

Republic of Botswana TAUTONA TIMES vol. 10 no. 7 (24/3/2012)  
The Electronic Press Circular of the Office of the President  
“REAL LEADERSHIP FOR REAL DELIVERY”

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“One of the key development projects that Botswana and Zambia are proud to have embarked upon is the construction of the Kazungula Bridge. Although this project has taken inordinately long to commence, I am, however, pleased to note that our two countries have ultimately secured funding, thanks to the support of our friends and development partners such as the African Development Bank and the Japanese Government.” – H.E. the President [B1]

## CONTENT –

### A. THE WEEK THAT WAS – A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP RENEWED

#### B. STATEMENTS BY -

1. His Excellency the President @ a State Banquet in Honour of His Excellency the Visiting President of the Republic of Zambia;
2. His Excellency the President of Zambia @ the Official Opening of Mogoditshane Senior Secondary School; and
3. The Honourable Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration @ Parliament in response to Members Questions

#### C. PRESS RELEASES, NOTICES AND FORWARDING

1. BTV and RB – Botswana’s most trusted sources of news
2. Upcoming Public Events for His Honour the Vice President
3. Botswana-Zambia – A Special relationship

#### D. ALSO BY OTHERS IN THE NEWS:

1. Times of India – “Diamantaires Now Eye Botswana”
2. Casper Journal – “Damn, I miss Africa!”
3. Mmegi – “Botswana's first cardiac pacemaker surgery a success”

### A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP RENEWED

Dear Readers – Welcome to this edition of Tautona Times, your window into issues and events involving the Botswana Ministry of State Presidency.

This past Monday H.E. the President, Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, welcomed his Zambian counterpart, H.E. President Michael Chilufya Sata, to our country for a three day Official Visit, which served to further bolster the longstanding special relationship that has long existed between the two countries. [B1-2][C3]

President Sata's first Official Visit here, coming within six months of his election, follows in the footsteps his four predecessors, each of whom also made multiple visits to our country, beginning with Kenneth Kaunda's first Official Visit back in 1968. All of Botswana's Presidents have likewise in the past made multiple Official Visits to Zambia, which in the case of President Khama has included his July 2010 State Visit. Last September he was also among the first leaders to personally congratulate President Sata on his election, arriving in Lusaka just hours after the confirmation of the electoral outcome.

Following the airport arrival ceremony, the two Presidents met at Office of the President. There they were subsequently joined by accompanying Ministers and senior officials for wider Official Talks that focused on areas of bilateral cooperation, while also addressing multilateral issues of common concern. Areas of ongoing cooperation between the two countries include, among other things, agriculture, education, health, transport, tourism, wildlife protection, energy and water resources, cross border crime and regional security. Both leaders commended the work of the two Joint Permanent Commissions, dedicated to general Cooperation and Defence and Security, for facilitating partnerships in these and other areas.

In the afternoon, President Khama hosted President Sata at a State Luncheon, which was also attended by H.H. the Vice President, Lt. General Mompoti Merafhe, former Presidents Sir Ketumile Masire and Festus Mogae, as well as Ministers and other VIPs. In his welcoming remarks, President Khama observed that, while rooted in shared historical experiences dating back to the pre-Independence era, the two countries' special relationship is driven by their common commitment to regional cooperation and shared adherence to democratic values. In this respect, he voiced his admiration for Zambia's own deep-rooted democratic culture, which he affirmed should serve "as an inspiration to many in Africa." [B1]

At the Banquet, both Presidents also spoke of the need to achieve zero tolerance for corruption, while expressing confidence that major initiatives, such as the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Trans-frontier Park and planned bridge over the Zambezi at Kazangula, would take Botswana-Zambia partnership to new heights. There was further agreement that the recent global economic downturn underscored the need to promote regional integration and trade for win-win economic diversification.

Following the Banquet, President Sata was given a tour of Parliament, which included paying a courtesy call on the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Botsalo Ntuane.

The highlight of the second day of President Sata's visit was his participation as Guest Speaker in the Official Opening of the Mogoditshane Senior Secondary School. In his

remarks the Zambian President noted that the two countries shared values included a common understanding that education is central to the attainment of sustainable development. [B2] Sata went on to applaud Government for the great strides that Botswana has made towards in ensuring that basic education is made accessible to all citizens, both in rural and urban areas, further noting that:

“Since the attainment of independence, your government has shown outstanding advancement in providing quality education to the entire population. Today, the enrolment rate for both primary and secondary education in Botswana stands at over 90 percent”

The Zambian President called for continued educational collaboration within the framework of the Joint Permanent Commission of Cooperation, noting that such options as twinning of schools, exchange visits and, regular participation in educational fairs could help improve the education standards in both our countries.

Also

With the financial year drawing to a close much of the President’s schedule this past month has been taken up with interrogating the quarterly progress reports of each line Ministries. During the fortnight, President Khama was also in Mogoditshane, where he addressed a well attended Kgotla meeting.

On Thursday evening H.H. the Vice President joined former President Mogae, Ministers and other Batswana in attending a commemoration for the victims of last year’s devastating Great East Japan Earthquake.

Last Saturday the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, the Hon. Mokgweetsi Masisi joined the Minister of Local Government, the Hon. Peter Siele in marking the Day of the Elderly in Moshupa. The event, which was organized by the Minister’s office in partnership with the Beno Society of Orphans, included donations of wheelchairs (from Mr. Raphael Sikwane) and poultry to the less fortunate.

