
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (S.A.)
DAKAWA GARMENT FACTORY.

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BACKGROUND:

In 1976, the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress (SA), decided to start a Clothing Manufacturing Project in Mazimbu, Morogoro.

It was in 1982 that the Holland Committee on South Africa undertook to raise funds for the very same project. The machines required for the Factory were already selected at a Machines Dealer in Amsterdam. The Committee in Amsterdam was able to raise funds after negotiating with the E.E.C. in Brussels.

While waiting for the machines and other requirements, we made samples of various types of garment and continued training our people, though the number of those who joined the factory was poor.

The average attendance per day was only 5 out of 14 registered personnel, and not the same people were showing up everyday.

Negotiations were also carried out by the ANC Leadership with the Solidarity Committee of the GDR to donate cloth to the Factory Project. Since then, the cloth is continuously being sent to the factory.

Of course, other Non-Governmental Organisations do some time donate cloth, e.g. Bulgaria, Nigeria and China. Credit goes to our highly experienced ANC Cadre, Cde. George Ponnen who set up the Project in a proper footing.

The Garment Factory was set up in Mazimbu on a temporary base while waiting for an industrial centre to be properly planned in Dakawa.

It was in 1988 when it was finally agreed that the Factory should now move to Dakawa.

Negotiations were carried out with Taksvarkki Committee of Finland. After funds were collected by this Committee, buildings started and were completed in October, 1988.

The previous Singer Machines (Industrial ones) donated by H.C.S.A. were re-inforced by ten Remoldi Industrial Machines bought by Taksvarkki. This assistance from Finland was accompanied by three experts.

Why did we embark on this Clothing Manufacturing Project? Why did the Solidarity Committee in Holland and Taksvarkki from Finland work and continue to work so hard to raise the funds for the project? Why has the Solidarity Committee in GDR decided to donate cloth to the Factory? We are members of the National Liberation Movement. We are revolutionaries fighting for the freedom of our motherland - South Africa. We are fighters in Tanzania as a result of severe political repression by the Apartheid regime. We are determined to carry on the struggle as our people and comrades are carrying on daily under the nose of the oppressors.

We are not here for personal gains and comfort. Our task is to advance the struggle for freedom. This project was set up for a particular purpose to advance the struggle. As a result, we have the political and morale undertaking to make the project a success.

To understand how our factory operates, it is important to know its main aims and objectives which are as follows:-

1. To teach our people skills in Garment Factory Management and Production.

2. To produce items in Bulk for the Community.
3. To produce for the purposes of selling so as to generate funds for the movement. These funds will be used for facilitating the smooth-running of the struggle.

The staff of the factory and its functions:-

1. The factory has twenty five (25) members who fall under the following categories:-
 - Maintenance Department (4)
 - Machinist (17)
 - Storeman (1)
 - Productive Manager (1)
 - Factory Manager (1)
 - Supervisor (1)
2. The factory had sent five (5) of the workers to the GDR to be trained in Tailoring and Dress Making (this group was sent in the mid-eighties). Out of this number, three have completed this year and are presently engaged in the work of the Factory. Two have remained to do their masters.
3. In 1987, another group was sent to Malta, the group will be returning soon to reinforce the Factory.
4. At the moment there are three future members of the Garment Factory in Zimbabwe who are in the process of being trained in the same field.

They shall complete their course in 1990.

5. In 1990, the Factory will send another three to study in Zimbabwe.

Besides these facts, the factory is continuously doing its best to meet its second objective, to produce for the community e.g. bedsheets, curtains, cultural uniforms, Somaferco uniforms, Nursery uniforms, Catering uniforms, Lounge cushion covers and other items. We have not yet resorted to the third objective. This has always been hampered by labour force crisis.

Now that we are gearing ourselves towards proper organisation, we hope that in the near future we shall be able to go to the market, (more so the local enterprises and other local companies are showing interest in our products).

The Factory has its own sub-factory unit, which deals with alterations mainly. In the process they also get basic training. This is the source of where our unskilled labour force is recruited before joining the factory. This small workshop is situated in Village 4.

For the time being, the factory does not experience manpower problems. The attendance has relatively improved.

At present, it is around 90% on daily basis. It is envisaged that the Factory shall operate at the capacity of 40 workers when it is in full swing.

The comrades working in the maintenance and the stores are sometimes withdrawn into the production, especially when there is a lot of work to be produced. The information mentioned above does not rule out the problems that we are continuously encountering e.g. positive attitude towards labour, quality of goods produced and others.

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