

UNREVISED HANSARD

MINI PLENARY - NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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PROCEEDINGS OF MINI-PLENARY SESSION – COMMITTEE ROOM M64

Members of the mini-plenary session met at Committee Room M46 at 10:00.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate on Vote No 9 – Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation:

The MINISTER OF PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION: Hon Deputy Speaker, let me take this opportunity, of course, to acknowledge you. Let me also acknowledge the hon Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Seiso Mohai. Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ms Teliswa Mgweba, hon

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members of the Portfolio Committee on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, hon Members of Parliament, MPs, Acting Director-General, DG, of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation as well as all the other supporting staff that are here, distinguished guests, members of the media, fellow South Africans.

I'm honoured to deliver the 2026-27 budget vote of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation before the esteemed Parliament.

We present this budget vote in a special year in our nation's history as we commemorate 30 years of our democratic Constitution. The Constitution entrusts government with the responsibility to advance socioeconomic rights and an inclusive society, thereby ensuring the full enjoyment of freedom and democracy by our citizens.

I was just sharing with our Whip that I am now almost 50, I can't see well, but I forgot my reading glasses. I hope I will be able to just manage.

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We also present this budget vote just two days after celebrating Africa Day, a timely reminder that South Africa's development journey is linked to the progress of our continent and the broader global community.

South Africa continues to have a strong participatory democracy, which enables citizens to participate meaningfully and hold institutions accountable. This is made possible through a strong planning, monitoring and evaluation system, which makes it easier to see if their aspirations have been factored in the plans and to track the progress in the implementation of our key priorities.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation plays a central role in this process by coordinating planning in government, monitoring progress in the implementation of key priorities and developmental goals and evaluating the effectiveness and relevance of key government programmes.

The department does this through accountability mechanisms, which advance the building of an ethical and capable state by using Ministers' performance agreement aligned with the state of the nation address commitments, the Medium-Term Development

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Plan, MTDP, the National Development Plan, NDP, which is the vision 2030 of the South Africa we want live in, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The department understands that a strong function of coordinating planning across government minimises the risk of fragmentation, duplication and silos implementation. In this regard ... in addition, an integrated planning system helps to align government action around shared goals, link policies to budgets and ensure that political commitment are translated into implementable programs.

Thereby as South Africans participate in the upcoming local government elections on 4 November 2026, the department will continue to promote an all of society and an all of government approach to the implementation of government plans and strategic priorities and periodically produce reports to identify gaps and work with stakeholders to find lasting solutions.

Hon members, we appreciate that this Parliament has consistently affirmed the significance of our department and

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invite hon members to endorse the allocated budget to strengthen planning, monitoring and evaluation.

The department has been allocated an amount of R532,9 million to implement the annual performance plan, APP, for the 2026-27 financial year.

This allocation represents an increase of approximately R18,8 million compared to the previous financial year and reflects marginal growth of about 4% per annum over the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF.

The department will work with this allocation to effectively deliver its mandate and contribute meaningfully to improving the lives of our people, our fellow South Africans.

Hon Deputy Speaker, following the approval of the MTDP of 2024-29, the department facilitated the institutionalisation of the MTDP guiding national departments as well as provinces in developing plans that adequately reflect priorities of our Seventh Administration.

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A major area of work was assessed on 55 national and provincial draft annual performance plans to ensure alignment with our Medium-Term Development Plan. This process, which was undertaken in collaboration with the Auditor-General of SA, AGSA, marked an important shift from compliance-driven planning towards result based planning.

Our intention is to strengthen this partnership and drive the implementation of the MTDP priorities and in the process, advance the realisation of our National Development Plan vision aspiration which is, of course, the South Africa we all wish to live in.

While there has been notable progress, there is still much more that needs to be done in strengthening the planning, monitoring and evaluation environment.

In addition, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation operates without an explicit statutory mandate; and I think hon Manyi has been talking about that and pushing us for quite a while now to actually develop this.

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The department's mandate is currently informed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, the presidential proclamation number 47 of 2014, the Public Finance Management Act, PFMA, Act 1 of 1999 and the policy framework of integrated planning of 2022.

The absence of an explicit statutory mandate limits the department's authority to drive coherence, integration and consequence management across government. In this regard, the department has started the development of a White Paper on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. This is expected to be finalised by the end of the 2026-27 financial year and will subsequently guide the development of a Bill in the 2027-28 financial year.

This Bill will seek to guide the establishment of a coherent national development planning system, guide the process towards Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation's legislative mandate, draw lessons to strengthen coordination and integration across government, and introduce an enforceable mechanism for planning, monitoring and evaluation for our country.

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Hon Chairperson, the department is consistently strengthening its monitoring system to ensure accurate tracking of progress in the implementation of our MTDP. The identification of potential gaps and to drive implementation is very important.

Through this work, the department produces its depth by annual MTDP performance monitoring reports and they are actually happening as we speak.

In January this year, we hosted a media briefing to reflect on the performance of government against the MTDP in the first six months of the 2025-26 financial year.

The department has finalised the biannual report of October 2025 to March 2026 and there are clear signs that government is making steady progress towards the realisation of the MTDP priorities.

Once approved by Cabinet, the department will brief the portfolio committee on the latest biannual report after which the report will be released to the public. Our aim is to make this report accessible to all South Africans through

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deliberate effort to disseminate them widely amongst all stakeholders including Members of Parliament.

The department will also produce a mid-term monitoring report assessing performance of government against the MTDP over the past two and a half years. This will assist government to identify bottlenecks and intervene speedily to drive the implementation of the MTDP priorities.

Following the integration of the Department of Public Enterprise's functions, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation established a dedicated state-owned enterprise, SOE, reform unit to improve oversight, governance and sustainability across also e-portfolio. This unit has hit the ground running, working collaboratively with the presidential state-owned enterprise council, line Ministries and shareholder departments to drive the rationalisation, restructuring, repurposing and repositioning of the 26 major SOEs including our water boards.

This is aimed at ensuring that SOEs are optimally configured to support the national development priorities, strengthen service delivery and reduce fiscal risk.

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To support this work, the department has developed a comprehensive SOE rationalisation framework, a standardized national guideline for boards and Chief Executive Officers, CEOs, appointments. This is aimed at strengthening governance, accountability and leadership across SOEs.

The department is also ensuring that there is a standardised remuneration framework for SOE board members. These reforms are further supported by the National State-Owned Enterprise Bill that was tabled in Parliament in 2025 and the department's ongoing performance monitoring work including the 2025 annual SOE performance monitoring report, whose findings reinforce the agency of the reform program and strong accountability across SOEs.

Hon Chairperson during the 2025-26 financial year the department updated several key evidence frameworks and tools with their implementation and rollout becoming a major focus for the 2026-27 financial year. This includes the national evaluation policy framework of 2025, which was approved by cabinet in February 2026 to maintain standards on how evaluation and plans conducted and use across all spheres of government must be done.

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We have phased out the previous National Evaluation Plan and are now implementing the updated plan that supports the National Evaluation Policy Framework, NEPF, of 2025.

