

MINI PLENARIES (BUDGET VOTES)

Vote 40: Transport

Hon. KP Sithole, MP

21 July 2020

Honourable Speaker,

Recently we experienced nationwide taxi protests across the country following the lockdown regulations, which forced taxis to carry a reduced capacity.

Like all industries, the transport sector needed to balance the safety of its people with getting them to work.

Unfortunately, government's bid to keep inflation from rising did not apply to the taxi industry, as we saw rapid and high increases in the taxi fares. This increased transport costs for many people who do not have the luxury of taking personal modes of transport. These people were often the first to take salary cuts with the lockdown of the country, which increased their burden.

Government needs to assist the people using taxis with fare subsidies to combat the effects of the lockdown.

A fare subsidy needs to be different from the once-off taxi relief fund, as it must set measurable objectives in kick-starting the economy. Taxis are used by the majority of commuters, even though they are more expensive than other modes of public transportation. They are also more easily available and offer stops that other public transport cannot.

Their importance in the sector must not be ignored.

According to research, the taxi industry alone employs about 300 000 drivers and 100 000 taxi marshals. It also benefits 100 000 car washers and 150 000 vendors at taxi ranks.

In the report we see the failure by government to recognise the real working class, through the subsidisation of fares, which would work to the benefit of our economy.

The failure of PRASA further emphasises the need for the private sector to support the transportation needs of South Africa. Again, we see another sector of our state being looted, and PRASA is now in the limelight at the Zondo Commission for irregular contracts and maladministration.

While the Committee recommends that PRASA needs to better secure its assets from theft and vandalism, we are worried about the possible corrupt tenders that will arise out of doing so.

The IFP supports the Budget.

I thank you.

Contact:

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