

Publication: Citizen, The (Daily) - Main

Title: R217m for land claims

Publish date: 14 May 2025

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Reach: 24431

AVE: R 46314.84

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R217m for land claims

SETTLEMENT: EXPROPRIATION SHOULD BE PROPERLY APPLIED – RISE MZANSI

➔ **Payouts made to 287 people, most of whom are black.**

Itumeleng Mafisa

Not only has the much-feared expropriation of land without compensation not yet started, the South African government spent R217 million on land claims in the 2024-25 financial year.

This land was privately owned by individuals and private companies; the claims were largely submitted by black people.

This information was recently revealed in a parliamentary reply to questions to the minister of land reform and rural affairs.

Rise Mzansi chief whip Makashule Gana recently told *The Citizen* this money was paid for 287 claims.

Of these claims, 14 farms were considered productive at the time of settlement, he said.

During the 2024-25 financial year, the land reform and rural development department budgeted R466 million to acquire and allocate 46 767 hectares of land for redistribution through the proactive acquisition of strategically located land and, also, for security tenure purposes.

"This information once again pours water over the misinformation and disinformation around the Expropriation Act," said Gana.

He said Afrikaner farmers who had applied for asylum in the US were spreading false information about land confiscation by the South African government.

The first group of Afrikaners landed in Washington this week.

Gana accused some Afrikaners of peddling lies and division.

"They falsely claimed that the government has in the past and will arbitrarily and illegally start a process of grabbing land, particularly farming property.



SACRED DAY Buddhist and Muslim devotees release a lantern in front of Borobudur Temple, the world's largest Buddhist monument and a Unesco world heritage site, in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia, yesterday, as they commemorate Vesak Day. Picture: AFP

"Thus far, not a single iota of proof has been produced to support this false claim," he said.

The party had even questioned Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Dean Macpherson about the amount of land expropriated using the Land Expropriation Act, Gana said.

Macpherson is the custodian of the Act.

"He said between 2014 and 2024, the department has not expropriated a single portion of land, despite already having the legal authority to do so," Gana said.

According to him, Minister of Land and Rural Development Mzwanele Nyhontso had also confirmed that 16 696 beneficiaries elected monetary compensa-

tion over taking ownership of the land being claimed.

"This in itself requires further inquiry around the reasons so we can better understand the psychology around and processing of land claims," he said.

While his party believe that the Expropriation Act should be implemented, he does not believe that it should be used maliciously, Gana said.

"Government should follow the provisions of the constitution, implement the Expropriation Act and have the political will to do so," he said.

At the same time, the lies being peddled about the Expropriation Act have the potential to create a diplomatic crisis for South Africa

and other countries, such as the US.

"Rise Mzansi hopes that with accurate information on expropriation and land reform in the public domain, it will aid with positively resetting relations between Pretoria and Washington," he said.

"Moreover, we hope that those who have subscribed to the misinformation and disinformation campaigns now see the truth."

Gana took a jab at US President Donald Trump for failing to listen to the South African authorities about the situation with land in the country.

"He listens to the wrong people. It is a deliberate attempt from certain sections of society who have never supported our transition to democracy," he said.

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16 696
beneficiaries
took money
instead
of land