We're also strengthening partnership across the evaluation system, including the collaboration to be announced this afternoon with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, J-PAL, at the University of Cape Town, strengthening impacts and on evaluation.

We maintain similar partnership, of course, across government institutions and with civil society, academia, the private sector and the global partners.

The department also launched the geospatial information management system which lays the foundation for a national spatial data system that supports the spatial tracking of the MTDP implementation and improves the targeting of development priorities.

Our intention is to ensure that the development is understood, not only in terms of what is delivered, but where it is delivered, but most of all, who will benefit from it.

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Starting this month, we have commenced with a series of provincial roadshows to facilitate the adoption and implementation of these gyms in provincial and local government, beginning, of course, with the province of KwaZulu-Natal. We will reach out to other provinces during the course of this year.

The department has also updated its data strategy with the development of a Medium-Term Development Plan integrated reporting system, a dashboard which monitors progress against the set priorities and target of the MTDP of 2024 to 2029.

The department has begun with the phased deployment of this system, which is envisaged to modernise and improve the management of government performance information and support a range of reporting needs, including the biannual performance reporting.

The department will also be publishing a development indicators report of 2025 to track progress made against the NDP, which is, of course, the 2030 targets that we have set out for ourselves.

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Hon members, following this declaration of gender-based violence and femicide, GBVF, as a national disaster, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation continues to play its part in addressing the scourge of this GBVF in our society.

Over the past year the department completed a five-year review of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF and the expenditure review of the GBVF intervention.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is now drawing from this work to provide evidence support to joint response team led by the Department of Co-operative Governance.

The expenditure review, in particular, developed a standardised framework for tracking GBVF-related spending across government aligned to the standard chart account. Our research in this area highlights the importance to target result-driven multisectoral partnership in addressing systematic challenges.

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Over the past year, in collaboration with the Pan-African Collective for Evidence, the department also launched South Africa's first AI-powered living evidence map dedicated to addressing GBVF. The living evidence map is a user-friendly platform which centralises, organises and connects the best available evidence on GBVF. It brings together academic studies, community-based college, evaluation and government data in one accessible interface. And it is also designed in the main to support policymakers, civil society and business and citizens who seek to identify gaps and understand the scope and solution of GBVF.

In addition, we also work with the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to develop an improved plan in response to midterm evaluation on the National Youth Policy of 2020 to 2030.

Hon members, as custodians of the NDP, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation continues to work with other countries and stakeholders to advance the NDP 2030 goals for a better Africa and a better world.

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We continue to do so with the promotion of strategic partnership with countries of the global south and global north through initiatives such as the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development, AUDA-NEPAD, Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative, PICI, the Hamburg Sustainability Conference, HSC, and the Global Partnership Conference, which we recently had the honour to convene and co-host with the government of the United Kingdom.

In addition, we continue to implement the legacy programmes of South Africa's 2025 G20 Presidency by pursuing initiatives such as the Ubuntu Commission on Global Public Good.

The department remains committed to deepening partnerships that are practical, equitable as well as committed to inclusive development across all society.

Hon Chairperson, the work of the department reflects government's firm commitment to building a capable, ethical and developmental state. Through improved planning, rigorous monitoring, credible evaluation and strengthened oversight, we

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are laying out the foundation for more effective service delivery and inclusive development.

We look forward to continued collaboration with hon members in Parliament as we implement this programme of action in service to our people.

As I conclude, hon Chairperson, I would like to express appreciation to the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, hon Mgweba, as well as all the other members of the committee for their continued guidance. It's not easy, of course, sometimes they are harsh, but we appreciate that because it helps us to do what needs to be done.

Let me also express my appreciation to the Deputy Minister, Seiso Mohai, for his steadfast commitment and support. I also express my gratitude to all the members that are working in the administration of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for their hard work and commitment.

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I, therefore, invite the House to accept and adopt the budget vote of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. Ke a leboga. [Thank you.]

Ms T MGWEBA: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Minister, the hon Maropeng Ramokgopa, hon Deputy Minister, the hon Seiso Mohai, the acting, director-General, DG, and the team, hon members, Madam Deputy Speaker, today we are called upon not only to consider a budget but to interrogate whether the machinery of the is truly capable of delivering measurable outcomes that improve the lives of our people. At the centre of this debate is the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, the architect of government wide planning coherence and the custodian of performance accountability.

Hon members, the central question confronting us is whether our planning and monitoring systems contribute to producing outcomes or merely generate reports. The report clearly shows that while the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation has clearly strengthened performance monitoring systems and evidenced-based evaluation there remains a systematic risk that monitoring becomes compliance driven, rather than outcomes driven

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We must therefore insist on a shift from reporting outputs to demonstrating outcomes and impact from process monitoring to corrective action, from compliance to accountability for results. The true measure of the department's success is not a number of reports produced but whether those reports trigger the real changes across all departments.

Hon members, there is a notable progress in aligning the Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP, the National Development Plan, NDP, and the department's annual performance plan, APPs. The APPs demonstrate a deliberate focus on aligning planning across all spheres of government. Monitoring implementation of the National Development Plan and the MTDP priorities and strengthening the evidence system for decision-making.

An area requiring focus, is the budget prioritisation process. This requires policy coherence within the executive and government. However, hon members, alignment alone is not enough. We must ensure that the alignment translate into tangible service delivery improvements, measurable socioeconomic outcomes and clear accountability for failures.

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Parliament must therefore interrogate whether this alignment is real or is merely administrative.

Hon members, a significant development is the department's work on the planning White Paper which will form the legislative basis for planning, monitoring and evaluation. This is not a procedural exercise, it is a fundamental exercise firstly, to clarify the powers and functions of this department, to strengthen co-ordinating authority across all government department.

However, hon members, this committee has rightly raised concerns about reviewing organisational structures before legislation is finalised and the risk of misalignment between the structure and the future legal mandate. We must ensure hon members that legislation is fit-for-purpose, enforceable and capable of driving outcomes.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the committee has correctly emphasised processing the National State-owned Enterprise Bill. This reform hon members, is critical. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is expected to play a central role in monitoring the performance of state-owned enterprises, SOE.

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The Bill provides an opportunity to strengthen governance
reframe works and enhance accountability of all SOEs.

However, the oversight must not end with legislation. It must
ensure that monitoring tools are used effectively and findings
lead to real interventions.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the department, yes is allocate R533
million for 2026-27, which is not enough increasing modestly
over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF. However, the
committee has raised several issues. Hon Deputy Speaker, the
committee's role is clear. We must ensure that monitoring
leads to corrective action. Evaluation informs budget
reprioritisation. Planning translates into measurable outcomes
and resources are aligned to delivery capacity.

Hon members, we must always ask ourselves this question: Are
we strengthening a system that improve lives or merely
refining systems that report failure more efficiently? As part
of the portfolio committee, we support this Budget Vote No 9.
However, the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
stand at the heart of building a capable ethical and
developmental state. Its plans are credible. Its intend is

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sound, but its success will not be judged by the strategy, but it will be judged by the results on the ground.

