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**DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE COMMUNICATION & ICT**

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**Media Release**

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**Tourism Authorities stands firm against illegal Tours guides**

The National Department of Tourism in conjunction with the North West Provincial Department, and law enforcement agencies comprising of Provincial Traffic, Road Traffic Management Corporation went of a joined campaign to hunt those who practice tour guiding illegally in the Bojanala district which is one of the busiest area in terms of tourist arrivals in the province. The campaign was aimed at raising awareness against those that continue to practice illegally.

The Department of Tourism has vowed to work with law enforcement agencies to curb illegal tour guides who according to the department continues to put lives of tourists in danger. The Department has thus far agreed with law enforcement agencies to put more focus on those that continue to practice illegally as tour guides.

Although a few that the department engaged with during the campaign were operating legally and had relevant registration requirement, the department is aware that there are those that are operating illegally. Those found to be operating illegally will be criminally charged as according to the Tourism Act no 3 of 2004, which regulates tour guiding across the country. If found in contravention of the act the incumbent may be fined or convicted.

According to the Deputy Director of Tourism Guiding in the National Department of Tourism Stan Montsho, the gesture is mainly about raising awareness and ensuring that both international and local tourists are safe and that they are being given correct information. "Illegal tour guiding is a criminal offence. Tourism guiding requires people with ethics and are taught a lot in terms of how they should handle

tourists. That's why we have joined forces with law enforcement agencies just to make sure that those found to be transgression of the law governing tour guiding face the might of the law. We will as a department continue to work closely with law enforces to make sure that our industry operates free from such people", said Montsho.

One of the renowned tour guides in the country, Joe Motsugi who has been in the industry for over 24 years hailed the effort by the department. Motsugi said that he know the length and breadth of the North West Province. He said that they are aware about the existence of those that continue to practice illegally and they are a big concern for the industry.

"Those people do not know the basics of tour guiding and do not know the ethics and information that goes with tour guiding. Government need to take serious steps against to curb the continuing unacceptable practice. We love our country and would like people to have a wonderful experience and comeback or spread the word internationally", said Motsugi.

The National and North West Department of Tourism have thus far trained more than 200 tour operators through the National culture guide training programme and will be registered as fully qualified and registered guides within the province.

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