



Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 3216

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TOURISM PROMOTES SAFETY AWARENESS IN QWEBERHA AHEAD OF EASTER WEEKEND

QWEBERHA - Deputy Minister of Tourism Ms. Maggie Sotyu, today hosted a community engagement in the Motherwell township in the Eastern Cape Province to highlight and promote tourism, and safety awareness measures, ahead of the Easter holiday break.

The community engagement encouraged the public and tourism stakeholder to play an active part in conserving tourism communities, and to support coordinated efforts that promote safety to minimise incidences of crime in the Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) Metropolitan Municipality.

“The upcoming Easter Weekend presents an opportunity to highlight the significance of tourism as a driver of economic growth and job creation in our communities.”

“A thriving tourism sector contributes to the country’s economic freedom and generates revenue, jobs and lucrative investments.”

“The success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors”

Today, we host this Joint Tourism Safety Campaign to empower you with information that will enable you to proactively safeguard our communities and destinations from incidents of crime, so we can all enjoy the benefits of tourism,” Deputy Minister of Tourism, Maggie Sotyu said.

The Department established a National Tourism Safety Forum which comprises public and private sector organisations and departments, provincial tourism departments, and SAPS. The forum manages all matters related to tourist safety. This group has been instrumental in communicating and sharing information on matters related to tourist safety and responding when tourists are in distress.

The tourism engagement commenced with a roadside awareness blitz in the Motherwell township where safety tips and tourism information were shared with the public. The event also afforded the community and stakeholders an opportunity to raise issues and engage with the three spheres of government, and the South African Police Service (SAPS), on issues of crime and safety in the area. The Deputy Minister emphasised a need for increased collaborative efforts between government and community to address crime, and ensure that the gains of democracy are not reversed.

“Crime has the potential to thwart development in our communities, and lead to dire conditions of poverty, unemployment and inequality. We have worked hard, under our democratic dispensation, to create opportunities for our people that eradicate these socio-economic threats. We must work together and not allow crime to rob us of a better life as a people and for future generations,” Deputy Minister Sotyru added.

Tourism’s campaign was hosted in collaboration with the executives from the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs (DEDEAT) and the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. This collaboration reaffirms Government’s continued commitment to prioritise and promote safer tourism communities.

As South Africa commemorates Freedom Month in April, communities were encouraged to reflect on the progress made in transforming the society, while also examining its challenges. The Department shared information about its capacity and empowerment programmes, calling on the community and SMMEs to participate in targeted government initiatives that lay the foundation for thriving communities.

“The Department has a range of impactful initiative under its Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP) that can elevate the tourism economy in the Eastern Cape Province. The TIP includes Market Access Support Programme; the Green Tourism Incentive Programme; the Tourism Transformation Fund, and the Tourism Grading Support Programme.”

“We also offer skills development opportunities, as well as bursaries, aimed at women and youth to address the transformation agenda. We advertise these programmes on a regular basis on our website, www.tourism.gov.za.”

“I would like to urge you to apply for these programmes, and let us build sustainable communities and tourism offerings together,” the Deputy Minister concluded.

ENDS

Ms. Tasneem Carrim
Departmental Spokesperson
Cell: +27 (0) 82 467 9227
Email: TCarrim@tourism.gov.za