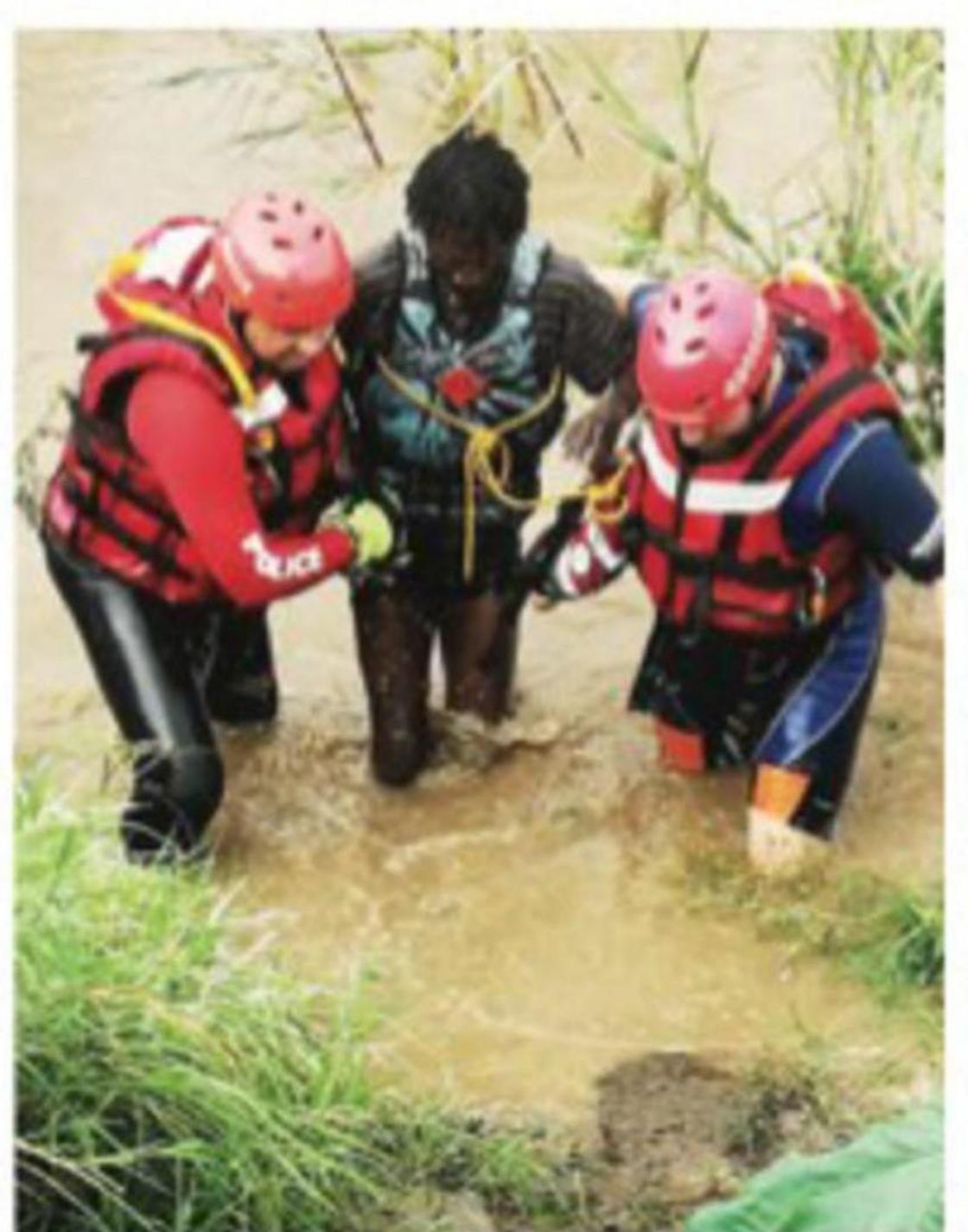
Death and destruction as #DurbanFlood wreaks havoc







Two individuals and a dog were rescued from the Umgeni River during the flood rescue missions

By Krishnee Naidoo

Trending globally, #DurbanFlood has grabbed headlines with a latest death toll of at least 51 flood victims and scores of injured and missing persons after torrential rains lashed Durban and surrounding areas from Monday night.

