



'CR17': Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa chats to residents in Orlando, Soweto, during a walkabout to raise awareness around the ANC's 105th birthday celebrations
Picture: IHSAN HAFEEJEE

ANCWL endorse Nkosazana while Cyril goes for broke

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THE race to succeed President Jacob Zuma has begun in earnest with the ANC Women's League last night officially endorsing Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as its candidate.

The announcement by the league came just a day after Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa threw down the gauntlet, calling for lifestyle audits "right at the core at the top of the leadership", in what is seen in ANC circles as a snipe at Zuma.

Ramaphosa has previously indicated that he intends succeeding Zuma as ANC president in December. But Zuma and his followers want Dlamini-Zuma, who is currently chairwoman of the African Union Commission, to become the country's first female president.

Dlamini-Zuma's campaign for the top job was boosted last night when the women's league named her as its candidate.

"We have come to the appreciation that nobody will break that glass ceiling but ourselves as women... To this end, in true pursuance of the ANC's policy of equality and non-sexism, we... have come out to call for the ANC to elect its first ever woman as president in December 2017," the league said in a statement.

"After careful consideration and opening our eyes as wide as possible" it had concluded that "Dlamini-Zuma is the only suitable candidate at this point in our history".

Women's league president Bathabile Dlamini last night said there was "overwhelming support" for Zuma's ex-wife as a candidate. She said their meeting "did not discuss Ramaphosa or any other man".

Along with Dlamini-Zuma, the women's league wants National Assembly Speaker Baleka Mbete; ministers Lindwe Sisulu; Maite Nkomo-Mashabane; Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula and Nomvula Mokonyane as well as ANC deputy secretary-general Jessie Duarte to be considered for other senior leadership ANC positions.

Dlamini denied that their support for Dlamini-Zuma was sponsored by the "premier league"—a pro-Zuma lobby group within the ANC that is opposed to Ramaphosa.

"I take exception to anyone who calls us the premier league because that says we are always controlled by men," she said.

The league's announcement came as Ramaphosa upped the ante in his bid to become the next president by

delivering a speech that was highly critical of Zuma and his backers.

Speaking at a rally to honour former SACP leader Joe Slovo on Friday, Ramaphosa warned against leaders who were "interested in self-gain and to advance the interest of their families and friends".

In what insiders said was a deviation from his notes, he said: "Leaders must not serve their own interests. They must not advance their interests and the interests of their friends and their families."

"We are going to make sure that these lifestyle audits do happen. And they must not only happen to general members. They must happen at leadership level—right at the core at the top of the leadership. That is where lifestyle audits should happen. That decision must be implemented. Because it is when we will be able to begin the process of dealing a devastating blow against corruption."

Claiming there were ANC members whose car boots were stuffed with money for buying votes,

Lifestyle audits ... must happen at leadership level — right at the core at the top of the leadership

Ramaphosa spared nothing in his criticism of the money cult that has bedevilled Zuma's presidency, notably in his relationship with the Gupta family.

With 11 months to go before the party elects Zuma's successor, Ramaphosa appears to have learnt a lesson from former ANC deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe's failed push for power in Mangaung in 2012.

Motlanthe is widely thought to have handed the presidency to Zuma because he played by the party's unwritten rule about a low-key approach to succession battles.

Ramaphosa has been at pains to distinguish himself from the Zuma lobby, underlining that the battle to save the ANC from corruption and self-enrichment will be central to his campaign.

"We know the ANC is not up for sale. Comrades, we have to make it very clear that this organisation is very priceless. It hasn't got a price that anyone can put on it. It there-

fore is not for sale. For those who may want to sell the ANC or a portion of it, just know the African National Congress is not for sale and it will never be bought."

But one of his advisers denied that Ramaphosa's comments were part of his campaign. "He was responding to previous speeches from Cosatu, the SACP and Sanco [the South African National Civic Organisation], who spoke about challenges facing the movement and the country. You don't have to look at it in the context of the succession debate," said the adviser.

While no ANC structure has publicly endorsed Ramaphosa, he is believed to enjoy support in Limpopo, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and at least half of KwaZulu-

Natal. He also has Cosatu's backing. Ramaphosa's campaign has been dubbed "CR17", while Dlamini-Zuma's is known as "NDZ17" in ANC structures. While Dlamini-Zuma's backers are playing up the need for a female president to garner support for her, Ramaphosa's endorsers are selling him as an alternative to a corrupt leadership.

Without naming those he claimed were corrupt, at Friday's rally Ramaphosa said leaders used family members to loot the public purse. "It is quite often that people can hide behind their relatives, they can hide behind companies that they establish while perpetrating corrupt acts," he said.

Ramaphosa's speech was welcomed by some of his cabinet col-

leagues. Public Works Minister and ANC national executive committee member Thulas Nxesi, who accompanied Ramaphosa on door-to-door campaigning in Orlando, Soweto, yesterday, said he supported the deputy president's condemnation of poor leadership.

Political analyst Ebrahim Fakir said even though it was hypocritical of Ramaphosa to criticise other leaders in the ANC, his statements were evidence that the race for the leadership had shifted.

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