



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

MEDIA STATEMENT

Thursday, 15 August 2019

MEC Kaunda calls on urgent review of all constitutions of taxi associations in KZN in a bid to end conflict and bloodshed

The KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mxolisi Kaunda, has called for an urgent review of all constitutions of taxi associations in the province to eliminate illegalities and bloodshed.

Kaunda said if the taxi industry is serious about creating stability and ending violence, constitutions of all of the 246 taxi associations must be aligned with the laws of the country and embrace fundamental issues of adherence to the justice system.

Kaunda made these strong remarks when he was addressing the Provincial Executive Committee of the South African National Taxi Council (Santaco), in Pietermaritzburg this week. The meeting was scheduled as part of engagements to address issues of mutual interest and to take stock of the work that has been done in stabilizing the taxi industry in the province.

“The first step towards ending violent conflict is to urgently review all constitutions of associations. There are many discrepancies in those Constitutions, and some give absolute powers to a chairperson to preside over illegal collection of monies. If the basic guide such as the constitution does not provide for legal handling of matters, violence will not stop. We must start by embracing accountability in the industry if we are to make it a viable business. It is the money that is collected willy-nilly that is used in hiring private security guards, hitmen and many other forms of illegalities,” said Kaunda, in his opening remarks.

Kaunda also used the meeting to report on the progress made in addressing the backlog of issuing operating licenses in all the regions in the province and the recorded number sits at 5342 of cases that have been finalized since the upliftment of the moratorium two years ago.

He credited these positive spinoffs to the decentralization of the Public Regulatory Entity (PRE) offices which has lessened the burden from operators of travelling long distances to Pietermaritzburg to renew their operating licenses.

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The department has fully operational PRE offices in Mbazwana, Ladysmith, Empangeni, Port Shepstone and Pietermaritzburg. Process of opening the eThekweni offices are approaching its final stages and the Department, together with the municipality will soon finalize outstanding administrative matters.

“We must unite in rooting out individuals who are brewing conflicts within the industry. The recent violent conflicts in Newcastle, Mpumalanga/Hammarsdale and Dolphin Coast must not be tolerated, and we must work with urgency to restore normalcy in those operations. We must also ensure consultations with the community and its leaders whenever taxi fares will be increased to avoid this matter causing instability in the province,” said Kaunda

Following a Private Security Indaba which was held last year, Kaunda said, government has referred a case to PSIRA (Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority) for an audit of all the private security companies; already some are facing suspension and termination due to their involvement in violence.

Kaunda also reaffirmed the commitment by government of transforming the industry to become one of the main role players in the economy, saying the Department of Transport and the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism will soon table bold plans to expand the beneficiation in the industry and create jobs.

The MEC’s commitment was welcomed by the SANTACO Provincial Chairperson, Boy Zondi, who also pledged their support and collaboration to the department in transforming the taxi industry.

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