

# Action needed to combat illegal mining

The discovery of 20 bodies near Lawrence Park's defunct mine ventilation shaft in Orkney has prompted North West premier, Professor Tebogo Job Mokgoro, to call for an integrated approach to combat illegal mining activities.



Image source: Getty/Gallo

“The situation calls for drastic, deliberate action that should happen almost immediately. I made it very clear that we have to strengthen our integrated approach towards dealing with illegal mining. Our efforts must be more sustainable and long lasting in terms of effectiveness.

“ [#sapsNW](#) Police opened inquest dockets after 20 unidentified bodies were on Tuesday, 14 and Wednesday, 15 June 2021, found at two various locations in Orkney. Anyone who may have information, call Col Gaanagomo 082 568 5975 or Crime Stop 08600 10111. NP <https://t.co/FRhiEkbjNe> [pic.twitter.com/LptXzvoRx8](https://t.co/LptXzvoRx8)— SA Police Service 🚔🚔🚔🚔 (@SAPoliceService) [June 16, 2021](#) ”

“We really believe that not sufficient role players have been taking part in operations. Going forward we will pull all resources together to combat, counter and eradicate this menace completely,” he said.

The premier was visiting the site with Sello Lehari, Community Safety and Transport Management MEC, and acting provincial commissioner, General Dintetse Molefe, where he received a report on efforts by the South African Police Service, which include different operations geared towards dealing with illegal mining.

The reports painted a sophisticated operation by the heavily armed illegal miners in different Matlosana Municipality towns.

## Arrests made

According to the report, over 50 people have been arrested in different operations, and gold material as well as firearms were seized. The suspects are still appearing in court.

Lehari said residents need to work with the police to arrest those who are behind these operations which are problematic to the communities in the area. Police are on high alert and investigations are ongoing, with other police been deployed in the identified hotspots.

“We are expecting more arrests soon. Residents must work with us and give us the necessary information. Thus far the information that came through is not enough.

“We need to educate our people to work with the police and inform us because the perpetrators are part of our communities. Indeed an integrated will go a long way in dealing with the illegal miners,” Lehari said.

The premier said sustainable joint operations are expected to ensue in due course.

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