



Publication: TheCitizenKZN - Main
Title: ANC project or ploy?
Publish date: 15 May 2023
Page: 7

Reach: 44390
AVE:R 50866.01
Author: Reitumetse Makwea

ANC project or ploy?

DOUBT: GAUTENG RESIDENTS SUSPICIOUS OF PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

➔ They say it's a mere tactic to garner votes and clean up party's image, while analysts say it's long overdue.

Reitumetse Makwea

The new Cleaning and Greening Expanded Public Works Programme in Gauteng has been met with mixed emotions. Some Gauteng residents are calling it "a scam to get votes", while experts say the project was long overdue considering the poverty, unemployment and pollution crisis in the province.

Yesterday, Gauteng premier Panyaza Lesufi and the MEC for social development, agriculture and environment, Mbali Hlophe, launched the intervention response to littering and illegal dumping across the province – particularly in townships, informal settlements and hostels (TISH).

However, residents in Mabopane, Ga-Rankuwa, Alexandra and Soweto said this was just a tactic for the ANC to garner more votes and clean up its image before next year's elections.

Ga-Rankuwa resident Kopano Mohauwe, 27, said: "Even previous reports and research have shown that the people's trust and votes are no longer with the party – it's evident they will do anything to remain in power.

"These jobs are not going to do anything; you can even see by the way he was enticing them, and promising contract extensions of six months.

"It's clear he was playing on the emotional vulnerability of those people, and that hit home. It will definitely do the same when it's time for votes," claimed the resident.

An Alex resident, Sarah Nyati, agreed with Mohauwe and said that the provincial government



FLORAL TRIBUTE

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) president Velenkosini Hlabisa lays a wreath at the Bredell Cemetery in Kempton Park on Saturday at the memorial stone unveiling of IFP veteran Constance Zikalala. Picture: Nigel Sibanda

was playing on the emotions and vulnerability of people.

"This is why they didn't even bother creating sustainable jobs. They're only giving us six months, so that we can keep coming back because we need an extension."

Dion Forster, political analyst and professor of systematic theology and ethics at Stellenbosch University, said South Africans were going to see many more similar projects with the approach of the elections.

"It's not as simple as we make it out to be.

"There is an obvious need to address social issues and challenges and attend to the city and province to make sure that services are met," he said.

"But the deployment of resources as we near the elections to try and garner votes and clean up the image of the ruling party –

More to come

► Political analyst prof Dion Forster said South Africans were going to see many more similar projects with the approach of the elections.

that's just a strategy that's as old as time. So they are trying to get the votes, while trying to meet an obvious need."

Another political analyst, Dr Ntsikelelo Breakfast, said although this may have been a strategy to clean up the ANC's image among South Africans, "the bigger scheme of things is that he [Lesufi] also wanted people to see the party in a good light in terms of its responsiveness to issues of underdevelopment in that particular province.

"We cannot say for sure that this is an act of campaigning in advance for votes next year," he added.

"I think the initiative is a mere anti-poverty strategy because there are threats to the stability of Gauteng, but at the same time it's meant to absorb people who are unemployed," said Breakfast.

Lesufi said the programme was aimed at addressing food insecurity challenges at household level and rising unemployment in the province.

It was also aimed at creating employment for 6 000 temporary workers and provide environmental management support to TISH communities through the Bontle ke Botho sustainable clean-up and greening initiatives to enhance human dignity, as well as instilling pride in communities. – reitumetsem@citizen.co.za