



V THE Voice

SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

Friday
April 24, 2020

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MOPHANE WORMS, HEADLESS CHICKENS AND BURNT HUTS

Changate man accused of
torching mum's huts

HEAD IN
HANDS:
Richard
Toteng

BY KABELO DIPHOLO

A FIERY Friday afternoon in Changate started with an ill-advised feast on moplane worm and climaxed with three torched huts, a headless chicken and a

very angry mother.

The man at the centre of the devastation is 34-year-old Richard Toteng, who is accused of burning down three of his mum's huts.

TURN TO PAGE 2

RETRACTION AND APOLOGY TO THE MANAGEMENT OF TSWANA PRIDE, TSWANA PRIDE AND TO MR SATAR DADA

IT has since come to our attention that the contents of the front-page article

concerning Mr. Satar Dada and Tswana Pride in our publication of Friday,

17th April 2020 titled "PROFIT OVER PREVENTION" were incorrect.

The Voice Newspaper and

the Editor hereby retract the article and its contents in full.

We unreservedly apologise to The Management of Tswana

Pride, Tswana Pride and to Mr Satar Dada for any inconvenience caused.

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MAN ACCUSED OF TORCHING MUM'S HUTS

FROM PAGE ONE

The suspected arsonist was remanded in custody by Masinga Magistrates Court on Tuesday and will remain behind bars indefinitely, with his next court appearance set for after the State of Emergency is lifted - at least six months away!

In total, the fires are estimated to have destroyed household property worth P25,000.

Labelled as someone frequently on the wrong side of the law by Investigating Officer (IO) Sergeant Sebele Oageng, Richard reportedly went on the rampage last Friday.

His red-hot rage was apparently stoked when one of the chickens in his mother's yard devoured the mophane worms he had lovingly laid out to dry in the sun.

It proved to be the chicken's last meal.

Furious at missing out on his tasty treat, Richard is said to have ripped off the unfortunate bird's head before flinging the trembling carcass into a

nearby bush.

According to the IO, earlier that day Richard had called his mum, Julia Toteng - who currently resides in Gaborone - requesting her permission to sell one of the family's cows. It was a request the old lady denied.

Already in a bad mood, it seems the chicken's antics pushed Richard over the edge.

"He proceeded to burn the house and told everyone who cared to listen that he was doing so because his family takes him for granted. He complained that he was starving but none of them ever sends him money to buy food even though he looks after the family cattle," Oageng told court.

The IO further revealed the suspect was arrested minutes after the incident.

"He fled into the bush but returned a few minutes later and handed himself in."

Pleading for the suspect to be remanded, Oageng described Richard as 'an unpredictable individual' who should be incarcerated for his own safety.

The officer also told court

that Richard only completed his extra mural in March and has another case pending at Customary Court.

"He absconded a lot from his extra mural and there is no guarantee that he'll observe the bail application. We're also worried that he may burn the remaining house in the yard, because he has allegedly boasted that he was to burn it down," continued Oageng, adding that the suspect's mother, who is in Gaborone on medical grounds, asked that her son remain in custody until she gets back to Changate.

"Now due to travel restrictions imposed by the State of Emergency (SoE), I've no idea when his mother will be able to come home!" he concluded.

In his plea for bail, Richard, who looked close to tears, literally begged to be set free and promised to behave and uphold any bail conditions set.

However, his emotion failed to move presiding Magistrate, Segametsi Basinyi.

sharonm@thevoicebw.com
@sharonmathala



ACCUSED: Dikologang (L), Barupi (C) and Motlhabane (R)

KHAMA IS THE TARGET-MOTLHABANE

BY PORTIA MLILO

BOTSWANA Patriotic Front (BPF) Spokesperson, Justice Motlhabane who was arrested, tortured and charged with publishing false statements about COVID-19 has said that he has found out that he was not the primary target of the law enforcement officers but former president Ian Khama was.

Motlhabane, Letsogile Barupi, and Oarabile Dikologang are facing four counts of publishing statements with intention to deceive persons about COVID-19 infection and the use of offensive electronic communication.

Barupi is the administrator of Botswana Trending News while Dikologang administers People's Daily News Facebook pages, which published the said false statements while Motlhabane is said to be the source.

Speaking to The Voice in an interview, Motlhabane said that during his arrest, the police and security agents stripped him naked and tortured him. He said as they tortured him, they kept saying that he was the small fish who could lead them to the big fish, being BPF Patron Ian Khama and the party president Biggie Butale. He said they even asked him if he knew something about Khama's suspected plot to topple president Masisi.

"About 30 police officers came to my house around 10pm on the 11th of April and banged doors and windows. When I opened they assaulted me. They took my phone, laptop and party documents. I was so traumatized. They went through party documents and said our party doesn't have money and they won't be able to bail me. They asked me where I got the information about articles that were published on Botswana Trending News but I wonder what makes them think I am linked to the page," said Motlhabane.

The Court heard that the three accused persons on or about the 6th of April acting together in concert published a statement through social media via Facebook page, Botswana Trending News titled: 'Breaking, Masisi to pay BDP MPs P12 million each so that they can support State of Emergency.'

The article is said to have been written with the intention

to deceive its readers and any other person of the real intentions and measures taken by the government to address COVID-19.

On the second count, it is alleged the three still on the 6th of April published an article titled: 'Possible war looming in Botswana as Masisi forces to implement State of Emergency'. It is alleged the publication was made with the intention to deceive its readers or any other person of the real intentions and measures taken by the government to address COVID-19.

On another count the accused persons on the 22nd of March allegedly published an article on Botswana Trending News Facebook page titled, 'Botswana hiding Corona Virus cases to avoid causing unrest amongst the citizens.'

The article is said to be offensive in nature and was not intended for any legitimate communication, thereby disturbing the quiet of the society.

On the fourth charge it is alleged that on the 25th of January the three acting together in concert, willfully and maliciously used electronic communication via Facebook Page, Botswana Trending News and published a post with the heading: 'DCEC boss living in fear as the DISS plan to eliminate the 100 billion mastermind.' This communication is said to have been offensive in nature and was not intended for any legitimate communication thereby disturbing the peace and quiet of DCECE investigating officer, Jako Hubona.

Regional Magistrate Goodwill Makofi granted the three bail on conditions that they shall each be released on their own cognizance of P10 000 and each avail two Botswana sureties who shall each bind themselves in the like sum. He ordered that they shall not commit any offence whilst on bail and they shall not interfere with police investigations. They shall also forfeit all of their travel documents to the Station Commander.

Magistrate Makofi further ordered the three to report themselves to the Station Commanders of their nearest police station once fortnightly on Fridays between the hours 0730 and 1630. He said they should attend court sessions as and when required to do so. They shall present themselves to Health Officials for assessment in line with Covid-19 regulations.

They will be back in court on July 30th for mention

"Our best defence shall always be our capacity to prevent"

- Masisi



So, we have donated P250 000 to help in the fight against Covid-19

Let's all do our part to prevent the spread

THANK YOU

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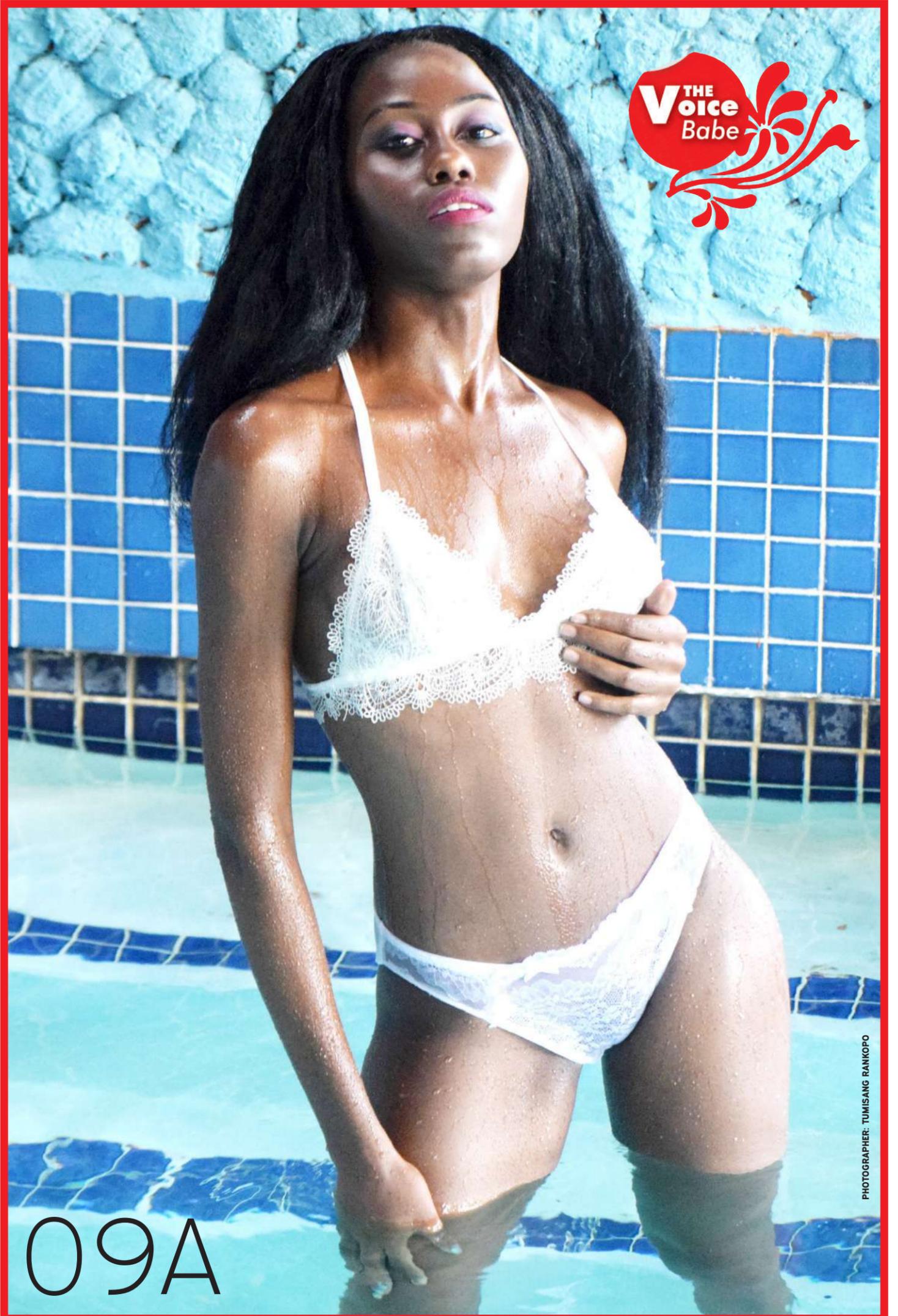
THE HUB

Topline

cb

AKU

SOLE



NALEDI BAELETSI

AGE: 23

HOME VILLAGE: Masunga

OCCUPATION: Sales Rep

FAVOURITE MEAL: Pizza

And Chilli cheese sliders

SMS EXAMPLE:
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SMS COST P2
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We're here for Botswana during the COVID-19 crisis

Absa Bank Botswana has donated P1.5 million to the National COVID-19 Relief Fund in support of the efforts by the Government of Botswana in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. An additional P500,000 will be made available to support other government initiatives related to fighting the pandemic.

#StaySafe

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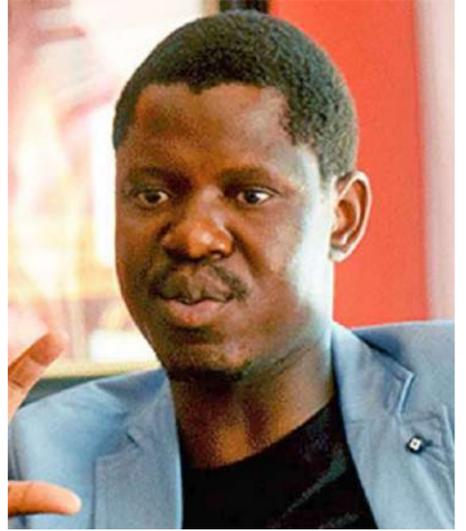
PHENYO BUTALE



MOETI MOHWASA



ROSELINE PANZIRAH MATSHOME



KETLHAFILE MOTSHEGWA

DID GOVT ERR?

Union leaders lambast govt for halting salary increment

GOVERNMENT has reneged on an agreement it had in reference to 2018 negotiations rules for

salary negotiations of financial years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, and Collective Bargaining

Agreement (CBA) of 3rd February 2020 between itself and public sector Unions.

The new development has put in place a unilateral decision to a decree, to cut and defer salary increment of public servants for six months.

The issue has been met with different reactions from the public. The Voice Staffer, DANIEL CHIDA engages opposition parties leadership, union leaders and some political analysts on the issue.

do you wait until pay day and then tell the workers you are disregarding an existing agreement? It is so demeaning, inconveniencing and a mockery of good labour practice and social justice. If the government can behave like this, it goes a long way to show the type of leaders we have. Disregard of workers and their interests is in the Botswana Democratic Party DNA. Government would never do this to Business because it is there to protect their interests. Workers should know who their true friends are and not allow themselves to be hoodwinked.

PHENYO BUTALE- SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESSIVES

Any decision, even during extraordinary times, needs to bring stakeholders who make our economy and society to function into confidence.

It is clear workers were not brought into confidence nor were there due processes for a give and take. These are fundamental tenets for building a fair society even during extraordinary times. So it was wrong for the government to renege on the agreement without consulting unions. This trend of unilateral decision making is worrisome.

KEBAPETSE LOTSHWAO - POLITICAL ANALYST

Government has only deferred the increment, workers will be paid once the crisis has passed.

In my view, workers have nothing to worry about. They are better, if not privileged, as other people are unemployed or will not be paid for sometime. Some businesses are even closed.

MOETI MOHWASA - HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR UMBRELLA FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

This was definitely well orchestrated move by the government.

We believe when the president went for the six months state of public emergency and pushed for suspension of industrial action, they had already decided not to pay civil servants the agreed increment. This shows that contrary to what some union leaders had said about the current administration, nothing has changed. If anything it has worsened. There was no proper consultation. How

ROSELINE PANZIRAH MATSHOME- SECRETARY GENERAL OF BOTSWANA PATRIOTIC FRONT

We are not surprised, it's nothing new, this government is not truthful.

They say one thing and do something different all the time. But it all boils down to consultation, people need to learn to consult before taking action.

KETLHAFILE MOTSHEGWA - DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL FOR BOFEPUSU

This unfortunate action by Government is contemptuous of the spirit of good faith in negotiations and bargaining, for this unilateralism dents and toxicates industrial relations, something that is gravely terrible for the socio-economic landscape of the Country.

The Federation urges the leadership of the Country to be thoughtful enough and espouse sound industrial relations, by respecting and complying with particulars of Collective Bargaining Agreement with Public Sector Unions. Government must be sensitive to the reality that, should she unrelentingly persist with her mission, such will further exacerbate the already virulent industrial relations in the public service. On another note the Federation is tremendously disquieted by unabating violation of workers' rights in private sector during Covid-19 pandemic. There are some ruthless and vicious companies that are making drastic and prejudicial decisions affecting employees, and aggravatingly without even involving employees or their Unions.

COUNCILORS RISK OWN LIVES FOR VOTERS

BY FRANCINAH BAAITSE- MMANA

AS the killer COVID-19 continues to ravage the world everyone is trying to follow health guidelines and observe extreme social distancing and protect themselves and families from coming into contact with the virus.

However, many councilors's political career has thrown them into the deep end as they find themselves having to choose between serving their communities and locking themselves inside their homes at the expense of losing the next elections.

Councilors maintain that they have to serve their communities even though by so doing they are exposing themselves to the dreadful virus.

Matlapana councillor, Kobamelo Baikgodise says the movement restriction or lockdown has especially increased their workload. "Our phones are ringing off the hook. We hardly get a full night sleep without being called to assist a community member in some way or the other," he pointed out.

Baikgodise even recalled one very distressing call recently.

"I got a call to go and take an elderly woman to the hospital. The signs of her ailment were pointing to corona virus, I tried calling the hospital, they referred me to Matshwane clinic where a doctor in turn told me that at that given time there was no available transport. I had to take the woman to a nearby clinic where it was discovered that she was actually dehydrated!"

The councillor added that, in his ward that include Sexaxa



INSERT: Kobamelo Baikgodise

CLEARING THE ROAD: Councillor with WUC worker

where almost everybody does not have a vehicle, a councillor's vehicle is shared with the community.

A councillor is expected to assist with grocery shopping and his car serves as an ambulance and a hearse too during funerals.

"some of these people are extremely poor. They hustle everyday to keep going, they sell fire wood for a living, and live a hand to mouth sort of existence, therefore it is important that we are there for them in times of need," Baikgoditse said.

The overwhelmed councillor also highlighted that as a councillor, "You are expected to be available to help all the time otherwise people would not vote for you in the next elections."

"Today I had to cut trees to

create an access road for trucks carrying water to go into Matlapana village," the exhausted Baikgodise revealed

According to the councillor, more than 5000 households in matlapana don't have running water and therefore have to depend on public stand pipes which are around 5 kilometres apart.