Let us therefore, hon members be clear the era of planning without delivery must come to an end. The era of monitoring without accountability must end. We must insist on a state that is outcome-driven, evidence-based, and above all accountable to the people of South Africa. I thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr M MANYI: Hon Deputy Speaker, greetings everyone. The MK party rises to give a brutally honest analysis of Budget Vote No 9 of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and evaluation. Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africans are tired of sophisticated plans, endless reports and technical language that changes absolutely nothing in their daily lives.

This department receives more than 533 million yet nearly half of that budget some 46 od percent goes to Program 1 Administration. Almost 74% of the total budget goes to the compensation of employees. Yet despite of this enormous bureaucracy the department itself admits that monitoring

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findings are not translating into corrective government actions.

Hon Deputy Speaker, that is the clearest admission that this department in its current form is failing dismally. The Department of Planning , Monitoring and Evaluation was supposed to be the government's rottweiler an institution that bites when departments fail, when municipalities collapse, when targets are missed and when corruption destroys service delivery. Instead, it has become a toothless poodle. Why? For it has no meaningful enforcement powers. The hon Minister admits this but they do nothing about it. It can monitor failure and all these kinds of things and evaluation collapse, compile reports but it cannot compel consequences.

Whenever Parliament raises this problem, the standard and tired answer is always we are developing a White Paper, we are considering legislation and we are consulting stakeholders.

Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africans cannot eat consultation processes. After years of discussion this department still lacks legislative teeth required to force accountability

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across government. That is why municipalities continue collapsing while reports are written about their collapse.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we now turn to the state-owned enterprises holding companies. The MK party warns this House that South Africa risks creating more than a centralised mega structure for looting white colour crime, procurement manipulation and a feeding trough for connected private sector players. We are told this company will improve governance. We reject that blindly optimistic assumption. What usually happens in South Africa when government creates another large, centralised entity with weak accountability measures and concentrated procurement powers what we usually get is a feeding trough. Instead of simplifying governance, this model risks creating yet another expensive bureaucratic layer between government and operational entities. Another board structure, another executive layer, another procurement ecosystem, another opportunity for politically connected network to capture public resources, it becomes a mess.

Hon Deputy Speaker, another serious governance contradiction here, the Minister responsible for planning monitoring and evaluation will effectively become the executive over the

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public enterprises by another name. You know they told us that the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is dead. It is not dead it is back. She will be heading the new old Pravin's department while simultaneously acting as government's monitor and evaluator. In simple terms, the same Ministry becomes both player and referee. How can a department objectively monitor and evaluate state-owned entity, SOE, performance when it is politically and administratively embedded in the same governance architecture that is supposed to oversee? How is that possible?

This is a direct conflict of institutional responsibility. This should be obvious. The MK party asks a simple question. Why is government overcomplicating this matter? Why can line function departments not simply assume full political and policy responsibility for SOEs within their sector?

South Africa already has examples where this works under Minister Gwede Mantashe, the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources. That department oversees entities and strategic functions linked to multibillion rand industries without the need of a giant centralised holding company. Why not do just that? The same principle can apply elsewhere.

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Transport entities should fall under transport. Energy entities should fall under energy. Why is this complicated? Water entities must fall under water affairs. Defence industries under Defence. That create direct accountability. When rail collapses the Transport Ministry must answer. When electricity fails, the Electricity and Energy Ministry must answer. When ports fail there should be no confusion about where political responsibility lies. However, under the proposed holding company structure, accountability becomes diluted across boards, holding companies' departments, overlapping governance, it is just a *minglemoes*.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the MK party supports capable and strategic state-ownership. However, ownership without accountability becomes organised chaos. The truth is this South Africans are being asked to trust a new SOE supper structure, while existing SOEs remain in severe crisis.

Transnet cannot efficiently move freight, the Passenger Rail Agency of SA, Prasa remains dysfunctional in major cities. Economic loses continue mounting because of operational collapse. At the same time, let us pause and acknowledge that Eskom under Mr Dan Marokane has shown measurable operational

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improvement in reducing load shedding and stabilising generation and so on. That African Engineer with quiet competence deserves praises. Full stop. He cleaned up the De Ruyter hot mess.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we also note with concern continued use of consultants in a department already dominated personnel expenditure. Parliament itself has raised concerns about consultant costs and outsourcing.

The MK party supports a full disclosure of all consultant expenditure and a moratorium on unnecessary outsourcing until government proves existing officials cannot perform those functions.

We further reject the irrational sequencing restructuring of the department while the White Paper and its legislative framework remain incomplete. Surely if you know what you are doing you cannot redesign an institution before finalising the policy architecture that governs them. However, here we are.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the deeper crisis facing this department is not a shortage of reports. They have reports about reports.

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Evaluations about evaluations. Monitoring about monitoring.
What is absent is strategic vision and political courage.

South Africa does not suffer from lack of planning documents. It suffers from a lack of enforcement, consequence and accountability. Until this department receives legislative authority to compel corrective action across government, it will remain exactly where it is today. A toothless poodle. A department that watches failure without power to stop it.

The people of South Africa did not send the MK party here to supervise paperwork, they sent us here to remove incompetence, remove thieves and remove constitutional delinquent at the Union Building. The MK party is ready to deliver. As we vehemently reject this budget, we call on the people of South Africa to vote for the MK party on 4 November.

IsiZulu:

Amandla!

Ms K A CHRISTIE: Deputy Speaker, this department exists to monitor and evaluate every level of government. Their staff evaluate government policies and actions homing in on

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indicators like economic growth and employment and they measure the government's performance against the National Development Plan, NDP, of 2030 to see if we are getting anywhere. The NDP envisages an average annual GDP economic growth rate of 5,4%. This target would double the size of the economy, add 11 million new jobs and drastically reduce the country's poverty and inequality levels by 2030.

The NDP aims to lower the unemployment rate from 25% in 2012 to 6% by 2030. Where do we stand, Chair, as the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation monitors our progress? Our unemployment rate is 32,7% while its expanded rate, including discouraged job seekers, is 43%. Since 2000, the official rate has never dropped below 20%.

The broader structural crisis leaves youth unemployment at 44%, expanded unemployment for the youth over 65%. What will happen to generation as they grow older and remain jobless with no experience, our future mums and dads? Unemployment is a time bomb which we must defuse.

The National Planning Commission states that South Africa should be investing 30% of its GDP in gross fixed capital

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formation to drive inclusive economic growth. But actual gross fixed capital formation is half of that, 15% of GDP. Vast amounts of capital are accumulating in the financial system without being invested in productive fixed assets.

The National Planning Commission is appealing to businesses to unlock their capital and invest. So, what will motivate South Africans to invest and take the R1,5 trillion short up in savings accounts to start or grow a company? What will incentivise foreign companies to invest in South Africa, boosting employment? One, profits and the prospect of growing wealth. Two, the ease of doing business.

Well, do our policies and laws help businesses or do they hinder them? The current economic growth rate of a mere 1% indicates that they hinder them. If a business owner employs 50 staff and there is a demand for her products so that she could triple the size of her company and employ 150 people, surely, she would. But in South Africa, when she employs 51 people, she is subjected to all sorts of complex and restrictive regulations.

