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**MEDIA
STATEMENT**

TO: ALL MEDIA
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 09 OCTOBER 2024


COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE CALLS FOR STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF BYLAWS TO PREVENT THE SALE OF FAKE AND EXPIRED GOODS IN SPAZA SHOPS

The Gauteng Provincial Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Community Safety is deeply saddened by the tragic deaths of five school children in Naledi, Soweto, who allegedly consumed food suspected to have been poisoned, purchased from a local spaza shop.

This tragic incident highlights the urgent need for stricter enforcement of bylaws to prevent the sale of expired and harmful goods, particularly in township areas, where many spaza shops, including those owned by illegal foreign nationals operate with little or no monitoring by Metro Police Officers and relevant Authorities.

The Committee strongly condemns the continued sale of expired and fake goods which pose a serious threat to the health and safety of our communities, especially vulnerable children. The irresponsible behaviour of some spaza shop owners who put profits above the well being of the community is intolerable.

It is crucial that the relevant authorities, including the Metro Police, Law Enforcement Agencies and the Department of Health take immediate and decisive actions to prevent further loss of life.



The Committee calls on Metro Police Departments in various Municipalities to enforce bylaws rigorously and ensure that all spaza shops are operating within the law, particularly in relation to the sale of consumable goods.

It is essential that Law Enforcement Agencies conduct regular inspections to monitor compliance and that immediate actions are taken against those found violating these laws.

The Committee further calls on the Department of Health to intensify its health inspections to ensure that all food products sold in these shops are safe for consumption and have not exceeded their expiry dates.

The Committee is concerned that the continued loss of life is partly due to the failures of Law Enforcement Agencies to fulfill their responsibility of conducting regular inspections and ensuring compliance by spaza shops. This lack of monitoring puts communities at risk and undermines the very fabric of public health and safety.

We urge community members to be vigilant and report any suspicious activities related to the sale of expired or fake goods. Together we must act to protect our communities, especially our children from such senseless tragedies.

The Committee will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that swift action is taken and that necessary measures are implemented to protect the health and safety of the people of Gauteng.

**ISSUED BY GPL'S MEDIA SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY, HONOURABLE BANDILE
MASUKU**

For interview requests with the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee please
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