



CORONAVIRUS: NICD ON HIGH ALERT



North West – In the wake of the ongoing novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak which originated in the Hubei Province of China and has now spread to other major Chinese cities and other countries, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), a division of the National Health Laboratory Service, continues with its surveillance activities and testing of individuals with symptoms of the 2019-nCoV.

The NICD, working together with the National Department of Health, continues to enhance systems to rapidly identify and detect any imported cases that may reach our borders.

We continue to provide preparedness training, guidance and support

to healthcare professionals in South Africa and the continent.

On 11 February, training of 130 health professionals, including medical doctors, environmental health practitioners, emergency personnel, nurses and others took place in the North-West Tsepong Hospital to build capacity and response.

The training includes guidance on what samples to collect to confirm the diagnosis as well as how to best manage the case clinically and to prevent spread to others while the diagnosis is being made.

While the outbreak is ongoing, we encourage the public to heed to the measures to prevent the spread of respiratory infections.

Extracts of NICD press release, 11 February 2020

DAMAGED WATER PIPE SHOOTS MASSIVE FOUNTAIN



The damaged water pipe led to a damaged road.

Rustenburg – A damaged water pipe created a spectacle when it shot a massive fountain of water up into the air on Saturday 15 February.

Motorists and pedestrians at the corner of Thabo Mbeki and Nelson Mandela drive in the Rustenburg central business district (CBD) could be seen avoiding the fountain during the early morning hours.

"I hope this is not treated water because every drop

is precious," a bystander said. Water shortages is the norm in Rustenburg for four months a year.

For at least two hours, motorists had to navigate around the 10m high fountain as the water gushed out before it eventually subsided into a trickle.

The area around the damaged water pipes has been sealed off to allow personnel from the Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM) to carry out repairs.

STELLA DOUBLE MURDER: BYLSMA GUILTY

Potchefstroom – Judge Ronnie Hendricks of the Mmabatho High Court has ruled that 20-year old Xander Bylsma is guilty of murdering two girls whose bodies were found inside a hostel at Stella High School. Bylsma's court appearance follows an incident in which two girls, Marna Engelbrecht (17) and Sharnelle Hough (16), were killed on Saturday 26 May 2018.

The girls were alone in the female hostel on the day and the evidence presented in court puts Bylsma at the scene of the murders.

A hostel matron at Stella High School discovered

Engelbrecht's lifeless body as it hung from the rails of the staircase.

Police spokesperson colonel Adèle Myburgh had this to say: "Firstly, the matron found the body of the 17-year-old girl hanging from the rails of the staircase in the hostel. She alerted the school management and the police were summoned. After further investigation, the police discovered the second body in the hostel bathroom." Bylsma, believed to be a former boyfriend of one of these girls, was arrested. It is of little comfort to the loved ones of the young girls who had their whole lives in front of them...

HIJACKING VICTIM RESCUED

Brits – A police detective went beyond the call of duty in the rescue of a 30-year old man who was kidnapped and robbed of his vehicle, a few moments after he had offered a lift to a stranger.

The incident occurred on Monday 10 February near Hartbeespoortdam.

Police said the 30-year old man was driving a Toyota Hilux along the R511 when he stopped for a stranger to offer him a lift.

After going past Hernic Mine, the passenger allegedly asked to be dropped off on an adjoining gravel road. As the driver stopped, three men allegedly emerged from the bushes. The driver of the Toyota was allegedly forced out of his vehicle.

A blue Toyota Corolla belonging to an accomplice of the three allegedly stopped in front of the other vehicle. The four threatened the 30-year old man while pointing a gun at him before tying his hands up and forcing him into the Corolla. Two of the suspects drove away with the victim in the Corolla.

Police spokesperson lieutenant colonel Amanda Funani said an off-duty police detective noticed the Corolla speeding along

the R511 and decided to give chase.

"He also called for backup while following the Corolla. In response, police from Hartbeespoortdam joined the chase, which led to the Corolla being stopped along the R513 road at Skeerpoort," Funani said.

"Two suspects tried to run away but were stopped and arrested. Police discovered the victim in the vehicle, with his hands tied-up," she added.

The other two suspects were also arrested while the Toyota Hilux was recovered.

Jabulani Sibasa (46), Thabo Ncobo (25), Siphelele Mazibuko (25) and Johannes Nceba (32) appeared before the Brits Magistrates' Court on Thursday 13 February on charges of car hijacking, possession of a suspected stolen motor vehicle as well as kidnapping.

"Motorists are once more requested to exercise caution when being approached by unknown persons and to report such incidents to the nearest police station," Funani cautioned.

"Never offer a lift to a hitchhiker and do not stop next to the road, except for an emergency. People stopping to relieve themselves have also become victims of crime," she concluded.



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