

Buses set on fire in Cape Town as taxi strike starts

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Two buses were set on fire on Monday in Cape Town as local taxi associations embarked on a two-day strike to protest against the termination of an incentive programme.



People walk past a torched bus during a two-day strike by taxi operators over a number of grievances against traffic authorities in Cape Town, South Africa, November 21, 2022. REUTERS/Esa Alexander

The Western Cape provincial government, home to legislative capital Cape Town, recently announced it would terminate an incentive scheme for taxi drivers which encouraged safe driving practices and curtailed illegal operations.

But due to a lack of funding, it had to cancel the programme after a little more than a year, triggering an uproar from the taxi associations who called for a two-day strike in the city from Monday.

There were long queues by 6am (4am GMT) at bus stops as people waited for transport to go to work and to school, a Reuters witness said.

The associations were not immediately available for comment.

A bus was attacked by an unidentified person, who shot at the tyres to stop it from operating, the witness said, adding people jumped from the windows with a woman suffering injuries.

"No passengers or drivers were injured," Bronwen Dyke-Beyer, a spokesperson of Golden Arrow Bus Services, which runs a fleet of 1,100 buses in Cape Town, told Reuters, confirming that one of its buses was set alight.

She said the company did not know who was responsible.

JP Smith, manager of safety and security of Cape Town, confirmed there had been several incidents during the morning involving buses operated by Golden Arrow and MyCiTi, the city's rapid transit system, but the situation was under control.

"The buses are running and they are being escorted by the police," he said.

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