

Top cop warns protesters

ELFAS TORERAI

PROVINCIAL acting police commissioner Maj-Gen Ryno Naidoo warned Kokomeng residents and surrounding areas near Taung to desist from destroying property during protests.

This came after a satellite police station in the area was set alight on Monday evening.

Provincial police spokesperson, Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said: "According to information at our disposal, members of visible policing and public order police while patrolling the area noticed that the station's windowpanes were broken. They also established that one of the offices was set alight."

He said there were no police officials posted at the station at the time of the incident as the station operates from 7am to 7pm.

It is suspected that the arson was in retaliation to the arrest of nine people for public violence in the same area.

Mokgwabone said the accused, three females and six males aged between 18 and 48 are expected to appear in the Taung Magistrate's Court today.

"We cannot tolerate the destruction of property and disregard for the rule of law. What happened undermines the authority of the state. The action also denies the community much needed policing services. This is one of the areas where members of the community complained about lack of services," Maj-Gen Naidoo said.

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19/04/18 TMA Pg 7 NUSARS POS

Cop shop torched

A SATELLITE police station was set alight in Kokomeng near Taung, North West police said yesterday.

Police spokesperson Brigadier Sabata Mokgwabone said the satellite police station was torched on Monday evening. "According to information at our disposal, members of Visible Policing and Public Order Police noticed while patrolling the area that the station's windowpanes were broken. They also established that one of the offices was set alight.

"There were no police officials posted at the station at the time of the incident as the station operates between 7am and 7pm." African News Agency (ANA)

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Raids in seven policing clusters sees 225 nabbed

ELFAS TORERAI

POLICE arrested 225 people in raids conducted across seven policing clusters.

Provincial police spokesperson Lt-Col Pelonomi Makau said out of the 225 arrests, 73 were for assault GBH, 22 for assault common and 18 for common

robbery, 29 for burglary residential and business and 19 for rape.

"The other suspects were arrested for theft, armed robbery, malicious damage to property, carjacking, contravention of protection order, theft of motor vehicle, theft and many other offences. They include 62 that were arrested for crimes against women and

children," Makau said.

Klerksdorp had the highest number of arrests at 81, followed by Brits with 39. Rustenburg had 38, Mahikeng 27, Vryburg 16, Pudimoe, near Taung had 14 and 10 were arrested in Zeerust. Meanwhile, 87 other people were arrested for various offences during operation Fela II from Friday to Monday.

"In one of the arrests, a 38-year-old man was nabbed for possession of dagga on Friday. According to information received, Tactical Response Team searched the man who was hitch-hiking to Kimberley, they found seven packets of dagga with a street value of about R8 500 inside his bag," she said.

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Easter road deaths up 14%

CHANTALL PRESENCE

HUMAN error remains the number one cause of road fatalities in South Africa, contributing 89.5% to crashes on the country's roads over the Easter weekend, Transport Minister Blade Nzimande said yesterday. During a media briefing in which he presented the preliminary report into Easter weekend deaths, which the department measured between March 29 and April 9 this year, Nzimande revealed that 510 people died on the country's roads over Easter - up 14% from the 449 road deaths over the same period in 2017. The report, said the minister, also showed women were much better drivers than men.

"The preliminary report shows the main contributory factors to road fatalities are related to human behaviour with male drivers accounting for 71.1% of fatalities and females for 24.1%," he said. "In 2018, human factor contributed 89.5% to crashes, as compared to 74.3% in 2017." Pedestrian fatalities increased from 33.8% to 37.3%, while the number of drivers killed also climbed, from 20.5% in 2017 to 25.6% in 2018.

"Passengers were the only user group that experienced a significant decline, from 43% in 2017 to 35.5% this year." The number of children under four and those aged between 50 and 54 also recorded a "sharp increase". "Children between 0 and four recorded an increase from 2.6% in 2017 to 7.5% in 2018. Individuals between the ages of 50 and 54 also recorded a sharp increase, from 1.3% in 2017 to 8.4% in 2018."

The biggest increases in road deaths came from the Northern Cape, North West and Limpopo, while Mpumalanga and the Free State saw fewer fatalities. Deaths per province were: KwaZulu-Natal - 111; Gauteng - 89; Limpopo - 80; Eastern Cape - 59; Mpumalanga - 49; Western Cape - 34; North West - 34; Free State - 27; and Northern Cape - 27. Nzimande was disappointed the 10% reduction in road fatalities target was not met - African News Agency (ANA)

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Easter road deaths soar

14%: 510 FATALITIES RECORDED COMPARED WITH 449 WHO PERISHED IN 2017

→ Incidents were among poor and working class, with human error major factor - minister.

