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## *Justice delayed: Galeshewe court building remains closed*

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RESIDENTS of Galeshewe remain in limbo as the long-promised reopening of the Galeshewe Magistrate's Court faces yet another delay, with no confirmed completion date in sight.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in the Northern Cape has expressed growing frustration over what it describes as a lack of transparency and urgency from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development.

DA Member of Parliament and Northern Cape representative in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Ofentse Mokae, released a statement this week criticising the department for failing to meet earlier assurances that the court would reopen within the current financial year. Instead, new information reveals that the appointment of a contractor to begin remedial work is now only expected by January 2026.

The Galeshewe Magistrate's Court has been non-operational since July 2023, when the Department of Labour ordered its closure

due to serious structural defects that posed a danger to both staff and the public.

Initially, services were temporarily moved to the Galeshewe police station, but by January 2024, operations were fully shifted to the Kimberley Magistrate's Court – causing added pressure on that facility and placing a financial burden on Galeshewe residents who now have to travel into town for court matters.

Investigations by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) revealed multiple

issues: detached plaster from reinforced concrete surfaces, significant cracking and shifting in the brickwork and concrete, especially around expansion joints, and visible signs of structural instability.

A formal project has been registered with the DPWI to address these issues. However, critical appointments – such as structural and mechanical engineers and an Occupational Health and Safety Agent – are only expected to be

finalised by September 2025.

The department further indicated that only after this stage will cost estimates be available. Actual construction is projected to take a further six months following the contractor's appointment – meaning the court may only be fully operational by mid-2026 at the earliest, assuming no further delays.

The delay has wider implications beyond infrastructure. Mokae warned that the situation is worsening access to justice for Galeshewe residents.