



Publication: Star, The (Early Edition) - Main
Title: Revolt over Ramaphosa's running mates
Publish date: 14 Oct 2022
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Reach: 74520
AVE: R 64791.14
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RUN-UP

Revolt over Ramaphosa's running mates

Dissent emerges ahead of elective conference

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PRESIDENT Cyril Ramaphosa's camp is likely to go to the 55th ANC elective conference in December divided following growing disagreement over running mates.

Sources who attended the camp's caucus meeting in Gauteng this week said there was dissatisfaction in the provinces when the president preferred a line-up that omitted current Limpopo chairperson Stan Mathabatha and former KwaZulu-Natal provincial secretary Mdumiseni Ntuli.

At the meeting, the caucus was said to have endorsed current Water and Sanitation Minister Senzo Mchunu for the deputy president position over Paul Mashatile, while Gwede Mantashe was backed to return as national chairperson.

In the secretary position, the caucus opted for Fikile Mbalula instead of Ntuli, while Gwen Ramokgopa was preferred over Nomvula Mokonyane for

the deputy secretary position. Former Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson was chosen to contest the treasurer position.

In the first Ramaphosa line-up, Mashatile was touted to deputise for him, while Mathabatha and Mokonyane appeared for the chairperson and deputy secretary positions respectively. Ironically, the three also appeared on Dr Zweli Mkhize's slate for similar positions.

Ntuli's snubbing did not go down well with his campaigners who had criss-crossed the country campaigning for him to be secretary. His lobbyist, Sabelo Sigudu, said they did not agree with the caucus meeting's decision to dump him.

He said they regarded his dropping as a proposal, not a decision, as it was the work of the branches to nominate members, not the caucus of individuals.

Sigudu, also from KwaZulu-Natal, said they did not accept the reasons put forward by the caucus that Ntuli should be dropped to allow Mchunu as it would not be a good idea to have both in the line-up.

"We have done a lot of groundwork. For us, Ntuli is still in the running and it would be the branches that would decide his fate, not a group of individuals who meet in the corners and come

up with their own line-up to serve their own interests," said Sigudu.

His sentiments were strongly shared by one of the key CR22 campaigners in KwaZulu-Natal, Jomo Sibiya, who rejected the new line-up that excluded Ntuli. Sibiya, a former human settlements and public works MEC, said those who created the line-up were the people who still wanted slate politics, something others in the ANC were rejecting.

He said he did not buy the reasons advanced by those who did not want Ntuli because he and Mchunu both come from the province, saying if the branches wanted them then so be it. He said their reasoning was misplaced.

"When former president Jacob Zuma was party president, comrade Dr Zweli Mkhize was the treasurer in 2012. President Ramaphosa is currently having comrade Mashatile as treasurer, but they are all from Gauteng and that has not been an issue, so why is it being raised now?"

"We are not backtracking in our campaign for comrade Mdumiseni and we believe he has what it takes to be secretary-general of the movement, and branches are currently agreeing with us as he is getting nominations across the country," said Sibiya.

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