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14 Pongola accident victims laid to rest in moving mass funeral

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Fourteen people who died in a horror crash in Pongola, northern Kwa-Zulu-Natal, were laid to rest over the weekend.

A moving mass funeral was held at the Waterbus Sports Ground in Pongola on Saturday. The 14 victims included 13 school children and the driver of the bakkie. In total 20 people died after a truck crashed into the bakkie they were travelling in on the N2.

The mass funeral was attended by numerous government delegations led by Minister of Transport Fikile Mbalula, Police Minister Bheki Cele and Deputy Minister of Education Dr Reginah Mhaule.

The KZN provincial government was represented by MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison Siphso Hlomuka, and the MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works Dr Ntuthuko Mahlaba, who is also the district service delivery champion of Zululand.

Speaking during the mass funeral, Mhaule said 10 pupils from Victorious Independent School died in the crash. "This means that there is no life in that school. That is why I say a team of social workers must come closer and work together with the school.

"We also want to send our deepest condolences to Thembokuhle



Fourteen victims of the Pongola road crash were laid to rest in a mass funeral that was held at the Waterbus Sports Field in Pongola.

PHOTO: KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Primary School as two pupils from that school died in the crash and at Siyathemba Primary School, one pupil died from the crash. Two pupils from Sakhumuzi Primary school died," said Mhaule.

She said a teacher from Buhlebuzile Primary School also died.

Last week the truck driver, Sibusiso Siyaya, appeared in the Pongola Magistrate's Court and is facing 20 charges of culpable homicide.

He is due back in court today for a formal bail application.

On Thursday, Mbalula released the accident report, which identified driver recklessness as the main cause of the accident. The truck driver apparently drove in the on-coming traffic lane for over 1,2 km.

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