



MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

To: All Media Houses

Date: 21 January 2025

CoGHSTA CONFIRMS ANOTHER LIFELESS BODY FOUND AT BA-PHALABORWA

The Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs in Limpopo, confirms the discovery of yet another body of a male person in the Ba-Phalaborwa area, that is believed to be linked to the drowning incidents due to the inclement weather. Two boys aged 15 and 17 drowned while swimming at the Selati river at Mashishimale village, which brought to a total of 6 missing bodies due to heavy rains. Preliminary confirmation indicate that the body is for one of the two boys who were swept away from Mashishimale on Monday 19 January 2026.

Meanwhile, the search and rescue operations continues at the hardest hit areas including the Tshwinga in Vhembe District, Mbaula and Ba-Phalaborwa in Mopani.

The MEC for CoGHSTA, Mr Basikopo Makamu, has expressed his sadness and regret following the latest discovery of the lifeless body. "We extend our condolences and sympathy to the bereaved families. We continue to strongly caution against engaging in risky behaviors such as swimming and crossing swollen rivers and streams at this period. We urge communities to avoid low lying areas and unwarranted travelling during heavy rains," said MEC Makamu.

Provincial and District Management Centers continue to coordinate access to relief materials and temporary shelter for the displaced families. The discovery of the body at Ba-Phalaborwa has increased the number of fatalities to 19.

The province recently experienced severe weather conditions which resulted in heavy rainfall, thunderstorms with hail, strong winds, and flooding, that affected mainly

Mopani, Vhembe, Waterberg and some parts of Sekhukhune. Beyond loss of life, the weather also caused serious damage to homes and public infrastructure, including such as roads, schools, health centers, environment and agriculture.

“We continue to conduct oversight visits to the worst affected areas several areas, particularly in Mopani and Vhembe Districts, to have an eyewitness account of the situation on the ground,” said MEC Makamu.

The MEC has also urged communities to play their part in preventing further loss of life by following all precautionary measure which have been issued by government including weather alerts from the SAWS warnings. He has requested the assistance of K9 and swift water divers that are assisting in searching for the missing bodies.

The Department of COGHSTA and the Disaster Management officials will continue to work jointly with sister departments such as Social Development, SAPS and Emergency Management Service agencies as well as municipalities to preserve lives and human dignity of our citizens during this rainy season.

END.

Issued by the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs

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