



MEDIA STATEMENT

MINISTERIAL INTERVENTION LEADS TO WATER RESTORATION BY SEDIBENG WATER

24 October 2021

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Senzo Mchunu, noted with disbelief, a number of media reports on the restoration of water supply by Sedibeng Water in the Free State. These reports erroneously claimed that the restoration of the water supply was due to a court order obtained by AfriForum on the 22nd of October 2021; the matter was in actual fact, attended to by the Minister earlier in the week.

On Tuesday, 19 October 2021, the Minister was advised of Sedibeng Water's electricity disconnection; the disconnection was because of the outstanding debt owed to Eskom, said to be R20 million, of which a minimum of R7 million was required for reconnection. Upon enquiry, the Water Board advised the Minister that it had been unable to pay Eskom due to the non-payment of amongst others, the Matjhabeng Local Municipality.

Following a number of engagements between the Minister, the Municipal Manager of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Ms Zingisa Tindleni, as well as the Chairperson of the Interim Board, Mr Siphetho Siyengo, resulting in a payment agreement between the Water Board and the Municipality on the 20th of October 2021. Payment of R4 million was made into Sedibeng Water's bank account by the Municipality on the 20th of October 2021, which thereafter enabled Sedibeng Water to supplement its payment to Eskom for reconnection, following the payment of R3 million received from another client.

AfriForum only approached the court on an urgent basis on the 20th of October 2021, well after the matter had been settled – evidencing that there was no need for court action in the first instance.

Closing on the issue, Minister Mchunu expressed the following: "It is quite unfortunate that there are those who come after the fact and claim victories they know nothing of; these opportunists prey on the efforts of others! Court applications in the absence of communication only leads to strained relations and shifts the focus on what actually needs to be done. The water supply challenge has been stabilised and we are working towards ensuring that all areas have an adequate supply of water. As the Minister of Water and Sanitation, I have been engaging all relevant stakeholders on issues affecting them and have been advocating for enhanced inter-governmental relations. The water sector requires the concerted efforts of all; Government, the private sector, civil society organisations and the like need to be working together to ensure continued service delivery."





water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



This intervention by Minister Mchunu must not be seen as separate from the Minister's on-going working sessions in different provinces, and the North West is still to be visited. The challenges in the NW province are on the radar for Minister and the Deputies together with the Department.

ENDS

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information contact Ms. Kamogelo Mogotsi, Spokesperson for Minister on 076 523 0085 or at MogotsiK@dws.gov.za or Sputnik Ratau, Spokesperson for the Department of Water and Sanitation on 082 874 2942 / rataus@dws.gov.za

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