

DAILY HANSARD

YOUR VOICE IN PARLIAMENT



THE THIRD MEETING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWELFTH PARLIAMENT

TUESDAY 30 JULY 2024

ENGLISH VERSION

HANSARD NO: 214



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Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly	- Vacant
Learned Parliamentary Counsel	- Advocate L. O. Tlhowe
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His Honour S. Tsogwane, MP. (Boteti West)	- Vice President
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Hon. Dr D. Letsholathebe, MP. (Tati East)	- Minister of Education and Skills Development
Hon. K. S. Gare, MP. (Moshupa-Manyana)	- Minister of Entrepreneurship
Hon. D. M. Mthimkhulu, MP. (Gaborone South)	- Minister of Environment and Tourism
Hon. P. O. Serame, MP. (Specially Elected)	- Minister of Finance
Hon. Dr E. G. Dikoloti MP. (Mmathethe-Molapowabojang)	- Minister of Health
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Hon. Dr K. Mzwini, MP. (Specially Elected)	- Minister of Lands and Water Affairs
Hon. L. M. Moagi, MP. (Ramotswa)	- Minister of Minerals and Energy
Hon. M. Kgafela, MP. (Mochudi West)	- Minister of Trade and Industry
Hon. E. M. Molale, MP. (Goodhope-Mabule)	- Minister of Transport and Public Works
Hon. T. M. Rakgare, MP. (Mogoditshane)	- Minister of Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture
Hon. B. S. Gofhamodimo, MP. (Specially Elected)	- Assistant Minister, State President
Hon. S. N. Modukanele, MP. (Lerala -Maunatlala)	- Assistant Minister, Local Government and Rural Development
Hon. T. Monnakgotla, MP. (Kgalagadi North)	- Assistant Minister, Local Government and Rural Development
Hon. M. M. Pule, MP. (Mochudi East)	- Assistant Minister, Local Government and Rural Development
Hon. M. S. Molebatsi, MP. (Mmadinare)	- Assistant Minister, Agriculture
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Hon. B. Manake, MP. (Specially Elected)	- Assistant Minister, Trade and Industry
Hon. H. B. Billy, MP. (Francistown East)	- Assistant Minister, Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture
Hon. A. Lesaso, MP. (Shoshong)	- Assistant Minister, Education and Skills Development

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND THEIR CONSTITUENCIES

Names	Constituency
RULING PARTY (Botswana Democratic Party)	
Hon. L. Kablay, MP. (Government Whip)	Letlhakeng-Lephephe
Hon. Dr U. Dow, MP.	Specially Elected
Hon. P. Majaga, MP.	Nata-Gweta
Hon. M. Balopi, MP.	Gaborone North
Hon. J. S. Brooks, MP.	Kgalagadi South
Hon. C. Greeff, MP.	Gaborone Bonnington South
Hon. T. Letsholo, MP.	Kanye North
Hon. T. F. Leuwe, MP.	Takatokwane
Hon. T. Mangwegape-Healy, MP.	Gaborone Central
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Hon. S. N. Moabi, MP.	Tati West
Hon. P. K. Motaosane, MP.	Thamaga-Kumakwane
Hon. O. Regoeng, MP.	Molepolole North
Hon. J. L. Thiite, MP.	Ghanzi North
OPPOSITION	
(Umbrella for Democratic Change)	
Hon. D. L. Keorapetse, MP. (Leader of the Opposition)	Selebi Phikwe West
Hon. M. G. J. Motsamai, MP. (Opposition Whip)	Ghanzi South
Hon. D. Saleshando, MP.	Maun West
Vacant	Mahalapye East
Hon. Dr K. Gobotswang, MP.	Sefhare-Ramokgonami
Hon. C. K. Hikuama, MP.	Ngami
Hon. K. K. Kapinga, MP	Okavango
Hon. G. Kekgonegile, MP.	Maun East
Hon. T. B. Lucas, MP.	Bobonong
Hon. K. Nkawana, MP.	Selebi Phikwe East
Hon. O. Ramogapi, MP.	Palapye
Hon. Dr N. Tshabang, MP.	Nkange
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Hon. M. I. Moswaane, MP.	Francistown West
(Botswana Patriotic Front)	
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Hon. B. Mathoothe, MP.	Serowe North
Hon. M. Reatile, MP.	Jwaneng-Mabutsane
Hon. O. Kedikilwe, MP.	Serowe West
(Alliance for Progressives)	
Hon. W. B. Mmolotsi, MP.	Francistown South

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Tuesday 30th July, 2024

THE ASSEMBLY met at 11.00 a.m.

(THE SPEAKER in the Chair)

P R A Y E R S

* * * *

SPEAKER'S REMARKS

MR SPEAKER (MR MOATLHODI): Please sit down Honourable Members after that powerful prayer. Please turn off the radio. Order! Order! Can that group disperse?

Good morning Honourable Members! You overwhelmed us with work. Where were you?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR SPEAKER: ...(Laughter!)...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Good morning Honourable Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Go to your seat Honourable Member.

Honourable Members, let us start the business of today with Second Reading of Bills.

**CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC
CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023
(NO. 16 OF 2023)**

Second Reading

(Resumed Debate)

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members!

Honourable Members, the debate on this Bill is resuming. When the House adjourned yesterday, I had just called upon Honourable Minister Lesaso to debate and he has a credit of 10 minutes to himself.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE (MR TSOGWANE): Procedure. Anyway I do not know, but maybe you should advise us; I was almost killed by people yesterday when I told them that they have finished debating that side, only this side remains. Maybe you should help us to know how many are left this side and across the aisle?

MR SPEAKER: Yes His Honour, let me say it now. His Honour the Vice President (VP), what you are saying when I read your mind is that, it is six from the

ruling party. I did not see... all those who have already taken the floor including the Minister of Education Honourable Lesaso are six; Honourable Morwaeng, Honourable Moatlhodi, Honourable Hikuama, Honourable Gobotswang, Honourable Molale.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR MOATLHODI: Yes Honourable Member... my staff did not write properly. Write properly.

I was about to ask my committed Clerks to correct the names, then I will have a good history. When I read the mood, maybe I can just remind your good selves' Honourable Members that these are Private Members' Motions.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Bills.

MR SPEAKER: Bills, Private Members' Motions, Standing Order 31.1(8). That is their sphere, their area, Private Member's Motion. I wanted to say although we agreed on 15, maybe in all fairness, it will be very fair to increase people who debate taking into account how eager they are to stand because these are Private Members' Motions. It is just my thinking as your leader.

MR TSOGWANE: Procedure. Mr Speaker, we will be deviating from our agreements, let us continue as agreed. It is not a private day, they will be completed because it is Bills not Motions. They are similar to Government Bills, they will take the same trend. So it is six. Who said six?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Nine.

MR TSOGWANE: Yes.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further procedure Mr Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: I would like to advise Mr Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure.

MR SPEAKER: Wait Honourable Members, you will advise. I am in possession of statistics now, three Honourable Members have spoken from opposition, and four from the ruling party. It means that is seven, we still have eight more slots, so let us cross the bridge when we shall be at the river.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (MR KEORAPETSE): Procedure. I would like to remind



the Vice President (VP) that the agreement was that it should be 69, if you recall it had a clause. The clause was that when we look at other Bills, we are going to save a lot of time like the ones we took 10 minutes debating last time. So we could increase time for other Bills when considering the magnitude of the issue before us and interest of Honourable Members.

So this Order Paper does not have a single Government Business which is disturbed. So if private...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR KEORAPETSE: Honourable Member?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR KEORAPETSE: No I mean this Order Paper. It is just private business. The Honourable Members are the ones who brought private business, so when they request to debate it, I thought it is good for you to look into it. I do not think we will want to stretch what is filibustering, I do not think so. I think it will be to try to debate Bills, you should be generous Mr Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further procedure briefly.

MR SPEAKER: Yes Honourable Member.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Briefly Mr...

MR SPEAKER: You took the floor from the Honourable Member. I gave him the floor; you are already up.

MR RAMOGAPI: Procedure. Okay, it is okay, the Honourable Member will take the floor.

Briefly, this issue is massive. The gravity of the issue is that we had that clause. You are on point Mr Speaker, it should not be like you are the only one who views it that way. The fundamental issue is that the agreement His Honour the VP is talking about is true, and we inserted a clause like Honourable Keorapetse is saying.

Another thing Honourable Members, in this Honourable House, we need to cooperate with each other. When Government comes and requests that we work from eleven like now, we should agree. If it is said we request this number of speakers, we should agree. It should not be because it will benefit Government, while we have nothing to benefit. No that is not cooperation. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Maun

West is the last one, then we call the Honourable Minister.

MR SALESHANDO: I want to emphasise the last point made by Honourable Ramogapi, let me direct it to the other side of the House, particularly the Leader of the House; His Honour the Vice President. Most of the time if there are Government Bills, we know that we allow you, we agree with you, we extend time, and sometimes we spend nights here. Our request is that there are private Bills from us Honourable Members who are not Honourable Ministers. There was an agreement.

However, we were suggesting that, since they are not numerous, we allow more speakers today at the Speaker's discretion. Even when we reach six, we should move on to the next. You should acknowledge that there are other members in Parliament who may not belong to the ruling party but deserve to have their matters heard. Additionally, please clarify what you mean when you say you do not want the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) to be independent. Let us be accommodating and cooperative; that is currently our only request.

HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT (MR TSOGWANE): Correction. No, the Honourable Members are not familiar with what we discussed at the Business Advisory Committee. Also, if we are thinking of any change, we normally go to the Business Advisory Committee to discuss. I am the one who moved. I was very magnanimous during discussions of how many people can speak. Initially, it was 5:10, then I suggested that we should cooperate and have at least 6:9. So, we have just forfeited one slot for the sake of trying to accommodate other members and being inclusive. You must be appreciative of that. Otherwise it would have been 5:10. I thank you.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (MR LESASO): Thank you Mr Speaker. I also agree that we not change, and that we all agree. We all talked about it there.

Mr Speaker, I want to start by disagreeing with the Member of Parliament for Selebi Phikwe West's Motion which states that our Directorate on Corruption should be independent in form and function, thereby enhancing its efficiency, as he said. What currently happens is, the Director General is appointed through an Act, Section 4.3 that provides for the directorate. The Director General shall not be subject to the direction and control of any person or authority in making decisions or carrying out



investigations under the Act. That is a very clear law which has no influence. There is nothing preventing him from doing his job at the best of his abilities. The Act demonstrates independence in form and function of how he should operate.

Secondly, he speaks of security of tenure. He says the Director General should be given tenure similar to the Secretary of Independence Electoral Commission (IEC) and Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and so on. The law is being amended Mr Speaker. It is being amended to allow that tenure. It will give him proper security. The process is on, it is coming and you will receive it. It will be brought to Parliament. Mr Speaker, some of these things have been done to ensure that DCEC functions as it should. In 2011, Botswana ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention against corruption. It is a globally regarded legal framework for anti-corruption. It is aimed at agencies including Government agencies to fight against corruption. That is proof that indeed Botswana is moving forward on fighting against corruption. There were some reports done addressing Chapter 3 and 4 of the convention, covering criminalisation, international cooperation and so on. Botswana as a signatory, ratified that convention. It was forced to have that kind of review.

The other review done included corruption convention and asset recovery respectively. Those are some of the things which really prove that Botswana is moving forward to afford the help from countries such as these ones, or organisations such as this one in fighting against corruption in Botswana. The recommendations we derived from that are related to legislative change. In 2013, during the process from 2010 to 2016, there was an amendment to the Corruption and Economic Crime Act. The aim has been to enhance the functionality of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) as an organisation responsible for combating crime and corruption in Botswana. Mr Speaker, there are some statistics which prove that the DCEC functions properly. Currently, Botswana is ranked at number three in Africa. The whole of the world, out of 180 countries, Botswana ranks at number 39. In Africa, Botswana is number three compared to other countries in the fight against crime. Transparency International; go read, you will find it there. That is measured through perception of very corrupt. It starts at very corrupt which is zero, up to 100 which is extremely clean. Botswana comes at 39, to extremely clean. That means when compared to other countries...

MR HIKUAMA: Correction. Thank you Honourable Speaker. Let us correct the Minister on what he said, which he knows is not true. During the Minister of Finance's speech, Minister Peggy Serame, herself and former Ministers indicated that corruption is rampant in Botswana, including within Government ministries, and you are a witness to this. The President has also acknowledged that corruption is responsible for undermining Botswana and its procedures. However, to claim that there is no corruption in Botswana contradicts the statements made by the President and the Ministers who are entrusted with the country's funds. They have expressed concerns about Government services being disrupted by corruption. By denying the existence of corruptions in Botswana, you appear to disagree with both the President and the Minister of Finance.

MR LESASO: I do not know if I should respond to what you are saying or ignore it. You are only dreaming. I never said that there is no corruption, I said zero to 100. Zero is extreme corruption, and hundred is clean. But now you want to change my statement with your stories. Perception is some of the things they look at. There are certain indicators which they look at. Do not think that you can put words into my mouth. You are delaying my debate, please calm down.

Among all the countries in Africa, Botswana ranks below Seychelles and Cape Verde. Specifically, it is the third-ranked country after these two. We acknowledge that there has been some progress in our efforts to amend laws. As I mentioned earlier, we aim to revise these laws to further enhance our country's performance. The issues related to independence and the Director's extended assignments are among the aspects we intend to address in the upcoming legislation. The Director will have the flexibility to work for the necessary duration. Additionally, I recall that when we were invited to participate in certain committees, including a committee on Intelligence for oversight, some of us from the opposition declined to join.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: You also refused.

MR LESASO: Yes, I refused when I was that side because the Leader of Opposition instructed me to refuse. Since I am an obedient child...

MR SALESHANDO: On a point of correction. It is not wrong to join another party to try and make ends meet. Honourable Lesaso, the truth of the matter is that you were with us when we sat down in one spirit and



decided that a committee appointed by the President is not a Parliamentary committee. We want Parliamentary Committees that are appointed in Parliament not those that are appointed by Office of the President (OP) and you willingly agreed with that. I still recall that you are one of the people who commented but I do not want to quote you. You were at the forefront when it comes to rubbishing committees.

MR LESASO: Stop imputing improper motives on me, I did not make any loaded statement.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR LESASO: Honourable Member, I was that side when we snubbed that committee. Proposals to amend the law are now being tabled but the organization is functioning.

Laws can be amended here and there, but there is nothing that shows in absolute terms that DCEC does not function. The main issue that he raised is that the Director General's term should be fixed, that it should not be changed. As for these many other issues, maybe functionality of sophistication of investigation can be improved together with issues that affect the quality of investigators. This is one of the things that can be reviewed. However, I do not support some of his proposals.

With those words Mr Speaker, I will stop here.

MR BALOPI (GABORONE NORTH): Thank you Mr Speaker. Good morning to you and the Honourable Members of this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, perhaps I should start by saying we often scratch where it does not itch. I believe the Honourable Leader of Opposition, Honourable Keorapetse tabled this Motion looking at issues that concern a system that he believes to be flawed. The question now is whether that warrants the law to be amended completely because as I was listening to our debate, everyone agrees that indeed corruption is there. Some are saying that as per the Act that formed DCEC, the Director is given powers that are not supposed to be impeded by anyone anyhow. Therefore, he is independent in his thinking, beliefs and actions. The question is whether the Director or those who came before him demonstrated this. Perhaps that is the question that we must focus on Mr Speaker. Regarding their rulings, were their teeth strong enough to bite as they should or perhaps they were the ones who got bitten now and then? Honourable Keorapetse,

I believe we must focus on that because I do not think that the law has to be amended in order for everything to be satisfactory because we all admit that there is corruption. We also agree that the person who should stop it or monitor it has sufficient powers to take serious action.

Mr Speaker, we often do not see pertinent and severe penalties being imposed on people who are utterly involved in corruption. Sometimes you can see a big case where you would expect accused people to end somewhere where they will be exemplary to those who want to commit corruption in future. Eventually, judgments which are delivered by those who handle such cases would not correspond with how the trial progressed or the weight of the case.

Mr Speaker, I believe corruption can come to an end, decrease or be prevented only when severe penalties are imposed, especially looking at familiar cases where people would be implicated in serious corruption cases only for us to bump into them on the streets. This would be so, simply because penalties were not imposed even though millions of public funds went missing. Therefore, I do not support the proposal to amend the law. Let us revise judgements or penalties imposed on people who steal public funds as we have education and health challenges, there is unemployment simply because people who are assigned the responsibility to manage these issues do not have money since the budget is channelled elsewhere.

Therefore, Honourable Keorapetse, I do not believe that proposing to amend the law to give these people powers and increase their term can solve challenges that are there. For example, if one can realise that there are many thieves and then he or she builds a screen wall at his or her home, erects an electric fence, cameras, keep dogs and engage a security guard who then gets used to the dog and how to switch off the cameras, he or she can end up conniving with thieves to break into the house and steal. One would then wonder how the thief broke into his or her house when he or she has many layers of security.

Mr Speaker, if we do not take serious action against people who commit corruption in this country, we are still going to talk about this issue...

MR TSHERE: Clarification. Thank you very much, thank you Honourable Balopi for yielding. I can hear that you are totally against corruption and you want



people who commit corruption to be punished. I do not know if what is currently happening can be classified as corruption; corruption is when you take and leave some funds but nowadays they take everything. What action should be taken against people who steal everything? Where is Rakgare? It was stated that he is to construct 10 stadiums, but there is not even a single one. He was assigned a public project but nothing has been done yet all funds were used and there was even a supplementary budget. What are you saying about those ones? Thank you.

MR BALOPI: Maybe if Rakgare was here he could defend himself but I do know that a stadium was constructed in Kanye, I have seen it and maybe that is why Minister Kwape wanted to raise a point of correction.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...even the one in Tsabong.

MR BALOPI: Oh, there is the list. When they are listed like this Honourable Tshere, do not lead me into temptation when you cannot deliver me from evil...

MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MR MORWAENG): On a point of procedure. Thank you Honourable Speaker. Honourable Balopi said perhaps Rakgare could defend himself because the person who raised this issue raised it in such a way that a person who is listening back at home might assume that stadiums are not constructed for the reason that Honourable Rakgare was corrupt even though he was not. I just wanted to clarify that as the Honourable Member was saying maybe the Honourable Minister has to clarify why the stadiums were not constructed. He is the one who could answer that but I want Botswana to know that Honourable Rakgare is not connected to any corruption case. I just wanted to clarify that ...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR MORWAENG: We know you, we have had a relationship with you and we know you.

