



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

FRIDAY, 26 APRIL 2024

GAUTENG MEC FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS WELCOMES THE CONVICTION OF 25-YEAR-OLD MALE FOR ATTACK ON EMS PERSONNEL

The Gauteng MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko has welcomed the conviction of 15 years direct imprisonment handed by the Pretoria Magistrates' Court to a 25-year-old male, Matome Tumi Sepesu on Wednesday, 24 April 2024.

The successful conviction follows a robbery incident which occurred in the Nellmapius area, east of Pretoria in July 2023 where the Gauteng Emergency Medical Services (EMS) crew was hijacked, kidnapped, assaulted and robbed of their personal cell phones and other working tools while responding to what appeared to be a distress call.

Out of four suspects involved in the incident, one has been successfully convicted and sentenced to a 15 years' imprisonment. The other three suspects are still on the run and the police investigation is still underway.

"This conviction sends a strong message to criminals who are targeting healthcare workers when they are discharging their duties trying to save lives of communities. Our teams have been subjected to senseless attacks in some of the communities which have made it rather difficult for them when they have to respond to emergencies," commented Nkomo-Ralehoko.

Meanwhile, the Gauteng EMS suffered two other attacks this week. On Wednesday, 24 April around 10pm in Rieger Park, Ekurhuleni, two suspects robbed paramedics and fled with a PTT radio used for dispatching calls. The incident happened while the crew was responding to a medical call and treating a patient at the back of the ambulance.

The second incident happened at Eersterust in Mamelodi, in the early hours of Thursday morning (25 April) around 01:30am. The crew was also busy treating a patient when the suspect stole a cell phone of one of the paramedics. Fortunately, the suspect was apprehended by the police through the assistance of the community and CPF. The phone was also

recovered. The suspect appeared at the Hatfield Branch Court in Pretoria today and was released on bail with the next appearance set for 02 May 2024 at the same court.

The Department continues to plead with communities to play an active role in the protection of healthcare workers and to work with law enforcement agencies to stop continuing attacks on healthcare workers because they have negative impact on the provision of healthcare services.

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Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health

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