



Numsa Media Monitor

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A daily compilation of local, national and international articles dealing with labour related issues

Numsa

South African workers

Lafarge SA 'isn't arrogant'

Roy Cokayne, Business Report, 25 July 2016

Johannesburg - Lafarge South Africa, which last week dismissed about 150 of its employees, has refuted accusations by Cosatu that the cement and building materials producer is arrogant and engages in union bashing.

The employees were dismissed after they embarked on an illegal strike and ignored two written ultimatums to return to work after allegedly downing tools to demand the reinstatement of the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM's) national full time shop steward, who has been suspended for contravening company policy.

Cosatu claimed Lafarge SA attempted to forcefully relocate the full time shop stewards from Lichtenburg to its head office so the company could "exploit members of NUM" and is demanding company to implement an agreement on a housing subsidy and closing the wage gap.

Lafarge SA said in a statement on Monday that the accusations by Cosatu were unfortunate because they were contrary to the company's persistent and unrelenting attempts over the years, including recently, to engage the NUM to reach agreements on issues raised by our employees.

The company stressed that it believed in collective bargaining and the right to strike but these existed within a framework of law that unions must equally respect.

It said it continued to engage in talks with NUM and wanted to resolve the outstanding issues related to wage gaps and the housing support programme as soon as possible.

“However, it is regrettable that there has been a delay in concluding these issues due to the company having to handle the matter of some NUM-affiliated employees who participated in illegal work stoppages several times in the last few weeks.

“This illegal action left Lafarge with no choice but to issue the approximately 150 employees with letters of dismissal on July 8 2016 after they ignored two written ultimatums and requests to return to work.

“Management continues to be prepared to discuss any concerns with employees but can unfortunately not condone illegal behaviour nor actions that undermine the company’s policies and procedures,” it said.

The company said last week it had act to protect its non striking workers who were being threatened, harassed, intimidated and in some cases physically assaulted.

Lafarge SA added that it continued to engage the Bodibe Tribal Council and had presented a plan to the council that proposed activities the company would undertake to benefit the entire community.

It said the company’s proposals were on social labour plans for the community, including a concise rental proposal for the surface rights mining.

“Lafarge awaits the tribal council’s feedback so that an agreement can be signed for plans to be implemented to *benefit the community*,” *the company said*.

<http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/44f94d804da1fff3bfa6ffcfcb4bc468/-Sacking-of-four-SABC-journalists-set-aside-20160726>

Parliamentary insubordination hearings start on Tuesday

Khulekani Magubane, Business Day, 25 July 2016

THE labour dispute at Parliament will enter a new round on Tuesday, when the institution will begin a disciplinary hearing against staff accused of gross insubordination, while the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) prepares to roll out mass action.

Five Nehawu members face disciplinary action, but the union refuses to back down on its claims that Parliament failed to pay performance bonuses.

Nehawu Western Cape provincial secretary Eric Kweleta said the hearing would take place in two rounds: one starting on Tuesday and ending on Thursday, and a second that would begin next Tuesday and end two days later.

Earlier in July, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) said Parliament slashing staff performance bonuses did not constitute sn unfair labour practice. The CCMA also ordered both parties to resolve the impasse through dispute resolution processes provided for in policy.

Despite this, Kweleta said that Parliament had not reached out to the union to seek an alternative solution to the deadlock. The union has already pledged to make Parliament "ungovernable".

"We are still battling to get a sense of what the actual charges are. We have requested a pre-hearing so we can zoom into what the exact charges are.

"There is a lack of co-operation in human resources and Parliament," said Kweleta.

Parliamentary spokesman Luzuko Jacobs would not be drawn to comment on the internal hearings, as the matter "has to be allowed to run its course in accordance with institutional policy".

"We would urge everyone to give due regard to the colleagues and the issues involved by not preemptively issuing commentary on public platforms about matters which are subject to formal institutional processes," Jacobs said.

He reiterated Parliament's view that the matter that the CCMA heard between Nehawu and the institution had nothing to do with the suspension of two staff members over their "disruption of Parliament staff meetings".

Parliament is due to begin business in the third week of August.

<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/2016/07/25/parliamentary-insubordination-hearings-start-on-tuesday>

South Africa

Protesting: How the youth votes

Matthew Savides, The Times, 27 July 2016

Many young people could boycott the municipal elections next week because of disillusionment with corrupt political leaders, shoddy service delivery, crime and poor standards of education.

Increasingly, young people feel that protests and demonstrations are more effective than voting in getting politicians to improve their lot.

According to the Independent Electoral Commission, 506561 youngsters aged 18 and 19 are registered for next week's vote - a mere 1.92% of the 26.3million people on the voters' roll.

