

MEDIA RELEASE PSA condemns burglary at Kushke Agricultural School in Limpopo

DATE 16 September 2024

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) condemns a burglary at Kushke Agricultural School in Polokwane on 12 September 2024, where several items, including laptops and printers, were stolen.

The security officer at the School could not offer resistance as he was outnumbered by the armed criminals who were determined to steal all valuables they could find. The criminals approached the security officer around 23:00 on 12 September 2024 and forced him to accompany them. They continued to break the entrance burglar bars to gain entry to the administration block. The officer was tied up in an office with wire and his belt. The criminals broke all office doors and vandalised offices where they found nothing of value. They stole all laptops they could find and broke the security camera recording system and took the hard drive.

It is concerning that the alarm system was off since the previous Sunday. The School's management was made aware of this but failed to address the matter, thus leaving the School's asset exposed and endangering the life of the security officer. It is unclear if a call was logged with the security company, or if the failure was on the side of the School. There is a need for investigation into this matter. The burglary took place at a critical time when the School had started with preparations for final examinations, and it is trusted that this incident will not have a negative impact on preparations.

Police officers visited the School at around 04:00 in the morning. It is unclear who alerted them of the situation as they found the security officer still tied in an office. Despite the matter being reported to the Circuit and District Offices of the Limpopo Department of Education, none of these officials have since visited the School.

The PSA is extremely concerned about vandalism and theft taking place across Limpopo where assets are being lost whilst there is already a shortage of assets. At most schools, assets are not insured, thus delaying prompt replacement, with a negative impact on teaching and learning. At the time, the South African Police Service is experiencing staff shortages, making it difficult to patrol schools and ensure protection. The PSA urges the Limpopo Department of Education to upgrade security systems at schools to deter criminals by means of effective alarm systems and adequate security officers.

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