



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA STATEMENT

Saturday, 12 October 2019

MEC NTULI CALLS FOR CALM FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH CONFLICTING TAXI ASSOCIATIONS IN LADYSMITH

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Bheki Ntuli today (12/10/2019) convened a meeting with the leadership of the taxi industry in Ladysmith (Alfred Duma Municipality) following a rank shutdown on Wednesday by private security companies employed by the warring Klipriver and Sizwe Taxi Associations.

MEC Ntuli was accompanied by the Chairperson of SANTACO, Mr Boy Zondi and the Mayor of Alfred Duma Local Municipality, Cllr Vincent Madlala.

MEC Ntuli stated that the purpose of the meeting was to listen to the concerns of both Klipriver and Sizwe Taxi Associations and to find a solution to resolve long standing issues between the two associations and the Department of Transport.

The violent conflict that claimed the lives of over 60 people between the two taxi associations led to the Department of Transport suspending their taxi operations in Ladysmith. The conflict between the two associations stems from a dispute about the ownership of the long-distance routes that were officially registered under Klipriver Taxi Association and operated by members of the two associations.

Following ongoing engagements with both associations and the department, former MEC, Mr Mxolisi Kaunda partially uplifted the suspension to allow local taxi operations to continue. He further uplifted the suspension on undisputed long-distance routes. Despite this both associations still failed to reach an agreement and the suspension of the disputed route was extended by a further six months in October 2018.

Klipriver challenged this decision in court which ultimately resulted in the court issuing an interim order to uplift the suspension pending the finalisation of the matter. In June 2019, the court found the decision of the Department unlawful and ordered Klipriver to continue operating the route. The department accepted the decision of the court and uplifted the suspension of operations and was pleased that the court acknowledged the good intention in the application of Section 91 of the National Land Transport Act to restore peace and stability in the taxi operations in uMnambithi.

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Ntuli said that he had used this first meeting with both associations to better understand the issues at play. "I have noted all the concerns registered by both associations and I'm encouraged by their willingness to find a lasting solution to the challenges we are faced with. We will have further dialogue on the conflict in this area, with the aim of emerging with a lasting solution and ensuring ultimately that an agreement is reached between the two associations," said Ntuli.

Ntuli said that what was urgent was for peace and stability to return to the area and called on police to ensure visibility especially at taxi tanks where the conflict had occurred in the past week. He also encouraged regular engagements between SANTACO, the Department of Transport, local leadership and the police to ensure that emerging challenges are tackled timeously to avoid any further conflicts.

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