

Minister calls for new investors in renewable energy

Push from private sector would spur the state to invite more participants, she says

SIYABONGA MKHWANAZI

DELEGATES at the renewable energy conference in Cape Town have called for more investments by the private sector, saying this would push the government to invite more players.

The conference ended on a high note yesterday, with Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson telling delegates that renewable energy was the future of the country.

In the department's annual report tabled in Parliament, Joemat-Pettersson said the renewable energy programme has added much-needed capacity to the grid.

She said that for South Africa to grow the industry, more private players had to come to the party.

During the visit to one of the wind farms on the outskirts of Cape Town yesterday, government officials, investors and private players said the role of the private sector was crucial in the country.

The chief executive of the West Coast One wind farm, Christiaan Swanepoel, said the plant had provided much-needed power to the grid.

The plant, which boasts 47 turbines, producing 94 megawatts, came on board in Decem-



ber last year when they connected to the grid.

Swanepoel said there was enough power on the wind farm to supply 100 000 households a year. "The lifespan (of each turbine) will be 20 to 25 years, but you can renew it. You can put in new gearboxes, you can also put new blades on the turbine," he said.

The West Coast One wind farm was one of several sites visited by delegates yesterday to see how renewables power the country.

The farm has 47 transformers with one transformer for each turbine.

The plant was constructed over 21 months, with most of the material imported from overseas.

The connection to the grid took several months to be completed, said Swanepoel.

Officials on the wind farm said they completed the project on time. Despite the challenges,

everything was done to finish off the project on the scheduled date.

In the annual report, Joemat-Pettersson said that since 2010 when they started with the renewable energy programme, they had seen some progress in additional capacity to the grid.

The more players there were, including the independent power producers, the better for the future of the industry as well as energy security for the country.

The private sector had pumped billions of rand into renewable energy projects over the past five years.

Joemat-Pettersson said in the report that more private investments were still needed.

While the government had invested R1 trillion in infrastructure in the past five years, it wanted to spend a total of R4 trillion in infrastructure development over the next 15 years, she added.



DECENT TURNOUT: Gauteng members of Cosatu march on the streets of central Joburg yesterday.

PICTURE: BOXER NGWENYA

KATHLEEN MORRISSEY

LABOUR broking, reliable public transport and e-tolls topped the agenda when Cosatu led a march across the Joburg CBD yesterday to deliver memoranda to organisations ranging from Telkom to the Gauteng provincial government.

Despite confusion about the starting location and the intense heat, about 3 000 people marched, according to the Joburg metro police.

Public transport top issue for crowd in Joburg

Most attendees wore red T-shirts representing their unions or previous demonstrations with slogans like "Back to the basics, members first."

Among the members were SACP, SATWU and Sanco who sang in unison, *Amandla ethu mawas'khokhele, igazi lethu malis'khulule*. (Let our strength lead us, let our blood free us.)

The vibrant crowd delivered the first memorandum to Telkom and Prasa (Passenger Rail Agency of SA).

Then they moved on to the Department of Labour, where they handed their documents to Kenny Fick, chief director in Gauteng.

As he signed for the memorandum, the crowd chanted: "Ho signer mo ha se morabaraba, Ho e pofa mo

hase morabaraba." (Signing here is not a game. Binding yourself is not a game.)

The next two stops saw an increase in security. Both the representatives for FNB and Standard Bank and the representative for the Gauteng provincial government had guards who moved the crowd back from the flatbed truck that carried the leaders of the march.

Elizabeth Zandamela and Sylvia Zungu attended with the textile workers' union. Better public transport was their top issue.

They said that when transport was unreliable, it made employees late for work, and they got fired.

Zandamela said she was dismayed that some of her co-workers had still gone to work yesterday.

Still, the leadership seemed pleased with the turnout.

Federation hails its socio-economic protests countrywide as a success

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COSATU came out fighting during its nationwide socio-economic marches yesterday, warning that it was in for the long haul.

"Government and big business should know that these are not just symbolic protests, but it's a warning shot. We are putting everyone on notice. We are prepared to wage a lengthy battle on these demands," the federation warned yesterday.

