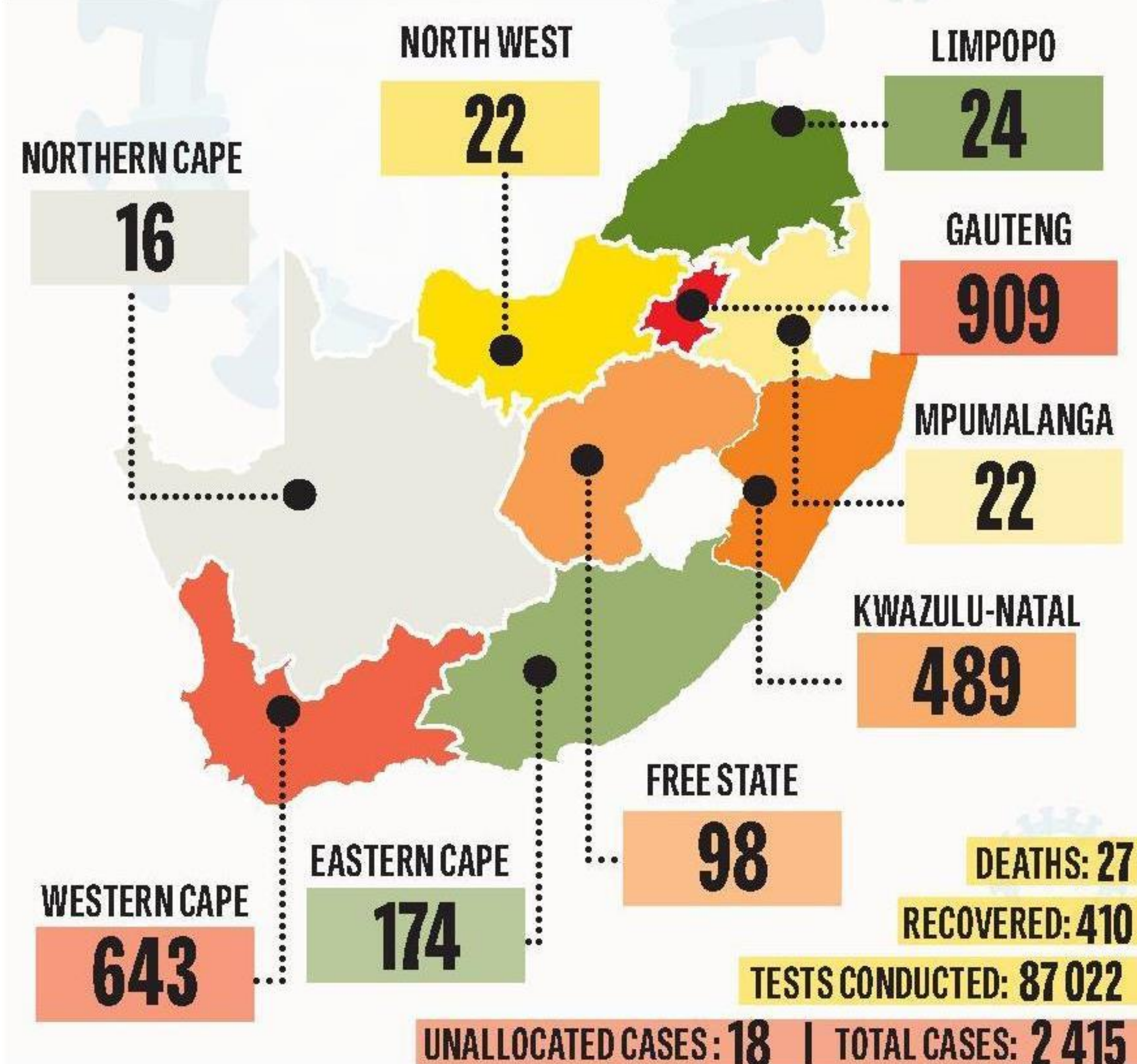


GLOBAL COVID-19 UPDATE

Last updated: Yesterday at 10.36pm

CASES IN SOUTH AFRICA BY PROVINCE



GLOBAL COVID-19 STATS



Graphic: Costa Mokola
 Source: worldometers.info

Coronavirus outbreak 24-hour hotline number: 0800029999

CORONAVIRUS CASES

1 9 9 0 0 9 7



	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL DEATHS	TOTAL RECOVERIES
USA	609 614	25 794	38 479
SPAIN	172 541	18 056	67 504
ITALY	162 488	21 067	37 130

Crucial tests key to lockdown

RESEACHER: LESS THAN 90 DAILY CASES CAN END IT

Sipho Mabena

Critical data on Covid-19 infection rate expected to be released this week will be key in government's decision on whether to continue with the hard lockdown or ease disaster regulations to avoid an economic Armageddon.

According to Professor Salim Abdool Karim, the epidemiologist advising Health Minister Zweli Mkhize's Covid-19 response, there was no way to escape the wrath of the virus, unless SA had a special protective factor or "mojo" not present anywhere else in the world.

In his interactive presentation detailing the technical aspects of the Covid-19 response on Monday evening, the prominent researcher candidly prepared the nation for the worse.

"It will be pretty difficult, it will be bad at its (Covid-19) peak

and the people will need medical care, thousands of them," he told Talk Radio 702 yesterday.

Karim has cautioned that though government's early implementation of the lockdown had resulted in a plateau level of infections, "our population will be at high risk again after the lockdown".

Government's early response delayed the peak, and was commendable in that it bought the nation time to prepare for the burden of the epidemic, Karim said.

Karim said if the basic reproduction rate of the virus could be shown to be below one (less than 90 cases a day), meaning it was not spreading at an out of control rate, the lockdown could be eased.

"If community transmission is low, cases decline...If community transmission is increasing then cases will increase and an exponential curve will start again," he said. — siphom@citizen.co.za

▶ Also see Page 10

Some good news:

- ▶ The decline in the number of new Covid-19 cases in the last two weeks were the strongest indications that time has flattened the curve even more.
- ▶ Though overall testing was still below the targeted figure of up to 15 000 tests a day, the National Health Laboratory Services claims it has the capacity to do that.
- ▶ According to Health Minister Zweli Mkhize's Covid-19 response advisory team, what puts South Africa in a favourable position was:
 - ▶ SA has unique component to its response, such as active case finding;
 - ▶ SA has more than 28 000 community health care workers going house-to-house in vulnerable communities for screening and testing to find cases.