MR TSHERE: Procedure. Mr Speaker, no, let us not involve Honourable Rakgare, I was not talking about Honourable Rakgare as a person, I withdraw Rakgare. What I am trying to say Honourable Balopi is that, that is not the corruption you are talking about where they take part of the funds, I mean where they take everything. For example, where are the Moshupa and Kanye hospitals? 10 years later there is still nothing but Parliament has

provided funds, then other funds were provided and we bought equipment and it is rotting there, and that is the corruption we are talking about. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR BALOPI: My friend, Honourable Tshere, today I do not know... you said Moshupa Hospital has not been constructed but I saw it being constructed. If I had time I would ask him what he meant by that? What I am trying to say Mr Speaker is that, I believe that it is not necessary to amend the law, with due respect. Because regardless of whether we amend the law or not, corruption ... Honourable Lesaso just said that, 56 out of 100 people in Botswana that we know, our Botswana, it is an embarrassment that we are almost half of what we are supposed to be. The Botswana we knew in the past Mr Speaker, in Botswana ...

MR NKAWANA: Clarification. Thank you Mr Speaker. Let me ask the Honourable Member of Parliament on the floor, Honourable Balopi are you saying this law should not be amended whereas there are problems, what should be changed, people? Do people have to be fired or replaced for things to be okay if the law is not amended?

MR BALOPI: No, what I am trying to say Mr Speaker in conclusion is that, I believe that there are law which exist and are implemented. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Act has just been read here for us Honourable Skeem and it states that the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) is independent. DCEC Director General has been given the powers to not let anyone influence him on anything that is not good. So the question I am trying to raise is that, if we have a law like that, even if you can give him a secure tenure of office Honourable Keorapetse, and then give him powers that exceeds the ones he already has, does that mean it will be possible for corruption to be dealt with properly, just the way things are at the moment? Then when the DCEC Director General is appointed, he is not able to work whereas he has a responsibility according to the law. The issue is that there is corruption and we have to find a way to prevent it from happening. The law is there but there are people who violate this law. My issue is, what kind of action is taken against those people when they violate the law and how do they hinder the independence of the Director General of DCEC's thoughts and ideas. What actions do we take for those people who indicate that he has no powers and what do we think about them. I think this is what I am trying to say Honourable Skeem.



So Mr Speaker, I believe we have to come up with another way of dealing with corruption ...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Balopi, really who is this Ski you are talking about? We have a new Member here called Ski, who is this?

MR BALOPI: Skeem! Skeem! My close friend! Skeem! That is our lingo when we are in some places. So let me say...

MR SPEAKER: Okay.

DR DOW: Procedure. Thank you Mr Speaker. Whether someone is calling Honourable Balopi Ski or Skeem, you should not find fault in that Mr Speaker because in this House you address Honourable Members as, "my child, my beautiful child, my uncle's child, my aunt's child." Really, this language whereby Honourable Members are addressed in a way that will make the people that report on the Hansard not know what to write, you are the one who is encouraging that Honourable Speaker. Honourable Members are going to address others as my sister's child, my sibling, my aunt and other names, so skeem is just okay Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you my aunt.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Laughter!)...

MR BALOPI: Thank you mother to ... (inaudible)... Mr Speaker, let me conclude by saying I believe that we cannot amend the law but we can change the implementation. So I yield to Honourable Mole Mole to comment.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (MR MOLEBATSI): Clarification. Thank you Honourable Balopi. I agree with you that, sometimes all we need is implementation capacity of an existing law than to change the law, including ...

MR SPEAKER: Your time is up!

DR DOW (SPECIALLY ELECTED): Thank you Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to debate this very important Bill, Corruption and Economic Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 16 of 2023). Mr Speaker, we are debating the general principles of this Bill, I will speak Setswana. We have not yet addressed Clauses, we are still focusing on the core of this Bill. Let me tell the people listening at home that this Bill states that we should give this organisation more powers. It states that this organisation should be independent. The

main issue is that, let this organisation be independent so that when you are in Leshibitse for example and you are cooking, then you realise that your maize meal is not enough, you can say, but at Parliament they are addressing laws that are trying to protect me, that is the main issue. I do not know of anyone in this House who can say they do not wish that we can have the DCEC that when a Government employee is listening, he or she can be elated that, but today Honourable Members are implementing a law that ensures that when I do my job, I will be free since I know that this organisation is independent and there is no one who can tell them what to do.

Honourable Members, when you consider all the ideas that we have before this Parliament at the moment and you realise that we are left with just six weeks, you will realise these are a lot of different ideas. The last thing to do when we leave this place is to create an independent and trustworthy organisation for Botswana. You will realise that there was a Bill by Honourable Saleshando that stated that when we leave this place, we must have a law that can ensure that Botswana trust the IEC. There was another Bill by Honourable Kekgonegile which stated that when we leave this place in six weeks, we should have a law that will clarify what the High Court is saying about dual citizenship. You realise that when you have limited time to execute all these ideas, you have to leave behind a legacy that people will remember you with. If you compare these ideas that are before us with yours from Domkrag (Botswana Democratic Party), you will realise they are all about protecting the people. There is a Bill that states that His Excellency the President's widow and her children including the ones he may have in future, should keep on benefitting from the Government. That is the one you have put before us ...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Applause!)...

DR DOW: That is not all, it does not end there, we want you to recall because when we adjourned in the last Parliament meeting at 12, you said when the Vice President (VP) and his family are at his home, they should continue benefitting from the Government. So someone who is trying to prepare maize meal at Leshibitse is wondering why the people he/she voted for thinking will implement laws which will be their legacy. They cannot at any point reject laws which seek to protect. Whilst pondering on that, you wonder what happened to the Constitution Bill, the response you get is we are going to bring it again. They advocate for



the President's powers to be increased so that he can interfere with Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), Attorney General and all these other organisations.

So we are saying the main proposal (Bill) before you Batswana...in fact whilst on this point let me implore Motswana listening back home to stand, clap hands and repeat after me, "Tymon Katlholo is a hero, Tymon Katlholo is a hero." Please Motswana say that, because he has sacrificed himself. In fact, what happened is an example, if it was necessary, to show that DCEC has no powers or backbone because another organisation which has powers managed to tie it down. Attorney General under Honourable Shamukuni, interfered as much as they wanted. Honourable Kagiso Mmusi also interfered, he did not advise police officers to step back because they are contravening with the law.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

DR DOW: Yes, he also interfered. Minister of Finance, Honourable Serame did not reprimand to say they are causing problems because she now had to sign cheques to pay for their mistake of contravening with the law. Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) interfered, those who enjoyed the process laughed.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

DR DOW: Honourable Morwaeng said I am not going to interfere, I will firmly stand with DIS.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

DR DOW: Yes, he said he will take the side of DIS. The two institutions clashed and there is no one who advocated for this institution, that it is being interfered with. Only one person sacrificed himself in order to protect you, yet Batswana voted for men and women to protect them. It took one person who is not even a Member of Parliament to say no.

In other countries there could have been a commission of enquiry as we speak to establish as to what happened, how did it come to pass that one institution was able to actually cripple another which is said to be independent. I have been listening to Honourable Balopi saying that is not lawful...anyways let me not talk about Honourable Balopi and talk about those members who said corruption rate is low. How do we know it is low when the Director is under pressure? How do we know, it is the same as saying the Commissioner of Police is

independent yet can be arrested in broad daylight then acquitted the following day? In which country, where is the independence? Our problem is...let me quickly mention this point that in all honesty if DCEC was independent, maybe those accused of embezzlement of National Petroleum Fund (NPF) could be in jail. If it was independent, maybe one comedian could not have been engaged with a lot of money that was not budgeted for just so that he can spend it next door. A lot of things could not have happened, perhaps Tautona Lodge could not have been purchased if DCEC is independent.

So, when measuring independence, we should know we are measuring independence of an institution for which the officers who could be spearheading investigations have fear. Honourable Members, let us be honest, as long as the process is the same, we cannot say DCEC is independent, you witnessed what happened between them and DIS. The only organisation that is currently independent in Botswana is DIS. By the mere fact of mentioning the name "DIS" Batswana are afraid and shaking on my behalf that I might be arrested. They fear it so much that they only whisper the name. It is the only independent organisation, maybe it is the one ruling.

There is no rule of law in Botswana, there is rule of one man, President Masisi. It is not his fault, it is the fault of his advisors, it is the fault of the laws we have in place. It is also the fault of the cowardice of those working with him by not advising him to say, Your Excellency appoint the commission of enquiry so that we can establish how come DCEC was restricted. Your Excellency appoint a commission to investigate why Mr Makgophe was arrested. Your Excellency appoint a commission to investigate why the former Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Secretary was dismissed, focus on those cases.

The truth is BDP is like a child who is being breastfed and if that child refuses to wean, you apply hot pepper on the breast.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!)...

DR DOW: It is now time for Batswana to apply hot pepper because BDP is refusing to wean off. It has now eaten off the entire tit and is now drinking everything.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!)...

DR DOW: So, with those few words Mr Speaker, I support this Bill. Thank you.



MR SPEAKER: Your time is up. Honourable Minister Monnakgotla, you have been standing for too long.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (MS MONNAKGOTLA): Thank you Mr Speaker. I should also comment Mr Speaker and I would like to first say I do not support this Bill, reason being DCEC is independent and is operating efficiently with no external interference. This same Parliament passed a law on how it can be regulated.

Mr Speaker, I now want to properly talk about DCEC more especially corruption because it is cancer. When I talk about cancer, I am talking about something which is deadly. In fact, if you talk about corruption, it is something which can impede on economic growth. That is why I want to speak clearly so that Batswana can hear. I want Motswana at Zutshwa, Ukhwi, Ncaang, Hukuntsi, Lokgwabe and Kang to hear, much as DCEC made a public outreach at Kgalagadi North constituency to educate them about corruption. Now is the time to talk about it in detail. That is why I support it because there is no external interference.

Mr Speaker, officers of this organisation are efficient, they can even investigate serious corruption cases involving high profile people. Yesterday I heard Honourable Keorapetse allude that high profile people are never investigated. They are investigated, he even said...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: ...high profile people are never investigated. They are investigated...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: No, correction.

MR SPEAKER: Correction called for. Honourable Leader of the Opposition (LOO).

MR KEORAPETSE: Point of correction. Correction is that I never said rich people are not investigated Honourable Monnakgotla. I said for the past 30 years DCEC has been operating, conviction rate on high profile corruption cases involving millions is very low. That is what I said, and it is a fact, conviction rate is low.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Mr Speaker, if you say corruption that involves high profile people and foreigners, what do you mean by high profile people?

At the same time, you are saying they should not be imprisoned? Also saying... we were listening; Batswana heard. If he wants to correct he can. Mr Speaker...

MR KEORAPETSE: Procedure Mr Speaker. It will definitely be out of procedure for her to continue saying what I did not say. Mr Speaker, I did not say that. I am talking about the conviction rate. I listen to myself when I speak. I worked at Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), and I know what I am talking about when I say conviction is very low. This is documented. Conviction rate in high profile cases is low; even though those people are investigated by DCEC. It investigates them every day; there are many cases but they are never imprisoned. That is my issue.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, your colleague is not very happy about the way you quote him. Please, rephrase your statement if possible and quote him verbatim. Please, go ahead Honourable Minister.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member talked about tenders yesterday that they are not managed correctly. I got shocked and wondered why Honourable Members that side, when only one of them is a Member of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and the rest are not, can talk about tenders. It is a disgrace, they are not telling Batswana the truth and they are...

HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT (MR TSOGWANE): My elucidation Honourable Monnakgotla is that you never said you are quoting someone word for word, you are quoting someone the way you interpret what they said. I do not see anything wrong with that. The other thing is, did you hear anyone speaking about politicians? We have only heard high profile people being mentioned, but if politicians can be mentioned, it would only be Members of Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). Have you heard anyone mentioning politicians because if that could be done, it would be said that it is politically motivated? Do you not think that this issue of "political motivation" encourages corruption whereby politicians think they are privileged animals that when they are questioned especially Opposition Members, they say it is politically motivated? Thank you.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: You are on track your Honour the Vice President. That is what we are experiencing. There is only one Member of Opposition at PAC which is Honourable Mmolotsi. We were once called for a



certain committee and every time they use politics as an excuse. Let us assess ourselves to find out what the problem is. PAC is very important. It is best you keep quiet if you are aware that tenders are stolen but not being part of the committee. What are you doing in Parliament? You are not telling Batswana the truth. Such things Mr Speaker, I do not support corruption because I am also a business woman even though I am in Parliament. As Members of Parliament, we should do something, and not complain about water tenders etc. while not being Members of PAC. You are corrupt.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Mr Speaker, that is not good. At times when we bring things...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction.

MR SPEAKER: Correction Honourable Minister.

MR HIKUAMA: Let us correct Honourable Monnakgotla for a better debate. It seems like she is not listening but we understand that it is caused by her introduction, she is known for her introduction of greeting Zutshwa constituents and Speakers and she did not do that this time around. No one refused to be part of PAC, Members of Opposition that were in PAC were chased by Honourable Healy's Motion. As Batswana are very attentive, they removed all the people that were part of the group that removed people that represented them from PAC, they removed Honourable Monnakgotla and Honourable Healy; who supported this Motion. Batswana are aware of what is happening around the country, please do not lie to them. Parliamentary committees were ruined by BDP Members. The Speaker had indicated that since he got to Parliament, certain committees had been doing exceptionally well; praising them in this very Parliament. This will make you clash with voters, it is proof that corruption in Botswana is very high...

MR SPEAKER: I have my microphone on because you are digressing a lot.

MR HIKUAMA: ... they chased us while trying to prevent corruption by providing the highest level of oversight. You are also a witness that we were providing oversight of the highest level. What Honourable Monnakgotla is saying is not true.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Mr Speaker, there is no correction here. Mr Speaker, when people are not well

mentally, you should send them outside. We are sent here by people. When he talks about correction...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: That is why I said corruption is cancer...

MR SPEAKER: Procedure, please wait and let us hear the procedure.

DR GOBOTSWANG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Member, I do not understand how Bulela Ditswe is treating you. Mr Speaker, I am requesting the Honourable Member to withdraw her statement or verify that there is someone here in Parliament that is not stable mentally and must be thrown out. If she does not do that, I will tell her who it is because I know someone. She should mention who she is referring to here in Parliament. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Mr Speaker, Batswana are aware that Opposition Members are not stable. Just listen to them; continue listening to them.

MR RAMOGAPI: Point of order Mr Speaker. No, Honourable Monnakgotla, you are my friend, refrain from those issues. The Standing Order is clear that we must respect each other, what you are saying as a woman is not right and Zutshwa constituents are listening. Please withdraw and never repeat it.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Mr Speaker, most countries envy Botswana. That is what is evident when we travel around the world, together with Honourable Keorapetse...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure Mr Speaker.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: ... and they listen.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Please wait Minister. I thought you considered what your colleague was saying; Honourable Member for Palapye. He complained that you have addressed them the wrong way and I thought you were going to reconsider your statement that they are not well mentally or something like that. I am pleading with you to listen to him and correct your statement. He said it respectfully.

MS MONNAKGOTLA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I withdraw. The Opposition Members should assist us and join Parliament committees so that together we can assess suspicious tenders to deter and minimise



corruption. Our core business in Parliament is to represent Batswana.

Mr Speaker, I can confirm that many countries envy Botswana. When it comes to least corrupt countries, Botswana is one of them. This is simply because we abide by the rule of law. You will also note that institutions like Ombudsman and Auditor General help Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) to reduce the rate of corruption. Botswana hates corruption so these institutions come up with strategies that can be used to fight it. That is why we carry out investigations to minimise corruption rate and Government also reinforces many regulations to deter corruption.

Mr Speaker, according to Transparency International 2023 Corruption Index, Botswana is number three. Honourable Lesaso mentioned that Botswana is one of the least corrupt nations. These institutions have also proved that indeed they are effective. For that reason, I commend them. The same goes for the Director General of DCEC, not to mention that his conditions of service are governed by our regulations. DCEC has been successful in terms of carrying out investigations. You will note that DCEC is empowered. They have powers to investigate cases as per our regulations as you can see that they usually investigate Former Ministers and other high profile people. It is clear that they are not afraid to investigate high profile people, the more reason why I believe DCEC is empowered. DCEC has powers and for this reason, I do not support the Bill presented by Honourable Keorapetse. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY (GABORONE CENTRAL): Thank you Mr Speaker and good morning to yourself and Honourable colleagues as well as staff.

Mr Speaker, I am also standing to contribute on Corruption and Economic Crime (Amendment) Bill. Perhaps I should start by rushing through some of the points that talked about perception on corruption and the rate of corruption. According to Honourable Monnakgotla Mr Speaker, numbers from Transparency International, Transparency International Perception Index rates countries from zero to 100. Zero denotes the most corrupt country while 100 denotes a very clean country as far as corruption rate is concerned. So they indicated that Botswana is number 39 out of 180 countries. So in terms of comparison of regional scores in Sub-Saharan Africa, many countries range around 33 while Botswana is number 59 in Sub-Saharan Africa,

Seychelles and Cape Verde are the only countries which performed better than us. This means Botswana follows Seychelles in Southern Africa which also means we are number three in Africa. One may ask, is it enough for Botswana to scoop number three in Africa and number 39 in the world? No, it is not enough, we have to do as much as we can to put an end to corruption because we all know that it may result in shortage of medicines in hospitals, poor Government structures or that do not meet required standard, shortage of resources in schools, hospitals and so on. Mr Speaker, it is important for us to fight corruption by every means possible. How or what can be used to fight corruption? Honourable Keorapetse gave examples, one of them is the operational independence of the DCEC. One may ask, is DCEC independent? Honourable Members have already given legal quotations from the Corruption and Economic Crime Act which birthed DCEC to depict its independence. Some will say is that enough? Perhaps it is not and perhaps this issue should be looked at in more depth. Honourable Lesaso already indicated that they are still reviewing the Corruption and Economic Crime Act to improve so that we may deal with these issues.

Honourable Keorapetse also talked about sophistication of the crimes and its capacity to investigate. Yes, we agree that it is also not enough, more needs to be done to capacitate the officers to enable them to successfully deal with the increased sophistication of corruption. We must avoid a situation where we are taking the easy way out by having laws like Proceeds and Instruments against Crime Act (PICA) as they may confiscate goods from people who are declared innocent by courts simply because they suspect that they are corrupt but without it being proven in a court of law. So, that is the easy way out, what we need to do is capacitate the investigators so that they can do it beyond reasonable doubt. I agree with this point so that it can enhance the conviction rates. I agree with that.

The mover also talked about an issue of great concern to many Batswana that it seems like high profile people always go scot free whenever it comes to investigations. However, the situation has been promising under President Dr Masisi's Government, as we saw people...

HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT (MR TSOGWANE): Clarification. You introduced your debate very well. However, you were supposed to conclude the first point before you proceed with the next one. Do you think it is necessary to come up with this



Bill and board to make people effective and efficient at work?

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Thank you incoming President.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!)

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: No, it does not need a law. Like I said Your Honour, it needs...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Healy, what is your statement?

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: I was thanking the incoming President for what he said Mr Speaker. My conclusion is...

