

MOZAMBIQUE

Border still criminals' getaway route

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THE South Africa-Mozambique border situated far north of KwaZulu-Natal remains a vehicle theft getaway despite remedial efforts that have been made by the government.

This was revealed by Bethuel Mthethwa, chairperson of the community safety committee at the KZN legislature.

Mthethwa said the report presented before the committee showed that at least 24 vehicles were reported stolen within a week last month, causing locals to panic.

Mthethwa, who is also the chairperson for the ANC Far North Region alleged there were "rogue" elements within the police, saying the recovery rate was very low.

Sbusiso Mpontshane was hijacked at gunpoint by five armed men while opening a gate in his home at Jozini on March 5. He said the culprits drove off with him to an unknown forest near the border.

SANDF spokesperson Brigadier General Mafi Mgobhozi said their members were deployed to all borders. He said extra members were deployed in areas where there was a high demand for enforcement.

Currently, the department of transport through public works and Infrastructure was building a R85.7 million jersey barrier wall which was commissioned in 2016 as part of upgrading and developing border control infrastructure along a section of the border.

Mthethwa said the project was moving at a very slow pace while people were becoming victims of crime.

He lambasted the police, alleging that some were working with syndicates.

The Jersey barrier wall project is a long term solution, we need law enforcement agencies to look into the allegations raised by the community about police working with syndicates. We hope that intervention from the provincial office will bring change in that area," he said.

Police spokesperson Colonel Thembeke Mbele did not comment at the time of publishing.