

SA Express grounding big blow for passengers

Hyro-Voice P8 OCS & TM neg 29/5/18

ELFAS TORERAI

THE grounding of SA Express flights has affected passengers travelling between Mahikeng and Johannesburg.

The South African Civil Aviation Authority cited compliance and safety issues when it cancelled operating the licences for SA Express and other small airlines.

The North West provincial government provides a R41m annual subsidy to SA Express in return for three flights a week between Mahikeng and Johannesburg and between Pilanesberg and OR Tambo International Airport.

A local entrepreneur, who preferred not to be named, said: "This is a big blow to Mahikeng. Our skies need flights and we were relieved the journey to Johannesburg had been made easier. However, we are back to nothing again."

Community safety and transport

management spokesperson Thabo Sematle confirmed that flights to the province had been cancelled.

"The department is yet to get a full brief on what the compliance and safety issues are that led to the suspension of operations at SA Express," he said.

The move is seen as a big dent for airports that were recently refurbished to accommodate passenger flights.

"We really feel the heat because it costs money to upgrade airports. Our hope is that we will get more information on where there is a need to upgrade our facilities," Sematle said.

The passenger flights between the provincial capital and Johannesburg started in 2015.

In the first year, only 9 508 passengers used the route but the number grew to 15 712 in the 2017-18 financial year.

elfast@thenewage.co.za

Cop spies 'forced into crime'

29/05/18 - The Citizen - Pg 3 - Mirror Police - Neutral

EXPERT: THEY'RE CHARGED BECAUSE THEY INFILTRATED CRIMINAL GROUPS

» But 1 449 Saps members had records, including major crimes, says DA.

Sinnikwe Hlatshane

Crime intelligence officers are often forced to commit crimes and get prosecuted for them in the course of their work, according to police boss and crime intelligence expert Mpho Kwinika.

Kwinika was responding to Police Minister Bheki Cele's parliamentary answer, stating that 27 crime intelligence officers had criminal records - seven of which were listed as serious crimes. This was in response to a question posed by the DA's Dianne Kohler Barnard.

"Honestly speaking, crimes

committed by crime intelligence officers are mostly because, if you get exposed while working undercover, you have to go through certain processes," said Kwinika.

"For instance, they will charge you because you infiltrated a criminal group. They must go through the same process as the criminals involved.

"Remember Captain KGB Tshabalala? He was too afraid to tell police he was in the line of duty when they arrested him, because when these people find out you were a cop the whole time, they go after your family. The minister is not obliged to say publicly what the nature of these crimes are, if they involved police work."

Former crime intelligence officer Morris "Captain KGB" Tshabalala has been charged, convicted and accused of a slew of serious crimes in his three-decade ca-

reer. While he was never charged for his alleged involvement in an OR Tambo International Airport cash heist, he was convicted of robbery and given a 10-year sentence.

"Since 2012, according to official records, only 1% out of thousands of cases reported to the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid), have led to a criminal prosecution," Kwinika said.

Kohler Barnard argued, however, such criminals would not be on the Saps record, because their identity would still be protected.

The Saps Act stipulates an application can be made to a judge if an officer has committed a crime as part of intelligence gathering - but this can only happen after they have been charged and found guilty, said Kwinika.

Earlier this year, Cele told par-

liament processes were under way to remove 57 police officers from the system, who had criminal records or cases against them. In some instances, officers obtained criminal convictions while in the system.

Kohler Barnard said Cele's answer was not enough. She wanted the exact details of those crimes, what rank those officers had and when the crimes were committed.

"A number of those crimes were traffic fines, but seven of them were serious crimes. In fact 1 449 Saps members had criminal records. They included major crimes from rape and murder, to bigamy and armed robbery, and there could be someone from that list in crime intelligence. I am really not happy with the answer."

She said she had faith that the new crime intelligence head, Major General Pieter Jacobs, would tackle the issues facing the unit, including the alleged influence of Zuma-era strongmen.

- sinnikweh@citizen.co.za



Hell breaks loose as inmates attack pupils

Sowetan 29/05/18 - pg 8 - negative - NWSAPS

School invited the 16 detainees

By **Boitumelo Tshenie**
North West Correspondent

Classes at a North West school have been suspended after pupils were attacked and injured by a group of juvenile inmates who accused the learners of being drug addicts.

The incident at Tshepagalang Secondary School in Letlhabile, Brits, on Thursday last week apparently lasted for about five hours.

Police had to use pepper spray to disperse pupils who were retaliating after they were attacked by the 16 inmates from Bosasa security centre, about 60km away.

Seven pupils were injured and were taken to a local hospital for minor injuries.

The centre houses youngsters who are awaiting trial.

The incident has left the parents of the pupils puzzled and fuming over the logic behind sending young crime suspects to their children's school without their knowledge.

The parents have called for the authorities to take appropriate disciplinary measures against the teachers who invited the detainees to the school.

Sowetan gathered yesterday that the juvenile inmates were invited by teachers to motivate the pupils against drug abuse.

The pupils said prisoners locked the gate behind after entering the school yard, and ordered the pupils to head to the school hall.

The pupils said the inmates were angry because some of the learners were not wearing school uniform.

"They asked us why we were not in our school uniform and also asked us why

some of us had dark lips, which they say was the sign that we smoke drugs.

"They started attacking us and some of them were armed with knives," one of the pupils told Sowetan yesterday.

"They told us that they are beating us because we looked like troublesome children. They said they will not tolerate troublesome pupils. Most of these prisoners are of our age."

The pupils claimed the teachers did nothing to protect them from the assault.

"Our teachers instead locked the door of the hall as we tried to escape. The beating lasted for about five hours and some of the learners were injured," explained the pupil.

One of the pupils called the police after their ordeal. However, the police arrival worsened the situation, the pupils alleged.

"The police accused us of provoking the prisoners. They were clearly protecting those criminals and they used pepper spray to disperse us. We were forced to defend ourselves and used the knives to

the tyres of the police van. It was a sad day for us, very disappointing that the whole thing happened at the school premises.

"It is also unfortunate that our own teachers did nothing to protect us from those criminals. We are traumatised and want answers from the school management. Whoever invited these criminals should be punished."

Yesterday, pupils were told to go back home and they missed their crucial mid-year exams.

The school management, members of school governing body, parents and officials from the provincial department of education are expected to discuss the matter

on Thursday.

A Grade 9 pupil, John Monakali, said his arm was broken.

"He [a prisoner] told me he was beating me for wearing black jeans instead of school greys [trousers]. He kicked me hard and I hit a steel pole," Monakali said.

His angry aunt, Linda Monakali, said: "I took him to school and left him under their [teachers'] protection. They failed my nephew and I want them to pay."

Congress of South African Students president John Macheke said the school must account for the incident.

The spokeswoman for the police, Amanda Funani, denied that police used pepper spray on pupils.

Petrus Siko, the Social Development spokesman, said Bosasa managed the detention centre on behalf of the department.

"We are aware that it has an outreach programme. We are investigating what actually happened and whether laws were broken."

Our teachers locked the door of the hall



Some of the pupils from Tshepagalang Secondary School who were assaulted by young prisoners after accusing them of using drugs at school.

/TIRO
RAMATLHATSE