

Threats of collapse shut down dept offices for a year

ENDY SENYATSI
>>endy@observer.co.za

A block of offices of the Department of Environmental Affairs in Suid Street remains non-operational a year after employees evacuated last September following claims that the structure might collapse at any time because of lack of maintenance.

Polokwane Observer reported last year that officials were forced to evacuate the structure as it was concluded that the building was not safe anymore and major maintenance was required. The affected officials had to be accommodated at the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (Ledet) headquarters in Biccard Street.

Ledet Spokesperson Zaid Kalla

indicated that the departmental Suid Street building is a three block complex. The affected and evacuated block is Block A. Kalla added that the officials from Block A were relocated to Evridiki Building pending an assessment report on the building, he emphasised. Apart from Block A, the other two buildings within the same premises are functional and occupied by departmental staff, Kalla explained.

"The Department is working with the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (DPWRI). An independent service provider has since been appointed by DPWRI for assessments on the condition of the building. We are currently awaiting a final report which will pave a way forward for advised renovations. The swift relocation of employees from Block A to the provincial office simply indicated the departments' desire to constantly prioritise its employees and ensure that they operate in a safe and healthy environment," Kalla stated.

He added that the relocation was highly effective and that no services have been hampered to date.



PHOTO: ARCHIVES

Block A of the Department of Environmental Affairs' offices in Suid Street remains non-operational a year after staff evacuated due to fears of collapse of the structure.