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MEDIA STATEMENT

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AND CONTRACTORS WILL ROLL OVER FAILED PROJECTS, WARNS KZN PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE MEC MARTIN MEYER

The MEC for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Martin Meyer, has promised that senior departments officials will no longer be protected while projects continue to fail.

This stern proclamation follows a number of projects which still fall short of meeting the department requirements as per issued mandate. One such example where this is happening is the Ngwelezana Hospital project, which is valued at over R100 million. A progress visit this week by the MEC revealed that the contractor initially appointed failed to get the project off the ground, leading to them being terminated from the project and replaced.

The project is for the construction of an orthotics and prosthetic Centre. Once the 24-month project is completed the health facility is envisioned to have a waiting area, administration offices, 3 x assessment rooms with ablutions, supply chain/storage, workshop, machine room, generator room, compressor room, welding room, pop rectification room, oven room, spray room, laminating room, ablutions, parking with associated electrical, mechanical, civil, and structural works.

However, to MEC Meyer's severe disappointment, construction had not begun while the March completion deadline remains around the corner.

A visibly upset MEC Meyer not only expressed the deepest sense of dissatisfaction but called for the relevant department officials linked to the project to immediately face accountability over the highly unacceptable non-progress at the project.

"As KZN Public Works and Infrastructure, we have been making good progress in dealing with failing and incompetent contractors, however, while doing this we have been allowing senior project officials to remain protected and dodge accountability. That will no longer be the case. Part of the mandate of department officials is to ensure that projects are on track, within budget, of the highest quality and take necessary action at the stages should things go wrong", said MEC Meyer.

Senior officials who standby while projects fail to get off the ground or fall apart will now also face the music. Under the new KZN Public Works and Infrastructure, incompetent department officials and contractors alike will not be protected.

END.

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