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Top cop's firearm stolen

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“The suspect who was arrested for being in possession of the retrieved firearm will appear before court soon, pending further police investigations”



File image

EVEN the Northern Cape Police Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Risimati Shivuri (pictured), is not safe from the clutches of criminals after his service firearm was apparently stolen out of his vehicle in the CBD on Sunday.

It is believed that the firearm was stored in a laptop bag inside the car while Shivuri slipped out to order some food from Nando's.

It was not confirmed whether he was off duty at the time of the incident.

No explanations have been forthcoming as to why the firearm was left unattended.

Shivuri was also allegedly robbed of an official cellphone and cash amounting to R5 000.

Extensive alerts and a massive search was launched for the missing firearm, where several raids were conducted in an attempt to retrieve the firearm.

It is believed that a firearm with a serial number that matches the firearm belonging to Shivuri was found inside a shack in Diamond Park on Sunday afternoon, although it was reported to have been damaged.

The firearm has apparently been booked in as an exhibit.

One suspect was arrested and taken into custody.

Police spokesperson Brigadier Mohale Ramatseba indicated that the police were unable to name the person from whom the firearm was allegedly stolen.

“First of all we cannot mention the name of the person whose firearm was allegedly robbed, as the police officer was not arrested. As the South African Police Service in the Northern Cape we can confirm that the matter is under investigation and all processes will be followed up accordingly. The firearm was robbed from the owner,” said Ramatseba yesterday.

He added that members of the SAPS were allowed to be in possession of their official firearms after hours as part of their personal equipment regulated by police regulations.

“The suspect who was arrested for being in possession of the retrieved firearm will appear before court soon, pending further police investigations. The police are investigating a charge of robbery. No further details will be disclosed as the matter will be before court.”

Ramatseba did not elaborate on whether the cash and cellphone were retrieved, or if any more arrests were expected.

No mention was made as to whether it was considered negligent to leave a service firearm inside a car unattended or if any action or investigation would be conducted by the Ministry of Police or national office.

The spokesperson for the national commissioner yesterday referred media enquiries back to the Province.

Shivuri is not new to controversy as he was one of several high-ranking SAPS officials mentioned during a court case involving gang-related clashes over the provision of security services at nightclubs in the Western Cape in 2018.

Shivuri was photographed in conversation with one of the accused, Nafiz Modack, at the One&Only Hotel at the V&A Waterfront last year.

During previous court proceedings it was stated that Modack intended to “wipe out” rival businessman Mark Lifman and alleged 26s gang boss Jerome “Donkie” Booysen – as well as his own “partner” Colin Booysen – to run the Cape Town nightclub security business himself

Modack had claimed that he was provided with police protection by some of the top cops in the country including the Western Cape’s head of crime intelligence, Major-General Mzwandile Tiyo, and provincial head of detectives, Major-General Patrick Mbotho, as well as Shivuri.

In another incident, a complaint was laid by the DA with the Police Investigative Inspectorate after Shivuri utilised the Province’s only police helicopter to fly to Wimpy to have breakfast and also to retrieve a jacket that he had left at Gariiep Dam during the 2017 ANC provincial elective conference in Colesberg.

The national commissioner at the time, Khomotoso Phahlane, had defended Shivuri, stating that he was executing his responsibilities in the vicinity of the event he was policing – including Gariiep Dam and Wimpy in Colesburg.

He had stated that all other locations visited by Shivuri were in close proximity to the venue where the police were monitoring the ANC conference.