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MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA
DATE: 14 April 2014
ATTENTION: NEWS EDITORS/ REPORTERS AND PR WIRES

MEC WILLIES MCHUNU MEETS KWADUKUZA AND MAPHUMULO TAXI ASSOCIATIONS IN BID TO END VIOLENCE

KZN- MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has worked flat out over the weekend, meeting the KwaDukuza and Maphumulo taxi associations in a bid to stabilise taxi operations and end violence.

Mchunu's intervention was prompted by the latest incident of random shootings at a taxi rank that left a passenger critically injured.

In an isolated incident, however, alleged to be linked to the taxi industry disputes, a taxi operator was shot and killed in Glendale, outside Stanger last week.

On Friday (11/04/14), MEC Mchunu met with the leadership of Maphumulo taxi association to ascertain their understanding of what could be the root cause of the latest incidents of violence in the area.

On Saturday (12/04/14), MEC Mchunu led a team from the Department of Transport to engage with the leadership of KwaDukuza taxi association.

In both these meetings, it emerged that the renewed tension between these two rival associations is over the Darnell route.

"Our intervention as Government is to ensure that we provide a safe public transport environment for citizens. I have made a strong appeal to both associations to immediately stop fighting and engage in dialogue. If this is allowed to continue, innocent commuters will be the victims," warned MEC Mchunu.

MEC Mchunu also alluded to the fact that the Department of Transport has a clear programme to facilitate issuing operating licenses for members of both associations and urged everyone to continue cooperating with this process.

"From what both associations told me, there is no need for shootings and killings. The Darnell route is clear and there are processes for whoever is not happy to raise objections within legitimate structures. We have entered into an agreement with both associations to fast track issuing of their operating licenses, and we expect everyone to participate in

this process objectively for us to achieve stability in the industry in the Greater iLembe region,” said Mchunu.

Mchunu has also assured citizens that their safety will be protected as the SAPS and the department's Shanela have increased their deployment in the area.

Today (14/04/2014), Mchunu continue engagements with both associations to bring the matter to finality and will announce the way forward this week.

Ends.

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