MR SPEAKER: I missed what you said, I only heard 'incoming.'

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Yes sir, as you know...

MR SPEAKER: No, you are required to use appropriate words in the House.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Yes sir. You already know that the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana states that the Vice President automatically succeeds the President. So, in any vacancy in that office, he is the incoming President. So, he is just a heartbeat away from the presidency. That is what I said.

In conclusion, there is no need to amend the law but there is need for more resources and more training for the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) to be strengthened.

One of the ways that we can use before we go on to make laws is oversight committees. It is on record that Members of the Opposition are in committees which travel for international trips. They have rejected local trips, it is on record. I heard Honourable Hikuama trying to defend it. It is on record.

DR DOW: Correction. Mr Speaker, let me correct in case Batswana would believe that everyone this side is a member of travelling committees. I am not a member of any travelling committee since Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) removed me. Moreover, when Honourable Talita Monnakgotla moved from backbench, she did so with two women committees that could have remained at backbench. So that is the correction. She refused to share them with Beauty Manake.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further correction.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Who are you correcting; Honourable Dow?

MR HIKUAMA: Correction. Let me correct Healy, it seems he is in trouble.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR SPEAKER: Let me hear what you are saying.

MR HIKUAMA: Do not allow yourself to be controlled by Vice President (VP).

MR SPEAKER: No! No! No! I am giving you a chance, I am listening to you.

MR HIKUAMA: Admonish him. He should not speak while you are speaking.

MR SPEAKER: He is not on the floor.

MR HIKUAMA: He is talking.

MR SPEAKER: No, he is hackling you. To me it is not a problem.

MR HIKUAMA: Oh, so hackling is not a problem?

MR SPEAKER: No, he is just hackling.

MR HIKUAMA: Is that not a problem?

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Hikuama, I have given you a chance to talk. If I realise his hackling is unnecessary, I will get him to be quiet.

MR HIKUAMA: Okay, you are hackling Mr VP, please stop hackling. Stop hackling the incoming President according to Mr Healy.

Mr Speaker, we are amending this for Batswana and you should also correct Honourable Members who are not telling the truth. There is no one who became a member of committees which travel abroad who was not removed from them. I am one of the members of committees which travel abroad but it is one that I was not removed from. All the local committees that I was a member of, we have been removed from them including their groups but the other ones we were not.

We are still members of the committees we chose when we got to Parliament. We are not members of new ones. The ones they removed us from; a crusade led by Honourable Healy and VP of undermining and



suspecting what they were praising these committees for that they are effective. They did not want effective committees. They wanted the ones that are controlled by BDP members which are without oversight which is the gateway to corruption. They do not provide the oversight needed to fight corruption in this country. Batswana must be made aware of this so that they understand what transpired. That is the correction I am making.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Mr Speaker, can I get the chance to debate?

MR SPEAKER: I have frozen your time Honourable Healy.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR TSHERE: Procedure. Thank you Mr Speaker. You know, this issue of committees keeps cropping up often. It is wasting Parliament time. I think as it is being discussed, you could come up with an understanding that we will carry forward so that everytime someone raises it, then we will recall how these committees were dissolved by Healy. Even right now I have a Public Accounts Committee (PAC) report, all of them are BDP members except Honourable Mmolotsi. It is a BDP committee being oversight on the BDP Cabinet. So we should not keep repeating this matter since it is wasting Parliament time. Batswana are already aware of it. Just finalise it here. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members, I just left you alone since you are adults thinking that you will restrain yourselves. So I am surprised that this old matter is still resurfacing. Like you are saying Honourable Member for Mahalapye West, Honourable Member for Gaborone Central executed Standing Order 98.1 to have the existing committees dissolved in order to establish new ones. Indeed my boss, the substantive Speaker of this House established new committees. When he was supposed to announce them, on medical grounds, he was away. Naturally according to our Standing Orders, when he was away, I took over and announced the committees in Parliament. After announcing with the hope that like the Speaker had announced, committees will be attended but the situation remained as it is.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Then they refused.

MR SPEAKER: The rest is history, there is no need to

debate because you know what transpired. Honourable Healy, no issue on committees should arise because we are not discussing committees.

MR TSOGWANE: Procedure. You spoke the truth except for the fact that the slots which Opposition members could have filled are still vacant. The slots are still vacant. If we were selfish or we had taken over committees, we could have filled those slots. They are still vacant. They have long been asked to submit the names, up to today. Maybe they will submit before we go for elections but the slots are still vacant. Thank you.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Thank you Mr Speaker. I was not aware that when I speak about Opposition members, that includes Honourable Dow. I know that she came here through BDP. So what she was saying is news to me.

I was still on the issue of competition of high profile individuals. It is on record that the Former Permanent Secretary to the President has been convicted on corruption crimes. So, Honourable Keorapetse, I believe this is a start. We will see where it ends.

DR DOW: Correction. Mr Speaker, my correction is simple. It is not true what Honourable Healy is saying that he is not aware that I am an Opposition member. It is either he does not attend Parliament or he is hard of hearing. If he is not aware, tell him that I am no longer with him. He is saying he knew that I am with him. I am not with you Honourable Healy.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: I still maintain that I know that you came here under the BDP ticket.

Mr Speaker, just in closing, I was still talking about the types of corruption that there are instances where Government departments take long to process tenders. For example, maybe a tender at Botswana Defence Force (BDF) is won by one they did not want and when they are supposed to award, they keep delaying. It progresses on to months without award. That is an example of corruption. Nowadays we hear reports of payment delays, like the challenge we have with Government Accounting and Budgeting System (GABS) currently. A person will ask you for something in order to expedite your payment. So those are corruption issues which collapse businesses of Batswana.

Earlier Honourable Dow cited some examples that they could have been prevented if they were serious. I recall that in 2014, at Ministry of Education, there was



something called Target 20 000, even now we are yet to see the results.

There was once a flight school called International Aviation Academy from which the students did not graduate but state funds were used. So, to me, that is an example of corruption. We must face these issues head-on. There is also political corruption as well where you find voters being bought with money or some resources so they move in a certain way.

Lastly, Honourable Keorapetse you are aware that in 2014, Mr Gomolemo Motswaledi passed on. The Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) did a fund raising telling Batswana that, they should donate money to investigate the issue. Currently, not a single Motswana has seen that report but their money was taken. I think these are examples of corruption that we need to face head-on. We should fear corruption. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR RAMOGAPI (PALAPYE): Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, let me commence the debate with what is being said by the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) members. They were saying that the index indicates that corruption cases are low in Botswana. Botswana is number three. Honourable Members, corruption is very high in Botswana. The reason why it looks like corruption is low in Botswana is because it has been legalised. It is clearly institutionalised.

Mr Speaker, let me tell you, there is corruption which is well known in Botswana, there is something called direct award. This direct award is corruption on its own which is in the institution. Tomorrow when there is COVID, the t-shirts tender at the Office of the President (OP) would be awarded to a friend, for example. Tomorrow the equipment tender there in OP will also be awarded to someone, as an example. All the things that were happening during COVID Mr Speaker, Transparency International does not examine these things and label them as corruption because it is said the tenders are awarded to people legally. Pay attention to it. So you should stop saying corruption is low because Transparency International says it is low, no. Corruption is rife, it is legalised.

MR KEORAPETSE: On a point of elucidation. Honourable Ramogapi, when talking about Transparency International, do you notice that when they release these results, the Botswana Chapter Office is moribund, it is not there?

MR RAMOGAPI: You are on point. Another example; a mere mask that we buy for P2, was sold at P200 each during COVID. Reports have come showing that this is wrong but it is not captured because corruption in Botswana is legalised. It is a stake where we all cut a piece. We do as we please.

Mr Speaker, I think that BDP or Batswana forget that ...

MR MORWAENG: On a point of procedure. The Honourable Member was explaining that they gave themselves a portion, and corruption is legalised. You did not clarify that you legalised it; he should explain how his party is benefitting from corruption. It should be clear who he refers to as benefitting from corruption. Does he mean himself only or and others, because we will think that he is getting others in trouble?

MR SPEAKER: Who are you benefiting with Honourable Member?

MR RAMOGAPI: Thank you Mr Speaker. It is those who are allocating tenders through direct award. Afro Barometer says, look at the Office of the President as number one in corruption. So you should read, when you talk to me, you should know you will have a problem.

Mr Speaker, when this Corruption Act starts, Batswana should remember that a lot of corruption was done by this Government. What revealed things is, there was a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) called Joseph Letsholo, the late Joseph Letsholo. He had a car accident, and he was found in possession of a lot of money. After a lot of money was found in that car, the existing report...

MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MR MORWAENG): On a point of order. Mr Speaker, what the Honourable Member is saying is, he is linking corruption with Government. The Honourable Member should realise that if you are a public officer, then you become corrupt on your own accord, if you were involved in corruption Honourable Ramogapi, do not say the corruption was done by Government because, we are combating this corruption.

Secondly Mr Speaker, when he clarifies the issue regarding Mr Letsholo, he should clarify it properly. Most of us were not there but it looks like he knows a lot about it. He should clarify it to us so people can know that the current Administration is fighting corruption. I do not wish for the Honourable Member to be distracted by someone who is corrupt, then it is said it was done



by Government, or if Honourable Ramogapi can be corrupt, then it is said Honourable Members are corrupt while it is only Honourable Ramogapi. So, my point of order is, when someone is corrupt, it should not be that it was Government. An individual is not Government. This Government, is fighting corruption. That is why there are many agencies that were established by this Government. Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) was established by Government, to combat corruption.

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: On a point of procedure. Thank you Mr Speaker. I was listening to Honourable Ramogapi trying to clarify his point here. So I hear him wanting involve the late Mr Joseph Letsholo in his issues. He says he was found in his car in possession of a lot of money, something which is not true. Unless Honourable Ramogapi can bring us that evidence Mr Speaker, I ask that he withdraws. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Ramogapi, did you listen to your colleague?

MR RAMOGAPI: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, do not waste your time on people who do not read. When he says that, refer him to go and read Charles Good Report. Go and see how DCEC was established and why.

MR SPEAKER: Convince him.

MR RAMOGAPI: I am teaching him, there is a report on how the DCEC was established, it shows clearly that it was created because of that. I am educating him.

Mr Speaker, free education, read Kenneth Good's report...

MR MANGWEGAPE-HEALY: Procedure. Mr Speaker, I was very clear on what I was asking, which is that Honourable Ramogapi should provide evidence that Honourable Letsholo was found in possession of a lot of cash. If you cannot provide this evidence, withdraw your remarks and stop telling me about Kenneth Good. I want him to bring that evidence. That is what I am asking for. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! The issue you are talking about Honourable Member for Palapye is very sensational. Therefore, in all fairness, do not talk about Honourable Joseph Letsholo, may his soul rest in peace, a citizen of this country whose family is still mourning,

and Batswana are shocked by. Can you produce evidence that can prove that Honourable Healy will leave you when you speak? Not necessarily now, now I would pray you divorce yourself from the Mr Letsholo issue then continue with our debate, and then either this afternoon or tomorrow morning, bring the evidence please.

MR MORWAENG: On a further point of procedure with regards to Honourable Healy; I only plead Honourable Ramogapi. What we would be doing in this House, is to ensure that as Honourable Letsholo rests, as you said Mr Speaker...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR MORWAENG: No, I am not patronizing, I am saying on a further point of procedure. I was saying Honourable Ramogapi, I do not know what these people did to you...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, I have ruled on that issue. Take your floor Honourable Ramogapi, please be advised.

MR RAMOGAPI: Mr Speaker, we have a problem of people who do not read in our Parliament, sometimes just direct them to the library. Thank you Mr Speaker. Let me quickly proceed.

Mr Speaker, with regards to our current debate on corruption, there are some cases which ended up at the High Court. Some are in South Africa, those who were with the late... but let me not get into that and quickly address our issues.

MR NKAWANA: Elucidation. Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Honourable Ramogapi. Sometimes we are tempted to say 'Domkrag this' or 'Domkrag that.' Most of the issues, if you recall from your constituency, revolved around Ministers allocating plots to themselves in Mogoditshane. There were even court cases, suggesting corruption was involved. Do you remember the names of those Ministers who were leading your Government? Thank you.

MR RAMOGAPI: They are leading me to say, Honourable Members, that corruption, which once existed, resulted in the resignation of the former Vice President. Some of the former Ministers, who have since passed away, also resigned. Although there were many, I would rather not name them because some of us in Parliament are their children. They resigned due



to accusations of corruption and were asked to leave. However, when we attempt to remind them of this, they refuse to listen. It was even suggested that the National Development Bank (NDB) had been drained. These are the issues we aim to avoid.

Honourable Members, Honourable Keorapetse's idea is straightforward. If I were to give an example and say that the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) should have autonomy, then the appointment of the Director General should include security of tenure. They should know that they are employed for life without fear of being removed from their position as time goes on. Just as it has happened before, when we recommended someone for the job, they changed and found someone else. In short, what Honourable Keorapetse is saying is that when the position needs to be filled, it should not be kept a secret. It should be direct, we know that when there is a vacancy, there should be an advert which states 'we want the Director General,' and then there should be a select committee which reviews the candidates. Then should follow recommendations made to the President after successful interviews. There should be a transparency mechanism to show us how these things are done. However, currently, there is no advert, no any applications, there is no selection committee and we cannot operate that way Honourable Members. We need to ask ourselves right now: How come, ever since the establishment of the DCEC, we have never seen any Minister on trial? Do we expect to believe that all Ministers are not corrupt? Batswana have realised that a fox was looking after the sheep, yet we want to claim that everyone is good. We want the DCEC to be able to investigate Ministers, find them guilty, arrest them, and take them to trial. That is what we want Mr Speaker.

As I mentioned earlier, investigations are direct and indicate that corruption is rampant at the Office of the President. That is why we are calling for an amendment to this long-standing law. We should ensure that Board Members are responsible for hiring these individuals. Consider this: currently, these people are employed by DPSM. When they attempt to investigate a case, they are transferred out of fear that they might uncover secrets. Such practices are unacceptable.

MR SPEAKER: Your time is up!

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DR KWAPE): Thank you Mr Speaker. I stand to comment on Honourable Keorapetse's Bill.

Let me begin by stating that in our country's procedures, particularly within this House, we believe that all perspectives in a gathering add value and are welcome. What we unanimously agree upon Mr Speaker, is that corruption exists, there is no denying it. Furthermore, no one disputes that corruption, much like cancer attacking the body, poses a serious threat. The question is, what is being done to fight against corruption? Is there something we are doing as a country? When we compare ourselves to other countries, where do we stand regarding corruption? Honourable Ramogapi has provided examples that he believes are related to corruption. He also answered himself, stating that if such incidents occur, there are procedures that can be followed to combat corruption. For instance, he gave the example that Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC)... Government that is concerned about corruption saw it appropriate to put certain measures in place to prevent these things from happening. Honourable Members highlighted that they were chased out of parliamentary.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Inaudible)...

DR KWAPE: Yes, the Honourable Members said they were kicked out of committees. I recall that Honourable Healy said our numbers in Parliament demonstrate representation of different parties. He said it would be shocking that 38 out of ...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Let us hear the correction Leader of the Opposition.

MR KEORAPETSE: The correction is this Mr Speaker, I wonder where these numbers confuse Honourable Kwaape. Members of the ruling party eligible to serving in committees of Parliament who are not Ministers are currently 14 whereas we are 20 this side. He is not telling the truth when he says they are many...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure...

MR KEORAPETSE: The correct thing is that, if the number of backbench in terms of Members eligible to serving committees is smaller than that of opposition, then it cannot be alleged that they are many to a point that backbenchers would be members of seven, eight, nine, or ten committees whereas members this side would have two or three committees. So, that is the correction, what you are saying is not true. Those of you who are eligible to serve in committees are not many



as compared to members of the opposition. That is the correction.

DR KWAPE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you for that thought Honourable Keorapetse. To err is human so you should have waited for me to err so that you can raise your perfect opinion. You should have allowed me to make a mistake. When you look at the statistics which the Honourable Members ignore, you will notice that they are very selective. If the ratings can say Batswana are an unhappy nation, people like Hikuama ululate louder women. When ratings show that Botswana is number 39 out of 180 countries, they say statistics are not accurate. Honourable Ramogapi would stubbornly say those numbers are cooked. The last time I checked, Honourable Ramogapi said he studied law at Gaborone Universal College (GUC) and I did not know that he studied statistics. Therefore, I do not rate his comment on the statistics which have been reviewed by statisticians. Let me give you extra statistics Ramogapi, Botswana is the third country in Africa with the least corruption. One Honourable Member told you that when Morwaeng... I will cite Morwaeng as an example since he is on my side of the aisle; if and when Morwaeng is found guilty of something, it is not the Government that is guilty but Morwaeng, and the fact that he is found guilty shows that the Government is working and it is not biased.

I hear Honourable Keorapetse's Motion and it reminds me of Honourable Saleshando's Electoral Act Motion. I told him that his Motion is not well prepared and I will tell you why I say it is not well prepared. His main interest is that DCEC director should have security of tenure and a board. When I look at the examples that you have been giving Honourable Members, the problem is that evidence which was presented before court was inadequate, hence why Mr Katlholo won the case. Therefore, this requires officers to do their job so that corruption suspicions can be proven before court and some people can be taken to prison as you wish. Honourable Ramogapi said there is no former Minister who has ever been taken to court.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

DR KWAPE: You said that you read so go and read and when you do that, you will see that one of them once went to prison.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Murmurs)...

DR KWAPE: Go and read, do not entertain...

MR HIKUAMA: Correction. Ah! Sometimes I fail to understand if we really listen attentively. Honourable Ramogapi explained that some former Ministers went to prison for corruption, he said this on the presentation that he just made here. He further said that the former Vice President lost his position because of corruption and he said this here in this Parliament. So, Honourable Kwaape is not telling the truth. If at all he wants to tarnish Honourable Ramogapi, he should say something else but he misquoting him on this one. He mentioned many people, Domkrag Ministers who lost their Members of Parliament and ministerial positions due to corruption. What are you saying?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Having said that, do you still say Domkrag does not combat corruption?

MR HIKUAMA: No, they were just reports and they then closed... (inaudible)...

DR KWAPE: Honourable Hikuama, growing up, a person who would bit about the bush when they wanted to say something would be regarded as someone who is not going to tell the truth. Honourable Ramogapi said that no one ever went to prison, that is what he said. I am now answering that question, he said some people lost their positions and he did not say... he says this Government is failing when it comes to prison because no one has ever been imprisoned. I was just being blunt on that issue.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Murmurs)...

DR KWAPE: No, you can change how you presented your words if at all you want to change them but please tell the truth. More than amending the law and everything, I believe we need good people who do things by the book. We need people with firm knowledge so that when there are corruption suspicions, they can follow such cases and deliver proper judgments. Government does not lose most of the cases because there is inadequate evidence, we lose them because people who represent the nation, do not represent Government in such a way that we can secure a conviction. I do not support Honourable Keorapetse's Motion because it is not sufficient, he left out important issues.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Include them then.