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She must part with 30% of the ownership of her business. Her management must be carefully structured. All while 100 people in places like my constituency in Khayelitsha are longing to join her company, even if it means starting at the bottom, working their way up into management as they gain skills and experience.

So, the businesswoman says to herself, firstly, I have to part with my wealth and ownership. Secondly, there is too much red tape. It is not worth it.

I will keep my company small, willingly, employ only 50 people and not additional 100. This story is multiplied around our country, explaining the 11 million jobless people.

We see South Africans with genuinely good ideas go overseas and startup businesses in the UK and USA where there are less hoops to jump through. You see, every time you put in a barrier, it does not matter how well-intentioned and noble that is, you stifle the potential for economic and organic growth.

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I am speaking up for my isiXhosa constituency in Khayelitsha, 100% black, 70% unemployed and disempowered, longing for any job, even an Expanded Public Works programme, EPWP job. But the ANC ward councilors keep those for their followers and acolytes. They are demoralised. They sit at home excluded, unable to add value to society with their many talents.

While the top politically connected and elite friends of the ANC share the spoils of R1 trillion between them, thanks to broad-based black economic empowerment, BBBEE legislation. So, does our legislation really empower most black people? Jobs are what empower people. To empower black people, enable them to get their first job. A few black people are jaw-droppingly rich, while the many are desperate for jobs.

IsiZulu:

... bafuna ukusebenza ...

English:

A few eat, and eat, and eat, and the many go hungry. The President tells us to hang our heads in shame, questioning his well-intentioned but failing policies.

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Should he not hang his head in shame, as black economic empowerment, BEE, has created a politically connected elite, living in eye-watering wealth, while many black people go hungry. So, if after monitoring our progress, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation finds we are actually regressing in achieving the National development Plan, NDP, targets, do we double down and insist on failing our policies? Or do we go back to the drawing board and rethink our approach for Ubuntu? If our ideology is causing hunger for the masses, but extreme wealth for a few, we are callous and indifferent. When told the people do not have bread, Queen Marie Antoinette of France said, "let them eat cake".

Well, we know what happened to her. Her indifference lost her head. In our democracy, the indifference of the majority party in the Government of national Unity, GNU, will lose them their votes and their power.

Back to the budget of half a billion rands, I hope our department will be able to earn its keep, reporting on our progress in the coming year. They will, if we bring reform.

IsiXhosa:

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Enkosi.

Mr C MATIWANE: Let me take this opportunity to greet the Chairperson of the session and the House at large. We greet you all in the name of economic freedom in our lifetime.

IsiXhosa:

Umbhali uPaulo Reglus Neves Freire uthi:

Amazwi angenanyaniso, angakwaziyo ukuguqula inyaniso abaneziphumo ezigwenxa xa intsingiselo yawo imbaxa inyanzeliswa kwizinto ezisisiseko. Xa amazwi esohluthwa bubungakanani besenzo, ukucinga ngokwenzekayo kuyabandezeleka kwaye eli lizwi liyatshintsha libe yincoko engenamsebenzi, libeyintetha njee yokuhanahanisa. Loo mazwi, ngamazwi njee angenakuguqula ihlabathi kuba ukugxeka akunakwenzeka ngaphandle kokuzinikela kwengoku kwaye akukho ngoku ngaphandle kwezenzo.

English:

Year in, year out, the government through the President makes promises during the state of the nation address with each year, the promises get bigger as hope is currency for

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deceivers of the people. No one stops to evaluate the previous year's promises, such as the million houses once promised to the people of Alexandra.

This chain of empty talk is repeated at the provincial government level and ultimately at the local government level with pomp and ceremony. The difficulty with this is that people cannot eat words. The Auditor-General is tasked with monitoring financial management across all spheres of government.

Over the years, there have been attempts to go beyond the numbers on paper as they can easily be manipulated. However, this has been a challenge for the Auditor-General as their scope is limited for performance management. Over and above the billions of rands that are flagged for unauthorised, irregular, wasteful, and fruitless expenditure, the Auditor-General has found that the performance information in most Organisational Development Tools, ODTs, leaves much to be desired as it is treated as a by the way.

A project can be at 90% on spending on the budget while the actual work is at a lousy 10%. These are the realities that we

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need to grapple with as this House. Communities have lost hope in the executive and Parliament because of the lack of implementation of the things that we promised the people. Performance reporting is taken only as a need to comply with reporting rubrics instead of a culture of quality service delivery. Thus, the promise of a better life for all keeps fading away with each unfulfilled promise.

Although South Africa is faced with an unemployment crisis, we must, however, condemn the fact that this department spend 74% of its budget on salaries, which is a domino effect on the funding of other critical programs that will enable it to fulfill its core mandate.

The department has allocated a paltry R2,8 million for capital projects that would unlock the digital transformation undertakings for integrated planning, reporting, and data governance.

Let us look at some of the key areas of responsibility such as the District Development Model, DDM, and the National Spatial Development Framework through the lenses of the oversight visits that we conducted in Gauteng and Mpumalanga at the

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beginning of this year. On paper, the DDM should be a tool for ending silo mentalities within government. However, similar with the intergovernmental forums that are supposed to iron out integrated planning and implementation challenges across the three spheres of government, these platforms are merely treated as a matter of compliance where junior administrators are set to sign the register.

In Mpumalanga, a multi-billion rent project has stalled due to the lack of integrated planning, which the DDM is meant to solve. The Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce market runs the risk of being a white elephant because the provincial government is not aligned with the City of Mbombela in terms of what must happen. While the Transnet Recovery Plan has made commitments to move from road to rail, which would assist in driving down the cost of living associated with transport and reduce the cost of maintenance for national roads. However, the development patterns continue to mirror those of colonial apartheid.

Rail networks in the Free State and the Eastern Cape are abandoned, which are an easy route for the movement of agricultural products and people. This goes against the vision

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of the National Spatial Development Framework, NSDF, of decentralising the economy. This is indicative of a government that pays lip service to the transformation of the South African economy. As our economy remains extractive with little attention given to rural and peri-urban economic hubs such as Umtata or Bethlehem in the Free State, which would unlock economic spinoffs for locals. Therefore, as the EFF, we reject this budget. Thank you.

INKOSI N Z BUTHELEZI: Hon Deputy Speaker, Minister, Deputy Minister, hon members and fellow South Africans, the IFP welcomes Budget Vote 9 and acknowledges the important role this allocation plays in strengthening oversight across the state.

In reviewing this allocation, we must commend the department for several progressive strides, particularly the fiscal support redirected to absorb the State-Owned Enterprises, SOE, Reform Unit function following the dissolution of the Department of Public Enterprises.

The introduction of the National State Enterprises Bill is an admirable legislative step that seeks to overhaul how South

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Africa oversees its major state companies by replacing a fragmented system with a coherent, professional and accountable model of ownership. Equally commendable is the above inflation growth rate allocated for the Frontline Service Delivery Monitoring Programme, which reflects a clear commitment to tracking citizens' lived experiences through extensive site visits.

