



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

MEDIA ADVISORY

MEC KAUNDA CALLS FOR TIGHT SCRUTINY OF LAWS AND POLICIES GUIDING THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN DRIVER FOLLOWING A FATAL TRUCK CRASH THAT CLAIMED SIX LIVES IN DURBAN

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Mxolisi Kaunda, has issued a stern warning to trucking companies employing foreign drivers and overlooking the laws of the country, saying they need to take personal responsibility.

Kaunda issued this warning this weekend when he visited the scene of the crash that claimed the lives of six people on the N3, near the Pavilion Shopping centre in Durban. The crash happened during a busy afternoon on Friday. There were five people who died on the scene and one later died in hospital.

Preliminary reports reveals that a truck driver failed to stop and collided with a minibus taxi laden with occupants from Durban to Clermont. A truck driver, who is a Zimbabwean international fled the scene after the crash and is still at large.

The investigation has thus far revealed that the truck had multiple defects and brake failure, however more and thorough investigation is underway by various agencies, including the Road Traffic Inspectorate, South African Police Services and the Road Traffic Management Corporation.

Yesterday, MEC Kaunda visited some of the survivors of the accident and inspected the wreckage at the Pinetown Road Traffic Inspectorate's office. Commenting after assessing the impact of the gruesome crash, Kaunda called on trucking companies to scrutinise and abide by the law when employing foreign drivers.

"We are calling on trucking companies to abide by the rule of law when employing drivers. As government we are seeking advice, including possible legal review that will compel truck companies to ensure that everything is above board when employing foreign drivers. This is not aimed at discriminating foreign drivers however there has been a growing trend witnessed in the industry of employing foreign drivers with no permanent work documents, no qualifications and experience in exchange for cheap labour. The Field's Hill accident, which killed 24 people three years ago is one of many examples of such negligence on the side of trucking companies. Informed by such experiences we are calling for serious scrutiny of the laws and policies guiding the employment of foreign drivers. Actions must also be taken against the truck owner in this accident and many others who are practising this. We view it as unprofessional and unacceptable that some trucking companies are obsessed with maximising profit at an expense of people's safety on the road," said Kaunda.

Kaunda further said that in the next few days he will be meeting with the captains of industry in the freight industry and initiate engagements with them to improve safety on the road. He has vowed to lead a process to engage all statutory agencies with a view of strengthening and addressing gaps in the law responsible for the employment of foreign drivers.

Kaunda has sent his deepest condolences to all the families of the deceased with wished a speedy recovery to all those who are hospitalised.

“We are deeply saddened by this horrific crash. It is unacceptable to witness such kind of traumatic experience. One cannot imagine how the survivors escaped if a minibus taxi was left completely damaged. We wish to assure all the families that government is with them and will provide all the necessary assistance. Traffic police has also been directed to sustain enforcement operations to proactively address failure to adhere to the traffic laws on the road,” said Kaunda.

ENDS.

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