

## Statement Of The KZN Provincial Executive Council On Recent Disaster Incidents And Other Related Matters

### INTRODUCTION

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Executive Council held its regular meeting on Wednesday, 05 February 2020, at the Moses Mabhida House in Pietermaritzburg.

The high-level meeting focused extensively on a number of key issues and reflected in greater detail on service delivery challenges and opportunities to effect positive change that need the attention of all government departments.

The Cabinet deliberated on various current affairs issues, the economy, education, health and social development.

### BACKGROUND

The Provincial Executive Council (PEC) received a report on the analysis of the 2019 Matric results performance by the province. The PEC congratulated the Department led by MEC Kwazi Mshengu, and paid tribute to all the teachers, learners, parents, unions and all stakeholders within the value chain of education for the hard work which has led to the historic improvements by the Matric class of 2019.

Cabinet also welcomed the presentation on the improvement plan for the 2020 academic year which includes a turnaround plan for schools that have recorded a decline, including the assessment of the viability of those that registered zero percent. The Provincial Executive Council noted that some of these schools have less than 10 learners hence the questions and the need for investigations on their viability.

Cabinet also noted that in the 2020 academic year there will be no modularisation; meaning that all learners will sit for full examination. We ask learners to focus on their education, and ensure adequate preparations with immediate effect.

### MUNICIPALITIES UNDER ADMINISTRATION

The Provincial Executive Council directed that Heads of Provincial Government departments visit all municipalities under administration to provide support in line with provision of section 154 of the Constitution, which requires provincial and national government to support municipalities.

To date, the province has a total of nine municipalities under administration and War Rooms have been set-up. It is the view of the provincial government that the municipalities must be rid of all the maladies that have paralysed them. The municipalities must be given hands-on support to recover speedily so that they can continue to discharge their mandate as engines of growth and development for their communities on their own.

### EMPLOYMENT OF SOCIAL WORKERS

The Provincial Executive Council noted and welcomed the efforts by the Department of Social Development, which has developed various strategies to respond to gender-based violence. These include the provision of shelters for abused women and children; currently there are 23 shelters and 28 White Door Centres of Hope provincially, to accommodate victims of gender-based violence and Femicide.

The Department also established two shelters for men who are victims of trafficking and other forms of abuse in eThekweni and uMgungundlovu districts

The department expanded psycho-social services in eight Thuthuzela Care Centres spread across six districts.

A total of 175 Social Workers have been appointed to render psycho-social support services to victims in crisis centres across the districts. Victim-friendly rooms are provided with Social Workers to render psycho-social support in all districts.

The Department has established a dedicated call centre that community members can contact when requiring services from the department. The number is 087 158 3000.

#### APPLICATION TO CLASSIFY KZN AS A DISASTER AREA

The KZN Provincial Executive Council was briefed on the impact of the disaster incidents that have battered the province since November 2019. The Cabinet noted the cost of the damage inflicted on households, schools. Public infrastructure. At this stage the damage amounts to R1,2 billion, and is beyond the affordability capacity of the Province or any affected municipality.

The Provincial Executive Council has therefore resolved to initiate a process of classifying and declaring a Provincial State of Disaster, in line with the (Disaster Management Act 57, 2002). This will then commence the process to harness more resources even from the National Government to rehabilitate and reconstruct the damage that has occurred.

#### PASSING OF STRUGGLE VETERAN DERRICK McBRIDE

The Provincial Executive Council received with great sadness the news of the passing of Struggle stalwart and decorated freedom fighter Derrick McBride. Derrick McBride is the father of Robert McBride who is also known for his role as a fearless liberation activist.

McBride senior, a former uMkhonto WeSizwe operative, ranked among the most outstanding activists South Africa has ever seen, with a prolific record in the Struggle for liberation. He pioneered many strategic interventions which eventually saw the demise of Apartheid.

Cabinet extends condolences to the family, relatives, comrades and friends of the McBride family. Owing to his contribution to the liberation of South Africa, we have submitted a request to the National Government for a Special State Provincial Funeral for our fallen comrade, in line with policy on official provincial funerals.

The family has advised that the funeral will take place this coming Saturday the 8th February 2020, with a solemn ceremony at the Durban City Hall, to accompany him to his final resting place.

#### UPDATE ON ENGAGEMENTS RELATED TO THE MBUYAZI DISPUTES AND RBM MATTERS.

We also want to indicate that since this morning, we have been here engaged in talks with the stakeholders involved in the KwaMbuyazi Traditional Leadership issues. As you will by now know, recent developments have had a serious impact on the operations of mining giant Richards Bay Minerals (RBM). We remain seized with the task of facilitating and eventually bringing about the resolution and lasting peace to all the challenges.

We are grateful that the concerned stakeholders remain committed and supportive of the intrinsic role that Government has to play in the resolution of the existing dispute. The multi-stakeholder task team has given us a report on the work they have been doing. We are noticing progress, especially around efforts to thwart the criminal networks that are beginning to take advantage of the situation. Arrests have been effected by the police with the help of the community. The company has re-opened for business even as we continue to address remaining challenges. All stakeholders appreciate the urgency with which we have to work in order to bring stability and lasting peace. We are happy to report that we are on the correct path.

#### CORONA VIRUS

There has been considerable global fear and panic since the emergence of the Coronavirus, in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019. The virus has now claimed nearly 490 lives while confirmed cases have passed the 24,500 mark, with the majority of infections and deaths reported in China.

Our province, being home to one of the biggest entry points which is the Durban Port, has been beset by a number of hoaxes, suspicions and other forms of speculation. We are, however, pleased that up to this point, there has not been a single confirmed case in our Province.

By unveiling a detailed plan to keep the infectious flu-like virus at bay last week, our National Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize helped quell growing alarm about the disease, and restored public confidence in Government's ability to keep the virus incursion into the country's borders.

As the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, we support the strict protocols and measures adopted by Government in this regard, which include active surveillance, early detection, isolation, case management, contact

tracing and prevention of onward spread of coronavirus infection, as well sharing of full data with the World Health Organisation.

We are satisfied with the measures in place at our Ports, where our contingent of health officials are routinely conducting temperature screening for international travellers in general, and adopting strict surveillance of visitors.

As the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, we will work hand in hand with our counterparts at the National Department of Health, and the National Institute for Communicable Disease, to pull out all the stops to ensure that that status quo remains. And that, in the unlikely event of any confirmed cases, we are ready and able to respond effectively and efficiently.

We also welcome the act of goodwill by the Chinese Business Community based in KZN in particular, which yesterday sent over 50 000 tons of masks to assist our fraternal ally in China. We urge our local business people to work through the Chinese Embassy, and our Department of Health, should they also to lend a hand and support with Masks and Gloves.

Thank you.