The disillusionment of the young was one of the key findings of an Institute for Security Studies study, the results of which are being released today.

The study, "Do you want my vote?" released to The Times yesterday, involved 49 one-on-one interviews and 277 with focus groups at 34 high schools or institutions of higher learning last year.

Authored by ISS researcher and Wits University master's student Lauren Tracey - the study found that young voters, particularly in high schools and at FET colleges, were put off by poor service delivery, poor quality of school education, crime and high unemployment rates.

Citing Statistics SA, the study said about 1.9 million South Africans were aged 18 and 19 and eligible to vote, but only 646000 (about a third) registered to vote in the 2014 national and provincial government elections. About 64% of citizens aged 20-29, and about 79.8% of those aged 30-39, registered.

Tracey found that many young South Africans do not believe that voting is the best way of expressing their political sentiments.

"Young people generally feel that politics is 'full of corruption', and they refer to politics as a 'dirty game', 'a waste of time', 'a joke', 'disappointing', and as something they do not want to get involved in," Tracey said.

"Politicians were commonly referred to as 'corrupt' people who were 'chasing after the money'; 'liars' who are 'abusing the power' they have; and as people who make empty promises."

University students were much more interested in politics than high school and FET students.

High school students in particular felt voting was "pointless".

"They said 'there is no point [in] registering' because 'there's no change' to be had from voting. They used phrases such as 'I'm not interested', 'it's useless' and 'a waste of my time' to express their views," said Tracey.

For these young people there is nothing that encourages them to vote: "The government does not keep [its] promises, so why vote?" they say.

"For them, elections are no longer an effective way of changing or improving South Africa, particularly in the current political landscape."

Tracey suggested that young South Africans were "increasingly turning to protests and demonstrations" as a means of getting their voices heard - as seen during the #FeesMustFall protests last year.

"There is a clear trust deficit among this demographic - for them, the loyalty they have witnessed among their parents and older groups towards the ANC had brought with it little improvement in their access to basic services and, most importantly, in the quality of the services provided. As a result, for this group, engaging in political and democratic processes such as elections is often not identified as the best option for changing things in their lives or those of their parents," the study says.

DA spokesman Phumzile van Damme said "born-frees" (people born after 1994) had become disillusioned, largely because of "rampant unemployment and an education system that sets them up for failure". She said it was "no surprise" that they had taken to the streets as their preferred form of political expression.

"The DA has worked extremely hard to provide hope to our country's young people, a sense that there is a point to voting, that their vote can bring about change," she said.

Political analyst Shadrack Gutto, of Unisa's Institute for African Renaissance Studies, said the disillusionment of the young can be blamed on promises made by the ANC-led government.

"The way in which politics is articulated in South Africa, where government is there to deliver, rather than support you in what you're going to do, is part of the problem. There is an idea of the government as employer, a deliverer of food, housing, and health - of everything. It's a wrong paradigm. This is a problem one would put on the ANC government since 1994 ... promising things they cannot deliver.

"With the gap between promises and delivery, one can see why the young feel the way they do," he said.

ANC spokesman Keith Khoza said it was contestable that young South Africans were disillusioned.

"If you look at what happened last year, around university protests, it showed a yearning among young people to express a view about the government, and governance and politics. It showed a level of activism that has been taken for granted by some young people," he said.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2016/07/27/Protesting-How-the-youth-votes>

Zuma must pay up on Nkandla in 45 days

Natasha Marrian, Business Day, 26 July 2016

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma must pay the R7.8m he owes for the Nkandla upgrades by September to comply with a Constitutional Court order.

He has 45 days in which to pay the money, following the Constitutional Court's approval on Tuesday of the amount as stipulated by the National Treasury.

The National Treasury calculated that Zuma should pay 87.9% of the cost of five items deemed non-security by Public Protector Thuli Madonsela in her 2014 report, *Secure in Comfort*, on security upgrades amounting to R246m at Zuma's homestead at Nkandla, in KwaZulu-Natal. This amounted to R7.8m. The Treasury last month submitted to the court the "reasonable percentage" it had determined.

Zuma had refused to take responsibility for the excessive spending, the ANC vilified Madonsela and there were raucous confrontations in Parliament between the ANC and the EFF, which taunted Zuma with the slogan: "Pay back the money". Zuma offered to pay only after the EFF took him to court.

In a Constitutional Court judgment handed down at the end of March, Zuma was found to have failed to uphold, defend and protect the Constitution in his handling of Madonsela's report on Nkandla.

