

NLC reaches level ground with SANPOU

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Breaking News

By. SUNDAY WORLD

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Johannesburg – A volatile situation was averted after the South African Non-Profit Organisation Union (SANPOU) held a protest outside the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) offices in Hatfield, Pretoria on Thursday.

The protesters, who were denied access to the NLC premises, had gathered to hand over applications for funding, according to SANPOU president Thapelo Ntlele.

“When the police arrived, we told them that our gathering was not an illegal gathering,” said Ntlele.

The NLC said police were called due to previous unlawful gatherings by the group, which were unannounced and posed a threat to the safety of employees and other applicants.

The NLC added that the police were called to the scene mainly to enforce Covid-19 regulations because many people had turned up for the protest.



In a leaked letter, the union states that some individuals from a popular news publication in the Western Cape had previously tried to bribe union members to “act” against the NLC, but the union turned down the offer.

SANPOU, which claims to have more than 200 members who operate non-government organisations, alleges that the NLC is biased and corrupt. Ntlele said the protesters had gathered only to push for their funding applications to be approved.

“There are more than half a million early childhood development centres in South Africa and half of them were closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic because they couldn’t get the funds” said Ntlele, accusing the NLC of prioritising the individuals and organisations that have connections to NLC officials.

NLC head of marketing and communications Ndivhuho Mafela dismissed the accusations, saying Ntlele had booked an appointment with NLC but instead rocked up with a group of people.



Mafela explained that the NLC does not encourage group submissions.

Of the more than 30 people who arrived with Ntlele, only 25 had valid application forms for submission. Sixteen applications were compliant and their complaints for funding consideration were allocated tracking numbers.

Nine applicants were rejected, however, they were guided on how to fill in the forms and what documents needed to accompany their applications in order to be considered for funding.

Nompumelelo Nene, NLC acting executive legal manager, said the police were only called after suspicious behaviour was noticed, adding that the NLC response was in line with its value for social consciousness.

“The NLC is aware of the allegations of corruption. The NLC has a zero-tolerance approach and all instances of corruption are investigated upon reporting,” said Nene.

“We have also welcomed and continue to co-operate with investigations by law-enforcement agencies such as the special investigating unit and the Hawks.”

She added that the NLC will act appropriately and decisively once the investigations had been finalised, noting that in some instances, cases will be reinvestigated.

Reporting by Juju Senyatsi

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