SACP, Cosatu paint Vanderbijlpark red

Members of the South African Communist Party march through Vanderbijlpark yesterday. Photo by Songoba Kunene

By SONQOBA KUNENE

MEMBERS and leaders of the South African Communist Party turned Vanderbijlpark red yesterday.

Together with the ANC and Cosatu, they marched to the head offices of ArcelorMittal in the Vaal, south of Joburg.

The march started at the Vanderbijlpark Licence Department 5km away.

It was led by Vaal Communist Party leaders Sello Maetso and Thembinkosi Pulu, as well as Victor Chiloane from the Gauteng police.

The marchers arrived in buses and started the long walk along Frikkie Meyer Boulevard.

When they arrived at the company they handed over a memorandum to ArcelorMittal’s John Motaung.

The company was given 14 days to respond to the grievances in the memorandum which included the following:

- Banning of labour brokers
- Racism in the company
- Firing of workers by labour brokers on the instruction of ArcelorMittal.

At the heart of the march was the call for the steel company to be nationalised.

“We call on the government to re-nationalise ArcelorMittal to serve as a strategic national asset for the country,” read the memorandum.

ArcelorMittal’s operation is associated with Iscor, one of the largest steel producers in the world.

The party’s Gauteng secretary, Jacob Mamabolo, said they would return to set up a branch for workers.

It also said it would ask the South African Human Rights Commission to launch an investigation.

The concerns included allegations of racism, violation of workers’ rights, victimisation of workers and unlawful deductions from wages and salaries.

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