To build on these notable achievements, we must collaboratively address specific operational constraints to ensure that a constructive solution immediately follows every challenge we identify. In light of this, a large share of the budget is absorbed by employee compensation, yet the department concedes that it lacks sufficient funding to support its own structure. Operating with fewer staff under a strict hiring moratorium limits oversight capacity. Completing the current restructuring process by the mid-term review period will allow the executive to lift the moratorium on critical technical vacancies and ensure frontline monitoring teams are fully capacitated.

A further matter of concern is the frequency of Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP, monitoring reports. In a context

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defined by climate disasters and local government instability, annual reporting is not enough. By partnering with universities and research institutions, the department can co-author quarterly localised risk updates. Crucially, these outputs must move beyond mere compliance exercises and explicitly provide quantifiable proof that ordinary citizens' quality of life has directly improved as a consequence of these monitoring efforts.

Administrative non-compliance is an area of urgent attention and correction. Recent irregular expenditure did not stem from unlawful actions as such, but from officials misinterpreting supply chain prescripts and acting outside their authority. Therefore, the mandatory enrolment of all supply chain officials into accredited compliance training before the end of the second quarter will eliminate procedural errors, protect the fiscus and set a benchmark for clean governance.

Hon Chairperson, notwithstanding what I have said, considering the difficult road our parastatals have travelled, there can be no doubt that delivery will now be a subject of intense scrutiny against the highest governance standards. This will

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be achieved by having a robust board populated by men and women of integrity. I thank you.

Mr E HENDRICKS: Hon Deputy Speaker, Minister, Deputy Minister, chairperson of the portfolio committee, hon members and all departments, although we support Budget Vote 9, the Patriotic Alliance rises today to debate Vote 9: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. This vote is about whether government delivers on its promises, whether policy translates into action and whether accountability is more than just words on paper.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation has failed to prevent the school placement crisis, housing injustice and service delivery breakdown. These failures are not isolated, they are systematic. Vote 9 must ensure that governments are held accountable when they fail citizens. Monitoring without enforcement is meaningless. Reports are compiled, statistics are published, but communities continue to suffer. In places like Knoflokskraal and the Cape Flats, citizens see no change despite repeated complaints.

The Patriotic Alliance insists that Vote 9 must not only measure failures, but it must also compel action. Planning

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must be rooted in reality. Too often, government plans are disconnected from the lived experiences of ordinary South Africans. Children are placed far from home, siblings are split between schools and families are left without housing. Vote 9 must ensure that planning reflects the needs of people, not the convenience of bureaucrats.

Hon Chair, Vote 9 is not about monitoring, it's about justice. A government that fails to act on its own evaluation betrays its people. On behalf of the Patriotic Alliance, we call for a department that enforces accountability, ensures transparency and delivers real change. Vote 9 must be an engine of action, not the archive of excuses. I thank you.

Mr R A P TROLLIP: Hon Deputy Speaker, if this department is truly monitoring government performance honestly and effectively, why does the public only ever hear glowing self-assessments from government? Why is it every crisis accompanied by another presentation claiming progress, while millions of South Africans experience decline and maladministration in their daily lives? The question should be, what are we paying for in this department?

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ActionSA has been monitoring and evaluating this government for the past two years through our Government of National Unity, GNU, Performance Tracker, a comprehensive index designed to track the performance of South Africa's GNU, and the numbers paint an indicting picture.

A bloated cabinet spends nearly R400 million every year on travel and accommodation. Taxpayers spend R4,5 billion annually on very important persons, VIP, protection for the politically connected few. Economic growth sits at just 1,1% generously, while comparable developing economies grow at 3% or 4%. Unemployment has reached 43,7%, the highest rate in our democratic history, despite the National Development Plan, NDP, promising to increase economic growth and reducing unemployment.

In the first quarter of this year, 345 000 South Africans lost their jobs. That's 30 000 a week, 6 000 jobs every day. These are not statistics. These are livelihoods destroyed, families pushed into desperation and South Africans who had work but now join the nearly 12 million people unable to find employment and who have given up looking altogether. Small businesses remain trapped in a hostile business environment.

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Our freight rail networks continue to stagnate. Our ports continue ranking amongst the worst performers globally, and yet this government congratulates itself. Are there any monitoring and evaluation of the alarming 6% growth in the illicit economy? Why is this being allowed to balloon at the cost of the legal economy and the national fiscus?

Where there has been some improvement, such as in Eskom's Energy Availability Factor improving from roughly 55% two years ago to approximately 65% in the last financial year, this remains below Eskom's own target of 70%. This improvement has, however, contributed to South Africa recently marking 365 days without load shedding. But should we be congratulating a fish for swimming? No. We need to identify why we got into this mess in the first place, noting also that ongoing load reduction continues to affect people's lives. We note reductions in the murder rate and gender-based violence statistics but not forgetting that they remain at unparalleled highs.

These outcomes beg the question, what are we paying for in this department? On paper, this department appears coherent. Its indicators appear technically sound. Its strategic

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documents are polished and sophisticated, as was the Minister's speech, but it remains a department of what we are going to do. Government cannot PowerPoint or speech its way out of failure.

The real test of monitoring and evaluation is not how many reports are produced, whether these reports result in corrective action, whether failed departments are held accountable, whether bad policies are changed, or whether budgets are reprioritised towards outcomes that improve the lives of South Africans. That is where this department and the GNU continue to fall short.

I note the chairperson's comments in this regard, and I applaud her for them. The department itself admits that it lacks enforcement authority and relies largely on influence and persuasion across government. So, the department produces increasingly sophisticated reports about a state whose delinquent performance militates against change and performance.

I recall our visits to the SA Post Office, SA Airways, SAA, and Statistics SA. You know, I told the Post Office at the

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time that what they're doing is like trying to put lipstick on a pig. SAA said they were turning their thing around and that they were showing profit. No, they're not ... [Time expired.] ... that's been debunked now. ActionSA cannot support this budget. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION:
Deputy Speaker and hon Minister in the Presidency for
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, me Maropene Ramokgopa, hon chairperson of the committee and hon members of the committee, comrades and friends, also recognise media houses that are present here.

From the onset, our department welcomes a robust engagement, constructive engagement. We do understand that criticism and self-criticism, its intention is not to kill but to cure the disease. So, we do agree with constructive engagement.

However, we also disagree with exaggerated views
self-aggrandisement by some of the opposition parties here and those who engage in the counterproductive engagements, especially well-travelled hon member Trollip. You have visited

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different political parties, but you have not yet found a view of what will rebuild South Africa.

Our budget vote today is being considered during a period designated Africa Month celebration in our national calendar. The twin questions that arise are whether our long-term planning is integrated to the African Union agenda, Vision 2063. If the answer is yes, how does our long-term planning assist us to realise the Africa of our dreams, the Africa we want?

We present this budget vote at a defining moment in the road to democracy and evolution of a people-centred system of governance. We continue to implement the medium-term development plan, which is the blueprint guiding the work of the Seventh Administration that must unlock inclusive growth and service delivery in the spirit of Batho Pele.

The ministry continues to serve as the heartbeat of government's developmental agenda. It does so by driving coherence in planning, strengthening performance monitoring, elevating the use of evidence, and ensuring that our intervention meaningfully support the achievement of the

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National Development Plan. Hence, we agree with the chairperson of the committee when she says that this department has got to change the behaviour of government to be a coherent machinery that delivers service and ensure that it monitors the entire system of governance in our country.

