

Calm restored in Majakaneng village after angry community's violent protest

ELFAS TORERAI

THREE roads that had been closed due to a violent community protest in Majakaneng village, near Brits, were reopened as calm was restored at the weekend.

The N4, R104 and the R566 had been closed to traffic after angry residents blockaded them and pelted passing vehicles with stones.

Residents are angry that a man alleged to have been shot by a farmer in the area has not been accounted for since August 2, when the incident happened.

Two trucks and a bakkie were burnt as the protest escalated last week.

North West police spokesperson, Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said that the situation was under control for now.

"It's been quiet since two people were arrested on Thursday and Friday and we managed to reopen all the roads to traffic on Saturday," he said.

The two men arrested are aged 38 and 40.

They were nabbed as part of a campaign to clampdown on criminal element taking advantage of the situation in Majakaneng village.

"The first suspect was arrested on Thursday while fleeing from a crime

scene in which a vehicle was set alight about 9pm at Majakaneng taxi rank.

"The other suspect was apprehended following incidents of public violence that engulfed Majakaneng since August 13.

"The incidents included pelting passing motorists with stones, barricading roads and burning two trucks as well as a bakkie," Mokgwabone said.

However, Mokgwabone said that no arrests had been made on the issue of the missing man.

"Police are still investigating the case and residents are urged to bear with us as we try to bring this issue to closure," he said.

Police in Mooinooi opened a missing person inquiry and an attempted murder case after a local farmer is alleged to have shot at three men said to have been stealing oranges on a farm.

Two men managed to escape but Tebogo Ndlovu, 24, is alleged to have been shot and has been missing since August 2.

North West police commissioner, Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane warned members of the community to refrain from criminal acts and to respect the rule of law. She said that the arrests would send a message that lawlessness would not be tolerated.

Community safety and transport management MEC Dr Mpho Motlhabane has also appealed to the community of Majakaneng to calm down and allow the police to thoroughly investigate the matter.

"We humbly request communities of Majakaneng to stay calm and allow police to do proper investigation.

"Police have confirmed that they have questioned the accused and are trying to obtain evidence that will be sufficient enough to warrant an arrest.

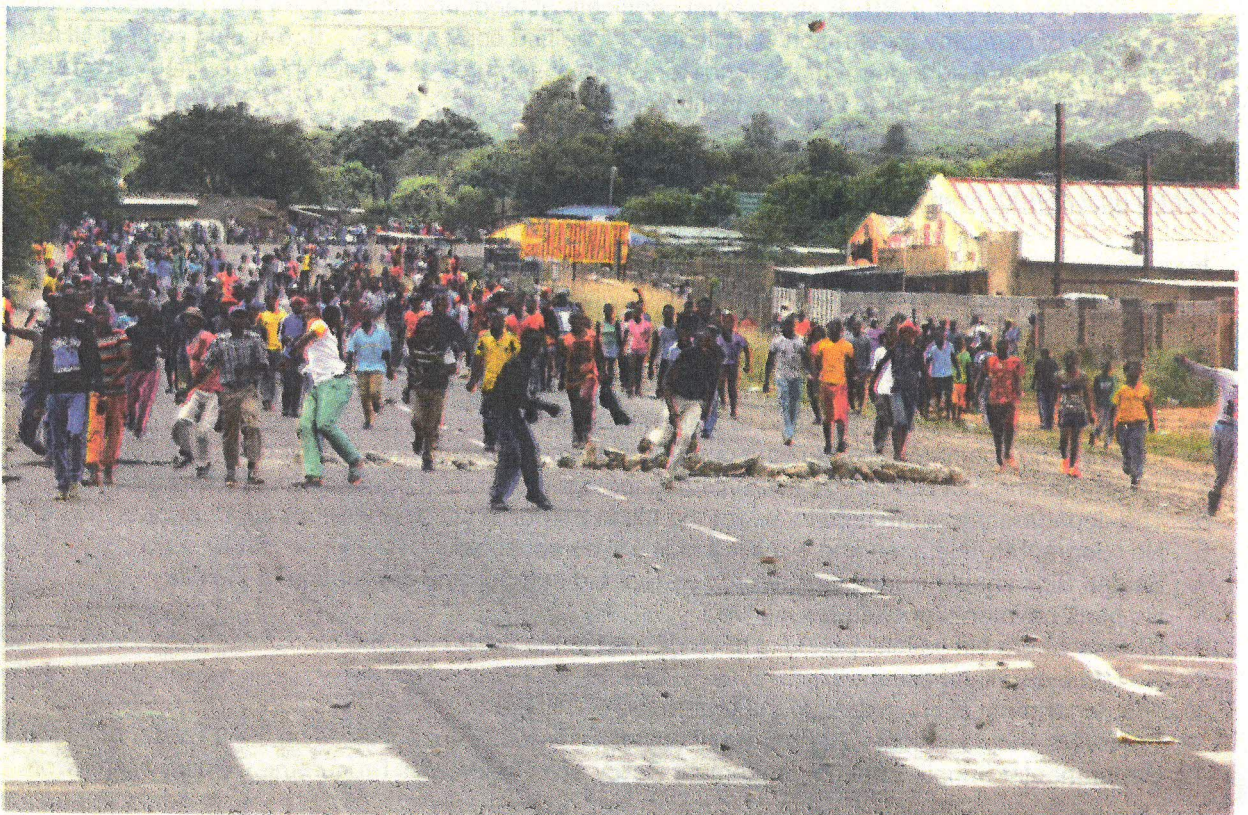
"They have searched the farm of the accused with all available resources but are hopeful that they will soon find something that will lead them to crack the investigation, but so far not enough has been found," he said.

