

Will he stay, or will he go?

Ask anyone in South Africa what their most burning political question of the moment is, and it will invariably be: "When is Zuma going?"

 By [Nicci Botha](#) 22 Apr 2016



Political commentator, Aubrey Matshiqi, paints the political scene facing South Africa

Ask political commentator, Aubrey Matshiqi the same question and you'll get a very interesting answer. Speaking at the Glacier by Sanlam Investment Roadshow, he started off by making two seemingly unrelated points.

The graphene analogy

First he asked if anyone in the audience had heard of graphene, before pointing out that it is a new material 200 times stronger than steel and a million times thinner than a strand of hair.

"Graphene is a story of disruption. The question is no longer whether disruption is going to happen but when. We need to anticipate disruptors and work out a plan, even though it won't always be foolproof."

When, not if

"The question is when will the power of ANC be disrupted, not if it will be disrupted?" he explains.

For his second point he uses the theory that in five billion years from now our universe will cease to exist. This gives rise to two schools of thought. The one type will say: "It doesn't concern me, I will be long gone. While the second type of person will say humanity does not have to die with the universe, and will work on legacy.

"If you are a member, leader or supporter of ANC – same question applies to you. What kind of party are you going to leave behind?"

The day the world changed

He says that 9 December 2015 was a watershed date in the annals of South African politics.

“The past five months have been great for me and other political commentators. I feel like Charlie in Willie Wonka’s chocolate factory. There’s chocolate everywhere,” Matshiqi exclaims.

“Think about it on 8 December, JZ was riding high, while Pravin Gordhan had been cast out into the wilderness. After David van Rooyen – I call him the weekend special - was gone, the entire balance of pov had swung the other way.”

“What this shows is the fact that you can paint as many scenarios as you want. But always add one more, no matter how improbable. A single event can change the course of history. This is what people in power must remember.”

Pay back the money

Following the ConCourt decision that the president must pay back the money for some of the non-security related upgrades to his Nkandla home, one ANC stalwart after another are saying same thing that Zuma must hand over keys of the Union Buildings to someone else, Matshiqi says.

The judicial decision has forced the president to concede that not all of the upgrades were security related which is a complete 360-degree turn from his previous stance. However, Matshiqi is quick to point out Zuma hasn’t apologised in any way.

Chickens coming home to roost

And for Cosatu and the South African Communist Party, the 2005 chickens are coming home to roost, he says.

“They had a choice to rise above factionalism, but instead they chose to support Jacob Zuma, which was a strategic error on their part. The lesson there is that parties must be careful not to make short-term decisions because the unintended consequences could be too ghastly to contemplate. My gut tells me that the National Prosecution Authority to charge the president with corruption will be reinstated.”

Self interest

He also points out that the ANC’s decision to recall the president will be based on self interest. “The ANC won’t recall him until its self interest is threatened. I’m of the view that public sentiment and the internal dynamics of ANC will determine his fate. And public sentiment against him is running high at the moment.”

“Think about it. If there is a huge voter turnout at the August local elections and the ANC bleeds enough, could they take the chance of taking Zuma to 2019 general elections?”

“So the question is, not if Zuma will fall, but when he will fall,” he concludes.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.
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