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Three arrested for robbery

ELFAS TORERAI

THREE men aged between 27 and 42 were arrested after they robbed a liquor store in Makau, Brits.

The three are said to be part of five who made off with liquor worth

R250 000. North West provincial spokesperson Brig Sabata Mokgwabone said: "A case of business robbery was opened at the Mmakau police station."

The three are expected to appear in the Brits Magistrate's Court soon.

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Mbalula on the defensive

APOLOGY: WILL BE ISSUED FOR DEPUTY'S STATEMENT ON FOREIGNERS

» **Mkongi's 'regrettable' utterances condemned by SA Human Rights Commission.**

Rorisang Kgosana

Using Joburg mayor Herman Mashaba as an example, Police Minister Fikile Mbalula defended Bongani Mkongi's controversial statement on foreigners in Hillbrow, saying his deputy was overwhelmed by the state of the congested area.

Mkongi came under fire for an alleged xenophobic statement after saying it was "dangerous" that

a city in South Africa can "be 80% foreign nationals". His utterances were strongly condemned by the South African Human Rights Commission.

Mbalula reassured the media during his 67 minutes for Mandela Day visit to Sunnyside police station that he discussed the "regrettable" statement with his deputy, but said it was not made out of mischief as Mkongi was on duty.

"I know the deputy minister did not say that out of mischief, but we made it clear that it must

not happen again. I think that situation in Hillbrow overwhelmed him. Herman Mashaba raised it when he became mayor, because he was overwhelmed by what he saw.

"This is regrettable. We apologise for that and it will not occur again. It was wrong on our part to say those words in a moment of enthusiasm for our job," he said.

He said Mkongi would not be facing any disciplinary action as the deputy was "hard at work", but a statement of apology would

soon be issued by the police department.

"Even myself, I could have uttered those words. I have spoken to him and we agree that it was too rough. I understand what he is saying about addressing the problem in Hillbrow. You can't say it is a place occupied by South Africans. Those who are there illegally must get out," said Mbalula.

Meanwhile, to honour Nelson Mandela Day, Mbalula conducted a walkabout at the police station, where he met the station commander to understand the operational challenges of the station.

"I need to understand the difficulties faced by the police and challenges of the police station. Mandela Day, for us, is what police should be doing every day, supporting, protecting and responding to crime." - rorisangk@citizen.co.za

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Fikile Mbalula
Police Minister

Remarks about foreigners scorned

POLICE Minister Fikile Mbalula says he has directed his deputy, Bongani Mkongi, to correct his (Mkongi's) recent remarks regarding the prevalence of crime and foreign nationals in Joburg.

"I've gone through what he said, and indeed, that is too rough. I do understand what he said. He was trying to address a problem in Hillbrow... Do you remember what Herman Mashaba said, and we came down on him? We cannot say that. We must do what the law permits," said Mbalula.

"Those (people) who are illegal, we must get them out. Those who are here as immigrants, they are fine. They must stay there. We cannot have an attitude that they are not supposed to be here. It is problematic and that statement (by Mkongi) is regrettable," he added.

Mbalula said he had discussed the matter with Mkongi, and the deputy minister would be amending his remarks soon.

"The deputy minister and I have agreed that he will issue



IN BAD TASTE: Bongani Mkongi

a statement explaining that his comments, while they were meant for a good purpose, could be misused to attack our African brothers. That statement borders on xenophobia," said Mbalula.

On Monday, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) strongly condemned the "irresponsible" utterances by Mkongi. While addressing concerns around crime and hijacked buildings in Joburg on Friday, Mkongi reportedly said South Africans had surrendered their city.

"How can a city in South Africa be 80% foreign national? That is dangerous. South Africans have surrendered their own city to the foreigners,"

Mkongi was quoted as saying.

The SAHRC said such remarks had the potential to fuel anti-immigrant sentiments and were, in fact, xenophobic.

"South Africa is already grappling with the scourge of violent xenophobic attacks, often directed against fellow African non-nationals. As a figure of authority in the Department of Police - and by extension across society - the deputy minister is expected to exercise a great deal of circumspection in his public utterances. Not only are the statements factually incorrect, in that he claims, without evidence to the effect, that 80% of the city is occupied by foreign nationals, they also unjustifiably ascribe crime to foreign nationals as an undifferentiated group.

"Leaders are expected to constructively shape public debate and social cohesion through evidence-based statements. Repeating stereotypes does not advance the goals of upholding the fundamental rights of all in society," said the SAHRC in a statement. - ANA

19/01/17 PRETORIA NEWS Pg 2 National Trans Meg.

