

Juju clothing label to be made in China

Pretoria fashion designer Obakeng Ramabodu of OB Fitted's Juju clothing range will hit the market soon. The range, inspired by suspended ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema, is expected to launch in early February in Johannesburg.

Speaking from China in Guangzhou where the range is being made, Ramabodu said he initially planned to launch the controversial range in Mangaung during the ANC centenary celebrations, but decided to launch it in Johannesburg "because I did not want to disrespect the ANC".

He said the demand for his range was high.

"On Facebook, I have more than 850 orders of berets and T-shirts. In two weeks, I am coming with more than 6000 T-shirts, caps and berets featuring the Juju logo," Ramabodu said.

He said the project was self-sponsored.

"Nobody wanted to support the project because it was highly political. I had to use OB Fitted money to finance the range. I am not celebrating my hero. I do not know why, when a white person does the 46664 apparel, he is not criticised, but when a young black designer from Mabopane does a Juju range, people throw a fit," he said.

China blings it on

He said he could not find a local company that could make high-quality bling.

"South Africa does not have the machinery to produce high-quality clothes like China where you get the whole package, including labelling and packaging under one roof at a reasonable price," he said.

However, Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi said Ramabodu was exploiting Malema's name to make a quick buck.

"China exploits its workers and working conditions are near to slavery, that is why it is cheap to produce goods there," Vavi said.

Ramabodu said Malema has no problem with the idea. However, Malema said Ramabodu did not need his blessings.

"He doesn't need my blessings. Like Blackcoffee when he released the song 'I love you Juju', he didn't get my blessings because Juju is not my name," Malema said.

Additional reporting by Moipone Malefane

Source: *Sowetan* via I-Net Bridge