"All we need is for communities of Majakaneng to have confidence in our South African Police Service as they will leave no stone unturned as they investigate this matter," Motlhabane said.

MEC further requested community members to assist with any information that can ease police investigations.

The two arrested people are expected to appear in the Brits Magistrate's Court today.

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UNDER CONTROL: Three roads in Majakaneng village near Brits have been reopened after violent protests last week. PICTURE: THAPELO MOREBUDI

Government clamps down on illegal transport services

21/08/17 Semphete Pg 11 DCS & TM POS

Rebaone Moeng

MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, Dr Mokgantsang Mpho Mothabane, has pleaded with residents of Bokone Bophirima to desist from making use of illegal transport services to get around.

The MEC said the department encourages communities to use authorised public transport. The culture of hiking is rife in the province, including in the capital city, Mahikeng.

Mothabane warned those operating illegal transportation without licenses that the department would conduct a special clampdown operation in order to close all hiking spots and illegal transport operations.

"We are not going to allow our people to be transported in vehicles without operating permits. These illegal operators put the lives of our people in danger and we will not allow this," he said.

He said the department has declared war on illegal and unauthorised taxi operators in Mahikeng.

"The programme is deliberately geared towards 'reclaiming of our streets and roads campaign' in line with a clear government position of repositioning, rebranding and renewal of Bokone Bophirima in general and Mahikeng in particular," explained Mothabane.

The department has recently noticed the practice of "ditlhogwana", hiking and illegal taxi operations had seemingly become a norm and somewhat prevalent. This follows mushrooming of unofficial ranks which are being operated through stubbornness, violence and aggressiveness, Mothabane said.

"This has become a road safety and passenger transport hazard and a nest for manifestation of public transport conflicts often characterised by high speed chases, passengers being harassed and taxi violence erupting. Law enforcement officials and the South African Police Service and the Taxi Conflict Unit are on the ground, working around the clock to clamp down on these illegal operations as well as closing down all unofficial ranks established around Mahikeng, such as the one operating near the Caltex filling station in town, Cookes Lake gates and Bophelong turn-off near Danville en route to Lichtenburg," he said.

