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Police officers rewarded for hard work and excellence

TNA REPORTER

NORTH West police officers will be honoured this week for their hard work, excellence and dedication.

Provincial police said the aim of the annual service excellence awards and medal parade which will be hosted by North West police commissioner Lt-Gen Baile Motswenyane was to provide

support to officers and honour their efforts.

"It also provides managers with a mechanism to facilitate an improvement in employee morale and institutionalise a culture of positive behaviour and innovation in service delivery in the financial year 2016-17," police spokesperson Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said.

Provincial community safety and

transport management MEC Mpho Motlhabane will deliver the main address at the event which will take place at Brits Sports Ground in the North-West tomorrow.

Mokgwabone said police officers in different categories will be honoured. "The service excellence awards will be preceded by a medal parade wherein about 130 police members will receive

30 years faithful service and centenary medals.

"SAPS employees in the province will be awarded in different categories including the sportswoman and sportsman of the year," Mokgwabone said.

During the police national excellence awards in January this year, Brits police station was named the best station of

the year in the country.

Brits station commander Brig Ellen Emmanuel said police officers based at the station were encouraged to come up with ideas that would assist in reducing crimes in communities.

The station was able to reduce serious crimes by more than 10%. The station made more than 3 000 arrests.

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MY RAPIST'S A FREE MAN!

Woman beaten, raped in tavern toilet

By KARABO RAMMUTLA
SHE had gone out to have some fun but it turned into a nightmare when she was raped by a mute man.

To add to her horror, her alleged attacker is still walking the streets. That's allegedly because police have yet to find a sign language interpreter to read him his rights before he is arrested!

The 28-year-old woman from Jakkalsdams Village in Winterveld said her nightmare started when she went to an outside toilet to relieve herself at a local tavern early in September.

She said the man grabbed her and dragged her to the toilets in full view of other patrons.

"I screamed but people just looked and did nothing," she said.

She said when they reached the toilet, the man started beating her. "He forced me to undress and threatened to hit me with a brick."

The man communicated with her by using sign language.

"After he raped me, he started crying and apologised, but I walked out."

She said she was afraid the man might rape her again or someone else as he was still roaming the streets.

"We work at the same mall. Every time I see him, he waves at me. He can see that there are no consequences for what he did and he might do it again."

North West police spokesman Colonel Sabata Mokgwabone said a case of rape was opened. He didn't say why the suspect hadn't been arrested.



This 28-year-old woman is afraid that the man who raped her might try again. Photo by Samson Ratswana

GANG KILLED MY TSOTSI SON!



Diana Moremi is still in shock after the death of her son, Tshediso. Photo by Samson Ratswaga

By KARABO RAMMUTLA
DIANA Moremi (54) knew her son Tshediso was troublesome.

The 28-year-old smoked nyope and stole from community members and his family.

Diana claimed a local businessman her son had stolen from warned her to reprimand him or he would hand him over to the Russians, a

group of local hitmen. "I told him I'd tried everything but nothing worked," said Diana.

She said she was home last Sunday when she learnt from a friend that her son had been killed.

She said: "He had stab wounds all over

his body and his throat had been slit."

Diana said whoever killed her son should have rather called the cops.

"Police should deal with the Russians before they get out of control."

Police spokeswoman Lieutenant-Colonel

Adele Myburgh said three men aged 18, 21 and 28 were arrested for murder.

They reappeared at the Brits Magistrates Court and were kept in custody yesterday.

Myburgh said police are aware of allegations that Tshediso was killed by a gang and said cops would investigate.



Tshediso Moremi was stabbed.

Drop in crime 'not felt'

PROVINCE SEES INCREASE IN VIOLENT CRIME AS 2016-17 CRIME STATS RELEASED

ELFAS TORERA

THE North West has recorded a sharp rise in violent and serious crime during the 2016-17 financial year.

In crime statistics released by Police Minister Fikile Mbatia yesterday, incidents of aggravated robbery recorded an increase of 11.7%.

National figures released showed an overall drop during the same period. The drop represents 1.8% in South Africa but Mbatia conceded in Parliament that this was not a perception held by citizens.

