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Traffic officer attacked by motorist

Manthi thought of his kids during assault

By **Boltumelo Tshelie**

A North West traffic officer who was attacked by a motorist and insulted by a passenger said the incident had

traumatized him.

This was after a video went viral on social media showing a motorist attacking the officer who was also sworn at.

The incident happened on

Sunday.

"I am shivering. I am traumatised and I am not feeling well. I am now having flashbacks of what happened," Johannes Manthi said.

Manthi, 47, said he stopped the motorist for overtaking over the barrier line.

"I asked him to give me his physical address [and] he refused. I told him that I was not going to let go of his driving licence until he [complied]."

Manthi, who was working with two female traffic officers at the time, said the man then started beating and swearing at him. He said he could not react and that his focus was on the driver's licence.

"I was not thinking of any other thing. I said to myself if he beats me up, let it be. The law will take its course because I did not provoke him. I was just asking for his residential address."

"I thought about my four children and family and I thanked God that I was not seriously injured."

Manthi, who has worked for the traffic department for 25 years, said it was the first time he had been attacked. "I heard



Traffic officer Johannes Manthi. / SUPPLIED

stories of my colleagues being attacked, but never thought it could happen to me."

Yesterday, he saw a doctor for treatment.

North West community safety and transport management spokesman Thabo Sematle condemned the incident.

"We are disturbed by the violence and aggression against an innocent officer," he said, adding such attacks were escalating in the province.

North West police spokeswoman Pelonomi Makau said the two suspects, a 32-year-old man and 26-year-old woman, were arrested and charged with crimen injuria and failure to comply with a traffic official.

The two will apply for bail tomorrow in the Potchefstroom Magistrate's Court.

13/12/17 TNA Pg 3 DCS & TM NEUTRAL
Motorist threatens to cut off traffic officer's manhood

OBAKENG MAJE

A NORTH West traffic officer was assaulted by a motorist who threatened to cut off his manhood in an incident caught on video.

The officer, Johannes Manthi, 47, said he felt disrespected and humiliated by a motorist who attacked him on Sunday between Potchefstroom and Johannesburg on the N12 Road. Manthi said he was on duty with his female colleague 12km outside Potchefstroom when the incident happened.

"I stopped the motorist, who was driving a Yaris vehicle, after he overtook another vehicle on the barrier line," Manthi said. "I gave him a fine for breaking the law. However, all hell broke loose when I requested a physical address from him."

"Sabata Kortman gave me a postal address instead, but I politely explained to him that I needed a physical address. Kortman failed to cooperate and hurled insults at me. He demanded his driver's licence back but I refused. He manhandled and assaulted me after I refused to hand over his licence."

A 47-year-old man is living with a disability after being involved in a horrible car accident back in 2013. Manthi said

he lost a limb during the accident and being attacked in public, especially by a motorist, was absurd and distasteful.

"The area is one of the high risk areas and more than 55% of accidents take place here. So being attacked for doing my job is disgusting. We are here to assist and render our services to all road users. Traffic officers also provide safe and timely response to accidents."

"We liaise with emergency services where necessary and relieve congestion as soon as possible."

So this incident will not deter my spirits and I am looking forward to working with cooperative motorists on the roads during the festive season," he said.

The police said two people were arrested regarding the incident. Provincial police spokesperson Col Pelonomi Makau said the suspects appeared at the Potchefstroom Magistrate's Court on Monday.

"Two people were arrested and appeared in court after they allegedly assaulted a traffic officer," Makau said. "Sabata Kortman, 32 and his younger sister, Ntswaki Kortman, 26, were denied bail and remanded in custody. The suspects were charged with crimen injuria and failure to comply with

a traffic official.

"They will be back in court tomorrow for a formal bail application."

We urge all road users to cooperate and obey the rules and regulations of the roads. They must also comply when stopped by traffic and police officials."

Meanwhile, community safety and transport management MEC Mpho Motlhabane will officially roll out the festive road safety operations and the SAPS When Duty Calls campaigns at Alabama stadium in Klerksdorp on Wednesday. Motlhabane said the initiative aims at creating a crime and incident free festive season.

"We will also welcome 20 newly recruited traffic officers who recently completed their 12-month road safety traffic management course at the Traffic Training College in Mpumalanga."

