

EPWP workers to be laid off

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A decision to lay off the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers in Ray Nkonyeni Municipality has angered the workers who now want to be employed full time.

About 135 temporary workers who are responsible for street sweeping, grass cutting and refuse collection, just to name a few, will be sent home at the end of this month (April) as their contracts come to an end.

Last Friday the workers gathered outside RNM protesting against what they deem as 'unfair' termination of their contracts.

The workers, who have been under a temporary contract for years, claim they were 'promised' full-time jobs.

However RNM spokesman, Simon April, disputed this. Mr April said the workers were never promised employment by RNM and that their contracts had a start and finish date which they were all

'well aware' of.

"We have families to provide for. If you send us home what are we going to eat," said a disgruntled worker during the protest.

Another worker said it was quite sad that government claimed to create job opportunities, meanwhile they offered a few months' contracts to the poor, only to kick them out later and make way for a new intake.

"That's not creating employment, that's blinding the poor into thinking government cares about them when, clearly, it doesn't."

According to Mr April, RNM is just an implementing agent for the government to which the project belongs.

"It's not the first time EPWP beneficiaries had their contracts terminated. These workers are always made aware of the conditions of the programme and how it works," said Mr April.

The workers accused RNM management of shrugging off their requests.

However Mr April added that the municipality understood that there was

a high unemployment rate and felt sorry for all job seekers. However, their hands were tied on the matter.

The workers said they would not give up until they had met with RNM mayor, Cynthia Mqwebu.

Take note

Police call urgent meeting for Merlewood residents

Residents of Merlewood are invited to a Community Policing Forum meeting to be held at the Merlewood Youth Centre next Thursday, April 26 at 6pm.

All are urged to attend in an effort to make a difference to their community.

Warrant Officer PC Naicker, sector commander for the area, can be contacted at 084 7035854 or 039 6881169 for further information.

Umbango temple to host Kavady from this Friday

The Umbango Sri Siva Soobramoniar Alayam invites all to their annual Chitraparuvam Kavady Festival from this Friday, April 20 until April 29.

Flag hoisting will be observed this Friday, with hawan starting at 4.30pm at the temple. The temple chariot will be visiting different areas of Port Shepstone this Sunday from 8.30am. Kavady bookings will be open from flag hoisting day.

All devotees who wish to take part in the prayers are requested to contact the executive members of the temple. Bhajans in praise of Lord Muruga will be rendered.

Daily prayer times on weekdays will start at 5.30pm and at weekends at 4pm. Supper will be served daily. All are welcome.

For more information contact the chairman, Jason Govender at 084 2508875 or Cohen Pillay at 076 4062386.



EPWP workers gather outside RNM offices in Port Shepstone last Friday