

KZN commissioner condemns attacks on foreign nationals

KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant-General Mmamonye Ngobeni has condemned attacks directed at foreign nationals, which have taken place in Durban...



Tensions remained high in the Durban (pictured) and Pietermaritzburg city centres on Wednesday as many foreign-owned shops closed in fear of further xenophobic attacks. (Image: Esther Dyson, via Wikimedia Commons)

A statement released by the provincial SA Police Service on Wednesday puts the number of lives lost to date at five, with one victim being a 14-year-old.

Seventy-four people have been arrested for various violence-related cases. The offences include murder, public violence, business robbery, theft and possession of firearms and ammunition.

Ngobeni has commended various departments, including NGOs and civil society, for rallying together in an effort to curb the wave of violent attacks in various parts of the province.

She has instructed all detectives investigating cases related to the violence to work closely with the prosecuting authorities to ensure that cases are thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators of violence are brought to book.

Ngobeni has also added more manpower to the affected areas, while negotiations are taking place to resolve the situation.

While the police are doing everything to restore peace and stability, Ngobeni appealed to the community to refrain from attacking each other.

"We once again discourage people from taking the law into their own hands and caution that those found to be breaking the law will be prosecuted. They must stop committing criminal activities and report those suspects wanted by the police for crimes that were already reported in the area," she said.

The SAPS also made an earnest appeal to people who are posting false information about the number of deaths and attacks on social media, to stop doing so.

"Spreading false information on the number of deaths and attacks, the different areas that are being attacked and hate speech aimed at foreign nationals not only causes undue panic in communities but also has the potential to fuel the violence.

"The responsible use of social media can contribute greatly to our fight against crime, by making people aware of the consequences of engaging in criminal activity, ways to safeguard themselves and their property against criminals and to help police identify and find suspects."

Meanwhile, KwaZulu-Natal Premier Senzo Mchunu and eThekweni Mayor James Nxumalo will tomorrow lead a peace march against violence directed at foreign nationals.

All citizens in KZN are invited to join the march, which will start at 10am from Curries Fountain to city hall.

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