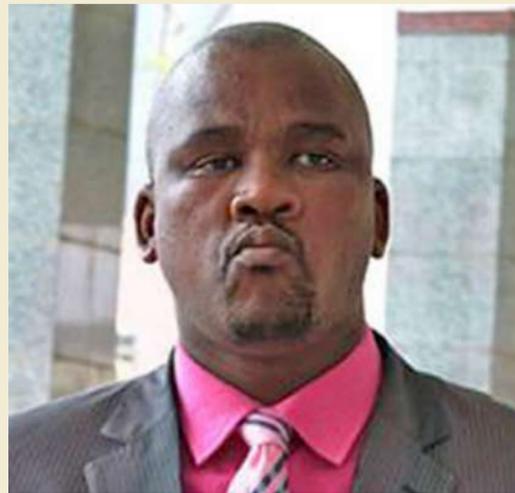
To avoid crowding at these standpipes WUC has been providing water in water tanks closer to the houses for easy access.

Just last week, another councillor, Luke Motlaleselelo explained the challenges of leading communities during times such as these. Motlaleselelo said some councilors have even resorted to hiding from people because they too were increasingly getting helpless as well.

KHAMA ACCUSED OF MEDDLING IN BDP AFFAIRS



REJECTED: Khama



ASPIRING BDP SG: Madigele



DISMISSIVE: Roseline Matshome

It's untrue-Khama

BY DANIEL CHIDA

ASPIRING Secretary General for Botswana Democratic Party, Alfred Madigele and his campaign team known as Team Zoza have allegedly turned down a shot in the arm from former President Ian Khama.

The former Minister of Health and Wellness who lost his constituency to Edwin Dikoloti during the party's primary elections (Bulela Ditswe) was apparently offered a monetary gift by Khama as campaign sponsorship.

A reliable source from Botswana Patriotic Front (BPF) has claimed that the patriot of BPF was still very much interested in the affairs of the ruling party and he wanted to sponsor Madigele's campaign for the SG position so he could then use him to infiltrate BDP.

"Madigele is likely to be up against the financial muscle of Lesang Magang and Boyce Sebetela and the Khama offer could have boosted his campaign but he turned us down. Coming up against such names is going to cost him a lot," said the worried source that didn't rule out chances of sponsoring other weaker candidates for BDP Central Party positions at the elective congress.

When contacted for a comment, Madigele confirmed that he

was indeed approached by Khama. "Myself and my team declined some assistance, which was rendered by people whose agenda was not known. However I am a principled person whose aim is to unite the party, revive structures as well as solidifying the party and government mandate, it is not money based," said the former minister of Health and Wellness.

He then refused to go further with details saying the focus for now was on fighting COVID 19 and not politics. "Why do we have to accept an offer from outside, it means there is a sinister motive behind it. What we want to see is a united BDP not the one controlled by outsiders and people who defy the President," said a Gaborone City Councillor who claims to have been part of the team that refused to accept Khama's offer.

When contacted, Khama dismissed the allegations as far-fetched and untrue. "I have not been in contact with Madigele for over a year. I was not even aware that he is contesting for any position until you asked me that question," said the BPF patron who went on to add that he has absolutely nothing to do with the BDP.

BPF Secretary General, Roseline Panzirah Matshome also dismissed the allegations as utter nonsense. "People must stop seeking relevance by using Khama's name," she warned.

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CLOTHING STORES REMAIN CLOSED- SERAME

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17 April 2020

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*"Working together
towards a common goal"*



MINISTER: Serame

BY PORTIA MLILO

The Minister of Investment Trade and Industry, Peggy Serame has said that clothing shops will remain closed during this lockdown.

Minister Serame was responding to a request from the public concerned about clothing for the new born babies.

She said government was working with the Ministry of Health and Wellness to assist mothers whose new born babies do not have clothes.

Serame pleaded with parents whose children have outgrown their clothes to continue dressing the children in the same ill fitting clothes until the president makes an announcement concerning the opening of shops.

"Schools are closed and your children stay at home so use their old clothes and blankets to keep them warm since we are approaching winter season. We have a responsibility to protect both children and expectant mothers against covid-19 so clothing shops will remain closed. We do not want mothers and their new born babies to be infected by the virus. Most of clothing shops sell adults clothes so if we open, all shops will want to open. We have received donations of clothes of infants and we will distribute them across all DHMTs," said Serame

She said as a woman she understood that a woman can give birth before the expected time but she also knew that mothers always buy clothes for unborn babies in advance.

The Minister said in case of emergency, hospitals will provide clothes from the donated lot and went on to encourage expectant mothers to register in clinics so the ministry would know where to distribute accordingly.

"There has always been an arrangement for emergency births in our hospitals so they will continue with the help. We are engaging with the relevant stakeholders and individuals on how best they can assist. As we speak we have mothers who have already had emergency births and they have benefited from this arrangement. They received clothes for the new born at the hospital. I therefore urge Batswana to join hands with the government to fight the spread of this virus. I must also emphasise that lockdown is not for six months but State of Emergency is' she said.

DEBSWANA

DEBSWANA'S SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES AND THE NATIONAL COVID-19 RELIEF FUND

The outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has had an unprecedented impact on the entire global community and the diamond industry, of which Debswana is a significant stakeholder, has suffered greatly from the inability to sustain sales due to global movement restrictions implemented as an infection spread response measure.

As part of these world-wide interventions, the Government of the Republic of Botswana (GRB) has also effected a number of swift interventions to prevent and manage the spread of the virus. These include a request by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Botswana, Dr. Mokgweetsi E.K. Masisi for the private sector to contribute towards the national COVID-19 Relief Fund, whose primary objective is to cushion the impact of the pandemic on the cross-section of Botswana's economy and communities.

Since the spread of the pandemic escalated, Debswana has committed resources to provide financial and in-kind support towards corresponding relief efforts, these also being in line with the Company's Corporate Social Investment programme's focus area of SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES. The Company has so far spent P14 million on the pandemic preparedness of our hospitals and operations, as well as support to communities. Over the next few weeks Debswana will contribute a further P10 million towards national relief efforts and community support.

In formulating its contributions Debswana has taken the following aspects into consideration:

1. The current interventions are focused on Prevention and Response, albeit with plans already developed for the pandemic Recovery phases.
2. Communities within our mines' environs are a particular focus area due to their resource constraints to respond to the pandemic, relative to urban areas of the country.
3. Debswana runs two district referral hospitals which are already at the core of the Boteti and Jwaneng-Mabutsane sub-district's response to the pandemic.
4. Debswana is a member of the Joint (Government and Debswana) District Disaster Management Committees through which the Company implements its Emergency Response Preparedness Plans in the event of any crisis. Both sub-districts' clinics are experiencing significant shortages of resources, such as front-line personnel protective equipment (PPE), for which requests for support have been submitted to the Company's respective operations.
5. Lack of access to remote learning due to limited or no internet connectivity, as well as a lack of access to broadcast media (radio and TV) for students in all of these outlying communities.

Since the previous month, Debswana has been proactively engaging stakeholders in our immediate impact communities, as well as at national level, such as the District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC), District Health Management Teams, National Emergency Operation Centre, Ministry of Health and Wellness, community leadership, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other stakeholders, to work on prevention and response initiatives. The Company conducted risk assessments from which an inventory of its resources and assets that can be mobilised was formulated.

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS FOR ALL DEBSWANA OPERATIONS AND IMPACT COMMUNITIES

Debswana has to date spent P14 million to prepare its operations and hospitals to fight the pandemic.

This consisted of procuring related medical supplies, PPE, testing equipment, converting some of its accommodation facilities into isolation centres, as well as pandemic educational materials and communication platforms. Of this figure P7,682,758 was spent on local suppliers. In addition, Debswana's mine hospitals also serve as district referral hospitals in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Wellness and have to be adequately prepared.

Other funds and efforts were spent on:

1. Re-allocation and streamlining of hospital services at both Jwaneng and Orapa towards COVID-19 treatment and patient care.
2. Availing funds, facilities and Company employees to assist the District Health Management Teams.
3. Enabling Government to convert some district clinics into COVID-19 treatment centres.
4. Re-deployment of mine hospitals' ambulances to support wider healthcare efforts around the communities: Jwaneng (two ambulances) and Orapa (one ambulance).
5. Provision of water and sanitisers to the Company's impact communities.
6. A cash donation to the Boteti DDMC to purchase masks, gloves and other medical supplies.
7. Provision of self contained porta cabins for a period of six months to be used by a clinic in Jwaneng and Mabutsane to house health personnel (eight rooms in Jwaneng and sixteen rooms in Mabutsane).



Jwaneng Mine Hospital doctor, Dr Rachel Seleke, shows traditional leaders the Isolation Centre.



Self contained porta cabins provided as accommodation for health workers



Assistant Minister of Health checks OLDM hospital readiness

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

With an additional contribution of P10 million the Company will continue to support interventions at both impact communities and national levels.

Debswana will commit the P10 million as follows:

- a) **P5 million** for the production of 250,000 re-usable masks and distribution to front-line workers such as the Police and Military; as well as Government essential workers and communities around our Mines. The masks will be made by pre-existing tailors in Botswana and around our communities, thus stimulating economic activity such as local production, import substitution and socio-economic development during this time of economic downturn.
- b) **P3 million** to purchase food packages, provide water and various supplies requested by communities around Orapa and Jwaneng.
- c) **P1.3 million** to support education programmes around the communities in Orapa and Jwaneng.
- d) **P700,000** to augment costs for medical Personnel Protective Equipment being purchased by the Anglo Foundation for 24 clinics in the 200 kilometer radius around our Mines.
- e) **Technical support** in the form of Emergency Preparedness training.

With regard to Debswana's employees and contractors we have ensured and continue to further consolidate the following;

1. Purchased disposable masks, sanitisers and gloves for **Debswana's 12,000 employees and contractors** who work at our operations.
2. In the next few weeks, spend **P480,000** for the production of re-usable masks for all employees and contractors.
3. Provision of **daily medical screening to employees and contractors** (currently only essential services and skeleton staff are working).
4. Providing **daily COVID-19 educational messages and advice** to employees via SMS and email.
5. Provision of a **toll-free number with 24-hour** for communication and wellness support services for employees.
6. Our crisis management teams have put in place robust plans for post lockdown re-entry to our operations that will ensure compliance with COVID-19 **safety protocols**.

The Acting Managing Director, Ms. Lynette Armstrong had confirmed that; "Debswana remains committed to play its part in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Our efforts in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 extend way beyond this pledge. Through our existing and long-term socio-economic development, Corporate Social Investment programme, Citizen Economic Empowerment programmes and our Debswana Values, we will ensure the continued support in the best way possible even post the COVID-19 crisis."



CONFIRMING: Superintendent Lemogang

METSIMOTLHABE MEN CHARGED FOR STOCK THEFT

148 people fined for travelling without permits

BY GOFAONE KOOGOTSITSE

SOJWE police have charged three men from Metsimotlabe for stock theft after they were caught with beef from two carcasses loaded in a Pajero on Sunday.

Two of the suspects aged 25 and 46 were arrested by Lentsweletau police early morning around 0300hrs while on their way to Metsimotlabe. The 42-year-old third suspect was later arrested at the cattle post in Mogotlho-wa-Lenong where they stole the cows.

The duo who got arrested first, claimed to have long bought the cows from the third suspect who had in-

structed them to collect the beasts which they then decided to slaughter to stock up on meat during lockdown period when movement is restricted.

Sojwe Station Commander, Superintendent Kitsiso Lemogang, said that although the duo had travelling permits, they gave the police contradicting statements concerning the meat. One said they killed the cows for consumption while the other claimed they had planned to sell the meat from home.

"We managed to recover the skins at the cattle post and realised that the culprits had destroyed the ear marks from one of the cows by cutting the ears off. They also destroyed the zone brand on the neck as well as the brand

marks on the skin. The other skin however was okay, it was found with the owner's brand marks," Superintendent Lemogang explained.

In related crimes committed during lockdown, three people were charged for brewing traditional beer at home, which leads to illegal gathering while two others were nabbed and fined for travelling without permits contrary to Covid-19 regulations.

Superintendent Lemogang encouraged the public to abide by the regulations and stay home.

Meanwhile, Molepolole police have charged 148 people between Saturday and Monday for travelling without permits and two for selling traditional brew at home.

Station Commander, Superintendent Motlhaba Rammapya of Molepolole said they were also investigating a case involving a 47-year-old inmate at Molepolole Prison who has been accused of causing grievous bodily harm to another inmate that he allegedly assaulted on the head with a wooden laddle.

The incident is said to have occurred on Saturday evening around 6pm following a misunderstanding between the two inmates after the the 50-year-old victim had allegedly said to the accused, "Mopakwana o wa ntlwaela" loosely translated to, "This autistic person is disrespecting me." The victim was hospitalised at Princess Marina Hospital with a broken skull.



NGAMI DISTRICT HEALTH MANAGEMENT TEAM HEAD: Dr Kebabonye

MALARIA KILLS TWO IN NORTH WEST

BY CATHERINE MOEMEDI

As the battle against Corona Virus intensifies the Northwest district has found itself having to distribute the limited resources to address malaria outbreak.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday the Head of Ngami District Health Management Team (DHMT), Dr Malebogo Kebabonye revealed that they have recorded 24 cases of Malaria in the district.

Kebabonye further indicated that they have so far recorded two deaths as compared to nine cases and zero mortality in 2019.

Kebabonye informed the Media that they had long started preparing for Malaria Outbreak before the Corona Virus pandemic.

"In response to Malaria outbreak we had long completed the indoor residual spraying and distribution of mosquito nets in the areas that are Malaria prone but the coming of corona has strained the little resources that were to be channelled towards fighting Malaria," she stated

In a bid to maximize the limited resources the district has now resorted to collaborative and coordinated response when addressing health needs. Speaking at a press briefing on The Northwest District commissioner, Keolopile Leipego said that apart from COVID-19 and Malaria, the district was also ravaged by flooding and locust attack.

"In our region as we are battling covid-19 we have been hit by other disasters which require our immediate attention," Leipego said

MURDER ACCUSED REMANDED



IN COURT: Sekukuni

BY PORTIA MLILO

BROADHURST Magistrate, Gaseitsewe Tonoki this Thursday remanded in custody Botoka Okhando Sekukuni, a murder accused.

46-year-old Sekukuni from Mmankgodi is facing one count of murdering his girlfriend, Botshelo Makgaka. It is alleged the two had a misunderstanding on the 5th of April at Mogoditshane and Sekukuni hit the victim with a hammer and slasher on the head. She sustained serious head injuries and got admitted at Intensive Care Unit at Princess Marina Referral Hospital where she died on Monday this week.

State Prosecutor, Sub-Inspector Keapela Seekolo told court that this was a fresh matter and the investigations were still at an initial

stage. She said the post-mortem was not yet done and the body of the deceased was yet to be taken to her family in Francistown.

When asked if he had anything to say Sekukuni said he was cohabiting with the deceased so he left some of his properties at her house. He pleaded with the court to make an arrangement for him to go and collect his radio, clothes and some work tools at his dead girlfriend's house.

Magistrate Tonoki however reminded the accused that he had committed a serious crime that carried a possible sentence of death by hanging.

"Taking a person's life leaves the public and the victim's family in a shock, trauma and anger. You will be remanded in custody to allow the police to complete their investigations," said the magistrate.

Plea was reserved and the accused person ordered to return to court on May 7th.

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MORAKA COMBO



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FAMILY OF FIVE CHARGED WITH MURDER



BEATEN TO DEATH: Mmerekhi



MURDER ACCUSED: Chipo



NO BAIL: Albert and Johnson Madoda

BY KABELO DIPHOLO

Sunday proved to be a bloody affair in Sebina this week, when a family of five allegedly beat a man to death in a dispute over a phone.

The Madoda brothers: Othusitse, 24, Wabuya, 37, Albert, 32, Johnson, 40, and their 28-year-old sister Chipo, appeared before Masunga Magistrates Court on Tuesday charged with murder.

The siblings are all suspected to have played a part in killing 46-year-old Sipho Mmerekhi.

All five were remanded in custody until the lifting of the State of Emergency.

According to Tutume Police Station Commander, Senior Superintendent Jerry Halahala, the youngest brother admitted to having a 'misunderstanding' with Mmerekhi the day before his death.

It seems Othusitse owed the other man money but when

Mmerekhi came to collect he was unable to pay.

In his police statement, Othusitse claims Mmerekhi then snatched his phone and left with it.

"We heard that he reported the confrontation to his siblings

who then traced Mmerekhi to his house armed with mophane sticks and stones," revealed Halahala, adding that the phone does not belong to Othusitse but his sister, Chipo.

The fired-up siblings reportedly assaulted Mmerekhi before

loading him into the boot of a Honda Fit.

They eventually handed him in to Sebina Police, who took Mmerekhi to the clinic where he was certified dead by the doctor.

The Station Commander further told The Voice that they did not find any mophane sticks at the crime scene.

"The only thing that we found was a knobkerrie which we suspect was used to assault the deceased," he added.

In his bail application, a visibly shaken Othusitse pleaded for his and siblings' freedom.

Although their plea was reserved, the youngster could inadvertently have implicated his family in the murder.

"I pray that we be allowed to wait for this case on bail because we made a mistake. What we did was not intentional," declared Othusitse, his voice breaking with emotion.

