

School's out as villages protest

Schools fair game in delivery war games

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– even if it takes three years”.

Aphane said they wanted assurance that the implementation of the projects would be made “but that assurance must be done in writing”.

Spokesman for the provincial department of education Naledzani Rasila said it was “unfortunate” that communities engaged in forms of protest that blocked pupils from going to school.

“When they want to march they must do so and leave the pupils to go to school,” said Rasila.

“Those concerns have got nothing to do with education. The community members must approach the relevant departments to raise their concerns,” he said.

Paena Galane, spokesman for the provincial department of public works, roads and infrastructure, said it was difficult for them to operate with limited resources.

“We ... have a serious backlog.”

LAST month, the community of Nthalalala, outside Elim, prevented pupils from attending school due to protests over lack of service delivery;



More than 30 schools were burnt in Vuwani last year as residents protested against the decision to incorporate the area into a new municipality that would include Malamulele, resulting in almost three months of schooling lost;

Residents of Bolobedu prevented pupils from going to school following protests over a lack of roads in the Mawa area last month; and

Since February 2, schooling had been disrupted in at least seven schools in three villages in the Zebediela area where community members are protesting over lack of roads.

There was a backlog of 14 000 kilometres of roads that needed to be tarred and their budget was reduced from R900m to just above R700m, he said.

“The reduction in our budget meant that instead of constructing 80km of tar road per annum we are now doing 70km per annum,” Galane said.

PHOTO: SANDILE NDLOVU



Mariadze Inclusive School's administration block was set alight by GaMashau villagers in Vuwani, Limpopo, in protest against slow service delivery.

SCHOOLING has not taken place in several Limpopo villages due to communities' demands for service delivery.

Learning and teaching had not taken place in at least seven schools in Zebediela, 65km south of Polokwane, after community members resorted to protests to demand better roads.

Pupils from four primary schools and three secondaries in the villages of Khureng, Mehlaeng and Leruleng have not attended lessons since February 2, while it remained unclear how long the impasse would last.

According to community leader Shirley Aphane, roads leading to the villages were so bad that they became impassable on rainy days.

Aphane said they thought it would be better to stop schooling to draw the attention of the provincial government.

“We had been promised roads since 1996 and nothing had been forthcoming,” he said yesterday.

He said after the lapse of the first promise, they were told roads would be built in 2007, before the promise was allegedly pushed forward again, to 2014.

“We are aware that the pupils are the future of our country. But should it happen that the government continues ignoring our calls for construction of roads, we will continue with the protests