

KwaZulu-Natal wants disaster relief

The KwaZulu-Natal provincial government has appealed to the national government to declare disaster areas for those parts of the province that were hardest hit by the heavy rains in the past week.

Co-operative governance spokesman Lennox Mabaso said in a statement on Wednesday (12 December) the provincial cabinet had resolved to ask the national government for the assistance.

The death toll in the province has risen to 14, with four deaths reported in the Dassenhoek region of Durban.

Mabaso said the provincial government could still not put a figure on the damage caused by the heavy rains, flooding and hail.

"You can understand the magnitude of the problem when in Ladysmith alone you have 3,500 homes affected by the hail," he said.

The worst affected areas were Ladysmith, the Ugu district on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast and parts of Durban.

"The damage will escalate to millions of rands. We do not at this stage have an accurate figure but once all the emergency relief and rescue efforts have been conducted we will start quantifying the damage," Mabaso said.

At least 28 people have died as a result of the heavy rains in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga and the torrential rain storms that led to the deaths of three people near Mahikeng in the North West province.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge