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9 nabbed for breaking the law

ELFAS TORERAI

NINE people were arrested for various offences in Itsoseng and Lichtenburg after police conducted an operation at the weekend.

North West police spokesperson Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said that the operation was carried out in the two areas to "discourage all crimes by providing a proactive and responsive policing".

He said that the operation yielded positive results as the nine people were nabbed after they were linked to differ-

ent crimes.

Itsoseng and Lichtenburg have been in the news following violent protests that rocked the two areas recently.

"Out of nine suspects, six were arrested for possession of drugs, mainly dagga, with a combined estimated street value of R35 800," Mokgwabone said.

He said the two suspects were nabbed for possession of suspected stolen goods after being found individually in possession of a computer set, roofing screws and a lottery machine in Itsoseng.

"It is suspected that the goods were

looted during the recent violent community protests in Itsoseng.

Police also seized three shower doors and apprehended a wanted suspect for theft in Lichtenburg.

"In a separate incident in Lichtenburg, a suspected stolen sheep was impounded after being found abandoned," he said.

Mokgwabone said that the suspects were expected to appear in the Itsoseng and Lichtenburg Magistrate's Courts soon.

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LOOT: Some of the bags of dagga confiscated by the police with a combined estimated street value of R35 800, out of nine suspects, six were arrested for possession of drugs.

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Man in the dock accused of torching municipal offices

A MAN accused of setting fire to the offices of the Mamusa local municipality in Schweizer-Reneke is expected to appear in court today, North West police said.

He was charged with arson and public violence and would appear in the Schweizer-Reneke Magistrate's Court, Brigadier Sabata Mokgwabone said.

The man allegedly set alight the

offices on June 1 after a group of people demanded the reinstatement of axed acting municipal manager Lucky Fourie. Fourie was deployed from the provincial department of human settlements in April this year to act as municipal manager until a municipal manager was appointed.

North West Human Settlements MEC Fenny Gaolaolwe condemned the act.

"We are deeply disturbed that we still have people who voice their frustration in a violent manner by destroying public infrastructure," she said.

"No amount of anger justifies the torching of municipal offices.

"On behalf of the provincial government I want to appeal to law enforcement agencies to apprehend the perpetrators," she added. - ANA

Council worker held for arson

The offices and a local library were torched in Schweizer Reneke on Thursday after the removal of municipal manager

OBAKENG MAJE

ONE person has been arrested in connection with the burning of Mamusa local municipality offices in Schweizer Reneke.

The offices and a local library were torched in Schweizer Reneke on Thursday.

The administration offices were reduced to ashes, allegedly by disgruntled municipal employees.

Mamusa mayor Aaron Mowana said the incident occurred after the removal of municipal manager, Lucky Fori.

He said they condemned the torching of public institutions.

"We want to condemn the torching of municipal offices. This is a pure criminality and the law must take its course. The incident was not prompted by service delivery. The municipal workers alleged that the redeployment of our former municipal manager, Fori, by the MEC for local government, and human settlements department, Galalatsang Gaolalwe, was uncalled for.

"We urge our disgruntled workers to make use of correct procedures to address their grievances. They have unions like South African Municipal Union (Samu). We also have Local Labour Forum which gives platform to those municipal workers who have concerns," he said.

Mowana said they could not justify



ARSON: ONE person has been arrested in connection with the burning of Mamusa local municipality offices in Schweizer Reneke. PICTURE: MAMUSAWANE

the decision taken by some municipal workers to torch the offices. He said there were no signs of desperation during the passing of the budget speech.

"The municipality presented its budget to the communities on Wednesday. However, there were no signs of divisions towards me as the mayor or any other official. No con-

cerns were raised by our employees. We were informed by the police that there would be possible protests on Thursday.

"We have plans to ensure that our people continue to receive services. We are still assessing the damage and we will inform the communities about our way forward.

"The municipality cannot collapse while we watch. We will also take corrective measures against those who are implicated," Mowana said.

He said there was a smear campaign against him. Mowana said those who accused him of nepotism were disgruntled.

"The municipality is cash-strapped and we have not employed anyone since 2014. I also do not sit in on any recruitment session panel when we employ people. This is distasteful and absurd. We are in need of qualified people to take the municipality forward.

"We want to ensure that there is accountability at our municipality. We were not going anywhere under Fori's leadership because we received claims for the past consecutive three years," he said.

Police spokesperson in the province, Brig Sabata Mokgwabone, said: "We have arrested one person aged 46 who is a municipal worker and will appear in the Schweizer Reneke Magistrate Court on Monday for public violence arson." - Newsnote

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Axed top cop Phahlane on shaky ground

SYRABONGA MOKHMANAZI

FORXABER acting national police commissioner Lieutenant-General Khomoso Phahlane is facing an uncertain future after he was axed by new Police Minister Phele Mbalula.

He left Cape Town for Joburg in a hurry after being relieved of his position while being presented with a letter of appreciation. It is unclear if he will be promoted to a new position or to move over from his old position as head of forensics.

But this may be the best of his problems, a reliable source said. "He is too compromised. It was just impossible for the SAPS to keep him in the top job until the end of August when the new top cop will

be announced," the source added. So now he has to face the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid), which has been set up to conduct an inquiry into the alleged irregularities of corruption against him.

Mbalula has used his new brown like an axe. Also chopped within the first few days of his taking up his new post was Hawks head Berrling Ndlemeza. Moreover, he has vowed at numerous engagements with communities across the country, and in

meetings with police top brass, that it will not be business as usual for the police. As Mbalula weighs who to promote as the next national police commissioner, Parliament has some bones of contention which it wants to be resolved.

And MPs could do it as early as Wednesday, when Mbalula is expected to brief the portfolio committee on police on the split between the now-axed Phahlane and Ipid chief Robert McBride.

Committee chairperson Francois Beaufort said yesterday the committee would raise its proposal for national commissioner with Mbalula because it wanted the system to be changed.

A few weeks ago the committee also presented a report on the appointment of the police chief. Beaufort said at the time that the National Development Plan (NDP) requires the president to appoint the head of police on a competitive

basis. The role of Parliament was also addressed in the meeting with the Civilian Secretariat for Police. Beaufort had said a panel must be appointed by the president to select the national police commissioner and his/her deputy. This would open up opportunities for many people to be considered for the positions.

The panel, as directed by the NDP, would drive the selection process and make recommendations to the president on the successful candidates for the positions of head of

police and the deputy.

The new acting national commissioner is Lesetja Motshela. But his appointment is not a permanent position. He is due to retire in 2017.

The contract of suspended police head Riah Phiyega comes to an end on Saturday. She was appointed in June 2012, but suspended in October 2015 following the release of the Marikana report, which recommended that she be removed from the job.

Mbalula wanted a new commissioner by August to create stability and concentrate on the fight against crime.