

Gatvol residents torch state cars

By NOMAMPONDO PLAATJIE

WHEN officials failed to pitch for a meeting with the kasi committee, the members returned ekasi to report back to the people.

Matatiele residents didn't take kindly to government's no show. About 400 people marched to the department of public works in Maluti on Tuesday, but the march turned violent in an instant.

Three state cars vehicles and a security temporary shelter were set alight.

The meeting would have been about roads in the town needing fixing.

Committee member Ben Sphamla said the protest was not planned.

"We went to the Public Works department for a scheduled meeting but authorities did not come. We reported back to the community, who decided to join us."

Sphamla said Public Works MEC Weziwe Tikana had promised them that road construction would begin in early July.

"There is tension because residents think we are not being taken seriously. We were supposed to meet at 8am and they didn't arrive. If they don't come things will get ugly."

Police spokesman Captain Raphael Motlounq said the situation was still volatile.

"The police are monitoring the area. No arrests have been made yet," said Motlounq.

Municipal spokeswoman Olwethu Gwanya said the mayor is appealing to residents to suspend the strike while government officials are engaged in discussions.

"We are about to go to a meeting with all the affected parties," said Gwanya.