

Major arrest and recovery of hijacked double-cab bakkie in Azalea Township, Pietermaritzburg: Duma warns society and used car dealerships that there will be severe consequences for hijacking or buying any of the 8,991 state vehicles.

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Media and Public Statement by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements, Siboniso Duma.

20 August 2026

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We commend our team from Operation Shanela for their decisive, intelligence-driven execution of the #NenzaniLaEzweni Operation.

This led to the arrest of criminals who hijacked the Department of Transport double-cab bakkie on Tuesday.

The bakkie was recovered yesterday afternoon in Azalea Township, Pietermaritzburg.

The latest arrest is a clear indication of our firmer hand on criminals targeting the Department's assets, fleet, and infrastructure aimed at accelerating service delivery for the benefit of ordinary members of communities.

Importantly, we wish to announce that Operation Shanela and Road Traffic Inspectorate teams are working with all law enforcement agencies to deal decisively with any re-emergence of incidents of hijackings of state vehicles.

In particular, we are warning society and used car dealerships that there will be severe consequences for buying stolen state cars.

Any market for stolen vehicles is the root cause of car hijackings, with young vulnerable youth being recruited to work for syndicates behind the racket.

We have been informed that if not dismantled in chop shops, stolen and hijacked state vehicles are often sold to other provinces and neighbouring countries.

In some instances, state vehicles arrive as completely broken-down parts from KwaZulu-Natal only to be assembled in another country and sold.

As the Department of Transport we have put in place measures to ensure that we protect a total of 8,991 state vehicles we have procured for various departments:

1. Health - 3 418
2. Transport – 1 497
3. Agriculture – 880
4. Education – 803
5. Social Development – 662
6. Public Works – 291
7. Social Development – 131
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Issued by the MEC for Transport and Human Settlements

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