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MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR ALL MEDIA

MEC HLOMUKA CONDEMNS THE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY DURING A PUBLIC PROTEST IN MNQOBOKAZI, HLUHLUWE.

KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Siphso Hlomuka has strongly condemned the torching of a luxury tourist bus from Mozambique and a delivery truck during a public protest at Mnqobokazi area, ward 1, under the Big Five Hlabisa Local Municipality on the R22, uMkhanyakude District, earlier today.

According to preliminary reports, irate community members took to the streets to vent their frustrations following a sharp surge in the number of hijackings in the route between Hluhluwe and Mhlabuyalingana. Police reports have revealed that last night a motor vehicle was hijacked in the area but fortunately it was recovered today in Manguzi.

MEC Hlomuka has strongly condemned this violent act by residents. **“We understand the frustration of our people, and we accept that they have a right to voice dis-satisfaction or unhappiness. However, that right must never infringe upon the rights of other citizens”.**

“We want to appeal to all our people in all the corners of our province that they must desist from using acts of violence to get their message across. We urge all community leaders and members to always abide by the prescripts of the law. Such acts of vandalism and anarchy will not be tolerated”, added MEC Hlomuka.

The issue of vehicle hijackings and subsequent cross-border crime has been a thorn on the side of our government. Plans to erect jersey barriers on the border between Manguzi and Mozambique has unfortunately been halted by minor technicalities. Moreover, MEC Hlomuka has assured the people of Mnqobokazi and other surroundings that government and all its stakeholders is working tirelessly to resuscitate the jersey barriers project because we believe that this will prevent these syndicates from transporting stolen goods to and from our neighbouring countries i.e., Mozambique and Swaziland.

Hlomuka has pledged to engage the provincial police top echelon about augmentation of law enforcement personnel in the area to allay fears of residents. He added that the Department of Community Safety and Liaison has deployed 38 social crime prevention volunteers as another deterrent to criminal elements in the uMkhanyakude District.

The MEC has also applauded local law enforcement for their swift response and dismissing the crowd before they could inflict more damage to property.

For more information, contact Sindiswa Hlophe on 082 045 8361 or Thando Biyela on 066 489 7373

