Shackled up in a tin hut - for real

PHOTO STORY

PREGA GOVENDER

WHILE students at South Africa’s private universities protest against rent hikes, others report mock shacks in protest at the lack of student accommodation. Living and studying in a shack is a cold reality for less fortunate ones.

Patrick Molele, 22, a third-year human resources management student at Tshwane University of Technology, has been renting a corrugated-iron shack in the Coronation informal settlement in Emalahleni (Witbank), since 2013.

Molele, who lives in Limpopo, pays R250 for accommodation. There is no electricity and he is forced to use his neighbour’s pit latrine because his shack does not have one.

He said his parents could not afford the R1 900 a month resi-
dences the university wants when he first applied for a place in a hostel. “I battle to study by candlelight and try as far as possible to study in the campus library. It is very difficult.” He did not qualify for National Student Financial Aid Scheme funding because both his parents were employed, he said.

“I wish the university could pro-
vide me with free accommodation,” he said.

Marginalistically more fortunate are third-year electrical engineering student Sandra Ramushu and her roommate Sopha Phasha. They can’t remember when last they had their own private bathroom.

The two Tshwane University of Technology students, also studying at the Emalahleni campus in Mpuumngana, have been living in a run-down shack in Coronation since January.

Ramushu, 22, and Phasha, 20, whose parents rely on social grants, pay R250 a month rent for the room, which does not have electricity.

They are among hundreds of students at the campus who have been forced to rent in informal dwellings and at private homes because the institution’s only hostel has space for roughly 213 of 1 132 students.

The pair sleep on a sponge mat-
top and bath in a large purple plastic bucket because there is no separate bathroom.

They share a pit latrine, which is a few metres outside their room, with 11 other occupants living in 11 other rooms.

Several other students, including Thabo Mphalele, 24, in his third year in electrical engineer-
ing, and Manda Ndlovu, 21, sec-
ond-year electrical engineering, and Davi Sibanda, 21, moving into informal housing too.

Zodwa Mabena, 26, leaves herself to R270 a month to share a dingy room with four other students in a private home which is also occupied by prostitutes who ply their trade from the premises.

People ended up thinking we were also prostitutes because we were staying on the same premises

Nine students, including Llewellyn Kotelo, 24, each pay R600 to share three rooms in a house in the suburb of both in the bathroom.

For Friday, Ramushu, Phasha, Mphalele, Ndlovu, and Mabena had no electricity, and the.”

A student at the University of Johannesburg, the University of Limpopo, the Vaal University of Technology and the Nelson Mandela Metropol-
itan University are renting ac-
commodation in private homes. These include 2 000 from UJ who are living in homes accredited by the university.

Said Ramushu: “I found it dif-
" tackling the problem of new buildings was a problem, especially given the zero increase in fees for 2016.” - Prega Govender

UNIVERSITIES are spending millions on the construction of new hostels to address the dire shortage of student accommodation. This week confirmed that the building of new buildings was in the planning stage of near completion. Among these are:

A 205-bed hostel at the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University that is expected to be ready for occupation by June.

A 288-bed residence at the University of Zululand that is expected to be completed next year.

A proposal by Rhodes University to build six more residences that would provide an additional 2 000 beds.

Plans by the Vaal University of Technology to build a 1 800-bed residence this year. A second residence was built while the construction of a 300-bed hostel at its science park is at an advanced stage.

The completion of a 320-bed facility at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology next year.

The construction of a 200-bed residence at Stellenbosch University’s Tygerberg campus that was expected to start soon.

A 622-bed facility at the Mangosuthu University of Technology that is expected to be completed by June. The cost of the 1 000-bed facility was expected to start before the end of the year.

The University of Cape Town said it planned to increase its 6 680 beds by 3 000. The University of the Witwatersrand said a 1 144-bed extension to David Webster Hall was one of the. That funding for new buildings was a problem, especially given the zero increase in fees for 2016.” - Prega Govender

Struggle: human resources management student Patrick Molele in his shack in Coronation informal settlement near Emalahleni. Picture: KEVIN SUTHERLAND

Heavy odds: These students lived in the outside room of a brothel in Emalahleni until they moved to new accommodation on Friday. Picture: DAVLIN PAUL

Campuses spend millions on hostels

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