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PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

Eastern Cape Premier assesses work done to fight COVID-19

By Lwando Helesi: GCIS, Eastern Cape



Premier Mabuyane and the delegation at the InnoVenton Centre of the Nelson Mandela University.

On 2 April 2020, the Eastern Cape Premier Oscar Mabuyane visited the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality to assess the work that has been done by the municipality's COVID-19 Disaster Management Forum – a public and private sector partnership created to spearhead the fight against COVID-19.



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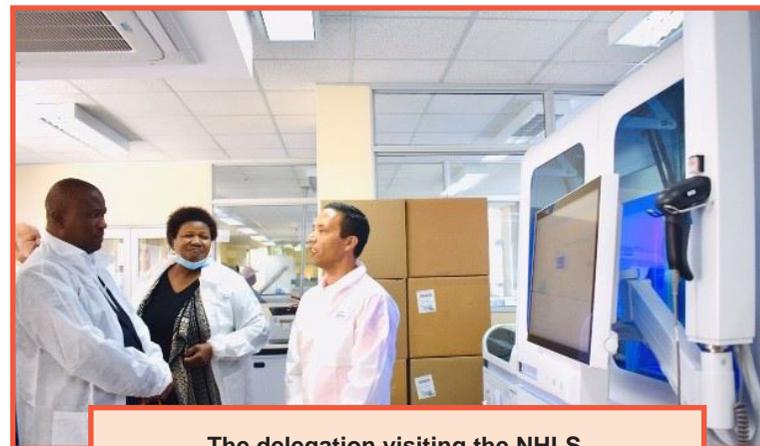
Accompanied by Health MEC Sindiswa Gomba, Nelson Mandela Bay Acting Executive Mayor Thsonono Buyeye and his mayoral committee, the Premier visited Nelson Mandela University, the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber and a public COVID-19 mobile testing station in the Walmer area.

The delegation checked the state of readiness of the NHLS which receives samples from people tested for COVID-19, processes them and confirms their status. Following the recent announcement by Health Minister Zweli Mkhize that the fight against COVID-19 must escalate and focus on screening, the Premier also launched a mobile screening programme at the Walmer Town Hall. The mobile testing unit will be working under the auspices of the NHLS.

The Premier ended his visit with a briefing session at the Nelson Mandela Bay COVID-19 Disaster Management Centre, also known as the Joint Operations Centre. The facility is an initiative of the Nelson Mandela University's science department as part of its contribution to the fight against the spread of COVID-19.

"I am pleased to see the work that has been done in Nelson Mandela Bay. What pleases me more is to see that government and the private sector are working together to fight this pandemic," said Premier Mabuyane.

The Acting Executive Mayor said the visit by the Premier and MEC was encouraging. "We are faced with a pandemic, the support of other spheres of government becomes key. We are running against time to save lives, we must then pull all the resources into one basket, work in unity to save our people," he said.



The delegation visiting the NHLS.

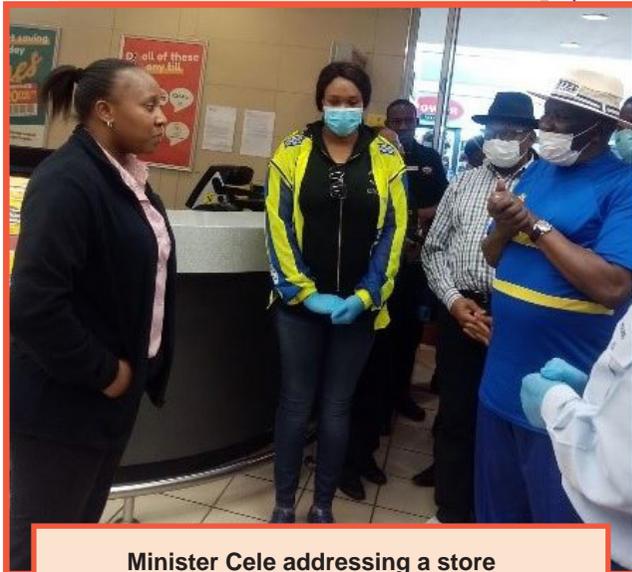


The delegation visiting COVID-19 mobile testing vans stationed at Walmer.

PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

Emalahleni Municipality ready to combat COVID-19

By Livhuwani Todani: GCIS, Mpumalanga



Minister Cele addressing a store manager in Emalahleni.



Mayor Malatjie at Ethembeni Centre for the homeless.

In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19, the Emalahleni Municipality led by Executive Mayor Lina Malatjie has identified various centres to house homeless people during the lockdown period. Various organisations and government departments, including the Emalahleni Youth against Substance Abuse, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Home Affairs, the South African National Civic Organization and the Department of Health donated food parcels and blankets to the homeless.

Police Minister Bheki Cele also visited the Emalahleni N4 highway roadblock site between Mpumalanga and Gauteng where he worked with different officials from the Department of Health, the South African National Defence Force and the South African Police Service to check if motorists are adhering to the disaster management regulations.

Minister Cele also visited retailers, KG Mall and some centres for the homeless to check the adherence. During the address at KG Mall, the Minister urged shoppers to continue maintaining social distancing. He noted cases of gender-based violence (GBV) around Emalahleni, urging communities to work with the police and report any form of GBV. The Emalahleni Municipality has already started fumigating taxi ranks and public areas.

PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.

COVID-19 screening and testing in Paarl

By Peter Titus: GCIS, Western Cape



Health workers conducting community screening in Paarl.



MEC Mbombo engaging the media during the launch of community screening and testing in Paarl.

The Western Cape Health MEC Nomafrench Mbombo launched community screening and testing for COVID-19 at Mbekweni, Paarl, on 6 April 2020. This is in line with the government's call for fieldworkers to commence active community screening and testing programmes across the country to curb the spread of COVID-19.

"We must ensure that our vulnerable communities are screened and tested in greater numbers to ensure that our people are protected against the spread of the virus," said MEC Mbombo. She added that screening and testing will be expanded to other communities that are at high risk of COVID-19.

Screening will be conducted door-to-door by trained fieldworkers in various high risk areas, using simple verbal questions to identify people who may require testing. The workers will carry identity tags and wear identifiable clothing. More information on COVID-19 can be accessed on: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>, the toll free number: **0800 029 999** and the WhatsApp helpline for South Africans: **0600 123 456**. Type the word "Hi" on WhatsApp and send to the helpline to get information on COVID-19.