DR KWAPE: Just as I implied when I started my debate Honourable Keorapetse, this thing is not well thought out. Like Honourable Lucas often says, it has to be thorough.



MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, why are you sitting down?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is done.

MR SPEAKER: Are you done?

DR KWAPE: Yes.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (MS MAKWINJA): Let me thank you Mr Speaker and greet you. Let me greet ...

MR SPEAKER: Wait let me tell you that, you are the ninth one; the Honourable Member requested the floor but you were the only one who was standing, so you caught my eye.

MS MAKWINJA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Let me thank my colleagues here. Let me also thank the people of Lentsweletau-Lephephe Constituency who came out in large numbers. God is there. What happened, happened and God knows the truth. Jesus is lord at all times.

Mr Speaker, this corruption issue concerns all of us in this House because whether we like it or not, corruption is there. Sine corruption is there, what is heartbreaking is that, it seems like we are confusing things, but our laws are clear. Just like in offices, governance laws are clear. So when things are not done accordingly, we say the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) led Government is to blame. Yes we should take the blame, but we should always differentiate between these two things. In regards to the law, just like Honourable Members have been saying, when you compare corruption in Botswana with other countries, it is low and we are not saying it is okay that way. Just like my colleague has said, we should ensure that we put a stop to this corruption. So the problem is people who intentionally deviate from what is supposed to be done.

Mr Speaker, I am pleading that action should be taken. Let the full wrath of the law take its course because it is the same thing even in offices, when things are not done properly, no action is taken and we pamper employees. When someone is fired, some people will wail suggesting it means that that person is hated. There are no such things at the private sector, you do not perform, you go.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction, Mr Speaker.

MS MAKWINJA: So let me say...

MR SPEAKER: Correction; let us hear the correction Honourable Mmolotsi.

MR MMOLOTSI: Correction. Mr Speaker, I want to correct Honourable Minister on her use of the statement "to wail," and say it seems to be an unprocedural statement to use in Parliament. She should find a better statement because it is not nice to use it. Thank you.

MS MAKWINJA: Thank you Honourable Member, I withdraw. It is not a good statement, it is just that sometimes we run out of words. I said when action is taken against someone Mr Speaker, it seems like that person is hated and that their supervisor does not like them.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order!

MS MAKWINJA: It becomes something that ...

MR SPEAKER: I have frozen your time Honourable Minister. Two things; very quick one. No, but in all fairness to the Honourable Minister, Honourable Mmolotsi even though you have an agreement, "to wail" means a high-pitched cry; cry of pain. If at the moment, I am here and I am told that my child is late, I will not cry, I will wail. Even God's scripture states that, "wail and after that remember there is a way."

So the time is up Honourable Members; it is 1 o'clock...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR SPEAKER: No, Honourable Mmolotsi agreed with the Honourable Minister that they will not use it. I was trying to explain to those of you who do not know Setswana. *Iwe unKalanga kaiwa, a oto ziba iTswana sa me* (meaning; you are a Kalanga and you do not know Setswana just like me.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Laughter!)...

MR SPEAKER: So let us stop the proceedings here Honourable Members, which means that on the side of BDP we are done with nine of them, on the Opposition side we are remaining with one. No, five Honourable Members spoke; Honourable Hikuama, Honourable Dr Gobotswang, Honourable Tshabang, Honourable Dow and Honourable Ramogapi, we are remaining with the sixth one. So let us adjourn Honourable Members, let us



stop proceedings. Nkamo's mother has prepared some refreshments.

PROCEEDINGS SUSPENDED AT 1:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR

PROCEEDINGS RESUMED AT 2:00 P.M.

"EXCHANGE OF SPEAKERSHIP"

MR SPEAKER (MR SKELEMANI): Pray be seated.

...Silence...

MR SPEAKER: You helped me. Order! Order! Honourable Members, good afternoon. Let us resume our business of today with questions.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER

SALE OF BHC HOUSES

MR W. B. MMOLOTSI (FRANCISTOWN SOUTH): asked the Minister of Transport and Public Works:

- (ii) why it has taken so long for Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) to sell their houses that require sectional titles given that there is no legal impediment to do so; and
- (iii) whether this does not defeat Government's effort of encouraging home ownership.

MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS (MR MOLALE): Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Honourable Mmolotsi. Yes sir, it took a while to start selling sectional titles. The main issue was that when it was supposed to start, there was introduction of two schools of thought about the interpretation of the sectional titles. For a long time some people said, no, it will not be possible to sell them there because there are foreigners. Others said if you sell them when there are foreigners there, you will have to relocate them to new flats. This year, I prevailed and I agreed with the latter that if Batswana buy sectional titles and there are foreigners there, they will have to be relocated to new flats. Those we were told might sue us, I said no, let us test the law and interpretation at court. So far, nothing has happened to that effect.

Secondly, the other thing that is causing delays is what is called, declaring sectional schemes. When you sell a flat in a block of flats, after they are sold, the plot that the flats are in is a communal area. So it necessary that the

people who buy those sectional titles within those flats, should have a communal of some sort which is called sectional schemes. Within that plot, there are communal areas, we are trying to avoid the tragedy of the commons because where there are communal owned areas, there is no one who takes care of them, so it is binding for us to do that, that is what is causing the delay. But the process of selling is ongoing Mr Speaker, so far we have sold 1,254. Preparations are underway to sell 3,074 and maybe by the end of the year, 168 units are anticipated to be sectionalised and ready for sale. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MMOLOTSI: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. Minister, the concern is that this process took a long time but I heard you say there is going to be further delay because you have to declare sectional schemes as you say. Perhaps you should give us timelines on, number one; how long that will take; number two, you should apprise Parliament on the steps which you as the Minister or Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) have to take so that we can appreciate the burden of this process. You said you already sold about 1,254, perhaps you should state the location of those you sold. I want to know their location as well as the location of the 3,074 which you are preparing to sell.

In the past, Honourable Greeff used to ask whether the Sweets Flats are among those that you have already sold or those that are being prepared to be sold, maybe you should also touch on that. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MOLALE: We know about your flat at Sweets area ... (Interruption) ... so, they are also part of the ones we are preparing to sell. So make sure you vacate the Parliament flat and go back to occupy that one.

I cannot state the timeline because we have already crossed the legalities. So the timeline of when to sell is contingent upon the occupants agreeing on the sectional schemes. The efforts we are undertaking is that BHC is encouraging them to speed up the process because if we sell without instilling this sense of responsibility amongst the buyers, these flats will become a nuisance to the extent that the environment will become dirty and others will cause noise and so on. So we are trying to instil that sense but I cannot give you the timeline.

Regarding the areas where we are selling; I implore that you ask a new question so that I can be able to answer accurately without fumbling. Thank you.



MR SALESHANDO: Further supplementary. Two questions, what are they saying is the problem with this communal sectional units? In the private sector, this is a common practice for those who develop and the regulations are readily available within the Botswana market. When it comes to BHC why does it now seem to be a complicated process while others do it on an annual basis and it is seamless and very smooth?

The second one is, can you not amend the Act because I heard you say there are some non-citizens and BHC does not sell to them but the Act states that if you sell you offer to all occupants of that area. It is a short-term solution you are doing which you state that you will ask non-citizens to move to another area, ultimately there is going to be an area which is dominated by foreigners. I do not think that is what we want, to separate people saying if you are a foreigner, we move you to a different area. Why can you not amend the Act so that it can be straightforward that you do not want to sell to foreigners, then identify the ones you want to sell and which ones you do not want to sell so that if they are those occupied by foreigners you decide that you leave them out? Thank you.

MR MOLALE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Saleshando knows that in this country there is an attitudinal issue that it is a Government entity, so a sense of entitlement which is different if it was done by the private sector, that is what we are encountering. It is the truth that has to be told and nothing else. So, we have to mobilise these people so that they know.

In the private sector, sometimes you find that the person selling is not like BHC, he still remains with probably the right or partial right to the land such that if there is any issue which we fear, he can assume that responsibility. So, we are looking at several permutations but our desire is to not delay people, they should buy because we encourage home ownership.

The right of first refusal; yes, it is possible to end up in a situation where we move two people here and there and we might end up with Somalia in some of those flats. We will try by all means to guard against that.

In the beginning, I thought like in other countries, since this is not a piece of land, it is a title in the air perhaps non-citizens can be allowed to buy just like the time you went to study abroad Honourable Nkawana and had the right to buy a flat you were occupying, in that one room. It is a policy decision which we have not began to consider but it is something that can be looked at.

Lastly, BHC does not receive subvention from Government, they make money from the sale and renting of their houses, so sometimes if we delay them by making proposals it negatively impacts them. That is why I agree with you that we should speed up some things so that BHC does not face any negative implications such that at the end they need to be bailed out. It is something in the process and we are open to all ideas to try and speed up this process. Thank you.

DR TSHABANG: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Minister, regarding the issue that spaces in between flats are communal; are those not controlled by council if you sell?

Furthermore, I saw that at Sweets, those spaces, BHC went ahead to build extra flats to close most of them. Are you not applying the same principle in empty spaces between other flats by closing them so that there are not a lot of such that maybe council fail to control them? But the main question is, are those spaces not supposed to be controlled by council?

MR MOLALE: It is a case by case scenario. At the Sweets Flats, the plot is very big, flats are scattered and that is why BHC went and did that. Even if they did that, they still remain with some small little corners like receptacles of garbage, communal children's play grounds and all that, which cannot be owned by council because in other places, the plots are smaller than those at Sweets. So, the permutations are different and the approach to those permutations are equally different. Thank you sir.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Majaga.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: I will take it for him Mr Speaker.

...Silence...

OPENING OF IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR OFFICES IN SHAKAWE

MR K. K. KAPINGA (OKAVANGO): asked the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs:

- (i) when the local offices of the Departments of Immigration and Labour in Shakawe will be opened; and
- (ii) whether the delay in opening these offices in Shakawe means that the Minister undermines the strategic location of Shakawe and the suffering



that local people have to endure to secure services in Maun.

**MINISTER OF LABOUR AND HOME AFFAIRS
(MS MOKGETHI):**

- (i) Mr Speaker, let me preface my response by acknowledging that my ministry is well aware of the challenges experienced by residents of Shakawe village in accessing immigration and labour related services. However, due to budgetary constraints, my ministry is not able to establish offices in Shakawe. With the little budget allocated to my ministry this financial year, we will only be able to establish District Labour Offices in three out of six villages covered under the approved budget. The three villages include Gumare, Tutume and Goodhope.

I would also like to make this Honourable House aware that following the pronouncement on the rationalisation of ministries portfolio responsibilities in 2022, a new structure for my ministry has since been approved. My ministry is currently validating the Job Effectiveness Descriptions (JEDs) to facilitate operationalisation of the new structure during the financial year 2025/2026. The manpower planning for Shakawe Immigration Office has been catered for in the new structure hence the office will be operational during the financial year 2025/2026.

As a short-term measure to alleviate the problem, my ministry has decentralised passport services to Mohembo Border while other immigration related services (including Residence Permits) may be accessed at Gumare District Immigration Office. My ministry is also on the process to provide online Work and Residence Permit services, online passport so that Batswana may access these services online.

- (ii) Mr Speaker, I would like to assure this House that the delay in opening Immigration and Labour Offices in Shakawe should not in any way be misconstrued to mean that my ministry undermines the strategic location of Shakawe and the inconvenience that the local people have to endure to secure services in Maun as alluded by the Honourable Member of Parliament. It is our wish as we have already submitted budget requests for the next financial year to cater for establishment of District Immigration and Labour Offices in other villages, Shakawe village included.

In recognition of the vastness of the district, my ministry will continue to serve the community by conducting outreach visits according to the schedule which will be communicated to the village leadership. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR KAPINGA: Supplementary. Honourable Minister, I am aware that you are not fluent in Setswana as it is not our mother tongue, but it was important to have answered this question in Setswana so that people can understand. According to me it seems like you do not understand how important Shakawe is considering that it is the only large village in that constituency that is closer to Namibia, Angola and Zambia border. Are you aware of the geo strategic location of Shakawe? What made you to rush and open an office in Gumare than in Shakawe considering how many villages are surrounding Shakawe? Honourable Minister, what made you prioritise Gumare instead of Shakawe? Thank you.

MS MOKGETHI: Mr Speaker, Gumare District Immigration Office is an existing facility hence we say that the Shakawe area can in the interim access the services at Gumare District Office. It is not that we do not recognise the strategic location of Shakawe. We do recognise it, hence we are saying that the manpower planning for Shakawe Immigration Offices has been catered for in the new structure, hence the office will be operational during the financial year 2025/2026. It is in recognition of that fact and I thought Honourable Kapinga will stand up and say thank you Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs for putting us in the budget, but instead of saying thank you that you have finally considered us and made provision under the budget, you are still continuing to criticise, criticise and criticise. Thank you Honourable. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MOATLHODI: Procedure Mr Speaker. Thank you Mr Speaker. Considering how many questions there are, I want to request you to invoke Standing Order 130.1 to enable us to finish all the questions for the day, my leader in whom I am so well pleased.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Are you saying that because you have a question?

MR MOATLHODI: Not that I have a question, I am assisting my leader to run the House. You do not respect people that are leading, what is wrong with you?

MR KAPINGA: Procedure Mr Speaker. Sorry to disturb, but I have a procedural issue. Thank you Mr



Speaker. My question was addressing two offices but the Minister only answered in relation to one office of Immigration. She did not answer the one for Labour, but it is part of the question.

GOVERNMENT REVENUES AND ROAD NETWORK INVESTMENTS

MR T. LETSHOLO (KANYE NORTH): asked the Minister of Transport and Public Works to update this Honourable House on the Ministry's efforts to enhance Government revenues and optimize road network investments, including the potential transformation of the Department of Roads into an independent Roads Agency as a means of reducing the burden on the national fiscus related to road construction and maintenance; more particularly:

- (i) how his ministry ensures an increased return on investment in our road networks, particularly on critical routes like the Trans-Kalahari Highway;
- (ii) to provide insights into the country of origin mix of trucks using the Trans- Kalahari highway and the fees generated from foreign trucks that use the highway;
- (iii) how Botswana's road fee structure compares to that of other countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region, particularly for foreign goods trucks; and
- (iv) if his ministry is open to considering a review of the road fees in Botswana, with the aim to contributing to cost recovery and supporting ongoing roads infrastructure maintenance.

MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS (MR MOLALE): Mr Speaker, it is long. I will answer it in English. He will go and interpret to his constituents.

Mr Speaker, I need to preface my answer to the Honourable Member by stating that my ministry has in its effort to enhance Government revenues and optimise road network investments, successfully sought and got approval from the Cabinet to increase Road Levy by 25 Thebe from P0.90 to P1.15 with effect from April 2024. It is worth noting Mr Speaker that previously, my ministry experienced challenges in collecting the appropriate levy due to non-disclosure of actual quantities imported by some fuel suppliers.

In order to identify this leakage in revenue, my ministry signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) to start collecting the levy at the point of entry effective April 2022. This is bearing fruits as the correct amount is being collected.

Revenue collected as road user charges from both locally and foreign registered vehicles can be directed to road maintenance and development and not the Consolidated Fund, and will improve the road network of our country both for new and for those to be maintained.

Mr Speaker, coming to the question; my ministry has for some time been considering the establishment of a Road Authority to replace the current Roads Department. Government while restructuring and reorganisation which is now being concluded, has taken a longer time because it had to look at a whole host of parastatals and it was not one ministry's affairs, it was as I say a whole of Government approach. I believe that the intentions here is that some parastatals can be consolidated, some struck off because maybe their usefulness may not be as needed as it was previously so. And when that has been done, we may be able to lobby and argue for the creation of a Road Development Agency.

The other question raised by the Honourable Member I answered as follows;

- (i) Mr Speaker, our road networks are an asset to this nation, hence they benefit us in growing the economy and linking communities.

There are major or critical roads that connect our country to her neighbours and because of the heavy investment on these roads, all foreign registered vehicles that enter Botswana are charged user fees. Botswana registered vehicles pay through the annual licensing fees for use of the road or as road user fees.

- (ii) The Trans Kalahari Highway is a regional corridor that links different countries to the port of Walvis Bay. The corridor links with the Maputo Corridor in the East and the North South Corridor through Kazungula. Therefore, trucks from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe are the main users of the corridors.

The user fees charged to the trucks using the Trans Kalahari Corridor are based on the vehicle mass, hence different trucks are charged differently. Mr Speaker, the Department of Road Transport and Services (DRTS) has



engaged as I said earlier, BURS to collect the road user charges for all these vehicles. The revenue collected is therefore remitted to Government Treasury into the Consolidated Fund. It must be clear here, we are talking of two charges; the Road Levy Charges and Road User Charges. We believe that once the Road Authority is setup because we wish for that, the funds will all be directed to that authority.

- (iii) Mr Speaker, road user fees structure compares very well with that of our neighbours. Botswana and Namibia use permit system, whereby you pay at the point of entry. South Africa uses tolling system, whereby toll plazas installed along the roads for collecting road user fees. You will recall also Honourable Members that in September 2023, we piloted through this House the amendment of the Road Act where therein we included tolling and we are already working on a way of finding which roads are tollable and which are not. As it is the international best practice, when you put in toll roads, you also have to provide for alternative routes and that is why, in anticipation of the toll fees, we have started constructing or even completed some alternative routes like Dibete/Machaneng parallel North/South, Paje/Serule and many more roads that we have awarded contracts for which will part of this exercise. So it is work in process in anticipation of what is going to happen if we do indeed put in toll roads as the law was approved by this House.

The current user fees were last reviewed three years ago and they are comparable and competitive to that of neighbouring states. We are mindful of this fact that Botswana is a transit country, and therefore we should not over charge the transit traffic that is using our roads. We must balance this with a deterioration of our roads and therefore collect fees such that we will be able to maintain our roads. So we are happy that the collection is ongoing, the leakages have been plugged and that we believe more work will be seen as we repair and build new roads. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR LETSHOLO: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. The Minister indicated that they are still assessing to determine if some institutions can be merged, so is it possible to assess the establishment of Road Authority in a special manner since it will be a new department? I mean just as you replaced Tax and Excise with BURS in the past. Do you think it is a

matter of establishing a new parastatal or to expand the current department? Do you not think replacing old one gives them an opportunity to speed up the process?

Mr Speaker, the second point is comparison of Botswana road user fees structure with our neighbours. For example; you will note that in a scenario where Botswana charges P500, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will charge P15 000 while Zambia charges P13 000. This means when Botswana charges a heavy duty truck from DRC P500, Botswana pays P15 000 in DRC, P13 000 in Zambia, P5 000 in Zimbabwe, P4 000 in Namibia and so on. Therefore Minister, do you not think it is important for you to review as soon as possible to rid Botswana these heavy charges as well as increase Botswana charges so that we can benefit from these heavy duty trucks which use our roads for the sake of maintenance and establishment of new roads?

Lastly Mr Speaker, the Minister indicated that the international best practice is such that when you put in toll roads, you also have to provide for alternative routes that can be used by those who choose not to pay or cannot afford. The Minister indicated that Honourable Member for Kanye North, Honourable Letsholo once requested them to consider Magotlhwane/Kgomokasitwa when they assess such roads, do you still intend to turn it into a tarred road? I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MOLALE: Mr Speaker, I am concerned that the Honourable Member asked five more questions under supplementaries and he was quick. Therefore, I missed some points when I was trying to jot them down which may appear as if I am not willing to answer his questions. So I urge the Honourable Members to normalise to take time when asking questions so that we can give the right answers. Thank you.

Let me start with the last one, we have budgeted for the Digawana alternative route passing through Molapowabojang and the areas he listed. It is a project that is in the plan. You should inform them that we will furnish you with the dates of what we would do at a certain time. I do not have them here with me Honourable Member.

Comparisons; that is true sir, we saw a whole range of how some countries charge within the spirit of Southern African Development Community (SADC). We have started working with some multilateral agencies with a view, not only to harmonise those fees but even to harmonise rules, regulations and other things that relate



to the support of regional integration. It is not easy because some may decline. We believe that Botswana must take the lead and we are taking the lead to try and encourage that harmonisation. Going forward, if we approve these tollgates, it will ensure that it is no longer P500. You will find that you pay P500 here and maybe P200 there and so on, which are not exorbitant charges.

On speedy changes; we once tried to apply for Road Authority. The Acting President by then, who is my neighbour today asked me which parastatals we are eliminating to register mine. It was a genuine question since Government is concerned about more parastatals. I also believe that maybe their time has passed. We cannot increase them while we have not dealt with these ones. It was a genuine concern and we are praying that the ministry leading the rationalisation and reorganisation of parastatals would speed up. Then we can submit this memo quickly because in the region, we are the only country that does not have a Road Development Authority. We believe that the efficiency of the Development Authority is better than Roads Department as it was. For your information, we have reorganised in the ministry, we no longer have Roads Department and Buildings Department. Ramogapi, wake up. It is now specialty divisions that are going to be doing the work; design division and project implementation and maintenance division. We are doing that in anticipation that ultimately, we may have a Road User Authority. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR BALOPI: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. Greetings to you. Thank you Honourable Letsholo for that relevant question and Honourable Molale for those answers. Honourable Molale, there is something that I missed on Honourable Letsholo's second question. He was asking about where the trucks using the Trans-Kalahari Highway which frequent this country come from and what the charges are. Maybe I missed a point there.

My question is, are you aware that Batswana trucks which transport goods to Namibia; I will single out Namibia because I know that we have a relation that we can improve, mostly there are return trips. A truck will leave Namibia and indigenous Batswana who have been given contracts, some use them to return with their goods since they know that they are charged a small fee. So those who subcontract those trucks accrue more profit. Are you aware that this might be affecting the growth of Botswana truck owners companies whom I

know are working hard for you to support them? That is, we are losing funds and also growth opportunity in terms of the transport sector; long distance trucks. Minister, are you aware of that? Thank you.

MR MOLALE: Thank you Mr Speaker. I said these trucks are from DRC, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Those are the countries I mentioned. Honourable Letsholo also helped me by answering part of that question on how much DRC and others charge and what we charge. I think he has more information on that and I thank him for that.

On the second one, the Trans-Kalahari Corridor Secretariat is doing a number of activities. One of the activities is to synchronise movements and actually encourage reporting of trucks that go and come back so as to encourage the utilisation of what is called backhaul rating. That is, the truck should not go and come back with nothing. You may find that there are some in the ports of Walvis Bay who need goods transported here. That is what the Corridor Secretariat are doing. We have also encouraged Sea Rail Botswana, the Botswana dry port in Namibia to start looking for a business opportunity there. They should link the incoming and outgoing trucks to transport goods. It will reduce charges for Batswana especially considering that there is a lot of what is called demurrage. When goods are stored at the port for longer, they have to pay paid rent and charges escalate. So as these charges escalate, they consequently affect the consumer. However, if we adopt that strategy, the consumer especially in Botswana will not be burdened. I thank you sir.

STAGNATION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

MR T. B. LUCAS (BOBONONG): asked the Minister for State President to apprise this Honourable House on the following:

- (i) the number of civil servants who have stagnated at the top notch of the C1, A and B scales for 10 or more years;
- (ii) plans to address stagnation and its effects in the civil service; and
- (iii) recommendations of the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) report as they relate to stagnation in the civil service.

ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MS GOFHAMODIMO): Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you Honourable Lucas for this question. In



response, a total of 24,460 Civil Servants have stagnated at the top notch of the A, B and C1 Scales for 10 or more years. This translates to 41 per cent of employees at A, B and C1 scales.

Mr Speaker, let me give a breakdown of how every grade in the public service is affected.

The A grade or salary scale has a total number of 11, 902. The number of individuals who have stagnated at the last notch of A grade salary scale is 4, 535, translating to 38 per cent of the total number of staff in A grade scale.

In the B grade, the total number of staff is 13, 990 the number of those who are affected is 6, 227. This means that it is 45 per cent of the whole staff in B scale that is affected by that situation.

With respect to C1, the number of staff on that scale, is 33, 621 and those who are affected the ones who long reached the last notch in that scale is 13, 698. This means that 41 per cent of the staff is affected.

Mr Speaker, let me clarify that it is not that Government is not concerned by this situation. That is why last time Government made an effort to see how this problem can be solved. As I speak, there is a plan to replace the current salary structure. We know that our salary structure in Government from way back, is a structure which I can say is akin to a ruler that is, it is just a straight structure, which between the different grades, when you reach the last notch, you will progress if you get a promotion, but your progression is straight, just like a ruler.

After Government made the effort to see how this problem can be solved, in the past, I think that most of us are aware or we will recall that there was a company that was contracted at the time. Most of us know about PEMANDU, Government engaged it to come and assist on this matter of staff being stuck on one scale. Not only that, and to see how staff welfare can be improved. That is to introduce a Performance Management System (PMS) which will be effective, which would deliver as expected. Another thing was for this company to help Government to come up with ways to make public servants attractive. Salaries in Government should be attractive; attractive even to attract people from outside. That task was done, in 2018 a report was released, after that report was released, there were discussions between Government and different civil service unions. These discussions took a long time, we know that most of the time when we start negotiating with unions, and about issues like these, it takes a long time.

These discussions ended in 2022, when they came to an end, the PEMANDU report recommended a new salary structure which can solve that problem by introducing a Fan Shape structure. Briefly, this structure means that salary scales are overlapping. You cannot stop on the A scale or on the B scale because they have been stretched. Notches in every scale have been stretched so that if you do not get a promotion, you should not stay in one place.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Minister. Freeze the clock. You will recall that the Honourable Deputy Speaker wanted to move a procedure Motion, and I thought we should wait a little bit because what is happening demonstrates that so far, we have dealt with three and part of a question, and we are left with five questions. So, when you decide on the procedural Motion by the Deputy Speaker, it is better ... (inaudible)... the time we have taken so far, and the five questions remaining against the Order Paper.

BUSINESS MOTION

MR MOATLHODI: Thank you Mr Speaker. I pray with your good self Honourable Speaker that we invoke Standing Order 130.1 in order to allow us to do away with all the questions on the Order Paper. I so move Mr Speaker.

Question put and **agreed to.**

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, you may continue and try to speed up.

MS GOFHAMODIMO: Thank you Mr Speaker. I stopped where I was clarifying that Government agreed with unions by implementing what is now commonly referred to as a fan shape structure which differs from the one that was in use, which will solve the existing concerns because now it is not only that it has many notches, or it introduces many notches in each and every salary scale. They are also overlapping, to ensure that when a person is progressing, he or she should continue going forward with a salary range which is satisfactory and it overlaps with the upper scale.

The discussions are finished, and we are ready to implement this new structure. The intention is to implement it this year.

Last year Mr Speaker, we called PEMANDU again. It now goes by a new name, it is AB Consulting. We called this company to come and help us again to see if we are still up to date because that was an old report



as it was released in 2018. We called them to see if the market conditions in terms of salaries still allows us to implement what was discovered in 2018. The minor amendments that had to be done, delayed us from implementing that structure in 2023.

In short Mr Speaker, let me conclude by saying that we are finished, and we will start to implement the new structure in 2024/2025. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR LUCAS: Supplementary. Thank you Minister for that response. Firstly, let me point out that people reach the specified number of 24,000, with 10 years on A, B or C scales. That is a significant number. Have you considered that having so many people stuck on one scale without progression can impact service delivery? Being stuck at one scale for an extended period can be demotivating. As the Assistant Minister, I believe you aspire to become a Minister someday. If you were to remain stuck at a single scale, it could lead to frustration. Honourable Morwaeng might even find it amusing.

Second question Assistant Minister, you seem to speak with calm, and as if you believe it is right for PEMANDU to have been delayed for more than six years without implementation. This delay in implementation means that service delivery to the people by the Government is negatively affected.

Thirdly, PEMANDU was announced in 2018, and it now appears to have been restructured and is currently known as AB Consulting. This restructuring has entailed significant expenditure. Could you provide an estimate of the funds allocated for the second round of PEMANDU? Additionally, do you not recognise that the implementation delay itself constitutes a misuse of Government and national funds, which could otherwise have been directed towards increasing Government workers' salaries? Thank you Mr Speaker.

MS GOFHAMODIMO: Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Lucas, I began by explaining that Government is concerned. This situation is of great concern to us, which is why we decided to bring in those who can help us address this issue. Although 2018 might seem distant, the truth is that as the Government, when we receive a report, we cannot implement it without first discussing it with unions. As I explained earlier, most of the delays arose from the necessity to engage in dialogue with the unions and agree on how to address this problem. The good thing is that we reached a consensus with the unions, and now we can proceed with implementation.

Honourable Member, please allow me some time before I can respond to your question regarding the funds that could have been used when re-engaging the company we had requested to assist with certain investigations. I currently do not have the information on the exact amount spent, but I will obtain it and provide it to you tomorrow. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR LUCAS: Further supplementary. Madam Assistant Minister, I think that you deliberately avoided one of the questions, however, I want your opinion on it. The question was on the people who spend years, maybe 10 or 20 years, on one scale C1, B1 and A scale. Do you agree that this could be frustrating and could potentially affect service delivery to the people? Respond to that one as I have asked it.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Lucas, you asked that question.

MR LUCAS: She did not provide an answer for it Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Yes, you should say so.

MR LUCAS: Yes, she did not answer.

MR SPEAKER: You are not making a supplementary.

MR LUCAS: Thank you Mr Speaker. Perhaps let me repeat it so that she can understand it well, because some people have spent 20 years on one scale. The further supplementary is for her to enlighten me. For quite some time, there have been promises regarding the establishment of the Public Service Bargaining Council. The President made this promise six years ago, yet it appears that the council has not yet been established. I am curious about the arrangement through which you are currently communicating with Government workers, especially since you have mentioned being in talks and possibly reaching an agreement. Can we realistically expect the Public Service Bargaining Council to be established soon, given that it has been six years since the President's initial promise?

MS GOFHAMODIMO: Thank you Mr Speaker. No, Honourable Lucas, it is true that if a person gets stuck in one position for a long time, they may become discouraged and it may affect service delivery. As I have explained, it is a situation that Government is trying to fix. It is a concern and we are addressing it. I believe that after implementing this new structure, we will do away with those concerns.



Currently, in the absence of the Bargaining Council, we engage with various unions when discussing issues affecting Government workers. As we all know, different Government sectors have their respective unions. These are the ones we collaborate with. While it is true that we have been waiting for the establishment of the Bargaining Council, it does not mean we are sitting idle. We have actively worked with unions to amend various laws related to Government workers. Significant progress has been made, and we are nearing conclusion. The Bargaining Council is one avenue we are considering, and it has also been incorporated into the amendments of the Public Service Act.

I explained that our discussions with unions led us to implement the recommendations from the PEMANDU report.

We encountered a similar challenge with the Bargaining Council, specifically, agreeing with unions on its structure and operation. However, I believe that when we present the Public Service Act before Parliament, it will address all the points you have raised Honourable Member. We have already finalised the Bargaining Council setup in collaboration with the unions. Thank you Mr Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Supplementary.

MR SPEAKER: Last supplementary; Honourable Ramogapi.

MR RAMOGAPI: Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Honourable Lucas and Honourable Minister. Minister, just as you are making promises, we will assure our voters that you have reached an agreement with the unions and will proceed with implementation. For my first question, could you provide a timeline for when this will occur?

Secondly, Minister, are you aware of the empty promises that Ministers often make in Parliament? These promises raise hope among voters, only to later discover that the proposed actions will not materialise. If you are aware of them, how do you aim to correct that situation?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Order, order!

MR RAMOGAPI: I will give you an example of an empty promise, since someone is asking for a point of order. We were told that soldiers were going to be paid as the matter was said to be concluded. We went on to our respective Dikgotla to relay the message that soldiers

are going to be paid. We are still far behind even though the date was set. I thought I should cite this example since I asked if you are aware of these empty promises.

MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS (MR MOLALE): Point of order. Mr Speaker, if Honourable Ramogapi is fighting one Minister here, he should not group us. I never lied to him nor have I ever heard any Minister lying to him. I plead that he should get back in order. Careful! Bassop!

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Ramogapi, you heard him.

MR RAMOGAPI: I am serious Minister, we have a problem. I believe that I am raising this point calmly so that you understand our situation.

Honourable Dr Letsholathebe also promised us that he will table the Botswana Qualification Authority (BQA) Bill but Parliament will soon dissolve. There are many promises. In short Honourable Minister, are you aware or do you come with any change such that when we go to Dikgotla and make this promise to Science and Maths teachers, we do not later on turn against our words?

Lastly, are you aware that consultancies do not start here, yet they are often discarded? There was Tsa Badiri Consultancy, Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) and another one. The sad thing is that after wasting money, these consultancies are not executed. How are you going to ensure that these recent consultancies are implemented and not discarded? Thank you.

MS GOFHAMODIMO: Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to inform you that I am not aware of the promises that you are talking about. I want to focus on the question that you asked or the reason why I am standing here today; what I am doing about stagnation of public servants after reaching high notches or mentioned scales. I have already answered, we took relevant steps to address that situation. I promise that we will start to implement the new salaries structure in 2024/2025.

I do not want to dwell on the claim that some reports or consultancies are not implemented. In short, when an exercise has been done and a consultancy is commissioned, when it presented a report that has useful recommendations, it has to be implemented. Sometimes a consultancy can be commissioned only for it to produce unfeasible results and when that happens, that consultancy or report cannot be beneficial to anyone, so we set it aside.



That is it Honourable Ramogapi. When you go back to your constituents or public servants, I expect you to tell them that together with unions, we have agreed on the new salary structure. We intend to implement it this year. Thank you Mr Speaker.

IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR OFFICES IN TONOTA

MR P. P. P. MOATLHODI (TONOTA): asked the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs if there are any plans to establish Immigration as well as Labour Offices at Tonota Village; and if so, when.

MINISTER OF LABOUR AND HOME AFFAIRS (MS MOKGETHI): Thank you Mr Speaker. I thank Honourable Moatlhodi, Member of Parliament for Tonota for this question.

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform this honourable House that my ministry has no plan to establish Immigration or Labour Offices in Tonota currently, due to budgetary constraints. However, the Department of Labour and Social Security through the District Labour Office in Francistown, visit Tonota village every Tuesday to provide services to the public. This arrangement has proved to be effective as customers no longer travel to Francistown to seek assistance. I am hopeful that this intervention will continue to improve service delivery in the area, until budgetary situation allows for setting up of such offices in Tonota, in the not so distant future.

Let me also indicate that following the pronouncement on the rationalisation of ministries' portfolio responsibilities in April 2022, a new structure for my ministry has since been approved. The manpower planning for Tonota Immigration Office has been catered for in the new structure, hence I am hopeful that the office will be established during the financial year 2025/2026. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR MOATLHODI: May the good Lord bless you Honourable Minister, to achieve this project for Tonota.

ICCR SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024

MR C. GREEFF (GABORONE BONNINGTON SOUTH): asked the Minister for State President to give an update on the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Scholarship offered by the Indian High Commission for the year 2023-2024; and further state the number of:

- (i) applicants across the 57 constituencies;
- (ii) successful applicants and their distribution by the 57 Constituencies;
- (iii) successful applicants with Junior Certificate qualifications and those with Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE); and
- (iv) the key selection criteria and whether first come first served takes precedence over merit;
- (v) if he is aware that there are applicants with lower BGCSE points who have been awarded scholarships over those with higher points; and
- (vi) if he will be willing to investigate the ICCR scholarship during the last five years for possible corruption, nepotism, favouritism and fraud.

ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MS GOFHAMODIMO): Thank you Mr Speaker. I will respond in English.

- (i) Mr Speaker, the Botswana Government through the Directorate of Public Service Management receives the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarships from the Indian Government, through the Indian High Commission as and when they are available. The scholarships targets undergraduates, postgraduates and PhD courses at various universities in India. Once scholarships are received, Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) distributes them accordingly to ministries, independent departments and agencies based on their relevance to the ministries, departments and agencies mandates and not to the constituencies.
- (ii) Mr Speaker, for the financial 2023/2024 the DPSM has not received any scholarships from the ICCR, hence no applications. No successful applicants, as a result of no scholarships received.
- (iii) The conditions for scholarship awarded to DPSM excludes applicants with Junior Certificate qualifications, since the minimum requirement for the scholarship is High School leaving certificate.
- (iv) Mr Speaker, it should be noted that DPSM only handles scholarships for the public service employees. The application process is done through the alumnae account to account portal, which is administered by the Indian Embassy.



The key selection criteria for the ICCR scholarship extended to DPSM is as follows; High School leaving certificate, is a requirement for undergraduate programmes and Bachelor's Degree for postgraduate courses and Masters and PhD programmes. The applicants should be 18 years at the time of admission, and not be more than 30 years of age for the undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Applicants should not be more than 45 years for PhD programmes.

- (v) As per the selection criteria, the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) points are not considered when awarding scholarships, therefore the Directorate is not aware of any applicant awarded scholarships with lower BGCSE points over those with higher points.

Lastly Mr Speaker, I wish to state that there are relevant public service procedures to be followed through for investigation of possible corruption, nepotism, favouritism and fraud practices. To this end, should there be any need for action; relevant authorities will appropriately deal with such matters. I thank you Mr Speaker.

