



Office of the Premier

North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Media Statement

Date: Friday, 18 September 2020

Ladies and gentlemen of the media,
Members of the Provincial Coronavirus Command Council,
Baagi ba Profense ya North West ba ba reeditse puo eno ee tlhagisiwang
ka tlhamalalo mo diyalemoweng tsa loago mono gae.

Bagaetsho ke a lo dumedisa,

Bosele.

E setse e le sebaka sa kgwedi fa e sale ke tlhagisitse phatlhalatsa, pegelo ee mabapi le maiteko, mananeo le diphitlhelelo tsa rona re le puso ya Profense ya North West, tse di ka ga go lwantsha go anama ga mogare wa COVID-19 mono gae.

Mo pegelong eo, re ne ra itsise baagi gore profense ya rona e tsweletse go rebola jang ditirelo tse di maleba le ntwaga katlhanong le mogare ono, le gore re dirisitse ja madi a sechaba mo ntlheng eno.

Ke ne ka itlama gore re tla tswelela go dira seno, e le sesupo sa gore re ikarabela mo sechabeng, le go bontsha fa re le puso ya batho.

I therefore stand before you today, just two days after the President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, had announced that we, as a country, moving to the Risk Adjusted Lockdown Strategy Alert Level 1 from midnight this coming Sunday.

This move as announced by the President, will result in the easing of some Lockdown regulations as well as restrictions; this at the backdrop of a decrease in the number of new COVID-19 positive cases across the country.

Basically, this means that our recovery rate has been on the rise; we are now standing at 89% recovery across the country.

The announcement by the President on Wednesday that restrictions that were placed on international travel for business and leisure as well as the opening of borders are going to be lifted on 01 October also means that we, as a Province, have to be ready for the influx of travellers from the SADC region.

We are strategically located as a gateway into SADC and from SADC into South Africa as the North West Province; and our health personnel will need to be on alert at all points of entry that link us to our northern neighbours to stem any transnational spread of the pandemic.

Furthermore, as we open up the tourism sector to both international and domestic tourists aimed at the resuscitation of the economy and the improvement of livelihoods, we are confident that we have the necessary systems in place to curb any possible outbreak of the pandemic in the North West.

Because of the devastating effects to the economy and livelihoods that came with the outbreak of COVID-19, I will also be announcing programmes aimed at ensuring a speedy resurgence of the provincial economy in weeks to come; some of them will be aimed at bringing young people into the mainstream of economic activity and participation.

As most of us are aware, the North West province has also since mid-August, registered a fluctuating, yet encouraging decrease in new positive cases, with the latest being at 192. We currently have a total of 240 COVID-19 patients admitted to our hospitals, and we wish them a speedy recovery. So far, the Province has registered a total of 27 721 positive cases, of which 4 014 are still active. The recovery cases continue to rise, and are standing at 23 382.

We have, however, been cautioned not to get too excited or complacent, as we still have a long way to go.

Since the beginning of the Lockdown in March, the Province had, through the guidance of the Departments of Health and Public Works and Roads, identified facilities which served as quarantine sites and shelters for the homeless, and amongst them were government and private owned facilities.

The majority of these facilities were adequately utilized, especially during the peak witnessed in the months of June and July.

With the current decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases, in hospitals and in quarantine sites, the Provincial Coronavirus Command Council has welcomed the request to release privately-owned quarantine sites for them to go back to their normal business; we have taken this decision in line with the need to resuscitate economic activities.

Some of these were guests houses and hotels, which had to revert back to their normal operations as the tourism industry begins to open up in anticipation and preparation for the forthcoming festive period.

We have agreed, however, that government facilities must remain as quarantine sites.

To this end, the Department of Social Development has started the process of reintegrating some of the homeless who were kept at some of our facilities during this period with their families, and we are finalizing a long-term utilization strategy that will be specific for shelters for the homeless.

We wish to thank families that have welcomed the return of their loved ones, and we have further committed to ensure that the necessary psycho-social support is provided in order for this reintegration process to be sustained.

We are however still housing a considerable number of homeless people, majority of whom are from outside the province, who came to the North West looking for employment opportunities, hence a need for a long-term strategy.

I am today making public, the latest North West COVID-19 Expenditure report, covering the consolidated spending information from Provincial Government Departments, State-Owned Entities as well as District and Local Municipalities.

The information which is as at 31 August, shows that the expenditure for Provincial Government Departments amounts to R164 million, of which Health accounts for 51% of the total spending, followed by Education at 22%.

These two departments, including Social Development which has spent around R16 million, account for 80% of the total Provincial Government Departments' spending on COVID-19.

We also wish to indicate that our analysis of the report shows that 66.8% of service providers appointed to render COVID-19 related items to the province, were from within the province, and that 41% of them were female-managed businesses, while 35.3% were youth-led.

Municipalities have recorded a total of R73.2 million in expenditure towards COVID-19, which was spent on procurement of various items including PPEs, decontamination and food relief.

As indicated before, we wish to reiterate the fact that the information on municipalities is presented as received from the municipalities and Provincial Treasury because the municipalities use a different system.

While the audit of the COVID-19 expenditure report is being finalized, our preliminary analysis and general observation of primarily provincial departments financial reports is that, prescribed procurement processes were followed, and that our resolve to publish this information does not in any way suggest that there has been contravention of any regulation by either parties involved in these transactions. In instances where there are transgressions, the Province will ensure that competent law enforcement agencies are engaged.

The Command Council has once more, instructed that our procurement process must prioritize service providers from within the province, and that it must be in line with all applicable SCM regulations, in particular, the recent National Treasury Instruction Note 11 on COVID-19 procurement.

We are concerned about reports suggesting that some learners are still not back at school because their parents see this as a way of preventing their children from contracting the virus.

We now urge parents to not disadvantage their children. We have a collective responsibility as government and the parents, to mold the future of these children, and to lessen or eliminate any possibility that will lead to learners dropping out of school.

Ka go rialo, re kopa gore re thusaneng go aga bokamoso jwa bana ba rona, gone ngwana sejo, o a tlhakanelwa. A re letleleleng bana ba rona go boela dikolong.

I wish to once more, extend my words of gratitude to all public servants, especially the frontline workers, for their selfless and immeasurable commitment which they continue to demonstrate in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic.

Their collective and determined efforts to protect the people of this province against COVID-19, did not go unnoticed.

Re santse re gakolola bagaetsho gore phenyo kgatlanong le mogare ono, e mo matsogong a rona.

A re tsweleng go obamela dikgakolo tse re di filweng; e leng gore re rwale di-mask tsa rona ka dinako tsothle, re tlhape matsogo gangwe le gape ka metsi le sesepa, kgotsa re dirise hand sanitisers, le go netefatsa fa ka gale re ema sekgala sa mitara le ba bangwe fa re le mo mafelong a botlhe.

Ke a leboga.

ENDS

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