'A gang' of five backed by social media

By Genevieve Quintal and Ahmed Areff

19 Feb 2013

Social media will be an important tool for author, activist and businesswoman Mamphela Ramphele, who announced a newly-formed "party political platform" on Monday,18 February 2013.

"You can multiply your troops very quickly on social media," Ramphele told reporters in Johannesburg. "Today we have a team of dedicated professionals. Thank God for information technology," she said.

Ramphele said she had an "energetic" team of five working with her to form the party political platform Agang SA, which means "build South Africa" in Sepedi.

She confirmed that she will contest the 2014 national elections.

"What I am going to be doing, and have been doing, is consulting every citizen because they deserve as much attention. Agang SA is called a party political platform because it's still in a consultative stage," Ramphele said.

Every South African had a right to contribute to the platform and to shape it.

"Our approach is to go from village to village, township to township, young people, old people, rich people, poor people, because the country belongs to all of us," she said. "Ours is a consultative process."

Name could change

Ramphele said the party name could change through the consultations.

"The name of Agang SA party will be confirmed, modified or changed through the consultation process. That is the working name, and if it is confirmed, that is the name under which we will contest elections."

She said Agang SA would bring additional things into the political arena, such as a campaign for electoral reform, the launch of a war against corruption, and improving education.

It would develop public policies and plans to put these into practice.

A policy director was putting together working groups to come up with policies in key areas. The platform's policies and implementation strategies would be evidence-based, said Ramphele.

"We need to move our country forward in a systematic manner," she said.

She said she saw herself as the bridge between the generation which had fought for freedom and her children's generation.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) said on Monday (18 February) that it had not received an application from Ramphele to register a political party.

According to the IEC's website, in order to register a political party an application form must be submitted. Along with the form, the party must indicate its name and abbreviation, submit a copy of its constitution and have a deed of foundation signed by 500 registered voters.

The party also had to have two sets of its logo in colour, and pay a R500 registration fee. A printed copy of the Government Gazette containing the party's notice also had to be submitted.

Fund raising

For Ramphele, funding is a key element in establishing and building a political party and she said fund-raising had always been a serious challenge.

"So far, we have been supported by caring South Africans who are absolutely frightened of the future. [They]... have given us, from their own pockets, money to start," she said.

"We will be asking each one of you to contribute. If you believe that the country of our future can be built in your lifetime, please contribute," she added.

Ramphele used the example of how the University of Cape Town had raised R77m for a library in 18 months when she was vice chancellor. This had been done without the help of social networking site Twitter.

She said she had not brokered a deal with the Democratic Alliance and would not join opposition parties in a Parliamentary coalition to oppose the African National Congress.

"With the issue of joining [an opposition party], I think I have made it clear, I am not a joiner. I believe that the challenges South Africa faces today require innovative approaches and those don't come from joining something."

She said she had spoken to the DA, the Congress of the People the United Democratic Movement and other organisations.

"We are not in the opposition business. We are in the business of building the South Africa of our dreams," said Ramphele.

"We are going to work with everybody who shares that dream. Spending time and energy opposing others is not the way to build a dream," she added.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com