



Press Release
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CONTRACTORS RESUME WORK ON STORM RAVAGED HOUSES

Work to restore storm damaged houses at various locations in the City of Mbombela, Mpumalanga has resumed. This follows a week long public protest in the municipality where residents took to the streets protesting against the apparent delays in fixing their storm damaged houses at KaNyamazane, Tekwane South and Ntokozweni just outside the capital. The public protests delayed the delivery of the project which had already been started in July.

Sequel to the protests, Premier Refilwe Mtsweni had several engagements with the community and visited few houses this week to assess progress on site. Premier Mtsweni expressed her approval with the progress thus far and instructed the contractors to prioritise all houses that remain roofless mostly in ward 21. "Much as the community protests had an effect to the work on site, houses will be prioritized and contractors have been instructed to increase their personnel to ensure maximum delivery", she stressed.

The delivery of the project was halted earlier in the month owing to public protests that affected the work already been started. A series of meetings between the Department of Human Settlements and the contractors were held in an attempt to address all administrative challenges regarding the scope of work and community concerns. "Our meetings yielded positive results as we have agreed on rates and payable amounts per house, thus serious progress will be realized in the coming days", assured Head of Human Settlements, Mr. Kebone Masange.

The Department has also addressed confusion and reports of contractors not wanting to sign their service level agreements (SLAs) for the work at hand. "Damages on the various houses vary; therefore costs to be allocated to each house will equally differ. Simply put, each house will be treated on its merit and work done gets verified by the project manager thus enabling the processing of payments", continued Masange. The protests which have since calmed down affected people's livelihoods and business in and around KaNyamazane.

During her assessment of the houses currently being rectified this week, Premier Mtsweni expressed her satisfaction with progress on site. "It is quite pleasing that we are seeing actual work taking place this week and I am urging the contractors to complete the said work within three to four weeks", emphasized Mtsweni. The department has earmarked R19 million for natural disasters throughout the province in the current financial year and a request for additional funding has been made to the National Department of Human Settlements.

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