**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO. 721-2022**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.06–2022, DATE OF PUBLICATION 04 MARCH 2022**

**“Inkosi B N Luthuli (IFP) to ask the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture:**

(1). Whether, given the ripple effects and the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sports that still persists as fans in many sporting codes remain barred from stadiums, there are plans to allow more spectators in the stadiums; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2). whether his department has been exploring ways to assist the various (a) associations and (b) clubs to maximise revenue without relying on gate-takings while the situation persists; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW860E**

**Reply**

1. The Department has consistently applied itself to such measures to enable the opening up of sporting venues. With the COVID-19 vaccines being accessible to all South Africans, the Department embarked on a partnership type of approach with sport and creative personalities / organisations.

The Minister established a committee of experts called the Return to Play Adjudication Committee to support organisations, clubs and individuals to ensure compliance. The Department formulated operational guidelines, Sports organisations have submitted their operational plans, which were analysed, adjudicated and approved, and events were monitored.

A proposal to reopen the events sector through a controlled set of Government (DSAC) approved events for vaccinated persons has been processed through relevant structures.

2(a). While the Department may not have provided direct support to maximise revenue without relying on gate-takings while the situation persists, other efforts have been in place to support Sports Federations during this time of COVID-19. The provision of financial and non-financial support to recognised National Federations is to promote and foster development of sport and recreation in South Africa. Support is provided to sport and recreation bodies in line with the provisions of Section 10 of the Sport and Recreation Act.

The support is towards both the administration of the sport and recreation bodies although this is minimal. The significant portion of the support is towards programmes and projects. Self-sustainable sport and recreation bodies represent ideal scenario, which may contribute to job creation and economic development. However, with the prevailing financial situation within the federations, consideration was made to provide for more allocation towards operational and administrative costs to keep the sport and recreation bodies afloat. The Department offered relief funding to athletes, coaches and technical officials who lost income due to cancellation of their events during COVID-19. Further, through the Presidential Economic Stimulus Package, sports federations managed to retain 4, 566 and 921 new jobs were created with the Sports associations.

The Department provided an enabling environment for the return of spectators as per the Directions gazetted by the Minister in October 2021 and requested Federations to submit operational plans. This is part of the plan towards economic recovery of the Sports associations.