Yadhana Jadoo

Transport Minister Blade Nzimande has released a horrifying preliminary report, showing a significant rise of 14% in deaths on South Africa's roads over the Easter period. Releasing his report into fatal crashes, Nzimande said these incidents were among the poor and working class, disproportionately more than other groups, with human error playing a major factor. "This Easter there was a noticeable shift towards the rural poor

who use the roads as pedestrians," said the minister. "Key among them is that there were four major crashes that took place in rural areas. Two of them happened in KwaZulu-Natal - Greytown and Taylor's Halt - and the other two in Limpopo - Dipere village and near Mabula Lodge in the Waterfall district. "Together, these four crashes claimed 345 lives and left 26 injured. These crashes happen where they were least expected and on roads that do not normally experience a high number of fatal crashes." He said despite efforts to reduce accidents, there was still an unfortunate increase to 510 fatalities recorded from March 29 to April 9, compared with 449 who died in the same period last year. "It is very concerning that some unwarranted behaviours continued unabated and this has been ably demonstrated by the success-

ful arrests of 6 435 drivers who were caught speeding; 3 208 drivers driving unlicensed vehicles; 300 drivers without driver's licenses; 2 344 drivers without fastening seat belts; and 1 698 drivers driving vehicles with worn tires." Light motor vehicles accounted for 44.6% of the crashes, almost the same as last year, said Nzimande. "Bakkies or light delivery vehicles accounted for the second-highest number of vehicle collisions at 21.2%, minibuses were third recording a 1% decrease to 9% and buses were stable at 1.7%." Most accidents occurred on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 5pm and 8pm, despite critical routes with high accident rates being identified and traffic law enforcement intensified. The majority of crashes happened on unnamed village roads in Limpopo, as well as on the N2, N4 and the R518. "The most affected rural dis-

trict municipalities in Limpopo are Vhembe, Waterberg, Mopani and Greater Sekhukhune," said the minister. "Other affected municipalities were Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, City of Tshwane, Capricorn, Ehlanzeni, City of Joburg, City of Cape Town, Joe Gqabi, Lejweleputswa, ZF Mgcawu and Nkangala." - news@citizen.co.za

'Safe rail transport key'

Transport Minister Blade Nzimande yesterday conceded to MPs that safe rail transport for the working class was low on the list of priorities for the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa). But he vowed this would change. Nzimande said he was trying to move quickly to appoint new and "capable" boards to entities reporting to his department so critical work like ensuring safe travel for rail commuters was addressed. "I accept that we need to move with speed to appoint capable people who are going to focus on the task at hand," he said. "I want to be honest. One thing that struck me at Prasa

was that all was prioritised except the provision of safe rail transport for the working class." Nzimande last week announced the appointment of an interim board at Prasa to oversee executive operations at the embattled agency. He said several other entities, including Airports Company of South Africa, were operating with very few board members, meaning executives had little oversight over their work and "instead entities have oversight over us". "If you have that, it poses a serious risk to governance because you can't have board subcommittees as required by law." - ANA

Minister regrets Easter road deaths

TNA REPORTER

MINISTER of Transport Blade Nzimande yesterday said he was disappointed that the targeted 10% reduction in road fatalities during this year's Easter weekend was not met.

Briefing the media about the Easter accident statistics, he said they would not lose hope in reducing the carnage on South Africa's roads.

"We commit ourselves that we will not be bowed by hardship and setbacks because road crashes and fatalities are a major hindrance towards the attainment of prosperity as envisaged by our forebears.

"Road crashes rob the country of the skills and talent required to build a prosperous nation," Nzimande said.

KwaZulu-Natal topped all the provinces with a total of 111 fatalities followed by Gauteng with 89, Limpopo 80, Eastern Cape 59, Mpumalanga 49, Western Cape and North West 3, Free State and Northern Cape which had 27 fatal accidents each.

The report showed the main contributory factors to road fatalities were related to human behaviour, with male drivers accounting for 71.1% of fatalities and females for 24.1%. In 2018, human factor contributed 89.5% to the crashes as compared to the 74.3% in 2017.

"Unwarranted behaviour has been ably demonstrated by the successful arrests of 6 435 drivers who were caught speeding, 3 208 drivers driving unlicensed vehicles, 300 drivers without drivers licences, 2 344 drivers without fastening seat belts and 1 698 drivers driving vehicles with worn tires.

"Among others, the fastest speedsters

were arrested for driving at 224km/h on the N3 Hilton in KZN, followed by Free State on the N3 Warden with 208km/h, and by Gauteng on the N12 Tom Jones in Benoni at 206km/h."

Nzimande said that there were many who died on the roads over the Easter period this year and others were injured.

"On behalf of the government, I would like to send our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who died on our roads and wish those who were injured a speedy recovery at home or in hospital.

"This year we defined our Easter period differently from other years. Whereas we previously considered the Easter in narrow sense focussing only on the four days long weekend, this year we decided to align our plans with the school holidays."

The minister said those who kept a keen interest on travelling patterns would have noticed that there was a spike in volumes of vehicles on the roads on April 8 as holidaymakers returned to start preparations for the re-opening of schools.

There were also significant events that impacted on the department's plans and key among them was that there were four major crashes that took place in rural areas. Two of them happened in KwaZulu-Natal - Greytown and Taylor's Halt - and the other two in Limpopo - Dipere village and near Mabula Lodge in the Waterfall district.

Together these four crashes claimed 35 lives and left 26 people injured.

These crashes happened where they were least expected and on roads that did not normally experience a high number of fatal crashes.

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