"Rolling out this year's festive season plan to send a stern warning to those who find themselves on the wrong side of the law."

"The new officers will assume their duties in different traffic stations across the province. We will further respond on the circulating video of the officer who was allegedly assaulted," he said.

- Newsnote



MANNING UP: A traffic officer was attacked and threatened by a motorist after the driver was fined for a driving violation. PICTURE: SABC

13/12/17 TNA Pgs NWSAPS POS

Clampdown shows results

Police intensify festive season operation back to basics with weekend arrests, give tips to improve safety for holidaymakers and revellers

ELFAS TORERAI

POLICE in North West arrested 150 people across the province in operations conducted at the weekend.

The festive season operations are meant to reduce crime at this time of the year when people are traveling and celebrating the end of the year.

North West police spokesperson Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said crime would be fought with everything at the police's disposal.

"As we approach another festive season, the police in the province have strengthened the fight against criminality. This became evident when a total of 150 suspects were nabbed for various offences during crime intelligence driven operations held between Friday and Monday," he said.

He said the 150 accused were arrested for contact crimes, property related crimes and other offences.

"Of this number, 16 were arrested in Rustenburg, 47 in Brits, 18 in Mahikeng, 46 in Klerksdorp, while a total of 23 were nabbed in Zeerust, Vryburg and Pudimoe clusters.

"Since the launch of the operation in October, the following substantial goods were seized during various operations: 21 motor vehicles and parts, 13 firearms, 114 units of ammunition, 48 dangerous weapons, liquor, dagga as well as various other drugs," he said.

Mokgwabone said the majority of the arrests were made as a result of



INTENSIFYING OPERATIONS: North West police have embarked on a back to basics approach to raise awareness and combat crime this festive season.

police actions and included drug related crimes, driving under the influence and illegal possession of firearms and ammunition.

The operations also led to the issuing of 2445 fines for contravention of liquor laws, traffic infractions and other offences.

North West police commissioner, Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane applauded

the good work done by SAPS since the beginning of the operation two months ago.

She said the police would continue to intensify the work done throughout the year to raise a sense of awareness, public/private partnership and a holistic approach to combatting crime as another phase of operation back to basics: safer festive season 2017-18 is approached.

Motswenyane further said the seizing of firearms was an indication the police were firm about the fight against aggravated robberies and other serious crimes.

In order to improve community safety, residents are urged to cooperate with the police to keep criminals at bay.

Police have given the following tips for when you are at home:

- Make provision for good outside lighting. Remember, outside lights that are on during the day draw the attention of thieves.

- Always check the identity of strangers who visit for business purposes to do deliveries or repairs.

- If you know that you will be away for a longer period, do not leave your house unattended, rather leave another person

to take care of it or report your absence to the police so that they can make turns at your place during patrols.

Safety in your car:

- Your safety is strongly dependent upon you, no matter where you are visiting. Always know where you are going.

- Do not drink and drive, avoid speeding by leaving on time from your departure point.

- Never pick up strangers and do not stop along the road in deserted areas.

- Do not use your cellphone while driving, unless you have a hands-free kit.

- Never display your valuables in the car, rather lock them in the boot.

Street Safety:

- Plan your route beforehand

- Do not drink and walk on or along the road.

- If possible, avoid walking alone. Your best defence is having other people nearby.

- If you walk alone, plan your route carefully and stay in well-lit areas as much as possible, especially at night.

- It is advisable not to carry large sums of money around, rather use your bank cards to do transactions.

ATM Safety:

- Always protect your pin by shielding the hand that is typing.

- Never accept help or ask anyone to assist you in the ATM.

- Avoid isolated ATMs and using them late at night.

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Cash heist looting trial of seven men postponed to Feb

ELFAS TORERAI

SEVEN men from Monakato village near Rustenburg will appear in court on February 1 after they were arrested for allegedly looting money after a cash-in-transit in their area.

The men appeared in court this week facing charges of obstructing and/or defeating the ends of justice and theft of cash.

Since their arrest in September, the men have been out of custody on warning.

The seven were part of a group of people caught on video grabbing notes that were strewn all over the road after a cash-in-transit vehicle was blown up.