Their bail application was, however, opposed by Investigating Officer, Detective Sergeant Ramatlalo Kaboyaone who stat-

ed that she was yet to meet with some of the possible witnesses.

"I'm afraid that once released they will interfere with other potential witnesses. This matter is of a serious nature, which if conviction is granted one can be sentenced to death," she highlighted, a comment that caused a nervous murmur to ripple through the courtroom.

Before sending them to the slammer, presiding Magistrate Segametsi Basinyi reminded the siblings they had purposefully contravened the lockdown regulations on movement.

Basinyi expressed her concern that if granted bail, the Madodas would again fail to observe the set regulations of social distancing.

"For your safety you shall be remanded in custody until State of Emergency is lifted," she concluded.

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REMORSEFUL: Othusitse (facing camera)

REGULATE PHANE HARVESTING

BY KABELO DIPHOLO

Alliance for Progressive activist and 2019 Parliamentary candidate for Francistown East, Theresa Mmolawa has called for a controlled harvesting of the popular mophane worm during the State of Emergency.

The AP activist told The Voice in an interview that she was deeply disturbed by the recent harassment of harvesters by the police.

"This is not even a political view, it is something that affects all of us across the party divide. We have to find a way to allow our people to continue harvesting the mophane worm which is a livelihood for thousands of families," Mmolawa said.

She opines that just like farmers are allowed to continue working their fields in a controlled arrangement, the same courtesy should be extended to the harvesters of the highly nutritious and profitable worm.

"Nobody knows how long this situation will last. Life should continue after corona, but if we let a food source like phane, which has sustained families for so many years go, we may live to regret it," warned Mmolawa.

The fiery politician suggested that government should allow people in cer-

AP activist calls for controlled mophane worm harvesting

tain villages with the abundance of the worm to harvest it.

"If the worm is found in Goshwe for instance, only residents from that village should be allowed to harvest it. They should be given permits just like farmers," she said.

"After this lockdown we are all going to buy from them and families will not starve. We should never stop people from using natural resources to sustain themselves, but rather find a way to make the process safer for everyone," Mmolawa said.

The politician who lost to Buti Billy of Botswana Democratic Party said if not careful Botswana will soon fight for food as the food hampers dished out by government come to an end.

"We should never make the mistake of relying on government. The Botswana Police should therefore be condemned for confiscating poor people's harvest. In fact they should return that mophane harvest to the rightful owners," charged Mmolawa.

She rounded off the interview by stating that while she appreciates government's initiative of food hampers she still maintains that citizens should be allowed to harvest phane, morogo and any other indigenous local seasonal food items that may sustain the nation post Covid-19.

"Nobody knows how long this situation will last. Life should continue after corona, but if we let a food source like phane, which has sustained families for so many years go, we may live to regret it,"

The veteran politician said she was also disturbed by the recent report published by the international Monetary Fund (IMF) on the outlook of the country's domestic economic growth.

The IMF states in the report that Botswana's economic outlook faces potential disruptions from COVID-19, most of which will affect Botswana through diamond and SACU revenue.



NOT HAPPY: Theresa Mmolawa



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BA (Hons) Business Management	Gabs	Full Time	
BA (Hons) Entrepreneurship and Business Leadership	Gabs	Full Time	
BA (Hons) International Tourism Management	Gabs/Ftown	Full Time	A minimum of 10 points in any of the combinations above.
BA (Hons) International Hospitality Management	Ftown	Full Time	

NB: All the programmes above are scheduled for 3 Years, 4 Months

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Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)	Gabs/Ftown	Full Time/Part Time	
Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)	Gabs/Ftown	Full Time/Part Time	A minimum of 12 points in any of the following subject combination Maths/English, Maths/Commerce, Accounting/English, Accounting/Commerce
Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS)	Gabs/Ftown	Full Time	
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NB: • All the programmes above are scheduled for 4 Years except for **AAT** which is 2 years.

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TAKING ON THE MOB



SCARRED: Sekgwa's stitches

COPS ARRESTED FOR BUYING BOOZE

Found with Klipdrift and Mocardo

BY DANIEL CHIDA

Three Pandamatenga police officers are being held in custody after allegedly being caught red-handed buying alcohol during the State of Emergency (SoE) period.

The three constables, aged between 30 and 42, were arrested after police received reports that they had asked a bar attendant at Pandamatenga's Crusher Bottle Store to open up for them.

According to a police document seen by The Voice, immediately after getting the tip off, the Station Commander, Superintendent Nelson Museke dispatched two officers to follow the thirsty trio.

They were arrested and found in possession of two Klipdrift brandies valued at P210 each and two Mocardo Coffees valued at P80 each.

Although a source from the said station confirmed to this publication that some of his colleagues were in police custody for contravening the SOE regulations, the Station Commander refused to comment on the matter and referred this publication to Police Headquarters.

However, Police Spokesperson, Assistant Commissioner, Dipheko Motube asked to be given time to look for the case as he was not aware of it. Despite his promises, he had not got back to The Voice by the time of going to press.

According to Emergency Powers (Covid-19) Regulations under the Emergency Powers Act, a liquor licence issued in terms of the Liquor Act is suspended during SOE and all liquor stores should remain closed and no liquor shall be sold.

Man relives terrifying beating after mob invade his house

BY GOFAONE KOOGOTSITSE

Left battered and broken by a bloodthirsty Mogoditshane mob who burst into his house in the dead of night,

Keonneng Sekgwa has vowed to sue his assailants.

Four months have passed since the terrifying December attack but for the 33-year-old, the scars, both psychological and physical, remain alarmingly vivid.

Sekgwa believes he was targeted because of his rumoured links to Thabo Tholane Olatlheng – a youth commonly known as Xholane with a long history of criminal activities in the village.

Olatlheng would eventually meet his demise a month later, beaten to death by an angry mob on 5 January after he was allegedly caught stealing at Mogoditshane's Senthumole ward.

It is a fate that so easily could have been Sekgwa's.

Reliving the night he was almost killed, the Molepolole native revealed he was fast asleep when a mob of about ten people stormed the premises.

"They got inside the house shouting the other one is here and started assaulting me. One man hit me with a baseball bat breaking my right arm – you could hear it crack like an egg! A lady grabbed me tightly so I couldn't

move as the guy tried to strike me on the head; I would have died if he connected!"

Alerted by his desperate screams, Sekgwa's neighbours arrived in the nick of time, forcing the attackers to flee into the night.

Pointing out the long line of jagged stiches that dominate the top of his right arm, Sekgwa says he now has to use his other hand for everything, including eating.

"I now survive with a terrible backache. I am helpless and cannot work at all; that worsens my life. I cannot even pay for rent anymore as I do not have any source of income. I used to work as a panel beater where I earned P50, P100 sometimes even P200 depending on the work I did," he told The Voice, adding the mob also took his wallet, which contained his Omang card.

As well as his damaged body - he is still awaiting wrist surgery on his injured arm - the ordeal has had a devastating impact on Sekgwa's mental state.

"I always imagined my future, I do not have children or a wife, I only have a brother but he is also caring for

his family as he recently got married. Though he assists me he cannot afford everything. I even feel suicidal, it is hard for me to admit."

To add insult to injury, Sekgwa insists he hardly knew Olatlheng.

"He used to pass by my place and I would greet him, that's as far as our relationship went. Xholane was a well-known man among Mogoditshane residents but we were not friends," maintains Sekgwa, who, not for the first time since the interview started, grimaces in obvious pain.

When the nationwide lockdown is lifted, Sekgwa, who says he can identify his assailants, plans

to seek legal assistance and compensation. Concluding the narrative, Sekgwa's older brother, Paul Mothusi Sekgwa, 53, said the family now live in fear as they worry the mob might come after them.

Highlighting his brother's current torment, Paul grimly declared, "He is just idling alone. Often when sleeping he wakes up saying he hears people's footsteps just because of the trauma."

"They got inside the house shouting the other one is here and started assaulting me. One man hit me with a baseball bat breaking my right arm – you could hear it crack like an egg!"

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THIS DAY
IN
HISTORY



1980

Iran hostage rescue mission ends in disaster

On April 24, 1980, an ill-fated military operation to rescue the 52 American hostages held in Tehran ends with eight U.S. servicemen dead and no hostages rescued.

▼ PETROL STATION: Fuel prices decrease slightly

◀ BERA CEO: Rose Seretse



A DROP IN THE OCEAN

Fuel prices decrease minimal despite collapsing global oil prices

BY KABELO ADAMSON

MOTORISTS were left disappointed this week after the eagerly anticipated drop in fuel prices turned out to be a 13 thebe per litre decrease for petrol and 10 thebe for diesel.

The minimal adjustment means a litre of petrol in Botswana is now P9.30 whilst diesel trades at P9.38 to the litre.

Retail prices for illuminating paraffin on the other hand decreased by 20 thebe per litre.

Announcing the reduction on Monday, Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA) Chief Executive Officer, Rose Seretse stressed the new amount was influenced by the general decline in international oil prices.

The slight alterations come three weeks after President Mokgweetsi Ma-

sisi first told the nation fuel prices were set to go down.

In his address to the media on Tuesday, Minister of Mineral Resources, Green Technology and Energy Security, Lefoko Maxwell Moagi explained that when government decides on fuel prices, they consider global oil prices as well as the costs at which fuel is brought into the country.

"After that, we look at where the National Petroleum Fund (NPF) stands because this Fund cushions consumers against adjustments. We do this because in the absence of the NPF, it would mean every time prices move either way it means the costs at source change," outlined Moagi, adding that when a consumer buys fuel, 13.5 thebe from every litre goes into the Fund.

He explained constantly adjusting the price of petrol would hit end-users hard as fuel prices affect costs of other services and products through inflation.

"Moreover, our fuel prices have been stagnant for a long period of time and inflation has over the past three years reached 9.3 percent overall. If you take a look at countries which we do business with and where we source our fuel, they are adjusting their prices and you will find that ours have been overtaken by time," continued Moagi.

While consumers had been hoping for a more substantial reduction, the Minister stressed fuel prices would be reviewed every three months with a view of keeping in line with both global and regional oil prices.

"This will help us as users of fuel as well as those we buy from. At the moment it helps in the sense that food is important during this period, so it is important to help those in the agricultural sector."

Moagi said currently the country has enough fuel stored to provide 15-days of supply.

Meanwhile, pressure on international oil prices continued this week as crude oil prices collapsed to historic new lows.

Investment Analyst at Kgori Capital, Kwabena Antwi predicted that the decrease in oil prices would keep inflation low and likely lead to a further drop in local pump prices.

With transport accounting for 23 percent of the inflation basket, he said this means low or disinflationary pressure within this component will keep overall inflation muted.

"The situation warrants close monitoring for the next few weeks and even months in the context of the changing global environment brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic," he pointed out.

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COMPANIES COULD USE STOCK MARKET TO RECOVER FROM COVID-19 DISRUPTION

BY KABELO ADAMSON

The World Bank has projected that Sub-Saharan Africa could experience its first recession in 25 years due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The negative projection is expected to have a damaging effect on the performance and competitiveness of most companies, with the impact varying across industries.

One of the major problems businesses are likely to face is a sizeable reduction in earnings, as most enterprises in the region have shut down in line with Extreme Social Distancing policies.

It is anticipated that the disruption will change the business world's competitive landscape.

To this end, Botswana Stock Exchange Limited (BSEL) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Thapelo Tsheole encouraged companies to utilize the stock exchange in the aftermath of the pandemic.

"At company level, access to capital is very critical in any business cycle," explained Tsheole, adding there are several ways entities can make use of the stock exchange to recover from the effects of Coronavirus.

Firstly, companies can issue and list shares through an initial public offering (IPOs) or private placement to raise capital for business operations.

"As a pandemic is systemic, it is highly likely that valuations will get depressed during the pandemic whereas the fundamentals of a business could be viewed differently by existing and potential investors," said Tsheole, noting this often presents opportunities to both seekers and suppliers of capital.

"The timing could prove beneficial in terms of optimizing the capital structure of the company by accessing public funds through the stock exchange," continued the CEO.

On the BSEL, companies could use available boards to list their shares such as Main Board, Venture Capital Board and the Tshipidi Board, which caters for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).



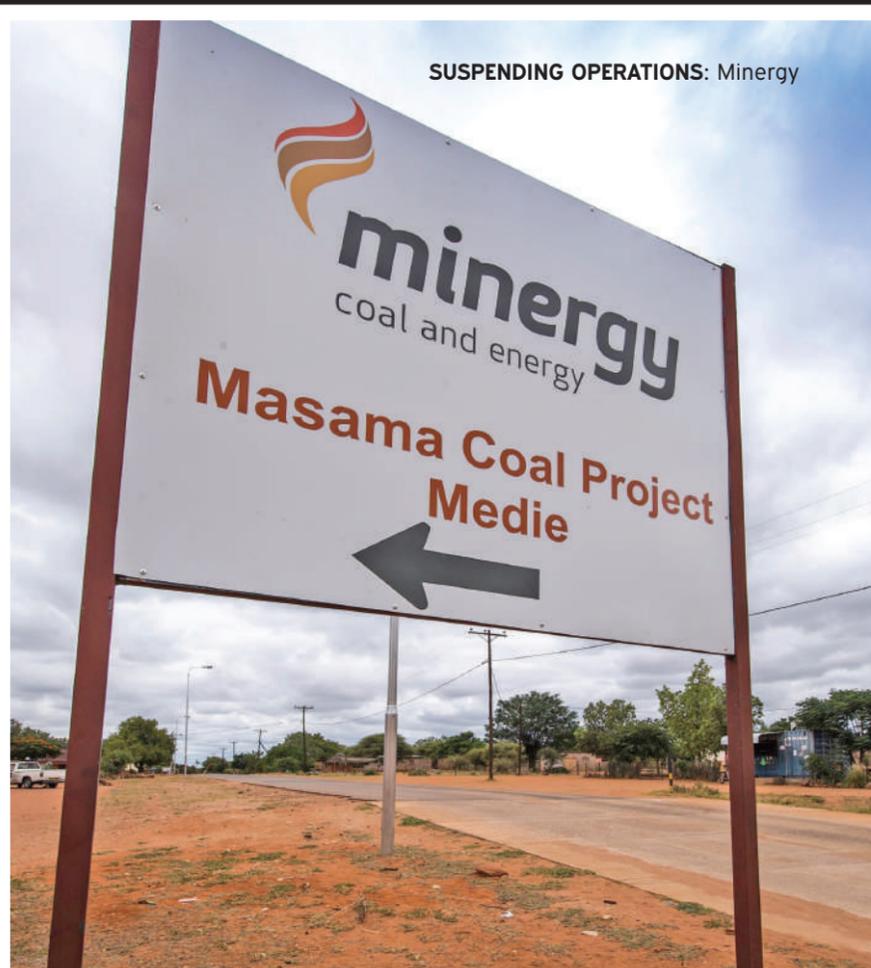
BSEL CEO: Thapelo Tsheole

Alternatively, instead of issuing shares, companies could issue and list bonds on the stock market.

"A bond is a debt instrument acknowledging an obligation of indebtedness to a lender by the issuer of the bond for a specified period of time and with a predetermined interest rate or coupon rate," highlighted Tsheole.

He revealed bonds are generally deemed less risky in comparison to shares because of the contractual obligations of the borrower to the lender as regards to payment of interest and repayment of principal, among other things.

Tsheole says enterprises could also use the platform to enhance their strategic performances as well as to optimize the capital structure and manage risks.



MINERGY SUSPENDS OPERATIONS AS KEY MARKETS EXTEND LOCKDOWN

BY KABELO ADAMSON

DESPITE the mining industry being declared an essential service during the lockdown period, local coal producer, Minergy has suspended operations.

The organisation was granted permission by the Department of Mines to undertake certain mining, plant and maintenance activities.

However, last Friday the coal producer saw fit to temporarily stop all its mining activities.

The decision was in part prompted by the company's desire to protect its staff.

The drop in demand was also a decisive factor, with the majority of Minergy's clients currently inactive due to the lockdown.

Roughly 90 percent of the company's market - in terms of volume - is based in South Africa. The bulk of these consumers were declared non-essential by Cyril Ramaphosa's government and thus halted activities when the country went into lockdown on Friday 27 March. South Africa has since extended its lockdown until the

end of April.

In a communiqué addressed to shareholders this week, Minergy Chief Executive Officer, Morne du Plessis was quick to point out the company would still be supplying customers during the period.

"Where sales are permitted to South African and Namibian essential services customers, primarily in the food processing and energy generation sectors, product stockpiles at the end of March 2020 are sufficient and are being utilized for this supply," reads part of the statement.

Du Plessis further noted Minergy has enough exposed but unblasted coal stocks to immediately restart mining operations in May should lockdown rules be relaxed in both Botswana and South Africa.

"The effect on May 2020 volumes and results are dependent on how quickly customers can restart and take delivery, which is in-turn dependent on border operations too," continued the CEO.

Meanwhile, Du Plessis announced that the development of the rail siding, which is financed by Botswana Railways, is progressing well, with

the necessary work preparations in place.

He revealed preparations are such that the first loading of trains bound for South Africa should take place next month, subject to lockdown being lifted.

The company, which is listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange Limited (BSEL), says balancing cash flow and cost implications as a start-up business in the ramp-up phase, with minimal sales and cash generation opportunity, is proving extremely challenging.

