

# Protesters released on warning

**BENIDA PHILLIPS**

STAFF REPORTER

THE FOURTEEN Ritchie residents who were arrested on charges of public violence were released on warning by the Kimberley Magistrate's Court yesterday.

The residents, aged between 17 and 48, were arrested during a protest in Ritchie, where community members barricaded the roads in the town with rocks and burning tyres to express their anger over the appointment of

20 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers.

They are facing charges of public violence following the incident.

Community members accused the Sol Plaatje Municipality of appointing workers to the project in an underhanded manner

The Sol Plaatje executive mayor, Mangaliso Matika, assured residents during a community meeting on Wednesday that no candidates had been hired yet to work on the pro-

gramme.

Matika said that the decision on who would be appointed to work on the programme would be made by the municipality's human resources department.

He also said at the meeting that he would meet with law enforcement agencies to discuss the arrest of the 14 community members, but added that he did not have the authority to demand their release.

Community members who attended the court proceedings yesterday, indicated that they would continue to support the 14 residents who were arrested.

"We will stand by these people during all their court appearances. The behaviour of the police was wrong as those who were arrested were not involved in the protests. These arrests were unlawful but we will let the law take its course," they said.

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