

DPWI approves release of 1,199ha of land to settle Mpumalanga restitution claim

In a statement on Sunday, 29 January, minister of public works and infrastructure, Patricia de Lille, announced the approved release of 1,199 hectares of land, valued at approximately R7.4m, to assist in settling a land restitution claim by the Kaapsche Hoop Community in Mpumalanga.



Source: www.pexels.com

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) granted approval of the release of the land to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) in terms of Section 2 of the State Land Disposal Act.

A restitution claim was lodged with the Mpumalanga Regional Land Claims Commission on behalf of the Kaapsche Hoop Community on 17 December 1998, before the 31 December 1998 cut-off date for claims to be lodged in line with the provisions of the Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994.

“The Kaapsche Hoop Community occupied the farm and its surrounding areas around 1910 and their land rights were lost due to the establishment of an asbestos mine when they were relocated.

“There was also an establishment of a forestry plantation by the South African Forestry Company Limited (Safcol).

“The establishment of both the asbestos mine and the plantation created employment for the community and only those community members who worked for both companies and their families were allowed to reside on the farm,” the minister said.



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Peter Setou 24 Jan 2023



Homes demolished

The community was removed from the houses built by Safcol in 1973 and when the Komati Land Company took over from Safcol, the houses of the community members not working for Safcol were demolished. De Lille said notices for the demolition were not issued to the community and as a result, their livestock was left behind during their relocation.

Since May 2019, DPWI has released 25,549 hectares of agricultural land (125 parcels) as part of the redistribution programme.

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