"Minergy recently reported that it received funding to alleviate historical working capital shortages and that future estimated cash flows were subsequently considered adequate to sustain the company," declared Du Plessis, adding this is no longer the case with the company losing a minimum of one month's sales while still having to carry fixed cost burdens.

To this end, he says Minergy has been liaising with its government-linked funders and has requested additional funding and assistance during the lockdown period.

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WON'T THEY PAY?

Please help me.

I have insured my car and had an accident in Block 10 on the 13th of March. Now I just received an email that they cant help me because I was above speed limit. I was driving at 70. The police they said reckless driving. It was on a curve so someone was in my line with bright lights and I tried to move aside by the road then hit the drain. Is this really fair???

Firstly, I'm glad you had an insurance policy because it's the smart thing to do. Even a basic vehicle insurance policy will cover you against potentially huge costs. I

don't mean the cost of any damage caused to YOUR vehicle by accident or collision. I mean the costs of damaging someone else's vehicle. A few years ago we heard of a driver who caused a collision but who had no insurance. His car was destroyed but he also destroyed another driver's brand new P750,000 Mercedes. Luckily for the other driver, he had an insurance policy so within a few weeks his insurance policy had paid for a replacement Mercedes. He was happy again. Unfortunately, the uninsured driver then received a demand from the victim's insurance company demanding that he pay them back

the three quarters of a million they'd paid out. Was this right, he asked? Yes, we told him, that what happens when you cause an accident and don't have an insurance policy. You pay the bill.

In your case I think this all depends on what the text of the insurance policy says. Most insurance policies automatically reject claims if, for instance, the driver was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident. It looks like your policy says that claims are rejected if you weren't obeying the traffic laws at the time of the incident. If you were charged by the Police they might consider that sufficient proof of this.

I'll contact the insurance company for you and ask them to double check the small print and make sure they've taken the right decision.

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Read the Consumer Watchdog blog where you can comment, celebrate and complain at consumerwatchdogbw.blogspot.com. Also join our Facebook group called "Consumer Watchdog Botswana".

PLEASE HELP MY SISTER!

My sister needs help.

Sometime in 2009 she applied for a loan from her bank and cleared it in 2013/14. A month ago she applied for a facility to consolidate through another bank and was informed that she had been listed with CRB. Upon inquiring from the first bank, they told her that their records do not show that she cleared that loan. The say back in 2013/14 the loan balance was around 28k, and now it's at 43k

Unfortunately for her, it's been almost 7

years and she can't find her records so she is really at the mercy of the bank. They keep giving her stories that they suspect that the money was deposited into another account.

They are actually saying that they will give her a discount to pay the 43k. But why should she have to pay a loan twice when it is clearly their wrongdoing?

She says the bank never contacted her and she had never changed numbers since she started using it in 2008. They can't explain why there was never any communication from them.

Kindly advise what she can do.

The difficulty here is that it's the responsibility of both parties to a loan, the borrower and the lender, to make sure that the loan is repaid fully and is settled finally. Very often we assume that the lender, in this case the bank, will get everything right and will keep full and accurate records. The bad news is that banks aren't always as reliable as we need them to be. Like us, they're flawed and lose things. It's why it's very impor-

tant to keep bank statements, whether they're printed or emailed somewhere safe.

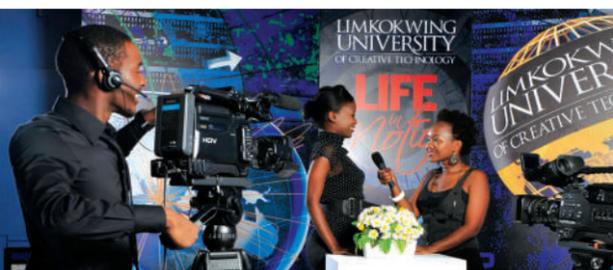
I contacted the bank and asked them to take another look and see if they can trace any payments your sister made.

UPDATE: The bank assured me that they would investigate the matter urgently. I then heard from the customer that the bank managed to help her sister and they've cleared her name with CRB and emailed her a clearance letter.

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Guy Brina

mind your own Business

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TURN, TURN, TURNING

To everything turn, turn, turn. There is a season turn, turn, turn. And a time to every purpose Under heaven

You've probably heard those lines before.

They come from the Book of Ecclesiastes, so if you are a Christian, you may have heard them in church. If not, it's more likely you've heard them sung by The Byrds who recorded Turn, Turn, Turn the year before Botswana gained independence.

The Byrds recording still gets played today, but that old American folk/rock band weren't the first artists to put music behind the passage; Pete Seeger did that. But his, To Everything There is a Season, wasn't a big hit, so he sold the recording rights, and in 1965 The Byrds changed the name, and Turn, Turn, Turn shot up the charts to number one in less than two months.

Basically, it was the same song Seeger released; but maybe the American record buying public just wasn't ready for it in 1962... which would be ironic considering the message. The passage

lists times for many things concluding with, 'a time for peace,' and then Seeger added, 'I swear it's not too late.'

In 1962, things were fairly calm in the States, but three years later, Turn, Turn, Turn caught on as the public became more and more fed up with the Vietnam War.

I'm giving you this musical history because I've been thinking about the song during the past three weeks while I've been expanding, weeding and planting the vegetable garden behind my English home. Actually, I've only thought about the Byrds song when I wasn't listening to the real life bird songs that have been playing in the trees.

When we were asked to self-isolate after flying in from Botswana, I thought Sal and I would probably spend a great deal of our time inside the house practicing the handful of tunes we play together on the guitar and bass... but that hasn't happened. That's because we have been spending far more time than expected, working in the garden.

But maybe 'working' isn't the correct term, because, as

the old saying goes, it's only work if you would rather be doing something else... and once we got started, that wasn't the case. A couple of the items listed in the song are, a time to plant and a time to cast away stones, and the weather has been so pleasant and the soil has been so loose that doing those things was a pleasure.

Pulling weeds was a pleasure as well, because it is early spring up here in the northern hemisphere and the roots haven't taken hold yet, so they didn't break off and stay behind.

Anyway, what I'm saying is we've been fine during lockdown because it came at a time when we had a lot of gardening to do, and at exactly the right time to turn, turn, turn, the soil. Now, however, Sal and I need another fruitful way to spend our time, so we've decide to learn a new song.

Turn, Turn, Turn would make sense... but fortunately, a Motswana friend has asked us to learn some AC/DC... and trying to do that feels like a better way to spend our time.

FEELING THE SQUEEZE



UP FOR THE CHALLENGE: Masupe

2020 Bank profit margins expected to squeeze

BY KABELO ADAMSON

COMMERCIAL banks margins are expected to squeeze in the next financial period due to the economic effects of Covid-19.

Listed lender, Standard Chartered Bank Botswana's Managing Director, Mpho Masupe, in a statement accompanying the bank's financial results for the year ended December 31, 2019, noted that new challenges are emerging brought about by the Covid-19 scourge.

"The spread of the Coronavirus has been described as an epidemic, crossing over from the epicentre in China to Europe, East Asia, America and now Africa in a matter of weeks," highlighted Masupe.

As human movement has been heavily restricted, Masupe says businesses and trade will slow down as value chains take a knock from wide-ranging bottle-necks.

For Botswana in particular, the country's main revenue earners, being diamonds and tourism, will not be spared.

Already De Beers has delayed its third sight due to the lockdown locally and across the world. Indeed the result of its second sight, held at the start of March, were less than expected, the early effects of Covid-19 playing a part.

Masupe says this, as and when it crystallizes, will have an obvious impact on the banking industry.

Before the outbreak of the virus, Masupe notes that early in the first quarter of 2020, performance was encouraging, transitioning well from an impressive momentum run in the last quarter of 2019.

"Sales of primary products, in particular, reflect a positive trajectory for the rest of the year, supported by increased disposable incomes for public sector

employees and general positivity in the economic outlook," said Masupe.

He revealed a number of key investments have been bedded down and are expected to support a rapid rollout of key enablers during the year.

"These enablers will not only improve client experience but contribute quite positively to the Bank's revenue profile, particularly the non-funded income lines," he added.

However, Masupe warned that the full effects of the virus broadly remain a guess, especially as the spread of Covid-19 appears far from over.

According to the Managing Director, financial performance could suffer as the bank continues to take appropriate steps to protect its staff, clients and contribute to efforts of curbing the spread.

Meanwhile, Bank of Botswana (BoB) has recently announced capital relief and liquidity support for commercial banks in order to enable them to satisfy capital requirements and liquidity challenges.

This was in view of supporting the banks so that they can continue to sustain economic activity under conditions of a possible increase in credit defaults and need for additional lending.

Subsequently, the capital adequacy ratio for commercial banks operating in Botswana was reduced from 15 percent to 1.5 percent while commercial bank liquidity is reportedly currently adequate.

Commercial banks have availed loan repayment breaks for customers with good track records of payment. Against this background, the central bank says it will generally exercise regulatory tolerance in relation to the assessment of non-performing loans and determination of expected credit losses, for regulatory and compliance purposes.

**#StayHome #StaySafe
#StopTheSpread #Covid-19**

The Big INTERVIEW



MDU

CELEB EDITION WITH MDU THA PARTY
Radio star shares experiences
PAGE 7A

SOCIAL MEDIA ROUND UP
Latest trends
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SEKWAKWA

CHILLING OUT WITH SHAYA
Latest and Hottest gossip
PAGE 11A



When the University of Botswana (UB) officially opened its doors back in 1982, Dr Patricia Finky Mogomotsi nee Madigele was still seven years away from being born.

Last week, the 31-year-old became the youngest Associate Professor in the university's history.

It is the latest achievement in a life bursting with impressive highs.

The Molapowabojang native, who completed her PhD in just 18 months, is one of the smartest individuals in the country – and she has the qualifications to prove it! As well as her PhD, Mogomotsi boasts a Bachelor of Arts (Economics), Bachelor of Commerce Honours (BComm Hons) in Economics, Master of Economics and Master of Financial Management.

However, as the Associate Professor (Natural Resources Economics) at Okavango Research Institute University of Botswana in Maun explains in this interview with **PORTIA MLILO**, hard work has played a crucial role in her rise.

We meet on this platform once again, welcome back and massive congratulations on becoming the youngest Associate Professor in the history of UB. How much does this mean to you?

So I hear! It is absolutely unbelievable! I published my very first research output in 2016. I am now at just over 50. The title and rank give me some sort of validation that I am doing something right. I am elated!

Describe your reaction when you received the news?

I applied for promotion last year July. The application had to go through three committees within UB before it was sent to external assessors within my field based all over the world. This is done for quality assurance and is

an international practice. I awaited the completion of the processes with fear and trepidation. I had to constantly counsel myself to accept the good and the bad with equanimity. The good news gave me a sense of relief! I now know that I boldly stand on the shoulders of academic giants within the natural resources economics subfield.

What does it take for one to rise to the rank of Associate Professor and

how long did it take you to claim the title?

To be an Associate Professor, one must have a minimum of 21 research products. These include refereed journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings etc. 14 of the 21 publications must be articles in internationally recognised journals. The researcher must demonstrate sustained research activity. In addition to research, the researcher has to satisfy teaching and service requirements. Service is three-pronged: ser-

vice to the university, service to community and service to profession. One must also display academic leadership.

I joined UB in September 2015 as a research fellow - the equivalent of a lecturer. It has taken me almost four-and-a-half years to reach my current rank. Now that I have just reflected on the journey, I am in awe! It is amazing how much I have achieved within such a short space of time.

TURN TO PAGE 6A

BREAKING BOUNDARIES



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RISING SWIFTLY TO HISTORY

It is indeed! So, what exactly does your new role entail?

When you are an Associate Professor based at a research institute like UB, you are expected to be engaged substantially in research, governance, teaching and social engagement. At the minimum, I am expected to produce at least four refereed research publications per year compared to, for example, a research fellow who is expected to produce two publications per year. The teaching and graduation supervision expectations are also steep.

A lot of young people find it difficult to concentrate on their studies and get easily distracted. How do you manage?

What everyone needs to understand is that education empowers. Every one of us responds to studies differently - some are fast learners, others are slow learners. I believe in doing everything with passion. Passion prompts you to be innovative in getting the best results with so little discomfort.

Martin Luther King Jr once said, "If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets so well that all

the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.'"

Any plans to publish a journal on the outbreak of Covid-19?

We have just completed working on a manuscript which focused on analysing the regulatory regime for responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies in Botswana. It was a collaborative effort between colleagues from the Okavango Research Institute and UB main campus. My role in the paper was to analyse the economic history of pandemics and their impact on service industries such as tourism. I also had to analyse the current and projected impacts of Covid-19 in Botswana generally, and the tourism sector specifically.

You are a married mother and successful career woman. How do you balance both?

It is all about finding the right balance. If one role suffers, it implies that you are definitely not doing something right. It is also important to seek support from family, friends and colleagues

to make life bearable. Fortunately, my husband is also a colleague and we co-author a lot of times. This makes the whole journey very enjoyable.

Which of your over 50 research articles did you enjoy doing most?

In 2017, we published a journal article titled, 'Live by the gun, die by the gun: Botswana's 'shoot-to-kill' policy as an anti-poaching strategy' in South African Crime Quarterly. From its controversial title and its bold stance, it attracted a lot of attention. We were even contacted by Survival International a few weeks after it was published. The paper likened poaching to war on nature and argued in support of militarisation of conservation. I thoroughly enjoyed working on it.

What challenges do you face as a scholar?

Lack of funding is a huge problem. Most of my research work was self-financed.

What makes a great scholar?

A great scholar must be a team player. The world benefits more from researchers who propose recommendations using both multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary ap-



HISTORY MAKER:
Mogomotsi

proaches. Working within a team of people from various disciplines gives research a holistic view and makes it a lot more practical. A great researcher also needs to have sharp analytical skills. Other features include passion, foresight, confidence and a good command of your area of speciality.

Your latest publication is about developing a framework for sustainable coexistence between eco-tourism and agriculture in Botswana. Briefly share with our readers what it is all about?

The article is an output of my human-wildlife project, from where my PhD thesis came. It argues that Botswana has experienced changes in the institutional landscape of natural resources governance and management in the form of land reforms, policy revisions and enactment of legislature over the years. Some of these changes introduced and fuelled land-use conflicts between traditional and contemporary livelihood activities, especially in ecologically sensitive areas such as the Okavango Delta. There has to be a participatory approach in the design of natural resources management policies and strategies. Communities have to play an active role in policy formulation, land-use planning, policy implementation and policy evaluation and revision. This process should have both forward and backward linkages with all stakeholders involved.

Sounds fascinating – but why this topic in particular?

Human-wildlife and land-use conflicts affect both the tourism business and rural livelihoods, especially farming. These conflicts often explain the conundrum of high levels of poverty in the natural resources-rich Okavango Delta. I have a constant thirst of understanding the paradox using insights from people with real life experiences.

What impact do you think, or hope, it will have on Botswana's economy in regards to tourism and agriculture?

The article challenges land-use policy makers to employ strategies that provide viable, effective and affordable options from addressing land-use conflicts. It also proposes a framework that supports the sustainability of both agriculture and tourism going forward. We should promote envi-

ronmental management while being sensitive to both the needs and livelihoods of local communities. Like I always say, we cannot have a happy economy with unhappy farmers!

What do you believe can be done to address the conflict between tourism and agriculture?

Our tourism in Botswana is largely nature-based and wildlife-based. Therefore, there is a need for a delicate balance between biodiversity conservation and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. This requires applying inter-disciplinary and transdisciplinary tools that integrate concepts and methodologies from various disciplines with the aim of proposing practical ways of attaining that intricate balance. The aim is to move towards a mutually beneficial and symbiotic relationship between tourism and agriculture.

Who is your inspiration?

My husband, Dr Goemeone Mogomotsi. He does so much work with so much ease. I still wonder how he does it!

I always remind my students that Jesus never said it would be easy. He said it would be worth it!

Good, so it hasn't changed since our last interview! Moving on, what are your future plans as far as your career is concerned?

The most obvious plan is to work towards my next and final promotion. I already have enough papers for the next rank. I also hope to supervise at least two PhD students to completion in the next four years. I hope to work for an international organisation, maybe the environmental department of United Nations for a few years before coming back to UB to apply the international experience to my research.

What advice can you give to young people who are aspiring to be Professors?

I always remind my students that Jesus never said it would be easy. He said it would be worth it! A smooth journey is not guaranteed, but victory is. All you need is to push yourself to the top. Use people whose aims are aligned to yours for an extra push. Do not let people talk you out of your dreams.

Thank God It's Friday, what are your plans for the third weekend of lockdown?

We have no option but to keep staying at home and staying safe. I have a novel I have been planning to read since 2018. I plan to give it a read over the weekend.



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CELEB EDITION

BY SHARON MATHALA



ON AIR PERSONALITY:
Mdu Tha Party

Controversial radio and TV Presenter Mdu Tha Party is this week's Celeb Edition feature.

We caught up with him for a two-minute chat during lockdown.

Do you think local radio, in terms of content, has improved over the years or has it remained stagnant?

Local radio has improved over the years. What happened is that when online became a thing and people were able to have their own podcasts it brought about competition, and in the market when you bring about competition then the question of quality comes about.

Why did you decide to join radio?

