



# transport

Department:  
Transport  
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA  
DATE: 2 July 2014  
ATTENTION: Editors, News Editors & PR Wires

#### **ACTING MEC DHLOMO CALLS FOR CALM IN MANDENI FOLLOWING KILLING OF ASSOCIATION'S CHAIRPERSON**

**Mandeni** – The Acting MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Dr. Sibongiseni Dhlomo, has strongly condemned the brutal killing of Mandeni/ Sundumbili taxi association's chairperson, Mr. Bhekizenzo Ngcobo.

Ngcobo (55) was ambushed by unknown assailants at around 16h30 yesterday (1 July 2014) outside his home in Mandeni.

Dhlomo, accompanied by the Mayor of Mandeni, Cllr. Sphesihle Zulu, today (2 July 2014) met the executive of Mandeni/ Sundumbili taxi association to establish what could have led to Ngcobo's killing and find solutions to end the tension in the area.

The South African Police Service indicated that the motive for the killing is not yet known and no suspect has been arrested, however, they are still following leads.

The killing comes two months after the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport signed a co-operation agreement with the Mandeni taxi association binding both parties to legalise taxi operations.

The agreement had been triggered by the killing of a female operator and her husband, who were both burnt to death in March.

It emerged in today's meeting that there is growing tension and confrontation between Sundimbili/ Mandeni and Nyoni taxi associations over a route to KwaSthebe industries. This arose from last week Tuesday's shooting, allegedly involving security guards contracted to both associations that ensued at the Mandeni taxi rank. Police have confirmed confiscating eight fire-arms and arresting three suspects.

This morning police also arrested a police officer alleged to be operating "underground" for one of the security companies.

Addressing the meeting, MEC Dhlomo called for calm and vowed that perpetrators of the killing and violence will soon be brought to book.

**"We are concerned about this senseless killing, which is aimed at undermining the great progress we have made in bringing peace and stability in the industry. I have engaged the police and they are working round the clock to bring perpetrators to book. These killings and tensions are counterproductive and we strongly condemn them. We further call for calm among the affected associations and ask all members of the community to work with the police, who are doing a good job in arresting suspects and continue to monitor the situation in Mandeni,"** said MEC Dhlomo.

He also urged all taxi operators to co-operate with law enforcement agencies to prevent any further loss of lives.

**"It is unfortunate that we have people in the taxi industry who are orchestrating the killing of other operators. The area of Mandeni is now known as a hot spot for taxi violence, but our collective task is to work together to turn around this bad reputation by obtaining peace and stability, which are critical to industry growth,"** said MEC Dhlomo.

Ends.

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