

The Weekly

SPECIALISTS DEPLOYED TO MUNICIPALITIES

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Specialist help enlisted ... Premier Ace Magashule has deployed expert teams to embattled municipalities.



The Free State government is set to deploy teams of specialists to struggling municipalities in the province.

Premier Ace Magashule announced this in his State of the Province Address which was delivered at the Vista Arena in Bloemfontein yesterday.

“In the forthcoming year, we will be deploying teams of suitably qualified and experienced personnel comprising of both the provincial and national sphere of government as well as the private sector to the Mafube, Ngwathe, Tokologo, Nala, Phumelela, Masilonyana, and all Xhariep municipalities to provide sustained support over a long-term period.”

Magashule said these municipalities cannot survive on their own due to the financial constraints they are currently encountering. This deployment is expected to last for a year.

He added that despite improvements in some of the municipalities in the province during the past two years, much still needs to be done towards creating viable and sustainable municipal service delivery.

“We believe government should achieve this by ensuring that municipalities have sound financial and administration systems by building a strong revenue base that not only encourages, but also holds the users of municipal services accountable for the payment.”

In conjunction with the political leadership within municipal councils and their management teams, the province would work towards the delivery of quality and sustainable municipal services and improve participatory democracy in communities.

“Many challenges remain in ensuring access to basic services for all our people and in strengthening of municipalities. We therefore will make infrastructure repairs to sewerage systems, and water and electricity supplies with municipalities and the stakeholders within the water and electricity industries in Wesselsbron, Parys, Odendaalsrus, Ficksburg, Botshabelo, and the areas of Isithwalandwe, Khayelitsha, and Phase 9 in Mangaung.”

Following the address, some of the residents of the embattled municipalities Ngwathe, Nala, Masilonyana, and Mafube voiced their opinions.

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Joseph Mphuthi from Heilbron in Ngwathe welcomed the deployment. “However, for me the core of problems of municipalities is ethical issues, not skills as is usually said. You can bring these professionals, but if systems remain unchanged you still going to experience problems.”

Maki Serathi from Villiers in Mafube said: “The proposal sounds inviting as long as they do not bring in dictators in our municipality”.

A trade union leader in Welkom, who wished to remain anonymous, added: “Perhaps this is a start of new things to come. As long as it is not another round of jobs for pals in disguise.”