When President Cyril Ramaphosa issued a clarion call, said:

Through Operation Vulindela, we are working to transform the structure of our economy to fix our infrastructure and make our electricity, water and logistics sectors more competitive and efficient.

We need to engage with issues like this. The work of the departments then at the intersection of accountability, coordination and reform and strategic foresight. It is here that we lay the foundation for a capable, ethical and developmental state.

As the Minister detailed earlier, these aspirations are encapsulated in the following sustained targeted departmental outcomes that are geared to reshape the state effectiveness, thus; improve governance and institutional capacity within the

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Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, DPME, first and foremost, improve government-wide planning and alignment with national priorities, continuous assessment of progress towards Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP, and National Development Plan, NDP, targets, strengthen evidence systems for decision making and enhance stakeholder engagement across sectors.

These outcomes are underpinned by robust outputs, including comprehensive monitoring reports, strengthened performance indicators, improve digital reporting and targeted planning assessments. Through these mechanisms, the department aim to reinforce the link between planning, budgeting, implementation and accountability across all spheres of government.

Our approach is aligned to the government-wide district development model, advocating for one government, one plan, one budget. We are providing solution to problems close to their area where they originate, right at the cold phase of service delivery. For an example, we have been in Umtata as promised to assess the extent of the damages the infrastructure basic services provision post June 2025 flood

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disaster and has been a multi-government response to a number of challenges in that area.

We determined the required intervention for improved and coordinated response by all spheres of government. South Africa's development challenges, ranging from unemployment, poverty service delivery gaps, and institutional weaknesses demand a strategic centre of government that is agile, future focused, and uncompromising on results.

I am encouraged by the department's continued commitment to modernise the planning system, improving government-wide performance reporting, and championing the use of rigorous evidence to inform policy and resource allocation.

In this regard, our department recently convened an improvement planning workshop involving seven national departments and six provinces participating in the Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme. The review highlighted the need for stronger intergovernmental coordination and correct prioritisation of geolocation of these bridges to maximize impact to communities.

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About 126 bridges have been completed. While there is more to do, a feedback from citizen indicates improved safety, living condition where bridges were delivered. It is precisely this agency to develop an agency to attend to these challenges. The Minister mentioned geospatial information management system, which the Minister launched, on the 19th of September 2025.

And this launch, the Minister found practical expression where we unveiled the GM's implementation in Durban last week at eThekweni in partnership with the city. The successful events have as a launching pad and beginning of local, provincial, community, and sector-based national roadshows.

For too long, our planning and reporting systems have operated in silos often disconnected from geographic realities on the ground. We have relied heavily on exaggerated data, which while useful, does not always tell us where interventions are working, where gaps persist, where urgent action is required. So, these gems represent a fundamental shift in how government understands, plans and measures development.

Our view is that effective planning and evaluation needs to be anchored in credible evidence, rigorous research and

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continuous learning. In this regard, the department has prioritised effort to strengthen collaboration between government, academic and research community. During the past financial year, the department coordinated and sustained strategic partnerships with universities and professional bodies, including the National School of Government, the Public Service Commission, various universities, I would not mention by name, as well as forums such as South African Association of Public Administration and Management, and South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association.

These partnerships are critical for advancing evidence-based planning, monitoring and evaluation across the state. Through this platform, government practitioners and academics engage directly on issues of governance, reform, institutional capability, development outcomes and policy implementations.

We are aware that the challenges facing South Africa cannot be addressed by government alone. Therefore, the department continues to advance the whole of government approach. Our assessment has been validated by the Deputy President when he said that our department will be monitoring saving of energy, especially at public institutions such as schools and courts.

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And this approach is evident in programs such as Transparency, Integrity and Accountability Programme implemented in partnership with government of Germany. Through this program, the departments, oversight bodies, civil society organizations, and research institutions are working hard to strengthen our institution to prevent corruption, ethics management, and transparent public procurement.

Over time, the department has institutionalised the practices and discipline of assessing policy and implementation outcome through frontline monitoring. And we will intensify this work and ensure that even the biannual reports that the Minister highlighted are reports that account concretely on the lived experiences of our people.

So, to conclude, we will continue as a department to emphasise that DPME is intentional in building synergies for improved delivery of outcomes, connecting plans to implementation, and ensure that government to citizen policy to evidence and state to society.

The department is contributing meaningfully to building a state that is capable, ethical, responsive, and focused on

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results by strengthening collaboration with academia, deepening stakeholder engagement, expanding frontline monitoring, developing institutional capacity, and amplifying citizens' voices.

We look forward to continued partnership with Parliament in strengthening accountability, oversight, and developmental outcomes for all South Africans. I thank you.

Setswana:

Ke a leboga.

Ms M J APHIRI: Hon Deputy Speaker, Minister in the Presidency, the Deputy Minister, the chairperson of the portfolio committee and hon members, fellow South Africans. I stand before this august House today on behalf of the ANC to support this Budget Vote for the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Hon members, this budget is not a mere collection of fiscal projections or abstract targets, but the programmatic blueprint for building a capable, resilient and developmental state.

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Madam Deputy Speaker, in our 2024 election manifesto, the ANC made an unbreakable sacred covenant with the people of South Africa to aggressively build an inclusive economy, accelerate massive infrastructure investment and strengthen the delivery of basic frontline services.

The Batho Pele principles should not only be on paper but also be experienced by the people we serve. Restoring the dignity of our people is also linked to how we serve them. Hon members, no nation can build a sustainable, equitable future on short-term impulses or fragmented interventions. If you plan for an election cycle, you fail the next generation.

That is why central planning must be positioned as the nervous system of our developmental state. At the centre of this structural vision is the National Planning Commission. This National Planning Commission is our long-term strategic radar.

The development of institutional technical capacity within the National Planning Commission, NPC, is critical to ensure the National Planning Commission continually plays a role in advising on policy implementation plans in different spheres.

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The capacity of the National Planning Commission to model policy implementation with a long-term horizon is vital. As we prepare for the long-term planning cycle post-2030, we should use the next cycle as an opportunity to develop robust capabilities of the NPC.

Without the institutionalised predictive capability, our infrastructure deployment and fiscal allocation will be reactive, excessively costly and structurally inefficient. Global markets are overflowing with private institutional capital, searching for a stable, long-term, high-impact investment destination. One of our structural bottlenecks is poor projection preparation.

We cannot crowd in adequate private capital to support infrastructure development without eroding state control. We should crowd in capital with bulletproof, bankable and highly technical feasibility studies to ensure optimal financial sector assets allocated for infrastructure development.

This requires a focused approach to monitor project preparation, to massify development to be financed and to monitor contract management to enhance project implementation.

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To fix this, we must massify our national infrastructure development in the pipeline with shovel-ready projects covering the medium term.

