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MEDIA STATEMENT

Proposed closure of Numbi Gate: Minister of Tourism Lindiwe Sisulu sets the record straight

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The Department of Tourism on Tuesday, 11th October 2022 briefed the Select Committee on Trade and Industry, Economic Development, Small Business Development, Tourism, Employment and Labour on the government's collaborative approach to ensuring tourist safety.

The closing of the Numbi Gate outside the Kruger National Park was raised by the Committee after a vehicle carrying German tourists came under attack resulting in the horrific murder of one person outside the Numbi Gate last week.

The Democratic Alliance (DA)'s Tim Brauteseth suggested that the Numbi Gate be closed for the time being, a suggestion the Minister said will be considered.

At no stage did Minister Sisulu say that the Numbi Gate would be closed. The Kruger National Park falls under the South African National Parks (SANParks) and Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries.

Minister Sisulu has strongly condemned the attack on the German tourists. "One life lost is one life too many. Every tourist whether local or an international visitor must feel safe to enjoy their holidays in our country and government is working with our local communities and tourism stakeholders to protect our tourists and support the tourism sector".

The department briefed the committee on Wednesday on its plans to address the safety of tourists ahead of the December holidays. It was revealed that a number of government departments including the Police, Social Development, Justice as well as the National Prosecuting Authority, are on board to work with the Department on tourists safety.

Over and above this approach, Provincial Tourism Sector Forums had been established and that they were efficient, especially in Mpumalanga.

The Department told the committee that although it was still early, it will monitor whether there had been cancellations following the incident where a German tourist was killed at the Kruger National Park on the weekend.

The committee pleaded with the department to consider whether closure of the Numbi gate at Kruger would be an option, but also consider availing a flyer with important numbers tourists could use for the duration of their stay.

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