



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

KZN AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT SUSPENDS OFFICIAL FERRYING PEOPLE TO A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

KWAZULU-NATAL Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has acted swiftly by suspending an agricultural advisor for serious misconduct after he was allegedly caught transporting voters during political by-elections in Bergville, Okhahlamba District.

Reacting on the reports, the Department's MEC Bongiwe Sithole-Moloi expressed deepest concern and instructed the department to act within the ambit of the law and apply all public service regulations to leave no stone unturned in ensuring that the official faced the full might of the law. It is alleged that the official embezzled fertilizers, seeds and farming implements, which were earmarked to support the community, for political campaigning.

Sithole-Moloi said due to the seriousness and gravity of the allegations, and in order to ensure that the investigation proceeds in an unhindered manner, the perpetrator has been placed on precautionary suspension from duty until the finalization of the investigation.

"We trust our officials to deliver services to our people, what this official did is very wrong because as government we are putting serious effort to fight poverty engulfing our communities. We did not expect our officials to use our state vehicles for political campaigning. This cannot be correct, as there are people who are awaiting assistance and information from the agricultural advisor who has decided to be a politician.

As the MEC for this department, I strongly condemn what this official did and we are currently investigating the matter but because of the evidence received so far it was enough for us to put him on precautionary suspension," said the MEC.

She also said that she hopes there's no political party that will ever condone such incidents because it counteracts what we've always been preaching as government to fight against the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. "Officials are not politicians but civil servants, they are entrusted with delivering services to our people. They must leave politics to politicians and continue to do their work which they have applied for through the Z83 system," said MEC Sithole-Moloi.

The MEC further encouraged members of the community to report government officials who are abusing state resources. “These resources are meant to help government to fight poverty and help our people who are eager to venture into the farming sector, not for political campaigning. Once again, I am so disappointed by this act with a hope that the Department will ensure that this will never happen again.

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