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Is the strike almost over?



Rustenburg – Signs that the nationwide strike by municipal workers in entering its final stages were evident on Thursday after the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) reduced its wage demands from 18% to 10%. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA), who are negotiating with SAMWU on behalf of the municipalities are offering an increase of 6%. “We are hoping that we will be able to reach an agreement very soon, possibly before the beginning of next week,” said SAMWU in a statement. However, there were no signs of a slowdown in the nationwide strike this week. In Rustenburg, top offi-

cial of COSATU in the North West staged a march in solidarity with SAMWU with the escort of the police. Addressing a group of people outside the Missionary Mpheni House, COSATU secretary of the North West, Solly Phetoe, said the city’s mayor should prepare for a backlash from the people if he does not accept the workers demands. He said, “We will give you marching orders if you do not listen to the people. We will continue with this action until our demands are met.” In the Moses Kotane and Tlokwe Municipalities, striking workers also marched in the streets and emptied dustbins, in some cases setting garbage alight.

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Farmers in court for assault

Schweizer-Reneke – Two framers based in the North West made a brief appearance in the Schweizer-Reneke Magistrate’s Court on Monday 22 August for allegedly assaulting four people they suspect to be arsonists.

Brigadier Thulane Ngubane of SAPS in North West said farmers, Attie Haasbroek (58) and Henna Lochren (63) were each released on R5 000 bail. Their case was postponed to September 15 for further investigations. A veld fire in the area on Saturday allegedly led to one of the farmers forcing a car off the road between Amalia and Vryburg. Four shocked occupants were accused of starting the fire, and one of the farmers allegedly fired shots at their vehicle, Ngubane said.

Another farmer who was driving past also stopped his vehicle. He then allegedly joined in the physical fight that was occurring between the first farmer and the four people. The four occupants of the car were left injured and had to be admitted to hospital for treatment. One of the farmers was arrested by police later that Saturday. Angry community members then gathered outside the police station, demanding the arrest of the other farmer. “The outraged community members took to the streets, resorting to violence and barricading the road linking Schweizer-Reneke and Pudimoe with burning tyres,” he said. The second farmer was arrested on Sunday. “Police are monitoring the situation, in case violence breaks out again,” Ngubane said.

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