"Yes, we have a 1.8% drop in crime. I do not feel it and our people do not feel it and they are correct. We have a drop in sexual violence but we have more and more stories of our women going missing. People must feel the drop in crime where they live," Mbatia said.

Reactions also poured in following the release of the long-awaited crime statistics.

In the North West, last year's figures showed that there were 6281 incidents of robbery with aggravating circumstances.

This has risen to 7017 cases, an increase of 7.3%. This is closely followed by common robbery at an equally worrying 7.1%, accounting for 172 more cases reported compared to the previous year.

Sexual offences came third with 162 more cases reported in the 2016-17 report.

Common assault also took a 1.1% jump from 6942 to 7021, an increase of 79 cases.

On a positive note, there were reductions in murder, attempted murder and

assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm (GBH) cases.

Traditionally, assault GBH is the major crime problem in the North West.

Despite a massive decrease of 883 cases from 13 614 to 12 731, the number remains the highest compared to other crime categories.

There were six less murders in the year under review.

A total of 901 people were killed compared to 907 the previous year. Incidents of attempted murder also saw a reduction from 899 to 895.

On hijacking cases, there was a 5.4% increase in the light motor vehicles category compared to a 14.3% increase for trucks.

David Lewis from Corruption Watch said: "Most serious crimes have gone up such as armed robberies, aggravated robberies and organised crime and they reflect the state of our crime intelligence and police leadership."

"Some crimes are under-reported, such as corruption, it is not broken down and people do not know much about these."

A phenomenal 21.1% increase in robberies at residential premises was recorded and a 7.1% upsurge in robberies at non-residential properties.

Farmers have every reason to worry as the incidence of stock theft trumps any other in South Africa.

A whopping 22.5% increase was recorded in this category.

Except for stock theft, the North West remains relatively safer compared to Gauteng that remains top in most of the serious crime categories.

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FIKILE'S CHALLENGE

Murders 1.8% ↑
19 061

Robberies 6.4% ↑
140 956

Sexual Offences
49 660

Assault GBH
170 616

52 murders

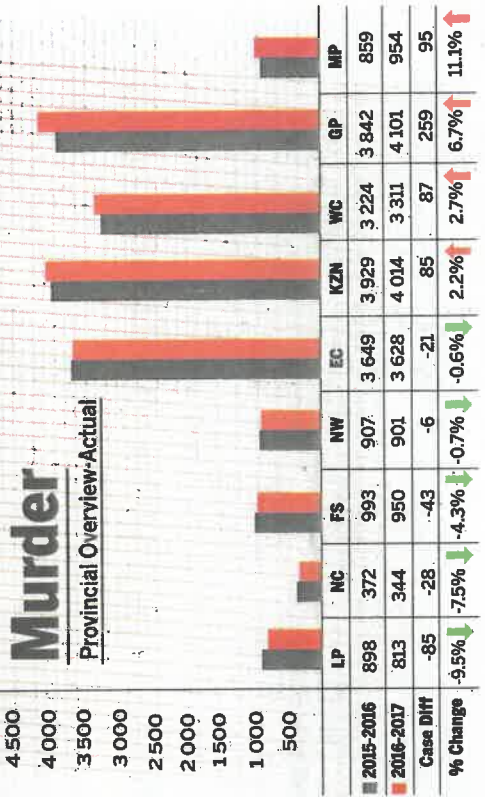
386 aggravated robberies

61 home robberies

46 vehicle hijackings

50 attempted murders

PER DAY



Customer service in SAPS 'appalling'

Mbalula also criticises acute lack of smart management

GEORGE MATLALA

POLICE Minister Fikile Mbalula yesterday slammed the quality of customer service at police stations as appalling, saying the SAPS had an "acute" lack of leadership from station level upwards.

Speaking before the release of the crime statistics, Mbalula said he wanted to deliver a police service that was professional and courteous, among others.

"The SAPS has an acute lack of leadership from station level up. The customer service for our people is appalling. Batho Pele was just an event inside the SAPS... It is not something management truly bothers with," the minister said.

"Police stations and 1011 are the places at which service delivery begins. The police must treat our people courteously and with sensitivity.

"We agree with our people that much needs to be done to improve our front-office services," he added.

Mbalula said the #MyPolice-Station Campaign was meant to address shortcomings in customer service.

Although there was a decrease in overall crime, with police working under tough conditions, Mbalula said the men and women in blue were being let down by management.

"Our police are working under tremendous situations, but are not led properly by management. Management must have strategic capacity or else we have accepted living with criminals as a part of life," he said.

The Police and Prisons and Civil Rights Union (Popcru) said that despite the decreases recorded compared with last year's statistics, not much difference was evident as the percentages had changed only slightly.

"In this regard, we are of the view that the SAPS should review its whole organisational structure. The main challenge

is that the SAPS has become a Hollywood-like structure, in that almost everybody is acting... at national structures, provincial structures and units across the country," Popcru spokesperson Richard Mambolo said.

"The SAPS structure in its current form is bloated, wherein you find a lot of duplicated positions... This has led to having too many bosses with conflicting mandates and directives that have caused confusion and poor performance," he pointed out.

He said different leaders came with different mandates that ended up confusing the functions of police on the ground - the very people who were supposed to execute the crime prevention strategy.

"We have been consistent in saying crime does not happen at national and provincial offices, where most of the manpower is currently located," Mambolo said.

The EFF said the SAPS was "among the most unprofessional, inefficient and unreliable of public services, with little ability to investigate and combat crime".

"Our society's levels of crime signify the inhumane conditions of high unemployment and poverty in a country of First World proportions of wealth," the party said in a statement.

The ANC in Parliament said the shocking increase of 6.4% in aggravated robbery and 14.5% in hijackings country-wide was indicative of a society that was increasingly becoming unsafe and more violent.

The ruling party echoed Mbalula's sentiments that Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal must become priority areas where the deployment of police was important.

Crime remained a serious challenge, which required joint efforts by all stakeholders to tackle and eradicate, the ANC statement read.

"Crime fighting remains one of the ANC government's top priorities," it added.



LASHED TOP COPS: Fikile Mbalula

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Crime stats paint a picture of mayhem

Murder has risen to 19 016: that's 52 killings a day.

By Graeme Hoshen

Death, mayhem and destruction. Rape, sexual assault and pillaging. All of them on the rise in South Africa.

Yet acting national police commissioner Lieutenant-General Lesetja Mothiba is confident that citizens have faith in the country's thin blue line of policemen and women.

"I am confident that South Africans are confident in our organisation," said Mothiba at a press conference just hours after the release of the crime statistics yesterday.

South Africa's latest police crime statistics paint a picture of a country at war with itself.

South Africans, according to the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), are now 13% more likely to be murdered than they were in 2012.

Murder has risen by 1.8% to 19 016 killings in the 2016/2017 financial year when compared to the 2015/2016 financial year. That equates to 52 murders a day - five times the global rate. Of those killed, 3 478 were women and children.

Murder increased in four of the nine provinces - KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

Sexual offences have dropped by 4.3%, from 51 895 to 49 660, with rape decreasing by 4%, from 41 503 to 39 828. Car hijackings increased by 14.5%, from 14 602 to 16 717. Robbery in residential areas and non-residential areas has increased by 7.3% and 5%, respectively.

Drug-related crimes increased by 12.9%, from 259 165



Police Minister Fikile Mbalula after announcing the latest crime statistics in parliament. / ESA ALEXANDER

to 292 689. According to police statistics, there are 52 attempted murders and 61 home robberies on average a day, with 46 vehicles hijacked daily - along with 16 aggravated (violent) robberies occurring every hour (388 per day).

For Police Minister Fikile Mbalula it's back to basics - the rejuvenation of police war rooms and defunct crime intelligence capabilities.

"It will be expensive, but it is steps we have to take. It cannot be business as usual or unusual," he said. "We have to revive specialised units, have competent police officers who know how to investigate crimes, make arrests and ensure that cases are so solid that we secure convictions. Criminals have too many rights in this country, while our citizens' rights are trampled on."

Gareth Newham, ISS crime and justice programme head, said the statistics remained

66
We are 13% more likely to be murdered than five years ago

seven months out of date. He said the most disturbing thing was that the two categories that were the most reliable indicators of violent crime - murder and armed robbery - continued to increase.