Responding to a motion in Parliament in Parliament last Friday, Minister Masisi revealed that a recent market survey confirms that 74% of Batswana have high levels of trust in BTV and Radio Botswana to provide them with accurate news and information, which is ahead of all other domestic news media. The same survey indicates that BTV and Radio Botswana also remain the most popular sources of domestic news and information. [C1]

Also in Parliament this week, the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, the Hon. Mokgweetsi Masisi, reaffirmed that Government is in the process of finalizing a comprehensive policy framework for Poverty Eradication. He noted that the policy will have been the product of widespread consultation and buy-in on the part of different stakeholders. He further re-assured MPs that, in the absence of the finalized policy, the Poverty Eradication Programme has not been operating in a

vacuum, as the core tenets of the policy are already in place. [B3] He further observed that guidelines for the programme, which incorporate already operationalised eligibility criteria and baseline data, will soon be launched in Tlokweng by His Honour the Vice President, Lt. General Mompoti Merafhe.

In response to a query about efforts to provide educational opportunities for people of school going age living with various forms of disability, Minister Masisi reported that Government has currently identified and is assisting 2113 such cases. These include 220 learners who have been placed in various specialized stimulation centres and 1,666 who are enrolled in Primary and Secondary Schools that have special units to cater for their needs. He further noted that 89 such students are being assisted at tertiary level. [B3] Among the additional affirmative action measures being undertaken to assist learners with disabilities, the Minister went on to report that, in line with the 2011 Inclusive Education Policy, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development intends to build an institution to cater for learners with multiple disabilities, which will be located at Maun.

Also this week, in the context of the Ministry of State Presidency's recently launched Youth Strategy and agenda for social upliftment, staff members commemorated the Month of Youth Against Aids with a special programme at the National Youth centre in partnership with the Botswana National Youth Council and members of civil society. The theme of this month's activities across society is "Take Responsibility, Take Action" in the context of the continued need for behavioural change to end the scourge of HIV/AIDS.

#### Open Online

In our last TT edition we reported that as part of the Ministry's commitment to online delivery Radio Botswana was piloting global webcasting with streaming quality expected to improve in the coming weeks. We can now further report that the webcasting has now been migrated to its website @ [www.radiobotswana.gov.bw:8000/](http://www.radiobotswana.gov.bw:8000/), which should be accessible to online listeners with enabled media players.

In other news, independent web monitors confirm that as of January 2012 the Government e-portal @ [www.gov.bw](http://www.gov.bw) was averaging over 31000 unique visits a day, with domestic traffic accounting for about 85% of the total. The only official website on the continent reported to have a greater traffic is that of Egypt, which is reportedly averaging just over 38000 unique visits a day. Members of the public who have not already visited us online are encouraged to do so. We further welcome your comments on how we can make any of our services better via the [www.gov.bw](http://www.gov.bw) "Feedback" option, which appears at the bottom of each webpage. We can also now be reached on Facebook @ BWgovernment/148228411926492

- Dr. Jeff Ramsay, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Government Communications  
(24/3/12)

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## B. STATEMENTS

B1) 19/3/12: SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA, AT A STATE LUNCHEON ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICAL VIST TO BOTSWANA BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

[Salutations]...Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. It is a great pleasure for me, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Botswana, to welcome you Mr. President and your delegation to Botswana. We are indeed very honoured and humbled by your visit.

2. I also wish to express my profound gratitude to you personally for accepting my invitation to visit us. This kind gesture, Mr. President, will no doubt bolster our close historical bonds of friendship and the excellent relations, which are anchored on a strong foundation and shared values of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

3. Let me take this opportunity, Your Excellency, to express my gratitude to you for the warm reception that you accorded me and my delegation during my visit to your country last year, when I visited you on the day of your swearing-in ceremony as the fifth President of the Republic of Zambia.

4. My participation at that occasion was because of the existing close affinity between the people of Botswana and Zambia, as well as my determination and commitment to further deepen our long-standing political and socio-economic ties.

5. Your Excellency, I once again reiterate my sincere congratulations and best wishes to you on your election as President of the Republic of Zambia. Your election to that Office is a clear demonstration of the trust and confidence that the people of Zambia have in you and that of your Party's policies. I am confident that you will deliver these policies for the further development of your country and the welfare of the people of Zambia.

6. I also find it fitting to commend the people of your nation for conducting another peaceful and orderly transition of power during your recent elections. This is a clear testimony of the maturity of the Zambian people which is not always evident in other parts of our continent.

7. It is a clear manifestation of the existence of a deep-rooted democratic culture in Zambia, which I believe should serve as an inspiration to many in Africa.

8. Allow me at this juncture, to applaud you and your Government for the strong commitment you have demonstrated towards the fight against corruption, the promotion of good governance and the rule of law as well as poverty reduction. This goes to show your determination to improve the living standard of the Zambian people. It is not an exaggeration that it is only through commitment to good governance and zero-tolerance towards corruption and mismanagement that we can attain sustainable development.

9. Your Excellency, it is gratifying to note that our two countries share much more than just a border. Botswana and Zambia enjoy a special relationship that can be traced back to the pre-Independence era. This special relationship should lay a solid foundation for deepening and strengthening cooperation between us.

10. One of the daunting challenges that our countries have experienced in recent times, relates to the negative impact that the global economic downturn has had on our fledgling economies. As you are aware, Botswana's economy is heavily reliant on the mining sector, which is the largest employer outside of the public sector. This sector has been the most affected by the global economic crisis.

11. Although the global economy showed positive prospects for recovery at the beginning of last year, the future now looks increasingly uncertain given the current slowdown in the economic activities of developed countries such as in the European Union and elsewhere. With global inter-dependence, our developing economies have begun to experience negative impact since many of our exports are destined to the markets of these developed economies.

12. The above scenario, Mr. President, compels us as developing countries, especially in Africa, to deepen our regional trade. We should therefore, step up efforts aimed at facilitating intra-African trade, and in this regard this includes between our two countries. I would certainly like to see more bilateral trade between us.

13. Your Excellency, one of the key development projects that Botswana and Zambia are proud to have embarked upon is the construction of the Kazungula Bridge. Although this project has taken inordinately long to commence, I am, however, pleased to note that our two countries have ultimately secured funding, thanks to the support of our friends and development partners such as the African Development Bank and the Japanese Government.

