

'NO PROCESSES FOLLOWED'

Premier slammed after reshuffle

Sandi Kwon Hoo

THE ANC has noted with "absolute disgust" the cabinet reshuffle initiated by Northern Cape Premier Sylvia Lucas.

Lucas dropped a bombshell when she announced a surprise provincial cabinet reshuffle yesterday afternoon, as MECs were making their way to the ANC provincial elective conference in Colesberg, which starts today.

ANC provincial secretary Zamani Saul placed it on record that the ANC was not consulted before the decision was taken.

"We don't know anything about this reshuffling. This was done in total disregard of the ANC internal processes, which require thorough consultation with both the ANC and the alliance partners. There will definitely be consequences," said Saul.

He pointed out that the timing of the reshuffle, which took place a day before the provincial elective conference was about to start, was "very suspect".

"We also want to put it on record that the reshuffling has got nothing to do with improving service delivery but has everything to do with influencing the outcome of the conference.

This tack is fallacious and deeply entangles the provincial government in the organisational politics of the ANC."

Meanwhile, Cosatu provincial secretary Anele Gxoyiya has condemned the provincial cabinet reshuffle as "childish and factional behaviour" and has called for Lucas to step down with immediate effect.

"The reshuffling was not based on strengthening cabinet or due to the incompetence of the MECs. Instead it was motivated by selecting cabinet

members who are perceived to be loyal to her."

He believed that processes were not followed.

"The decision was taken without consultation and the relevant MECs were not informed.

"They were called to a meeting last week where a lot of fighting took place."

Gxoyiya indicated that the reshuffling was done to detract focus from the ANC provincial elective conference.

Former MEC for finance, economic development and tourism Mac Jack and the former MEC for transport, safety and liaison, Pauline Williams, were axed from Lucas's cabinet.

Jack has been instrumental in promoting fiscal discipline in the province under difficult economic circumstances.

Williams was appointed as MEC for transport, safety and liaison last year. ANC Women's League deputy secretary Gail Parker will replace Jack, while ANC MPL Alexandra Beukes will take over from Williams. The new MEC for roads and public works is Bongiwe Mbinqo-Gigaba, while the new MEC for sports, arts and culture is Mxolisi Sokatsha.

The rest of the cabinet (MEC for nature conservation and environmental affairs Tiny Chotelo, MEC for education Martha Bartlett, MEC for co-operative governance, human settlements and traditional affairs Alvin Botes, MEC for social development Father Gift van Staden and MEC for health Lebogang Mothlaping) will remain in their positions.

The spokeswoman for the office of the premier, Bronwyn Thomas-Abrahams, said the premier's decision was taken after "applying her mind and consultation with her individual MECs".