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news we need to know dot. **Mmegi**

Editor:
Oarabile Mosikare
Email: omosikare@mmegi.bw

Commercial Manager:
Lone Koosenye
Email: lone@mmegi.bw

Northern Bureau Chief:
Ryder Gabathuse
Email: ryder@mmegi.bw

Business Editor:
Mbongeni Mguni
Email: mguni@mmegi.bw

Sports Editor:
Mqondisi Dube
Email: dube@mmegi.bw

Graphics Head:
Lesego Mogotsi
Email: lesego@mmegi.bw

Supplements Coordinator:
Annah Dedede
Email: annah@mmegi.bw

Arts&Culture coordinator:
Mompoti Tihankane
Email: thankane@mmegi.bw

Photography Coordinator:
Moreri Sejakgomo
Email: moreri@mmegi.bw

Plant Manager:
Owen Ndlovu
Email: owen@mmegi.bw

New Media Coordinator:
Thalefang Charles
Email: charles@mmegi.bw

Khato Civils awards local partner P230 million

MONKAGEDI GAOTLHOBGWE

Khato Civils executive chairperson, Simbi Phiri says his company is living up to local economic empowerment expectations by ensuring that P230 million is awarded to its citizen partner, Evolution Engineering as per the dictates of citizen economic empowerment as part of the Water Utilities Corporation (WUC)'s P781 million tender award.

Speaking at the WUC's Masama 100KM infrastructure project ground breaking ceremony early this week, Phiri said he was deliberately spelling out his company's contribution to real citizen economic empowerment because there were not many in the field who contributed at the magnitude for the local economy and in particular for their local partners.

Phiri also announced that additional to awarding 30% of the tender to a local partner, his company had deliberately taken upon itself to pay its lowest grade of workers more than double the local industry standard of P1,500 a month, going a distant to pay them not less than P3,000 a month, additional over times, thus making Khato Civils the best paying in the industry by far, a trend he says is their trade mark wherever they carry out public projects in Africa.

Phiri also said they are further economically empowering local procurement entities, suppliers as well as engaging local subcontractors to ensure that significant amounts of money remain in the country rather than being shipped beyond the continent.

He stated that he is also proudly paying back to his mother's country as he was born to a Tonota mother and grew up here, worked here, started business here before leaving for South Africa in 1993 where he founded construction and engineering companies, Khato Civils and South Zambezi.

The Masama 100KM project has employed about 400 workers as of September 20, 2020 cumulatively; majority of whom come from villages along the pipeline such as Masama, Artesia, Leshibitse, Bokaa, Rasesa, and numerous cattle posts.

As well as providing jobs, empowering small businesses, Khato Civils has been praised by Kgatlang District Council chairperson, Dan Molokwe for further empowering the villages by arranging to pay them for boreholes from which the company draws water.

According to Leshibitse headman, Mooketsi Tosh Kgotlele, the company's project has further benefited residents of cattle posts along the pipeline. The cattle posts are Nokaneng, Linchwe 1, Linchwe II, Temesele, Lefarwe, Masama, and Artesia.

Furthermore, another P2.5 million has been set aside by Khato Civils for corporate social responsibility projects in the villages along the pipeline where they are constructing various community development facilities as suggested by the various villages' leaderships led by dikgosi and Village Development Committees.

According to Bakgatla regent, Bana Sekai



Phiri

Linchwe, many infrastructure projects were undertaken near the villages in the past, but without any tangible community social responsibility initiatives until Khato Civils came on board and demonstrated the extent to which corporate entities can play their part, further urging other companies to take a leaf and plough back into the communities in which they operate.

According to the Khato Civils executive chairperson, corporate social responsibility is heavily embedded in his company's DNA and that it is something they will not tire from dispensing even though the concept appears foreign and has attracted controversy in some quarters. That is because some cannot believe that a company can just invest millions in community projects.

Phiri said when his company first built blocks of classrooms and fenced a graveyard in Mmadinare, where they had tender works, Khato Civils' gesture of magnanimity was not welcomed by critics.

"Wherever we undertake projects we do more of these societal responsibilities and we will be doing them where ever we are engaged in Botswana, until it is appreciated as the norm," said Phiri.

The company boasts of investing over P5 million on social responsibility projects at their Limpopo water project as well as constructing over 500 homes and a brand new school in Malawi, amongst others.

Responding to Water Minister, Kefentse Mzwinila's plea to deliver the project timeously and with the best quality, Phiri said despite various challenges, the project is already ahead of schedule as it is at 34% and proceeding at great speed and with the best engineer-

ing and vast resources mobilised.

He appreciated the urgent need for water in the region and the need to deliver a high quality finished product at the earliest time.

Meanwhile, Country Director Ishmael Maposa said while normally companies use excavators which cover maximum of 400m per day, Khato Civils' revolutionary and state-of-the-art trenching technology deploys four Italian-made tesmic trenchers going by the sobriquet, rock eaters, which each easily covers two kilometres per day, bringing the total number of kilometres to eight per day.

He said they have deployed four of these at four various sections; each with its own distance to cover to ensure that the mission to deliver the water project is executed with the highest quality, efficiency and diligence.

Maposa said the four various sections of the project execution are like four companies, each with own resources, allocated to enable them to finish their various portions at speed and with the highest quality of execution.

Although the company is way ahead of schedule, Maposa says had it not been for the challenges brought about by COVID 19, which slowed progress for them, they would have covered more ground.

Maposa's team oversaw engineers and technicians from South Africa having to under go the mandatory 14 days quarantine, delivery of equipment and pipes stalling at the border, as well as having to overcome strict COVID-19 protocol adherence.

Project manager Ntoloki Moleo explained that 55 chambers have been excavated and built, with 69 air valves also scheduled for construction after the completion of pipe laying in December.

weather update

Maximum & Minimum Temperatures for 25 Sep 2020		KEY:	
Shakawe	39° 20°		Sunny
Maun	37° 20°		Partly Cloudy
Kasane	37° 18°		Cloudy with showers
Pandamatenga	36° 16°		Cloudy
Lethakane	36° 20°		Rain showers
Francistown	36° 17°		Light rain
Selibe Phikwe	35° 19°		Moderate/Heavy rain
Mahalapye	35° 22°		Light rain with storms
Jwaneng	35° 17°		Heavy storms
Werda	36° 13°		isolated thunders showers
Tsabong	35° 11°		
Tshane	36° 13°		
Ghanzi	37° 19°		

FIVE DAYS FORECAST OF DISTRICTS

Gantsi And Ngamiland Districts:			
Chobe And Northern-Central Districts:			
Kgalagadi District:			
Southern, South-East, Kgatlang, Kweneng, North-East And Southern-Central Districts:			

Information courtesy of: AccuWeather.com