatively over the medium term. When you strip out inflation at 3,4%, the sports programme in the country, in real terms, is at a standstill. In fact, one could argue that it is retreating.

More troubling still, Programme 3: Infrastructure Support has suffered a nominal reduction of R75,9 million, a cut of 24,7%. In real terms, that is an R83,5 million decrease or a 27,1% decrease. While the department speaks of expanding sports access to underserved communities, it simultaneously cuts the very same infrastructure budget that will make the accessibility of sports possible. The portfolio committee has raised this contradiction, and the ANC endorses this concern.

Chairperson, one of the most persistent failures in the sector is the inconsistent implementation of the school sports programme. The moratorium that has been placed on school sports has never been fully or permanently lifted. Rural and

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township schools - the very same communities that the National Development Plan, NDP, 2030 says government must prioritise - continue to be left in the dark. In fact, it is left in the cold every time that we encounter these budget cuts.

The department plans to enable 15 000 learners to participate in the National School Sport Championships at a projected cost of R220 million over the medium term, and to support 624 school sports programmes at the district and local levels at an estimated cost of R189 million. These are not insignificant contributions, but they remain uneven in their reach.

We call on the department to permanently lift the moratorium on the school sports programme and to implement it consistently across all districts, especially in rural and township schools. Enhanced co-ordination with the Department of Basic Education is not an option, it is essential in the implementation of this project.

Chairperson, the ANC notes with deep concerns the allocation in the Sports Trust, which has escalated from R22,9 million in the 2025-26 financial year to a whopping R139,5 million in the

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2026-27 financial year. The portfolio committee has formally rejected this increase, and this side of the House stands with this assessment. We are speaking of the Sports Trust, an institution that has previously failed to demonstrate adherence to competitive bidding and compliance with the procurement prescripts cannot be rewarded with a 50% budget increase. We recommend that the Sports Trust allocation be kept, a comprehensive procurement and governance framework be submitted to Parliament and that the difference be redirected towards sports infrastructure development, particularly in underserved communities where backlogs remain unaddressed.

Hon Minister, today, other communities like Utlwanang and Geluksoord in Christiana continue to suffer the consequences of not having adequate sports facilities. Our youth are drowning in alcohol and substance abuse due to a lack of sports facilities in our communities. Hon Minister, how do I explain that the department is living up to its core function when we have drastically decreased the sports infrastructure budget?

Chairperson, as South Africa prepares to represent itself at the Commonwealth Games and other international competitions,

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SA Sports Confederation, Olympic and Paralympic Committee (Sascoc) must be held accountable. The ANC supports a strengthened relationship between the department and Sascoc. Through a clear programme performance agreement and variable reporting obligations, high-performance athlete support must be fully functional and adequately linked to the transfer of sports federations and Sascoc before the next financial or international cycle.

We cannot, hon Chairperson, celebrate podium finishes while government failures undermine institutions that prepare our athletes. The department must prioritise athlete coaching and technical support systems now, not as an afterthought when games are already upon us.

Hon members, Boxing SA, BSA, continues to be a source of instability - a clear, classical example of the failures of governance. The board appointment process has been smeared in legal dispute for too long. Professional boxing as a sport has deep roots in our working-class communities and cannot develop under the shroud of perpetual governance failure. The ANC calls for the finalisation of the BSA board appointment

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process with no further legal disputes, and for the consistent enforcement of licensing and sanctioning regulations.

More broadly, the ANC concurs with the portfolio committee's grave concern about the lack of transparency on how the department allocates funding to the National Sporting Federations, NFs. Transfers to federations must be conditional on the demonstrated compliance with transformation requirements and annual reporting obligations. Non-compliant federations must face structured consequences.

The committee report has noted with concern that the SA Football Association, Safa, has received an advance in the 2025-26 allocation. It has increased its 2026-27 allocation, which raises serious questions about whether compliance and performance are genuinely being used as a basis or as a funding criterion. It cannot be correct that while Safa is encountering serious governing and structural challenges on and around the leadership battles, we continue to fund Safa when it has been unable to demonstrate that indeed it can comply with the framework or the transcripts of the financial management system.

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Chairperson, Sub-programme 2: Active Nation, received the largest share of the programme budget at R727,3 million or 54,3% of the programme over the medium term. Six hundred community-based sports and recreational programmes will be supported at a cost of R48,7 million. These are meaningful numbers, but mass participation data must be disaggregated. We must track whether women, people with disabilities and communities in underserved areas are being reached.

Women in Sport Policy Framework must be fully implemented. Federations receiving government support must demonstrate compliance with gender equity requirements. We note that R7,4 million has been targeted for Women in Boxing and R2,7 million for the development of young female athletes. But these amounts, while we welcome them, are a mere fraction of what a truly transformative programme demands. The salary disparities in the NFs must be resolved. Bafana Bafana and Banyana Banyana coach salaries must be aligned.

Hon members, payments for capital assets across the entire Vote have declined from R140 million in the 2025-26 financial year to R102,7 million in the 2026-27 financial year, a cut of R37,3 million or a 26,6% cut. It continues to decline to

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R91,6 million in 2026-27 and R77,8 million in 2028-29. In a country where communities in the North West, Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape still lack basic facilities, this trajectory is deeply problematic.

The ANC calls on the department to establish a dedicated infrastructure monitoring mechanism to address the persistent underspending and delays in capital transfer. The department must also work with municipalities and the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to maintain and expand recreational facilities for youth. Chairperson, despite the concerns raised, the ANC supports the Appropriation of Budget Vote 37, a total of R6,62 billion is allocated for sports, arts and culture heritage; within that, R652,6 million through the Mass Participation and Sport Development Grant to the provinces.