A cloud of mourning hovers over the city as emergency and rescue workers continue to search for missing persons, whilst also unearthing bodies during their rescue missions. KwaZulu-Natal Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) urged residents and visitors to the province to remain on full alert and said disaster relief efforts are in progress in all affected areas. Cogta MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube reportedly said that as rescue operations were undertaken, more bodies were discovered under the rubble, throughout Tuesday night whilst five more people remain unaccounted for.

On Tuesday, MEC Dube-Ncube, Human Settlement and Public Works MEC Ravi Pillay, eThekwini Mayor Zandile Gumede, Deputy Mayor Fawzia Peer and Exco led various assessments and relief efforts in various parts accommodated in community halls where of the province. "KZN Cogta is working closely with the eThekwini Metro and other affected municipalities to ensure that all emergency relief efforts are coordinated and timeous. The authorities have also reported 145 displaced persons, some of whom have already found refuge with relatives. Those without alternative accommodation will be provided with temporary shelter as close to their homes as possible.

"At the same time, we would like to assure the general public that our disaster management teams are working round the

clock to attend to all reported incidents. Where help is needed, it is already on its way or will be very soon. We are overwhelmed but our presence throughout KZN ensures that we will be able to assist everywhere we are called," said Dube-Ncube.

According to eThekwini Municipality, massive damage was inflicted on public and private infrastructure. The Provincial Government of KZN, together with eThekwini Metro and all affected municipalities, had to mount a spirited response as part of efforts to alleviate the impact of these extreme weather conditions on communities and businesses, and to bring the lives of the people affected back to normalcy.

Information from the Department of Health, said, authorities were left with no option but to source additional capacity from uMsunduzi Municipality and iLembe District. The extent of damage to infrastructure includes flooded and blocked roads, collapsed buildings and perimeter walls, blocked storm water drains and sewer lines, flooded buildings and households and power outages as a result of electric cable damage. Displaced communities have had to be temporarily they will receive emergency relief assistance.

At this stage, the focus remains on recovery and the provision of relief efforts while assessments of damages are underway. Following the catastrophic disaster, President Cyril Ramaphosa shortened his trip to the African Union (AU) summit in Egypt and returned to South Africa to visit the floodstricken communities in KZN and the Eastern Cape.

In his tweet, President Ramaphosa, shared, "Arrived back home and flew to KwaZulu-



Rescue Care paramedics at the Overport home where one person died while another was seriously injured

Natal to assess the damage caused by the floods and review the recovery efforts. Our thoughts are with the affected communities in KZN and Eastern Cape.I urge those living in the affected areas to take extra caution in this period."

Dozens of incidents of collapsed walls and flooded homes were reported throughout Monday night, with 235 Durban homes already assessed as damaged. The assessment continues both in respect of private properties and public infrastructure. Roads have been flooded too, disrupting traffic as KZN entered the first working day after the long Easter Weekend, Meanwhile, Kwazulu-Natal Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has urged the relatives of the 51 people who sadly demised during the fatal flash floods to come forward

and begin the arduous task of identifying their mortal remains. At Pinetown Medico-Legal Mortuary, the mortal remains of 36 people are being kept. They were taken in from Chatsworth, Malvern, Mariannhill, and surrounding areas. The Magwaza Maphalala (Gale) Street Medico-Legal Mortuary, meanwhile, is looking after the mortal remains of 15 people who were brought in from Umlazi, Reservoir Hills, Overport, Bluff and surrounding areas.

MEC Dhlomo says that the clergy, social workers will be on hand to provide counselling and other psycho-social support services for the bereaved families. "This is an extremely difficult time, but we have put these measures in place to help our fellow compatriots to cope at this difficult time," the MEC said.