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INFRASTRUCTURE

Officials angry at working in North West 'death trap' courts

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COURT officials in the North West have called on President Cyril Ramaphosa to rescue them from dilapidated buildings before it's too late.

The officials, from four courts in the province, have been pleading with the *Pretoria News* to expose their plight for weeks now.

"We work in a death trap here, and nobody seems to care. It's so painful now that it rains almost every day. We have to risk our lives under roofing that always gets flooded. We are afraid the roof will eventually cave in," said an official who asked not to be named.

The affected magistrates' courts in Potchefstroom, Brits, Ga-Rankuwa and Tlhabane have all experienced constant flooding.

In September, court proceedings had to be held under a tree following the collapse of a roof at the Potchefstroom Magistrate's Court. No injuries were reported, but officials want Ramaphosa to take action.

"We are calling on the president is because no one is listening to us. Justice officials and those in charge of public works pretend that we are going mad when we send them proof of the hazard we are dealing with.

"We know that should any tragedy strike, Ramaphosa will be the first to send condolences and visit our families for camera opportunities. We are saying, here we are. Visit us now before we perish," said a worker from Tlhabane.

The Tlhabane court had water leaking through the roof yesterday.

The workers say they don't know whether they should continue going to work or stay at home.

"We cannot go to work under such conditions. Unfortunately, the same government that claims to care for us



ONE of the flooded courtrooms in the North West. Workers have asked President Cyril Ramaphosa to help resolve the problem.

will punish us with no work-no pay for trying to be safe. This is a serious plea to the president. Please hear our cry," she said.

Police officers working within the Taung cluster told the *Pretoria News* their work was difficult.

"We are responsible for taking suspects in and out of these court buildings, but we have to deal with flooding almost on a daily basis. It has become far more risky working in court than it is chasing criminals down the road. Something needs to be done urgently," said a warrant officer who asked not to be named.

Court managers dealing with complaints about the flooding referred questions to the relevant national communications officers.

Spokesperson at the Department of Justice, Correctional Services and Constitutional Development, Chrispin Phiri, referred questions to the Department of Public Works.

Public Works spokesperson Zara Nicholson did not respond to questions sent to her regarding the matter.