Other unofficial ranks are operated near Mahikeng Primary and Secondary schools and the stadium, as well as outside the Sasol filling station at Riviera



MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management Dr Mpho Mothabane is on a mission to stop unlicensed transport services

Park en route to Zeerust, the N18 road and near the Stad village robots opposite the Airport road junction along the Vryburg road.

"My office is worried about sporadic taxi conflicts in general and we are monitoring and intervening in all reported cases. We cannot afford another

simmering tension affecting the public transport system, especially the taxi industry which we could face, if not careful. We are not going to fold our arms and do nothing.

"We will not shy away from being tough on those illegal public transport, hiking lords and pirates using seven to nine seater Toyota Avanzas, bakkies, Versos and unauthorised normal taxis. We are going to impound these vehicles and slap owners with heavy traffic fines. We are also contemplating amending the law to ensure that all second time offenders have their vehicles impounded. Such vehicles should only be returned after legal processes are finalized in favour of the operator, otherwise the car should be ceded to the state," said the MEC.

Mothabane said government could not allow a state of lawlessness and deliberate paralysis to take place. He said illegal transport operations must stop and people should make applications to the department through proper channels if they want to operate public transport businesses. The MEC said no one would be allowed to wake up and operate an illegal taxi service.

This clampdown campaigns started in mid-July and will continue until those hiking spots are closed permanently.

21/08/17 TNA Pg1 MWSAPS
POS

Man appears for double murder

ELFAS TORERAI

A MAN who allegedly stabbed and killed two people in Mmakau village will appear on a double murder charge in the Brits Magistrate's Court today.

The man, whose age was not specified, allegedly attacked the victims, aged 45 and 48, on Friday.

The deceased were attacked after they were apparently seen leaving the room where the accused's girlfriend stayed.

North West police spokesperson, Sgt Kelebogile Moleko said: "According to information received, the suspect went to his former girlfriend's place at Tshwara section, Mmakau.

"He knocked on the door and ultimately sat down outside the shack after failing to get a response.

"Three men came out of the shack a while later. The suspect stabbed one of them with a knife. He then chased the other two and managed to catch and stab one of them with a knife," she said.

Moleko said the first victim was certified dead on the scene while the other was taken to hospital where he later died.

"Police were notified of the incident and acted swiftly to arrest the suspect," she said.

Provincial police commissioner Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane condemned the incident and urged the peaceful resolution of disputes.

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21/08/17 PRETORIA NEWS
Pg2 MWSAPS POS

Girlfriend killer jailed

OLEBOGENG Magara, 33, has been sentenced in the Kuruman Regional Court to 20 years' imprisonment for murdering his 40-year-old ex-girlfriend.

Magara was at a tavern at Batlharos village near Kuruman on December 19, 2016, when he saw his ex-girlfriend speaking to another man, police said.

"He attacked the victim, asking her why was she speaking to other men in front of him. He stabbed her with a sharp object. The victim tried to run away but collapsed. Magara assaulted the victim's friend who tried to go get help. Magara had a pending case of assaulting the victim he killed. - ANA

21/08/17 TNA Pg3

Heavy sentences for rape accused

ELFAS TORERAI

THREE men were sentenced to a combined 62 years imprisonment after they were convicted of rape in two separate cases.

The Klerksdorp Regional Court handed down the sentences on Friday to the delight of North West police commissioner Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane.

In the first case Joseph Dlomo, 19, and Johannes Moabi, 21 were each sentenced to 22 years imprisonment for raping a 27-year-old woman.

North West police spokesperson Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said the two attacked the victim on December 29, 2013.

The accused forced a woman into his house and raped her several times during the night. The woman was allowed to go home the following day

"The woman was on her way home when she was approached by the two accused who dragged her to a nearby house, threatened her with a knife and raped her. The accused also robbed the woman of her money and a cellphone. The matter was reported to the police in Kanana and through a comprehensive investigation both the accused were traced and arrested," he said.

In the second case, Tebogo Sibondo, 23, was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for raping a 20-year-old woman on January 26 last year.

The incident happened in Jouberton township near Klerksdorp.