I like to think I am a born creative but I have always been an academic. So radio is something that just happened for me. I wanted to try it out. Sometime in varsity I came across an AD on Yarona FM, decided to try it and the rest is history.

Has the advent of the Internet and online affected radio?

As I mentioned earlier, on-line content has without a doubt brought about competition on traditional media for both print and radio. We are now forced to step up our game to bring value for money for both listeners and advertisers.

What is keeping you busy during the lockdown?

Radio is keeping me busy. I am currently hosting the drive time show on Yarona FM for the duration of State of Emergency.

Do you have pictures of your colleagues on your phone gallery?

Well pictures we took together sure, but their pictures NO! That would be creepy. Unless if I have a crush on one of them, which I am not confirming nor denying!

Have you ever been in the back of a police van?

Yes I have been at the back of a police van.

What happened?

It was a case of mistaken identity, funnily enough. I was at a private party, there was a bit of a mess that I was not part of then police were called. When I was going

to the police van this dude punches me in the face. He was accusing me of stealing his phone. We were then chucked into the back of the police van. It was all cleared at the police station though because the guy who took the phone was wearing an orange t-shirt I was wearing a pink one, so yeah!

Tell us about the concept of your top 10 list?

It is all about celebrating BW Hip Hop music by sharing my top 10 of the year. I am a music journalist and an avid consumer of local music. I know pretty much all the artists, I do the research so I share who I have enjoyed over the year and it breeds conversations hence garnering mileage for the artists.

Have you ever had beef with anyone in the industry?

Of course - I mean, I am a tough guy, I stand my ground. But I'll tell you I am now good with all those I had beef with in the past. Everybody now making their fair share of money so we all good. Obviously it was with rappers, and I am not even

a rapper!

Have you ever been kicked out of a club/party?

Yes I have been kicked out of multiple restaurants. I have been kicked out of Chez Nicholas, I have been kicked out of Cigar Lounge. I have been banned from some places but the ban has since been lifted. I

party hard (laughing).

Five things people don't know about you?

1. I have a very deep religious background. I grew up wanting to become a priest!
2. My father is a pastor
3. I am a philanthropist - actually, I am from a family of

philanthropists

4. I drink a lot of water. I am addicted to water

5. Ke Mokgalagadi, gape ke Motebele. As I am from Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Zambia.

sharonm@thevoicebw.com
@sharonmathala

BOMAID PARTNERS WITH THE VOICE NEWSPAPER FOR ONLINE FITNESS SESSIONS

In an attempt to raise the nation's health and happiness during the Covid-19 pandemic, Botswana Medical Aid Society (Bomaid) has launched online fitness sessions aimed at both its members and the public at large.

The classes, which are scheduled for 7am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, are streamed free of charge through Bomaid and The Voice Newspaper's Facebook pages.

Outlining the thinking behind the initiative, Bomaid Chief Operations Officer, Thato Kubu, said, "It is our responsibility as pioneers in the medical aid space to empower our people with whatever tools to enhance their health and happiness during these challenging times.

"In addition to the P2 million we donated towards the Covid-19 Relief Fund, we have decided to add in free fitness classes to the public. It is our considered understanding that by keeping our members fit we would be assisting them to fight off the Covid-19 virus as regular exercise strengthens the immune system. We think this step is crucial in the fight against the pandemic because, as Bomaid, we believe in the preventative approach to medicine. Our belief is that a healthy and happy people makes for a formidable Botswana."

Meanwhile, in their efforts to effectively meet their members' needs, Bomaid has upgraded its medical plans to include Travel Insurance from its top tier to middle levels plans.

Additionally, it has included Mental

Health Hospitalisation benefits across all plans to stem the tide of alcohol and drug abuse cases. More recently, the society, in a bid to ensure better customer service, launched its Android Bomaid App off the Google Play Store.

"Our commitment to our members' health and happiness is not only a once off engagement. This was, and still is, our purpose. To this end, we will do everything possible to bring innovative programmes such as this online Stay Home Workout Session and many more in the near future to transform our industry and ensure that our people's wellness is prioritised and catered to. Members and the public should be on the lookout for more of such people-centred initiatives from the brand!" promised Kubu.

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Voice on fashion

HOW TO MAKE A FACE MASK (NO SEWING)

DON'T have a mask but you are anxious about going out for your essential shopping or pharmaceutical emergency?

Then The Voice on Fashion has a remedy for your situation, a face cloth mask that involves no sewing. Remember: A DIY face mask is not a replacement for a surgical mask or N-95 respi-

rator. In addition, masks are not a replacement for social distancing. You should still be practising and observing two metres social distancing and frequently washing your hands with soap for 20 seconds.

In preparations for the upcoming cold season, while at home, here are some tips on how to do a D.I.Y (Do it yourself mask). You will need two layers of tightly woven 100 percent cotton

fabric, such as quilter's material or bedsheets with a high thread count.

Alternatively you may also use a cotton handkerchief, a scarf, a cotton fabric or a bandana - whichever you have but make sure they are cotton. All these fabric are ideal as they are eco-friendly and their ability to capture small particles yet remain breathable. You may wear this around the house on days you feel under the

weather with a flu bug or as a precaution to not touch your face or use them when going out for emergencies so as to curb mucus droplets that come out of our mouths and noses when we cough, sneeze or talk. You should always make sure that you wash it frequently to the number of times you use it, and avoid touching your face.



How to make a face mask with a fabric piece



How to make a bandana into a face mask using ribbons



IMAGES BY | SARAH MAKER

BEST DRESSED OF THE WEEK:

The Voice on Fashion Stunner

A model in one of Africa's best and sought after designers. South African fashion designer David Tlale recently showcased his new collection for the Autumn/Winter 2020 season.

The pre-recorded show, which was presented virtually was tagged "Classica Icons" featured a mix of men's and women's wear looks. This serves as a call-to-action for the local Clothing and Textile Industry and the fashion community at large to help amplify and bring awareness to observe and encourage adherence to the set 'National Lockdown' regulations.

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GABORONE UNIVERSITY
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GUC Contributes P 260 000.00 to Covid-19 Fight

The local education sector has been one of the hardest hit by the novel Covid-19 pandemic which is ravaging the international social and economic wellbeing. The virus has reached our shores and the clarion call by the government to assist in fighting the spread of the virus has led to the closure of amongst others, all academic institution as a measure towards promoting extreme social distancing.

"GUC has just made a P250, 000.00 donation to the Covid 19 Relief Fund. We hope this contribution goes a long way in the successful fight against this influenza pandemic and speed up the return back to normal. Let me also take this opportunity to urge local businesses to also make a contribution to this fund as this war cannot be left to the government alone," the Managing Director of GUC Dr Antoney Joseph said.

GUC has always been compassionate and recently donated food hampers valued at over P10, 000.00 to 35 players and officials of Makungulupeswa FC Lamela Mangwe, a football team based in Nshakazhogwe Village. The donation was meant to aid the team members to stay at home. Further, the BA Public Health and BBA Occupational Health and Safety graduates and final year students of GUC have proposed various initiatives to assist the ministry of health and wellness in the mitigation of the spread of the corona virus in Botswana

Gaborone University College of Law & Professional Studies (GUC) has put up a plan in place to ensure staff retention and continued learning and working from home during this period. Amongst other interventions all learners have been given hard copy course manuals. The course handbooks are prepared by module lecturers covering the content of the entire module syllabus designed to facilitate self-study. The GUC E-learning platform uses Moodle eLearning which is compatible with mobile phone, tabs, laptops and desktops and all students are enrolled on the system according to their classes where they can assess Course material.

"We acknowledge that some of our learners do not have the internet resources to access the eLearning platform and currently working around the clock to provide all our students with mobile data of up to 1GB per month. In this way, Lecturers are able to follow up students through class WhatsApp groups, Emails and also support online teaching and Monitoring" the GUC Academic Director Jisha Binse added.

The institution ensured that all academic staff has internet facilities at their residences so that they are able to work from home. The Heads of Departments have access to all classes in their departments through class login details in order to monitor and access the class interactions and learning progress. Practical lessons have been affected as priority is given to theoretic modules which can be delivered online. Where possible, lecturers are sharing videos and practical procedure guidelines with learners online. Practical lessons will be allocated more time when the College re-opens as a way to cover required learning hours.

GUC is a private tertiary institution which offers a wide range of qualification ranging from certificate to degree and Masters Level. Ever since setting up in the country the University College has enjoyed tremendous local support from companies and the government as well as individuals wishing to pursue further education. For enquiries on courses offered and how you can be a part of this great institution, our administration contact of enquiry@guc.ac.bw is always online to assist.

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SOCIAL MEDIA ROUND UP

BY TUMISANG DALE RANKOPO



POWER PLAY: A-Reece and Nasty C

WHILE a large chunk of the world's population remain confined to their homes, social media streets have been teeming with traffic. From the serious, matters of global economic concern, to the strange, girlfriend smuggling, here are some of the highlights.

COP PRAYS FOR PASTOR BEFORE ARRESTING HIM

The global Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in most countries taking the necessary precautions to curtail the spread of the virus. This includes restricting outside movement and prohibiting large gatherings.

However, a South African church unwisely decided they would go ahead and conduct a service regardless of the rules.

A video surfaced of a police officer praying for the congregation and the church leadership before making an arrest. Social media found it hilarious and believe the pastor needs deliverance for placing lives at risk. We surely hope the pastor has learned his lesson, even if it was the hard way!



PRAYING POLICE: Prayers for the church and pastor

PETROL PRICES TAKE TINY DIP

This week Botswana Energy

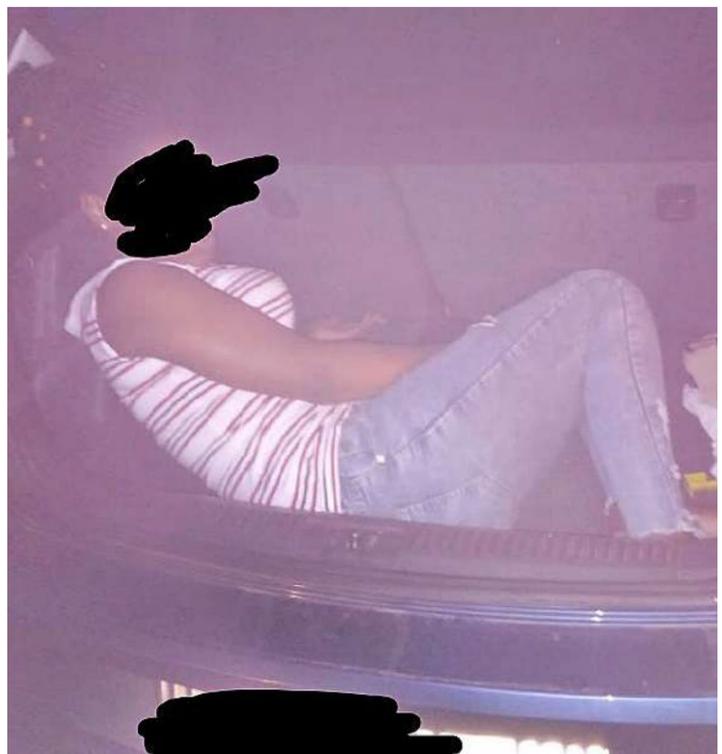
Regulatory Authority (BERA) announced the decrease of petrol prices by 13 thebe a litre. Social media was slightly underwhelmed by the news, as most had been hoping for a more substantial price reduction.

"They must get serious. Next thing they will increase prices by P1.50," blasted one unimpressed commentator. Another suggested government has its priorities wrong, noting "They should rather reduce prices of food since that is more important," whilst another pointed out, "Crude oil prices fell from \$58 to \$13 and all we get is 13 thebe?"

Other sections of social media were waiting hopefully for an announcement on alcohol but unfortunately nothing materialised. "Ok fine we heard about the petrol, let's talk alcohol now," said one thirsty Twitter user to no avail.

NASTY C AND A-REECE POWER BATTLE

Over the years there has been a cold war between



SMUGGLED: Woman in the boot of boyfriend's car

rappers Nasty C and A-Reece. The feud recently heated up after an A-Reece album leaked online titled 'Sotho Man With Some Power' - an unerringly similar title to Nasty C's highly anticipated LP 'Zulu Man With Some Power'.

Nasty C took to his social media to address the matter, saying simply "Sad, sad, sad."

Social media was surprised as to how Reece could blatantly steal a rival's album title. However, Reece responded on his social media to diffuse the bomb, insisting his account was hacked and old songs were re-released under that album title. He confirms he is not responsible for that album at all. A-Reece fans tried to stick up for their man, saying, "Reece is not even Sotho, he is Tswana." Another comment read, "They are trying to sabotage Reece by causing friction with Nasty C."

Hopefully the pair can move on from the misunderstanding. Sad times indeed!

MMATHETHE BREWERIES

Due to the extreme social distancing regulations on alcohol, some people have found an innovative way to quench their thirst. According to BTV news, some Mmathethe villagers figured out a way to make their own alcohol. Social media found the story very interesting and others tried taking notes for themselves.

"I heard them say the ingredients but I did not get the mea-

surements," complained one Facebook user. Another user jumps for joy in the comments, gleefully declaring, "Thank goodness I recently bought red apples."

Most social media revealers were impressed by the Mmathethe Cider as it shows the innovative side of our beloved people.

Hopefully, when the Coronavirus dust has settled, Mmathethe Breweries can make an honest living.

MOTORIST SMUGGLES GIRLFRIEND IN BOOT

Many people are struggling with the current lockdown situation all over the world. However, some have taken matters into their own hands and have tried to wiggle their way around the rules.

One desperate gentleman took it upon himself to put his permit-less girlfriend in the boot of his car and smuggle her to his house. Unfortunately for them, South African Police stopped and searched his car and were shocked to find a woman cramped up in the boot. Social media saw the video clip and couldn't believe their eyes either.

"The things we do for love," noted one of the popular comments. Another joked, "She is a real ride or die."

The two ended up being arrested for breach of permit rules. So, just how far would you go for love?



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HOT GOSSIP BY SHAYA
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AMANTLE BROWN

AMANTLE BROWN'S BAD VAJAYJAY ADVICE

LOCAL songbird Amantle Brown was this week at the receiving end of social media backlash when she uploaded a brief video of herself taking a bath and advising women on how to

take of their Vaginas. Amantle told her followers to use vaginal soaps to help 'clean' up to which she received a lot of criticism. Stick to the mic Amantle leave the Vajayjay to those who know it best. Your Brownies have been waiting for the long overdue album.

DEMANDING LAWYER

SHAYA has got wind of threatening messages from a prominent lawyer based in phase 2 to his clients about payment. This lawyer in one message says, "Good morning kante do you want me to lock you up again? When we come back I am returning you to prison

since you are refusing to pay my fees." Hold your horses counsel there are more civil ways to speak to your clients. In fact just stop threatening people because Shaya has received about five complaints from different clients about your foul treatment. Change your approach Mr.; otherwise these people are threatening to ask for protection from law society.

FEEDBACK @ CHILLIN' OUT

The views expressed on this column are not necessarily of the management, sponsors and paper.



SOLOMON SEKWAKWA

DOUBLE FACED BIG BROTHER!

On Tuesday evening President Mokgweetsi Masi made the decision to fire Permanent Secretary (PS) Solomon Sekwakwa and his deputy from work with immediate effect.

Whilst details are a bit sketchy it seems the axing was as a result of a fall out between the duo and the COVID-19 response task team. But that is a story for the journalist to spell out for us. What Shaya is concerned about is the double standard set out by Government. Shaya thought no one was to be fired from work during this time, or is it a case of some animals being more equal than others?

POLITICS OF THE STOMACH



WORD reaching Shaya has it that a politician in Themashanga is threatening to divide the village into two with his unfair distribution of the Covid-19 food hampers.

Apparently the politician has usurped power from the Social Workers and is now handing out food hampers along political lines. The shameless politician according to sources has also made sure that his family members are first on the queue to re-

ceive the hampers. "One of his family members also receives old age pension, but she also received the hamper. Shaya would like to point out to you councillor with a seared conscious that what you are doing is very wrong.

Look here Mr Legislator; don't make the mistake of thinking that Shaya went to sleep during this lockdown. Far from it! I've my eyes on you. Give the hampers to those who need them the most and stop stealing. In fact let Social Workers do their job and stop meddling.

THINGS THEY SAY:

Dineo Saleshando has a few words to share with Minister Peggy Serame



DINEO SALESHANDO



PEGGY SERAME

THE thought of a new born without clothes, especially during the cold weather sends chills down my spine.

