

Media Statement  
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## **MEC PILLAY VISITS JOZINI TO CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES AND OFFER SUPPORT TO THE TOURISM SECTOR FOLLOWING TRAGIC FIRE INCIDENT ABOARD SHAYAMAZI BOATHOUSE**

The MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr. Ravi Pillay, visited Jozini today to offer support to families and to the tourism sector as a whole following the devastating fire incident aboard the Shayamanzi 1 boathouse.

Two people, a German tourist and a crew member from Pongolo, passed away while another crew member from Mtubatuba is still missing following a fire incident aboard the Shayamanzi 1 luxury boathouse on Saturday afternoon.

While the names of the deceased and the missing crew member are known, they are being withheld out of respect for the families.

During his visit to Jozini, which is one of KZN's prime tourism destination, MEC Pillay conveyed condolences to the family of the German tourist who have since left the province and to the families of the crew member who is confirmed dead.

MEC Pillay held a meeting with family of the missing crew member and assured them that police were hard at work trying to find the missing crew member.

He also met with the owners of the facility, the police management in the area, and a representative of the local community tourism organisation.

In one of the meetings the MEC received a briefing from the crew members, who were still clearly distraught about the events that led to the incident. He also received a briefing from the local SAPS and from the South African Maritime Safety Authority officials on the investigations that are ongoing.

MEC said maintaining safety standards remains one of the highest priorities. He said he was pleased that the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) was investigating and will provide a detailed report and recommendations as this will be crucial in preventing a reoccurrence of similar incidents.

"I have no reason to believe that this is not an exceptional incidence. The maritime industry has high safety standards. We expect the highest safety standards to be observed and there is no reason at this stage to say that they were not observed."

The owner of the facility, Mr Rodger Blevin told MEC Pillay that in its two decades of operation it was the first time that the facility encountered an incident of this nature.

Based on the briefing he had received, MEC Pillay said it appeared a fire started and spread very quickly.

"We cannot speculate beyond that. People must take comfort that we have experts like the South African Maritime Safety Authority which licences these boats on an annual basis," MEC Pillay said.

MEC Pillay was accompanied by the chairperson of the Tourism KZN Board, Mr. Sithembiso Madlala, and the Chief Director for tourism development in the Department; Mr. Sibonelo Nzimande. The officials will tomorrow visit the family of the deceased crew member.

MEC Pillay said he was confident that the investigation by the relevant authorities will shed light on the incident.

**Issued by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs**