

Sections Of SA-Zim Border Fence Stolen

Written by Rudi Prinsloo

Sunday, 26 July 2009 05:15 - Last Updated Sunday, 26 July 2009 05:22



Large sections of the border security fence between South Africa and Zimbabwe have been stolen, the Democratic Alliance said on Friday.

"The SA Police Service appears to have given up protecting the borders of South Africa," DA MPs David Maynier and James Lorimer said in a joint statement.

The pair have just completed a visit to the northern borderline, following a visit last week to the Lesotho border, where they also discovered sections of that security fence was missing.

Maynier and Lorimer said the state of the SA-Zimbabwe border fence was shocking.

"On our visit... in the Beit Bridge area we found that... several gates had been left open; the borderline fence had been cut wide open in several places; large sections of [it] had been stolen; and [it] had been flattened in many places."

Further, their latest tour had found a "low police presence" on the border.

"The SAPS do not do foot patrols, and were deployed at 10km intervals at sub-stations along the South Africa-Zimbabwe border.

"The poor state of borderline security made it possible for organised crime syndicates to smuggle cigarettes and livestock. Poachers also came over the border, causing a major problem for farmers in the area.

"With livestock easily moving over the border, there was a continuous threat of foot-and-mouth disease breaking out in the area."

They noted that both Defence and Military Veterans Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and her deputy had indicated the SA National Defence Force would be returning to patrol South Africa's borders.

"We appear to be moving in the right direction. But what we need is a concrete plan rather than vague promises. We need to know how many soldiers will be deployed on the border. And we need to know when they will be deployed on the border," Maynier and Lorimer said.

Source : Sapa /rod/gj

Date : 24 Jul 2009 12:14