



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU - NATAL - ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU - NATALI

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
UMNYANGO WEZOKUTHUTHA

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 14 APRIL 2011

MEC MCHUNU CONDEMNS THE VIOLENT PROTEST AND ROAD CLOSURE AT PLESSISLAER
IN PIETERMARITZBURG

MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Mr. Willies Mchunu strongly condemns the violent protest and road closure at Edendale in Pietermaritzburg this morning (14/06/2011).

Preliminary reports reveal that the police received a report of a volatile situation along the Selby Msimang Road in the Georgedale area of Plessislaer. On arrival at the scene a crowd of about 300 (three-hundred) community members were obstructing traffic, blockading the road and burning tyres. They had also set a motor vehicle alight in the centre of the road. It is believed that the protests are with regard to service delivery in the area. At about 09:00 the crowd thereafter began shouting and throwing stones at the police, damaging several motor vehicles. After numerous requests to stop police were forced to retaliate and fired stun grenades and tear gas to disperse the crowd. No arrests have been made so far. Police are investigating a case of Public Violence.

"I strongly condemn any violent protest, because innocent people end up dead or injured. People must keep in mind that there are various ways of resolving any issues besides resorting to protesting and violation of property. There are community structures that are put in place to ensure that all communities' needs are met. At this stage police have the situation under control and a large contingency of police members have been deployed to the area to make sure that there is peace and stability at all times," said Mchunu.

ENDS

Media contact: Kwanele Ncalane-079 699 5755/072 803 1462

Media Liaison & Public Relations Directorate

Street Address: 172 Burger Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201 Republic of South Africa
Postal Address: Private Bag X9043, Pietermaritzburg, 3200 Republic of South Africa
Tel: (27) (33) 355 8624 Fax: (27) (33) 355 8632
Internet: <http://www.kzntransport.gov.za/home.htm>