

Zuma hails Durban soldiers who died trying to help

DURBAN — President Jacob Zuma yesterday used the Armed Forces Day parade to remember the six people who died in last week's freak accident at the Durban naval base.

Zuma sent his condolences to the families of three South African National Defence Force soldiers who died when they were overcome by methane gas fumes, inhaled when they went into a

sewage pit to try and save three public works contract workers who were screaming for help.

Leading Seaman Amrithlall Tothara Ramdin (41) from Naval Base Durban residing in Bluff; Able Seaman Francois William Mundell (26) from SAS Makhandha from George in the Western Cape; and Seaman Henro ter Borg (21) from Maritime Reaction Squadron, re-

siding in Brackenfell, Cape Town, all died. The army previously said Ter Borg had been on a tour of duty in Durban for the 2017 Armed Forces Day celebrations. The army said the funeral arrangements for the soldiers would be announced in due course. The incident happened last Friday.

While members of the Department of Public Works were working on a sewage

valve, gas fumes leaked out and affected their breathing. The army said the workers had tried to escape the pit, but were overwhelmed by the toxic gases and passed out.

More SANDF members descended into the pit using a Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus and recovered the six bodies. Paramedics declared all six people dead. — News24.