

# 1 killed, 48 injured following explosion in Joburg CBD

An explosion in Bree Street in the Johannesburg CBD on Wednesday, 19 July, has claimed one life and left 48 others injured, according to Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi, who briefed the media on Thursday morning.



Source: [@SAGovnews/Twitter](#)

The explosion caused extensive damage to the road infrastructure, splitting it open, while damaging vehicles in the immediate area. The cause of the blast is still under investigation. A joint command centre has been set up at the Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown.

Spokesperson for the City of Johannesburg Emergency Management Services Robert Mulaudzi [told the SABC](#) that the area has been cordoned off and people are being discouraged from visiting the area in case of any secondary explosions.

The structural integrity of adjacent buildings is also being assessed, he said.

Egoli Gold, which services the area, released a statement saying the explosion is unlikely due to a gas pipeline or leak in its network, however, Mulaudzi said they have not ruled out a gas leak. Other potential causes being investigated, he noted, include excessive methane from the sewer system and illegal mining.

"We have now formally brought [in] all institutions that deal with gas. We now have Egoli Gas, we have brought [in] Sasol, and we are bringing [in] anyone that has either underground pipes or cabling," said Lesufi.

“ TRAFFIC ADVISORY 🚧🚧

*Please avoid Lilian Ngoyi (Bree) str in Jhb CBD between Eloff and Harrison str as it is closed following yesterday's explosion.*

*Alternative routes:*

*- From eastbound travel along Lilian Ngoyi turn right into Simmonds and then left into either Pritchard st or...*

[pic.twitter.com/6LyGcH5K0S](https://pic.twitter.com/6LyGcH5K0S)— City of Joburg (@CityofJoburgZA) [July 20, 2023](#) ”

Bree Street is one of the busiest in the city and redirecting traffic away from the scene has become “a headache”, he said, with many frustrated by its closure. He emphasised that as soon as the cause of the explosion is determined, “they will move with speed to release some of the roads”.

“They will keep the area sterile until it is rehabilitated. Road closures and diversions will remain in place until further notice,” said Lesufi.

## **Explosion being investigated by Department of Labour**

Lesufi also said on Thursday that the explosion is now being investigated by the Department of Labour.

He said that according to a preliminary report by the department, there may be similarities to an incident that occurred in 2010 in Yeoville, Johannesburg, and that there are three manholes that are of interest to their investigations and they need to interview “certain institutions” further.

The premier said a consolidated report from all relevant stakeholders is being compiled and the area still remains under close guard.