



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT DATED 12 OCTOBER 2014

MEC MCHUNU TO MEET THE COMMUNITY OF ZAKHENI FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF 15 PEOPLE IN LADYSMITH

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu will engage with Ezakheni community and the police tomorrow (Monday, 13 October 2014) following two tragic incidents that claimed lives of 15 people over the weekend.

Mchunu's visit follows the death of 15 people in two, separate incidents in Ezakheni. Yesterday, Mchunu dispatched a high-level team, led by Transport HOD Sibusiso Gumbi and top management of the Department of Community Safety and Liaison.

The delegation, which was accompanied by the local mayor, Councillor Vincent Madlala, was briefed by both local police and RTI management on the tragic events.

The team also visited the scenes of accidents, including the local RTI where wreckages of the vehicles are kept.

During the interaction with the police and RTI officials the following picture emerged:

On Saturday afternoon, a grey Mercedes Benz which was traveling from a wedding was apparently fleeing an alleged shooting incident when it almost hit a taxi. The driver of the taxi in turn, trying to avert the accident, crashed into an oncoming truck.

Five people died on the scene while four others died in hospital. Others remain critically injured. One woman was shot dead in the Mercedes Benz, which had 38 bullet holes after this attack, making the total number of the deceased to be 10 from the first incident.

Almost 30 minutes after the first shooting, which resulted into the accident, a group of men was sitting near the car wash at Section D in Ezakheni (eRingini). They were accosted by a Toyota Avanza vehicle, whose occupants, opened fire on them, instantly killing five people. One person was injured and managed to escape.

The motive for these incidents is not yet known. However, police are investigating cases of murder, attempted murder and culpable homicide.

"I have received a briefing from the team which was in Ladysmith today and it is clear that the community is in fear after these two incidents. The modus operandi makes it difficult, at face value, to conclude that the two shooting incidents are not related.

"I will tomorrow meet with police management and all community stakeholders to look at ways of providing support to the affected families.

"I appeal to everyone to leave this matter to the capable hands of the police and to resist the temptation to retaliate. Once again I wish to send our deepest condolences to all the families who lost their loved ones in these two callous incidents," said Mchunu.

Among others, MEC Mchunu will visit those still at the hospital, get a briefing from the locals and meet relatives of the deceased.

Details of the MEC's visit tomorrow:

09h00 – Briefing with Ladysmith leadership and the police at the Ladysmith Council Chamber.
10h00 – Visit survivors of the accident at the Ladysmith Provincial Hospital
11h00 – Visit both scenes
12h00 – Meet with deceased families and the community at Zakheni – C section

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