

Mix Camp Squatters Stay

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SQUATTERS at 'Mix Camp', a private plot at Brakwater, have decided to stay put until the owners evict them.

They were given until the end of last year to vacate the land or face eviction when PF Koep and Company, acting on the instructions of owners Eluwa Lya Tenda Property, placed an advertisement in local newspapers.

However, the estimated 3 000 squatters have decided to stay and fight their case when the High Court reopens on January 15.

In November, lawyers PF Koep and Company said their clients reserved the rights, "amongst others, to approach the High Court of Namibia or any other competent court to obtain the necessary order for your eviction and ejection from the properties, together with such other additional or ancillary relief that might be necessary or appropriate".

Residents of Mix Camp, some of whom have lived there for as long as 20 years, are mostly employees of parastatals, businesses and farms in the Brakwater area.

The informal settlement started in the 1980s when the former plot owner, the late Heiner Mix, allowed some workers to settle on his property.

Since his death in 1999, the settlement has mushroomed in the absence of a landlord.

The residents claim that they had an agreement with Mix to stay on the 50-hectare plot.

The owner of Eluwa Lya Tenda Property, Frans Kapofi, informed the residents that any such agreement was terminable by "reasonable notice" and that the month and a half he gave them was enough.

Through his lawyers, Cabinet Secretary Kapofi said the agreement the squatters had with Mix expires on December 31.

The publication of the notice was authorised by the High Court on September 11.

Kapofi acquired the plot, Portion 8 of Farm Emmarentia, in July 2003, through the close corporation Eluwa Lya Tenda Property, of which he is the sole member.

At the time he gave the squatters notice that they would have to pay rent for living there and informed them that they should find alternative accommodation.

But they have refused to budge.

In 2003, Kapofi set a levy of N\$45 a month per shack, which covered the rental fee and grazing fees for small stock.

The community pay for water from time to time but Kapofi claims that he pays the rates and taxes.