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AZAPO

Dupa John Hlomuka

Dupa was born on 24 June 1953 in Evaton where he attended school until Standard 8. In January 1972 he worked at Vam?? as a machine operator. Unhappy with the low wages, he resigned after six months and went to work for the then Bantu Affairs Administration Board as a clerk.

It was here that he learnt about influx control and its effects on black people. He became well known in Boipatong for advising people. After six years Dupa felt he could no longer be part of an institution which brought miseries to the lives of black people. Nevertheless these experiences shaped his political outlook.

In 1978 Dupa began working for the African Explosives Chemical Industries. He married in Ntubaki Mirrian Moloi in 1979 and they have two children.

Dupa joined the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) in March 1980 after a Sharpeville commemoration service and was later elected to the executive of the Vaal branch as an additional member.

In 1981 Dupa joined the South African Chemical Workers' Union (Sactu) and helped organise workers at his work. Workers striked for two days after management refused to negotiate a wage increase.

In 1983 Azapo launched a campaign against a rubbish dump outside Boipatong where rubbish from the white towns was dumped causing many flies during summer.

In the same year, Dupa was elected chairperson of the Vaal branch of Azapo. 1983 was the year of the black local authorities elections and Azapo organised meetings, distributed pamphlets and stickers urging people not to vote.

Dupa organised for the Black Allied Workers Union for a few months in 1983 before getting a job at the African Life Insurance Company in Johannesburg. He was still employed by them when he was arrested on the 5 September 1984.

When the rent increases were announced in August 1984, Dupa addressed a number of protest meetings and participated in the protest march on the 3rd of September.