

Shabangu furious over Amplats job cuts

Plans by Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) to cut 14,000 jobs came as a shock to the government, Mineral Resources Minister Susan Shabangu said on Tuesday (15 January)



Image: GCS

"It is regrettable that the company consulted with [my] department less than seven days ago despite the major socio-economic ramifications of its decision," a furious Shabangu told reporters in Pretoria.

"We are surprised and shocked today," she added.

The mining giant announced the possible job cuts earlier in the day, saying this would form part of a major restructuring at its strike-hit South African operations.

The firm would close four shafts and sell a mine considered unsustainable, it said in a statement.

"As a result of the proposed changes to the business, a total of up to 14,000 jobs may be affected, 13,000 of which will be in the Rustenburg area."

Shabangu said her department was approached by Anglo American last year to say it was facing problems and considered restructuring.

She said the company was told to discuss any such plans with the department first.

Yet, the company waited until seven days ago to do so.

The minister said her department regretted the conduct of Anglo American when making such an important business decision that would impact on the country's economy.

She said miners and their families would be hugely affected by such retrenchments as there tended to be minimal work in and around Rustenburg.

"It tends to create a grim future for those workers," Shabangu said.

The company's plans to move retrenched workers to other industries such as brick-laying were not sustainable.

"You can't train at the tail end of everything. Those skills are not created in a sustainable way. They must not talk about sectors they do not understand," Shubangu said.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

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