



**The Mthatha High Court was ready for a site inspection by the minister of public works on Friday.**

# New dawn for high court

**By ZIYANDA ZWENI**

THE Mthatha High Court is being revamped.

On Friday, Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi did a site inspection to check on the progress of the R100 million project at the court where a number of inmates have tried to escape.

Nxesi looked at the security measures that were installed, including CCTV cameras, a control room and different entrances for judges and awaiting trial prisoners.

The entrances have been separated by a high bulletproof wall.

The court, which was built in 1986, had leaking roofs, a broken air conditioning system and poor security.

The 24-month project started last August and is expected to be finished by next year.

Nxesi said: "Security was one of the major concerns court officials have been complaining about for

more than a decade and now it will be top notch.

"There are a number of buildings we are upgrading across the country. We are also building a magistrates office in Bhityi. We are looking at what needs to be fast tracked."

The most recent incident at the court happened in October last year when a 32-year-old prisoner was shot while trying to escape.

The revamped court complex has six courtrooms, eight judge's chambers, a library, prison cells with secured areas to drop off and pick up prisoners and administration offices.

The renovations will also include the repair and upgrading of water, sewer and stormwater services and the repair of electrical installations.

The minister met the department's Mthatha regional staff, who had raised concerns that they were understaffed.