14. The completion of this long-overdue project will no doubt, facilitate increased trade and investment, not only between Botswana and Zambia, but also the Southern African region. Its completion would help to realise our shared vision of attaining greater integration through improved communication links.

15. Your Excellency, the political and security situation in the Southern African region still has some challenges. It is my profound hope that Madagascar and Zimbabwe will deliver credible elections whenever they are held, and we in Botswana are determined

to play our role to help achieve this alongside other sister states in the SADC region. For too long now has political instability been going on in those countries, and for too long therefore on the SADC Agenda. We only wish they can conduct elections like Zambia and Botswana and indeed others in our region without the accompanying violence leading to instability. Elsewhere on the African continent it is our hope that the AU will become more effective in dealing with instability where it exists like in Somalia, in dealing with droughts and famine, and to come up with a roadmap to address developmental issues, health, poverty, education and many other challenges facing our continent.

16. In the Middle East Botswana remains concerned about the ongoing wholesale murder and widespread violation of human rights perpetrated by the Syrian Regime. It is unbelievable that the International Community is unable to respond in a robust manner to halt these atrocities which include the indiscriminate bombardment of cities killing men, women and children, sniper fire that does the same, the use of landmines along refugee routes and torture. The failure of two permanent Members of the UN Security Council to carry out their responsibilities that have now allowed such slaughter of innocent people to continue is a disgrace. Assad and his regime have abused their mandate to govern, not that they ever had one in the first place. We call for regime change and for Assad and others with him in their killing frenzy to be brought before the ICC for committing crimes against humanity. We hope and wish that one of the world's greatest diplomats, Koffi Annan as the UN and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria, will succeed in his efforts.

17. Mr. President, in conclusion, I wish to extend my congratulations to your country for its resounding victory at the recent Africa Cup of Nations. I wish to pay tribute to The Mighty Chipolopolo, who have proved that they are a continental force to reckon with. I always knew that Zambia had it in them to win this tournament. I look forward to see them playing against the Zebras one day.

18. Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, may I now request you to join me in drinking a toast:

- to the continued good health of His Excellency Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata, President of the Republic of Zambia;
- to the continued friendship, solidarity and fruitful co-operation between the Governments and peoples of Zambia and Botswana; and
- to international peace and security.

I thank you. PULA!!!

**B2) 20/3/12: STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. MICHAEL CHILUFYA SATA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MOGODITSHANE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

[Salutations]

It is my great honour and privilege to be invited to this beautiful town of Mogoditshane, for this important occasion marking the official opening of the Mogoditshane senior secondary school. I wish to thank you for the invitation extended to me and my government to be part of this special occasion.

Hon Minister, Zambia and Botswana's bilateral relations transcend the sharing of a common border as our two countries also share the same educational system, inherited from the British. As such, education is another point of commonality between our two great nations. This occasion also affords us the opportunity to hail the people of Botswana for the various development strides that they have made since their independence.

Hon Minister, education is central to the attainment of sustainable development by any country as it empowers and strengthens the people of a nation through the creation, application and spreading of knowledge. At the individual level, it is a powerful equalizer that opens doors for career development. Thus a country's investment in education, not only benefits the individual but society as a whole.

Hon Minister, good quality and broad-based education serves as a pre-requisite to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS), as it helps to reduce poverty, promotes gender equality, lowers child mortality rate, protects against HIV/AIDS, reduces fertility rates and enhances environmental awareness.

In the same vein, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) protocol on education recognises that the development of human resources to its full potential is the most significant tool for tackling socio-economic challenges of the region and this calls for concerted efforts from all member states.

Hon Minister, the right to education is a universal entitlement that is recognized, the world over, as a human right. According to the international treaty on economic, social and cultural rights, the right to education includes the right to free and compulsory primary and secondary education for all.

The right to education further encompasses an obligation to rule out discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality of education.

Hon Minister, allow me, therefore to applaud your government for the many great strides that Botswana has made towards ensuring that basic education is made accessible to all citizens, both in rural and urban areas.

Since the attainment of independence, your government has shown outstanding advancement in providing quality education to the entire population. Today, the enrolment rate for both primary and secondary education in Botswana stands at over 90

percent while the University of Botswana has similarly continued to register a high growth rate.

Hon Minister, despite these strides in education, our two countries continue to register challenges which include, among others, access and gender equity in early childhood education, secondary education, provision of quality education for all and the availability of qualified teachers at all levels.

Hon Minister, I wish to emphasise that both primary and secondary education provide the critical foundation upon which tertiary education could be built. It is, therefore, important to improve and sustain the educational standards at both primary and secondary levels.

I wish to urge the relevant authorities in the education sectors of our two countries to continue collaborating within the framework of Zambia/Botswana joint permanent commission of cooperation.

Options such as twinning of schools, exchange visits between our institutions of learning and, regular participation in educational fairs of our two countries would help improve the education standards in both our countries.

Hon Minister, in conclusion, our roles as governments is to ensure that our teachers are remunerated accordingly so as to motivate them to produce quality students who would compete confidently on the global market. Pula!

### B3) 12-22/3/12: RESPONSES BY THE MINISTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, THE HON. MOKGWEETSI MASISI TO QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT

B3a) 22/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 688 (2) ASKED BY MR. M. R. REATILE, MP. (NGWAKETSE WEST)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration:-

(i) To state the Government Policy with regard to assistance of Trade Unions, in light of the recent High Court Judgement (Union Members Vs Attorney General) that rules in favour of maintaining the current assistance to Unions;

(ii) How long the current state of Affairs will prevail;

(iii) Whether any Trade Unions in the public service have complained about unfair treatment in the distribution of Union assistance, if so, to state the nature of the complaint and how the matter was resolved; and

(iv) To state the international best practice with regard to Union assistance in the context of a unionised public service.

ANSWER:

(i) Madam Speaker, there is no case between Union members Vs Attorney General regarding assistance to Trade Unions. Instead a case on union assistance between individual recognised unions and Attorney General is before the courts and there is no judgement as yet.

