



Publication: Mercury, The - Main
Title: PHALA PHALA FIGHT IS NOT OVER
Publish date: 14 Dec 2022
Page: 1

Reach: 25432
AVE: R 48016.19
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RACISM STOPS WITH ME

PHALA PHALA FIGHT IS NOT OVER

Five ANC MPs – including Dlamini Zuma, Mahumapelo, Zwane and Dirks – supported the vote

KUBEN CHETTY AND THAMI MAGUBANE

OPPOSITION parties have slammed the ANC's decision to vote against the Section 89 independent panel report in Parliament, and have vowed to step up the fight to hold President Cyril Ramaphosa accountable over the Phala Phala scandal.

The parties have also accused the ANC of failing to protect the Constitution, saying their vote on the Phala Phala report has shattered any myth of Ramaphosa's ANC renewal and new dawn.

The ANC used its majority in the House yesterday to vote against the adoption of the Section 89 independent panel report on the Phala Phala scandal.

In total 214 voted no, 148 voted yes while two people indicated they were abstaining from the vote, with Speaker Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula saying that the motion for the impeachment process would not continue.

The notable exception was Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma who went against party lines and voted yes for the adoption of the report.

ANC presidential candidate Dr Zweli Mkhize and Tourism Minister Lindiwe Sisulu were absent during the vote. Other ANC MPs who voted yes included Mervyn Dicks, Supra Mahumapelo and Mosebazi Zwane.

Reacting to the ANC MPs who refused to toe the party line, ANC chief whip Penny Majodina said: "I will be writing to the officials (top six) inform-



CYRIL Ramaphosa

ing them of what has transpired and asking them to refer the matter to the processes of the organisation. All other parties are toying their own party line, it is unfortunate that our own did not."

She said the move would not affect the ANC as it heads to its elective conference this week.

The DA with the exception of a few members who were absent voted yes, while the EFF, IFP, UDM and ATM voted for the adoption of the report.

GOOD Party leader Patricia de Lille abstained from the vote.

Mzwanele Manyi of the ATM, said the party would be speaking to its lawyers to see if it could nullify the process which he described as "a travesty of justice".

He accused the Speaker of having failed in her duties by not calling for a secret ballot, saying that people had been threatened with violence to the extent that cases were opened with the police.



PARLIAMENTARY officials confer during a special sitting of the National Assembly at the City Hall in Cape Town yesterday, which was held for MPs to debate the section 89 independent panel report and vote on whether an impeachment committee should be established. | EPA-EFE

He added that ANC members were threatened with expulsion if they did not vote with the party, which meant they had to put their livelihoods above their oath of office.

"That process was a travesty of justice and the Speaker acted recklessly ... She was biased towards her party and acted to protect Ramaphosa," Manyi said.

DA leader John Steenhuisen said the ANC vote confirmed that the party had

not changed its undemocratic behaviour in the wake of state capture and the Zondo Report.

"Perhaps even more disappointing is that this behaviour was happily welcomed by President Ramaphosa himself, who has done everything in his power to avoid answering questions truthfully about the money he hid in his farmhouse," said Steenhuisen.

"As we did throughout the Zuma years, the DA will use every resource and

every avenue at our disposal to hold the president to account, and ensure that our Parliament remains functional and intact. This fight has only just begun."

IFP spokesperson Mkhuleko Hlangwa said this was a missed opportunity for Parliament which could have started a process for the president to come forward and answer.

He said it was now up to the law-enforcement agencies investigating the matter, including the Hawks, Sars and

the Reserve Bank to investigate it fully.

He said the failure by Parliament to carry out its oversight function was "a dereliction of duty".

ActionSA leader Herman Mashaba said history had repeated itself in Parliament as the ANC again demonstrated that the party would always come before their oath of office, the Constitution, and the South African people.

"Equally shocking was the surprisingly high number of MP absentees from the opposition benches today.

"Impassioned speeches from opposition leaders called on ANC MPs to vote with their conscience, and yet so many opposition MPs did not see it fit to attend this sitting.

"The fact that ANC MPs defend the indefensible is disappointing but expected, but that opposition MPs would defend the actions of the President with their absence is a demonstration of how the opposition has become complicit in the problem," Mashaba said.

Policy analyst Nkosibhule Nyembezi said the decision to reject the panel report would go down in history as one of the lowest points in Parliament's history.

"With hindsight, the revelations of the panel report were to be the fulcrum on which the prospects of the governing ANC, and therefore opposition parties, turned. But for a victory so longed for, it feels like one unaccompanied by a sense of hope," Nyembezi said.

"Instead, the message from Luthuli House seems reminiscent of a military government that has taken control after an unruly revolution – order must be restored. But at what cost?

"The courageous act by some ANC members of voting in favour of the report demonstrates deep divisions within the ANC over combating corruption."