

GOVERNMENT ADDRESSES POOR SERVICE DELIVERY IN PETRUSBURG

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Delivery under spotlight The MEC of Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements, Mamiki Qabathe.

The MEC of Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements, Mamiki Qabathe, has committed that the provincial government will attend to service delivery challenges that have engulfed the Bolokanang Township at Petrusburg.

This follows her meeting with community leaders and stakeholders this week to address the problems in the area. The Bolokanang residents took to the streets several times earlier this month and demanded that the provincial government to respond to their service delivery concerns. They blocked the N8 between Bloemfontein and Kimberley with burning tyres and stones.

“The ANC does not make promises because they can be broken, but we make commitments. Like in Ficksburg where we have made commitments and we are still working on achieving them. Even here we are making a commitment that we will help this community. The main challenges of this community are water, incomplete houses and sewer.

“It is true that some of these challenges will not be solved overnight but we have made a short-term commitment of providing this community with water which is their main challenge. We have provided the community with Jojo tanks for drinking water.

“But we appeal to them that if they are not going to use this water for drinking, they should use it for other domestic use. They can use the water that is provided for them in the morning and evenings for drinking purposes,” said Qabathe.

Bolokanang residents complained about the inconsistent supply of drinking water by the municipality. According to residents, the Letsemeng Local Municipality supplied water for 30 minutes in the morning and the evening, while the urban area is supplied with water around the clock.

They are also unhappy with unfinished houses and RDP units that are allocated to young people, while the elderly are still waiting for houses. According to them, there are 66 Masakhane housing scheme houses that were left unfinished in the past 12 years. Some of the houses were built with cheap materials, and as a result they have deteriorated.

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“There was a directive from you MEC that 20 elderly people should benefit from all towns in the Free State. That has not been implemented here in Bolokanang. What we see is that young people are the ones who own these RDP houses and our old people are still struggling,” a community member known as Bonolo said.

The Department of Water Affairs has committed R5-million to solve the water problems in this area. This money will be used to install new pipelines and employ local people with the necessary skills. This area is said to have enough groundwater but the infrastructure does not allow the municipality to provide water evenly in different section within their jurisdiction.

The other challenge is that some of the available groundwater is contaminated and cannot be used for drinking. There are also water leakages that result in wastage.

The Department of Water Affairs will also assist in repairing four boreholes and building a storage tank that will be located near the reservoir to bolster the water supply. The department will also install a one-kilometre pipeline that will enable the municipality to improve its water supply.

The executive mayor of the Xhariep District Municipality, Mongi Ntwanambi, said they are committed to providing equal water supply to the different areas within the municipality.

“We have met with COGTA to discuss the challenge of shortage of water. It needs a long term rather than a short term solution. Residents must understand that water will be rationed in various in various areas throughout the day. We will ensure that people receive water evenly and in a balanced manner.”

According to some residents, the challenge of water is impacting them negatively. Some learners have to go to school not properly washed and as a result they are mocked by their teachers. In some instances, residents have to walk a few kilometres to fetch water.

Providing water to the area was described as a short term solution to many service delivery problems being experienced by residents in this township. These challenges include sinking VIP toilets, the overflowing of sewerage drains, councillors who do not consult with the community, and allegations of favouritism when allocating jobs to residents.

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