



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA RELEASE

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MEC NKONYENI URGES MOTORISTS TO ADHERE TO THE RULES OF THE ROAD AS KZN RECORDS 47 ROAD DEATHS DURING THE EASTER WEEKEND

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Ms Neliswa Peggy Nkonyeni has warned motorists that law enforcement authorities will continue to adopt a hard line to enforce safety on the roads in order to reduce road fatalities, which currently stands at 47, since the start of the Easter long weekend.

Preliminary road accidents reports reveal that 37 crashes resulting in 47 fatalities have been recorded in various parts of the province from 01-04 April 2021 compared to 5 crashes resulting in 6 fatalities recorded in the same period in 2020 when the country was under Level 5 Covid-19 nation-wide lockdown. During the same period in 2019, a total of 31 crashes resulting in 40 fatalities were recorded in KZN.

In the latest accident that occurred on Saturday along the N2 towards Pongola in the Godlwayo area, it is alleged that a Hyundai light duty vehicle was transporting 29 people from a local wedding when the driver lost control of the vehicle and it overturned. Three people died instantly at the scene of the crash and the fourth victim who had sustained serious injuries died later in hospital. Meanwhile 25 victims who had sustained injuries were also taken to hospital for urgent medical attention. Reports indicate that the cause of the collision include speeding, alcohol and burst tyre.

The motorist with the highest alcohol content was arrested in Scottburgh and his alcohol reading was 2.68 mg/l, which is 11 times over the legal alcohol limit.

Furthermore, the highest speed recorded was on the N2 near Mtunzini in the Empangeni Region where a motorist was caught driving at 170 kilometres an hour in a 120 kilometre zone.

Traffic volumes were beginning to peak as holiday makers were travelling back to their respective destinations, by 12 noon over 2000 cars per hour were measured at Mariannhill Toll Plaza on the N3 from KwaZulu-Natal.

MEC Nkonyeni said empirical evidence shows that most accidents on the road are as a result of human behaviour such as speeding, overloading and driving under the influence of alcohol.

“Road fatalities are a major concern to the provincial government; however, it takes each individual to play their part in curbing the high rate of accidents that occur each year on our roads. No matter how many law enforcement officers we may deploy, we can never be able to police every aspect of motorists’ behaviour, so this calls for us to individually take responsibility for our actions when we get behind the steering wheel. We wish to express our deepest condolences to the families of the 37 people who lost their lives in these horrific accidents that occurred over the past three days. We also wish those fighting for their lives in hospital a speedy recovery,” said MEC Nkonyeni.

Law enforcement officers continue to be out in full force during the Easter period as part of Operation Vala Easter Safety Plan and have stopped 14 739 vehicles at multi-disciplinary roadblocks and other operations throughout the province. This resulted in 1345 written charges being issued, a total of 111 motorists were arrested for drunken driving, 324 motorists were charged for speeding, while 111 vehicles were suspended, and 48 vehicles impounded. Furthermore, a total of 356 motorists were charged for various offences that include driving without a driving licence, driving an unlicensed vehicle inconsiderate driving and failure to wear a seatbelt while driving.

MEC Nkonyeni also appealed to pedestrians to avoid jaywalking on freeways and reiterated that ensuring safety on roads in KwaZulu-Natal is a shared responsibility.

“Integrated roadblocks will continue throughout the province targeting all degrees of crime including unroadworthy vehicles, overloading, distractive driving, drinking and driving and illegal drugs among other violations,” added MEC Nkonyeni.

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