You do not need any authority to do right for pregnant women! You do not need validation to confirm that your decision is the right one! All you need is a Motherly instinct. (sic)

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SOCIETY IN ACTION

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WORKING GIRLS: Ame (right) and her colleague take a selfie at work



FUN LOVING: Tsholo and Didi making the most of the extreme social distancing



SOCCER LADS: Thomas, Thuso, Tsaone, Thusonyana, Oaitse and Tshupo pose for pictures before a friendly kick around



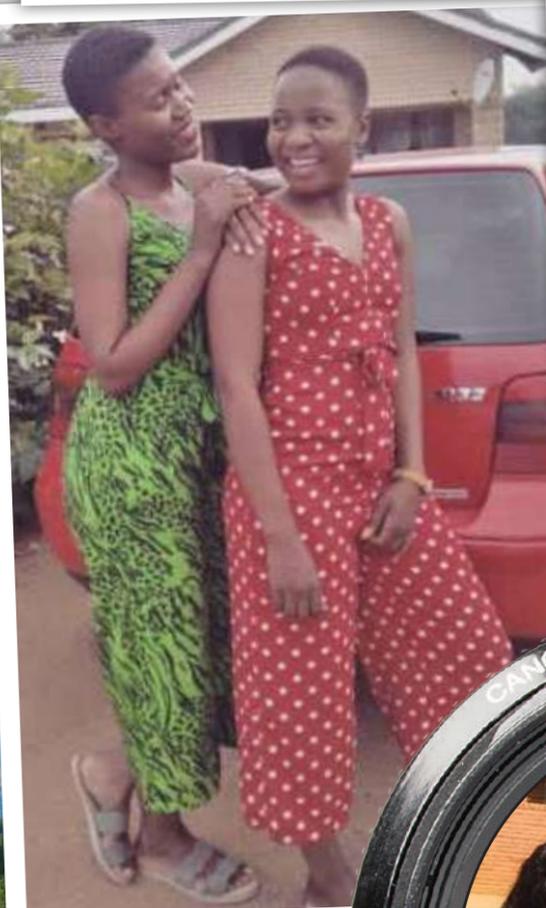
COOKING UP A STORM: Ladies at home preparing lunch



RELAXED: Morenaogaufi and Opelo having a chill session at home



CHARITABLE: Boitekanelo College representatives donating to the COVID-19 Relief Fund



COLOURFUL LADIES: Michelle (left) and a friend striking a pose



HOME BODIES: Khumo and her daughter Zalika take a quick snap at home



KEEPING FIT: Tshupo and Shagwa inspiring fitness with the BOMAID Lockdown Workout



ALL SMILES: Dintle and Gao taking a selfie in the sunlight

SOCIETY IN ACTION

Week three of extreme social distancing comes to an end but there are plenty of activities from the week. As always, The Voice's resolute lens managed to capture magical moments across the land.

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MAJESTIC MOTSAODI TREE FALLS

Tribal leaders suspect tree was torched out of lockdown frustration

For many years, along the Thamalakane river, next to Thamalakane primary school in Maun, the evergreen motsaodi tree (*Garcinia livingstonei*/African mangosteen), stood majestically tall.

Having served the Maun community since the early 1950s during the barter trade system, it was declared a historical monument and a tourism attraction site by Ntshhe museum.

The tree, which sheltered an informal trade of mostly Bayei tribe has now fallen. Last week it was reportedly burnt down by unknown individuals, causing disappointment among the community of Maun.

"It was an important tree for us the community, especially the Bayei tribe. Our people used to travel all the way from Seronga by river to trade meat for bullets and other important things under that tree," stated Luke Motlaleselelo who is a member of North West District council.

In fact on September 5th,

2015, Motlaleselelo successfully tabled a motion calling for the conservation of the tree, and a recommendation was subsequently forwarded to the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism to protect the tree.

However at the time of vandalism, the tree was yet to be fenced and according to Motlaleselelo people were sheltering under the tree to commit illegal activities. "Used condoms were thrown all over the place, drugs were consumed there and it was no longer used for good purposes like in the past."

Some of the residents suspect it was cut down by depressed individuals frustrated by the ongoing long lockdown.

"These are the works of deliberate vandalism. It was done on purpose, otherwise why would somebody torch down such a big tree! What for?" exclaimed another resident and tribal leader, Kgosi Kegaisamang Ramokwena who added that, "We have long advised for the fencing of the tree for conservation purposes, and now look what has happened!"

But what is so special about

this tree? The tribal leader who claims to be well versed with Batawana history explained that a long time ago Bayei who resided mostly in the Okavango Delta would travel by boat to Maun and set up camp under the same tree and engage in trade with Maun residents.

Money, according to Ramokwena was not of use to the traders who engaged in barter trading with game meat, biltong, fish and water reeds which they exchanged for fashion accessories, bullets for hunting guns, sugar and tea among others.

"Money was not valued then. The important thing was to exchange goods and it was under that very same motsaodi tree that hunters and gatherers would converge following some months of hunting to trade their catch. The tree was basically a trade centre. In fact it was a meeting place for hunters and gatherers who travelled through the long and dangerous route in the Delta, so the tree was our pride as the Batawana community," Ramokwena said.

The tree stood a few metres away from Letsibogo la basadi pool, a designated swimming area for village women when they had gone to to fetch water and do laundry.

"Those were the days, full of innocence and happiness," said Ramokwena with a tinge of nostalgia in his voice.

Although Maun has since become a gateway to the Delta and ultimately a tourism village,



CHOPPED DOWN: Motsaodi Tree

Ramokwena explained that there was a time in the past when traders would reject money from tourists because they knew nothing about its value.

Many stories are being told about this Motsaodi tree and one such story is the claim that Mtsaodi village, located just outside Maun was named after this tree.

According to a study done by Okavango Research Institute in Maun in 2017, motsaodi is a water loving tree and produces fruits, which are loved by both people, birds and animals in the Okavango Delta.

"There are several places named after the motsaodi tree. This reflects its longevity, its

importance as a food source and also its distinctiveness in the landscape. Motsaodi trees are often used as landmarks," the tribal leader explained

The study, which was done by Mmusi Mmusi, then a herbarium assistant at the same institution detailed the importance of the tree to the people of Ngamiland. He stated that the tree is used in traditional medicine and in particular the powdered root is used as an aphrodisiac (motsosa).

"The fruits can be fermented into a pleasant alcoholic beverage. The wood is susceptible to borers but has been used as a general purpose timber," Mmusi explained.



IN BETTER DAYS: Motsaodi Tree

"Our clients are Americans, Italians and Spanish and they are dying in numbers"

COVID 19 OUTBREAK HIT MORUTSHA VILLAGE HARD

Located on the edge of the magnificent Okavango Delta, Morutsha village lies within NG 32, a large concession characterised by sprawling floodplains and a lifestyle solely dependent on tourism.

On a bright sunny Wednesday morning this week, the residents of Morutsha crowded under the village's big tree to watch the road.

Young and old, almost all the 300 of them violated the Covid-19 regulations to stay indoors and observe extreme social distancing and met under the tree to wait for the arrival of the government

social worker with food relief packages.

And then faces lit up and sighs of relief broke out as two trucks loaded with food and toiletry arrived.

"We are hungry. We desperately needed food. We have patiently waited for so long for social services to show up so we can have a good meal for a change. We are tired of consuming watermelons every day," said Kebonyemotse Mokokwane.

The 71-year old man was dependent on his son, a poler who has since died.

"He left me in the lurch and I am now reduced to a beggar. Tourists no longer come to our village and therefore we



WORRIED: Gontlekgosi Kwelo

are not getting any gifts and handouts from them. Ours is an animal protected zone, so we cannot do much subsistence ploughing," Mokokwane explained.

For many years, residents of this small village enjoyed fruits of the tourism activities in this area, which has been listed as a heritage site.

The residents's main source of livelihood has mostly been poling of traditional canoes and tour guiding, besides the government's drought relief programme, (namola leuba.)

Asked about why they were not social distancing a 47-year-old poler Dichaoto Boitshwarelo said, "Are you kidding me! Nobody stays indoors when they are hungry. There has to be a way to find food and my friend, that is called survival."

Explaining how the cessation of tourism activities has hit their pockets hard, Boitshwarelo said, "Yes tourists do give some tokens of appreciation, sometimes they come to the village for photographic purposes and when they take our pictures they pay us."

Many people in Morutsha have other



IN THE LURCH: Kebonyemotse Mokokwane

homes either in Maun, Shorobe or Ditshiping, but such homes are mostly used for business purposes.

We use those homes to sell cooked food, especially fish for polers, "I am a cook because when polers go to the river, they need breakfast and lunch packs to carry with them and that is where my trade is," explains Kehakgametse Chombo.

But now with the outbreak of COVID-19 that has been killing thousands of people the world over since the beginning of the year, polers are afraid their businesses may take long to recover, spelling more days of waiting for the social worker's truck arrival.

"I guess more hard times are yet to come. My worry is that the very people who have been bringing us business and boosting our economy are dying in large numbers. Our clientele are mostly Americans, Italians, Spanish and English people among others," said Gontlekgosi Kwelo.

So far Botswana has recorded 22 cases of Covid 19 with one death mostly in the southern part of the country.



WAITING: residents waiting for food packages

COVID-19 CHALLENGE

BOTSWANA INNOVATION FUND

THIRD CALL FOR PROPOSALS

BOTSWANA INNOVATION FUND (BIF) 3RD CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR SOLUTIONS ADDRESSING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGES IN BOTSWANA

Opens: 18th April 2020

Deadline for Submission: 01st May 2020 at 20:00hrs CAT

Eligible Applicants: Entrepreneurs, App Developers, Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge Holders, Social Enterprises, Civil Society and Non Governmental Organisations

Amount of Funding: Open bid (to be determined by the most feasible solutions)

BACKGROUND ON CALL FOR PROPOSAL

In light of the **Novel Coronavirus of 2019** outbreak (**COVID-19** pandemic) the world is not only working towards the development of a vaccine, nations are rapidly responding by seeking solutions to abate the socio-economic impacts resulting from this outbreak. **COVID-19** has disrupted that which societies knew as the norm. This disruption has brought about opportunities for new innovations to be developed for use now and in future.

The Botswana Innovation Fund (BIF) is looking to fund the development of innovative solutions that address the **COVID-19** pandemic challenges from eligible applicants. It is also envisaged that private sector entities will have an opportunity to invest or participate in the implementation of the chosen solutions. The call places emphasis on innovative digital solutions and working product prototypes that are ready to scale and **to curb the some of the socio-economic effects of the COVID-19** pandemic. Further to this we anticipate intellectual property development and registration, technology transfer, and commercialisation of developed solutions.

TARGETED SOLUTIONS TYPES:

WINDOW 1: VIRTUAL HACK

This call provides emerging digital innovators an opportunity to rapidly produce solutions that can be adopted by the market. The solutions will be informed by current epidemiological and socio-economic challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic with special emphasis on the local economy. It is expected that the development of these solutions will involve individuals or collaborative teams with the requisite skills. The primary goal being the rapid prototyping of solutions with impact on society. The expected timelines to get the solutions to market are 2 (two) to four (4) weeks.

The solutions targeted are at Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 3 to 8 (TRL 3 to TRL 8), proof of concept to commercial system.

The development of any solution needs to consider that it will be hosted locally in data servers and tested accordingly. As such it is expected that the proposed solutions; May include mobile and web-based solutions e.g. food value chain e-commerce solutions

Will be data enabled with the ability to analyse and publish information.

Will adhere to the necessary standards as approved by the relevant bodies including medical bodies, as appropriate.

May be able to provide near real time updates on the pandemic and related socio-economic impacts.

WINDOW 2: WORKING PROTOTYPES/SOLUTIONS

There are a number of market ready solutions relevant to the **COVID-19** pandemic which can be deployed but lack the necessary validation and tweaks to deliver them to market. In recognition of this, Window 2 seeks to provide innovators the support needed to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the **COVID-19** challenges with the aim of getting their solutions to market during this time when the market recognises the usefulness of technological solutions. The expected time of solution to market is 2 (two) to four (4) weeks.

These solutions are at Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 5 to 8 (TRL 5 to TRL 8), prototype system to commercial system.

These may include working prototypes of products, processes, value added services, community social interventions, tools and gadgets that may be of high demand during and post the **COVID-19** pandemic.

It is expected that the solutions will include, but are not limited to, those addressing challenges in:

- Health Systems (Public Health Surveillance, contact tracing, Model test-kits and accreditation and management)
- Public Service Delivery (Digital education, public service delivery systems)
- Transport (Payments, monitoring, & tracking)
- Logistics & Value Chains (Food, Fresh Produce, Medical supplies)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Submitted proposals will be ranked according to the following criteria:

- Clear articulation of proposed solution and approach
- Market Need
- Value Proposition (a clear path towards operationalising the product on-the-ground)
- Team Composition and Roles
- Customer Validation
- Clear Revenue Streams
- Alignment with Key Govt Objectives/National Needs i.e. **COVID-19** pandemic
- Social Impact, (evidence that the solution addresses a specific problem/challenge or need)

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Submissions in response to this call for proposals will be made through the provided portal and must include the following sections in the order listed:

- Expression of interest letter
- Technical proposal containing the following content:
 - Concept note of the innovative solution(s);
 - Technical specifications;
 - Team experience;
 - Work Plan / Schedule for an implementation;
 - Mission team experience/profiles;
 - Implementation plan with budget and timeline.
 - Working prototype (pictures, narrative, video)
- Any other relevant documentation as an additional value proposition.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Submit your proposal here:

Covid-19BWchallenge <https://form.jotform.com/innovationfund/application>

General Terms:

1. Clarifications

Request for clarifications shall be sent to innovationfund@bih.co.bw, cc procurement@bih.co.bw. BIH will respond in writing to any request for clarification, provided that such requests are received five (5) days prior to the deadline for submission of proposals. Should the clarification result in changes to the contents of the Call for Proposals advert, BIH shall amend and issue an addendum.

2. Preparation Costs

The prospective solution provider shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their proposal. BIF shall not be responsible or liable for the costs regardless of the outcome of the bidding process.

3. Cancellation

BIF reserves the right to cancel the Call for Proposal without providing any reasons.

4. Validity

The solutions and prototypes proposals costing must be valid for a period of 90 days

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QUARANTINED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

BY DANIEL CHIDA

The initial excitement and relief at being told I was going to get an essential service permit came to an abrupt end on the morning of Thursday 9 April.

I have seen and experienced much in my nine years with The Voice but this is a day that will remain etched into my memory forever.

A missed call from my diligent colleague, Portia Mlilo, proved to be the prelude to my troubles.



LONELY DAYS: Self quarantined

Since I was running late for the Extra Ordinary Meeting of Parliament scheduled for Boipuso Hall, I asked her to leave me a message on WhatsApp.

Instead, she sent me a short clip that literally sent chills down my spine.

The video showed Minister of Health and Wellness, Lemogang Kwapo announcing that everyone – myself included – who attended the previous day’s General Assembly was at risk of Covid-19. Apparently, the nurse who had been in charge at the Assembly had just tested positive for the virus.

The first stop after receiving such devastating news was the bathroom; out of the blue I had a runny stomach!

Then the calls from colleagues started coming in, Mmegi’s Tsaone Basimanebotlhe being the most persistent – and irritating!

After taking a few minutes to compose myself – although my heart continued to beat like an Overthrust drum – I eventually answered her call.

The panic in her voice

echoed the shock I was feeling. “Okae re a batliwa, itlha-ganele,” she blurted as a way of introduction.

I then contacted another comrade, Victor Baatweng who told me he was stocking up on books and was preparing for quarantine.

However, I had supplies of a different kind in mind.

Accompanied by a bottle of gin and wine, together with some hastily packed clothes, I made my way warily to Boipuso – after all, I still had a job to do!

For once I completely ignored the rules of the road, talking non-stop on the phone as I drove into town. Even the manned roadblock by the Old BURS offices wasn’t enough to cut my call.

As the officer approached, the rebuke – and possible fine – he was surely about to deliver caught in his throat as he overheard my heated conversation.

“How can you mix us with a person from High Risk, go riana rotlhe re ka tswa re tsenwe ke bolwetse but ke motseleng.”

His eyes widening with fear, the cop quickly signaled for



THE DOOMS DAY: Juggling between Parliament and makeshift office

me to pass. Foot down, I pressed the ML but got little joy from the speed. All I could picture was death and a funeral without friends and family.

“Guys go out there and do your job but be careful because there is no story worth your life. It’s unfortunate because if you die we won’t have the chance to bury you so take extra care,” my Editor, Emang Bokhutlo’s last words before we parted for lockdown ringing in my head.

The day, spent mixing at Boipuso again, passed in a haze with more questions than answers – you should know, you guys watched the whole episode live!

Afterwards I drove straight home and locked myself in, my mind racing but my body resigned to not going anywhere for the next 14 days.

Again my phone rang repeatedly, as concerned family members kept calling to check on me. With tears threatening, my uncle Emmanuel Chida informed me he was going to pray for me.

“Why, am I dying?” I asked the pale but ruggedly handsome reflection staring back at me from the mirror.

In the end I opened a bottle of wine and woke up the following morning, disheveled and fully clothed in the sitting room.

It started to sink in that I had chosen home quarantine over government one. Despite a slight hangover, I hit the treadmill to run off some nervous tension.

The stories that I was working on at Parliament made it to the paper, with one being the lead, Front Page. “At least that’s some-

thing,” I consoled myself, dripping with sweat as my workout intensified.

Quarantine is a different set up. No visitors and the people that call ask depressing questions – how are you, are you okay, don’t worry it’s nothing, any signs yet?

My eating schedule has undergone a drastic change. Breakfast is taken at around 1200 while lunch is usually 1600hrs. I rarely had supper.

Exercise also lost its appeal. I continued but without much enthusiasm as my mind was elsewhere.

Finally, on Sunday, 10 days after going into quarantine, the day of testing dawned

I woke at around 03:40 like a nervous rabbit and, try as I might, I was unable to get back to sleep.