(ii) Madam Speaker, as I already indicated this matter is still pending before the courts and to respect the sub-judice rule I do not wish to comment on it further.

(iii) Madam Speaker, the Trainers and Allied Workers Union (TAWU) has complained about alleged discrimination by the employer on provision of office accommodation to Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU). The resolution of the complaint is tied up with the matter that is before the courts and similarly I do not wish to comment on it further to respect the sub-judice rule.

(iv) Madam Speaker, in terms of Article 2 ILO Convention No. 98 and Article 4 & 5 of ILO Convention No. 151 "Public employees' organisations shall enjoy complete independence from Public Authorities and shall enjoy adequate protection against any acts of interference by each establishment, functioning or administration. In particular, acts which are designed to promote the establishment of Public employees' organisations under the domination of a public authority or support public employees by financial or other means, with the object of placing such organisations under the control of the employer shall be deemed to constitute acts of interference". I thank you.

B3b) 22/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 690 ASKED BY MR. B. ARONE, MP (OKAVANGO)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration:- If he is aware that high and low income largely reflects inequality between rural areas and the rest of the country, if so, what has contributed to this situation; and what government is doing to correct the above scenario in an effort to eradicate poverty.

ANSWER: Madam Speaker, I am aware of the fact that poverty is more pronounced in rural than in urban and peri-urban areas. The income inequalities in these areas are mainly caused by fewer job opportunities in the rural areas. It is for this reason that government has come up with initiatives such as the Economic Diversification Drive, ISPAAD, LIMID, Ipelegeng and the Poverty Eradication Programme, essentially to create income generation opportunities.

Madam Speaker, Government is also giving out incentives to officers working in rural areas to improve service delivery which impacts positively on the livelihoods of the rural population. These incentives include Remote Area Service Allowance (RASA), subsidized rents for council housing and provision of transport once a month for teachers to access bank and other services. On the other hand, Rural Development

Council (RDC) is being revamped to focus on infrastructure and development issues, to facilitate service delivery to the rural areas. This will enable more people in the rural areas to be assisted with government programmes to improve their livelihoods. Lastly, we continue to use CSO reports that have disaggregated data on poverty levels in the country. The latest report was released in December 2011. This data will enable us to focus our strategic initiatives to the specific localities. Thank you.

B3c) 22/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO 693 ASKED BY MR. R. MASITARA, MP. (GABORONE WEST NORTH)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration:- how many graduates under the Internship Programme, were employed by each Public Body/Parastatal under his Ministry between April 2009 and March 2010, April 2010 and March 2011, April 2011 and December 2011; how much funding from the public purse was allocated to sponsor such; how many interns he expects each Public Body/Parastatal to employ between April 2011 and March 2012, April 2012 and March 2013; and how much funding that will entail for each financial year in (iii) above.

Answer: Madam Speaker, the number of interns employed by Public Bodies/Parastatals under my Ministry and the associated funding between April 2009 and December 2011 is as follows:

PERIOD	NUMBER OF INTERNS	
ASSOCIATED FUNDING		
April 2009 to March 2010	6	P58 500
April 2010 to March 2011	4	P73 800
April 2011 to December 2011	3	P48 600
TOTAL	13	P180 900

Madam Speaker, I cannot indicate the number of interns that will be engaged in future under my Ministry because of the volatile economic environment that we find ourselves in. I thank you.

B3d) 21/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 675 (3) BY MR. M. R. REATILE, MP (NGWAKETSE WEST)

Question: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration:-

- i) To explain the meaning of the term "Political Controversy" in Section 37 (c) of the Public Service Act as used by Government;
- ii) To state the number of Trade Union officials who have been charged with misconduct under this section, the nature of offences and the Unions involved;
- iii) Whether disciplinary action against Trade Union officials carrying out legitimate Trade Union duties is not a violation of their constitutional freedom, International Labour

Organisation Conventions and Botswana Labour laws and whether such punishment is not a form of intimidation.

Answer: Madam Speaker,

i) The term “political controversy” as used in Section 37 (c) of the Public Service Act means being involved in activities that are of a political nature in accordance with Section 5 (5) of the Public Service Act which states that Public Service Employees shall not:

- a) publicly speak or demonstrate for or against any politician or political party;
- b) an active member of, nor hold office in, any political party;
- c) publish his/her view on political matters in writing; or
- d) hold a parliamentary seat or hold a political office in any local government body, except where the office is held ex officio.

Madam Speaker,

ii) One employee has been charged with misconduct under Section 5 (5) of the Public Service Act, 2008 in the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The employee belonged to Botswana Sectors of Educators Trade Union (BOSETU). Another employee was charged in the Ministry of Local Government under the same section from Botswana Land Board, Local Authorities and Health Workers Union (BLLAHWU) and the matter has not as yet been concluded.

Madam Speaker,

iii) I am constrained to give a definite response to Part III of the question as this matter is before the Courts which will provide guidance as appropriate. However Government has no intention to violate employees’ constitutional freedom. It must be noted that public service employees’ conduct should be within the parameters of the statutes governing the Public Service. I thank you.

B3e) 21/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 680 (8) ASKED BY MR. M. R. REATILE MP (NGWAKETSE WEST)

Question: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration:-

i) Whether in the course of legitimate Trade Unions activities, Union Officials employed by Government are indemnified against Civil Suits in terms of the Public Service Act, Trade Unions and Employers Organisation Act or the Trade Disputes Act, if not,

ii) Will he consider amending Section 37 (c) of the Public Service Act to insert the official meaning of “political controversy” as used by Government to indemnify Trade Union carrying Union duties.

Answer: Madam Speaker,

i) There is no provision indemnifying Union officials against civil suits in the course of legitimate Trade Union activities in the Public Service Act, Trade Unions and Employers Organisations Act and Trade Disputes Act as there is no need to do as they are not acting within the cause and scope of their employment.

