

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA condemns vandalism of Limpopo schools and calls for harsher action against perpetrators**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is gravely concerned about the disturbing trend of vandalising schools in Limpopo, particularly during school holidays.

The PSA has learnt with shock about burglaries at several schools in the Mopani district of Limpopo where valuable assets, including photocopying machines, printers, chairs, sporting equipment, laptops, tablets, laminating machines, files, trophies, WiFi fibre and a generator were stolen from various schools.

Ximausa Mpembelani School, Ha-Aka Primary School, and Nobelhoek Primary School experienced burglaries and malicious damage to property whilst Gidela Secondary School in Blinkwater suffered the most as the administration office was torched during a break-in, destroying valued assets, including photocopy machines, printers, and sports equipment. The cost of the damaged and stolen assets is estimated at R1 075 700. This is a major setback as there is an immediate need to replace the items for the smooth running of these schools.

Vandalism of schools poses a serious threat to education in Limpopo. It affects infrastructure and disrupts the lives of learners and educators. Damage to government property is a declaration of war against the state and people and should not be tolerated. The PSA further commends the prompt response by the Limpopo Premier and the MEC of Education to ensure that affected schools were visited and supported, resulting in minimum delay disruption of learning and teaching.

The PSA calls for the enhancement of security at schools, particularly during school holidays, which seems to be a peak time for attacks. In addition to fences, security officers must be appointment at schools, coupled with sporadic police patrols. Communities must further ensure that schools are protected as these criminals hide in communities. Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to help prevent further damage and loss of property at schools. The PSA urges the SA Police Service in Limpopo to leave no stone unturned in these investigations to ensure that the perpetrators are prosecuted.

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