The 2026-27 annual performance plan has increased its annual targets from 25 to 34, signalling greater ambition and accountability. The ANC recognised that the department operates under fiscal constraints that are shared across the department, but those constraints must make it more important, not less important, that every rand is spent where it matters

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most - the schools in townships, schools located in underserved communities, women and youth in sport, and on clean governance in our federations and entities.

We continue to follow our slogan as a portfolio committee: #WeFollowTheMoney. The ANC supports Budget Vote 37. We do so with an expectation that the department will account for, will correct course and will place the people of South Africa at the centre of every programme that it implements. We support the budget with an expectation that the department will put mechanisms in place to revive incomplete projects that were identified during the oversight visit by the portfolio committee in 2025, namely, the R13 million Utlwanang library project that is left unattended in Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality, the R35 million sporting facility in Mmakau village in the Madibeng Local Municipality, and the Matlosana running track project in Jouberton, Klerksdorp.

In conclusion, as much as we appreciate the introduction of the Video Assistant Referee, VAR, we must make it very clear that the VAR implementation must be done within the prescripts of the law. It cannot be right that we accept the pronouncement of the Minister out of excitement, without the

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matter or the programme being included in the annual performance plan. We also reject the implementation of the project without any feasibility study. We also believe that it is quite important for us to always conduct a feasibility study before we begin to make an investment on any project. We call on the department to prioritise the implementation of the creative arts in schools. I thank you very much, hon Speaker.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Hon House Chair, when things go wrong, the person who gets blamed in the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, DSAC, in this country is me. So surely, when things go right, I must get part of the praise.

Our sport is in a very good state. People talk about Safa. Safa is not perfect, but I want to state it here that this Minister stands behind Safa. Safa has led the qualification of the 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations, Wafcon, has led the qualification of the Africa Cup of Nations, Afcon, and has led the under-20 team to become African champions. For the first time since 2002, we've qualified for the World Cup. Now, we cannot ignore these things, these are facts. To Safa, I want to say, the department is behind you. You have problems, but you are doing very well currently.

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Talking about the truth, it is not true that we've not given money to Mmabatho Stadium. We've given R10 million and the contractors are on site as we speak. It is not true that nothing is happening in sports development. George Stadium has been completed at a cost of R40 million. Eldorado Park Stadium is in the process of being serviced and being fixed. If we go further, Hon House Chair, and look at the stadium that has not been in existence, the old KwaMhlanga Stadium. But now it is functional as the Solomon Mahlangu Stadium. TS Galaxy has got a home. It is working and I want to mention that. Hon chair of the portfolio committee, we have given money to Mmabatho Stadium.

As far as the Sports Trust is concerned, and what it has done wrong, we cannot go on ... you know, you cannot criminalise development. As far as the hon Trollip, it's sad about all these accusations, because hon Trollip doesn't even know the difference between a swimming pool and a water reservoir. We are stepping in, as the department, with the Soweto Marathon.

The Saartjie Baartman Museum, everyone here knows the truth. The Saartjie Baartman Museum is not in my hands. It is in the hands of the Minister of the Democratic Alliance; you all know

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that. If you don't know that, then you do not know how government works.

Eighty-one chess players are going to Sri Lanka and Uganda under this leadership. The parents had to borrow money to send their children. And I want to congratulate Reverend Meshoe because he criticised, but he speaks the truth. You see, he does not lie, like the lies we've heard here about Mmabatho Stadium, that there's nothing happening, and that the Minister is doing nothing about the Saartjie Baartman Museum; the Minister is responsible.

The Cultural and Creative Industries Federation of SA, CCIFSA, from the 2014-15 financial year, has been getting money until Gayton McKenzie stepped in. Now, there's a report. So, we are not just accepting stuff, things are changing. As far as LIV Golf is concerned, you can't criticise LIV Golf unless you do not understand how issues work. People got jobs and our country was showcased.

As far as hon Gift is concerned, he is complaining that he doesn't see development. Things are changing and everyone here can see that things are changing. I don't know about VAR, I

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hear that we might do a feasibility study about it. What is unfeasible about VAR? We are going to follow the processes. Everything will be done according to plan.

I want to thank all the hon members who have voted for this budget. Whether you like it or not, facts are stubborn. We have built five times more facilities currently than what has been done in the past. CCIFSA is under forensic investigation. Stadiums are being built. Our sport is going forward. We are going to the World Cup. Things are really, really going well.

When people complain about lucky fans who are going to watch football, I find that to be very elitist because football is the heartbeat of the poor in this country. Now, the people who complain about football, they don't even know who's playing tonight. They don't even know who's in the league or what important games are there. Our football is so exciting. I want to thank Dr Irvin Khoza for leading the Premier Soccer League, PSL, into one of the most exciting leagues that there is.

I'm going to take what is being said here, and I'm going to learn from what the other members are saying. I want to congratulate the Deputy Minister for always supporting the

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projects and coming with very fresh ideas. Lastly, the director-general of this department, DG, you are one of the best people I've ever worked with. People can accuse you without evidence, but you continue doing the best. The DSAC and sports are at its best than it has ever been in this country under our leadership. Things are changing.

Hon Trollip says, I call myself the Minister of happiness. No, hon Trollip, the people are happy when they see me and you know that. You stand with me in Parliament, the workers want pictures, everybody comes to me, they're happy to see me. I'm sorry that they walk right past you or ask you to take the picture, not asking you for your picture. But do not say I'm giving myself names. People just love me and I ... [Time expired.]. Thank you.

Debate concluded.

The mini plenary session rose at 15:53.