



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MEC KAUNDA ADDRESSES KZN LONG DISTANCE TAXI OPERATORS' ISSUES

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Mxolisi Kaunda, has committed the Department of Transport to step up law enforcement to curb illegal taxi operators on long-distance routes in the province.

Speaking at the meeting with SANTACO and Long Distance Taxi Association in Pietermaritzburg earlier today, Kaunda said that as long as the industry still harboured illegal operators and violent elements it would never realise its growth potential.

The call comes after some of the long-distance taxi operators illegally blockaded roads in Blood River, northern KwaZulu-Natal, in a bid to stop illegal operations. This led to a police operation in the area, which resulted in the impounding of vehicles and arrest of scores of armed taxi operators.

Other issues that were raised in the meeting included the issuing of fraudulent operating licences and the proliferation of illegal firearms in the industry.

"As the provincial government, we are proud of the taxi industry since it's the only sector that was established and remains majority owned by black people, Africans in particular. It is precisely for this reason that I have prioritised it in the list of stakeholders that I still have to meet in the province," said Kaunda.

Responding to the issue of uplifting the moratorium on the issuing of new operating licences, Kaunda said that in the meeting he held earlier this week with the SANTACO provincial leadership it was agreed that a working group will be established to facilitate the implementation of the uplifting of the moratorium.

He reiterated that the department will increase enforcement to ensure that illegal operators, particularly in the long-distance routes, are rooted out.

Through its provincial chairperson, Mr. Boy Zondi, SANTACO committed itself that they would support the MEC's efforts in ridding the industry of illegal operators and fraudulent activities, imploring for the law to take its course.

"We have decided to mount operations in all areas that have been identified as hotspots and a great deal of resources have been put into these operations. This is a clear indication that the department is serious about bringing law and order in the industry. We want to make it clear that our law enforcement operations are not

going to be selective. The law will apply equally to all operators, because we want to rid the industry of rogue elements.”

“I have requested the Provincial Commissioner of Police to support our Road Traffic Inspectorate with more personnel in dealing with criminality and violence in the industry,” stated Kaunda.

ENDS.

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