Thugs who blew up the vehicle are still at large but police investigations are ongoing.

Allegations are that an unidentified number of people ambushed a cash-in-transit vehicle that was travelling on the Thabazimbi-Rustenburg road and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash.

North West police spokesperson, Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said: "The suspects blew the back portion of the van with explosives and managed to get away with an undisclosed amount of money."

The seven were part of a group caught on video grabbing notes that were strewn all over the road after several thugs, who are still at large blew up a cash-in-transit van

"No arrests have been made at this stage," he said.

Mokgwabone said provincial police management wants to condemn the behaviour of people who went to the scene and

picked some of the notes.

"What residents in the video did was to contaminate the crime scene. This makes it difficult for the police to do their work and may actually lead to us failing to get to the suspects," he said.

Mokgwabone said police expect residents to work with the police in cases of this nature and not to be on the side of thugs.

"They also endangered their lives because there could have been explosives that were not detonated. As police, we are considering taking action against those found to have been involved," he said.

Mokgwabone said video footage helped police identify the arrested suspects.

Subsequent to the looting, an investigation was launched regarding the suspects who committed the robbery as well as those who stole cash from the vehicle and in the process trampled the crime scene which is considered to be "holy ground" and needs to be preserved at all times.

The investigation led to apprehension of seven suspects aged between 20 and 58 and their case is heard by the Bakokeng Magistrate's Court.

North West police commissioner Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane urged members of the community not to tamper with crime scenes but to preserve them for processing by the police.

She also informed members of the community about the significance of a crime scene. "Evidence collected and analysed at the scene of a crime can make or break a case," she said.

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STOP AND GO: As the festive season nears, motorists should brace themselves for more roadblocks, during which inspection of vehicles and licences will be done, and motorists will be checked for drunk driving. PICTURE: ANTOINE DE RAS

More testing of motorists for drunk driving urged

SIHLE MANDA
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AS THE festive season fast approaches, so does the dreaded period of mass road fatalities.

To tackle the scourge, traffic authorities and a safety advocate have called for caution.

The Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) yesterday said it would be increasing visibility and roadblocks on the country's major routes.

"During this time we'll address the issues of pedestrians, reckless driving and driving under the influence of alcohol," spokesperson Simon Zwane said. "This time, we'll also deal with fatigued drivers."

Special attention would be paid to national routes between the Western Cape and Eastern Cape; between Gauteng and the Eastern Cape and Durban; and routes heading to northern parts

of the country.

Asked if enough was being done to curb fatalities, Zwane said several arrests had been made and convictions secured.

Caró Smit, the director of South Africans Against Drunk Driving, said a lot needed to be changed in the system if the government was to successfully tackle road fatalities.

"We feel there should be much more testing done on drivers," she said. "Every single traffic officer and every police vehicle should have a breathalyser in it. Currently, they don't. Drivers are not tested enough."

She added that courts needed to secure many more convictions in order to send out a strong message.

"The conviction rate should be much higher. The police and traffic officers need to do their paperwork better so that these convictions stand out in

court. Every person found guilty should have their licence suspended, which is allowed," Smit said. "It needs to be seen as the serious crime it is."

Added to this was that paperwork was done badly.

"The other thing is that cases take a long time to get to court, and if they get there, they are struck off the roll. What we need is the evidential breathalyser - which is now legal again. It's being used in the Western Cape but needs to be used throughout the country, so that when people appear in court they can be convicted there and then because the results are accurate," she said.

The Road Accident Fund (RAF) yesterday said 1 120 more people died on the roads in 2016 than in 2015. This was a 9% increase, "and the figures may increase in 2017".

Despite this, the RAF said,

road users persisted in disobeying rules. These included not using seatbelts for their children; texting while driving; walking drunk on the side of the road; refusing to take two-hourly rest breaks during a long trip; and speeding in order to pick up the next taxi load of passengers.

RAF chief marketing officer Phumelela Dhlomo said the fund had launched an education campaign to address the scourge.

"This campaign appeals to people's emotions. We are saying to road users, 'just remember all these people who have died in road tragedies'. Each and every person knows someone who has passed on in the road - be it they were pedestrians, drivers or passengers. We need to remember those people and also ensure that that doesn't just end there. We should then change our behaviour on the road."

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