DR GOBOTSWANG: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Minister, are you aware that a while back when these scholarships were provided, they only benefitted two constituencies namely Kanye South and Gabane-Mmankgodi, constituencies of two Honourable Ministers. Since the introduction of this scholarship, are you aware that from many constituencies including Tswapong South, no one has ever benefitted from this programme? Do you not suspect that something is not right here, if in the end the programme benefits only two constituencies? Do you not think that should be investigated so that we can figure out how only two constituencies benefit from this programme? Thank you.

MS GOFHAMODIMO: Thank you Mr Speaker. I am pleading with you to realise that when I answered I said, DPSM only talks about scholarships that are provided to Government employees. When we talk about scholarships that are provided to Government employees, since I realise that the question was about constituencies, these scholarships will go to different Government ministries and not constituencies. So I am not aware of the scholarships that benefitted only two constituencies as we provide them to Government ministries.

MR RAMOGAPI: Procedure. No Mr Speaker, this honourable Government that rules us, often says that there is only one Government. So, as an Honourable Minister responsible for public service, you should answer all questions. She should not say since she is the Honourable Minister for a certain ministry that is all she knows whereas she has colleagues. If he does not have the information, why can she not get it from her colleague, the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs?

MR SPEAKER: Did you read the question Honourable Ramogapi?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: It asked the Honourable Minister for State President about this Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarships. She answered by saying, she cannot be involved in issues of constituencies because the ones they receive are provided to Government ministries, as they receive those scholarships and decide which Government employees they can send them to. So, what information is she going to get?

POWER CUTS IN NATA-GWETA CONSTITUENCY

MR P. MAJAGA (NATA-GWETA): asked the Minister of Minerals and Energy to state:

- (i) if he is aware of the frequent power cuts in the Nata-Gweta Constituency;
- (ii) if it is mandatory for his ministry to provide electricity for Batswana in the Nata-Gweta Constituency or his ministry is doing them a favour;
- (iii) what action has been taken to assist the Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) in Nata since power cuts occur every year during rainy season;
- (iv) what plans are in place to have a permanent solution for power cuts not to occur in future;
- (v) if he is aware of the damage caused by power cuts on electrical appliances;
- (vi) if he is aware of the impact of power cuts on the businesses in the Nata-Gweta Constituency especially butcheries; and



(vii) if there is any provision to compensate for business losses caused by power cuts.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister of Minerals and Energy.

... Silence...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is not here.

MR SPEAKER: No, he is working. At least I know where he is. He is connected, he asked from me to go to Kasane on duty. Honourable Minister Moagi.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is not here.

MR SPEAKER: He is here.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is discouraged.

... Silence...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Moagi. Can you hear me? He is on the screen. Maybe he cannot hear since he is in Kasane. Let us move on to the next one.

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

MR S. J. BROOKS (KGALAGADI SOUTH): asked the Minister of Environment and Tourism:

- (i) when the Climate Change Policy will be implemented in Botswana;
- (ii) if there is a budget for the implementation of this policy and how much it is;
- (iii) if he is aware of the negative impacts of climate change on food security and the tourism sector at large, if so; to state them; and
- (iv) to explain plans to address the increasing challenges of climate change and how he will raise a budget to cushion the stated sectors.

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM (MR MTHIMKHULU): Thank you Mr Speaker. I have a long answer here, it is five pages long. With your permission, may I hand it over?

MR SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister is saying the answer is long.

MR LEUWE: Mr Speaker, he did not provide me with supplementaries and other things. He just told me to get it for him and that means that I will take this powerful answer and give it to him. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, you can summarise your answer. You do not have to read the answer.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR MTHIMKHULU: Mr Speaker, I would read all of it into the record.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!)...

MR MTHIMKHULU: That is what you want.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: No, we did not say that.

MR MTHIMKHULU: Mr Speaker, in 2021, Botswana developed a National Climate Change Policy to guide its response to climate change. The policy is aimed at promoting sustainable development, enhance resilience to climate change impact and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy is currently being implemented by various economic sectors through various Government interventions that address climate induced hardships.

Initiatives such as solar power generation, energy efficiency programmes, reforestation projects that promote carbon sinks, early warning systems for natural disasters and sustainable agricultural practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserved natural resources and enhance resilience to climate change impacts are implemented in line with the Climate Change Policy.

Mr Speaker, there is currently no dedicated budget for climate change. However, there are activities undertaken and resolved from national budget. These activities are implemented through other ministries such as Agriculture, Water and Health, to mention but a few. These activities include and not limited to subsidies in the agricultural sector such as Temo Letlotlo initiatives, etcetera.

Mr Speaker, my ministry is aware of the negative impacts of climate change on food security and tourism sector. This understanding...

MR TSOGWANE: Point of procedure. Sorry for disturbing you Honourable Minister. I thought the Honourable Minister was trying to assist this House when he said this answer is five pages, but to read it and not complete it, reading it after a long time, then we end up not knowing how the answer began and that would not help us, especially that the Honourable Member who has asked that question is not here. Even if you are to



give a written answer, it is there in our Standing Orders. You can do it orally or you can do a written response. So if the Honourable Minister indicates that he wishes it should be a written response because it is too long, that would have helped us because we do not have sufficient time to start with, we have Bills before us, and we have been complaining that we have insufficient time. I think if he continues like this and this House loses patience that the answer is too long, what are we going to do, it will end halfway. I thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Leader of the House, at the beginning I said the Minister, because he has the answer, apart from the fact that he is a lawyer, he knows what he is talking about, he summarises. He does not have to read the whole long thing, which is unnecessary.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: I gave that option to the Minister that he does not have to read, he gives the summary, the gist of your answer and we pass. We do not have to listen to a five-page reading of the reply.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Complexity of the subject.

MR SPEAKER: I do not know about complexity because I have my own understanding when I read the questions, I did not see the complexity which people may see. Honourable Minister, you just have to hand over the reply, I think Honourable Leuwe is agreeable to receiving the written answer.

MR LEUWE: Yes sir, but I agreed with you that he could have summarised it. Normally a question is not for an individual, it is asked for the whole Parliament but perhaps he could have summarised just like you said to avoid another member asking the same question in future and for the people to hear the response, that could be better. I will still take the written answer to the member who sent me. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SALESHANDO: Procedure. Mr Speaker, I propose that we proceed as you had initially directed. This question applies to all of us. I was a member in a committee that deals with issues of climate change. We travelled with the ministry talking about issues of climate change. We held briefings about issues of climate change. If you recall when we passed this policy we were at Boipuso Hall and it was passed under a certificate of urgency so that funds can quickly be sourced to implement it. I am just surprised that

right now when he is asked to state the budget for the implementation of the policy, he says that there is no dedicated budget, yet we passed the policy under the certificate of urgency so that we can be allocated funds to implement it.

The question itself is not long because he is only asking four questions:

- (i) implementation – when are you implementing, that is in terms of date.
- (ii) is there a budget; he said no.
- (iii) are you aware there are some negative impacts on the tourism industry.

And then the last one he is asked to address the increasing challenges and how will he raise the budget he indicated is not available. I do not think this is something too long to an extent that when he finishes, we would have already forgotten how he started. With due respect Vice President, we only understand if everything is read from start to finish. If you could have forgotten by the time he finishes, you will ask for our help, we will help you.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I am sure you realise how much time we are taking up totally...we are not producing anything. I suggested to the Minister that he could summarise and as I have said, I may have my own views on the question as to whether it is difficult or not, other people may differ. Honourable Minister, you are a lawyer, just cut the thing short.

MR MTHIMKHULU: Mr Speaker, I could have done that, it is only that Order 38.4 does not provide for summarised answers. It says you hand over the written answer, that is basically what I was saying. That is why when they objected, I said I will read it all out to Parliament so that I read it into the record. Unless they accept it, I have to read the entire answer to them.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR MTHIMKHULU: No, you are the ones who are objecting and who are passing...(Interruptions)... there are reports that you are spending sponsorship money of your political parties. We know that there is alleged corruption at Botswana Congress Party (BCP).

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, if you cannot summarise, read the answer. You started reading the answer, the problem is people who are creating unnecessary drama.



MR MTHIMKHULU: Let me start from the beginning.

(i) Mr Speaker, in 2021, Botswana developed a National Climate Change Policy to guide its response to climate change. The policy is aimed at promoting sustainable development, enhance resilience to climate change impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy is currently being implemented by various economic sectors through various Government interventions that address climate induced hardships.

- Initiatives such as solar power generation, energy efficiency programs, reforestation projects that promote carbon sinks, early warning systems for natural disasters and sustainable agricultural practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve natural resources, and enhance resilience to climate change impacts are implemented in line with the Climate Change Policy.

(iii) Mr Speaker, there is currently no dedicated budget for climate change.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Dedicated?

MR MTHIMKHULU: Dedicated. It is not like it is not available, it is available in other ministries.

However, there are activities undertaken and resourced from national budget. These activities are implemented through other Ministries such as Agriculture, Water and Health to mention but a few. These activities include and not limited to subsidies in the agriculture sector, such as Temo Letlotlo initiatives etc.

(iv) Mr Speaker, my ministry is aware of the negative impacts of climate change on food security and the tourism sector. This understanding is informed by the vulnerability and adaptation assessments undertaken that put into perspective that climate change is unequivocal and that various sectors of our economy such as water, agriculture, forestry, rangelands, biodiversity, infrastructure are particularly vulnerable to climate change.

- The negative impacts of climate change on food security in Botswana comes as a result of a combination of various factors that reduce agricultural productivity and increase the vulnerability of farmers to climate-related risks. These factors include changes in temperature

and precipitation patterns that lead to decreased crop yields and crop failures. Extreme weather events such as droughts, floods and heat waves damage crops, reducing the availability of food. Warmer temperatures influence the distribution and prevalence of pests and diseases that affect crops and livestock. Climate change also affects livestock production by increasing heat stress on animals, reducing feed availability and altering disease patterns.

- Botswana is well-known for its diverse wildlife, unique ecosystems, and popular tourists' destinations which are affected by climate change. Loss of biodiversity due to a changing climate can diminish the attractiveness of wildlife tourism destinations and reduce the diversity of species that tourists come to see. Extreme events such as droughts, floods, and wildfires can disrupt tourism infrastructure and impact visitor experiences, for example, flooding can make certain areas inaccessible to tourists.

Activities such as boat safaris, fishing, and water-based tourism experiences can be negatively affected by unavailability of water related to climate change. Changes in wildlife populations, shifts in tourist preferences and disruptions to tourism activities can affect the income and well-being of communities reliant on tourism-related businesses.

(v) Mr Speaker, the adoption of the Climate Change Policy was an initial step to domesticate the Climate Change Convention which was adopted in the context of the sustainable development. Botswana further adopted and ratified the Paris Agreement ahead of which a pledge was made through the Nationally Determined Contribution to reduce emissions by 15 per cent in 2030. This is however, to be achieved through provision of support from developed country parties to the Climate Change Convention.

- To achieve these, both technical and financial (in the form of grants) support is needed for Botswana to develop in a sustainable manner. Additional to the initiatives mentioned under (i) above which are funded through national budgets, Botswana needs international funding to finance climate



change activities because of an already existing burden on other development imperatives. Enabling environment has been created for Botswana to access international climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Adaptation Fund. These funds provide financial support to developing countries for climate change projects and programmes. Under the GCF, Botswana has accessed a grant of USD 36 760 394 to implement a project on 'Ecosystem-Based Adaptation and Mitigation in Botswana's Communal Rangelands'.

- Other avenues for climate funding are bilateral and multilateral partnerships where Botswana has partnered with other countries, international organisations and development agencies to access funding for climate change related activities. These partnerships include but not limited to the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Southern African Science Services Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL), Southern African Development Community Climate Services Centre (SADC-CSC) who provide Botswana with both financial and technical support on climate change related matters. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR NKAWANA: Supplementary. Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you Minister. Indeed, your answer is too long. I heard you listing stakeholders in this programmes from the policy that we have just discussed, I thought you will reference one or two stakeholders and their own initiatives to show what was done since the policy was made. Out of the many that you have mentioned, are there any that you can single out? You mentioned Temo Letlotlo and what initiatives they have that we could show to people that we want to do these even though we do not have a budget, including issues of water. Thank you.

MR MTHIMKHULU: Thank you. Honourable Nkawana, I believe that you are aware that Government introduced a programme of producing solar energy and include it in the national grid. It is done in partnership with international organisations, which is what you are asking for. I spoke of Temo Letlotlo, we have reticulation of water from north to south. All these matters, that is why I spoke of ministries who are implementing the policy in their specific...(Inaudible)...through various projects. They are many Honourable Nkawana, you are aware we have tried to mitigate effects of climate

change. When you talk about Temo Letlotlo, clearly you can see that this is a Government which has taken steps to ensure that agriculture is revived and there is production of food through effective means and modern technology in farming. I believe you are aware that Honourable Nkawana being in the tourism industry, you know what is happening around the country. You have 10 wildlife concessions, so you know the whole of the country, you see what the Government is doing and you must appreciate it.

MR LUCAS: Supplementary. Thank you Honourable Mthimkhulu. You mentioned that there is no dedicated budget for climate change activities and projects which means they are all over different Ministries. Do you not think that it is not important to have a budget that will be specifically dedicated to monitoring and coordinating climate change projects and activities? If they are executed in different Ministries without a coordinating framework with a budget, would it not make it unattainable to see its progress from the timeframe given? Please emphasise that one, I know that there is no dedicated budget but do you think there should be such budget directed to the monitoring and coordination of climate change activities and projects?

MR TSOGWANE: Procedure. It is not procedure that someone is out of order but a procedure that going forward, maybe a consideration must be made. Looking at the situation before hand, but the Minister of Health is around to assist. Would talking for long not exacerbate the condition which led to him putting on the mask? Would subject to that for a longer period not affect his health because he is continually asked long questions? We should consider such things because our health is important. That is why I am saying we should be considerate because the Minister mentioned that the answer is long but we subjected him to read throughout and he had been standing up but he is protecting us by wearing a mask. I was saying we should be considerate Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: I hear you.

MR MTHIMKHULU: Honourable Lucas, at my ministry we do not implement, yes, we are the custodian of the policy but we do not implement. Other ministries, that is a very straight forward answer that I gave you earlier in my response. If we do not implement, it is best the implementing ministries that are bringing projects which of course have been intact with climate change, reduction of greenhouse emissions. Those are the people



who are properly placed to come up with projects that you are talking about, to ensure that work is done on the part to enhance our climate change response. So, as a coordinator, I cannot move beyond that, I only coordinate. That is our responsibility at the ministry.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further supplementary Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: I think you have done enough on this question. Honourable Thiite.

MR MOATLHODI: Thank you Honourable Speaker. On his behalf, I ask question nine sir.

USE OF CONCRETE POLES IN VELD FIRE PRONE AREAS

MR J. L. THIITE (GHANZI NORTH): asked the Minister of Minerals and Energy if he is aware that whenever there are veld fires in some areas, electricity timber poles are burnt resulting in some villages enduring days without electricity supply; if so:

- (i) when will his ministry consider using concrete poles in veld fire prone areas as a long-term solution taking into account their superior fire rating and other factors compared to timber and steel poles; if not, what is the position in this regard; and
- (ii) to elaborate on the Expression of Interest (EoI) 3531/19 concerning the establishment of a manufacturing plant for the production, supply, and delivery of concrete poles and cross arms to Botswana Power Corporation (BPC).

Later Date.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members, let us go on to Second Reading.

CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC CRIME (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 (NO. 16 OF 2023)

Second Reading

(Resumed Debate)

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members, just before we adjourn for lunch, Honourable Makwinja was on the floor debating and she was left with six minutes.

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (MS MAKWINJA):

Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you very much for the opportunity. Mr Speaker, I was still on the floor debating the Bill presented before us and indicating that I do not support it because...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure Mr Speaker.

MS MAKWINJA: ...there is confusion.

DR TSHABANG: Procedure. Thank you Mr Speaker. Sorry Honourable Makwinja. When I was debating yesterday, there was an issue about interference...

MR SPEAKER: I will come to that, Honourable Dr Tshabang. I do not want to interrupt the Minister.

DR TSHABANG: Oh! Yes.

MR SPEAKER: Yes, I am aware of that.

MS MAKWINJA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I do not support this Bill because it tampers with sound and independent regulations that we already have Mr Speaker. You will note that we are the same people that commit corruption in our respective offices. Thereafter, we claim that something is wrong with our laws and then blame them on the Government of the day. So Honourable Members, it is important for us to differentiate these things. We are the ones to blame for what transpire in our offices because we tend to violate the law. Thereafter, we claim that the law calls for review because IEC just like University of Botswana (UB), all parastatals, particularly law enforcement agencies such as police and Botswana Defence Force (BDF); all of them are independent and we also play a role as Government. We are responsible for paying salaries of public service. Tell me, have you heard of any country where Government is not involved in the affairs of any institution on the basis that it is independent? I am saying this because our institutions operate through the laws made by Government.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MS MAKWINJA: So if at all some of our laws...

MR KEKGONEGILE: Point of correction. Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I understand the Minister's point. However, I would like to correct her; opposition is saying indeed we have a problem. Therefore, responsible Government should account in terms of rectifying the problem. For example; Botswana currently has a



challenge with Government Accounting and Budgeting System (GABS). Businesses have collapsed as a result. Shockingly, instead of taking responsibility, we decided to fire the Permanent Secretary (PS) who deals with GABS then spare the Minister. For this reason, we believe it is important for us to rectify these things. We should refrain from blaming innocent people instead of taking measures towards idle policy makers. Someone who spent a month at Tsholetsa House only to tamper with BDP voters roll, where you did not take any measures towards them but fired the PS. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Makwinja.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!)

MS MAKWINJA: Mr Speaker, this is exactly what I was referring to earlier before we went for lunch. We have what we call technocrats, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) who regulate our law who are also responsible for making sure that everything is in order. You will note that Ministers are responsible for making laws. Honourable Member, PS reports to Permanent Secretary to the President (PSP).

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification Honourable Member.

MS MAKWINJA: You also have committees that are capable enough to address these issues. PSs do not report to Ministers...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MS MAKWINJA: They do not report, yes they report to the PSP. I believe you know where PSP reports. For this reason, I believe you will cause confusion between laws made in this House including what transpires in our respective offices. That is why I used the '*bokolela*' (complaining) and I was criticised. Whenever someone is fired, we start complaining though they either failed to do their job or performed poorly. In no time Mr Speaker, this thing happens; people sleep on their jobs, we have a problem. Thereafter, they blame Ministers. Why blame Ministers? The truth is, we have accountable people in place and they are called Accounting Officers. Mr Speaker, I am saying this because we sometimes confuse things.