Normally my Sundays fly by way too quickly but this time the minutes trickled by. I had samp for lunch and drank gallons of hot water with lemon.

Pacing the house like a caged tiger, the video circulating on social media about how tests are conducted did little to calm my frayed nerves.

At 12:25, I received a call from Dr Andia Muke Tshiyuka informing me that they would be coming within two hours only for him and the team to arrive at 15:35.

Mentally I was ready. I didn’t want to delay anymore or receive any lectures.

It’s not a painful test but not comfortable either as the long bud touches areas that have not been touched before. Seconds later and it was all over, samples collected. The softly spoken Dr agreed to take some selfies and then left me to my solitude.

Another anxious wait for results was to follow. On Thursday, we received the consoling news that all MPs were negative.

However, by the time of going to press, my results were yet to be delivered. It looks like my wait will continue for at least one more day – who’d be a journalist!

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APPLY NOW

The Botswana Open University (BOU) invites applications for the following programmes for the Academic Year 2020/2021, starting in July 2020

Programme	Duration
1. Certificate for Distance Education Practitioners (CDEP)	Minimum 1 year and 3 years maximum
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3. Certificate in Community Based Work with Children and Youth (CBWCY)	1 Year
4. Certificate in Small Scale Business Management (SSBM)	1 Semester
5. Certificate in Vocational Education and Training (CVET)	1 Semester
6. Diploma in Human Resources Management	2 years
7. Diploma in Business Management	2 years
8. Diploma in Integrated Early Childhood Development	2 years minimum and 4 years maximum.
9. BEd – Integrated Early Childhood Development	2 years minimum and 4 years maximum.
10. BEd - Primary	2 years minimum and 4 years minimum.
11. BEd – Special and Inclusive Education	2 years minimum and 4 years maximum
12. Bachelor of Commerce (Human Resources and Industrial Relations)	3 and half years.
13. Bachelor of Business and Entrepreneurship - (BBE)	3 and half years.
14. Bachelor of Business Administration (Leadership and Change Management) (BBA - LCM)	3 and half years.
15. Master of Education - Educational Leadership	2 years minimum and 5 years maximum
16. Commonwealth Executive Master of Public Administration (CEMPA)	2 years minimum and 5 years maximum
17. Commonwealth Executive Master of Business Administration (CEMBA)	2 years minimum and 5 years maximum
18. Postgraduate Certificate in Quality Assurance in Education	1 year minimum and 2 years maximum

Application Requirements and Procedures

- (i) Applications should be done on-line through the University website at www.bou.ac.bw under Online Services.
- (ii) BEFORE completing applications, applicants should carefully read the Guidelines for Applications and Payment.
- (iii) Applicants may use the computer rooms at the University Regional Campuses to process their applications.
- (iv) Certified copies of certificates, identification document and either results slips or transcripts should accompany the application following the online Application Guidelines. Please make sure that you have scanned soft copies of these documents before you start the process of applying. Please note that online attachment of these documents is core as these are used to assess your eligibility for admission.
- (v) Applicants are required to pay a non-refundable application fee of P61.00 online. Application fees paid after closing date or without authorization by the University shall be forfeited

Application Deadline: 30th April 2020

Only successful applicants will be responded to.



BOU Headquarters and Regional Campuses Contacts

Private Bag 80187 Bontleng Gaborone Tel: 3648000 Fax: 3191089	P/Bag 80 349 Bontleng Gaborone Tel: 3646150 Fax: 3930018	P/Bag 005 Palapye Tel: 4924024 Fax: 4900343	P/Bag F32 Francistown Tel: 2418383 Fax: 2414586	P/Bag 0394 Maun Tel: 6865621 Fax: 6800581	P/Bag 006 Kang Tel: 6517248 Fax: 6517396
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SCREENSHOT: Message from Portia on the day



DOCTOR'S VISIT: After the mission was completed

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Real Lives:

"MY UNCLE RAPED ME - NOW HE MUST MAINTAIN OUR BABY!"

BY SHARON MATHALA

Almost 10 years have passed but Thato Kagiso* is still haunted by her past.

Now 26, Kagiso claims she was repeatedly raped by her uncle as a schoolgirl, eventually falling pregnant and giving birth to a daughter.

Although she never reported her ordeal to the police, this week Kagiso reached out to The Voice to share her story.

"I am done living a life of shame. My uncle must acknowledge his child!" she maintains defiantly.

Delving into dark memories, Kagiso, who has since had two more children, tells The Voice she moved in with her uncle's family in November 2006 because her mother was struggling financially.

"We were staying in Mahalapye at the time. I was living with him, my uncle, his wife, three children and my brother. My mother had gone to Maun to try and make ends meet there."

For the first three years everything was fine.

How - ever, in April 2009, shortly after she turned 15 and started her period, Kagiso says her life plummeted into pain.

"I was in Form Two by then. I remember the first time I could not walk properly after the sexual encounter. I was a virgin. The

first attempt was late at night. He asked me to take a torch and accompany him to a backyard house on the pretext he was looking for a tool to use to fix his car and so I obeyed.

"When we got there he did not find the tool he was looking for. He closed the door and asked me to take off my clothes. He then covered my mouth and told me not to scream," recalls Kagiso, adding grimly, "He was disturbed by a call and he aborted the mission."

She was not so lucky the next time.

"The abuse went on for the next few months. His wife used to travel a lot or sometimes she was on early shifts or late night shifts. That is when he would have his way with me."

Kagiso suffered in silence, terrified of being kicked out if she reported the abuse.

He warned me if I told anyone he would throw me and my brother out into the streets because my mother was unable to take care of us," she explains.

Inevitably, Kagiso fell pregnant, giving birth to a baby girl in April 2010.

Again, she says she was bullied into keeping quiet.

"He told me not to tell my mother what he had done and said that I should say it was one of the boys at my school. The biggest thing was that he was married. I actually remember

I was in Form Two by then. I remember the first time I could not walk properly after the sexual encounter.

that he too was threatened to say if I come out with this story I would get into trouble because he was a married man and he would say I seduced him."

Despite her uncle's threats, Kagiso, burdened by the weight of her secret, she soon confided in her mother.

Sadly, like so many similar cases in Botswana, her mum was unmoved. "I told my mother who the true father of the child was three months after I gave birth. She had none of it and asked that I never speak of it again and I never did. My mother and grandmother helped me take care of the child but stopped a few years back."

After giving birth, Kagiso returned to live with her uncle's family while her newborn daughter was sent to stay with her grandmother.

She says the sexual abuse continued.

Having missed the entire school year, Kagiso finally completed her Form Three in 2011. Unsurprisingly, she did not do well.

It remains a bitter memory.

"I want him to pay for what he did. He ruined my future. I failed my JC because of him and what he did to me," blasts the unemployed mum, adding that after her schooling came to a premature end she went to live with her mother.

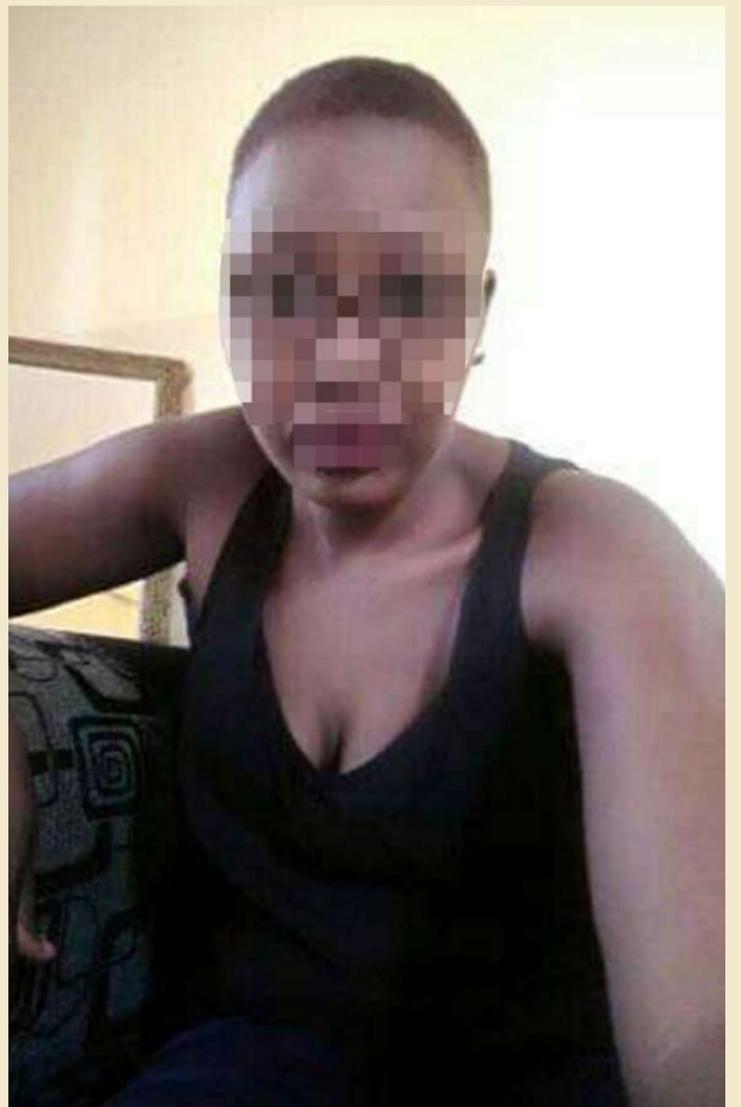
She kept quiet about her child's true identity until last year, when, struggling to cope with caring for three children, she reached out to social workers for help.

Her daughter, who turns ten this month, remains blissfully unaware of her origins.

"I will tell her when she's a bit older. I feel she is too young for now to even comprehend," says Kagiso, who admits she only truly started bonding with her child about five years ago.

"We're getting there now though," she adds proudly.

As for why she decided to contact The Voice after so many years of silence, Kagiso explains, "I just want him to take care of his child. I will eventually deal with my past. I will



COMING OUT: Kagiso

eventually deal with the everyday abuse."

Deal with her past she must as the psychological scars still remain. Despite being in a loving relationship with the father of her other children, Kagiso concedes she sometimes struggles to enjoy sex.

When contacted on the allegations, Kagiso's uncle dismissed his niece's tale as fantasy.

Instead, he claims it was a one-off drunken mistake and not a prolonged reign of terror.

"She says I was drunk one time and I raped her and she had the child. I don't even know if the child is mine. She kept quiet about it for so long," retorted the retired Jwaneng Mine employee,

who admitted sending Kagiso money back in December.

"I gave them P1, 500. It is just that she is very naughty; when I give her money she doesn't use it for the child."

Although he refused to acknowledge the child as his own, he promised to try a little hard to take care of her. Kagiso says it is something she has heard many times before.

*Not her real name. Although she was willing to be identified, we have decided to keep Kagiso anonymous to protect both her and her daughter.

NOT BACKING DOWN: Kagiso

SANGOMA CLAIMS COVID CURE



HESITANT: Minister Kwape

"The ancestors showed me the answer in a vision"

BY SHARON MATHALA

WITH the entire planet grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic, and the world's top scientists desperately working on a cure, a local sangoma believes she has the solution.

40-year-old Chandapiwa Nyoka, a respected medicine lady from the small village of Mookane, felt compelled to contact The Voice after experiencing a vision on Tuesday.

It is not the first time the traditional doctor has experienced such an apparition.

"What I can tell you is that towards the end of last year I had another vision of something that was coming to shake the

world. I did not know what it was then. I had sleepless nights about it for a while but I could not just get my finger on it and so I ignored it," revealed Nyoka.

"When the disaster hit, I think early this year, that is when I knew what my vision was about. The discomfort also disappeared for a while," continued the sangoma, adding she received another message from the spirit world this week.

"On Tuesday I had another vision. There were a lot of flying insects, with

What I can tell you is that towards the end of last year I had another vision of something that was coming to shake the world.

blot-shot red eyes. There was a lot of darkness. In this vision, the flying insects transmitted this virus. The virus created a lot of foam in the human body," explained Nyoka, pausing dramatically as she arrives at the heart of her story.

"The ancestors then led me to this 'Segwere' (wild tubers crop), which they say will cure the virus."

She is convinced this will put a stop to Coronavirus, the global

pandemic which by Thursday had claimed over 184, 000 lives worldwide.

"This is the cure to Covid-19, I am confident. I want to engage Government so they can do tests on it. I am sure it can be the solution!" she reiterated emotionally.

The sangoma is desperate for government to heed her advice before the killer virus establishes a stronger foothold in the country.

The Voice reached out to Minister of Health and Wellness, Lemogwang Kwape to get his views on the matter.

Kwape was hesitant to share the Ministry position, saying only, "Adversity brings the best out of us but we should note that there are processes that need to be followed.

"Those solutions need to be scientifically tested before they can be used. There are specifications that should be met," he cautioned, adding he was not aware of Nyoka's appeal.

"We are yet to receive her plea but maybe because I am still under home quarantine her request has not yet reached my desk."

As of Thursday, confirmed cases in Botswana stood at 22 with one death. So far, 5, 023 individuals have been tested for the virus, including President Mokgweetsi Masisi and his entire cabinet. His Excellency has been on home quarantine since Thursday 9 April but was released today (23 April) after testing negative.

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WHAT IS IT?

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.
- The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Early action improves chances of recovery

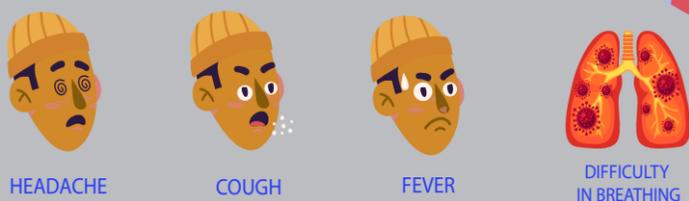
MYTHBUSTERS

1. COVID-19 can be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climate.
2. Spraying alcohol or chlorine all over your body will not kill the virus that is already in your body.
3. Vaccines against pneumonia, pneumococcal vaccine and Haemophilus influenza type B vaccine, do not provide protection against COVID-19.
4. People of all ages can be infected by COVID-19
5. Anti-biotics only work against bacteria, not the COVID-19 virus.
6. There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the new virus.

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CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



What does the Bible say about rape?

BY ASHLEY THABA

I recently led a youth dialogue to discuss the issue of rape. Many wanted to know what the Bible says about rape, so I thought I would extend my answer to this week's column.

I will briefly summarize the actual stories of rape that are talked about in the pages of scripture. Then, we will talk about the practical applications for us in dealing with rape. To add a disclaimer, although I realize that both women and men can be raped -for the purpose of this article, I will focus on a man raping a woman since that is generally the type of rape we read about in the Bible.

Surprisingly, there are several very explicit stories written in the Bible about rape. I will just give you the references of two stories and quick highlights of a third. You can read stories of gang rape and entire tribes avenging the violation of their sister after being raped in Genesis 34 and Judges 19-21.

2 Samuel 13 tells us that Amnon was the half-brother to Tamar. The Bible says he "loved her"... if you read the story, you can see he was filled with LUST for her because as soon as he "had" her, he was disgusted with himself and with her and immediately and forcefully sent her away after the "act". The Bible tells us due to the way she was disgraced, she lived the rest of her life in the home of Absalom, her brother, as a desolate woman. In the end, her brother Absalom was so full of hatred for Amnon for this disgusting act that he eventually murdered him. Amnon's intense need for instant gratification made him so blind that he could only think of himself - not the fact that he would literally RUIN this girl's life that he supposedly "loved" and ultimately his sin would bring his own life to an early end.

To contextualize, in ancient times, a woman's virginity was her most valued prize. If it was known a woman was not a virgin, then no man would want to marry her. In a time where women couldn't own property, have a job, or many other civil rights we take for granted today, without marriage a woman's life would be destined for immense hardships. The security of marriage provided protection and provision and ensured her the hope of legitimate children whom would grow up and bless her even if something happened to her husband. One moment of passion brought ruin to an entire lifetime of happy hopeful dreams for Tamar.

Sadly many beautiful women and young girls today can relate to being robbed of their peace of mind and hopeful dreams. Men who treat women as an object of their pleasure ruin their lives. Survivors of rape speak of how it literally kills them inside to be violated and overpowered in such a horrific manner.

Deuteronomy 22:25-27 displays that God HATED rape too - so much so that the punishment was being stoned. In a world where women had no rights and rarely appreciated, God made His laws in such a way that a woman who was dishonored in this way was not shamed nor ignored. The crime was dealt with in such a way that God defended her innocence and ensured her reputation wasn't spoiled for life by a selfish man's actions. His laws shielded her from blame and shame! She was not to be discarded but rather protected and the violator was to be severely punished. The man must bear responsibility! Any woman who has suffered this should know that God loves you; He sees you and He is a just God who is disgusted with what has been done to you. The person who is abusing you will have to stand before God one day and will be held accountable. He sees and He cares!

TESTIMONY

During the youth dialogue, I heard a moving testimony of a girl who had been raped by a relative from a young age. She testified that to cope she had literally stopped feeling - she felt dead inside. In fact, she had tried to kill herself many times. Then, one day she read that God could bring beauty out of ashes, that God could turn mourning into laughter and that God could work all things for the good of those who love the Lord. Psalms 9:9 promised her, "The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble." Her face beams now with a joy that for over a decade she never thought she would feel again. Her words, "God took my heart of stone and gave me a new heart". She said I could share her story so if anyone reading this wants to know how to find joy and supernatural healing as a survivor of rape, contact me and I will give you her contacts.

