




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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MORTAL REMAINS ARRIVE TO A GRIEVING SOUTH AFRICA

By: SAnews.gov.za

South Africa is in mourning

Building-collapse tragedy, Nigeria



The mortal remains of 74 South Africans who died when a guesthouse collapsed in the Nigerian capital of Lagos in September, arrived on 16 November 2014.

The bodies arrived at the Waterkloof Air Base in Pretoria at 9:45.

The mood at the air base, which was busy with various South African National Defence Force, Health, South African Police Service (SAPS) and other government officials, was sombre.

The bodies were carried in mobile mortuary trucks on board the Antonov cargo aircraft which left Lagos in the early hours of 16 November.

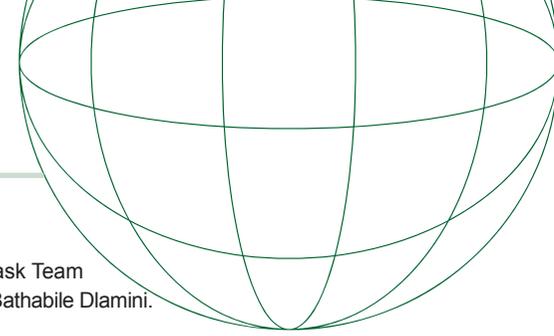
The four forensic pathology trucks from the Department of Health are specifically designed to handle bodies in disaster situations.



communications

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Building-collapse tragedy, Nigeria

An official delegation stood on the tarmac to receive the aircraft, including Chairperson of the Inter-Ministerial Task Team set up to oversee the repatriation, Jeff Radebe, Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi and Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini.

The specialised trucks left the aircraft one by one. They were then driven to a hangar where they were stored until the formal reception ceremony.

Earlier, a passenger aircraft landed carrying an 80-member specialist team from the Department of Health, the South African Police Service and the South African Military Health Service, among others.

The arrival of the bodies signalled the end to a harrowing two-month wait for the families of the victims. Officials from the Department of Social Development, who have been in contact with the families throughout the process, will continue to provide support and counselling.

Minister Jeff Radebe, said the Government team in Lagos would continue to work around the clock to identify the remaining South Africans and ensure their speedy repatriation.

Minister Radebe met with the Nigerian Federal Government authorities, as well as Lagos State authorities to expedite the process.

The South Africans were killed when a guesthouse belonging to the Synagogue Church of All Nations collapsed on 12 September, killing 116 people. Most of them were South Africans.

South Africa agreed to repatriate three Zimbabwean nationals and one from the DRC who were travelling on South African passports.

The lengthy process to identify the bodies was made difficult by the nature of the incident.

“The bodies of 11 other people from South Africa still have to be positively identified in Lagos and will be repatriated later...the job has not stopped for us,” Minister Radebe said shortly after arriving back from Nigeria this morning. Inter-Ministerial Task Team spokesperson, Phumla Williams, said the repatriation process had been tiring but that the officials had to be commended for their efforts.

“It was exhausting, but the fact that we finally brought our compatriots home – we could not be prouder, ” said Williams.

She said the difficulty of the task ahead dawned on the team when they visited the site where the guesthouse collapsed earlier in the week. “It was full of emotions. It hit hard that this was someone’s son or daughter, who came for spiritual upliftment, who had died such gruesome death.”

Family members of the victims travelled to Pretoria to be part of an official reception at the air base. The event was led by Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The ceremony was broadcast live on national television and South Africans were encouraged to watch. At the end of the formal reception ceremony, the mortal remains were transported by road to the closest government forensic pathology services mortuaries in the different provinces.

From there, the mortal remains were transported to the government mortuary closest to the place of burial where they will be received by their next-of-kin.

Individual families will proceed with their own private funeral arrangements.





South Africa is in mourning



EASTERN CAPE COMMEMORATES VICTIMS OF THE NIGERIAN TRAGEDY

By: Yolisa Blom: DoC, Eastern Cape



Executive Mayor of Chris Hani District Municipality, Mxolisi Koyo, speaks at the memorial service.

Eastern Cape Premier, Phumulo Masualle and members of the Executive Council were joined by different leaders from religious, business and community backgrounds as they led citizens of the province in commemorating the lives of those who passed away in Nigerian church tragedy, when a building collapsed and killed them on 12 September 2014.

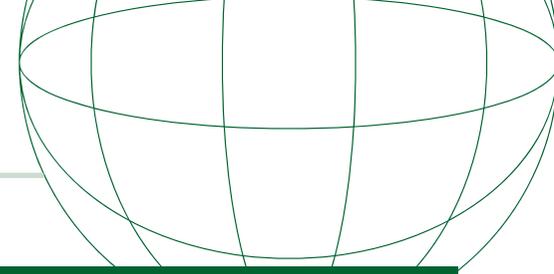
A special memorial service was held in Queenstown at Kwa-Mlungisi township, Thobi Kula Indoor Sports Centre on 18 November 2014.

Through this gesture of Ubuntu government hoped to give some comfort to the grieving families in their journey towards healing and closure. The Provincial Government committed to continue supporting the affected families including those of the three victims whose DNA identification process is yet to be finalised.



Members of the public and family members of the deceased during the service.





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in mourning*



MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR PASTOR RICHARD MABE

By: DM Dirane: DoC, Free State



Ward councillor Masetjhaba Lakaje from Maluti a Phofung Local Municipality conveying her message of support to the family of the deceased and the community of QwaQwa at the memorial service.

