



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MEC KAUNDA ENCOURAGED BY COURT DECISION TO SENTENCE TAXI OPERATOR TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT AND ADDITIONAL 10 YEARS FOR MURDER

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Mxolisi Kaunda, has applauded the Mtubatuba magistrate court for sentencing a taxi driver from KwaMaphumulo, who killed another member of the taxi association, to a life sentence and an additional 10 years .

The court imposed this stiff sentence to Sipho Zulu for killing his colleague, Nelson Malani Cele, who was a taxi operator from KwaMaphumulo.

The incident happened on 29 April 2014, when Cele who was traveling with his family was attacked by a then unknown person who opened fire and wounded the occupants on the vehicle in Kranskop. All other occupants were rushed to a nearby hospital, but Cele died instantly due to severe gunshot wounds.

The Mtubatuba magistrate court found the accused guilty of murder and attempted murder. He was sentenced to life and an extra 10 years in prison. The incident was linked to in-fighting within the taxi association.

About two months ago a man was also sentenced to life imprisonment and an additional 40 years by the Durban court following the killing of four people between KwaMaphumulo and KwaDukuza.

Commenting on the court outcome, Kaunda said the court decision will give more impetus to law enforcement agencies to continue working hard to end killings in the taxi industry.

“We are very encouraged by this harsh sentence. It is indeed a milestone for us to finally realise our efforts of rebranding this industry by steadily rooting out all criminals who opt to resolve differences by killing people instead of

peaceful dialogue. Clearly, we have now reached a turning point as the justice system is now taking very seriously incidents of brutality in the taxi industry.”
“We will continue to advocate for operators to come forward and engage with us if they cannot reach amicable decisions. We are here to help taxi associations and operators to have a stable, legitimate and violence-free business.”

“We once again reaffirm our stance when it comes to violence, that there is no room for murderers in this industry. We are serious about inculcating the culture of tolerance and respect for the rule of law in the industry,” said Kaunda.

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