North West considers calling in army as more rhinos are killed

PRETORIA: The North West provincial government is considering asking the South African National Defence Force to assist in overcoming the scourge of rhino poaching, Premier Thandi Modise says.



Modise's statement follows the killing of seven rhinos at a game farm near Sun City at the weekend.

This brings to 21 the number of rhinos killed in the province in recent weeks.

Modise said the cruelty and brutality against the rhino - which is a symbol of the country's ecology and rich heritage - had gone too far.

"We had hoped that the 40-year sentence that was recently imposed on self-confessed rhino poaching kingpin and Thai national, Chumlong Lemthongthai, would serve as a deterrent, but recent incidents dictate for extraordinary measures to protect our tourism and biodiversity," said Modise.

She stressed a need to clamp down on the issuing of illegal hunting permits as part of intensifying law enforcement and crime intelligence to overcome the scourge of rhino poaching.

Further to this, communities in the proximity of game parks and farms needed to be educated and actively involved in nature conservation, tourism and anti-poaching strategies.

Over 500 rhinos have been killed this year and government has called on society, wildlife organisations, business and other parties to unite and work together to stop crimes against wildlife.

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