

TO ALL NEWS EDITORS

Media Release

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

ACTING TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MEC KWAZI MSHENGU COMMENDS POLICE FOR TAKING ON HEAVILY ARMED ROBBERS KILLING THREE SUSPECTS DURING SHOOTOUT

Acting KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Kwazi Mshengu has commended the swift action of police officers from the Provincial K9 Unit who pounced on a heavily armed gang of robbers and killed three suspects during a shootout in Pinetown.

Last night, police officers from the Provincial K9 Unit acted on intelligence driven information about a white Ford Ranger that was involved in a spate of armed robberies in the greater Durban area. The police officers spotted the vehicle in Pinetown and attempted to pull it over. A shoot out initiated by the suspects ensued while the suspects tried to flee. Police gave chase and the suspects eventually lost control of their vehicle and crashed into a garage on Josiah Gumede Road.

Six suspects got out of the vehicle and engaged in a gun battle with the police officers and officials from a security company who also responded. One police officer who was injured when he was struck on his arm and chest remains in a stable condition in hospital.

During the exchange of gunfire, three suspects were killed while a fourth was injured and taken to hospital. Two suspects fled the scene and a manhunt for them is still continuing. Police seized four firearms from the crime scene. A snake and traditional medicine believed to make the criminals invincible and other implements used by the gang to commit robberies was found at the scene.

MEC Mshengu has praised the efforts by the team and called on law enforcement agencies to continue closing ranks against dangerous criminals.

***"Police must be supported in the fight against dangerous and heavily armed criminals who are hell bent on terrorising citizens. We commend the efforts by the Provincial K9 Unit because police must not hesitate to defend themselves against merciless criminals. When there is exchange of fire with criminals,**

we don't want to count the bodies of police but those of criminals. Police are the only shield between criminals and innocent civilians therefore they must refuse to die in the hands of criminals with a gun in their hands. We wish the police officer who was injured during the shootout with robbers a speedy recovery," said MEC Mshengu.*

Police in Pinetown are investigating cases of attempted murder, unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition as well as inquest. Detectives are convinced that this gang will be linked to a number of recent robberies in the greater Durban area.

MEC Mshengu has appealed to anyone who may have information on the whereabouts of the two remaining suspects who fled the scene to contact the police.

ENDS

For more information contact Gugu Sisilana on 082 889 3474