Madam Speaker,

ii) I therefore have no intention to amend the Public Service Act to insert the official meaning of "political controversy" as I have no intention to indemnify Trade Union officials. I thank you.

B3f) 14/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 622 ASKED ON WEDNESDAY 14TH MARCH, 2012 BY MR. D.P. MAKGALEMELE, MP. (SHOSHONG)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration to state progress he has made in negotiating a partnership with Botswana Post to sell Government publications such as Government Gazette through their outlets, given the continued loss of opportunities presented by lack of access.

ANSWER: Madam Speaker, consultations with Botswana Post on the selling of government publications to members of the public are ongoing, and are to be concluded by April 2012. Parallel to consultations with Botswana Post, my Ministry is working on a project to avail government publications online, in order to increase citizen access to all government publications.

B3g) 14/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 615 ASKED BY MR. D.P. MAKGALEMELE, MP (SHOSHONG)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration to state:-

Progress he has made in developing the Poverty Eradication Policy for Botswana as per the commitment he made to Parliament in response to Question No. 557 of 4th March 2011; and The methodology for this process with regards to consultation and buy-in of different stakeholders.

ANSWER: Madam Speaker, the process of developing the Poverty Eradication Policy for Botswana has started. The Policy should be ready for the July 2012 Parliament meeting.

Madam Speaker, it should, however, be noted by this House that the Poverty Eradication Programme is not operating in a vacuum, owing to the fact that the core tenets of the Policy are already in place. The Poverty Eradication Roadmap was completed in November 2010 following the Pitso held in Mahalapye; The Poverty

Eradication guidelines will be launched on March/April 2012 by His Honour the Vice President in Tlokweng; Criteria for eligibility in place; Baseline determined. Funds have now been secured to develop the Poverty Eradication Policy for the 2012/13 financial year.

Madam Speaker, consultations were done through the national Pitso held in Mahalapye, Regional and District Dipitso, Market days, Kgotla meetings and through presentation to Full Council meetings. To-date six (6) regional Dipitso were held countrywide, nineteen (19) Market days and presentations were made in 2 Full Council meetings. Consultations will continue as more consultative fora are undertaken in different Districts country-wide. I thank you.

B3h) 12/3/12: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 595 ASKED BY MR. D.P. MAKGALEMELE, MP (SHOSHONG)

Question: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration to state:-

- (i) The number of people of school going age living with various forms of disability
- (ii) The institutions of learning where these people are placed and
- (iii) Plans in place for those who do not have access to education given that is a right for all citizens

Answer: Madam speaker, there are two thousand one hundred and thirteen (2,113) people of school going age living with various forms of disability in Botswana, of these two hundred and twenty (220) are placed at stimulation centres such as; Cheshire Foundation in Mogoditshane, Anne Stine in Molepolole, Tshidilo in Serowe, Motswedi in Mochudi, Sethare Tshimologo in Francistown, Francistown Center for Deaf Education, Ramotswa Center for Deaf Education, Boyei in Maun, Makolojwane in Serowe and Mochudi Resource Centre.

One thousand four hundred and thirty three (1,433) learners with special needs are placed in Special Classes for learners with intellectual disabilities in various Primary Schools (special units) in Francistown and Ramotswa. This includes learners with Hearing Impairment at Boyei and Masa Primary Schools and those with visual Impairment are placed at Matsieng and Phatlhogo Primary Schools Mochudi and Francistown respectively.

A total of two hundred and twenty three (223) are placed in various Secondary Schools around the country. Those with Hearing Impairment are placed at Ramotswa JSS, Tashata JSS and Maun Senior while Linchwe JSS and Molefi Senior cater for learners with Visual Impairment.

Various Vocational, Technical Colleges and Brigades have admitted one hundred and forty eight (148) learners with special needs. These are Motswedi Rehabilitation Centre, Legodimo and Motsewabadi in Otse, Thuso Rehabilitation Centre in Maun, Thuto Rehabilitation Centre in Lobatse and Tlamelong Centre in Tlokweng.

The University of Botswana, Limkokwing, ABM, NIIT/BOTHO, Baisago, GIPS, BAC as well as external universities such as Algonquim in Canada, Galladet in USA, New Zealand and NID in South Africa and various other Tertiary Institutions have admitted eighty nine (89) such students.

Madam speaker, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development has plans to build an Institution to cater for learners with multiple disabilities (those who cannot benefit from regular schools due to their condition) in the North West region in Maun. Furthermore, initiatives to increase access for people with various forms of disabilities are in place as espoused in The Revised National Policy on Education of April 1994. These are:

- a) Creating schools of skills for learners with Intellectual Disabilities, who have overgrown primary units,
- b) Providing bursaries for learners with special needs who do not meet the placement requirement of Department of Tertiary Education Financing,
- c) Developing sponsorship guidelines for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners at tertiary institutions,
- d) Opening of new special units in various regions,
- e) Providing subventions to NGO's institutions that cater for learners with special needs and
- f) Implementing of the Inclusive Education Policy of February 2011.

The above, Madam Speaker, should enable us to ensure that all people living with various forms of disability have access to education. I thank you.

### C. NOTICES & FORWARDING

C1) 24/3/12: PUBLISHED IN WEEKEND POST NEWSPAPER - "BTV & RB - BOTSWANA'S MOST TRUSTED NEWS" BY DR. JEFF RAMSAY

During the recent debate in Parliament on the status of the Department of Broadcasting Services (DBS) it was observed that the media outlets falling under the said Department, i.e. BTV, RB2 and Radio Botswana, enjoy the highest levels of domestic public confidence.

The point was made by the Honourable Mokgweetsi Masisi, as the Minister responsible, who further reported that a 2012 public perception survey, based on a representative sample, has found that 74% of Botswana trust DBS media to provide them with credible news and information.

The same survey further reveals that the public trust levels for our state supported news media in general, that is the Daily News as well as BTV, RB2 and Radio Botswana, remain higher than the corresponding figures for the private press, both electronic and in print.

