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**236.   Mr S L Ngcobo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

Whether, in light of the fact that in many parts of the world school sport has restarted, albeit tentatively, she has plans in place to ensure that school sports go on this year, especially at schools in areas that are more impoverished in the Republic; if not, why not; if so, what plans?

**Response**

On 21 October 2020 the Department of Basic Education issued the Amended Directions, in terms of Regulation 4(3) of the Regulations made under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), regarding the re-opening of schools; and measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of Covid-19 at Alert Level 1. At that point, non-contact sport was allowed and inter-school matches were allowed to resume activity. However, this was short-lived as the country experienced a surge in the number of people who contracted the corona virus; and the country was then moved to Alert Level 3. As a result, the Department has finalised the amended draft Directions in line with Alert Level 3.

These Directions have been consulted on widely with basic education stakeholders and the Human Rights Commission. The draft Directions allow for non-contact sport to resume within all schools, provided that compliance with social distancing, hygiene and safety measures to prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 is adhered to.

The following safety measures must be adhered to with this resumption:

1. The number of persons in the sporting venues, change rooms or training area at any given time, must be limited as far as is reasonably practicable;
2. Sport personnel and all participants must be subjected to temperature screening before they enter the sport venue or sport fields;
3. Face masks, or appropriate items that cover the nose and mouth as required by the health protocols, must be worn by all personnel and participants entering the sporting venues, change rooms or training area except participants when training or participating in matches;
4. All windows and doors must remain open, where feasible, to reduce contact and ensure adequate ventilation;
5. Social distancing must be maintained at all times; and
6. A register of all personnel and participants must be kept.

Contact sport training is also allowed under Lockdown Alert Level 3, provided there is no contact during training, and physical distancing is maintained. Arts and Culture and other enrichment programmes are also allowed to resume in schools with safety and hygiene measures maintained.

For now, inter-school matches, choir rehearsals, choir competitions and sport championships at district, provincial and national level will be suspended. This is temporary as the country deals with the surge in the numbers of infections.

These measures are temporary and will be reviewed as the Covid-19 infections decline.