

Sports, Arts and Culture budget is not worth the paper it is written on

By Tsepo Mhlongo MP – DA Shadow Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture

Chairperson,

Ngalesi sabelo mali ngenke sifeze amaphupho wabantu bethu.

With the current budget and current government, we cannot win the fight against poverty.

The ANC government is not taking sports, arts and culture seriously. The ANC does not prioritise artists and its poverty politics is playing with their lives. During the pandemic, the ANC government failed to support artist. People have lost hope in the ANC administration.

Artists are lamenting over Minister Mthethwa's silence and lack of empathy for the cultural and creative industries of South Africa.

It is shocking how the ANC government accounts for the mismanagement of the PESP relief funding – by using pictures rather than official bank accounts.

Haibo, is that what you call proper accounting?

Fact: The unlawful and corrupt 'confidential settlement agreement' between the NAC and Rosemary Mangope disregards the PFMA and the NAC Act.

Fact: The Department and its entities disregard the PFMA and the NAC Act.

Sport has the power to change South Africa, but the Minister and his Department's actions are holding it back.

Chairperson, we have a Minister that is not developing sports and has remained quiet regarding the payment of R21 million to SAFA NEC members to allegedly buy votes. Each NEC member of SAFA will be getting a financial 'bonus' amounting to R520 000.

Why don't we use this money for soccer development in eDutswa (Idutywa) nase Lusikisiki? We should ensure that the focus is on making sports events and infrastructures safe, accessible and available to everyone.

When we submit written parliamentary questions to the Minister, he is not responsive, always stating that he will still source the information.

We have been waiting for answers regarding the Department's legal woes with Miriam Makeba's trustees since 11 March 2021.

It is clear that the Minister has dropped the ball.

Question regarding the R5 million spent by Cultural & Creative Industries Federation of South Africa (CCIFSA) was submitted in November 2021, and have yet to be answered. Is the Minister still trying to verify information, namanje?

Haibo Minister.

It has been 6 months since you claimed the South African Rugby Union (SARU) needed additional time to answer our questions, Minister. How much more time do they need?

Ja ne! How can we expect the ANC to manage our money, when they cannot even govern our sporting codes well, lamasela.

The Auditor-General (AG) has raised concerns over weak internal controls especially in the Department and its entities, one of which is Boxing SA.

Due to maladministration and non-adherence of supply chain irregularities, the CEO was suspended and they appointed an acting CEO before he resigned as well. Kwenzakalani? This resulted in continued instability in the leadership of Boxing SA.

A R15 million stadium that was built by an ANC municipality in the Eastern Cape has Mzansi shook. The Enoch Mgijima Municipality recently unveiled what they call a stadium worth R15 million. But the real cost was R5 million. What happened to the rest of the money?

The ANC administration has done nothing. Dololo, besides bringing our once beautiful South Africa to its knees.

The Department is not adhering to the Division of Revenue Act; it incurred an irregular expenditure of R19.3 million. The AG has raised concerns regarding the audit report, finding the Department being non-complaint.

Where is the detailed report of the Social Justice and Nation-Building Commission, Minister?

Unemployment is on the rise and the Department has done nothing to address it. They advertise and advertise and short-list but no action has occurred.

Theatres cannot survive with this continued threat of closing due to Covid-regulations.

Ngalesi sabelo mali ngenke sifeze amaphupho wabantu bethu. With the current budget and current government, we cannot win the fight against poverty.

Under the ANC government, there will be no prosperity in the sports, arts and culture sectors. Building of sports infrastructure in poor communities will remain a pipe dream. Apartheid spatial planning will remain a thing of the present, 28 years into democracy.

It leaves us with the following question:

What does the ANC government actually do? Nenzeni to ensure that our sports facilities have infrastructure that caters for disabled people?

The answer to this question is ... absolutely nothing.

This budget is not worth the paper it is written on.

The Minister must make sure all amateurs and schools have adequate facilities in order to ensure the adequate development of sports in the country.

The DA will continue to prioritise sports, arts and culture

The DA will bring total change in 2024.