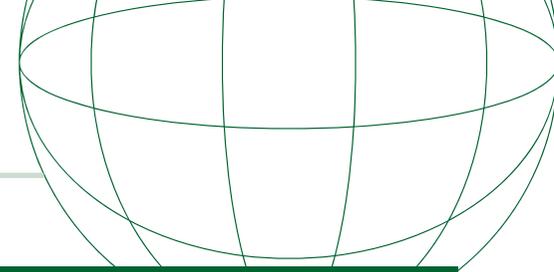


Community of QwaQwa and members of the church of Pastor Richard Ditaba Mabe supported the memorial service.

Pastor Ditaba Richard Mabe from QwaQwa in the Free State was one of the victims of the building-collapse tragedy in Nigeria. A memorial service was held to commemorate his life at the Namahadi Thusong Service Centre hall on 19 November 2014. The service was supported by different churches in QwaQwa as well as the leadership of Maluti a Phofung Local Municipality. Different speakers expressed appreciation to government for its efforts to bring the bodies back home.

South Africa is in mourning — Building-collapse tragedy, Nigeria





South Africa is in mourning



MPUMALANGA HOLDS A MEMORIAL SERVICE

By: Poppy Maluka: DoC, Mpumalanga



Left: Premier Mabuza delivering his address during the ceremony. Right: Director General, Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize read out the names of the deceased.



Family members of the deceased, government officials and community members at the ceremony.

On 17 November 2014, Mpumalanga Premier, David Mabuza, addressed mourners of the victims of Nigerian church tragedy. The event was attended by families of the deceased, political leaders and community members. Messages of support were received from the South African Council of Churches, House of Traditional Leaders and the Provincial Legislature.

“Now we are starting a new journey and as provincial government. We will support the families throughout their journey as we have already started with providing them with counselling,” said Premier Mabuza. Of those who passed away on that fateful day, 23 of them were Mpumalanga residents.

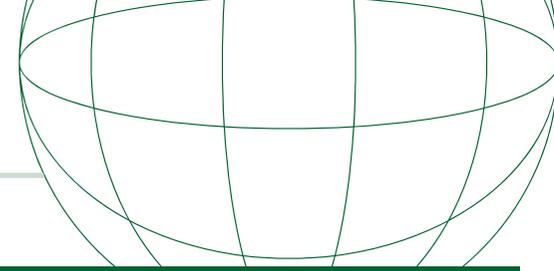


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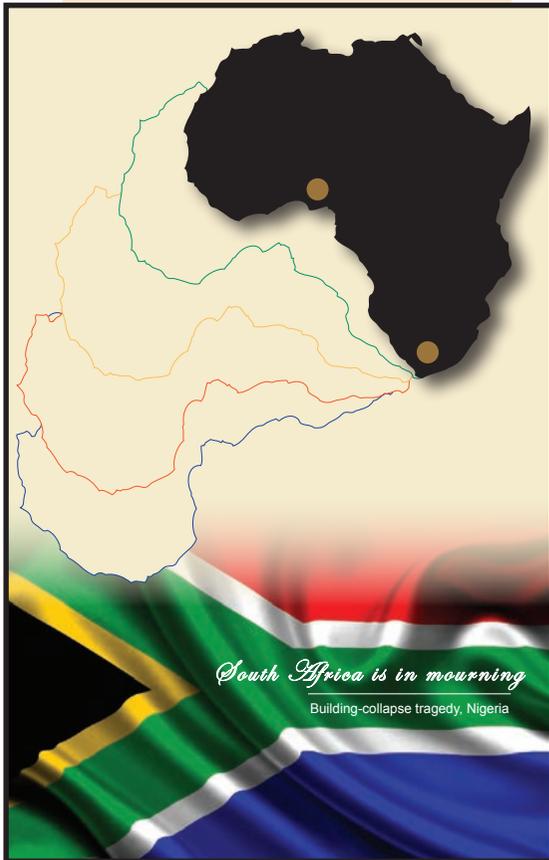


Psychologists and nurses moved between attendees to comfort members. Family members were given candles to take home.





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MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THOSE WHO PERISHED IN THE NIGERIAN TRAGEDY

By: Malcolm Bagwell: DoC, KwaZulu-Natal



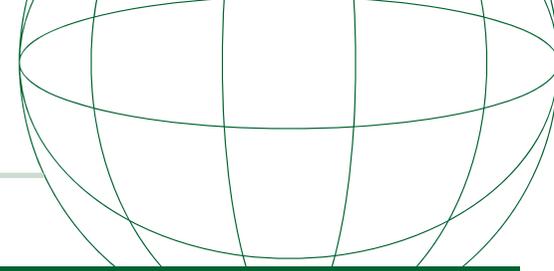
The memorial service, held at the Dube Trade Port, near King Shaka International Airport, was packed to capacity with political principals, government officials, members of the media, representatives from faith-based organisations and family members of the deceased present.

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Senzo Mchunu assured families of the victims of the Nigeria church tragedy that government and the people of KwaZulu-Natal will never desert them during this difficult period. He was speaking at a memorial service held at Dube City near King Shaka International Airport.

The memorial service was led by religious leaders from different backgrounds.

President Jacob Zuma was thanked for ensuring that resources were allocated to assist the families during this difficult period. The MECs for social development and health led a team that provided support to the families.





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NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL MEMORIAL SERVICE



Photos of the six people who died during the building-collapse tragedy in Nigeria.



The congregation singing.



A moment of silence and scripture reading.



North West members of the Executive Council comforting the bereaved families.

The North West Provincial Government held a formal reception for the mortal remains for the six people who lost their lives two months ago when a church building collapsed in Nigeria. The service took place at UNI-West Chapel on 18 November 2014. MEC for Social Development Fenny Gaolaolwe comforted the bereaved families on behalf of the North West Provincial Government.

