

Departments owe billions

Municipalities have not been paid for services

SIYABONGA MKHWANAZI

GOVERNMENT departments are still struggling to pay billions of rands they owe to municipalities.

While the government had promised to sort out the issue, it emerged yesterday that departments were still owing municipalities for services.

Nghamula Nkuna, the spokesperson for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Richard Baloyi, said that there were outstanding fees.

While Nkuna could not immediately say how much was still outstanding, the department said last year that the debt was at R3,5bn.

However Nkuna said "there has been some movement" in paying off the debt but he would not say how much had been paid.

Nkuna said the reason for the delay in the debt not being settled was that departments were questioning the figures.



CLEARING DEBT: The Cabinet decided that Corporate Governance Minister Richard Baloyi's department should look into the backlog in payments to municipalities. PICTURE: HAROLD MBELE

He said the money owed to various departments to deal with the problem.

The issue of municipal debt was discussed by the cabinet last year and a decision was taken that the Department of Cooperative Governance would have to follow up the matter

He said Baloyi had met with various departments concerned, with departments concerned, Nkuna said.

He said following the intervention of the cabinet, there had been some movement.

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Health and Education departments as being responsible for most of the debt.

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