"The accused forced a woman into his house and raped her several times during the night. The woman was allowed to go home the following day. The matter was reported to the police in Jouberton who traced and arrested the suspect," Mokgwabone said.

Motswenyane applauded the officers who worked on the two cases and vowed that more would be done to bring criminals to book.

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Deputy Minister for Transport Sindisiwe Chikunga and MEC for Public Safety and Transport Management, Dr Mpho Motlhabane launched Provincial chapter of the South African Network for Women in Transport (SANWIT) in Mmabana Taung. Photos: Mpho Bilwane

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Deputy Minister Chikunga launches SANWIT in Bokone Bophirima

Obakeng Maje

Deputy Minister of Transport, Sindisiwe Chikunga, launched the South African Network for Women in Transport (SANWIT) provincial structure of Bokone Bophirima at Mmabana Taung, on Monday.

Chikunga said women empowerment has always been a necessity and was made more urgent by the consistent and persistent calls for radical economic transformation.

"SANWIT was established in 2008 with the main objective of encouraging women to enter and succeed in the transport industry through facilitating enterprise development, networking and supporting women for success and growth, negotiating on behalf of members for wealth generation and lobbying and advocating for policy environment that will support and enable the sustainability of women enterprise.

"We came here to launch the provincial chapter in North West province. This was agreed upon during SANWIT summit in 2015. We acknowledge that women are faced with many challenges within the sector. However, we also reckon that there are successful stories too. The transport sector is male-dominated

hence the policies say we need to bring women on board," Chikunga said.

She added that there are many opportunities for women to be explored. Chikunga said women should take advantage of the opportunities and added that government would continue to transform the sector.

"We want to bring women on board into the transport sector and that has to happen. We will also support female-owned companies than those owned by men. The transport department will work together with provincial government to ensure that they support its provincial structure. We have agreed with MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, Dr Mpho Motlhabane, that there must be a person responsible for liaising with the provincial leadership to ensure efficient communication between the two," said Chikunga.

She added: "The department has a national structure for SANWIT and we are also working together to increase good performance between our department and their structure. We also have our action plan that was adopted during our summit in 2015. That should be implemented by the leadership that is here too".

The Deputy Minister also said state-owned companies will also come on board to ensure that SANWIT is efficient.

"Small Micro-Medium Enterprises (SM-EMEs) are the backbone of the economy. One of the SANWIT objectives is to support and provide mentorship with all those who have businesses in the transport sector. Women will be considered in particular because the industry has been dominated by males forever. We believe that now is the time for them to give women space. We have set aside a budget for youth and women businesses," she said.

MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, Dr Mpho Motlhabane, said SANWIT needs to benefit women and get them more organised and exposed to opportunities that are available in government and private sector.

"Our department will expose them to opportunities that exist in the transport industry. Remember that 50% of our population in South Africa is women. So, when women benefit economically, it means we will achieve our goal of radical economic transformation. It is an opportunity moment for women to make their mark. When you empower women, you empower the better part of the society," Motlhabane said.

Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti District Municipality mayor, Boitumelo Mahlangu, had this to say: "We have not done well in communicating with our communities so that they understand the oppor-

tunities that are available for them with government. The initiative is part of service delivery that will improve the lives of the masses, especially women.

"This is a rare moment that has been created by the ANC-led government to empower women. They are also able to enter the transport industry and we encourage them to come and take advantage of available opportunities. We do not expect the provincial structure to educate and disseminate the message to those who do not know," Mahlangu said.

Naledi Kopanang Basadi cooperative member, Beauty Andraese, from Vryburg said she welcomed the opportunity presented to women in transport by government.

"I am running a scholar transport business and I believe that the initiative will benefit us all as women. The field has been saturated by males and we need to find our craft within the transport industry," Andraese.

Mayde Ngobeni from Remoratile Holdings PTY (LTD) in Bojanala district was equally impressed with the many opportunities made available for women.

"We support women empowerment initiatives because we are the most vulnerable group within the society. The burden that is carried by women is unbearable, that's why many opportunities must come our way," she said.