



**Publication:** Herald, The - Main  
**Title:** We dare not fail in our oversight role - Duba  
**Publish date:** 13 Dec 2022  
**Page:** 4

**Reach:** 17067  
**AVE:** R 15591.37  
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## news

● Bhishe legislature's new chair of committees says implementation of Zondo commission recommendations a priority

# We dare not fail in our oversight role — Duba

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The Bhishe legislature has to work hard and take its oversight responsibility seriously to avoid a repeat of the malfeasance that happened under state capture.

This is according to the newly elected Eastern Cape legislature chair of committees, Tony Duba, who said the implementation of the Zondo commission's recommendations would be the priority when the house resumed its

work in the new year. This, he said, was essential to ensure it was never found wanting again.

"We have quite a number of negative findings where oversight is concerned," Duba said.

"When chief justice Raymond Zondo spoke recently at a Public Service Commission anti-crime summit, he spoke about his interest in the response of parliament to the negative findings against it.

"We agreed one, two, three was wrong and going forward this is what we need to do to

fix the mess of state capture and make sure we do not repeat what happened," he said.

Duba, who was elected unopposed during a virtual sitting yesterday, replaces former chair and public works MEC Ntombovuyo Nkopane.

He was previously deputy chair of chairs, a position now filled by ANC MPL Nontuthuzelo Maqubela.

The two new members complete the composition of the legislature's presiding officers, which includes the speaker, deputy speaker, chair

of committees and deputy chair of committees.

During an interview, Duba said the legislature could no longer afford to fail in its crucial oversight role.

"If you look through the literature, since 2001/2002 there were already signs that if something is not done something like this [state capture] would happen.

"A number of summits and anti-corruption forums discussed it at length but today here we are," Duba said.

One of the recommenda-

tions in the state capture commission report was that parliament should consider having more members of opposition parties chairing committees.

Duba is an ANC MPL. In part six of the commission's report, Zondo found that corruption-accused company Bosasa made regular payments to MPs to ensure "they adopted a favourable attitude" in committee meetings.

"Committees are very critical for parliament," Duba said. "It is how it does its oversight work.

"Whether you talk about the negative audit outcomes about education, it would have been the committee that should have done work to ensure the department complies with policy," he said.

He said it was crucial for parliament and the legislatures to ensure the public was made aware of the work done by committees.

"You cannot have a school not knowing it can write to the portfolio committee of education when they have problems.



**ON A MISSION:** ANC MPL Tony Duba has been elected as the new chair of committees of the sixth Eastern Cape legislature. Picture: FREDLIN ADRIAN

"Residents cannot be negatively affected by [dysfunctional] clinics and not know they can write to the chair of a committee to attend to their grievances.

"What then tends to happen is that they write to the public protector — they will write to everybody else for intervention while there is a body whose function is to attend to

that specific matter. We need to strengthen the work of committees."

Speaker Helen Sauls-August said: "We welcome the election of the new members and added new responsibilities.

"We wish them success in fulfilling their constitutional obligations as presiding officers and members of the executive committee of the legislature."