

Cops ready to take fight to cash-in-transit criminals, Cele warns

MAYIBONGWE MAQHINA

POLICE Minister Bheki Cele says the cops will not lose momentum to tackle cash-in-transit (CIT) heists as they pull together to keep South Africa safe.

"We are going to turn things around. South Africans are going to be safe. We have started. We are not going to let the momentum go down," Cele said.

He made the statements when stakeholders in the CIT industry appeared before the police portfolio committee in Parliament yesterday.

The meeting, called in the wake of an increase in CIT heists, was aimed at looking at measures to tackle the crime.

Reports presented at the meeting showed that 152 CIT heists, involving R114 million, took place this year, which was more than the overall 136 estimated at R61m last year.

There were 81 incidents between April and May - with Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng and North West identified as hotspots - with 25 suspects arrested.

"Police are working hard. We have unleashed everybody on the streets - the Special Task Force, the National Intervention Unit, the Tactical Response Unit - so everybody has been unleashed," he said.

Cele also said police had in their last three operations been proactive and arrested suspects before they could commit acts of crimes.

"Even the intelligence is getting there. We have always been responding and reacting. We move ahead now," Cele said.

"We are quite comfortable if we keep where we are and improve now. South Africa will be fine," he said.

Cele said the spike in cash vehicle robberies had really pushed the police, compelling them to buy high-powered vehicles to respond to the crime, often carried out by criminals armed with high-powered weapons.

"They are real performance cars put on the road for quick response. Most of them will be unmarked."

He was confident that things would change for the better in the police service after the revitalisation of crime intelligence and the Hawks.

National police commissioner Khehla Sitole said the police were close to bringing crime under control.

He said they had a multidisciplinary strategy which involved every stakeholder, as well as chasing the suspects throughout the corners of the country.

"Maybe criminals had better opt for other countries and cross the borders," he said. "There is willingness among all parties to share one common vision and fight the enemy."

The head of the Hawks, Godfrey Lebeya, said they would fight the granting of bail to CIT suspects.

"The instruction is that all suspects arrested for cash-in-transit heists, we will oppose bail," he said.

"There are other feeder crimes to it," he said, adding that they would deal with corruption within the SA Police Service and cash-in-transit industry.

Sitole said resources had moved to the grassroots level to fight crime where it took place. "That is where we need maximum resources."

The Star, Pg 3, 14/06/18 Neutral

MEC Motlhabane tackles illegal hiking spots and illegal taxi operations

The Mail, Page 5, 14/06/18, Positive

MAHIKENG MAIL-MAHIKENG: The MEC for the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management Dr Mpho Motlhabane together with the law enforcement officers woke up on the break of dawn recently to tackle this phenomenon of illegal hiking spots and illegal taxi's operation head-on on the N12 Wolmaranstad, along R504 Ottosdal, R503 Lichtenburg and N18 Mahikeng. These operations were intended to ensure that those who are taking part in the transport industry do abide by the laws of the country at all cost. Those who are operating public transport are all expected to have made the necessary applications, registered their vehicles accordingly, have received relevant permits and operating public transport legally and lawfully and the process is not negotiable. During the operations; 26 taxis, Toyota Avanza, Hyundai H1, Toyota Condo and Toyota Noah were impounded, one arrest for drunken driving, and 1 arrest for a fraudulent permit to operate scholar transport and fines were issued out to motorist for operating without required permits. The MEC Dr Mpho Motlhabane visited the taxi ranks to engage with the Executive Leadership of the respective Taxi Associations to listen to their concerns and complains which included illegal public taxi operations, illegal hiking spots, illegal permits, drivers who are operating without licenses and potential conflicts as well as simmering tensions in the industry. He was pleased with its success.



Mahikeng Airport's contract with SA Express a "smokescreen for money laundering" - DA

by Joe McGlulwa - DA North West Provincial Leader

MAHIKENG MAIL-MAHIKENG: It is with great shock that the Democratic Alliance in North West learned about the allegations of corruption and misuse of the people's money, linked to SA Express airline, former Premier, Supra Mahumapelo and the Department of Community Safety and Transport.

It has been reported in the media that SA Express obtained a contract from the North West Provincial Government under the guise of economic development. In accordance with this agreement, a whopping R100 000 per passenger had been subsidized by the Department of Community Safety and Transport.

The DA believes that these subsidies had shamelessly been used as a mechanism for looting the public purse to the tune of over R400 million.

This information was revealed after a whistleblower, who was granted a small contract, had witnessed over R51 million moving through her account, turning her into a conduit of money-laundering. The DA maintains that if found guilty, former Premier Supra Mahumapelo, along

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with all SA Express executives and Department of Community Safety and Transport officials involved in this fraudulent scheme, must be prosecuted and imprisoned.

The DA further reiterates that this is political patronage at its worst. Fruitless and wasteful expenditure within the North West Province has escalated from R2 billion to a whopping R13.2 billion in just one year under former Premier Supra Mahumapelo's watch. The bleeding North West deserves better. The DA will be approaching the office of the Public Protector to ensure that justice prevails.

The DA will continue to address the plight of the poor by keeping criminals in the public sector accountable.