

Let The Voters "Punish" Zuma: Malema

Written by Rudi Prinsloo

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South African voters should "punish" ANC president Jacob Zuma if he is corrupt, ANC Youth League president Julius Malema said on Tuesday.

"Leave Zuma to the voters to punish him. If he is so corrupt and he must be punished, let the voters do that," Malema told a press briefing at ANC headquarters in Johannesburg.

"Why do you want to subject him to the hands of the few, the judiciary, the judges and the media? Leave it to the voters, 23 million must decide whether Zuma becomes president or not, not the judges."

He was responding to Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille's threat to approach the Constitutional Court to prevent Zuma from being the country's next president while still facing corruption charges.

He said Zille's approach was an "old apartheid tactic".

"When we say Zille represents... the apartheid system, we mean this. When they can't defeat them they must arrest them and lock them up," he said.

He reiterated that Zuma remained innocent until proven guilty.

Taking a swipe at the Congress of the People, Malema said many ANC members who had defected to the breakaway party were now returning.

"They... have surprised themselves by introducing people who are not in leadership positions to come and lead their campaigns.

"They surprised themselves and as a result of those surprises many people are leaving that new party and coming back to the ANC," he said.

He said many defectors from the ruling party in the Eastern Cape, a hotly contested province, would be returning to the ANC this week.

"There is a leader who has been hired to lead their campaign, so they left because they know things for hire is like car for hire... you can't borrow leadership. This leadership for hire arrangement has demoralised many people."

This followed Cope's selection of its candidate for president. Bishop Mvume Dandala was selected for the race, expected to be a tussle between the party's president Terror Lekota and his first deputy Mbhazima Shilowa.

On Monday, Lekota brushed aside perceptions that there was tension in the party resulting from its candidate selection.

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Malema said Lekota was "choked" by his own party.

"I think those who are loyal to our honourable friend comrade Terror, they should form a "Friends of Terror Lekota" in Cope and fight for his cause, I mean, he can show a brave face, but you can see it's an embattled individual.

"He has been choked by his own party and what they did to him, I mean really in all fairness it's unfair," he said.

"These people said they are forming a party which will provide better people with high moral standards, that's what we were told, when they left the ANC.

"But when they look among themselves there is no person that is meeting those moral standards... "

The league's NEC said it accepted Malema's apology to education Minister Naledi Pandor, saying it understood Malema "never meant to undermine the minister".

It also expressed its "unreserved confidence" in Malema, who had to be reigned in by the ANC after comments he made about campaigning in the "backyard" of Inkatha Freedom Party president Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The league nominated its deputy president, Andile Lungisi as chairman of the National Youth Development Agency's board.

Malema said the ANC Youth League would try and persuade the IFP Youth Brigade and the Freedom Front Plus Youth to join the board, but not the DA's youth.

"There is no DA youth, we recruited the whole DA youth into the Youth League when Mbalula [former Youth League president Fikile Mbalula] as still president... that's when we finished with the DA... anyone who comes to say they are DA youth, that would surprise us, or people should not come and parade their workers here and say that is the DA youth," he said.

Malema was kinder to the Freedom Front Plus youth, saying they would be invited to join the board because they "challenged the Youth League on real political issues".

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