The amount determined by the Treasury was reached through a rigorous process involving two firms of quantity surveyors and a panel of six experts from the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) and the Association of South African Quantity Surveyors. (ASAQS). They had volunteered their services and the Treasury accepted to ensure "objectivity" and "maintain independence" in the process. The two firms did not have contact with one another and held site visits separately.

The Public Works Department was asked to provide construction and engineering drawings to aid the quantity surveyors. However, according to the Treasury report,

some of the drawings provided were incomplete, incorrect or not reflective of what was actually built.

The costs of the five items — the visitors' centre, swimming pool, amphitheatre, cattle kraal and chicken run — were estimated at 2016 prices and adjusted for 2009 values, as that is when the construction took place.

At the time the Constitutional Court ordered that Zuma "personally pay the amount determined by the Treasury" within 45 days of the court approving the Treasury's report.

<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/2016/07/26/zuma-must-pay-up-on-nkandla-in-45-days>

Fransman says ANC probe into sex harassment claims harming his reputation

Xolani Koyana, EWN, 26 July 2016

Fransman is preparing to take on the ANC in court to access the integrity commission's report.

CAPE TOWN – The African National Congress (ANC) Western Cape leader Marius Fransman says that the prolonged internal probe into sexual harassment claims against him is harming his reputation.

Fransman returned to work yesterday despite ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe saying he's not allowed to resume his duties.

The ANC maintains that the integrity commission has recommended the matter be referred to the disciplinary committee.

Fransman is preparing to take on the ANC in court to access the integrity commission's report on the matter.

Fransman claims the process has not been swift or fair. He's accused Mantashe of barring him from meeting with senior party leaders.

ANC spokesperson Zizi Kodwa said Fransman should respect the party's internal process.

"It is their right to go to court to seek recourse but also we've a responsibility as the ANC to challenge and defend our own decision."

Fransman said he will now focus on campaigning for the ANC ahead of next week's elections.

ANC ADAMANT FRANSMAN ISN'T BACK ON DUTY

Meanwhile, the ANC said the disciplinary matter against Fransman has not been concluded and is still with the national office.

It's reiterated that Fransman has not been allowed to resume his duties as head of the party in the province.

The ANC is clarifying the confusion around the matter, as various party leaders have made contrary statements on the issue.

Kodwa said the commission has tabled its report.

"One of the recommendations they made in the report is that the matter be referred, given the seriousness of the allegations, and how they found the statement and the testimony of the person who made this allegation."

Kodwa said the party will challenge Fransman's intention to approach the court.

"It invalidates the integrity of the commission, which is an important component of the ANC, since in Mangaung we agreed on its establishment. If you have decided to take this organisation to court, then this organisation will defend itself against him."

<http://ewn.co.za/2016/07/26/Fransman-says-internal-probe-into-sexual-harassment-is-harming-his-reputation>

SABC

Will journalists be allowed to go back to work? SABC won't say

Genevieve Quintal & Franny Rabkin, Business Day, 26 July 2016

THE SABC will not say whether the four journalists who won their case in the Labour Court on Tuesday will be allowed to return to work.

In a resounding defeat for the broadcaster, the Labour Court on Tuesday ordered that four dismissed employees are entitled to return to work.

The four were dismissed for objecting to the public broadcaster's ban on the broadcast of violent protests showing the destruction of public property. The ban was widely condemned and found to be invalid by the Independent Communications Authority of SA (Icasa), which ordered the SABC to reverse it.

The reinstated journalists — Foeta Krige, Suna Venter, Krivani Pillay and Jacques Steenkamp — hope to return to work on Wednesday.

"The question will be, will we be allowed to go back because obviously the SABC can appeal and they can keep us outside until the appeal is heard," Steenkamp said. "We'll see tomorrow if we allowed."

Pillay said she was looking forward to getting back to work and was confident they would be allowed in.

"The courts have spoken and we have work to do. We are in the business of news and we've got a week to go to elections and we have a lot of work, not only to catch up on, but to get going," she said.

Labour Court Judge Robert La Grange found the journalists' dismissals to be invalid as they breached their contracts of employment, which entitled them to a formal hearing before being fired.

SABC spokesman Kaizer Kganyago would not comment on the judgment or say whether the journalists would be allowed back into the building on Wednesday.

"We (are) still studying the judgment. It's a long judgment.... All they read was the order, therefore we need to study it, our lawyers are looking at it. We not going to comment until we know what the way forward will be."

Trade union Solidarity, which represented the four journalists, said the SABC had to adhere to the judgment otherwise it would be in contempt of court.

"The order is quite clear. If the SABC does not adhere to this specific order ... we will then definitely go back to court. Contempt of court is a serious thing," CE Dirk Hermann said.