We take direct guidance from the groundbreaking National Planning Commission report on financial architecture. This report provides both the diagnostic truth and the clear structural remedy. We must reform our financial architecture and seamlessly blend public and private capital aggressively, de-risk large-scale projects at an early stage and create a transparent multi-year pipeline that gives state financing institutions and domestic and global investors the concrete confidence to deploy trillions of rands into our national terrain.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we do not build infrastructure for the sake of abstract microeconomic metrics or statistical vanity. We build it to restore dignity for the working class of this country. Our capital allocation remains dual-focused on social and economic infrastructure to transform frontline service delivery.

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When we invest, Madam Deputy Speaker, in social infrastructure, we are investing directly in basic human dignity. We mean building and maintaining the schools, hospitals, roads, a reliable bulk water treatment plant, and the safe sanitation system that our communities rightfully demand.

Simultaneously, we are scaling up economic infrastructure, the very engine of sustainable growth. This means overhauling our freight rail corridors, expanding our port capacities, securing our energy grids, and modernising our road networks. By doing that, we lower the cost of doing business, unlock localised manufacturing, link isolated rural economies to major urban markets, and create the rapid economic growth needed to safely break the back of unemployment, poverty, and inequality.

Finally, hon members, let us confront the historic legal weakness that has often diluted our planning efforts. For too long, the strategic directives of our Central Planning Authority have been treated across various spheres of state as polite, optional recommendations. Through the budgetary

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resources allocated today, this department is finalising a comprehensive White Paper on planning.

This White Paper is the foundational precursor to a decisive legislative intervention, the introduction of formal binding planning legislation. This upcoming legislation will give our national planning framework real sharp institutional teeth. It will make the decisions and directives of the department legally binding and consequential.

If an organ of state, a province, or a municipality attempts to allocate capital or build infrastructure outside the strict boundaries of our national spatial and economic planning frameworks, there will be immediate hard legal and budgetary consequences.

In conclusion, the ANC manifesto explicitly directed us to defend our democratic gains, deepen transformation, and accelerate economic growth. Let us approve this budget, let us roll up our sleeves, and let us transform our society and create a better life. Our people are waiting.

I thank you.

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Mr W M THRING: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP is of the view that the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation carries a responsibility central to the success of government itself, because policies, programmes, and budgets mean little if they are not properly monitored, honestly evaluated, and effectively implemented.

South Africans are increasingly frustrated by the widening gap between the government, promises, and service delivery realities on the ground. The ACDP notes the allocation of some R514,6 million to the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation and asserts that this budget must strengthen the department's ability to ensure that government planning is coherent, delivery measurable, and accountability transparent.

Yet serious weaknesses remain. There exists a poor alignment between departmental annual performance plans and the Medium-Term Development Plan, while simultaneously the rollout of the geospatial information management strategy has stalled. Across government, we continue to witness poor coordination, delayed infrastructure projects, persistent underspending, and weak implementation.

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Far too often, monitoring becomes a compliance exercise instead of a mechanism for corrective action. The true measure of this department is not the number of reports it produces but whether its work leads to measurable improvements in the lives of citizens and this is what is not seen.

The ACDP believes this department must become a far stronger driver of accountability and consequence management across government. We recommend firstly the strengthening of real-time monitoring systems. Failures are far too often identified only after public money has been lost. Digital monitoring dashboards and quarterly public reporting mechanisms should be expanded so departments are held accountable throughout the financial year.

Secondly, the ACDP recommends that there must be a stricter consequence management for non-performance procurement irregularities and repeated audit failures. Monitoring without accountability weakens governance and erodes public trust.

Thirdly, we recommend drastically improved coordination between national, provincial and local government because departments continue operating in silos while struggling

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municipalities lack support and oversight, but integrated planning and faster intervention mechanisms are urgently needed.

As kingdom builders, the ACDP positions that South Africans do not need more bureaucracy which paralyzes development, but a capable ethical state undergirded by good governance that delivers results. This budget must strengthen oversight, restore accountability and ensure that every rand spent delivers meaningful value to the people of South Africa.

Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr D BERGMAN: Today, we debate the Budget Vote of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. I suppose it is a celebration considering that most of us spoke off the same song sheet, but we debate the Budget Vote of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. The observation tower that should strive to be more like the situation room. We know planning matters. We've heard that monitoring should matter and evaluation is yet to find an honest outlet that could matter.

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A capable state is not built through speeches, slogans, or good intentions. It is built through measurable delivery, reliable data, honest oversight and a relentless focus on outcomes. This budget must place continued emphasis on evidence-based planning, improving intergovernmental co-ordination, strengthening performance monitoring and building a more professional public administration. These are not glamorous functions. They do not cut ribbons or dominate headlines, but they are foundational to effective governance.

The truth is simple, if government cannot plan properly, monitor honestly, and evaluate rigorously, then service delivery will always disappoint our people. South Africa does not suffer from a shortage of policy frameworks, strategic documents, or ambitious targets. In many respects, we are a country rich in plans.

The National Development Plan remains one of the most comprehensive long-term policy visions on the continent. Departments produce strategic plans, municipalities produce integrated development plans, and provinces produce growth strategies, and yet, despite all this planning, too often the lived experiences of South Africans tell a very different

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story. Projects stall, infrastructure deteriorates, targets are missed, budgets are underspent, reports are delayed, and communities are left frustrated. We therefore have to confront an uncomfortable but necessary truth as a state. We are punching far below our weight.

South Africa possesses extraordinary institutional capability. With the size of our civil service, we should have a mean-clean working machine along with our progressive constitutional framework admired across the world. However, too often we fail at the basics, not because we lack intelligence, not because we lack legislation, but because implementation discipline is inconsistent and this is precisely why the work of the department matters so deeply.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation must become the engine room of execution within government. It must ensure that planning is not theoretical, but it is practical. That monitoring is not cosmetic, but it is honest, and that evaluation is not an academic exercise but a mechanism for improvement.

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Hon Chairperson, in addition, a major challenge facing the government is not the absence of reports. It is the quality, speed, and usefulness of these reports. Too often reports arrive late, incomplete, overly technical, or disconnected from the miserable outcomes. Too often departments report on activities instead of impact.

We hear how many meetings were held, how many workshops took place, and how many stakeholders were consulted. However South Africans want to know, did schools improve? Did hospitals function better? Did crime decrease? Did infrastructure get repaired? Did unemployment fall? Did communities feel the difference? That is a standard we must aspire to.

Monitoring and evaluation must move beyond compliance and become a culture of performance. The culture begins with getting these basics right - basic project management, basic consequence management, basic data integrity, basic co-ordination between departments and a basic follow-through. If those fundamentals improve, the capacity of the South African state could increase dramatically without necessarily increasing expenditure. Because in many cases our greatest

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challenge is not a lack of money, it is inefficiency, fragmentation, duplication, and weak execution.

The GNU represents an opportunity to reset silo thinking with collaboration and an opportunity to place delivery to citizens above political point scoring. In that spirit, the department should not merely monitor departments after failure occurs. It should become an early warning system for government. It should identify risks earlier, escalate implementation failures faster, track underperforming programmes more aggressively and ensure that the Cabinet receives real-time honest assessments of delivery performance because problems ignored become crises and delayed interventions become expensive interventions.

