



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, 06 November 2017

MEC KAUNDA URGES POLICE TO CLOSELY MONITOR NEWCASTLE FOLLOWING THE MURDER OF TAXI OPERATOR

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Mr Mxolisi Kaunda has condemned the fatal shooting of a taxi operator, Sbusiso Obed Nkomonde, in Newcastle yesterday.

Preliminary reports indicate that at about 18h00, Nkomonde, who was the chairperson for Sizwe Taxi Owners Association in Newcastle was driving along P483 from Osizweni to Utretch when he was attacked by three unknown men. The suspects opened fire, fatally wounding Nkomonde instantly. Police have opened a case of murder which is currently being investigated by the Provincial Police Task Team.

Kaunda has urged the police to speed-up the investigation into the matter and ensure that perpetrators are brought to book. "Newcastle is one of the areas that has been stable after we experienced a few incidents of taxi violence some years ago. This is also the first area where the Department implemented the rank management system, which entailed installing of CCTV cameras, employment of a security by government which protects everybody at the rank" said Kaunda.

On Friday, the Department convened a meeting with members of the association after receiving reports that there were simmering tensions within the association between members who operate local and long distance routes. Another meeting was scheduled today between the Department, SANTACO and members of Sizwe Taxi Owners Association to find a lasting

solution to the conflict.

The murder of Nkomonde comes hot on the heels of another tragic taxi-related shooting last week in Ladysmith which claimed the lives of 11 people, including five school teachers.

“The continuous killings of taxi operators will not be tolerated in the province. It is for this reason that I have sought approval of Section 91 to be declared in uMnambithi should acts of violence continue in the area and operators found to be involved in the conflict shall lose their operating licenses, said Kaunda.

The Department, working with the police will continue to closely monitor the situation in Newcastle to ensure that no further loss of lives occur. The MEC expressed his heartfelt condolences to the Nkomonde family and appealed to the community to come forward with any information that can assist in fast tracking the investigation.

Ends.

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