



## **SPEECH (NOTES) BY HEAD OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT DR. KWAZI MBANJWA AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE AT UMZUMBE ON THURSDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2005.**

### **All Protocol Observed.**

- Only a week ago (last Thursday) we were gathered at Mayville for a memorial service for eight people, who were killed in the early hours of Saturday morning, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2005 in a road crash involving a bus on the R66 between Ulundi and Nongoma.
- It is again with profound sadness that we are gathered here today to mourn the passing away of eleven people, who died last Saturday (25<sup>th</sup> June 2005) as a result of two separate road crashes on the South Coast.
- The first crash occurred at about 14H00 at Magog Location, uMzombe.
- According to reports, it is alleged that the driver of a taxi was travelling up a steep gravel road, when the engine of the vehicle lost power and the brakes failed. The driver then decided to jump out of the moving taxi leaving the passengers on board, and the taxi went down a 500 metre embankment. Five passengers died on the scene, and the sixth died at hospital. The taxi was carrying a total of 15 passengers.
- The names of the deceased, who were all from the Magog area, are as follows:
  - Mrs. Thandeka Shozi – 50 years
  - Mrs. Angeline Maphumulo – 60 years

- Mr. Ernest Maphumulo – 65 years
- Mr. Bayi Dladla – 68 years
- Mr. Albert Maphumulo – 66 years
- Mrs. Christina Mbonambi – 65 years

**“May their souls rest in peace?”**

- MEC Bheki Cele together with senior departmental officials visited the scene of the crash and the injured at hospital last Sunday.
- The driver of the taxi has been arrested and has been charged with culpable homicide. He is currently in custody.
- In the second incident, five people were killed in a crash, again involving a minibus taxi and a four ton truck, at about 18h00 at Wilson’s Cutting near eZinqolweni. The minibus taxi was en-route from Durban to Matatiele. The driver lost control around a bend and collided with the on-coming truck. Three people died instantly on scene, and two others later died in hospital. This taxi was carrying a total of twenty passengers.
- The names of the deceased are as follows:
  - Mr. Zolile Sphambo - Umlazi
  - Mr. Thambiso Sebatsa - Clairmont
  - Mrs. Nobuhle Mzamo - Verulam
  - Mr. Edmond Penn - Matatiele
  - One unidentified male

**“May their souls rest in peace?”**

- This driver was also arrested and has been charged with culpable homicide. He is also presently in custody.
- I am grief-stricken each time I have to witness the pain of family members at gatherings such as these, and no amount of words are sufficient enough to comfort the families during these difficult moments.

- I would like to reiterate that the safety of passengers also rests in the hands of drivers, as well as public transport operators.
- The owners of public transport vehicles such as taxis and buses also have a role to play in ensuring that their drivers are qualified and capable of driving these vehicles.
- Provision must also be made for relief drivers, so that two drivers can take turns when travelling long distances.
- As head of this department, I will continue to play the role that I am mandated to play, and champion “100% compliance” 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year, in order to ensure that we have safer roads in our province.
- I will also continue to sustain the ideals of “Defending the Weak”, which include defending that child, woman or man killed on the road because the driver was drunk, moving at a high speed or simply did not obey the rules of the road.
- One of the key mandated goals of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport is to create a safe road environment through the reduction of road crashes.
- Over the years our Department has successfully pioneered the Asiphephe (Let Us Be Safe) road safety campaign. As part of this campaign, during December last year MEC Cele introduced our new slogan, “from Zero Tolerance to 100% Compliance”, as well as “Omela eKhaya” (Get Thirst At Home).
- The Asiphephe campaign has reinforced the Department’s enforcement programme as well as provided road safety education in schools and communities throughout the province. Community Road Safety Councils have been established throughout the province to ensure that the Department addresses road safety issues identified by the respective communities themselves.
- As part of our efforts to invariably reduce the number of road crashes, we officially launched the “KEEP LEFT, PASS RIGHT” road safety campaign recently.

- The primary purpose of this campaign is to encourage motorists to drive on the left side of the road at all times, and to use the right lane expressly when overtaking another vehicle.
- The “KEEP LEFT, PASS RIGHT” rule is not new and is one of the most basic and fundamental golden road rules.
- In conclusion, we as government will continue to do everything possible to assist the families in whatever way we can during these difficult moments.

**THANK YOU.**