The journey isn't easy! We hope strict laws are put into place by our government and swift harsh punishments are given to deter this awful crime, but there is hope after this life shattering violation on your precious body. God can shine light into the darkness that you may feel now surrounds you. And to the person who



RELATIONSHIP EXPERT: Ashley Thaba

is contemplating raping another, please consider this verse, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (Proverbs 14:12) Learn from the story of Amnon. No matter how you may burn with passion, you will always regret hurting another person in this way. You will never have a peace of mind nor experience true joy in life if you continue to abuse and violate another person's body for your pleasure. Your temporary satisfaction will hurt both you and your victim and you will answer for your actions one day - if not in this life then for sure on Judgement day when you stand before the All-knowing and All-seeing God.

I feel there is more to say on this issue - like what do these verses teach us when we have been hurt by other's actions (even if it isn't rape), what does the Bible

say a rape survivor can do to move on, what does the Bible say about the perpetrator who has done this but sincerely wants to repent, and from a social perspective what we can do to show the love the Bible models for us to our neighbors so we prevent this from happening all together! We are out of space so come back next week for part B of this answer!

Ashley Thaba is a popular author, motivational speaker and media personality. You can view some of her work on her YouTube channel: Ashley Thaba or on her website www.ashleythaba.com. You can buy two of her books, Dive In and Conquering the Giants, on her website or Exclusive Books. **You can email her at askthaba@gmail.com or follow her on Facebook at: Talking with the Thabas**

UB RISES TO THE CHALLENGE, DONATES FACE SHIELDS



DELIGHTED: Thato Mومakwa

BY SHARON MATHALA

In their effort to help the country fight COVID-19, the University of Botswana (UB) has donated face shields to the Sir Ketumile Masire Teaching Hospital.

Tipped as just the first phase of the prototypes they have designed, the University through their faculty of engineering in partnership with the faculty of medicine will also design masks and ventilators to assist patients with difficulty in breathing.

Speaking at the hand over ceremony, UB's Dr Robert Batane said that UB through the faculty of engineering has teamed up with the faculty of medicine to come up with solutions against Covid-19.

"We came up with prototypes that will assist in the fight against the virus. We have designed a shield that will assist the front liners, we also came up with the mask to assist patients with the supply of oxygen and the respiratory hood and finally the ventilators to assist those who would not be able to breathe on their own," he said.

For her part, Professor Nkomazana said, "I am reminded that as a University every single Motswana can lay a claim to this institution. We should be able to respond and be relevant to the needs of our society. This is a gesture towards that social accountability."

When accepting the face shields, Thato Mومakwa, the Commissioning Manager at Sir Ketumile Masire Teaching Hospital said, "We have been asked to perform as an isolation and treatment centre for Covid-19 and hence partnerships are important to us, partnerships such as the one we are gathered here for today."

Mومakwa further explained that the personal protective equipment (clothing (PPE) will assist health workers who are at the forefront minimise exposure to the hazards and dangers they face on a daily basis.

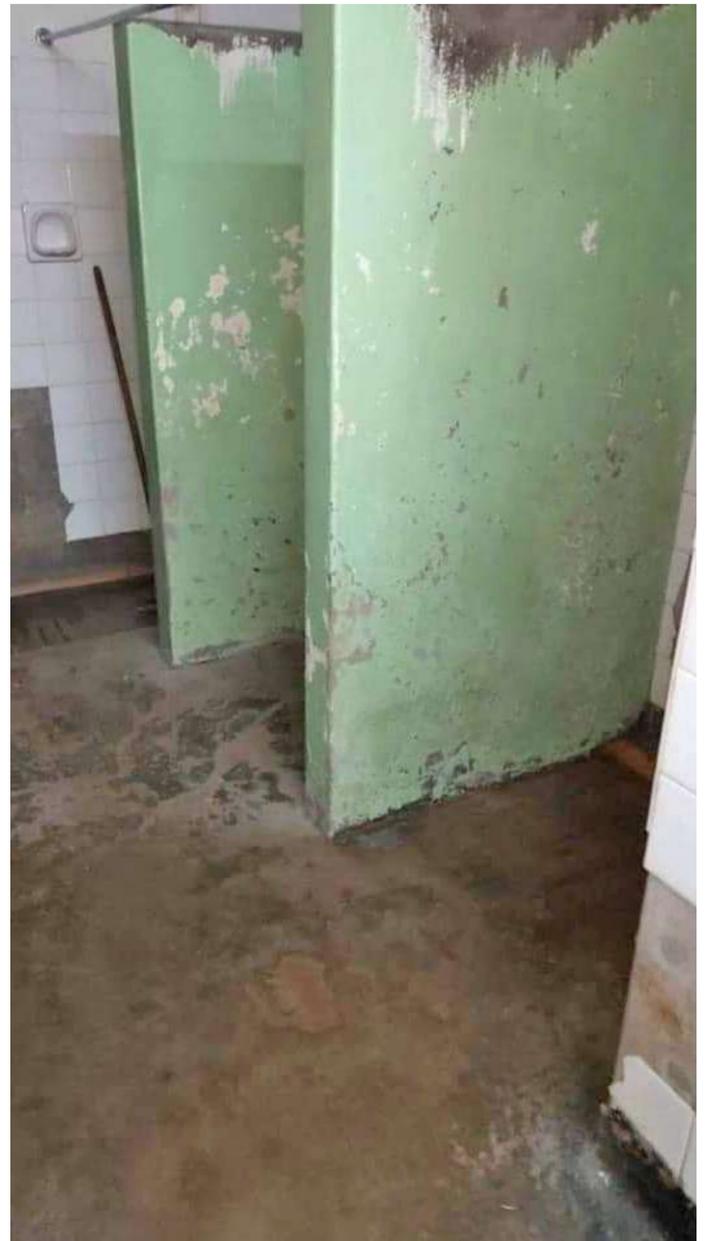
"Global supply of PPEs is severely drained. It is possible that we find ourselves challenged in accessing the necessary PPE required by our frontline health care workers as they provide this much needed care. It is now best that we localise the devices and consumables required in this fight against Covid-19," he said.

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CORONAVIRUS HOSPITAL: Sir Ketumile Masire Teaching Hospital

HOME DISCOMFORTS



▲ **STAINED:** On one of the beds (Source: Fadzayi Mahere - Twitter)

▶ **DILAPIDATED:** Inside the quarantine facility (Source: Fadzayi Mahere - Twitter)

Letter from Zimbabwe

By Sinqobile Tesa

ZIMBOS who recently returned home from the United Kingdom have received a rude awakening.

While they were all too aware they would be quarantined upon arrival, they never imagined they would be placed under squalid conditions, housed in a place which is literally falling apart and has no water.

The group, which has become known as UK65, were dumped at Belvedere's Teacher College and have been complaining of their living conditions since their arrival a few days back.

Apart from broken beds, filthy mattresses and dirty rooms, the place has no running water and people have to rely on an outside tap.

The government has, of course, gone into defensive mode, insisting they are providing the 65 with 'good food'.

If anything, this has further exposed our leaders for lying about their readiness to deal with Covid-19.

If they were as prepared as they claim, such facilities would have received a facelift so at the very least they become habitable.

This has also highlighted just how little they care about the welfare and living conditions of students, as this institution is a teacher training college, which is fully functional under normal circumstances.

Meanwhile, the coronavirus claimed its 4th victim on Wednesday, an 82-year-old woman and a mother to a former Min-

ister.

Questions are now arising as to why she was admitted at a private hospital in Harare instead of a health facility designated for Covid-19 cases as this exposes health personnel who will unknowingly be dealing with an infected person.

There are also fears that the virus may have found its way to the country's remote areas as the deceased lived in her rural home before falling sick and being brought to Harare for medical attention.

In other news, the prankster who wrote a press statement purporting to be President Emerson Mnangagwa announcing extension of lockdown has been arrested. Sad isn't it?

The 36-year-old man from Chitungwiza, outside Harare, was arrested on Saturday and is being charged with publishing or communicating false statements prejudicial to the state.

He appeared in court on Monday and was remanded in custody until 13 May. I had personally hoped he would not be traced and arrested despite spreading fake news. In any case, what he said turned out to be true as the lockdown was indeed extended.

His hope now rests on Human Rights lawyers to fight his corner so that he doesn't get the maximum 20-year jail term as threatened by the President.

Surely his crime does not warrant such a harsh sentence; at worst he should get a suspended sentence and a stern warning. Let's hope common sense prevails for once!

If anything, this has further exposed our leaders for lying about their readiness to deal with Covid-19.



COVID HANDSHAKE: Serumola and Town Clerk Lopang Pule



DONATES TO 50 FAMILIES

Newly established gym room in Francistown, Fitness Factory has donated 50 food hampers to the Francistown City Council. The food hampers valued at over P10 000 were officially received by the Town Clerk Lopang Pule on Thursday.

Speaking briefly at the official reception of the hampers, Pule said on behalf of the City Council he appreciated the gesture by the young businessman. He said it was commendable to see members of the public giving a helping hand during such a challenging time. "In doing this, you are helping government to fulfill her mandate," said Pule.

The Town Clerk said over 20 000 people from 28 000 households need food hampers in Francistown, which is an astronomical number. "This is a huge number and when individuals do this we appreciate. This is exactly what we expected from Batswana. It is a spirit unique to this nation," he said.

In his remarks the Director of Fitness Factory, Pako Serumola said the gesture was the little he could do as a businessman operating in Francistown. "I just felt as a child of a Motswana I had to do something to help those in need even though my business has also been affected," he said. Serumola said although many businesses have been adversely affected by the lockdown including his, there are however those who have been hard hit who needs all the help they can get.

"There are a lot of people who relied on their hassles, who made their money on the streets. These people are now struggling to feed their families which calls for those who can afford to help to dip their in their pockets and help," he said. Serumola said depending on how long the State of Emergency takes he'll continue to help in anyway he can to ensure that no one goes to bed hungry.

Mr Serumola, also an eye doctor at Healthy Eyes optometrists in Francistown and Tonota, has also urged those whom are seeking eye services to make appointments on the emergency number **2406411** or **76457773**.

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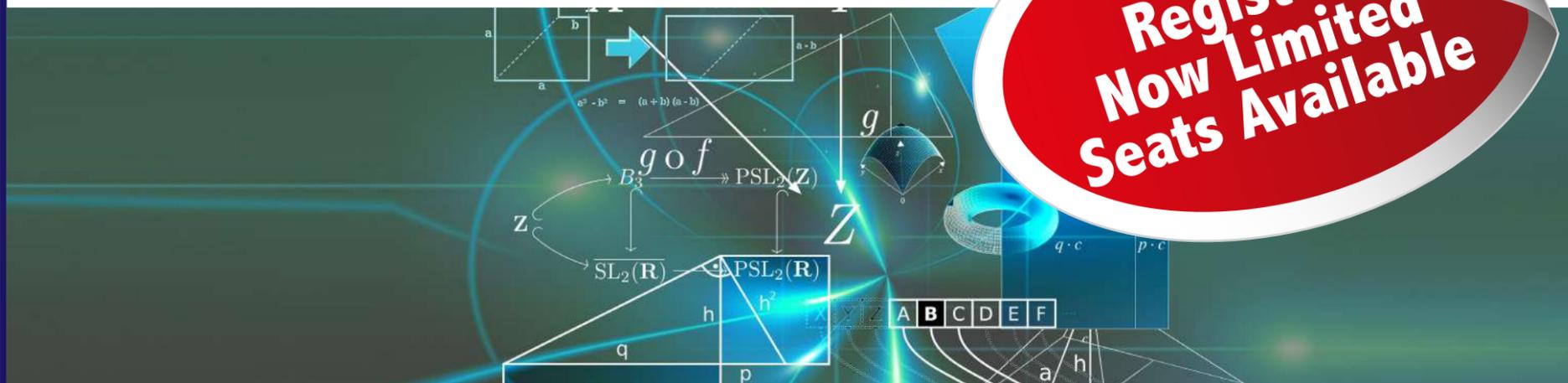
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NEDBANK TOUR DE TULI CANCELS 2020 MOUNTAIN BIKE EVENT



ADMIRATION: Tour de Tuli riders in action

Riders to transfer entry to 2021

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Nedbank Tour de Tuli (NTDT) has cancelled its 2020 mountain bike tour which was set to take place from the 21st to the 26th of July.

The pandemic has created numerous uncertainties, including that of cross-border travel, leading to the decision. As the primary fundraiser for Children in the Wilderness (CITW), the cancellation of the tour impacts many of those involved, including the riders, local businesses and most importantly, the beneficiaries – the children.

“At this critical time for survival in the tourism industry, we cannot emphasise enough how important the monies raised through riders’ entries are for CITW, Wilderness Safaris’ non-profit environmental, life-skills and education programme for children living alongside our areas of operation”, says Tour Director, Nicola Harris.

“While we are ready and willing to refund all registered 2020 event riders, we are appealing to all participants to consider transferring their entry to 2021, which will be honoured at the 2020 NTDT rate. We thank all our riders for understanding, and appeal to them to communicate

their decision soonest, to help us to assess the extent of the supplementary fundraising we may need to plan for 2020”, continues Nicola.

Over the last 14 years, the Tour has hosted some 3 900 cyclists and raised more than R25 million for CITW. These monies have helped to provide scholarships for more than 600 children and contributed to weekly environmental

Eco-Clubs based in rural schools across seven countries, impacting 3 300 children each year. In addition, the programme has trained over 1 000 teachers and Eco-Mentors, ensuring that they are fully equipped to run the programme successfully. Some 7 800 children have also had the amazing opportunity to participate in the annual CITW camps since 2001.

“We hope that when we come out of this crisis together – stronger and more unified – our riders will continue to

participate in our world-renowned annual mountain bike event, and in turn contribute to changing the lives of thousands of children in the rural areas of Africa. It is thanks to Tour participants that we have been able to positively influence the lives of so many children, a number of whom are now employed in ecotourism – actively contributing to the biodiversity conservation

of pristine wilderness areas”, concludes Nicola.

The Nedbank Tour de Tuli is a superb four-day adventure, with riders traversing unspoiled wilderness areas in the three African countries that contribute to the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area (GMTCA). This year’s Tour would have been the 15th event comprising endless kilometres of flowing single track along game trails in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.



SMILEY FACE: Happy Children in the Wilderness

BFA SEEK BAIL OUT

FROM BACK PAGE

In total there are 480 registered Premier League players, with all 16 sides boasting 30 footballers each. The ‘P2 million plus’ budget would cover their salaries for the month.

Speaking to Voice Sport this week, BFA President, Maclean Letshwiti admitted the majority of teams were already struggling economically before the enforced break.

He noted some failed to comply with club licencing requirements and were finding it increasingly difficult to pay players.

“This is an emergency. We have to do a lot of clubs’ financial impact data analysis and time is not on our side. It is month end and players have to pay their rentals and other expenses. It is a process. We do not know when FIFA will assist because assessments differ per association member. We also have staff to pay and we make money when there is action.”



LOST IN THOUGHT: Letshwiti

“There are lots of issues to look at. It is not only players’ salaries but also expiring contracts, transfer window among other things.” - BFA President, Maclean Letshwiti

Sounding stressed, Letshwiti said the current situation was giving the BFA ‘sleepless nights’ but maintained his association were doing all they can to assist their affiliates during the lockdown.

“These are tough times that need everyone’s input. Our teams are not commercialised. If they were all registered as companies they could be benefiting from the BURS Relief Fund, which would cover players’ wages,” the President pointed out.

Highlighting the BFA’s present predicament, Letshwiti explained there were other, more

complex concerns to consider on top of how to pay the players.

“There are lots of issues to look at. It is not only players’ salaries but also expiring contracts, transfer window among other things. The obligations placed on the parties will potentially be made impossible.”

Letshwiti further warned there was no guarantee the league – two-thirds complete with ten rounds of fixtures remaining – would resume.

“We are not even sure if this season will be finished. We might find ourselves starting afresh next season. We are dealing with something unprecedented and do not know when a cure will be found and our lives get back to normal.”

With the season set for a thrilling climax – separated by just five points, Jwaneng Galaxy, Township Rollers, Orapa United, Security Systems and Gaborone United are realistic title contenders – cancelling the league would be the latest body blow to the country’s long-suffering football fans.

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CRYING OUT FOR COVID RELIEF

BFA turn to govt for help



BY PORTIA MLILO

Cash-strapped Botswana Football Association (BFA) has submitted a desperate P2, 234, 136 SOS to government to cover the April wage budget for Premier League players.

With all football activities in the country grinding to a halt over a month ago, teams across the land are faced with a daunting financial hole they are struggling to fill.

As most local clubs rely on gate takings and merchandise sales to survive, the inactivity could prove terminal to some.

Although the BFA have already sent a much larger budget to the sport's global governing body, FIFA, the request is expected to take a while to process.

Thus, in their hour of need, the association have turned to home for more immediate help as they seek to benefit from government's Covid-19 Relief Fund.

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STRANDED: BPL players