

# Cyril tells Masualle: fire MECs

## Premier given deadline of end of business this week

By **ZINE GEORGE and ZOLILE MENZELWA**  
Politics Desk

**P**REMIER Phumulo Masualle has been instructed to announce changes in his provincial cabinet by the end of this week, the ANC said last night. Pressure has been mounting for Masualle to fire four of his cabinet members. The instruction to act was given following a top-level meeting atten-

ded by ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa. The meeting was attended by Masualle as well as ANC Eastern Cape provincial working committee members led by the party's provincial chairman, Oscar Mabuyane. ANC provincial spokesman Gift Ngqodi confirmed the meeting with Ramaphosa and top party officials, saying it was part of the feedback on the ongoing work to unite and consolidate the Eastern Cape. "The meeting was frank, open, comradely and dealt with a number of issues which confronted the ANC Eastern Cape and concluded on the need to speedily resolve areas of difference and further ensure that the issue of the EC provincial re-configuration is concluded speedily. "As a consequence of the aforesaid,

we expect that the Eastern Cape premier will make the pronouncements before the end of this week," said Ngqodi. The Dispatch can reveal today that the entire provincial working committee (PWC), which is the implementing arm of ANC decisions at provincial level, travelled to Luthuli House over the weekend to meet the ANC's top officials. The meeting was where the party leaders were expected to table a full report on how Masualle continued to defy the ANC's instructions to recall four of his MECs. Some of Masualle's supporters yesterday marched on Luthuli House, and protested against the elective conference that put Mabuyane in power. Three months ago the party re-

solved to recall some of the provincial MECs. But Masualle has been pleading for more time citing various reasons. The Dispatch has also learned that Masualle's closest ally, the SACP, turned its back on him when its provincial executive committee met over the weekend and endorsed the ANC decision to fire some of the MECs – in Masualle's presence. He attended in his capacity as a central committee member. As if this was not enough, when the auditor-general tables his report on performance of the province's municipalities later this week, the report will confirm that all is not well at local government level in 33 of the province's 56 municipalities which were found to be in the red. Of these 33, 11 are in a critical state

due to poor management of state funds. The shocking state of local municipalities was discussed at a meeting in Bhisho last week where senior officials from the auditor-general's office met with, among others, Masualle, finance MEC Sakhumzi Somyo as well as cooperative governance and traditional affairs MEC Fikile Xasa. The SACP wants Somyo, agrarian reform MEC Mlibo Qoboshiyane, social development MEC Nancy Sihlwai and public works MEC Thandiswa Marawu fired. SACP provincial spokesman Siyabonga Mdodi confirmed the party's meeting and in statement 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 requires level-headed political management to ensure the synergy between the government and the African National Congress as the governing party. "It is in this context that the SACP endorsed the decision of the reconfiguration of government in the interest of the people of the Eastern Cape and ensuring certainty in provincial administration for effective delivery of services." The SACP decision to go public about the matter comes a month after Cosatu, an alliance partner of the ANC, announced it also wants the Masualle-led cabinet reshuffled. Contacted for comment regarding the PWC's visit to Luthuli House yesterday, ANC provincial secretary

Lulama Ngcukayitobi refused to discuss anything related to their visit to Luthuli House, saying: "This matter has nothing to do with the media. "We have no reason to explain to anyone when we decide to visit ANC headquarters." The ANC members who marched in Johannesburg yesterday also threatened of a day of action and a march to the party's provincial office, Calata House, if the national executive committee failed to urgently respond to their grievances. The head of the delegation, Ndoda Mesani, said in a telephonic interview that 120 members marched on the party headquarters. He said the delegation was happy with the reception from party secretary-general Ace Magashule. — [zolilem@tisoblackstar.co.za](mailto:zolilem@tisoblackstar.co.za)