"We are now 13% more likely to be murdered than five years ago. Aggravated robbery shows how profound the failures of police leadership have become."

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Outrage as the figures omit farm attacks and murders

The SAPS's rural safety strategy is not producing favourable results

took such a decision last year," Groenewald said.

"If we have the figures, why can't we get it now. What is the reason we can't get them now?" Acting national commissioner Lesetja Mothiba said there were more than 1 000 police stations and that it could take over a day to make a presentation on all types of prevalent murders.

Mothiba promised to prepare a report on farms.

"It does not make sense to give it after the meeting," he said, adding he was not looking for statistics of every police station.

Police Minister Fikile Mbalula said he was unaware there had been an arrangement for such statistics to be available.

"We must never give an impression that there are certain things we are running away from," Mbalula said.

"If something has been

agreed to, we must honour it," he said.

He said he understood Groenewald's standpoint and that he regularly raised the issue of farm killings and attacks.

"I have met with your party. It is a matter I would want to be addressed amicably," Mbalula earlier told the committee his department was interacting with farmers to develop a rural safety strategy.

"We have working groups

on how to beef up security," he said.

However, Mbalula said the farmers should ensure they were compliant with the country's laws and also desist from hiring undocumented foreigners.

"When they turn against you, you blame the police," Briefing the media afterwards, Mbalula said he did not want to defend useless things.

"Just give the man what he wants and deal with politics he wants to engage in. I don't want to engage in useless fights."

The Transvaal Agricultural Union SA (TAU SA) said the crime statistics compared badly with the situation over the same period last year.

Henry Geldenhuys, TAU SA deputy president, said 26 attacks and 52 murders were recorded in 2016 while the same period this year reflected an increase

of 347 and 65, respectively.

"The situation on South African farms and small holdings is critical and it is clear that the SAPS's rural safety strategy is not producing favourable results," Geldenhuys said.

THE absence of figures on farm, murders and attacks caused a stir in Parliament as the police portfolio committee was presented with South Africa's annual national crime statistics.

The FFP's Petrus Groenewald demanded police provide him with statistics on farm murders.

Groenewald said the police had made a commitment last year to provide the statistics on farm attacks.

"I'm sure the commissioner should have the figures. We

MURDER ON THE RISE

DAILY SUN-25/10/17-Pg 2-NATIONAL SAs-1 Neg

By HESHEK MAMORA

POLICE Minister Fikile Mbalula briefed the portfolio committee on police on the latest crime statistics yesterday.

"It can't go on like this," said Mbalula.

In the year under review, about 2.1 million serious crimes were recorded.

Murder increased by 1.8% to 19 016 in 2016/17.

This means nearly 34 murders per 100 000 people in the country.

Gauteng recorded the highest murder rate with 4 101 murders, while KwaZulu-Natal recorded 4 014 murders.

A total of 3 628 murders were re-



From left: Police Minister Fikile Mbalula and the police's head of statistics, Major-General Norman Sekhukhune, present crime statistics to MPs.

Photo by Lindile Mbonisi

corded in Eastern Cape, 3 311 in Western Cape, 954 in Mpumalanga, and 950 in Free State.

About 150 murders were recorded at Phillip East Police Station in 2016/17, an increase from 122 the previous year.

Acting police commissioner Lieutenant-General Lesetja Mothiba, said that murders had been on the decline until about five years ago.

Attempted murder is up by 0.4%, while sexual offences went down by 4.3%.

Meanwhile, aggravated robbery went up 6.4% and hijacking increased by 14.5%.

And Mbalula vowed to clamp

down on crime.

"Enough is enough!" he said.

It was also revealed that about 108 people are raped in South Africa every day.

A total of 39 828 rapes were reported in Mzansi in 2016/2017, a 4% decrease compared to the previous year.

Mothiba said: "We are throwing everything at criminals.

"The fight against crime is continuing every minute."

Committee chairman Francois Beukman asked Mbalula what his plans are to address leadership issues in the police service.

The minister said he will soon appoint a new top cop.

