



Hundreds of cleaners and security guards blocked the main entrance at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital demanding to be insourced. /VELINHLAPO

# Enough with outsourcing - Bara protesters

Workers block main entrance to hospital

By **Penwell Dlamini**

Hundreds of cleaners and security guards blocked the main entrance at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital demanding to be insourced.

The workers, who belong to the South African Cleaners Security and Allied Workers Union (Sacsawu), have been protesting outside the country's biggest hospital wanting the government to fulfil its promise to end the outsourcing of security and cleaning service employees in the province.

Oleg Mabunda, one of the representatives of the workers, told Sowetan that the government had made the commitment to insource cleaning and security back in 2014.

"Government brought in-

sourcing on the table and we agreed to it. But five years down the line insourcing has not been implemented.

"We submitted a memorandum of demands on October 8 and went again on October 30. The Gauteng department of health informed us that it is waiting for the appointment of the new MEC.

"Now the MEC has been appointed. We want the date on which we will be insourced. We have decided to protest here because this is where our members work," Mabunda said.

Mabunda said workers had had enough of working for pri-

**Five years down the line it has not been implemented**

vate companies as they pay low salaries with no benefits and tough working conditions.

Police were called to the scene to maintain order. Gauteng provincial government took a decision at the beginning of Premier David Makhura's second term to insource support services such as cleaners and security guards.

In September, the EFF tabled a motion to have all security guards and cleaners insourced across provincial departments but it was dismissed by the speaker of the legislature Ntombi Mekgwe before it could go to a vote.

The EFF had tabled the motion, arguing that the provincial government had to abolish all contracts for cleaners and security guards and employ them directly to end tender corruption and exploitation of workers. The motion was supported by the DA.

Makhura's spokesperson Vuyo Mhaga told Sowetan that all departments had started the insourcing of cleaners and security guards but some were unable to implement the resolution because of budget constraints.

On average, each of the 10 provincial departments spends about R415m on security alone in a year.

Insourcing is seen as a way of eliminating the corruption associated with cleaning and security tenders, while providing better wages and working conditions for the workers.

Gauteng department did not respond to questions yesterday.

## 'Reconciliation is at the risk of failing'

Cyril highlights problems in SA

By **Andisiwe Makinana**

President Cyril Ramaphosa has admitted that racial tensions that flared up in parts of SA continued to open old wounds and also showed that race relations remain fragile.

Delivering the annual national Day of Reconciliation speech, he said as much as South Africans continued to work to overcome divisions in society, deep and persistent challenges remained. "What we have seen in Senekal in the Free State, in Eldorado Park in Gauteng and in Brackenfell in Cape Town shows that the state of race relations in our country remains fragile. "We may have come a long way from the days of institutionalised racism, but we are alive to the reality that for many, reconciliation is something they have yet to experience."

Ramaphosa said this situation was not unique to SA.

He cited the worldwide Black Lives Matter protests earlier this year. "Under the banner of 'Black Lives Matter', they spoke out, they marched, they demonstrated... about the many ways in which black people continue to be discriminated against and victimised.

"It is our hope and determination that this groundswell of activism will forever change the attitudes and practices that have sustained racism across the world," he said.

Ramaphosa said South Africans were fully aware that racism continues in SA in var-

ious forms. "As we work to bridge the racial divisions between the people of SA, we hope that our path to a non-racial society may serve as an example to others."

Ramaphosa said true reconciliation will not be possible unless social ills are addressed. He said SA could not build a truly caring society as long as the majority lived in conditions of poverty, inequality and deprivation, while a minority lives in comfort and privilege. "We cannot move forward... if policies about economic transformation, affirmative action and land reform are resisted."

He said it would be impossible to build a society that enables the individual to better their life and realise their potential when resources meant to benefit people are stolen by those who claim to be public servants. "So long as we do not overcome the poverty, inequality and underdevelopment that affects this country's majority, reconciliation will forever remain out of our reach."

He said the social conditions under which many people live were the single biggest obstacle to achieving a society rooted in equality and committed to social justice. Ramaphosa also called on SA men to do more to fight gender-based violence, saying the country cannot achieve reconciliation for as long as women, who constitute half of the population, live in fear of GBV.

"We should be ashamed that women and children are afraid of being in the company of unfamiliar men, of being followed home by men and of being beaten up, harassed, abused and raped.

## Bribery a huge problem at border

By **Mandla Khoza**

Mpumalanga premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane has called for law enforcement agencies in the Lebombo border to Mozambique to do their job and stop criminality including human trafficking.

Mtshweni-Tsipane said she was aware of allegations of bribery allowing people to cross the border, adding that people who are involved in crime should be exposed and arrested.

Mtshweni-Tsipane, who was accompanied by community safety, security and liaisons MEC Gabisile Shabalala, said she was satisfied with the level of compliance with the Covid-19 regulations as people are tested at the border.

"We are pleased at the way of dealing with the traffic congestion here, every officer is ready

and doing their job. We are trying to do away with the flow of illicit goods into SA. We are aware of the allegations that there are corrupt officials here and we are warning people that we will deal with that, arrest, prosecute and fire those who are aiding criminals," said Mtshweni-Tsipane.

Two weeks ago police at the border intercepted a Ford Ranger bakkie that was reported stolen in Sandton, Gauteng, after a car tracking company saw it approaching the border.

The bakkie was loaded in a truck and covered with grass brooms. According to the Mpumalanga police the bakkie was reported missing on November 30.

Officials at the border confirmed that bribery made it easy for illegal items to cross the border.

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