



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA
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ATTENTION: EDITORS and NEWS EDITORS

MEC MCHUNU CAUTIONS MOTORISTS TO ADJUST DRIVING HABITS AS THREE SCHOOL CHILDREN DIE ON THE R66 IN ESHOWE

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has learnt with shock at the death of three school children on the R66 near Umlalazi outside Eshowe and further called on motorists to exercise safe driving patterns as heavy rains are expected to continue in the province for the next couple of days.

Preliminary reports have revealed that a bakkie ferrying school children collided with a bus and claimed the lives of three children from Gcwalulwazi High School, on the scene. There were seven passengers who sustained critical injuries and were taken to the hospital. All injured people were from the bakkie as the bus had no occupants at the time of the accident.

Among the deceased were two boys and a girl between the ages of 14 and 16. Strong indications are that the weather condition might have contributed to this tragic accident. A case of culpable homicide was opened.

According to the South African Weather Service, wet weather is expected to fall on the province for the next couple of days.

MEC Mchunu has cautioned motorists to adjust their driving habits and continued to urge parents to ensure that pupils are transported using safe, regulated and reliable modes of transport.

"We would like to send our deepest condolences to the families of the school children who lost their lives in this tragic accident, earlier today. We appeal to motorists to be extra vigilant on the road as wet weather is expected to continue for the next couple of days, according to the South African Weather Service, so we would like to caution motorists to adjust their driving habits, and all road users to take extra care to be visible and respect road signs. We further appeal to

motorists to remain visible by switching on their headlights and reducing speed, following a safe following distance in order to avoid accidents,” said Mchunu.

MEC Mchunu further reiterated government commitment of prioritising schools where learners are transported using bakkies, saying limited funding has affected the pace and progress on the roll out of the provision of scholar transport.

Currently, more than 22 000 learners are provided with free subsidised scholar transport every day in the province yet the backlog is still huge, mainly in rural communities.

Ends.

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