



community safety,
security & liaison
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media Statement

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Government sabotage will not be tolerated- MEC Ngomane says

The destruction of public infrastructure such as schools is equivalent to sabotage because it is depriving the communities of their rights to services and it also affects the economy of the country. This is because the money that is spent on reconstructing such facilities could be directed elsewhere for service delivery.

This is according to Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Pat Ngomane who was responding to the recent spate of torching of schools in Siyabuswa, Matsulu and Shatale. Two schools were set alight in Siyabuswa in Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality last week. One school was put on fire by angry residents in Matsulu (City of Mbombela) yesterday while another school in Shatale (Bushbuckridge Local Municipality) was torched earlier today.

MEC Ngomane says: "While the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, it does not mean the community can burn down public infrastructure such as schools. The burning of schools is extremely barbaric and it will not be tolerated. It denies children access to education. It also affects the future of our country and it impacts negatively on the quality of service delivery to communities.

Vandalising of private and public properties should never form part of protests and it can never be a solution to any dissatisfaction with service delivery."

MEC Ngomane says regardless how genuine the grievances are, properties should be respected. He added that while they have a right to voice their concerns with the government, they should do so within the ambit of the law and in a manner that recognizes the rights of other people.

Therefore as part dealing with criminals who burn schools, police should immediately arrest any persons linked to the burning of the four schools. He said that community members who know the culprits must inform the police so that arsonists face the consequences of their irresponsible actions.

He further encouraged the police to thoroughly investigate these cases as they do not only embarrass the province but also scares investors from investing in the province and the country as a whole.

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