

Gatvol workers shut down major hospital!

By LETHABO KHAMBULE

ANGRY staff disrupted service delivery at a major hospital.

Heaps of rubbish and medical waste were scattered in the passages and in some wards of the hospital, including in casualty wards.

This was the scene at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital yesterday.

According to Nkosinyethu Mazibuko, spokesman for the hospital, the protest started on Friday but it became violent yesterday.

Mazibuko said some staff who are members of Black First Land First were demanding permanent jobs.

It's understood the group of at least 100 protesters were cleaners and laundry staff employed on con-

tract under the Expanded Public Works Programme. Mazibuko said they have been engaging with them since February.

"Patients and the staff were intimidated by the protestors. We called in the police to restore safety. They are demanding full time employment.

"We responded to their memorandum back in February but they are unhappy with the response."

Gabisto Mafa, BFLF regional secretary, said in terms of the programme, the department provides one year of training and then re-



Striking workers scattered rubbish around Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital yesterday.

Photo by Lucky Nxumaio

cruits a new group. Mafa said: "When we engaged with the department early this year, they said they didn't have money. We understood and gave them time, but they later hired new staff."

A meeting was held later yesterday and Mafa said more talks would take place today.