THE STAR Pg 14 SAs NATIONAL NEG Sobering statistics 25/10/17

THE Minister of Police, Fikile Mbalula, released his first set of crime statistics yesterday.

There wasn't much to be happy about. Attempted murder was marginally down, the number of sexual offences actually reported to police was down by 4.3%, with the number of contact crimes in general down 2.4%.

Murder, though, has increased, as has robbery with aggravating circumstances by a worrying 6.4%. Murder in Gauteng, particularly, has spiked, with KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape not far behind. In the Cape the issue is even more problematic because many of these killings have been perpetrated by gangsters.

Thankfully, Minister Razzmatzaz, as he is better known, was sombre. Magisterial.

"Behind the numbers are real feelings, real lives, real hurt, real harm, real losses," he said.

"We couldn't have put it better ourselves.

"The only good crime statistic is zero - as in no crimes being committed, no one being hurt, no one being killed. The fact that sexual offences have dropped only means fewer victims are coming forward, not that the violence has lessened. If this is the case, our minister must be having sleepless nights because it means victims of this horrid courage don't feel they will get justice from the thin blue line that is all that stands between us and

narchy.

Equally, the spike in aggravated robbery suggests a brazenness among criminals that either they won't be caught, or that if they do, the penalties for their deeds are no deterrent.

We are heartened by Mbalula's customary honesty and candour; far too many of his predecessors have either tried to spin the figures or conceal them altogether. Mbalula sees crime statistics as a vital tool in actually fighting crime, which is precisely what they should be - as well as reassurance to a fearful citizenry that the war against the outlaws is actually being won.

As always, the police are only part of the arsenal in this war. We, the citizens, have a vital role to play, alerting the police, giving testimony in court and creating an environment where crime cannot flourish.

If we do that, we have a chance.

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Police commissioner role needs clarity

KUBEN CHETTY

CRIME experts described the statistics released by the SAPS yesterday as a clear indication that police were failing in their attempts to combat crime.

A major part of the problem, they say, is the uncertainty over the position of national commissioner - a role that is meant to be occupied by the country's head of police but is often undermined by political appointments and political interference.

This is a view that is shared by Parliament's portfolio committee on police.

Yesterday the committee issued a statement, in the wake of the release of the crime statistics, calling for the urgent

appointment of a national commissioner of police by President Jacob Zuma.

"This is of vital importance in dealing with the challenges affecting policing in South Africa.

"The country needs a competent accounting officer who has the energy, strategic vision and innovation plans to fight crime and corruption," said Francois Beukman, the chairperson of the committee.

Steps should be fast-tracked for the establishment of the National Policing Board that will set standards for the recruitment, selecting, appointing and promoting of officials and officers," the statement read.

Institute for Security Studies researcher Gareth

Newham said Zuma had appointed four different people to the role of national commissioner during his eight years in office and this had created a leadership vacuum in the SAPS.

'The police minister is not a professional'

"Between 2009 and 2012, carjacking in Gauteng was reduced by 32% because of the role of crime intelligence.

"Since 2012 and the suspension of Richard Mdluli and the political protection that he has been receiving, crime intelligence - the most vital component in policing -

has failed." Newham said police had a budget of R87 billion (60% more than five years ago) and personnel of 195 000, yet they were failing to catch 5 000 serious and violent criminals who operate in the country.

He said the power to fix policing lay with Zuma and not with Police Minister Fikile Mbalula.

"The police minister is not a professional and he must only play an oversight role.

"However, we have seen him encouraging police to break the law and he has undermined the national commissioner, and that creates serious problems."

Newham said the fact that there was an acting provincial commissioner in KwaZulu-Natal and an

acting national head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, (Hawks) added to the leadership vacuum in the country.

Professor Rudolph Zinn, a criminologist and senior lecturer at Unisa, said Mbalula had taken on the role of the national police commissioner.

"The risk here is that police feel they are being led by a politician and this fuels the risk of political interference.

"When he first took office a few months ago he promised there would be a new national commissioner by August, but this has not happened.

"He also promised that he would deal with the issue of Richard Mdluli and others. But this too has not taken place," Zinn said.