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Road construction companies issued with an ultimatum to finish road works in Mahikeng within two weeks.

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Road construction companies appointed to upgrade five roads in the North West capital Mahikeng were today (Tues) given an ultimatum to complete the job and vacate site within two weeks or else...

Provincial MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mahlakeng Mahlakeng warned contractors awarded the jobs in March this year, not to turn the road projects aimed at rehabilitating the seat of the provincial government "into a camping site".

These were initially three months contracts but were revised following challenges with regards to either the supply of road material, alleged late payments unforeseen additional work following the discovery of a layer clay soil underneath the earth surface in one of the roads earmarked for improvements.

Clearly irritated by the apparent slow pace in at least three of the two projects, Mahlakeng summoned all five contractors- including a firm of consultants appointed to oversee and monitor progress- to a meeting where an ultimatum of September 23 was issued for final delivery.

None of the companies affected raised objections to Mahlakeng's ultimatum, the move interpreted as "a commitment by them" to deliver on or before scheduled date.

While Mahlakeng did not say what action would be taken against contractors who fail to comply with the order, his department is renowned for terminating contractors who fail to meet targets.

"We will cross the bridge when we come to it," is all he said.

Mahlakeng was however full of praise for work done by the construction company- M Civil (Pty) Ltd- tasked with the rehabilitation of a portion of the N18- from Mahikeng to Magogoe Bridge.

Work on this particular portion of the road was completed two months ahead of schedule.

In view of the ultimatum, the 2.1km rehabilitation works by construction company Ultrasonic Express on sections of Ngaka Modiri Molema, James Moroka and Sekame roads are expected to also meet the deadline.

Same applies to road works on Onkgopotse Tiro (2.8km); Joe Slovo and Dorothy streets (2.4km) as well as the 2.1km on Moshoeshoe and Sekame roads awarded to construction companies IBD Civils JV Phenno Business Enterprise respectively. Mahlakeng promised contractors assigned for the said projects that his department would “fast-track all payments” due to them in order to enable them to meet the deadline and deliver on quality.

On the flipside, newly appointed companies: Down Touch Investments (Pty) Ltd and Jodan Construction (Pty) Ltd, have 12 months to finish the remainder of the work on the Koster to Lichtenburg road which will cost the department more than R126 million.

Down Touch Investment is to complete within seven months, the 50km stretch of road from outside Lichtenburg towards Koster at the cost of more than R93.5m while Jodan Construction would work on the 10km portion from Koster town towards Lichtenburg for five months for the contract value of R32.5m.

Meanwhile, one of the emerging woman contractors, Meadow Tlhapi, of Wonderkop near Brits became the first woman in the province to win the 5 Civil Engineer to 6 Civil Engineer category of the Construction Industry Development Board (Cidb).

Her profile was the work she did for the department in Tosca, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District, driven by the department under the banner of Rephelele Contractor Development Programme.

Tlhapi was contracted by the department to construct a 3.2km road in Tosca in August 2009, which she completed on schedule in April 2010 and created job opportunities in the rural community of Tosca.

“It is indeed encouraging, that the support we continue to give to emerging contractors, especially women, is seen to be bearing fruit albeit at a slower pace which needs urgent attention,” Mahlakeng said.

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