



agriculture & rural development

Department:
Agriculture and Rural Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

The Independent
17 March 2018

Page: 02

Page 2
THE INDEPENDENT
on Saturday
17 March 2018

News

Call for calm after Eshowe farm arson

DUNCAN GUY

THE Eshowe security guard whose alleged actions sparked a protest which saw three sugar farms burnt out will apply for bail in the coming week.

Andiswa Magwaza, 21, appeared briefly in the Eshowe Magistrate's Court on Thursday after having been arrested for the fatal shooting of alleged trespassing fisherman Gift Siphamandla Xulu on Corby Hill Farm, just outside the town.

After the fires, a case of arson was opened, but no arrests have been made.

Meanwhile Sandy la Marque, CEO of the KwaZulu-Natal Agricultural Union (Kwanalu), has appealed to communities to remain calm.

"The criminal act, and the social unrest which followed, are unrelated to land issues but rather are the result of a community calling for the arrest of an alleged accused.

"This is an isolated criminal offence which took place

on a property in Eshowe which happens to be a farm. The incident is being dealt with by all the relevant authorities and it is currently under investigation," said La Marque.

She further called on people to refrain from jumping to conclusions, to ensure their information was from credible sources and not to blindly rely on information circling on social media channels and groups.

"We strongly condemn any criminal acts, the use of

violence and the subsequent actions that have taken place in response to the incident, but we call on people to be rational and calm in order for the SAPS to complete their investigation so that due process of the law can take place," said La Marque.

Yesterday mist and rain saturated the ashes of the farmhouse, a cottage and other out-houses of the farm as well as remnants of road signs and sticks which protesters used to block the R66.

When The Independent on Saturday visited the farmstead, reportedly owned by a Dr Kabashane, no farm residents or workers were present.

The only sign of farmyard life was a flock of chickens pecking around on the established garden where plants included a huge flamboyant tree and a cycad.

A stone wall separated the garden from an adjacent burnt sugar-cane field.

The insides of the houses were charred, with ceiling

beams collapsed and large gaps where there had once been windows.

A damaged washing machine and a microwave oven with its working parts removed lay on the lawn.

Also on the grass was a pile of banknotes used in the game Monopoly beside a 2008 Absa bank statement and an issue of the Sugar Journal.

Down a short, steep road into the valley below was the dam where the alleged shooting incident took place.



WASHED OUT: A washing machine stands broken and abandoned on the lawn of the farmhouse at Corby Hill Farm, outside Eshowe, which crowds torched, along with nearby sugar-cane fields.

PICTURE: GCINA NDWALANE

Find us at:

www.iol.co.za/ios
IOSnewsSA

@IOSnews_A
@IOSnewsS