In his finding, La Grange referred at length to the journalists' argument that their dismissals breached their Constitutional right to freedom of expression.

He said in argument the journalists' counsel Steven Budlender had acknowledged that freedom of expression did not entitle employees to say whatever they wanted about their employer, which might put their employer in a bad light.

But the SABC had "exceptional features". It was the public broadcaster and "the public has an interest in how it is run". Journalists also had ethical and constitutional obligations, "which they must at least aspire to."

Codes of conduct that regulate the media required news to be reported truthfully, accurately and fairly, he said. These duties applied particularly to those journalists who worked at the public broadcaster, because of its special mandate.

La Grange also said the case was indeed urgent because "it cannot be reassuring" for journalists currently working at the SABC to know that their colleagues remained dismissed even while the SABC had agreed not to enforce the ban.

It was also important that the SABC's "will and ability to fulfil its mandate" would not be questioned "at a time when the role of the SABC will be in the spotlight in the course of the imminent local elections".

Solidarity said that if the SABC appealed the judgment, it would approach the court again on an urgent basis asking that the order stand pending the outcome of other legal proceedings.

Asked if the journalists were worried about being victimised by SABC management when they returned, Hermann said the union would keep an eye on this.

"The Labour Relations Act is very clear on victimisation and we will do everything in our power to make sure that we protect them."

Some of the journalists were emotional, shedding tears of relief after the order was handed down allowing them to return to work.

Eight journalists were suspended for questioning an editorial decision taken to ban the footage of violent protests where public property was being burned. Following this seven of the eight were fired.

The eight journalists are still proceeding with a Constitutional Court application. Steenkamp said the journalists would meet on Tuesday afternoon to discuss the way forward in the Constitutional Court matter.

Another three of the journalists -Lukhanyo Calata, Busisiwe Ntuli and Thandeka Gqubule -will challenge their dismissals in the Labour Court on Thursday.

<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/media/2016/07/26/will-journalists-be-allowed-to-go-back-to-work-sabc-wont-say>

Democracy triumphed and Hlaudi Motsoeneng lost, union Solidarity says

Genevieve Quintal Business Day, 26 July 2016

TRADE union Solidarity, which represented four journalists that the SABC will now have to re-instate, on Tuesday described the victory in the Labour Court as a "six-love" win.

"It's game set match," CEO Dirk Hermann told journalists in Johannesburg. "Democracy triumphed and Hlaudi Motsoeneng lost."

He said the union and the journalists were confident all along that they would win.

Earlier, the Labour Court ruled that the dismissals were unlawful and that the journalists be allowed to return to work immediately.

The SABC was also interdicted from continuing with the disciplinary action against the journalists.

Solidarity, on behalf of four of the seven fired journalists — Foeta Krige, Suna Venter, Jacques Steenkamp and Krivani Pillay — lodged an application in the Labour Court in a bid to have dismissals overturned.

Eight journalists were suspended for questioning an editorial decision taken to ban the footage of violent protests where public property was being burnt. Following this, seven of the eight were fired.

Hermann said the journalists had paid a high price for protecting the principles of democracy.

"We trust that this ruling will signal a strong message that we are in a Constitutional democracy."

He accused Motsoeneng of challenging this very constitutional democracy, saying "this should have implications".

"A strategic battle has been won but ultimately the war must still be won. We are appealing to this powerful civil society alliance to intensify the campaign and win the war," Hermann said.

<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/media/2016/07/26/democracy-triumphed-and-hlaudi-motsoeneng-lost-union-solidarity-says>

SABC to appeal Labour Court order

News24, 27 July 2016

Johannesburg - The SABC will appeal the Labour Court order that it reinstate four journalists that were recently dismissed, and will not allow them back into their offices.

The Labour Court ruled on Tuesday that four of the eight SABC journalists that were axed by the broadcaster must be reinstated. It also ruled they were entitled to return to work and that the SABC was interdicted from proceeding with the disciplinary hearings of the four before they were dismissed.

The four journalists are Foeta Krige, Suna Venter, Krivani Pillay and Jacques Steenkamp. They asked the court to set aside their dismissals, and that their disciplinary processes be revoked in its entirety. The four were represented by trade union Solidarity.

They had criticised the broadcaster's policy to not broadcast footage of violent protests.

Solidarity on Wednesday tweeted a copy of a lawyer's letter indicating that the SABC intends to appeal the matter. "In the premise please be advised that your client may not report for duty pending the outcome of the appeal," part of it read.

Solidarity's Dirk Hermann tweeted that the union will file urgent court papers to get the four journalists back to work pending the SABC's appeal.

BREAKING: SABC will not allow 4 journos back into their jobs and office after Labour Court found their dismissal to be unlawful.

<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/sabc-to-appeal-labour-court-order-20160727>

International

Swazi king prepares lavish SADC summit as population starves

Manqoba Nxumalo, Daily Maverick, 27 July 2016

The next SADC summit takes place in Swaziland in August – at great cost to the Swazi taxpayer. The money would be better spent on providing desperately needed food for the country's long-suffering population.

Next month, Swaziland will host the 36th Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State summit, with King Mswati III set to take over as chairman of the regional body.

In Swazi media King Mswati's ascendance as chairman of SADC is hailed as historic mainly because ever since the regional bloc was established in 1992, Swaziland has never occupied the chairmanship role. King Mswati is currently deputising for the current chairman, Botswana's Ian Khama, and will officially replace him when the summit starts in Mbabane on August 17.

Mswati's new role as SADC chairman has already come in for sharp criticism from civil society organisations who bemoan what they call the "institutionalisation" of dictatorship in the region. In a seminar held last week in South Africa, the Swaziland

Solidarity Network (SSN) in conjunction with the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) condemned SADC for giving this important role to Mswati.

The SSN said the appointment of Mswati "had the potential to cast a shadow over the region's future and well-being".

Meanwhile, inside Swaziland, government officials are preparing for the summit. With Mswati being the showman he is, and his penchant for impressing outsiders, everything is prepared with a touch of pride to show other heads of state, and by extension the world, "the beautiful kingdom" and its "peaceful" people. It is therefore not surprising that roads are hurriedly being repaired and revamped while the media is being cajoled into praise singing the king's "great feat" for leading SADC for the first time.

But is any of this worth the amount of money this tiny kingdom will spend for the three-day summit? Even though the state is coy with information, media reports suggest that a whopping R16-million has been set aside for the summit. Never mind that Malawi hosted the summit for far less, in Swaziland King Mswati is all about grandeur and splendour. This would be forgivable if Swaziland were not facing such disasters as drought, increasing unemployment, HIV/AIDS and massive poverty.

The statistics tell a dire story. For example, maize production, the country's staple food, fell by 31% in 2015, and is expected to be lower in the 2016 crop season, placing at least 300,000 people – a third of the population – in urgent need of food and water assistance.

Only this week did Swazis hear from Members of Parliament that the people are beginning to die as a consequence of the drought. James Simelane, MP for Sandleni Constituency in the Shiselweni region, was reported in the Swazi Observer newspaper as saying people had started dying of hunger in his constituency.

The Observer reported on Friday (15 July 2016) that he said:

"We have started burying people who are dying of hunger. It's just that each time a community member dies, there is always a disease that is associated with the death when in fact the disease itself has been accelerated by the hunger."

The newspaper reports him saying there had been no agricultural activity at all in his constituency for two ploughing seasons.

Yet despite this, King Mswati continues to show that he couldn't care less about the concerns of his own people and finds Swaziland fit to host the regional body. But I suppose this is to be expected of a man who rules his country as an absolute monarchy, with a net worth of about \$100-million while 69% of his people survive on less than \$1 a day.

Only last week, City Press reported a R16-million globetrotting spree for the monarch's wives in Orlando, US. Already we are awaiting a \$14-million 375-seater private jet for the monarchy all paid for by the taxpayer. Put into context, this amount is equivalent of two annual health budgets in Swaziland.

But then again, those of us living under the yoke of a greedy and obstinate monarch are not surprised by such stories. Instead we are only disappointed when the people

we expect to understand our situation assist the monarchy in pillaging our resources and legitimise his rule by giving him serious responsibilities in important institutions.

In less than a month we have lost R16-million to the king's wives' holiday and another R16-million to the SADC meeting, yet the Swazi government has released only R22-million of the R305-million earmarked for drought relief in this year's national budget.

The recently issued Government National Drought Emergency Mitigation and Adaptation Plan estimates that a minimum of 300,000 people needed food assistance as of March 2016. As it is, 90% of Swaziland's sugar cash crop relies on irrigation, which has been hampered by the rationing of water. Sugarcane harvests, which account for a staggering 21% of Swaziland's GDP, have been hit hard, spelling trouble for government finances and service delivery.

So as heads of state trek down to Swaziland to waste vast amounts of money on a three-day summit – a not-so-tacit endorsement of the king – they must know that beneath the veneer of peace and tranquility is a nation crying in condemnation. As King Mswati boastfully assumes leadership of SADC, let it be known that he will use his newly found status to prove to his opponents at home and abroad that his Tinkhundla royal misrule finds legitimate resonance within his peers in SADC.

