

# Casino security upgrade at Wild Coast

A huge police contingent has been stationed at the Wild Coast Sun Casino after a robbery at the resort over the weekend.

Private security has also been stepped up after a gang terrorised staff and patrons during the early hours of Sunday morning.

The robbery is one of many incidents that have plagued the well known resort, which attracts thousands of tourists each year.

Last year, 20 armed men forced their way into the Wild Coast Sun Casino and escaped with an undisclosed amount of money.

In January, a Mooi River family was robbed by three armed men in their hotel room at the resort. The suspects made off with money, cellphones and wallets.

In the latest incident, a heavily armed gang of five men entered the casino in the early hours of Sunday morning and forced patrons and staff to lie on the floor.

The men made off with money and jewellery from patrons.

One of the patrons, Sagren Venketas, a businessman, said he and his family were seated at a restaurant near the casino entrance when the robbery occurred.

Venketas said he saw a group of men armed with rifles and guns running around shouting at patrons inside the casino.

„The men started pushing children around and then locked the gates. They shouted at everyone to lie on the floor. It was such a terrible experience,“ he said,

Venketas said one of the balaclava-clad robbers stood next to him and fired a shot into the ceiling.

„I just froze when I heard the gunshot. The man also kicked a child who was crying for her parents. The robbers were brutal and manhandled the children that were in the play area,“ he said.

General Manager of Wild Coast Sun Alec McMath has assured patrons that management had recently employed 24-hour armed response that patrolled the entire resort.

„We are taking this incident seriously and have since doubled the number of external security guards. There are also more patrols,“ he said.

McMath said the entire robbery was captured by the casino’s surveillance cameras and the footage was handed to police.

„Police are busy viewing the footage at this stage. The men wore balaclavas, so this might make identifying the suspects difficult,“ he said.

He said there was a huge police presence on the property since the robbery.

Meanwhile, local casinos have also stepped up security and surveillance systems to ensure the safety of their patrons.

Suncoast Casino and Entertainment World’s Marketing manager Robbie Naidoo said while they had had no incidents so far, they were „geared up for anything“.

General Manager of Sibaya Casino and Entertainment Kingdom Melville Vogel said: „We are confident we have a good security strategy to maximise patron safety and minimise risk on site at Sibaya.“

He said Sibaya had security cameras in strategic positions inside and outside the casino and 24-hour surveillance.

„Front line staff are trained to handle a variety of potential emergencies,“ he added.