

POLICE FINALLY MAKE GOOD ON PROMISE TO NYANGA





A temporary police station is being set up in Samora Machel informal settlement. The area is currently policed by officers from the station in Nyanga, which is the country's murder capital according to recently released crime statistics. Ayanda Ndamane/African News Agency ANA

Cape Town – Nyanga was this week again flagged as the country's murder capital, with policing in the area made more complex by inaccessible informal settlements.

In April last year, Deputy Police Minister Bongani Mkhongi said funds set aside for upgrades on Muizenberg police station would be diverted to building new stations in Samora Machel in Nyanga and Makhaza in Khayelitsha after a public outcry over the use of millions of rands to improve already resourced police precincts.

Khayelitsha has stations in Site B, Harare and Lingelethu, while Nyanga has one.

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Mkhongi said the new site would serve as a temporary station to ease the load from Nyanga police station.

"I made the announcement last year, and I can assure you we are proceeding with that," Mkhongi said.

He said although work to prepare the ground had started, it would be another year before the station was functional.

“We have to wait for personnel to be deployed by the national minister before the station can operate,” Mkhongi said.

With regard to Makhaza, he said land had been acquired and planning for the construction of a station in the area was under way.

“We are not going to have a palace police station (referring to Muizenberg renovations) when we still have so many pauper police stations,” Mkhongi said.

He took a swipe at business owners, saying crime should be everyone’s concern. “Businesses are able to hire private security and hide behind high walls but not strengthen policing in their areas.”

According to the Department of Public Works, stations in Muizenberg and Khayelitsha are set for an upgrade in the current financial year.

Spokesman Thami Mchunu said no new stations were planned for the Western Cape in the current financial year, adding that a station in Dysseidorp, Oudtshoorn, was under construction.

MEC for Community Safety Dan Plato said: “We fully support the work done by the dedicated and hard-working men and women in blue who relentlessly serve our communities under the expert and committed guidance of our provincial police commissioner Lieutenant-General (Khombinkosi) Jula.

“While a lot of people in the province are benefitting from adequate policing and proactive and effective community-based safety structures, the realities of too many people in the province are still marred by violence, specifically interpersonal violence.

I believe it could be brought about by the prevalence of guns and drugs in our communities and the continued scourge of gangsterism and drugs in our province,” he said.

TIMELINE

2014: Arno Lamoer promises a new police station for Khayelitsha on city-owned land in Makhaza.

August 2014: Justice Catherine O’Regan and advocate Vusi Pikoli release their report on the Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry highlighting relations between police and the community.

March 2016: Social Justice Initiative and Equal Education take the minister of police to the Equality Court for failing to abide by the findings of the commission.

2017: Deputy Police Minister Bongani Mkhongi announces that R100 million will be diverted from the refurbishment of Muizenberg station to establish new stations in Khayelitsha and Nyanga.

Weekend Argus