

High-level task team to address violent protests

The Gauteng Government has formed a high-level task team to urgently address violent protests in the province following an upsurge of violent service delivery protests in the last few weeks.



(Image: Wikimedia Commons)

Areas affected are Rethabiseng, Zithobeni and Ekangala in Tshwane; Princess Park in Roodepoort; Boiketlong in Emfuleni; and Bekkersdal on the West Rand.

Given the seriousness of the situation, the provincial government is giving a high-level attention and resources to the situation, which has claimed human lives and essential public properties.

The task team, made up of Premier Nomvula Mokonyane, MECs and Heads of Department for Health, Community Safety, Human Settlements, Economic Development and Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation, will convene regularly to assess the situation.

In the interim, the task team has appealed and encouraged communities to protest within the confines of the law and refrain from destroying or damaging public property or infrastructure during protest actions.

According to the task team, protesting communities, must amongst other things, allow ambulances to go through and they must allow children to go to school.

"Also, the destruction of public property deprives communities of much-needed services and creates the additional burden of resources being diverted to restore and repair the damages, including critical infrastructure.

"The cost of the destruction and the long-term damage to the economy runs to millions of rands," noted the task team.

Furthermore, the task team encourages communities to follow proper procedures before embarking on a protest action.

"If community members are unhappy with any aspect of service delivery, be it the pace or the quality of services they should take these up with the ward councilor, if they do not get any assistance, they should escalate the matter to the municipality, then the Department of Cooperative Governance.

"If these too do not yield any positive results, they must lodge a complaint with the Premier's Office through the Premier's hotline on 0860011000.

"It is also imperative that community members apply and obtain approval for marches and public gatherings to ensure safety and protection of marches," the task team said.

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