If readers are not aware of the Minister's statement they did not see it in the Daily News, which appears to have been the only newspaper to have so far reported anything on his intervention. The Daily News also reported that the Minister had further observed that the 74% trust rating in DBS means that public confidence in his Department is among the highest in the world. In this respect it compares favourably with European public broadcasters who are often cited as global benchmarks.

Further quantitative support for Masisi's statement can be found in the Centre for International Media Ethics (CIME) 2011 Public Trust Survey of global media, which was released this month. The CIME Survey found that the majority of people on all continents were skeptical of their broadcast news, with an average of no more than 9% of those surveyed on any continent expressing "a lot of trust" in their TV news and 12% in their radio news. By contrast 51% of Batswana in the domestic survey expressed "a lot of trust" in DBS current affairs.

The positive numbers for BTV and Radio Botswana should not come as a complete shock, as they are consistent with past surveys that together suggest longstanding institutional trust in DBS among Batswana. In this respect a 2005 public perception survey, which asked the same questions as the 2012 survey, found 72% trust in DBS, with 44% then expressing "a lot of trust." Whereas 7% claimed to have no trust in DBS media in 2005, the corresponding figure for 2012 was less than 1%.

In other words, notwithstanding the intensity of negative criticism that both BTV and Radio Botswana news have been subjected to from some quarters in recent years, their public confidence levels have modestly strengthened.

One thing that has changed, however, is the remarkable growth of TV viewership. Whereas in 2005 43% of Batswana sourced their news from television at least a few times a week, with 27% watching TV news on a daily basis, in 2012 the weekly figure has risen to 92% with a massive 70% getting their news daily from TV.

The 2012 Survey further reports that TV is the preferred source of news for 38% of Batswana, followed by 33% for radio, 17% for newspapers and 11% for the internet.

Why do figures suggest that BTV in particular is so popular and trusted? One explanation is that, unlike some of what appears in print, its visual content does not lie. Indeed, BTV often exposes the pseudo-truths of others, which may explain why a few have become so incessant in their criticism.

A case in point was recent coverage of His Honour the Vice President's Kgotla meeting in Mochudi. Whereas one private newspaper the following day described the meeting on its front page as being "poorly attended" viewers of BTV news the night before would have seen with their own eyes that the gathering was in fact packed, despite earlier speculation by the same private news group that it would be boycotted.

By the same token people can contrast the negative image of His Excellency the President, as constantly portrayed by a segment of the private press; with the conscientious leader they see regularly engaging the public on their TV, thus drawing their own conclusions.

What they can also see and hear on BTV and Radio Botswana is dignified discussions about real issues that affect their daily lives, news that goes beyond the seeming obsession on the part of some with political soap operas and alleged personal scandals.

If one were to adopt one's worldview simply by reading and taking at face value the output of a few of our journalists, one might suspect that we are a nation of bitter morally corrupt people who are deeply obsessed and polarised by partisan politics and petty jealousy.

It would be difficult to believe that such a population could accomplish much in the way of progress, much less be the proud citizens of a country that is still widely perceived by the global community as a benchmark of decency and democratic development.

In the words of Minister Masisi at Parliament: "We have a public broadcaster that operates by certain rules, we have programmes in place, and it has served us well."

## C2) 22/3/12: MEDIA ADVISORY: HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT'S UPCOMING PUBLIC EVENTS OPEN TO THE MEDIA

1. Wednesday March 28, 2012 @ 1400 hours. Officiate at the Regional Conference on Doing Business Venue: GICC, Gaborone
2. Thursday April 05, 2012 @ 0800 hours. Official Launch of Poverty Eradication Guidelines Venue: Tlokweng
3. Thursday April 05, 2012 @ 1430 hours. Courtesy call by the Deputy Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China. Venue: Office of the President
4. Saturday April 14, 2012 @ 0800 hours. Official Opening of the new Mahalapye Police Station. Venue: Mahalapye
5. Monday April 23, 2012 @ 1430 hours. Official Opening of Railpark Mall. Venue: Marakanelo, Gaborone
6. Thursday April 26, 2012 @ 0900 hours. Official Opening of the 4th Botswana SMME Conference and Fair. Venue: Gaborone

7. Friday April 27, 2012 @ 0900 hours. Official handover of houses to the needy.  
Venue: Letlhakeng East

C3) 17/3/12: PUBLISHED IN WEEKEND POST NEWSPAPER - "ZAMBIA-BOTSWANA A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" BY DR. JEFF RAMSAY

This week it was announced that the President of Zambia, H.E. Michael Chilufya Sata, will arrive in Gaborone on Monday to undertake a three-day State Visit at the invitation of H.E. the President, Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama.

As is the norm for such summits, between ceremonial events the two leaders and their delegations will hold Official Talks, which are expected to cover a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of common concern.

Existing areas of cooperation between the two countries include, among other things, agriculture, education, health, transport, tourism, wildlife protection, energy and water resources, cross border crime and regional security. Partnerships in these and other areas have for many years been promoted through the regular convening of two Joint Permanent Commissions, one dedicated to general Cooperation with the second focused on Defence and Security.

On Tuesday, President Sata is also scheduled to Officially Open of the Mogoditshane Senior Secondary School.

It is testament to the special relationship that has been nurtured between Botswana and Zambia over the past five decades that in coming here President Sata will be walking in the footsteps of his four predecessors, each of whom made multiple visits to our country.

By the same token all four of Botswana's President's have been regular visitors to Zambia. In this respect President Khama has already made several visits since assuming office, including his July 2010 State Visit. Last September President Khama was also among the first leaders to personally congratulate President Sata, arriving in Lusaka just hours after the confirmation of the election results.

The first post-independence visit by any head of state or government to our country was, in fact, by the then Zambia President Kenneth Kaunda in May 1968. At the time Kaunda's arrival was perceived here and elsewhere as being of great symbolic value. In global diplomatic circles it was generally interpreted as a signal that, despite our then being surrounded on all sides by racist regimes, Botswana was firmly on the frontline of free Africa.

