

EASTERN CAPE POLITICS

Premier under pressure to fire some of his MECs

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Pressure is mounting on Eastern Cape Premier Phumulo Masualle to axe some of his executive committee members.

It is understood the entire provincial working committee, an implementing arm of ANC decisions at provincial level, left for Luthuli House at the weekend to meet the governing party's top officials.

A similar battle is also playing out in North West, where a bid to unseat Premier Supra Mahu-mapelo is under way.

KwaZulu-Natal, though under the leadership of a task team, is also riven by factionalism at provincial level.

The Eastern Cape delegation was expected to table a report on how Masualle defied the ANC's instructions to recall four

of his MECs. Some of Masualle's supporters on Monday marched on the ANC's Luthuli House headquarters in Johannesburg and protested against the unruly elective conference that put Oscar Mabuyane in power.

Three months ago the party resolved to recall some of its MECs, but Masualle has been pleading for more time.

Masualle's closest ally in the province, the South African Communist Party (SACP), has turned its back on him.

The SACP's provincial executive committee, which met at

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the weekend, also endorsed the decision to fire some of the MECs – in Masualle's presence.

He attended the SACP meeting in his capacity as a central committee member.

When auditor-general Kimi Makwetu tables his report on the performance of the province's municipalities later this week, the report will confirm that at least 33 of the province's 56 municipalities are in the red.

Of these 33, 11 are in a critical state because of poor management of state funds.

The shocking state of Eastern Cape municipalities was discussed at a meeting in Bhisho last week when senior officials from the auditor-general's office met, among other officials, Masualle, finance MEC Sakhumzi Somyo and local government MEC Fikile Xasa.



The party wants Somyo, agrarian reform MEC Mlibo Qoboshiyane, social development MEC Nancy Sihlwayi and public works MEC Thandiswa Marawu fired.

SACP provincial spokesman

Feeling the squeeze:

Eastern Cape Premier Phumulo Masualle is coming under pressure to get rid of some of his executive committee members.
/The Herald

requires level-headed political management to ensure the synergy between the government and the ANC....

"It is in this context that the SACP endorsed the decision of the reconfiguration of government in the Eastern Cape," Mdodi said.

The SACP decision to go public about the matter comes a month after Cosatu, an alliance partner of the ANC, announced it also wanted the Masualle-led cabinet reshuffled.

Contacted for comment regarding the visit to the ANC headquarters, ANC provincial secretary Lulama Ngcukaitobi refused to discuss anything related to the visit.

"This matter has nothing to do with the media. We have no reason to explain to anyone when we ... visit ANC headquarters," said Ngcukaitobi.

Siyabonga Mdodi said: "The party leadership discussed the developments in the province, including the reconfiguration of the provincial government.

"The SACP is of the firm view that this period of transition