

Media Statement

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Shabalala condemns tourists' attacks

Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Gabisile Shabalala has condemned the recent attacks on tourists. MEC's comments followed several cases of hijackings and robberies experienced by some visitors to the province recently.

Five attacks on tourists occurred in the last few weeks in Graskop, Hazyview and Sabie areas. There have been instances where tourists experienced hijackings and some attempted hijackings in the above mentioned tourist attraction areas.

Four of the incidents took place in Sabie and Graskop areas, while one incident happened near White River. All five attacks occurred in one week.

The robbers conducted these heinous acts by bringing cars to a halt in remote areas and robbed the occupants of valuables such as cash and bank cards.

It is believed that tourists were followed and observed while they were at certain attractions.

Furthermore, a trip that was supposed to be fun and a lifetime experience was turned into a terrific nightmare for five Mozambican nationals after they were attacked by three knife-wielding men in the Mbombela CBD.

The driver noticed a suspicious white VW Polo sedan following them. After coming to a stop at Ferreira Street, the men approached the vehicle and tried to take car keys from the driver. One of the men ordered the passengers out of the vehicle, the victim resisted and was then stabbed in the chest. He sustained superficial stab wounds. The perpetrators fled the scene immediately after the attack.

MEC Shabalala has called for an end to attacks on tourists, saying that the behaviour of these criminals impacted negatively on the economy.

She said that attacking tourists portrays the province and the country in a bad light. It also scares away potential investors.

The MEC has also called on the communities to partner with government and the police to bring an end to attacks directed at tourists.

She has also called on role players in the sector to ensure safety of their patrons at all times.

She insisted that the perpetrators of these crimes will be brought to with increased co operation among all role players.

“We must work hand in hand with communities so that we can bring to book the perpetrators that are torturing our tourists. Perpetrators should also be harshly punished,” says the MEC.

She continued and said: “Tourism plays an important role in growing the economy of the country and the creation of much needed jobs in our communities.

She added that tourism provides for the effective domestic and international marketing of the province and the country as a whole.

Issued by Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison

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