



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU - NATAL - ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU - NATALI  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
UMNYANGO WEZOKUTHUTHA

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**FIVE ARMED ROBBERS DIE AFTER ATTACKING SAPS**

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Bheki Cele has applauded a swift move by the police in bizarre shootout which resulted in the sudden death of five armed robbers. This follows a tip off which led to a confrontation between members of the SAPS Organised Crime Unit and the armed men on the N3 north bound near Camperdown yesterday afternoon (Wednesday 21/01/2009).

Preliminary reports have revealed that the incident occurred after the SAPS detectives received information that a minibus carrying nine men with firearms was on its way to Pietermaritzburg to commit armed robbery. The police ordered the driver to pull over to the side of the road. It is alleged that as the minibus stopped, the suspects opened fire on the SAPS, forcing the police to return fire in self defence. This resulted in the killing of five suspects and the immediate arrest of four. One member of the police was slightly injured during the shootout. Several firearms belonging to the suspects were confiscated by the police. Police investigation is still underway.

"Reports have indicated that in KwaZulu-Natal alone about 24 police officers have been killed in the line of duty in the current financial year. It is on that score that as government we will continue to encourage our officers to act decisively in threatening situations and not surrender and die with guns in their pockets. The arrested suspects will be charged for attempted armed robbery, possession of unlicensed firearms and attempted murder on members of the police. This serves as a warning to everybody that the police are serious about fighting fire with fire," said Cele.

**ENDS**

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