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**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1593**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 21- 2017)**

**1593. Mr S P Mhlongo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Police:**

What programme or strategy does the SA Police Service have in place to deal with the nationwide epidemic of sexual violence committed against female students at institutions of higher learning?

NW1798E

**REPLY:**

The South African Police Service (SAPS), is committed to provide a professional and empathetic service which will focus on the needs of victims of all sexual-related crimes, which are committed against women and children. The SAPS has a dual mandate in terms of addressing sexual-related crimes, which is as follows:

* **Proactive:** Conduct awareness programmes to educate and sensitise communities, as a preventative measure, to curb sexual-related crimes, as well as to collaborate with external stakeholders, such as the Department of Social Development, the Department of Higher Education and various non-profit organisations.
* **Reactive:** Investigate reported sexual related crimes, as guided by the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No 32 of 2007) and the Sexual Offences Act, 1957 (Act No 23 of 1957).

The proactive approach to the addressing of sexual-related offences, committed at institutions of higher learning, is one that requires specific interventions and the forging of partnerships, based on what would be the most appropriate manner of addressing causes and factors that contribute to the crimes committed. Examples of these interventions range from those that specifically target institutions, where these crimes have been reported, to general awareness-raising campaigns, aimed at all members of the public, regarding sexual offences.

In addition, as part of the general approach to addressing sexual-related offences, victims of sexual offences are encouraged to report these crimes, in order to enable thorough investigation, directed at ensuring the successful conviction of the perpetrator.

Examples of the proactive crime prevention approach, per Province, are indicated below:

| **PROVINCE** | **APPLICABLE INTERVENTIONS** |
| --- | --- |
| Eastern Cape | * Continuous awareness campaigns are conducted at universities. * Several engagements have been held between the SAPS and university management. * The Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit (FCS), conducted integrated campaigns with University Management and Student Representative Councils (SRCs). * The Rhodes University implements its own sexual violence policy. * Talk shows have been conducted by the SAPS at ocal radio stations. * Engagements with social partners, who are able to address the social factors that lead to sexual violence, e.g. the Department of Social Development. |
| Free State | * Implementation of the Youth Crime Prevention Framework, which is premised on establishing partnerships with appropriate organisations, including higher learning institutions, in order to address the risk factors of crime. * The SAPS’s Free State Youth Ambassadors, conduct dialogues with students at higher learning institutions. The youth ambassadors are peers/young leaders, who are best placed to address issues that concern young people and to discourage criminal behaviour and encourage victims to report crimes. |
| KwaZulu-Natal | * Awareness campaigns are held at learning institutions to sensitise learners on the prevention of abuse and on the reporting of abuse. * The SAPS, various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other government departments, are instrumental in conducting such awareness campaigns. * The discourse is not limited to abuse only, topics such as drug and alcohol abuse, which may be contributing factors, are also dealt with. |
| Limpopo | * The conducting of monthly meetings with relevant stakeholders, such as the municipality, landlords of students living off-campus, school representatives and NGOs, in order to address factors that precipitate crime or contribute to the risks of sexual violence. On the basis of the analysis of the risk factors, advice is provided to landlords on security management. * Community group patrols are conducted in the communities surrounding higher learning institutions. Patrols are also conducted in partnership with security guards, in and outside institutions. * Crime awareness campaigns and safer school programmes are conducted. * As part of sector policing, intelligence-led operations are conducted within communities that may impact on sexual offences. |
| Western Cape | * Awareness programmes and strategies are in place which are aimed at combating gender-based violence, focusing on the community as a whole. |
| Gauteng | * Every institution of higher learning is responsible for their own security. Therefore, the SAPS does not patrol the inside of these institutional premises. Not all students reside on the institution’s premises, but rent rooms/houses in the nearby vicinity. This means that they will either walk or commute to and from the institution. It leaves these students more vulnerable than those residing on the various premises. * Station areas are divided into smaller sections, called sectors. According to National Instruction 3 of 2013, every police station must have a crime forum, in every sector. The attendees must represent those who reside and/or work within the sector. Students and institutions of higher learning do fall within a sector and are represented at the sector crime forum. * Besides the sector crime forums, police stations also have a forum for security companies, where the different crimes affecting the station area, are discussed. The security managers, including those responsible for security at the higher learning institutions, form part of the security forum. Crime hotspots and the latest modus operandi, are discussed and crime prevention actions/strategies are planned. These meetings are held on a weekly or monthly basis. Crimes are also addressed at the higher learning institutions, via the student residence committees. * The owners of commune premises owners are included in the security meetings and forums, in order to communicate with their residents and also to sharpen up the security on the premises were the students live. * Pamphlets, reflecting the latest threats and safety tips, are regularly distributed to students on the premises and/or at entrance/exist gates. * Social media, such as WhatsApp groups, specific to crime in and around the relevant area, is very popular and also very effective. Communication through the Community Policing Forums and Youth Desk/Youth Committees are utilised to send safety measures and look-out messages. At most police stations in the province, a Social Crime Prevention Co-ordinator has been appointed to coordinate such activities. * The Province recently developed a plan to address crimes against women and children. The plan focuses on the following proactive objectives: address crime generators, social crime prevention initiatives and enhanced community awareness. The reactive objective addresses effective investigation and prosecution. |
| North West | * Continuous awareness campaigns are conducted at the North West (NW) University, Potchefstroom, as well as the other NW University campus, in Mahikeng. * The Province has also implemented the Youth Crime Prevention Framework, which is premised on partnerships with appropriate organisations, in order to address the risk factors of crime. * Community and security patrols are conducted in the communities surrounding the institutions. Patrols are conducted in partnership with the Sector Commander. * Awareness programmes and strategies, which are aimed at combating gender-based violence and focusing on the community as a whole, are in place. * Locally based radio stations, as well as the campus radio station, are utilised to make students aware of their rights and safety, specifically in respect of sexual offences. |
| Northern Cape | * To date, no incident has been reported from any higher institutions in the Province. However, the Provincial Crime Prevention Strategy, which was launched in 2013, addresses crimes against women and children. All governmental programmes are aligned to the Northern Cape Provincial Crime Prevention (NCPCP) Strategy, which is a guiding tool to all departments and NGOs, on how issues of gender-based violence, should be addressed. |
| Mpumalanga | * The following programmes or strategies are in place in the Province: * SABC radio slot during which the SAPS provides information on gender-based violence and sexual offences and reaches out to community, including female students at institutions of higher learning. |