

Marikana memorial service to be held tomorrow

A memorial service for the Lonmin mine workers will be held on Thursday at the same place where the tragedy took place.



(Image: GCIS)

Thirty-four people were killed and 78 others sustained injuries in clashes with police last week at Marikana. Prior to this, 10 other people - including two police officers - were killed.

Addressing the media, traditional leaders and church representatives in Rustenburg today, Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) Minister Richard Baloyi said it was decided that the memorial service would be held at the scene of the tragedy.

"We felt the memorial service should be held there as part of cleansing the place. The tragedy that happened is not easy for the people of Marikana and the country as a whole," he said.

Baloyi appealed to all sectors of society to join hands with government in helping and comforting the families of the deceased. "Let's work together in this difficult time, we all need to be there for one another."

So far, 28 bodies have been identified and six others are yet to be identified.

Yesterday, the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), appointed by President Jacob Zuma, pledged that government would assist the communities affected by the Marikana tragedy by helping to identify the remaining six deceased persons.

The Committee members went to Phokeng mortuary to assist family members and health workers in the process of identify the bodies which were taken there after Thursday's tragedy.

The IMC, which is currently based in Rustenburg, will coordinate and lead all support efforts to families and relatives, including counselling and burials, the Presidency said.

With regard to deceased foreigners, Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma yesterday said her department would do everything in its power to help the families with documentation.

"We had discussions with them and we have agreed to help them," she said.

The IMC is expected to meet with Lonmin management and the workers again later today. On Monday, some members of the IMC had met with the mine management and discussed issues pertaining to the ultimatum issued by the mine at the weekend.

The parties had agreed that this was a time for mourning and that the ultimatum should be set aside.

State Pathology is currently working with the provincial authorities in finalising post-mortem processes, and a contingency of health personnel - comprising military, municipal, provincial, and national personnel - have been mobilised to provide any emergency services required during this period and beyond.

Other services that will be provided to the Marikana community include psycho-social support to members of the bereaved families and the injured through a dedicated team of social workers, who will be stationed in the area while providing alternative care for orphaned children.

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