

## NYATI BUSH AND RIVER BREAK

### Media statement

22 January 2020

The Parktown Boys' High School Grade 8 Orientation Camp took place at Nyathi Bush and River Break in the North West Province from 15 – 17 January 2020.

The learners were accompanied by their Headmaster, seven staff members of the Parktown Boys' High School, and a number of Grade 12 prefects.

The scheduled time of arrival for the school was 11h00 but the busses arrived more than three hours late. The scheduled and agreed program had to be adjusted to allow for the time lost due to the school busses' late arrival.

The learners participated in an adventure activity, known as a stretcher-run that was supervised by seventeen of Nyathi Bush and River Break's camp facilitators as well as the school staff members.

The activity was conducted between 15h00 and 16h00 on Wednesday, 15 January 2020.

Only one part of the stretcher-run activity involved the river. Participants, who were working in teams of more or less seven each, had to pass through about 20 metres of a shallow bend on the outside edge of the river-bank, with one member on a stretcher which had to be improvised as a raft, supported by four tubes and the remaining team members supporting and steering the tubes and stretcher.

Eight of the seventeen facilitators were deployed at the riverside to assist the learners and a number of school staff members were also present.

The children participating in the activity were excited and competitive. The groups were eager to finish first and started to overtake other groups in the water. That created a dangerous situation as groups – despite clear instructions to the contrary – tended to move into the deep end of the river where the current was stronger than in the shallow water. The facilitators had to help three groups to get out of the water. At no stage the facilitators noticed that any of the group members were swept away, but the specific activity was immediately terminated when the dangers were realised.

After the activity there was a hike and supper, followed by a sleep-out in the veld. On the Wednesday evening, roll-call was held by the school staff, where it was realized that eight learners were unaccounted for. Unfortunately, no roll-call was held at the school before the departure of the learners, so there was uncertainty amongst the school staff whether the eight absent learners were actually attending the camp at all.

After the school contacted the parents of the eight unaccounted learners it became apparent on late Thursday morning that Enoch Mpianzi was missing.

Internal standard emergency procedures were immediately instituted by the camp management, staff and members of the community. The SAPS Emergency Services were also contacted to assist with the search and rescue efforts.

At 11h00 on Friday we were informed of the tragic news that the body of Enoch Mpianzi had been found by SAPS Search and Rescue personnel.

The Nyati Bush and River Break staff and management express our deepest condolences the Mpianzi family following this tragic loss. We share the pain of Enoch's loved ones. Our staff are also receiving counselling for the trauma and shock.

Nyati Bush and River Break will provide full cooperation and assistance to all investigations conducted as well as provide access to the property.

Further details will be communicated once more information becomes available.

For further enquiries, contact:

Mr Daniël Eloff

Legal representative of Nyati Bush and River Break

Cell number: 082-838-5290