

KZN Premier appeals for calm in trucking industry

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Sihle Zikalala has appealed for calm and a peaceful resolution to all the concerns facing truck drivers and the road freight industry as a whole.



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The provincial government said it has noted with serious concern the protest action by truck drivers and the subsequent ultimatum that "no truck with a South African registration should enter the harbour or be driven by a foreign national from the 1st of December 2020".

The provincial government said it has escalated the matter to the national government, as "this is not only a KwaZulu-Natal matter, but it has implications for the entire SADC region".

The Departments of Labour and Home Affairs is currently involved in a process of developing legislation that will address the issue of the employment of foreign nationals in all sectors of the economy, including the road freight sector.

Zikalala has instructed the task team assigned to address challenges in the road freight sector to immediately meet with the representatives of the concerned truck drivers.

KZN is the only province that has established a task team that is engaging with all stakeholders that are involved, including truck operators (truck owners) and truck drivers' representatives (the National Truck Drivers Founders and All Truck Drivers

Foundation).

The provincial government said it is committed to the transformation and stabilisation of the road freight and logistics industry, which is a critical sector of the provincial and national economy.

"We will continue to engage all the relevant role-players and work within the law to negotiate solutions meant to resolve the current conflict, and in the long-term, stabilise the industry within the ambit of the country's Constitution," Zikalala said.

Zikalala reiterates that they will not allow lawlessness to threaten the economy, especially when the country has just emerged from the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We thus call on those who have grievances to work with us and not to shut down our roads, torch trucks or even resort to attacking truck drivers, as has happened before.

"Where these violations take place, we expect the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security cluster to respond decisively to maintain peace and order by dealing with criminality and unlawful activities in the province," Zikalala said.

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