



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU - NATAL - ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU - NATALI

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT**

**UMNYANGO WEZOKUTHUTHA**

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 04 JULY 2011

**MEC MCHUNU APPLAUDS POLICE OFFICERS IN PREVENTING A POTENTIALLY FATAL  
FARM ROBBERY LAST NIGHT**

MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Mr. Willies Mchunu applauds police officers for their efforts in preventing a potentially fatal farm robbery last night (03/07/2011) at about 22h00.

This is subsequent to the plea made by the community members on the level of crime in the areas between Pietermaritzburg and Richmond. A task team comprising of the Crime Intelligent Unit, Detective Branch, National Intervention Unit, Private Security with their Private Investigator was formed. Members from the NIU responded to information of a possible farm robbery in the Eston area just outside Pietermaritzburg. Preliminary reports have revealed that, a group of armed men were attempting to force open the main gate to the farm when the NIU members confronted them and demanded their instant surrender. Instead, a shootout ensued between police and the suspects, which resulted in five suspects being shot dead and two escaping. One of the suspects was seen emerging from a nearby bush by security guards and he was arrested with a gunshot wound to his leg whilst the seventh suspect was shot dead when he got involved in a shootout with security guards this morning.

Police recovered seven firearms from the suspects. The firearms will be sent for ballistic testing to establish whether they were used to commit other crimes. Meanwhile, it has emerged that some of these suspects were being sought for a spate of business robberies in and around the Pietermaritzburg, Durban, Pinetown, Richmond, and Mariannhill, areas. It is

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believed that suspects were also linked with more than 25 cases currently under investigation, from murder, attempted murder and robbery.

**"I welcome the arrest of the one suspect made by the police. It is indeed frustrating that when the police give the criminals an order to surrender, the criminals see it as an opportunity to shoot at the police. I would also like to acknowledge the partnership the police have with the community and would also like to emphasize that the only way the police will win against crime is when the police and the community work together,"** said Mchunu.

ENDS

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