

IFP CALLS ON THE URGENT REMOVAL OF MDUDUZI MANANA FROM PARLIAMENT IN DSD BUDGET VOTE

Honourable House Chairperson,

I rise to first and foremost remember those who cannot speak for themselves today: the countless victims of gender based violence. Today, I remember Anene Booysen, Reeva Steenkamp, Karabo Mokoena, Zolile Khumalo and the countless others who died just like them.

Women are not safe in their homes. Women are not safe on our streets. Women are not safe at work. Women are not safe. Women and children are under siege in this country.

It is a travesty therefore that the Department of Social Development developed the Integrated Plan of Action to Fight Gender Based Violence in 2013, but then made no effort to see it succeed. I truly wonder what type of Government would continue to fail to prioritize the fight against gender based violence, while knowing that, for women and children, ours is one of the most dangerous countries to live in.

While the IFP welcomes the recent statements emanating from the ruling party pertaining to Mduzuzi Manana, it is clear that this perpetual women abuser, is no longer fit to serve as Member of Parliament. And I hope we will unite with one voice, across the political divide, to call for his urgent removal.

Our femicide crisis, like our rape crisis, and the crisis of violence against women and children, is not only a "problem" as you once labelled it Minister Shabangu, but a crisis; and it should be treated as such.

Our activism and outrage can no longer be confined to funerals and the 16 Days of Activism campaign alone. It is time to act. It is time to act consistently. It is time to hold to account the entire system that fails our women.

House Chairperson,

For far too long the Department of Social Development has been limping from one crisis to another. Limping from a leadership crisis, to a credibility crisis. Limping from a social worker crisis, to a social grant crisis.

Limping, from one crisis to another, because those who were supposed to lead us were misleading us instead.

This is exactly why the new Minister initially refused to sign off on the plans we are debating here today. And rightly so. Who can blame here for not wanting to take ownership of the immoral, unethical decisions of her rogue predecessor?

But where did it all go wrong?

It was back in 2013 when the Constitutional Court first ruled that the current contract SASSA holds with the now notorious Cash Paymaster Services, is unlawful.

Yet the former Minister of Social Development went about her business as though the Court order was nothing more than a till-slip from Checkers.

The only question that must still be answered is why former Minister Bathabile Dlamini defied the Constitutional Court in order to continue to do business with CPS, a company with dodgy business practises, fake BEE credentials, and a perpetual tendency to steal from the most vulnerable. Was it because this dodgy deal benefited the ruling party's coffers?

These question must be answered. The IFP seeks accountability on behalf of grant recipients. And to this end the IFP will be submitting a formal complaint to the Public Protector asking her to investigate whether CPS/NET1 violated the human rights of grant recipients through its unethical business practises, while we will ask the National Consumer Commission to do the same.

While sole focussing on the SASSA crisis, it's the plight of other vulnerable citizens that have been forgotten.

NGOs and NPOs are underfunded. Shelters for women and children are underfunded. Social workers are underpaid and, underappreciated.

The child protection system prioritises paperwork over vital social work interventions that would save the lives of children. This must be fixed.

Minister Shabangu, this Department has failed the vulnerable. You have an enormous task ahead to change that. The IFP pledges our support.