Our people are not asking for perfection, they're just asking for competence, for consistency, for urgency, and for results. The credibility of the democratic state ultimately depends not on what government promises but on what government can deliver, and that is why this budget matters. If we get the basics right, this country can move from managing decline to driving progress, and that must be the mission of this department and indeed of this GNU. I thank you.

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Ms A N KUMBACA: Hon Chairperson, hon Minister and Deputy Minister, hon Chairperson of the portfolio committee, hon members, and fellow South Africans. Let me take this opportunity to join the nation in congratulating Amabhakhaniya and ... equally congratulate Mamelodi Sundowns for continuing to fly the South African flag high on the continental stage. Hon members and fellow South Africans, I rise today in steadfast support for Budget Vote No 9. Hon members, a capable state is measured by the lives it changes.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation stands at the centre of that responsibility. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is the nerve centre of the state machinery. It is the institution responsible for ensuring that government delivers measurable change in the lives of its people.

At a time when citizens demand accountability, efficiency and visible service delivery, the role of DPME becomes even more important. The department sits at the centre of ensuring that the ideals of the National Development Plan and the Medium-Term Development Plan are translated into practical outcomes for ordinary South Africans. Despite the developmental

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challenges impacting the people, the government has begun to turn the tide against mismanagement.

Judicial commissions appointed by the President have contributed to restoring governance and monitoring reports do reflect that. The Zondo Commission has led to nearing R11 billion, and the Mpati Commission has led to a recouping of R19 billion by the Public Investment Corporation, safeguarding the investments of our workers. The Madlanga Commission is also yielding outcomes. Criminal prosecution actions are in the public. All these measures contribute to tackling crime and corruption and help the government meet critical development objectives.

The national government has been undertaking various interventions to support state entities, such as Eskom and to support local municipalities, mainly to ensure we restore the dilapidated infrastructure to improve the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, roads and electricity.

This budget must be understood within the difficult fiscal environment confronting our country. Yet, despite these constraints, government continues to invest in strengthening

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the capacity of the state to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate performance across all spheres of government. The department has been allocated R533 million for the 2026-27 financial year. While some may say this is simply yet another budget allocation. As the ANC, we understand that this investment is about improving governance, strengthening accountability, and ensuring that public funds produce real development outcomes.

The strategic priorities identified by the department are both necessary and timely. These include improving capability, institutionalising the Medium-Term Development Plan, strengthening evaluation systems, and enhancing implementation, monitoring, and modernising digital planning and reporting systems. They go directly to the heart of whether clinics function properly, whether infrastructure projects are completed on time, and whether municipalities respond to citizens and whether departments use public resources effectively.

A capable development state remains one of the most important instruments for advancing youth empowerment and restoring hope to a generation determined to shape the future of South Africa. Fellow South Africans, one of the most important

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interventions of this department is in its work on strengthening evidence governance. For far too long, in many parts of the world, governance has often been driven by political slogans instead of measurable evidence. The DPME is helping government move toward a culture where policy decisions are informed by data evaluation and measurable outcomes. The department's work in co-ordinating the National Development Plan and aligning departmental plans across government is equally critical.

The broad-based black economic empowerment remains a critical pillar in the transformation and reconstruction of our economy. In supporting Budget Vote No 9, we reaffirmed that meaningful economic participation is a constitutional and development imperative aimed at correcting the structural injustices of apartheid and advancing inclusive growth. Don't let the DA mislead you, fellow South Africans, and don't allow the DA to erase the injustices of the past 32 years later.

The ANC remains committed to building a capable, ethical, and developmental state that places the people at the centre of governance. This budget strengthens that vision and equips the

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state to become a more responsive, more accountable, and more effective in delivering dignity to our people.

South Africans are not asking for promises. They are asking for action. They are asking for functioning municipalities, quality public services, and leadership that delivers measurable change in their daily lives. Budget Vote No 9 contributes meaningfully towards that responsibility. It is for those reasons that the ANC proudly supports Budget Vote No 9. I thank you.

The MINISTER OF PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION: Hon Chairperson of the session, and let me thank all the interventions that were made here by hon members of this portfolio committee. As I have already said in the beginning, we don't take them as a criticism, but we take them as something that would construct the broader atmosphere that needs to govern the issue that deals with planning, monitoring and evaluation. Fortunately, or unfortunately, for us to be able to successfully execute our responsibility, we have to do that by producing data - the reports.

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Those reports are necessary, not only for us to assist or do what we need to do, but for this Parliament to exercise their oversight. Without the reports and the data generated by our department, we will not be able to adequately, clearly and directly deal with the oversight that we need to do to ensure that different departments do what they are supposed to do as well. My understanding is that Parliament's responsibility is to play oversight, not just for the sake of playing oversight, but to ensure that departments do what they said they would do.

It is for this reason that the annual performance plan, APP, comes to Parliament to be processed so that they can be implemented. Through our work and our report and the data that we produce, you are able to assess whether those APPs are aligned with what we said we would do in this administration or whether they are not aligned. We have recently decided as a department and we are still going to take it to Cabinet to be approved.

As part of what we have presented over the past week, we will require an opportunity to issue a certificate for each department before it appears before Parliament, to ensure that

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its APP is aligned with our stated commitments. The reason we are doing that is precisely because most of our APPs are not necessarily aligned. This is where we would agree that in the absence of legislation that allows us to determine whether an APP is not aligned, it means that it will regress some of the things that we have put in place through data that we were able to generate.

So, I am saying this precisely because it becomes important to understand why this department has invested a lot in generating data that would give us scientific evidence-based intervention that is needed not only by departments but also by all the spheres of government, including Parliament itself, and the judiciary. Indeed, the data and reports we have produced, particularly those presented to government - Cabinet, and various institutions, have played an important role in informing decision-making. Through these engagements, government has been able to review, adjust, and improve a number of its policies, programmes, and interventions. For example, the hon Kumbaca have spoken about some of the interventions that we have seen in government, that was informed by the data that we have produced.

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These reports are important because they provide direction and serve as a mirror through which government can assess its performance and identify what needs to be done. What we need to do, moving forward, is to ensure that we implement. If we do not have credible implementation processes, we will continue to produce policies that may not deliver the change we need. However, it also becomes the responsibility of Parliament to utilise the data we provide and the reports we issue to monitor departmental performance and ensure that departments adhere to their mandates and fulfil their commitments.

Lastly, the issue of capacity becomes very important, and we have highlighted that because if we don't have a capable state that has skilled and capacitated individuals, we will forever have all these plans. However, implementation may prove challenging, not because people are unwilling to carry out their responsibilities, but because, at times, they may not fully understand what is required of them. Another issue that we continue to raise is the importance of lifestyle audits. Through these audits, we are able to better understand why progress is not being made as expected. They help us determine whether the challenges are the result of systemic issues,

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skills shortages, or corruption in certain areas that may be hindering the effective implementation of service delivery. By identifying the root causes of these challenges, we can take the necessary corrective measures to improve performance and accountability. Thank you very much for the interventions that were made and for affording us the opportunity to present our budget. Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON (Ms C Labuschagne): Hon members are reminded that a physical sitting of the House is scheduled for 15:00 hours at the dome.

Debate concluded.

The mini-plenary session rose at 11:34.