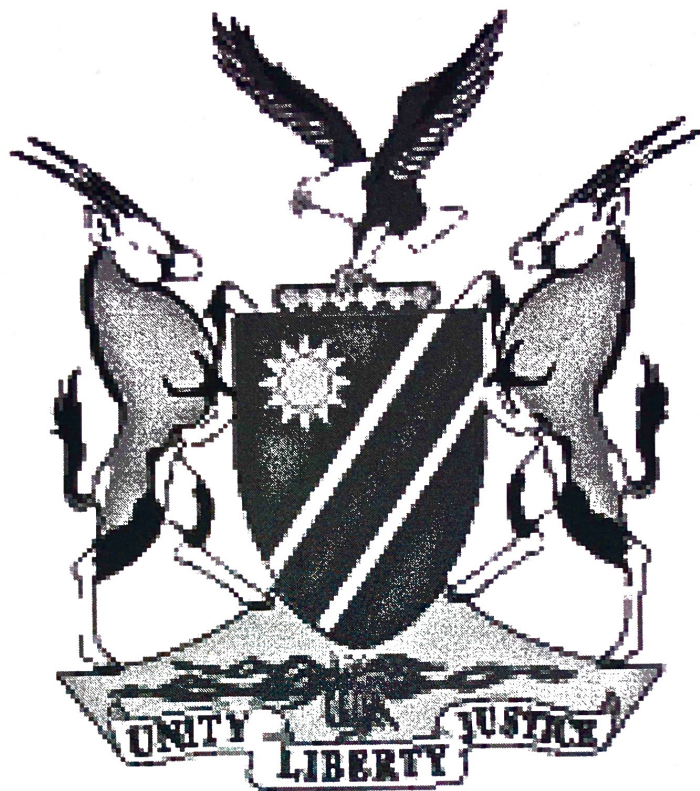


REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**STATEMENT BY DR. ESTHER E. MUINJANGUE, DEPUTY
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES: DAILY COVID-19
UPDATE AND THE ALLEGED COVID-19 DEATH AT MARIENTAL
STATE HOSPITAL, HARDAP REGION, NAMIBIA**

17 MAY 2020

WINDHOEK



1. Good morning Namibia, the COVID-19 disease continues as global health threat, affecting the majority of nations around the world. As of yesterday, 16 May 2020, WHO reported more than **4.4 million** cases worldwide and more than **302 thousand deaths** due to COVID-19.
2. The media, here at home and also globally have reported and continues to report on COVID-19 with frequent regularity. This is welcome as keeps the public informed. Through this Media Centre, our media houses, broadcasting via different platforms have provided vital information to our people. This is why the role and the value of the media in educating the public and fighting this pandemic cannot be over-emphasized.
3. Most importantly, however, is the imperative that the media must report factually to avoid causing panic and consternation in the society. That is why, as Government, we have always called on all stakeholders to report only authenticated information as provided by relevant authorities. It is unfortunate that yesterday, social media was abuzz with reports of an alleged COVID-19 related death in Mariental.
4. The facts on this case are as follows. On 12 May 2020, a patient visited a private doctor in Mariental with the problem of productive cough, chest pain and shortness of breath. The patient was admitted on the same day in Mariental State Hospital and diagnosed with Pneumonia. Out of abundance of caution, and in line with our strategy on Expanded Targeted Testing for COVID-19 during State 2 of the State of Emergency Regulations, the patient was swabbed for COVID-19, in addition to other investigations. He was kept in isolation room while receiving treatment.



5. The patient had underlying chronic health condition. The swab to rule out COVID-19 was taken on the 13 May 2020 and sent to NIP in Windhoek for testing. In keeping with strict quality standards, that initial sample was deemed non-compliant and a second sample was taken on 14 May 2020 and also brought to Windhoek.
6. In the meantime, the patient's condition deteriorated on 15 May 2020 and the patient succumbed.
7. The laboratory results came out **NEGATIVE** for COVID-19 last evening, Saturday, 16 May 2020. Therefore, this death is not COVID-19 related. We extend our sincere condolences to the family, loved ones and co-workers. It is always a painful experience when we lose a patient who was in our care.
8. I would now like to provide the daily update on COVID-19:
- Confirmed Cases: **16**
 - Recoveries: **13**
 - Active Cases: **3**
 - Deaths: **0**
 - Total tested (cumulative): **2 381**
 - Total tested yesterday: **155** all tested **NEGATIVE**
 - Total contacts: **243**
 - Total quarantined (cumulative): **1 346**
 - Total number discharged from quarantine: **804**
 - Total in quarantine (currently): **542**
9. Let remain cautious by observing preventive measures. Let us not relax on keeping social distancing, washing our hands frequently with soap and running water and sanitizing our



hands. Let us wear face masks appropriately in public in order to protect each other from this deadly pandemic.

10. Let us remain safe, have a blessed Sunday!

I thank you.

