

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA concerned about recent burglaries at Pietermaritzburg schools, KwaZulu-Natal
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EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned about recent spate of burglaries at schools in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal that are spreading fear.

Thieves stole eight laptops that were kept in a safe, eleven computer towers, a Wi-Fi sim card, and an extension cord at Nzuzwenhle Full-Service School in Azalea. At Sibongumbonvu Combined School in Cedara thieves looted 22 laptops, a television set, Wi-Fi routers, and other products after a high-tech application was launched, just a few days before cyber-cadet training was set to commence.

These burglaries is another blow to digital education efforts in the KwaZulu-Natal as the equipment was meant to bridge the gap in accessibility of technology, especially in previously disadvantaged rural schools. Rural schools are often located in lower socio-economic status areas, with fewer resources, lower funding and staffing, which impact on the quality of education.

This situation resulted in the Department of Basic Education (DBE) donating high-tech labs to schools to assist in levelling the playing field with more affluent schools. Technology can make learning more engaging, enhance digital literacy skills, and help in teaching robotics and coding. This can facilitate blended learning models where learners learn in class and online.

The PSA is concerned about the thefts at schools as it is a serious matter that requires the attention and intervention of the DBE. The PSA urges the Department to implement stringent security measures, using tracking software so that even if resources are stolen, these can be traced, and educating learners, staff, and communities to report crime as it disrupts education.

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