Motswana at home, we should strike a difference between these things. You should understand that our core business in this House or Parliament is to make laws

just as we are discussing this Bill today. We already have Corruption and Economic Act which indicates that both DCEC and Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) are independent. So we should not violate what the Act says then blame the BDP Government. We must understand that we have Executive officers as heads of ministries. They have to take responsibility. We must take responsibility because we are Government of the day and it is impossible for us to expect our PS to function as Accounting Officers. You should be able to differentiate these things. Government must make sure that everything is in order. So you must not blame us for firing those who sleep on their jobs. Mr Speaker, I am left with one minute and I must say; elders at home should understand that these things differ. Parliament is in this House to make sound laws and when that happens...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure Mr Speaker.

MS MAKWINJA: ...we are not to blame Mr Speaker. I thank you.

MR REATILE: Point of procedure. Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Makwinja's debate will soon mislead the House. She insinuates that public service cannot be complimented for the job well-done.

According to Honourable Makwinja, when bulls arrived from America, it was not through public workers' facilitation but BDPs'. When things do not go according to plan in the ministry, public workers are blamed. I wonder why Honourable Makwinja hates workers in Botswana so much where she feels they deserve bad things while the good suits BDP members who travel with black cars. I will keep protecting them until you realise that they are also worthy of praise. We cannot come here and attack public workers if something goes wrong.

When the Minister of Finance told us that she is going to buy Government Accounting and Budget System (GABS) and so on and everything will be alright, it was not public workers. She is the one who said that responding in Parliament. She came with statements and submitted them to Parliament. Right now you are saying we should not blame her but the Permanent Secretary. No Honourable, we know that what you are giving us is assurance from the Minister. That is why in developed countries a Minister can resign taking the blame for train accident because he/she has failed in his/her duties. So the way you are framing it, you are saying



Ministers are just sitting in their offices forgetting what public workers are doing and what they are not doing is not their business. Public workers do not report to them but Permanent Secretary to the President (PSP); PSP reports to a politician. There is no how PS cannot report to the politician while the PSP does. I thank you Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Before you rise Honourable Makwinja, we run the risk of creating confusion if we do not have clarity. If public officer A could be a Permanent Secretary and from here he/she hits someone with a car, I am sure we all agree that that has nothing to do with the Government. He/she was driving on their own. If he/she was not careful, that is his/her problem. If a public officer is executing Government policy and in the execution of that policy, something goes wrong, you cannot go and try and crucify the public officer, then Government takes itself out of the equation and says, 'I had appointed a person to serve you but he/she did not do what I said should be done. So it is his/her mistake'. If you are clear on policy, individual responsibility, the policy implementation by the very people we expect on behalf of the Government, if you can focus on that and see that we do not deny our officers just because we do not like what has happened, it is dangerous to do so. In my view, you own up; you accept.

I take it Honourable Makwinja, you understand what Honourable Reatile is saying. You may have an answer, and you may want to react to that Honourable Minister.

MS MAKWINJA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I hear you Mr Speaker and I also understand the Honourable Member. I think there is a slight misunderstanding. What I am saying is that at the end of the day as the Government of the day, we take responsibility and we will not leave public workers because we think we are different, no. I am trying to distinguish the accountability that goes with the office that at the end of the day, we must not confuse the laws that we made though they may not be perfect. Yes, you take responsibility but it is as if we are being crucified as the Government of the day because of things that at the end of the day, yes, we do have control but we do not have total control over them. When we try to fix, we get blamed for firing people yet we want to straighten out these very things Mr Speaker. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Makwinja. I am told that there is one slot remaining for the Opposition.

MR LUCAS (BOBONONG): Thank you Mr Speaker. I want us to accept that the aim of the Bill as proposed by Honourable Keorapetse is to try to improve, amend and strengthen the DCEC. What Honourable Keorapetse is proposing is that this organisation is not autonomous and its staff is not safe and I believe we are all aware of that. Unfortunately, there are people who prefer to oppose and I am glad that Batswana are watching those who are opposing. There is no problem, continue opposing the proposition to fix.

Honourable Members, corruption is a terrible thing. Most African countries that Botswana is better than them in terms of several things, from the start, it looked like they will perform well but where corruption is, the damage incurred sometimes cannot be fixed. African countries where the schools are dilapidated, there is poor performance, there is shortage of books, it is because corruption is high. There are people who are in Government or business people who covet national assets and want to take them in a wrong manner. You will find such a situation where there is shortage of books in schools. That greediness is caused by people who covet Government assets and sometimes it causes shortage of medication in health facilities because the country is unable to procure or funds are available but there is maladministration. That is where you will find that corruption destroys the country and anything that you can think of in terms of Government administration.

Where there is corruption, you will hear the rulers claiming that funds are available and they call them with different names such as *mekgokolosa* and *mopomponyego* (excess funds) which is an indication that funds are available. However, you look on the other side where there is corruption, you will find out that Government owes people, the very same Government which claims there is *mopomponyego* and *mokgokolosa*. You will find that veterinary staff who are manning disease controlling gates have been owed for many years yet there are claims that funds are available, all because of corruption. Then it becomes clear to you that when you see a country...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Point of correction, Mr Speaker.

MR LUCAS: ...gets to that situation, then it is a problem.

MR SPEAKER: Point of correction, Leader of the House.



MR LUCAS: I was moving on to the point of soldiers' pensions but now you are disturbing me.

MR TSOGWANE: Are you a soldier? My point of correction Mr Speaker is that I thought we will sieve our issues and I thought the way the mover of the Bill presented it, he tried to differentiate things. I have noticed that Honourable Member for Bobonong is debating everything. Even when he fails to sweep his house, to him that is corruption. So he has now generalised everything as corruption. Batswana no longer know how to differentiate corruption from maladministration. It is not about where you discuss anything. He is assigning every failure to corruption. So since you used to lecture at University of Botswana (UB) and from there you moved to politics, it was not corruption. I do not understand. So I would like you to assist us there Honourable Member, because I know that you went to university, you were a lecturer there. When you left the university and got into politics it was not corruption, it was so you could go and make developments here and there. However, if everything is corruption, I do not understand, I do not know when you will differentiate for Batswana that, this is incompetency, this is laziness, and this is carelessness. So we are going to end up with everything being corruption. So where everything is a priority therefore there is no priority.

MR LUCAS: I heard you His Honour the Vice President (VP). If you pay attention my debate for today is to highlight that, corruption is destroying this country, corruption will ruin it, and it continues to ruin it. Corruption destroys all facets of society especially the corruption that exists in Africa and has visited this country.

I was highlighting that, where there is corruption you will see a Government saying she has funds while owing the people of this country, and this Government does owe the people. She promises people and then she does not help them as promised, including the retired soldiers and I believe you will pay them soon. Pay the people.

Let me continue and highlight that, you will know that corruption has settled in when tenders are allocated to relatives and friends and on party lines. Then you find that only a handful of people become rich, and many people become poor, because those few have money, and they become wealthy through corruption. That is why there are two classes of people in Botswana. There is the extremely rich and the extremely poor, the middle

class has reduced, they fell to the extremely poor. That on its own is caused by corruption, because the money is in the hands of few people at the top, because when there is a project there are some people who are given those projects, and this corruption destroys the country. If we do not amend these laws our corruption will be like the one in other countries you were saying we are better than. Those countries are going to do better than us in developments if we continue not amending laws like Honourable Keorapetse is saying. Just look at what is currently happening, we are saying that if we want to combat corruption properly, the DCEC Director General should not be appointed by His Excellency the President, while knowing that most of the time corruption starts at the top from the Presidents. So the President who may be involved in corruption is the one who should appoints the DCEC Director General. It is also said that the President can fire the DCEC Director General, really! How can those at the top, who are involved in corrupt acts be the ones who appoint people who fight corruption, no that is not acceptable Honourable Members.

MR KEORAPETSE: Elucidation. In addition to that Honourable Lucas, you are aware that Section 15 of the Corruption and Economic Crime Act (CICA) states that, when investigations are ongoing, the President can instruct those investigating not to access a certain house, office, boat or plane. He can even prohibit them from taking certain files. You cannot take these files, because of the security of the nation, but not explaining what it means.

MR LUCAS: Thank you Honourable Keorapetse. It is true Honourable Keorapetse that, our laws need to be amended, because if the President can say, stop the investigation there, he can stop an investigation that involves him. We are saying that high ranking politicians like Presidents and Honourable Ministers are the ones who are more likely to do corruption. So if they are most likely to be involved in corruption then why are they the ones who appoint and fire people who combat corruption? It does not correspond Honourable Members. So that is why we are saying this situation should be corrected. Last time we had a serious problem the DCEC staff were under attack for fighting corruption. I saw them being told to back off. Maybe they were being bullied because someone knew that their file is there, or someone knew that the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) is in possession of their file. That is why we are saying, there



should be an amendment. I am saying it is something we can agree on here, because we are saying we want to strengthen laws that combat corruption, so I hear them that side saying, we should not correct it. You can be suspicious that the reason they are saying we should not amend it is because they have bad intentions.

MR TSOGWANE: Correction, sit down and stop misleading Batswana. The correction Mr Speaker is that, he says the other side they are refusing to make amendments. This side we are talking about the amendment which we can see does not solve an existing problem. If something is administrative it should be amended in that manner. You cannot come with administrative issues then you make a law to change the process so there can be fundamental change, but that thing remains the same. The measures you are saying were taken against people, it was administrative. So there is confusion, the measures were taken because there is no board, the people's turn is not secure. So what kind of administration are we going to have if we administrated in that manner? It means that everything is going to be changed even issues which are administrative, that can be addressed by changes to the policies, rather than tabling a Bill that solves everything, it is going to create something else that in the future will also bring a problem. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR LUCAS: Still on this issue that, when you exist with people like you, and you have to make amendments and they say there are no amendments that should be made, it might raise suspicion that you have bad intentions. The objective being to want this law to continue being weak, so that you can continue doing corruption. In my view when we talk about making amending and improving, it does not make sense for people to be upset and start shouting, and even saying I am not making sense. However, hearing that the fundamental issue here is amending the legislation, so we strengthen the existing legislation. The President should not be the only one who appoints the DCEC Director General.

MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MR MORWAENG): Correction Mr Speaker. I want to show the Honourable Member that, the Bill that was presented here, established DCEC, and it controls the administrators, it shows that the management of DCEC is independent. It is independent and it performs its functions legally, without any interference, in their investigations they are not supposed to be disturbed or be directed to do something by anyone. The Bill is clear,

I think that is what you are saying that, you need DCEC to be independent. So we are saying, that is what the Bill is saying. So what you want to amend Honourable Member does not correct anything that is not already there, because this already exists in the legislation, the agency is independent, we hope that, everyone who is appointed there should do their job fully, and follow the law. The law says they are independent. Honourable Lucas should note that, it is not that by highlighting what the law says, it means we accept that there should be corruption. We agree that corruption is bad, and like you are saying, it can collapse the economy of the country. That is why the Government initially formed this department. I thought I should explain this thing because it is not...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Point of order.

MR MORWAENG: Honourable Kapinga, you have just arrived since Parliament resumed but that is okay. We have been progressing efficiently in your absence.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Morwaeng stood on a point of correction, which has equal force to that of order.

MR MORWAENG: Yes, thank you sir. Thank you for the guidance which Honourable Kapinga probably forgot since he just arrived. That is my story, thank you Honourable Member. Thank you Mr Speaker.

MR LUCAS: Mr Speaker, I believe that Honourable Morwaeng's well known problem is that, he does not have good listening skills. Honourable Keorapetse has just highlighted that the President has powers to stop ongoing investigations. You were acting last time when the icon Mr Katlholo was dismissed, that man is an icon. You were acting, and you can see that these people are dismissed without any clear explanation. The President is the only one who knows why he fires them. There are no disciplinary hearings whatsoever, but they are dismissed by the President. What makes us not to suspect that he dismisses them because they are seemingly thorns in his flesh?

MR SPEAKER: Your time is up. Thank you very much. Honourable Members, before...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: No, no one is going to rise except one to reply to the debate.



SPEAKER'S RULING

MR SPEAKER: Before I call upon the mover of this Bill, Leader of the Opposition (LOO), I thought this would be as good a time as any to go back to the situation which occurred yesterday when Honourable Dr Tshabang was debating. You will recall that he made certain statements, and said that he had available to him the write-up or letters backing-up his allegation which summarised the issue that departments or institutions which are believed to be independent are meddled with, institutions that no one has a right to order or instruct how they should do their job. I hope you remember that Honourable Members.

This morning Honourable Dr Tshabang brought to my attention two pieces of correspondence. One is a letter with a heading more or less backing up what he alleged and a reply, acknowledging the receipt of that letter of the 29th of August 2022, the acknowledgement coming from the Office of the President. Honourable Members, normally my view is that, if you can help it never ask questions when you have no idea what the answer is going to be. Maybe because of my background and upbringing, we learnt that the hard way because you could spoil your whole case by asking questions without any clue of what the answer will be. The answer can ruin the whole case.

I have read the two letters, unless people want these documents to become part of the proceedings or to be debated. My own view is that, because the real question was, if Honourable Tshabang did not have any correspondence to back-up what he is saying, he will have to withdraw. If you produce the documents backing-up what he said, then you do not have to withdraw. My view is that, we will then leave it at that and the letters which he gave me do back-up what he said.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: No, I do not want an interpretation. I did not ask anyone to assist me to run this House.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR SPEAKER: No wait. That was the essence Honourable Tshabang, and that is why I said you should produce those letters the following day or otherwise withdraw the statement. He brought the correspondences, they are valid, it backs-up what he said. So, I cannot order him to withdraw.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: *Ga se gore a bale?* (Should he not read?)

MR SPEAKER: You want to implicate me with Setswana that I am not conversant with...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ... (Laughter!)...

MR SPEAKER: ... I told you that I only learnt Setswana in Standard 3. Honourable Ambassador and I know just a bit so I might say irrelevant things.

Honourable Members, I do not want these to be read because other people who are not here, who cannot answer anything, cannot reply to some of the things in the correspondence. Hence I have total aversion to reading into the records of Parliament, something which will then introduce names of other people who are not here, when we are dealing only with the question whether there is something backing-up what Honourable Dr Tshabang was saying. We have letters that show some interference on independent institutions, and I am satisfied that there is such a correspondence. So Honourable Tshabang, you do not have to withdraw that statement. That is the ruling.

MR LUCAS: Procedure Mr Speaker. There was an argument here yesterday, and some people saw Honourable Tshabang as a liar but letters that prove that he was telling the truth are here. Mr Speaker, I believe it is in Batswana's best interest to hear what those letters entail. It will now seem like you are hiding something Mr Speaker. I do not know you as someone who keeps secrets.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Lucas, I have ruled on that one. I am not prepared to have anything that involves people who are not here read in the record of this Parliament, people who cannot defend themselves. It is sufficient Honourable Lucas, that I said Honourable Tshabang does not have to withdraw his statement which he made, and the matter...

MR LUCAS: I was not yet done Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: No, you are done. I have taken the floor from you.

MR LUCAS: I only fear that you might soon chase me out.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Lucas, please take your seat.



DR TSHABANG: Procedure. Mr Speaker, I hear you Mr Speaker, I do not have to withdraw. There was an argument from Honourable...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

DR TSHABANG: I do not have to withdraw. There was an argument from Honourable Minister Morwaeng that he has never interfered in anything and there is no letter stating such. I am not going to read the letter. I am asking that Honourable Morwaeng withdraws his words because the evidence is there, it goes with the integrity of the Minister to say he was not aware, he is not aware of those letters and I was not telling the truth. The other letter shows that it was carbon copied to him.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: He now accused you of not telling the truth.

DR TSHABANG: He accused me of not telling the truth. Who was not telling the truth in Parliament yesterday? His words should be expunged and he should withdraw.

MR SPEAKER: I do not know what the problem is. If the Minister alludes that I do not know what Honourable Tshabang is talking about, I am not aware of those letters, are we now going to cross-examine the Honourable Minister? Is that a fruitful debate?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Withdraw.

MR SPEAKER: Withdraw what? He says he is not aware. He will withdraw if he can demonstrate that he is aware. That is not the debate here; the only question which was debated yesterday was that, I said Honourable Tshabang should bring the letters so that I can read them, failing which, we withdraw. We... (Inaudible)... of that matter. The matter ends.

MR MORWAENG: On a point of procedure. Mr Speaker, let me remind you sir that last week there were words spoken in Parliament which you requested Honourable Keorapetse to produce evidence for, the statements he raised regarding his Excellency the President that...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Morwaeng be very careful ...(Inaudible)... to the record and I have expunged it. I am not about to allow anybody to put into that record where I have deleted from the record of proceedings.

MR MORWAENG: Thank you for expunging those words sir because there were not true.

MR SPEAKER: I have expunged them, the instruction was carried out.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Procedure Mr Speaker. I agree with you, I am not going to cause any chaos.

MR SPEAKER: Should I read Standing Orders on what procedure means?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: I am going to order advocate out in your presence.

MR RAMOGAPI: I am not causing chaos Mr Speaker. I agree with you that you are handling the procedure very well Mr Speaker. If we call for procedure it means we have complaints regarding the procedure. Honourable Members, some issues are embarrassing, sometimes Mr Speaker just wants to cover us so that people do not see our negative traits. Mr Speaker, I implore members who have the tendency to ask for evidence whereas the information is in the public domain, they should at least ask other members.

Mr Speaker, for example, I was asked to bring another piece of evidence which is all over the internet. You can simply google what Kenneth Good wrote, all that is there in the public domain. If we now start raising such issues in Parliament, we are wasting time. Sometimes they have to learn to listen when you speak because you are trying to rectify the situation like you did with Honourable Tshabang's issue. We should not dwell into the issue, we should leave it and continue with your Parliament business Mr Speaker. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member for Palapye, Honourable Ramogapi.

Honourable Members as you may recall, the question before the House is that the Corruption and Economic Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 16 of 2023) be read a second time. This is the time to call upon Honourable Keorapetse, Leader of the Opposition (LOO) to reply to the debate.

MR KEORAPETSE (SELEBI PHIKWE WEST): Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, it seems like there is not much understanding from the other side of the aisle regarding the objective of the Bill. Mr Speaker, as I explained, the objective of the Bill is to transform the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime which I once worked at, to be independent without any interference. That is why we are proposing that



this organisation should have a board which will recommend the appointment of Director General (DG) of Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) after assessing if the applicant is competent and the background to check if the applicant will not be easily influenced.

Mr Speaker, all organs in developed countries which promote democracy like DCEC, Attorney General, Ombudsman, and Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) are entrenched in the Constitution. What happens is, directors of these organs are protected by the law. That is why in this Bill we seek that the Director General (DG) of DCEC should be protected.

MR TSOGWANE: On a point of correction. Mr Speaker, my point of correction is that, when the Honourable Member started and had to now respond to Honourable Members, he said it seems there is no understanding on this side of the aisle. Mr Speaker, we clearly understand and know what he is talking about. Members on the side of the aisle raised arguments on why they do not support you. If people do not agree with you and raise arguments to support their position it does not mean they do not understand. They are law makers, they have made Bills, we have enacted laws so we understand. We run this organisation, it is under Government. It was not established by any Government. We understand, we know what we are talking about. Let me therefore correct him Mr Speaker, he should not say other members do not understand just because they raised strong arguments against his Bill.

