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Cedara College students return to campus following protest action

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After almost two weeks without classes, Cedara College of Agriculture students are expected to return to the campus today.

This after they were chased out of the college for protesting against the "appalling" living conditions.

This was confirmed by the Department of Agriculture spokesperson in KwaZulu-Natal, Vusi Zuma, following a parents' meeting that was held over the weekend.

Zuma said the protest has also provided an opportunity for students to raise their grievances with the de-

partment head, Zibusiso Dlamini.

Over 100 students were chased out of the college residence on the night of May 23, and the college was closed.

The Witness reported that the order for the closure allegedly came from MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Supa Zuma, who accused the students of misbehaving during a worker's month commemoration event, which took place at the Cedara sports field.

Some of the students spent hours on the streets waiting for their parents to pick them up, while others were taken in by residents who live near the college.

The students have since been sitting at home and not attending classes.

Vusi Zuma said the college will reopen for academic activities tomorrow and students are expected to return to residence today.

He said the department has also revised their academic calendar to accommodate the interruption.

"The department has established a task team to work on the issues that have been raised.

"Parents were advised that some issues, such as the completion of the renovation of the residence will take longer as the department is working with Public Works to iron out and

finalise the contractor situation.

"But issues within the control of the department are being addressed. We will provide regular reports to students through the SRC and parents.

"The task team is working according to the resolutions and timelines set out in the meeting.

"The HOD will also meet with the SRC members on Wednesday (tomorrow)," he said.

Work on the renovations had stalled after some issues arose between the department and the contractor.

Zuma said the non-academic events, rugby and volleyball will continue as planned.

The students had embarked on a protest over the state of the college owing to the renovations which have been put on hold for the last three years.

These delays have contributed to the poor living conditions which was another reason for the protest.

They claimed that about 80 male students are staying in mobile units and are sharing five bathrooms.

Speaking to *The Witness*, students said they were moved to mobile units about three years ago when the college was doing renovations, but the renovations have not yet been completed.

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