<http://firstthing.dailymaverick.co.za/article?id=79189#.V5hIQk3lrIU>

Oyo Workers suspends seven months indefinite strike

Tayo Johnson, The Nation, Ibadanon, [Nigeria], 26 July 2016

The National Secretariat of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), has ordered the suspension of seven weeks indefinite strike against the non payment of workers salary and allowances in the state.

It will be recalled that the state government based on the agreement with the national leaders of the union, set up a 14 man committee two weeks ago from both the government and labour sides to deliberate on how to resolve the industrial impasse.

The strike was called off after a joint Memorandum of Understanding signed by the 14 man committee which includes: the Secretary to the State Government, Ishmael Alli, Chairman of NLC in the State, Waheed Olojede, Head of Service, Soji Eniade, and Commissioner for Finance, Abimbola Adekanmbi.

The National Vice-President (Southwest), of NLC , Comrade Solomon Adelegan declared the strike off around 11:15pm on Monday.

Also, the Chairman of NLC in the state, Comrade Waheed Olojede confirmed the suspension of the strike around 11.30pm on Monday, said it was based on the agreement among the parties.

He disclosed that the leadership of the union agreed to suspend the strike based on the fact that the state government has decided to pay two months salaries arrears of workers, plead with the banks to exclude workers who are owing them from

deduction of their debt from the two months salaries to be paid as well as the release outstanding promotion letters to workers.

Olojede said both parties have agreed to continue with the negotiation on all the outstanding issue, adding that the suspension of the strike was consider in the interest of members of the union.

Also confirming the suspension, the Secretary of the union in the state, Kofo Ogundeji said the national leaders of the congress has ordered the suspension of the strike based on the above agreement.

The MOU reads in part:” That the total amount received from the federal Account for the month of June, 2016 was N2.1 billion and that an additional sum of N1.39 billion, being the first tranche of the budget support facility, was equally received from the Federal Government, bring the total available sum to N3.495 billion in in the government coffers that could immediately be utilized for payment of salary, wages and pensions of the state workforce.

“That the total sum of N3.495 billion which is readily available will be immediately disbursed to honour the State’s obligations on salaries, wages and pensions for the month of January 2016. That an appeal be made by the State Government to banks to grant concerned workers a moratorium of two months on their January and February 2016 salaries and pensions on their debt service obligation.

“That a a letter of apology be tendered to government by principals, teachers and pupils of schools engaged in the breach of peace and destruction of government properties. That the government withdraws all all outstanding litigation against labour. That no worker would be victimised as a result of participation in the industrial action. That the industrial action be suspended forthwith”

Similarly, the Chairman of the government/labour committee, Ishmael Alli, while briefing journalist on Tuesday accompanied of the Head of Service, Soji Eniade and Commissioner for Information, Toye Arulogun, Alli said deliberation will still continue among the members of th committee to forestall future reoccurrence of industrial impasse.

He promised that the state government would pay the workers two months salary within the next two weeks.

“The state government appreciates the citizens of the state for their support during the strike action. We urged you to continue to support the Abiola Ajimobi led administration which strives to elevate the standards, promote ethical values and good governance in the state” he said

Since the strike commenced, most of the workers have continue to decried their living conditions based on the non payment of their salaries.

However, most members of the workers in the state are unaware of the suspension and they have kicked against collecting two months salary out of the seven months the government is owing them.

They stated that their leaders should address them at the same place where the strike was declared, stressing that it was wrong for the seven months old strike to be suspended on the media.

<http://thenationonlineng.net/oyo-workers-suspends-seven-months-indefinite-strike/>

Comment and opinion

Economy bridled by high number of excluded

Steven Friedman, Business Day, 27 July 2016

IF A senior IMF official is convinced that this country's core problem is that too many people are excluded from the economy, why do decision makers still show so little interest in fixing poverty and inequality?

IMF deputy MD David Lipton's speech on SA's economic challenges last week deserved the media attention it received. But much of the reportage seemed to miss what was new and interesting in what he had to say, concentrating instead on those parts of his speech that repeated the story we hear daily in much of the debate.

Lipton did, as most reports noted, repeat refrains that are often heard in commentary here and in IMF documents — they place most blame for missed economic growth on government and labour. Like many politicians and economists, he blamed law and government policy, crime and corruption, governance of state-owned enterprises and wage bargaining for blocking growth.

But that is not all he said.

First, his central message was that excluding "one-third of the working population" from the economy was why growth is weak. This is not how much of the debate sees the issue. Opposition politicians and mainstream economists do lament poverty and joblessness as they attack the government. But they rarely if ever see the exclusion of millions from the economy as the root of the problem.

