

PUBLIC OFFICIALS DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS OF THE MARSHALLTOWN FIRE

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As South Africans are still recovering from the shock of the fire that happened at no. 80, Albert Street. Archbishop Thabo Makgoba foresaw a need for spiritual therapy for the victims who suffered trauma. Whether it was losing loved ones or those that are still recovering in hospital.

Archbishop Makgoba held a prayer session which took place on Wednesday, 6 September 2023. Others in attendance were people of different faiths, government employees, civil society activists, and councillors of Region F1.

The prayer session later turned into a symposium, where deep discussions took place from various angles. The symposium was led by broadcaster Clement Manyathela of 702, who was a co-sponsor of the event.

Manyathela grilled the government officials with tough questions, starting by asking Councillor Mongameli Mnyameli of Ward 124 of the criminal activities that are taking place in the inner city. This included criminality including prostitution, substance abuse, and the selling of drugs in hijacked buildings. The councillor agreed that there are so many buildings that are being hijacked by crooks who in turn make people pay rental fees, and they couldn't go to raid those buildings due to the fear and dangers as they lack capacity.

Gauteng Premier Phanyaza Lesufi made a revelation that the provincial government is working on finalizing terms for the commission to deal with the issue of hijacked buildings in the inner city. He acknowledged the weakness of the government in managing these properties.

Ms Angela Rivers, an inner city property owner, made an emphasis that the government does not have enough capacity to manage its properties and refuses to partner with the private sector. Moreover, that government officials are clueless about how many hijacked buildings there are.

Rabbi, Dr Warren Goldstein, concurred with the message of morality by Archbishop Makgoba. He reminded the attendees about the prospects of hope brought about by rainbow nation in 1994. He shared:

"Our constitution which was adopted in 1996 was and is still a beacon of hope for all races of this country, rights of any individual are protected regardless of nationality. I therefore appeal to all of you to go and vote in the forthcoming elections to address these shortcomings done by this current government."

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