Between 1966 and 1980, when freedom was restored to Zimbabwe, the border junction with Zambia at Kazangula was of critical significance as our only geographic link with the rest of the liberated continent. As a result for many years it served as a strategic crossing point for refugees and freedom fighters as well as trade.

The crossing's commercial importance became all the more critical in 1973 when Zambia's border with the racist Rhodesian regime was closed. The resulting crisis spurred the construction of the Francistown-Kazangula Road, which was internationally referred to as the "Botzam Highway".

The roots of the Botswana-Zambia special relationship can, however, be traced back still further to May 1964, before either countries' independence, when Seretse Khama first visited Kaunda in Lusaka. During their initial encounter the two met as the leaders of their respective political parties, though "KK" was already Zambia's leader in waiting, as the country was scheduled for independence in October 1964 (Seretse attended the ceremony as Kaunda's guest).

The visit also came on the eve of the June 1964 announcement that the British Government in London had finally accepted the constitutional framework that had been earlier adopted at the August 1963 Lobatse Conference, a development that confirmed that Botswana was also on a path to accelerated independence.

In April 1965, a month after he was inaugurated as Prime Minister, Seretse Khama visited Zambia for the third time, his now official status allowing for the two to initiate of formal Government to Government contact. Shortly thereafter, in July 1965, Zambia was one of the first nations to offer food aid to Botswana in the context of that year's devastating drought and threatened famine.

In 1966 Zambia also became the first African country to establish formal diplomatic relations. In this respect one can rather loosely speak of a restoration of relations given that, prior to colonial rule, King Khama III and his royal Balozi counterpart Lewainika had also exchanged envoys, the Bangwato being represented north of the Zambezi by a certain Makoatsa.

Like an older brother or sister, during the early years of our republic Zambia often extended a helping hand, in the process opening the doors for many Batswana to receive higher education and training.

In 1974 Botswana and Zambia were joined by Tanzania and newly independent Mozambique in forming the Frontlines States, which subsequently also included Angola. From the beginning the formation combined a political commitment to spearhead the end of white minority rule in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe with moves towards building regional economic partnership. This culminated in the April 1980 joint Declaration on Southern Africa's Economic Liberation, which is a cornerstone for today's SADC.

Moving forward there is much more work still to be done, from realizing a bridge over the Zambezi at Kazangula, to reaping the win-win potential of the emerging Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Trans-frontier Park, to achieving further mutual benefit through the sustainable utilization of the Zambezi basin's natural resources.

As Lewainika once informed an inquisitive lekgoa, when kings get together there is always much to talk about.

#### D. ALSO IN THE NEWS:

NB: NEWS REPORTS, STATEMENTS AND/OR VIEWS REPRODUCED BELOW ARE FROM NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES AND THUS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA.

D1) 24/3/12: FROM TIMES OF INDIA – [SURAT] “DIAMANTAIRES NOW EYE BOTSWANA”

SURAT: After Zimbabwe, diamantaires in the world's biggest diamond cutting and polishing centre in Surat are eyeing Botswana for rough diamond imports. The government of Botswana had recently set up State Diamond Trading Company (SDTC) to auction an estimated \$300 million worth of rough diamonds in the open market.

About 70% rough diamond supplies globally are controlled by world's leading mining companies like De Beers, Alrosa, Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton while the rest are sold through open tenders or auctions by the respective governments in African countries, Canada, Australia and Russia.

Diamantaires have been eyeing the 30% supplies in the global market available through open tenders and auctions. As per official statistics of Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council ( GJEPC), the import of rough diamonds in the country in February increased 21% to \$1.33 billion compared to the same month in previous year. For the first two months of 2012 - January and February - the total rough diamond imports increased by 15% to \$2.42 billion.

"While Zimbabwe is seen as a major rough diamond supplier with about \$4 billion worth of annual diamond production to be sold in the open market, Botswana is the second country in focus for the diamantaires," said Dinesh Navadia, president, Surat Diamond Association (SDA).

The Botswana government's STDC will be responsible for purchasing, selling and marketing of that country's 10% run-of-mine production from Debswana mines, which produces rough diamonds worth \$3 billion annually. Botswana is the world's largest source of precious stones, accounting for 21% of global diamond-mine production and about two-thirds of De Beers's output.

In September 2011, the government of Botswana and De Beers SA - each of which own 50% in Debswana mine - signed a 10-year agreement for sales, valuing and sorting of Debswana's diamond production. Under the agreement, De Beers will move its London-based rough diamond sales - Diamond Trading Company (DTC) - office to Botswana's capital Gaborone by the end of 2013. As part of the new 10-year sales pact, Botswana

government will have the right to sell 10% of diamonds mined in the country through STDC.

D2) 20/3/12: FROM CASPER JOURNAL (USA) – “DAMN, I MISS AFRICA!” BY DOUG CROWE

For several years I worked in southern Africa with the Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks. During that time I shot many elephants! In every case they ran a ways, slowed down, stopped, swayed back and forth and then fell over. An hour or so later they got up and wobbled off. This was as intended since it was a tranquilizer dart, not a bullet, that put them down! And the operational objective was to outfit each pachyderm downed with a sturdy “necklace” sporting a new Global Positioning System. This device would then keep track of the wearer’s wanderings. The objective was to collar as many elephants as time and resources allowed and document their movements.

Northern Botswana was (and is) the center of elephant distribution in southern Africa but the bordering states of Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe also support significant numbers. Elephants move through this huge area without concern for territorial boundaries established by Homo sapiens. Our goal was to document the timing and geographical extent of these movements and use that information in the formation of management strategies. But first we needed to place a lot of collars on a lot of critters!

