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Office Of The Premier
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KZN CABINET CONVENES TAXI VIOLENCE IMBIZO

Pietermaritzburg, 22 July 2012: The KwaZulu-Natal Government has resolved to call an urgent provincial imbizo to address on-going instability in the taxi industry.

This follows a briefing to Cabinet by the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Mr Willies Mchunu in Durban this week.

KZN Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize welcomed the report and emphasised the need to attend to this issue urgently.

“It was clear from the briefing by MEC Mchunu that urgent intervention is needed to ensure long-lasting peace and stability in the taxi industry. We cannot afford to have the taxi industry being wreaked by so much havoc. We need to engage everyone involved and make sure we stabilize the taxi industry in the best interest of commuters and the people of KwaZulu-Natal. We condemn this instability and urgent corrective measures are needed to normalize the situation” said Dr Mkhize.

Cabinet has directed the Department of Transport to work out logistical arrangements for the taxi imbizo and the Department will soon announce the details.

Mr Mchunu highlighted problems ranging from the killing of taxi operators, lawlessness in the taxi industry, conflicts over routes, power struggles over the control of associations and the increase of taxi fares.

Mchunu shared with Cabinet a number of interventions by his Department in the affected areas.

“Despite our interventions the problems persist. Our position has always been very clear - that where there are problems let’s all engage and find solutions. Violence will not resolve differences. Instead it deepens divisions and complicates the situation. We think it’s high time we looked for extra-ordinary measures to address instability in the taxi industry. We affirm our commitment to ensuring peace and stability in this sector” said Mr Mchunu.



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Some of the issues he highlighted include:

Taxi fares

The recent spate of public transport instability has been caused by taxi fare increases in a number of areas in the Province. The very latest was the area of Folweni, south of Durban, where a protester was allegedly killed by the police.

The Department of Transport has intervened and negotiations have started in this area.

“It is however important to note that taxi fares are not regulated by Government as the taxi industry is not benefiting from any Government subsidy” observed Mr Mchunu.

Stanger Taxi stoppage

The Stanger Taxi Association recently announced the stoppage of taxi operations citing operating licences as a major problem. This left commuters stranded and some walking long distances to work. The Department has now started a process of facilitating the issuing of operating licences and has agreed with the association on the way forward.

Ngwelezane and A- rank Taxi Association

The Ngwelezane and A-rank Taxi Association for months have been fighting over the route operation and this has led to both associations being asked to withdraw their services in the area. Currently the service is being provided by iKhwezi Bus service.

Mpumalanga Taxi Association

The Mpumalanga Taxi Association continues to witness killings of taxi operators.

This has been going on for a very long time and recently there has been an alarming increase in the number of operators being murdered.

“Given the above incidents and many others not mentioned here, we are of the view that an imbizo will provide an appropriate platform for all affected parties to share their views and ultimately come up with an amicable solution” said Mr Mchunu.

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