

# ROUTES OF EVIL

## **'More clashes' if W.C. govt closes taxi industry lines**

**THE provincial government's intention to shut down certain taxi routes and ranks without consulting affected groups could result in an escalation of violence, taxi associations have warned this week.**

This after Transport and Public Works MEC Donald Grant said he planned to publish his proposal to close some routes in an effort curb escalating taxi violence, the *Cape Argus* reported.

At least four taxi owners were killed in three separate incidents recently.

Control of the lucrative Athlone route sparked the feud between two groups associated with the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata).

A Langa taxi owner was gunned down two weeks ago.

His murder was followed by a double murder at the Langa taxi rank on Thursday, during which nine people were also shot and wounded.

By ZODIDI DANO

A day later another taxi owner was shot dead, this time in Philippi East.

Arrests have been made for two of the shootings.

In response to the escalating conflict, Grant said: "The closure of certain routes, not the entire Langa taxi rank, is intended to stabilise the area and ensure commuter safety. The route closure is also aimed at forcing opposing groups to seek solutions through means

other than violence and killing."

However, Cata spokesperson, Andile Soyema, said closing the routes would increase the violence.

"If routes are closed there won't be any way to control operations. Who will monitor whom? The existing model is OK. It is just that we need to have an annual general meeting with all stakeholders, where leaders are questioned on the operations in their branches or ranks," he said.

Congress for Democratic

Taxi Associations (Code-ta) spokesperson, Andile Khanyi, said Grant should establish the cause of the violence.

"He needs to meet with Cata and talk with them," said Khanyi.

But Grant said he did speak to taxi industry leaders and gave instructions for legal processes to be initiated by his department, including the process that may lead to the closure of routes, and an inquiry that may lead to the suspension of the association and/or its members.

**OPERATIONS:** Plans to shut down taxi routes may spark violence, say associations



**PLANS:** MEC Donald Grant