Prasa boss slams Gigaba for withholding nominee

GETRUDE MAKHAFOLA

PASSENGER Rail Agency of SA (Prasa) board chairperson Popo Molefe yesterday accused Finance Minister Malusi Gigaba of withholding a Treasury nominee to his board and stifling corporate governance at the state enterprise.

Molefe, who was reinstated as board chairperson following a court challenge, claimed it was clear that attempts were being made to isolate him immediately after the appointment of Gigaba and Transport Minister Joe Maswanganyi.

"They called non-executive directors one by one so that I remain alone, because when I am alone, there will be no board to take decisions. Now there are four of us, there are supposed to be six people including the nominee from Treasury and another from the Department of Transport," Molefe told delegates of a conference against state capture.

Molefe said he was "surprised" by Gigaba's statement on good governance last week when the minister announced his 14-point plan to save the country's ailing economy.

"I listened to him speaking at the JSE saying that he wanted good, efficient state entities and good governance... while he is withholding a nominee who should be on the board of Prasa. The board cannot finalise its work because there is no quorum," he said as delegates



Prasa board chairperson Popo Molefe

PICTURE: OUPA MOKOENA

applauded.

Molefe was speaking at the Conference for the Future of SA organised by the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation and Save SA to come up with a plan to stop state capture.

He said when he arrived at Prasa, he realised that former chief executive Lucky Montana "had enormous power".

"I sat him down and told him 'you're a bright nice young man, but I think you have made mistakes. You seemed to have worked with people who never showed you your errors,

I want you and I to work differently now, I don't want us to delve into the past but work together going forward'."

The board, he said, has a duty to protect taxpayers' money and has, through court challenges, planned to recover cash from service providers who supplied Prasa with the wrong locomotives which were too tall for the country's rail system, procured from Spain on Montana's watch.

"We have sent letters of demand to Swifambo, which has told us it has no money and was being wound up, but we know that Swifambo was a front... we will get that money from the Spanish," he said.

Molefe has argued that the locomotives tender was unlawful and has since approached the high court to have the R3.5 billion tender reviewed and cancelled.

The tender was awarded to Swifambo Rail Leasing in 2013 to supply Prasa with locomotives.

The locomotives were made by Vossloh Espana, a Spanish company. In a report titled "Derailed" released in 2015, then-public protector Thuli Madonsela found that Prasa failed to comply with its own supply-chain policy.

She found widespread maladministration and impropriety in the awarding of contracts worth R2bn.

Montana was fired following the hard-hitting report by Madonsela. - ANA

Hawks help poor families

Mbana led a team of officials that started early yesterday to work on erecting tanks at the two identified homes

ELFAS TORERAI

CRIME fighting unit the Hawks, dug deep into its poverty fund to install water tanks at the homesteads of two families in villages near Rustenburg.

They also erected a toilet for one of the families as part of their Mandela Day 67 minutes of goodwill.

North West Hawks head Maj-Gen Linda Mbana said she challenged officers to pledge money towards the cause to put a smile on the faces of the less privileged.

Mbana led a team of officials who started out early yesterday to work on erecting the tanks at the two identified homes situated about 100km apart.

"Our theme this year is: 'Take Action Against Poverty', and we had to make it practical by pledging money towards the installation of water tanks. We targeted two families who would benefit from this initiative and one thing we identified was that neither household had running water," she said.

The first house belongs to the Thebesi family, an elderly couple who live in Kameelboom village.

The other one was the Sibanda family, two adults and 14 children aged between two and 16. Their home is in Vlakdrift, a farming community in the Boons.



MANDELA DAY: The Hawks installed water tanks at two homes as part of their 67 minutes of goodwill.

The family did not have ablution facilities and the Hawks team had erect a toilet for them.

"We decided to help the two families because they both struggled to get access to water. However, the second

family had an even greater challenge where they lacked a toilet.

"It was automatic for us to instantly

want to give this family a toilet too and that is exactly what we did," Mbana said.

She said arrangements were also made with the local municipality to make sure that the water tanks were filled on a weekly basis.

"I have taken it upon myself to make sure that the water tanks do not run dry," Mbana said.

The two families were also given food parcels, toiletries and blankets.

"We are proud to have made this great contribution to our community and in the spirit of the late Nelson Mandela, we have shown love to our fellow countrymen," Mbana said.

Meanwhile, Premier Supra Mahumelo led the Mandela Day activities at various facilities in Potchesfroom.

He led the officials in painting, doing carpentry work, cleaning and gardening at Ikhaya Labantwana Homage Orphanage in Ikageng Township.

Working together with representatives from Old Mutual, Sassa, Motsweding FM and the local municipality, they donated a R5 000 cheque to help meet the needs at Ikhaya Labantwana Homage.

Mahumapelo also visited Love & Peace Old Age Home and two local clinics in the same township.

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