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EPWP members gathered in front of the Department of Transport head office yesterday. **PHOTO: AKHEEL SEWSUNKER**

## EPWP workers feel 'cheated' out of permanent jobs

**ZAMA MYEZA**

Contract workers who fall under the Pietermaritzburg Region of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) want to be employed permanently by the Department of Transport.

They gathered at the Department of Transport to submit a memorandum on this yesterday morning.

The EPWP said that on June 29, the minister of Transport Sindisiwe Chikunga and the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison together with other officials,

convened a gathering at the Curries Fountain sports ground for the official launch of "S'thesha Wayaway".

"In the meeting, a commitment was made for the prioritisation of EPWP workers for job opportunities in the Department of Transport. To date, no member of the EPWP has been employed," said the Economic Freedom Fighters' labour desk.

The EPWP employees are demanding that there be a temporary suspension of the overall recruitment process, answers with regards to why other people are being employed to be permanent workers

when those who are still under contract have not been employed. They have also demanded to have a meeting between the Economic Freedom Fighters' labour desk and the Department of Transport to discuss the workers' grievances. They have given the department up until tomorrow to respond to their memorandum.

The EPWP have cited unfair discrimination against them, in contravention of the provisions of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998.

"The workers we are not happy with how things have been conduct-

ed during the recruitment process," said Sbusiso Mtolo, EPWP PMB region committee member.

"The minister made it clear in the meeting that was held at the beginning of this year that new posts [would] be created in the department, and the current EPWP members would be the ones to fill those posts. We found out that there was a list created of people who have been hired to fill the posts that were meant for us."

The Department of Transport had not commented by the time of publication.