Cosatu, supported by taxi associations, took to the streets over a number of issues, including the country's job crisis, e-tolls, labour broking and a better public transport system. It said the ANC had to make good on its promises of radical transformation and called for national discussions on the jobs crisis.

The federation's president S'dumo Dlamini, yesterday said an estimated 188 000 jobs are on the line this year alone.

Cosatu again called for a moratorium on retrenchments, while discussions are happening at the National Economic Development and Labour

Council (Nedlac).

The new Cosatu spokesman, Sizwe Pamla, told The Star last night that the federation was going back to ANC branches to fight its socio-economic battles, taking up the ANC's challenge to its alliance partner.

"Today's significance is that Cosatu is back at work. While it has lost some of the workers who made its 2 million members, we are just happy Cosatu is back to work," Pamla said.

"Looking towards this week's (ANC) NGC (national general council), we are emboldened because we don't have the albatross around our neck of internal factions that has paralysed the federation for the past four years.

"The march was a sign and way of reporting back to the employers that Cosatu is back at work, and the battles ahead are going to be numerous and hard."

While Cosatu has not yet consolidated its estimate of how many people it mobilised countrywide, it estimated it pulled together between 4 000 and 5 000 workers in Joburg.

Western Cape Cosatu secretary Tony Ehrenreich said 2 500 to 2 600 workers marched in

Cape Town, while Durban saw 4 000 members in what the Durban metro said was a peaceful march.

The hiccups experienced by Cosatu's Gauteng secretariat – which led to delays in the march's starting time, and a last-minute change of venue – included the Joburg metro's last-minute decision that the federation would not be allowed to shut down the CBD.

Pamla said the Gauteng leadership decided to defy this and were looking to interdict the City of Joburg, but by the time they tried to do this, it was "too late". He confirmed that marches were also held in Rustenburg, Polokwane, Kimberley and Bloemfontein.

"Cosatu could have decided on one national massive march – which is usually held in Joburg or Pretoria – but we don't have the money this year to bring members from the Free State and Mpumalanga," he added.

"It's not possible because there's no money. (But) given the purpose of today's march, we see it as a success, with the federation's focus back on its mandate."

@shantiaboobaker

ANC faces fresh battle to have new minister sworn in after Mbete rescue

MARIANNE MERTEN

PARLIAMENT staved off a court bid to have National Assembly Speaker Baleka Mbete removed from office for bias, but now faces another legal challenge over the "illegal" swearing in of Mosebenzi Zwane as MP, days before his appointment as mineral resources minister.

The EFF yesterday said Zwane's inclusion in the official list of eligible MPs was in contravention of the Electoral Act – and that it would go to court if Mbete did not annul Zwane's swearing in and President Jacob Zuma did not annul the cabinet appointment.

The bottom line is: if Zwane was not properly sworn in as MP, he could not have been appointed as a cabinet minister. That is because Zuma has already exhausted the possible permissible appointments from outside the ranks of MPs by including Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane and Deputy State Security Minister Ellen Molekane, who are not parliamentarians, in his executive.



SURVIVED: Speaker Baleka Mbete saved by a successful court bid.

Central to the EFF's argument is the system under the Electoral Act which allows political parties to change their lists of public representatives in Parliament, and the provincial legislatures, a year after elections.

The Electoral Act allows for a window within seven days of the previous year's election date to fill all vacancies, for up to 25 percent of candidates to be replaced and for the order of the lists to be changed. Then the lists stand; if an MP resigns, the next one in line takes his or her place.

In May, just over 12 months

after the May 7, 2014 elections, the ANC made changes to its national list, as did AgangSA and the EFF, which also changed various provincial to national lists.

The new political party public representatives' lists effective from May 18 were gazetted on May 27, 2015. Zwane's name was not there.

But last month, the ANC changed its Free State to national public representatives list, which was published on September 10. In it Zwane was pushed up into first place after another MP from that province resigned, creating a vacancy. The date for the changes was September 2.

Zwane was nominated to Parliament on September 2 and sworn in on September 3.

Deputy Speaker Lechesa Tsenoli made a brief comment at the start of the sitting of that day, but Zwane's name did not subsequently appear in the announcements, tablings and committee reports, the record of Parliament's work.

On September 22, Zuma announced that Zwane would be his new mineral resources minister.



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