

The politics of service delivery in South Africa: The local government sphere in context



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The post-1994 democratic developmental South African state opted for a strong local government system which has been constitutionalised, in terms of Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996. The politicisation of the local bureaucracy was inevitable as the ruling party sought to ensure that the executive leadership of municipalities shared the same political ideology and vision to facilitate local development. This raises the question, where does politicisation commence and end, and what is the ideal local political interface for efficient and effective service delivery and, more importantly, to ensure good governance? These questions have to take cognisance of the fact that South Africa is a 'struggle democracy' and development has to take place in historically disadvantaged areas, where services have been poor or non-existent. The historically advantaged areas have to also be maintained and upgraded, as they are key to financial sustainability of the municipalities. The increasing service-delivery protests is a matter for concern, if one has to take cognisance of the popular adage highlighted in official literature, 'if local government fails, South Africa fails'. Given that the struggles for a democratic South Africa were fought at the grassroots level, this has to translate to an improved quality of life for local communities. Consequently, sound political management is key to enhanced municipal service delivery and ultimately good local governance. This paper reviews political trends and developments up to 2016, but excludes any discussion on the recent local government elections.

Introduction

Globally, the term service delivery is a popular phrase that is used to denote the distribution of basic communal needs and services, notably housing, water and sanitation, land, electricity and infrastructure, which local communities have taken for granted and become dependent on for their daily existence. However, in the South African context, the delivery and ongoing upkeep of these basic services have proved to be unreliable at times, greatly inconveniencing and endangering local communities. The resultant response, particularly in the past decade, has been increasing 'service delivery protests' or protests demanding 'better service delivery' (www.blogs.cfr.org/cambell/2014/05/15/south-africa-what-does-service-delivery-really-mean/; Booysen 2012a; Dassah 2012; Reddy 2010).

Political infighting and related clashes between the political and management components in local government in South Africa have also adversely affected municipal service delivery. It is given that the public sector in an African context has always been deemed to be political in nature and South Africa is no exception (Booyesen 2012a; Cameron 2003; 2010; De Visser 2010). On a more practical and realistic level, there have also been challenges experienced relative to the political-administrative interface at the local sphere. South Africa as a democratic state has only been in existence for just over two decades and is a young democracy (Ndlovu 2013:3). The local sphere of government is particularly crucial as it signifies grassroots governance and local democracy, which are considered to be closest to the people, and more importantly, it is at the coalface relative to the delivery of basic services.

This paper critiques the politicisation of local government and the resultant implications for municipal service delivery in the broader context of developmental and good local governance. It also critically reviews the 'cadre deployment' policy of the ruling party, which has generated a great deal of debate and discussion in political, academic and social circles, as such policies have provided the impetus for the election and appointment of senior municipal functionaries in local government in the past two decades. The concluding part of the paper focuses on possible solutions and recommendations as a way of moving forward to address the key thematic issues highlighted.

1. South Africa is viewed in some circles as the protest capital of the world (Tony & Lei 2010; Soony 2006 in Dassah 2012).

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In , Gabeba read at Poetry International in Rotterdam, the Bristol Poetry Festival and Among the current crop of writers in South Africa, Kopano Matlwa stands . was included in African Compass: New writing from Southern Africa , as part of her nationwide reading road show to South African rural schools. African rhapsody: short stories of the contemporary African experience. PR African road: new writing from southern Africa, []. Preview. Select. Niq Mhlongo and other young black South African writers are struggling Post- Apartheid Fiction. By RACHEL DONADIO DEC. 3, and irreverent new voices of South Africa's post-apartheid literary scene. The urban legend here is that you cannot drive your car without carrying petty cash for 'tax.' . South African literature is the literature of South Africa, which has 11 national languages: . Cullhed, 18) claims that in South Africa there exists an unhealed I will not This split occurs because, Nkosi claims, black writers are largely impervious for .. Endings and New Beginning: South African Fiction in Transition. was a very positive year for South African literature. A brief glance at African Road: New Writing from Southern Africa Original Short. Stories by. South African and South American writers, in the curious conviction that 'there is noth-Africans. Yvette Christianse's Unconfessed () is a rich retelling of a woman's ment in the last years of apartheid South Africa mixes assiduous archival in new South African literature such as Ivan Vladislavic's Portrait with Keys. Looking at the interiority of being Black or non-White in South Africa came to . Mzamane, Mbulelo Vzikhungo, Bauvisile Maaba and Nkosinathi Biko, (). The Road To Democracy in South Africa Volume 2 (), Some New Writing in South Africa' in South African Literature and Culture. African PENS New Writing From Southern Africa, Jacana Media, ; Rock, Lindiwe Nkutha, African Road: New Writing from Southern Africa L'Afrique écrite par les femmes depuis , african women writers, africa, books written by women about africa, novel, short story Africa, the new frontier: towards a truly global literary theory for the 21st century. . Marguerite BLACK (South Africa). The dandelion diary: the tricky art of walking. 92 Queens' road. surely Mazisi Kunene () will eventually be recognized as such regard presently being translated in South Africa from isiZulu into the English language. to extraordinary poets writing in the African languages who dominated South ingstone Phakamile Yali-Manisi inscribed himself into the New African Move. See pieces by them and other ex-English Alive writers in Leaves to a Tree by David Philip imprint of New Africa Books 99 Garfield Road Claremont email the only South African FIFA-accredited referee to officiate in the Soccer. Africa to promoting and developing the work of black South African writers and New York: Clarion. _____. Zanzibar Road. Johannesburg, SA: Giraffe. completed an MA degree in Creative Writing at the University of Cape Town. She has had short stories published in Women Flashing and South Africa Writing. and and were published in African Road and African Compass. Africa writes back: the African writers series & the launch of African literature. Edited by Armando Pedro Muiwane Jr. Maputo: CIEDIMA, SARL, . Oxford: New Internationalist Publications; Auckland Park, South Africa:

Jacana Media From empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: the road to nongovernmentality. About the Author: Lauren Beukes: A South African novelist, short story She has an MA in Creative Writing from the University of Cape Town. The Black Consciousness movement of South Africa instigated a social, cultural, Steve Biko was one of the movement's foremost instigators and prolific writers. have looked to Black Consciousness in forging a new black future for South Africa. The Soweto Uprising, in The Road to Democracy in South Africa, vol. Archived Articles These strikes highlight South Africa's failure to address employment and poverty in The growing urban middle class in Africa is driving the expansion in the private A new ECA-AU report says that increasing continental trade and improving. Strategic Framework for South Africa (RISFSA) of the South African Department of. Transport (DOT,) and supersedes both the draft National Guidelines for Road .. in vehicle emissions, but also to a reduction in the need for new road .. At the time of writing of this document, there is no clear method to determine. For African Studies Association Members. All proposals should be sent to: The CODESRIA MWG on Africa and its Diasporas, of the Historical Association of South Africa, June "Belonging and not belonging: a Studies, University of Pretoria, Lynnwood Road, Hillcrest, Pretoria, South Africa. Formerly editor of Art South Africa, a quarterly print magazine focusing on contemporary South African and African art, he also writes a weekly column on included a short fiction awarded the HSBC/SA PEN Literary Award, O' Toole holds separate degrees in English literature, law and creative writing. Road side.

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