Second, unlike much of the mainstream, Lipton blamed business as well as the government. He argued that "the private sector — supported by government regulation — has been supported in ways that create privileged markets working against the interests of consumers".

Businesses "also damage competitiveness by keeping business costs high", he said. The financial sector is "deep, sophisticated and resilient", but high fees and other barriers make it hard for small businesses to access banks. And Lipton complained about "anticompetitive behaviour" by industries ranging from taxi transport to telecommunications.

So, the core of his message is that growth is blocked not because the well-off are hampered, but because too many people are locked out of the economy by all the key economic actors — business, labour and government.

This tells a different story because it puts the needs of the millions who live on the economic fringes at the centre and insists that all the major actors need to change the patterns that prevent many of them from earning a living.

If his message is taken seriously, rather than used selectively to justify prejudices, everyone with a stake in the economy's future will begin to talk about how to change this. And they will look at what they have to do differently, not only what others must do. Agreeing on the problem does not mean agreeing on solutions.

Some, like Lipton, will see the answer in more freedom for markets. Others will argue that far more than one-third of working-age people may be excluded.

Because the problem is deeper than Lipton suggests, simply improving the formal economy will not solve it — they will see a need also to ensure that people who cannot work in a factory, office or shop can earn a living. Still others will note that the IMF's own research shows that wage bargaining does not prevent growth and insist that we need a national minimum wage and more government action to ensure the wealthy support the poor and working people.

So, Lipton and the IMF do not have all the answers. Nor does anyone else. But his message is important because it focuses on the core problem and invites bargaining on how to fix it. If everyone with the power to make a difference agreed to talk about what is needed to ensure no one is excluded from a growing economy, the country would be on the way to tackling its most important problem. There will be strong differences on what should be done — what people think is wrong with the economy and what they want to do to fix it depends less on the latest economic research than on where they sit in the economy and what they value: what makes sense to them is what works for them, whether or not it works for others.

But all of them can only get some of what they want if they work with the others, so the solution will be not that which "science" says is needed, but that with which they can all live. Lipton's speech tells us what the problem is. Will those who shape the economy now talk about how to solve it?

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<http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2016/07/27/economy-bridled-by-high-number-of-excluded>

LGE 2016: Scrum over Mandela's legacy exposes hollow heart of SA politics

Ranjeni Munusamy, Daily Maverick, 27 July 2016

Two-and-a-half years after his passing, who would've thought that Nelson Mandela would be featuring in this year's local government elections? Instead of big issues that should be in contention in this poll, the African National Congress and Democratic Alliance are fighting over which party is entitled to use Mandela as a campaign weapon. Mandela's legacy might belong to the world but his political affiliation was not universal. The question is: why should Mandela even be a factor when people make a decision about who to vote for? The answer says a lot about our politics.

On 18 July, it is perfectly acceptable for people across the political spectrum to celebrate and uphold Nelson Mandela's legacy. In the context of the elections campaign however, the Mandela family and his party, the ANC, have taken offence at the DA using the icon's image, voice and legacy to draw the attention of voters.

Up to now, the opposition's biggest campaign tool has been President Jacob Zuma. His conduct and leadership (or lack thereof) has turned many people away from the ANC and caused disillusionment, even among people who were prepared to dedicate their lives to the organisation. But there is only so much the DA could flog out of that horse, and with the president's ability to shrug off every scandal and controversy, they needed to find another strategy to tap into the ANC base.

A television advert released by the DA a few weeks ago was aimed at rattling the ANC. Not only did it use the ANC's flag and show members supposedly trying to bully a voter, they also used Mandela's voice to convince a young woman in the voting booth to change her vote from ANC to DA. It was aimed at undecided and disillusioned people, using Mandela's words to get into their minds and convince them to vote DA.

The Mandela family reacted angrily saying the association of Madiba with the DA was an "insult" and an "affront to his history, his party of choice, his legacy and the values for which he stood". A statement released by the Royal House of Mandela also said that the use of Madiba's voice was an attempt to "lend credibility to a party which has made the preservation of white privilege its reason to exist".

This did not dissuade the DA, which put up posters this week saying, "Honour Madiba's dream; Vote DA". The ANC was, predictably, enraged. ANC national spokesman Zizi Kodwa said attempts by the DA to "appropriate" Mandela as a campaign weapon were "cheap politicking bordering on desperation".

"It is a glaring sign that the DA's attempts to woo the black electorate are floundering and they will stop at nothing to 'blackwash' their chequered history as a whites-only party by thrusting a few token blacks into positions of leadership and appropriating even symbols that have always shunned them," Kodwa said in a statement. He cited an incident 16 years ago when Mandela said at a Cosatu rally that the DA was a party of "white bosses and black stooges".

