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Title: How `anti-GNU` group lost out at DA meeting

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How 'anti-GNU' group lost out at DA meeting

By THABO MOKONE and LIZEKA TANDWA

 DA leaders from Gautenø cut lonely figures at the party's federal council meeting this week after their proposal that its GNU ministers should account directly to the party on their government activities was

rejected.

This is according to DA leaders who spoke to the Sunday Times on condition of anonymity after the meeting in Johannesburg on

Insiders said the Gaut leaders, led by provincial chair Fred Nel, arrived at the meeting in "an anti-GNU" mood, asking what the party had gained from the GNU as it continued to be undermined by the ANC on policy issues such as the Bela and Expropriation Acts, among

Sources said that during the debate. Nel stunned the federal council when he proposed that the meeting should adopt a motion that all DA ministers and deputy ministers serving in the GNU should directly report and account to DA structures such as the federal executive and the federal council on their work in government. Other sources said Gauteng DA leaders also argued in favour of withdrawal from the GNU, claiming the party had dropped the ball on Bela.

But, according to those who were at the meeting, Nel's proposal was roundly rejected after DA leader John Steenhuisen, who is also the GNU's minister of agriculture, spoke

Insiders said Steenhuisen told the meeti there were already enough measures to hold DA ministers accountable. He said they were

DA limited accountable. He said usely were accounting to him as party leader and he was leading them in cabinet meetings. Nel on Thursday declined to comment on

the motion he tabled at the meeting but denied he went as far as calling for a total withdrawal from "He [Nel] has been like that from the word go; the first GNU roadshow was in Gauteng, he was the one who mentioned is around blue lights. We voted on Nel's motion and fortunately it did not go through," said one of

sources. "It was a motion to say we must report to federal council about what we are doing. But John was at pains to say, 'I meet these guys every Friday, we constantly have meetings. So I don't understand why he thinks we are not held accountable."

The Gauteng branch of the DA last year failed to strike a deal to form a provincial unity govern with the ANC after negotiations about sharing positions collapsed

Another top party leade from Gauteng argued that DA messaging on GNU affairs was not casting the party in a positive light.

"The reality is that what we have done and how we have managed the GNU is not putting us in a good light with South Africans and our istituency. We keep putting red-line items, and when the president disregards them we move from our

position and pretend these are

compromises that are reached.

"Look, Bela might not have been bad in terms of the way it ended, because compromise was reached, but there are other items which have been overlooked, including the bad faith with which Ramaphosa entered into this coalition. So we needed clarity on why we have to continue with thi

GNU, what our ministers are doing to service our constituency and how we change the

essaging and narrative to benefit us." Last week, Steenhuisen announced that the DA was not ready to walk away from the GNU, despite its unhappiness over Ramaphosa's decision to sign the

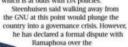


What we have done and how we have managed the GNU is not putting us in a good light with South Africans and our constituency

A Gauteng DA leader

Expropriation Act into law.

The legislation allows for the minister of public works — the DA's Dean MacPherson without compensation in the public interest, which is at odds with DA policies.



Expropriation Act and is seeking a "reset" in relations between the ANC and DA at the level of the GNU The DA leader

held a "bilateral" with Ramaphosa this cabinet lekgotla, as one of the first steps towards mending relations,

"It was a constructive and and commitments have been made on mechanisms regular meetings between

DA leader John Steenh

