

Female tipped for top position

PREMIERS: RAMAPHOSA TO REFIGURE HIS CABINET

» **Nandi Ndalana** first of 'many', says ANC Women's League leader.

Alex Matlala

A special meeting of the NEC of the ANC has been arranged for today to discuss the appointment of new premiers for the eight provinces won by the ANC in last week's elections.

Yesterday, provincial executive committees for the ANC in the eight provinces, which exclude the Western Cape, won by the Democratic Alliance, had to send three names to the party secretary-general, Ace Magashule. Their deadline was midday.

"Magashule will, in turn, be expected to present the names to the NEC meeting scheduled to take place at 14 hours today," the ANC said yesterday.

According to a resolution taken at the 2007 ANC Polokwane conference, provinces are supposed to submit three names to the ANC's national executive committee (NEC), the highest decision-making body between conferences, for consideration for premiership position.

Yesterday, ANC national spokesperson Pule Mabe con-

firmed the special meeting today.

"By the end of the day, one name shall be chosen for premier candidate and the candidate would then be expected to be elected at the respective provincial legislatures," he said.

"It is also expected that the president will embark on the configuration of his cabinet. But that process, which is at the behest of the president, is expected to unfold later," said Mabe.

An independent political analyst, Somadoda Fikeni, said last week Ramaphosa was expected to face the dilemma of who to appoint to his Cabinet after the fight the ANC displayed during its election campaign.

Fikeni said this was so because the losing camp within the ANC, which is facing an existential crisis as a result of the evidence emanating from the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture and other inquiries, could put up some resistance.

Ramaphosa has been criticised from many quarters for fielding Environmental Affairs Minister Nomvula Mokonyane and Women Minister in the Presidency Bathabile Dlamini in his cabinet reshuffle last year.

While the writing is on the wall that Ramaphosa will trim his cabinet, public works MEC and former ANC Women's League depu-

ty provincial chairperson Nandi Ndalana is tipped to become the first female Limpopo premier.

The Citizen has learnt three names submitted to the NEC by the Limpopo PEC yesterday: Nandi Ndalana, treasury MEC Rob Tooley and current premier Chu-pu Stanley Mathabatha.

Early indications were that speaker of the legislature, Polly Boshielo, Mopani district executive mayor Nkakareng Rakgoale and party deputy provincial chairperson Florence Radzilani were neck-and-neck for the province's plum job.

The move was brushed aside by their detractors citing lack of leadership.

ANC Women's League secretary-general Meokgo Matuba recently said the league would do everything in its power to ensure that more women were nominated as premiers.

She said the league was "going to use the power that we have as the women's league to ensure that we get 50/50 gender representation".

Currently, provinces such as Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Limpopo, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal have only men topping the candidate list, while only Mpumalanga and the Western Cape have female names.

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In general, the FF Plus is doing better than expected