

Whippery Newsletter

ANC Parliamentary Caucus Newsletter

12 NOVEMBER 2022



This edition of the Weekly Whippery newsletter focuses on the Questions to the President in the National Assembly, and the Section 194 Parliamentary Inquiry, and highlights the critical discussions and debates in the National Council of Provinces and the National Assembly.

On Wednesday, 3rd November 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa answered questions in the National Assembly. In an environment that was cordial and characterised by jokes and laughter from time to time, contrary to the hostile and disrespectful environment South African viewers are accustomed to, the President answered questions

openly and honestly. The mood in the House was collegial, and members need to be commended for conducting themselves in the manner befitting the decorum of the House while they asked difficult questions as part of House while they asked difficult questions as part of the

JOVIAL PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA ANSWERS QUESTIONS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



openly and honestly. The mood in the House was collegial, and members need to be commended for conducting themselves in the manner befitting the decorum of the House while they asked difficult questions as part of House while they asked difficult questions as part of the He further spelled out the role of the Presidential Climate Commission in developing South Africa's climate change commitments as part of the country's transition towards climate neutrality Lastly, he elaborated on the importance of broad-based black economic empowerment in the country's efforts to build an inclusive and sustainable economy.

their mandate and responsibility to hold the executive accountable. We hope we will see more of this kind of conduct in the future.

The President faced several questions from Members of Parliament on load shedding, energy transition, and Black Economic Empowerment, amongst others. He engaged with Members of the National Assembly on crucial national issues, which included stabilising electricity supply to households and industry.

SOME OF HIS RESPONSES ON THE POWER UTILITY:

Eskom is recruiting skilled personnel, some of whom are former employees who left the parastatal for overseas companies.

A national energy crisis committee, led by the director-general in the presidency Phindile Baleni, has been established to unlock policy and implementation blockages, streamline decision-making processes and eliminate any red tape

- In September, public enterprises minister Pravin Gordhan made sweeping changes to the Eskom board, appointing business leader Mpho Makwana as chair.

The President understood why most of the burning questions revolved around Eskom, which is understandable given the current situation of load shedding, which had dire consequences for South Africans. The President outlined progress in infrastructure development directed towards overcoming spatial inequality in the country and unequal access to social services such as water

SECTION 194 COMMITTEE



As the Section 194 Committee's hearing into the fitness of the suspended Public Protector, Adv Busisiwe Mkhwebane, to hold office continues, it has not proceeded without its fair share of obfuscation, playing to the gallery and the interminable cross-examination of witnesses. The most recent news focussed on the fact that Parliament's Section 194 Committee has the power to set

SECTION 194

its working arrangements and timelines to conclude its work. We all await the final report with infinite patience.

During the course of the sitting of this Committee, there have been instances of threats or promises of threats, most notably by Adv Dali Mpofu to the Chairperson of the Committee, HonQR Dyantyi, "will pay." Then we had Adv Mpofu in August 2022, telling Parliament that he may apply for the recusal of the Chairperson after another rescission application by Adv Mkhwebane was dismissed by the Constitutional Court.

The high jinks by Mkhwebane's legal team reached a crescendo when his luck finally ran out, and his application for an indefinite postponement of the committee's work failed; Adv Mpofu abandoned the inquiry. This, after we all heard of the astronomical legal fees he was paid, more than R12 million by the Office of the Public Protector! Whatever the reasons for the petulant walkout, it was encouraging that the Committee Chairperson proceeded with the inquiry despite Adv Mpofu's absence. And then, just as we thought that was the last of the farcical shenanigans of Adv Mpofu, he returned to the proceedings on Wednesday, 9 November 2022.

Another bizarre turn of events played out when the Section 194



Inquiry also heard how Adv Mkhwebane's protector had allegedly been poisoned. Still, it turned out to be an upset stomach due to an "overindulgence" in fried chicken.

Having flagged the astronomical legal fees incurred by Adv Mkhwebane, the Office of the Public Protector has reported the matter to the Auditor-General, and confirmation was received that the matter would be looked into in the next audit.

As this saga plays out in the public eye, the ANC Caucus is confident that the Section 194 Committee will endeavour to ensure a fair and just conclusion to these hearings.

NCOP DEBATES STRATEGIC PLANS TO SUPPORT TOWNSHIP ECONOMIES

In a debate on the township economy in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) on 10 November 2022, Members of Parliament lamented how unemployment has allowed criminal syndicates to run rampant in township economies, which has contributed to the collapse of legitimate

legitimate economic development in South Africa's townships.

Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry, and Competition HonNomalungelo Gina told the NCOP that the department had discussed measures to unlock the full potential of the township economy in a briefing debate. "This has become the demon that affects all the provinces. This crime syndicate is something that we will try and respond to, and we are going to see it getting lesser and lesser with all the efforts we are putting in," the Deputy Minister added.



NCOP Chairperson Hon Amos Masondo had earlier informed the sitting that the ministerial briefing was about measures to unlock the full potential of the township economy. "The limited growth of townships-based enterprises is due to a number of challenges, like informality, registration challenges, access to funding from banking institutions and access to markets, enterprises finance agencies, lack of value chain, red tape and legislation." He also highlighted abuse by metro police, who often demand kickbacks as another problem.

WOMEN'S CHARTER FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT REPORT BACK SESSION IN BOTSHABELO, FREE STATE



On Friday, 11 November 2022, Parliament embarked on a Women's Charter for Accelerated Development report back session in Botshabelo, Free State. The session, led by the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Ms Sylvia Lucas, and attended by the permanent delegates to the NCOP as well as the Free State Premier is part of a sustained and targeted oversight and accountability campaign, to oversee the effective implementation of the adopted 2021 Women's Charter for Accelerated Development.

From 2019 to 2021, Parliament began reviewing the entire women's rights regime to take stock of the progress in implementing the 1994 Women's Charter for Effective Equality and assess its impact since the country's advent of freedom and democracy.

The review sessions were held across all nine provinces, 44 districts, and eight metropolitan municipalities and culminated in adoption of the 2021 Women's Charter for Accelerated Development. Parliament is now

embarking on a process of the district and provincial-level report-back sessions, allowing the provincial and local government to report to communities on the progress made in implementing commitments made at the provincial high-level sessions, where the provincial executive presented comprehensive gender mainstreaming programmes of action for the provinces.

This week parliamentary programme

The National Assembly has been busy this week dealing with Consideration of Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports of PC on Police on, on Social Development, International Relations and Cooperation, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Health, Mineral Resources and Energy, Transport, and Water and Sanitation

ON ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATIONS & ENTITIES

Mini Plenary sessions, below are the topics for debates

Mini-plenary 1:

Subject for discussion (Mr N F Shivambu): Just energy transition in South Africa (90)

Subject for discussion (Mr B M Hadebe): Reflecting on the state of coalitions in local government and the need for principles of: deepening a healthy political-administrative interface; good governance; quality service delivery; and good financial management practices (90)

Mini-plenary 2:

Subject for discussion (Mr M Hlengwa): Building a culture

of accountability and responsibility to balance with the proper exercise of constitutional rights and freedoms (90) Subject for discussion (Mr P A van Staden): The prevalence of corruption, poor management and incompetence in public health care which has led to the violation of the constitutional rights of patients, backlogs in medical procedures and a multitude of medico-legal claims (90)

DEBATE IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REFLECTING ON THE STATE OF COALITIONS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE NEED FOR PRINCIPLES OF DEEPENING A HEALTHY POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFACE; GOOD GOVERNANCE; QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY; AND GOOD FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The ANC's view articulated by Hon Fikile Xasa was expressed in the debate primarily focussed on the "Management of the Coalition."

He said that the management of the political relations between parties in a Coalition is a political art that few can master.

By management, we mean the political management of personalities who lead parties and often conflate their subjective will onto organisational decisions. Political management is an acquired art that evolves through experience, the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary matters, and an ability and vision to understand the endpoint on any matter and how to keep parties focused on the essence and not the phenomena.

DEBATE IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REFLECTING ON THE STATE OF COALITIONS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



If we examine those coalitions that have been successful since 2000 since coalitions are not a new phenomenon, political maturity and ability to accommodate and remain guided by principle and the people's needs have always assisted parties in negotiating disagreements. Much has changed since 2000 in terms of managing coalitions in local government. The political economy of the country since 2008 has changed, and local government has steadily been seen to be the resource from which individuals and

communities can derive an ability to survive.

Legislative and regulatory frameworks have become an obstacle and are undermined by those seeking access to power and resources. Disillusioned voters are not either not registering to vote or simply not voting.

Coalition governments are a product of the people's will in democratic systems and their lack of overwhelming or outright-majority confidence in any single contestant in an election. The political party coalitions and coalition governments that result are largely unstable or changeable. And so, in response in trying to manage this situation

we turn to amend legislation and regulations, usually, the Municipal Structures Act, to deal with the challenge instead of using existing legislation to deal with the challenge and instead of political parties themselves conducting introspection of their shortcomings. Coalitions are, by definition, not permanent governance institutions. Yet stability and cooperative, constructive governance can be optimized.