

Questions arise from accidents

FRIDAY - AUGUST 31 - 2007
■ Nicolene Smalman

NELSPRUIT - The horrific accident which occurred on the N4 last Sunday raised various questions this week.

Lowvelder reported on Tuesday about the accident which left nine people dead and 10 injured, as well as another accident on the N4 on August 18 during which 22 people burned to death when they were trapped inside a minibus taxi a few kilometres from Komatipoort.

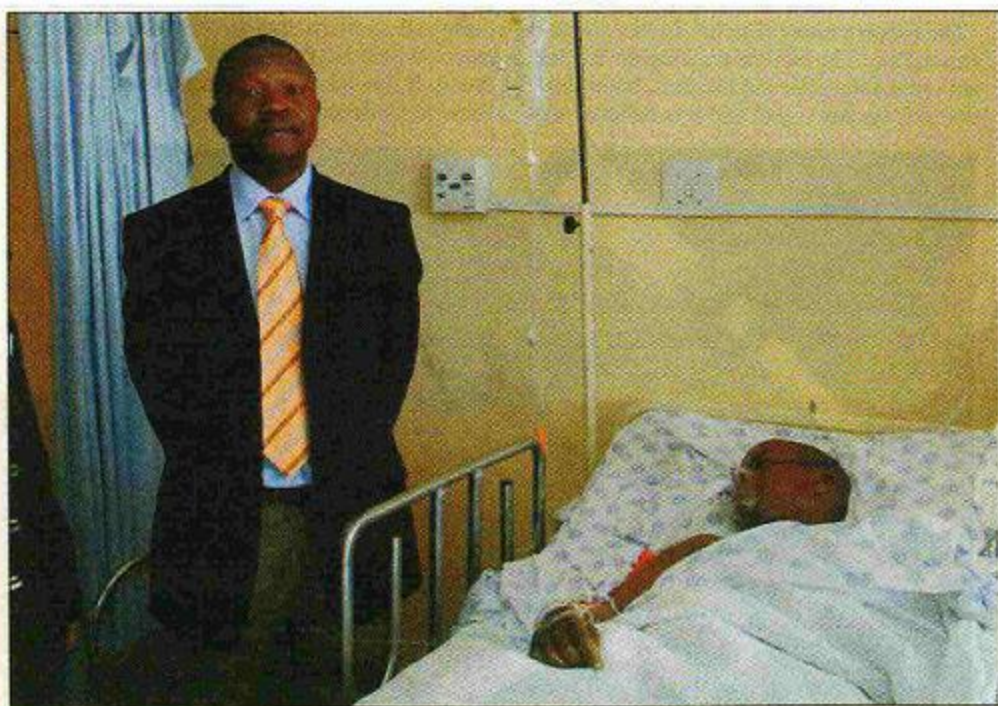
On Tuesday the MEC for roads and transport, Mr David Mabuza, visited two survivors of Sunday's accident who were treated in Rob Ferreira Hospital and expressed his concern

about accidents increasingly involving minibus taxis.

"My take is that both vehicles were overloaded," Mabuza said. He wanted to know how the overloaded taxi involved in Sunday's accident could pass so many towns on its journey from Gauteng to Nelspruit, undetected. He noted that taxi drivers on their way to Mozambique drove long hours without resting to reach border gates on time.

"They deliberately ignore the rules and I am concerned about law enforcement at the province's municipalities. We can avoid accidents through the correct enforcement of the law and collaboration with our municipalities. Our neighbours do not respect the law and their vehicles are not roadworthy," added Mabuza.

A total of 41 traffic officers had been employed during the past financial year and 50 more would be sent for training. "We are approaching 2010 and must improve visibility and enforcement of



MEC for the Department of Roads and Transport, Mr David Mabuza, with Mr Raymond Gwambe, one of the survivors of the horror minibus taxi accident that took place on Sunday.

the law."

Another question raised by media present on Tuesday was whether the department was aware of the bribing of traffic officials. "We are

aware of the problem and systems will be put in place to track down the culprits," Mabuza concluded.

email: nicolenes@lowvelder.co.za