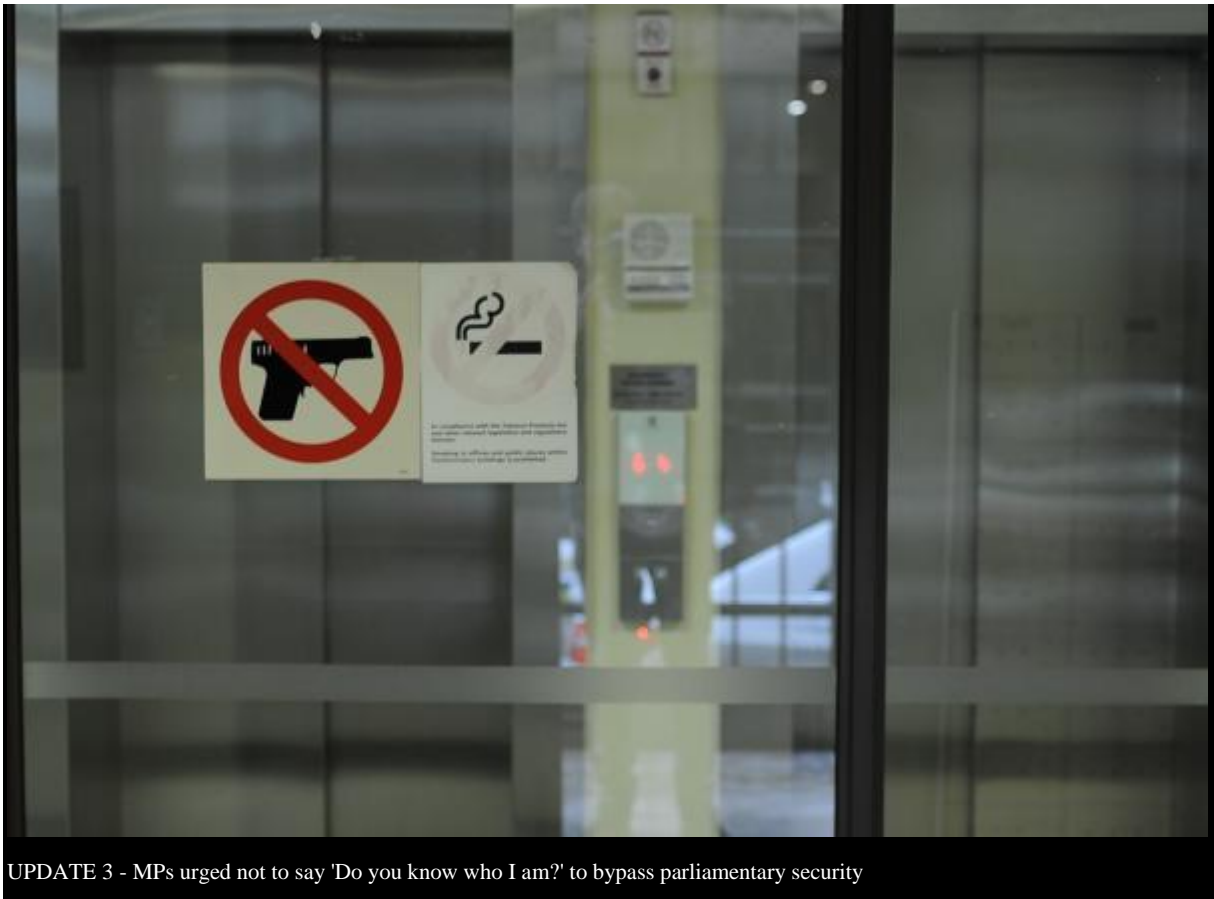


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UPDATE 3 - MPs urged not to say 'Do you know who I am?' to bypass parliamentary security

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PARLIAMENT, September 26 (ANA)

MPs and senior parliamentary staff were on Wednesday urged not to use their clout to bypass security at the national legislature. In a briefing to Parliament's portfolio committee on police about concerns regarding security at the legislature following the suicide by gun of a parliamentary staff member on the precinct recently, police and MPs raised a troubling phenomenon of senior staffers and MPs asking officers "Do you know who I am?" when they're asked to show their parliamentary accreditation or are asked to pass their bags through metal detectors.

Cele urged Parliament to educate MPs and staff about security measures and the need that everyone be screened before entering the precinct. "If this member asks a constable 'do you know who I am', that guy is already pushed out," said Cele.

"Just imagine where the police officer says, yes, you are honourable Groenewald, so what? There will be war in Parliament..." The committee received a briefing from police highlighting security gaps at the legislature. These included a failure by the department of public works (DPW) to put in place physical security features to help police do their job. It emerged that DPW had registered a project to upgrade security measures in 2007, but that the project came to a standstill when the scope of the project changed. The project was resuscitated last year, but several permissions have to be received first, including from the SA Heritage Resource Agency since the legislature is a heritage site.

"The project is envisaged to start in 2019, be completed in 2020," a document tabled by DPW in the committee, said. SA Police Services Major General Leon Rabie told MPs security would be beefed up from October 1, when those entering Parliament will be required to produce their access cards when entering and wear it where it is visible to police. All people will have to pass through a metal detector, with only vehicles with a parking disc to be granted access. In addition, all vehicles, including delivery vehicles, will be thoroughly searched.

Those with weapons will have declare their firearms to a designated security official. Earlier, Rabie told MPs that parliamentary worker Lennox Garane was allowed to enter the premises without putting his bag through a scanner. The police officer on duty has since been placed on suspension and will be subjected to disciplinary steps. Rabie said an assessment of security following Garane's death showed three metal detectors were not working, the layout of access control points was not "conducive for proper access control", and other facilities were not equipped to help officers carry out their duties. Technology also needed to be updated said Rabie. "The cameras installed are not in sequence...which makes it difficult to follow intruders in parliamentary precinct," said Rabie. Parliament had a perimeter fence which was only 1.2 metres high, making it easy for an intruder to jump the fence. Currently, there are 334 police officers deployed as static protectors to Parliament. , Editing by Lindiz van Zilla