"The DA displays a shocking form of arrogance and presumptuousness in claiming that Nelson Mandela would endorse its organisation were he still alive," Kodwa said.

Anybody who tries to repackage Mandela as a mascot for the reconciliation, nation-building project is misrepresenting who he was. Mandela was a politician, and the president of the ANC at that. That fact cannot be camouflaged by the elder statesman and global icon he grew to become later in life. Mandela's conscious life choice was to serve the ANC, to the extent of facing death or life imprisonment for his organisation. Even though he might have felt disappointment about the conduct of some ANC leaders after his retirement, there was absolutely no indication that he wanted to renounce his organisation in the final years of his life.

Mandela belongs to the ANC. But his legacy belongs to the world.

This is why people participate in all manner of activities to honour his memory. If any civil society organisation had put up posters saying "honour Madiba's dream", there would be no issue whatsoever. His "dream" for equality and human rights should, after all, be a universal goal. The problem is that the DA, while not infringing any electoral laws, is using Mandela against his own organisation.

There is an ethical question about whether the DA should be using a dead person's name, image and voice for a political campaign he was not associated with while he was alive. If the DA used Mandela's name to build hospitals for children or for an HIV treatment campaign, it would be less objectionable, as these were issues he was passionate about. If Mmusi Maimane or anyone else in the DA uses quotes from Mandela in their speeches, they are entitled to do so – his words belong to the world.

But would Mandela have agreed to have his name used in an election campaign against his own party? No.

At the launch of the poster campaign outside the Union Buildings, Maimane said their message was that "Madiba's dream and vision for a prosperous, united and non-racial South Africa for all is alive within the DA, and can only be realised by the DA". He said because the ANC had strayed from the legacy of its legends and the divisive way Zuma was leading the country, former president Thabo Mbeki was not campaigning for the ANC.

"My question is – would Madiba be out on the streets campaigning for the ANC if he were alive today?" Maimane asked.

Mbeki can speak for himself, if he chose to explain why he is not campaigning for the ANC, but Mandela cannot. It is therefore wrong for anyone to make assumptions about what he might and might not have done.

But the DA's campaign was aimed at stirring controversy and agitating the ANC. It was intended to provoke a reaction to show that the ANC is worried about whether its traditional voters will remain loyal in the face of much anger and disappointment. It is quite clear that the ANC has been severely challenged in this election campaign, due in no small measure to its own delivery failures and poor leadership.

If the ANC were confident about its support, it would have waved off the DA's campaign as a stunt. But the ANC is on the back foot and had to drag out its veterans, even those who have been critical in the past, to help with the elections sales pitch.

The ANC should not have needed Mandela, its surviving veterans or a host of celebrities to salvage its campaign because its image is so tarnished by scandal, factional battles and bad leadership. It should have fought this election on the capability of its election candidates, the strength of its achievements and the successful implementation of its developmental plans. The fact is that there have been serious weaknesses in the management of municipalities, and the economic woes and failure to create jobs add to the instability in the country.

While it is true that Mandela belongs to the ANC, they cannot claim with confidence that the party has remained true to his legacy, which belongs to the world. The ANC has neglected issues of race relations and nation building, for example, and the country has never been as racially polarised in the post democracy era as it is now.

While the DA claims that they espouse Mandela's vision and values, what have they done to promote race relations? In the wake of a spate of racist incidents, including by DA members, Maimane had promised to undertake an anti-racism campaign to root out racists from the party's ranks. He had also undertaken to conduct a series of dialogues to foster race relations. If these have taken place, there is no indication

that they have had any impact in changing racist mindsets in the country. The party's leadership structures are by no means representative – racially or otherwise – of the utopian society they claim to represent.

It is one thing to lay claim to Mandela's legacy, but it is extremely difficult to live up to it. Nelson Mandela should not have featured at all in this campaign – both the parties brawling over his legacy fall far short on upholding his legacy. Mandela's legacy is also too great to be abused for short-term electioneering, even by his own party.

In any event, voters should be making decisions based on who is best able to run their municipalities and the track records of the parties desperate for their votes. We should be making informed choices based on current conditions and not be coerced by sentimentality or blackmail.

Madiba has done his part and should be left to rest. It is the current cohort of politicians who should be judged because it is they, not the golden generation of yesteryear, who will be running our lives for the next few years.

<http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-07-27-lge-2016-scrum-over-mandelas-legacy-exposes-hollow-heart-of-sa-politics/>