Facilitating that was the knowledge that female African elephants live their entire lives with the herd into which they were born. So, one needs only a single collar on an animal to keep track of an entire herd. This may sound like straightforward simple stuff. It isn’t! I’ll concede an elephant collaring safari isn’t so complex as, say, the Normandy Invasion, but it ain’t no cakewalk either! First you need a fixed-wing aircraft and a savvy pilot to fly it. Also requisite is a helicopter in the hands of an experienced driver who can maneuver at low levels without ending up wrapped around a tree! Then you need a biologist who’s proficient with a dart gun and stupid enough to tie himself to a strut, lean out of the chopper and shoot a dart into a running elephant’s butt! Further, you must be able to do this while the game scouts sitting behind you are in the process of upchucking their breakfast! Unfortunately, it’s considered impolite to throw game scouts out of a chopper and, besides that, they come in handy later!

At any rate, here’s the way the operation is supposed to go down: Men, machines and equipment are deployed at one of the scattered “bush strips” from whence the fixed-wing pilot and his observer take off at first light. Their job is to locate a herd and call in the coordinates. We “chopper guys” then rendezvous with the plane and swoop in to dart a mature female. The rest of the herd invariably gathers around their tranquilized buddy, attempting to get her up. At this point, the plane hazes them away while the chopper guys land to place a collar on the ol’ gal. This isn’t as simple as you might think. The damn thing is made of thick, laminated canvas and weighs nearly 100 pounds. Also, the GPS attached to the collar operates on solar power so it must be facing the sky (on top of the elephant’s neck) or you lose contact.

Therefore, the collar has to be weighted to keep the GPS facing upwards. Long story short, it takes three men (this's where the aforementioned puking game scouts come into play) to drag the contraption out of the chopper and get it on the elephant. The entire time the fixed-wing is buzzing the herd to keep them from returning to their herd mate. Should the fixed-wing not be able to hold them, he radios the ground crew and they scramble for the chopper (which has been sitting on the ground "churning and burning" in anticipation of such an event). It's hard, hot, dangerous work ... and probably the most fun I've ever had!

But, lest you think it all fun and games, there are also moments of unbridled terror. For example, in the course of one of our forays, we inadvertently strayed into Angolan air space. This was back when Angola was engaged in a civil war. As we were making a turn to correct our mistake, someone on the ground popped a SAM (surface to air missile). As it turns out, a small light aircraft can out-maneuver a SAM, but it will clinch your butt cheeks to see a contrail snaking up out of the bush towards you!

Damn, I miss Africa!

D3) 19/3/12: FROM MMEGI – "BOTSWANA'S FIRST CARDIAC PACEMAKER SURGERY A SUCCESS" BY NNASARETHA KGAMANYANE

Princess Marina Hospital (PMH) has successfully inserted its first cardiac pacemaker, balloon angioplasty and coronary arterial stent, the Superintendent, Dr Vincent Molelekwa, has announced. In addition, Botswana's main referral hospital has performed its first trans-oesophageal echocardiogram.

Speaking at a press conference last Wednesday, Dr Mololekwa said these achievements were the result of a maturing cardiac centre of excellence that PMH had pioneered over the last two years, with the support of a Mauritian open-heart surgery team led by Professor Sunil Gunness. Dr. Molelekwa noted that Professor Gunness had saved many lives in Botswana. "Since the inception of our programme, we have lost a total of three patients, one from the investigations and two as a result of the heart operations themselves," he said.

He emphasised that no one died during the series of tests that were performed from Friday to Sunday at PMH last week. "To-date, Princess Marina boasts of having conducted 21 open heart surgeries, 64 coronary angiograms and 266 echocardiograms," he said.

"Of the 21 open heart surgeries, we have conducted four coronary bypass surgeries in which we inserted a vein from the (patient's) leg into the heart to bypass a blocked artery." Dr Molelekwa explained that they had replaced defective or damaged heart valves in 16 patients, on two of whom they replaced more than one valve.

At first, PMH only investigated hearts by means of coronary angiography in order to thoroughly evaluate the condition of the heart prior to surgery. Performing cardiac surgeries successfully was thus a major step for PMH, Dr Molelekwa noted.

They successfully inserted a balloon into a patient's thigh artery, threaded it all the way to the heart and entered it into arteries where they inflated it to remove or ease the blockade in the vessel. They have also been successful in performing one of medical science's most high-risk surgeries - inserting a pacemaker. "Pacemaker surgery is performed on a patient whose heart contractions are slow and drops below 60," said Dr Molelekwa. "This is a threat to human lives as the heart arteries work like electricity. We need the constant contractions to be alive as lower contractions can lead to heart failure or death. When the heart stops, life ends."

Professor Gunness added that pacemaker surgery is when a battery is inserted under the skin and connected to a wire that goes through the artery to the heart. When the heart contraction drops, the battery takes over and pumps the heart. When the heart contractions pick up to 160, the battery stops and the heart does the work on its own. Dr Gunness said the Mauritius Cardiac Centre sent he and his team to Botswana to help the country save money.

"I am happy with the support that we got from your doctors, nurses, matrons and everyone who participated in these procedures of our fourth cardiac operation project in the country," he said. "We have operated on six people. All our patients were operated on between Friday and Sunday. Five are already sitting while one is still in bed, but I believe that she will be fine by tomorrow."

The Mauritius crew left yesterday together with 11 Princess Marina hospital staff members to understudy the Mauritian team for a period of three weeks in Mauritius, with the hospital's perfusionist spending six weeks on training.

"Together with the Mauritian team, our very own staff was instrumental in the momentous achievement of the cardiac programme," Dr. Molelekwa said.

END NOTE - TAUTONA TIMES

Tautona Times was launched in May 2003 as a means to communicate to the media and other interested stakeholders. It is freely available to any who wish to receive it. But, we have no wish to SPAM. Requests for cancellation will be promptly acted on, as will any complaints about such things as double mailings. For ease of downloading all e-mailed copies of TT are sent in text format WITHOUT ANY ATTACHMENTS.