

# Nhleko says he will rid Westbury of crime

Police Minister Nathi Nhleko has promised to work with the community of Westbury to root out criminals and to bring peace back to the area.



Police Minister Nathi Nhleko says the community of Westbury must work with police to stamp out gangsterism in the region. Image: GCIS

The Minister said he was extremely concerned by the spate of killings involving children and women in the area and called on communities to help fight this scourge.

"For us to achieve this we need to build a united front against crime and corruption. We appeal to all our citizens to use designated institutions of policing to deal with matters of policing," said Nhleko, adding that the community needs to play its part by partnering with Community Policing Forums (CPF) and reporting crime.

The Minister met with the station commander and other officers at Sophiatown Police Station before he visited the family of three-year-old Luke Tibbetts, who was shot in the head after being caught in a shootout on the corner of Statler and Croesus streets.

The boy sustained critical injuries when he was shot along with a 28-year-old man, on Saturday evening. The two were travelling in the area in separate vehicles when they were hit

by stray bullets.

The man was discharged from hospital after being treated for a gunshot wound in the arm, while Luke sustained serious injuries and was put on life support. He was later declared brain dead at Garden City private clinic. The family is still deciding whether to take him off life support.

## Khakhu arrested and charged

The accused, 24-year-old Lindray Khakhu, who was arrested over the weekend, has been charged with two counts of attempted murder.

According to Gauteng Community Safety MEC Sizakile Nkosi-Malobane, Khakhu appeared in court where the case was postponed to 12 August. He will remain in custody at the Johannesburg Central Prison.

The court heard that these were not the only charges Khakhu is currently facing. He also faces three other charges of attempted murder for a separate incident. The cases are pending before the High Court.

Police also arrested a 28-year-old wounded man - who has been identified as Keenan Mokwena - after he admitted that he was the intended target for the stray bullet that had hit Tibbetts in the head. He has appeared in court and was denied bail.

Earlier this week angry community members packed the court where the suspect appeared. They complained that people were arrested for various crimes but were usually released and back on the streets by the following day.

Westbury is one of the areas identified as a drug hot spot, following an outcry by an Eldorado Park mother a few months ago, which prompted President Jacob Zuma to visit the area. Gang-related crime continues to dominate the area according to residents.

Nhleko said part of the department's plan for the area was to restore and strengthen the communities trust with the police.



The discordant suburb of Westbury where gangsterism and random shootings are destroying the community life in this suburb. Image: [Ag in Africa](#)

Tibbetts' shooting comes just a week after the murder of 4-year-old Taegrin Morris in Reiger Park and the hijacking of a father and his 5-year-old son near Bronkhorstspuit.

The incidents prompted National Police Commissioner General Riah Phiyega to announce that the National Intervention Unit, Tactical Response Team and Public Order Policing units will move into the country's identified gangster hotspots such as the northern parts of Port Elizabeth, Western Cape, Free State and Gauteng

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