MR KEORAPETSE: Mr Speaker, that is exactly the argument that, this organisation should not be run by them. That is the objective of this Bill to transform this organisation to be independent.

MR TSOGWANE: On a point of correction. If I say it is ran by us I mean everything whether it is the board or parastatals is under the ruling Government. He should not divert words I am using to correct him and invent his own. He should just admit that we hold this perspective and he holds a different one. We differ in terms of understanding that is why we debated the way we did.

MR KEORAPETSE: Mr Speaker, I still maintain that there is a problem of understanding. The reason I say there is a problem of understanding is because, this Government agreed ...(Inaudible)... a consultant to undertake the project that was funded by European Union (EU), to conduct a study and make recommendations on

how to improve and transform DCEC to be independent. Mr Speaker, I explained that in this report, 96 per cent of Batswana believe that DCEC should be free from outside influence, influence of Government; 72 per cent felt that DCEC should not be part of the civil service. An expert is the one who wrote this report which has reference group; 85 per cent of Batswana are of the view that DCEC should be an independent body like Auditor General. Why? Because it is not independent. This research was conducted by an expert, a solicitor who worked in the organisation we were benchmarking from at Hong Kong.

Mr Speaker, DCEC was created by a model of ...

MR TSOGWANE: Correction. Mr Speaker, we have got so many different policies globally. It does not mean if that solicitor said what he said it is the gospel truth. It also does not mean that if he mentioned that we are out of order. Minister Morwaeng has been quoting a law written in black and white that you can challenge in court that DCEC is independent and it should not be influenced by anybody. So, it is not different from that solicitor that you mentioned, we are not a copycat to that solicitor of yours. We are administering through the existing law, which was passed by the Parliament. So, that is the law which we use, you cannot dispute that.

MR KEORAPETSE: A solicitor hired to run DCEC as he mentioned we are the ones running it as the Government. Not Honourable Keorapetse's solicitor, his that created a reference group that had his public officers, which included the Government. He should check those who were included in the reference group. Mr Speaker, he made recommendations, and that report was taken and the Government committed itself to implement the recommendations by Bertrand De Speville. When I got to Parliament in 2014, I asked a question about when Bertrand De Speville's recommendations of consultancy report will be implemented. Go and check on the Hansard how the Minister for BDP responded to the question.

MR MORWAENG: Correction. Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, let me make a correction before people get confused. When the Government hires an expert to advise them on something, there is nothing obliging the Government to implement what was said by that expert. That is not how that Government is ran, ideas can be brought forward but there is nothing obliging the Government to implement that Mr Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...



MR MORWAENG: Honourable Kapinga please try, you have been absent since the Parliament meeting commenced but there is nothing wrong with that because you went to make lots of money from outside. Thank you.

DR TSHABANG: Procedure. Mr Speaker, the past three interventions of corrections are not corrections. I do not know what I will do but seeing that people want to debate, they want to counter the debate. Corrections must be corrections based on facts. If someone is present because there was a consultant that was hired and made recommendations, the other one says I must correct 'I must correct, we are not obliged to take that recommendation,' that is not correction.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

DR TSHABANG: No, he is not saying you are supposed to ...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

DR TSHABANG: You said you are going to implement, what are you correcting? Mr Speaker, these corrections are not right, there are being abused.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: You do not understand.

DR TSHABANG: No! You are the ones that do not understand because you want to correct someone's argument that is straight forward. What are you correcting when someone is giving you evidence that you agreed that you will implement? Mr Speaker, I am worried about these interventions, you must stop them.

MR SPEAKER: You are right Honourable Dr Tshabang, you are quite right. Most of the corrections are not corrections, they are arguments. When you differ to the view, that is not a correction, you differ, which is legitimate.

MRS SALESHANDO: Procedure. Mr Speaker, thank you for making that point that they are not really corrections. What Honourable Keorapetse is doing is summarizing his response to the debate. He is being disrupted by non-correction objections throughout. In addition to that, corrections made by Honourable Morwaeng are so long that he can leave what Honourable Keorapetse is saying and focus on Honourable Kapinga. When he hears someone talking from the back, he leaves and focuses on them and laughs as usual. I thought you should mention that we heard you and there is no correction,

and not because I said correction, allow me to speak until I finish. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR KEORAPETSE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me clarify. I do not know what is bringing confusion hence I am saying there is a challenge of understanding. Appointing someone has a bearing on their independence. Mr Speaker, the reason why there is Judicial Service Commission (JSC) is to enhance independence of the appointed Judge so that in future they do not pull to the wrong direction. That is why I am saying, the appointment process should be enhanced. The report that I mentioned by Afro Barometer, talks about corruption that the candidate that gets appointed in this institution should be appointed in such a way that, they would not be coerced to seem as... the perception is also very important. This candidate should be independent and independent in truth. Mr Speaker, that is where our concern is, that since His Excellency President assumed his position he had Director Generals... I believe he started with Mr Bruno Paledi if I am not wrong, then Mr Joseph Matambo, Mr Tymon Katlholo, then Mr Tshepho Pilane acted, as well as Mr Festus Matshameko and as we speak Ms Botlhale Makgekgenene is the Director General of DCEC. On average His Excellency President Masisi changes the Director General of DCEC every year. The best practice is that one politician should not be given all the powers of changing the Director General of anti-corruption agency like DCEC. That is our argument Honourable Members. That is why I am saying, there is a challenge of understanding that the independence of a candidate appointed as the Director General, appointment has a bearing on that independence. I yield to Honourable Lucas.

MR LUCAS: Clarification. Honourable Keorapetse can you please assist us here, if six people were changed in six years, which means people in DCEC are the most failing than other institutions if they are frequently changed, or it means these people are the ones who are disrupting people that are appointed?

MR KEORAPETSE: I hear you Honourable Lucas, one can think that. What is being proposed on this Bill is that the board should recommend to the President a competent candidate to be appointed. The other thing is that DCEC should appoint its staff. Mr Speaker, as we speak a senior member of staff was transferred from Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to DCEC without the DCEC Director General's knowledge. They



found a person in the office and told that the person has been transferred to the DCEC. When we talk about operational autonomy, this is what we are referring to, how do you transfer someone from another department to an investigation body like DCEC? Mr Speaker, I raised this concern during the 11th Parliament that, you cannot transfer a person to the Ministry of Health whilst they are still dealing with a case and the other one is taken to Francistown. Mr Katlholo appeared in June 2021 before Public Accounts Committee (PAC), answered a question when we were asking him if there are senior officers of his that were transferred by the Permanent Secretary to the President (PSP)? He responded that, "it is true, but he is engaging the Office of the President regarding the matter because he disagrees with it as it interrupts his job." So that is why we are saying, we should not hide behind the Act just because the staff of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) is divorced from the mainstream public service. If the Director General is not appointed by the President, this will curb instances where they get interrupted whilst dealing with cases.

When you talk about operational autonomy and claim that the DCEC Director's job will not be interrupted and that there is no one who can condemn him for addressing cases the best way he knows how, Mr Speaker, there has to be no interruption between the appointing authority and the Director. If the appointing authority feels that the case is investigated by their relative, friend or myself, then they have no choice but to resign. He does not have to explain to anyone that is why we believe the Act should clearly state that he is prohibited from taking that decision.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Elucidation.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield.

MR MMOLOTSI: Point of elucidation. Thank you Mr Speaker. That is an excellent debate Honourable Keorapetse. Here is the thing Honourable Keorapetse, there are two key elements of an anti-corruption agencies' independence. One of them is that, there should be less political interference in appointment of authority.

Two; politicians should never interfere with implementation, functions and decision making. So you will note that Honourable Morwaeng is lost though he knows that there are two key elements of an anti-corruption agencies independence.

MR KEORAPETSE: Thank you Honourable Mmolotsi. It is a fundamental element like you said; politicians should never interfere with the affairs of an institution like DCEC. Mr Speaker, the unfortunate and most disheartening thing is that there is...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield.

MR TSOGWANE: Point of clarification. Can you enlighten us Leader of the Opposition (LOO); your concern is based on the fact that, people are being transferred or fired. I believe transfers are allowed in public service and firing people for specified reasons, not because someone is being investigated or is investigating a case. The question is, do those who are fired carry their files away when they leave? The truth is, the office will continue to function and the coming officer will get to appreciate what transpired and how to investigate cases looking at those files. What can stop them from doing so? I thank you.

MR KEORAPETSE: Vice President (VP) the challenge is that, the Director General of DCEC must be independent instead of handling cases based on whether they will get fired for passing certain verdict. Firing them means the new officer will also... we could say self-censorship if we were talking about media.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Self-censorship.

MR KEORAPETSE: Self-censorship is where they start to wonder whether their predecessor got fired for investigating a particular case. So that is why we are saying, in South Africa a Public Protector is employed for a seven year contract, non-renewable.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: You can never touch them.

MR KEORAPETSE: It will all be over at the end of seven years. Judge of the Constitutional Court has to leave after a period of seven years. For this reason, we must legally protect the Director General of DCEC in Botswana. Mr Speaker, why did the framers of our Constitution decide that the Secretary of IEC should retire at the age of 65 while Auditor General retires at the age of 60? Why did they give terms that make it quite difficult to fire Auditor General, Secretary of IEC, Attorney General, the Director Public Prosecutions (DPP) but make it easy to fire the Director General of DCEC? This thing will never take us anywhere if at all



we intend to fight corruption and economic crime Vice President. I thought to bring this point to your attention.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further elucidation.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield.

MR MMOLOTSI: Point of elucidation. Thank you Honourable Keorapetse. My concern is that, you missed my point because members interrupt your debate. You missed the point that Former Director General of DCEC, Mr Katlholo, was fired after meeting and telling the Vice President that he finished investigating three Ministers and would like to submit their files to DPP. Are you aware of this issue?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR MMOLOTSI: Thereafter, Vice President fired him.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Point of correction.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: No I am correcting him, he is telling lies. You cannot stand here and say untruthful things. Correction Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Correction Vice President (VP).

MR TSOGWANE: Point of correction. If you are well known for being dishonest, Batswana should completely give up on you today. You can call Mr Katlholo and ask off the record if we have met in that manner. I have never seen Mr Katlholo in my office and he never came to my office Honourable Mmolotsi. So stop telling Batswana things that are not true, people will give up on you; Mr Katlholo is out there, we can call him. Stop ridiculing Parliament, we are serious in this House and you are distorting Honourable Keorapetse's debate as people will start to conclude that you are the same and that everything he says is not true. I thank you.

MR KEORAPETSE: Mr Speaker, it is very suspicious for our leaders; His Excellency the President, His Honour the Vice President, Minister responsible for the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) and DCEC, that DIS can lock offices and cease files and the High Court and Court of Appeal rules that what they did was unlawful. However, up to now Mr Speaker we do not know anyone in Government who was charged because of this case.

So this alone tells us that this interference was an order from above, it was sanctioned. The High Court and

Court of Appeal also explained that this was unlawful. Moreover, DIS abused its power just like they always do. I personally asked the Director General and Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to show me where their Act gives them power to investigate cases of corruption. They told me that they are permitted to do so provided that they affect national security.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Elucidation.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield.

MR SALESHANDO: Point of elucidation. Thank you. Are you not surprised that these unlawful acts which were even corroborated by the High Court and Court of Appeal (CoA) to be unlawful, were encouraged by the Vice President? He even fired the Director General who tried to stop DIS from interfering?

MR KEORAPETSE: For that reason, we believe this was an order from above, they were ordered to go and cease those files from DCEC. Mr Speaker, I asked in this very Parliament and Ministers who worked at the OP responded, go and check the records. I asked why they stopped DCEC from investigating cases of DIS, Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) and Botswana Railways which they already investigated and submitted their files to DPP?

Further Mr Speaker, I also wrote a letter to His Excellency when appointing Ombudsman, telling him that my objection regarding Ombudsman is that they failed to give good reasons for not investigating some cases and take them to court.

Mr Speaker, I went on to indicate that, they are pursuing fake cases where they claim that P100 billion disappeared in Botswana. P100 billion Mr Speaker, we also heard that those who were being transferred to DCEC refused because there is no P100 billion that disappeared. These law enforcement agencies asked them to stop wasting their time since they are busy investigating real cases. For that reason, they were crucified and fired from DCEC. Mr Speaker, Honourable Mmolotsi spoke about political interference. Political interference is very possible looking at Section 15. Section 15 explains that His Excellency (HE) the President can call Director General of DCEC or DCEC investigators and instructs them not to investigate a certain file, office, building or ship.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification.



MR KEORAPETSE: You should not search a certain vehicle or plane due to national security. That national security is not defined in terms of this Act and can mean anything. That tells us that interference is very possible; political interference is legislated for. I yield to Honourable Dr Tshabang.

DR TSHABANG: Clarification Mr Speaker. Honourable Leader of the Opposition (LOO), the clarification I seek is, if Honourable Minister is able to interfere in a case investigated by a Judge, somebody who is protected by the Constitution, what more of somebody who is not protected by the Constitution? The loopholes that you are talking about, do you not think that they are just too much that DCEC is just a small entity that they can brush aside?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification. Take also this one LOO. I have another one this side, Mathoothe.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield to Honourable Mathoothe. I will come to you.

MR MATHOOTHE: Thank you Mr Speaker. The clarification I seek is that when you said, if he says, a certain plane must not be searched, what if that plane carries drugs that are all over Botswana, what does that mean?

MR KEORAPETSE: Possibility of political interference always exists. That is the argument that political interference is always a possibility according to how the law is written. Honourable Members, are there no ways that due to national security reasons can be intervened? Our suggestion is that court can be approached. A Judge can order that journalists and anyone from outside should not be in attendance and HE can be heard through the Attorney General. He can be asked, 'are you actually saying if DCEC can investigate these cases that can interfere with national security? Make your argument before me' and then the Judge can make a decision that they can continue investigating, national security is not an issue.

Let me respond to a point raised by Honourable Tshabang. Honourable Tshabang, we went for 2019 elections, Secretary of Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was appointed on a temporary contrary to the provisions of the Constitution. I agree with you that there can be interference with an appointed official who is appointed in terms of the Constitution

and given a temporary contract, what more of a Director General who was appointed at the whims and caprices of the President? This one is not protected at all under Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) Government. That is why Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) calls for this Bill's amendment. Let us review and amend it. Mr Speaker...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: I asked for clarification sir.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Elucidation Sticks.

MR KEORAPETSE: I yield to Honourable Reatile.

MR REATILE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Keorapetse, you will recall that when we were at Public Accounts Committee (PAC), the former Director General of DCEC indicated that Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) cases were complete. He had submitted files at Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP). He listed those that were completed. These cases had a lot of political interference. The beneficiary are those in high places of appointing authority. That is why those cases have never seen a light of day at court yet they passed through DPP. After Tiro gave us those answers, he was fired from office because he disclosed information which was highly classified though he did not disclose who were in there. I thank you.

MR KEORAPETSE: That is what we are basically saying Honourable Members that...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR KEORAPETSE: He has long asked for clarification and I did not yield, now he is interjecting with this point.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: I have to correct, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Let me hear his correction.

MR MORWAENG: Correction. Mr Speaker, according to what Honourable Member is saying, His Excellency has powers that if there is a case affecting... He is saying the law allows His Excellency that upon realisation that...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Morwaeng?

MR MORWAENG: Sir.

MR SPEAKER: You have to stop that line of yours. Correct what you want to correct. Do not interpret to us



what he said is wrong. I also happen to know the law.

MR MORWAENG: Thank you sir. The correction Mr Speaker with your permission is that, it is wrong that he interprets it in such a way that, when HE does that, he seems to be out of order because the law permits him for the good and security of the nation. That is my correction.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Morwaeng, you agreed with Honourable Keorapetse. Honourable Keorapetse is saying the law empowers him and his argument is not about that. His argument is that, when you give an individual those powers, you open yourself to abuse. That is the bulb.

MR KEORAPETSE: There always exist a possibility of abuse. Like we are saying in (g), Mr Speaker it says, "Clause 9 amends Section 15 of the Act with a primary purpose to eliminate the possibility of abuse of power by the President, where in certain circumstances he or she could prevent exercise of powers of search and seizure of records or reports or entry into premises under the guise of national security, and thereby compromising the independent operations of the Directorate". That is the one that we are saying there is a challenge of comprehension Honourable Morwaeng. You do not empower a politician with such immense powers. He/she is not an angel. I explained that our political offices are not for angels. That is why you must have adequate oversight and safeguards. That is why I am saying the law can provide that if HE realises that there is a national security issue, he can move urgent application before the High Court or a Judge and ask to discuss the matter with the Judge alone. It can even be an *ex parte* application. Then he can explain that DCEC should not search where military weapons are since it can interfere with national security. The Judge will make a determination that, 'I hear you but I do not think this issue interferes with national security because it is trying to investigate corruption and not trying to interfere with national security. That is what I am saying Mr Speaker. Even if this Judge makes a ruling, there can be an expedited appeal at Court of Appeal to say 'no, no, that Judge did not make a proper ruling'. That is my point that we want to deal with the issue of abuse.

I want to deal with the issue of paramour. In the old Act of Competition in Contracting Act (CICA) before it was amended during the 11th Parliament, family extended to paramour. The law of conflict of interest, conflict of interest where a determination has to be made either on

award of a tender or appointing someone or anything. You will be found guilty of corruption if one of your family members tries their luck and you do not disclose. That is what it says. Family here extends even to what in other jurisdictions is called permanent companion. So that is why it is possible in the old Act- the framers of the old Act or the original Act. There was recognition that a person can do corruption and then use their paramour. There was that recognition, which is why paramour was included in the law, but when the Act was amended, paramour was removed. I can tell you Mr Speaker, that the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), that paramour was removed from the Act because when some people steal Government property they take it to their... to use the words of a Mongwato that we were with in this Honourable House, he said there are *bommamofelwagosele* (female paramour) or *boramofelwagosele* (male paramour), that is where they take proceeds of corruption. So that paramour can be hired through nepotism but in terms of the Act now, there is nothing you can do. The paramour can be allocated a Government tender, a person hiding behind this paramour as a Director, as a Permanent Secretary (PS), the tenders being allocated to the paramour, but the law protects...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: You are revealing things.

MR KEORAPETSE: We are talking about things that exist Honourable Moatlhodi, which the first Act discovered and combated. So now the current law removed the paramour. It was made by this Honourable House, it made a mistake.

So Mr Speaker it was said that...

MR TSHERE: Elucidation. Thank you very much. No, I am not going to touch on the paramour issue. This issue that Government is failing to highlight this thing, and that we are able to talk about these things and reveal them I suspect that, it is because of the Assets and Liabilities Act that there is non-disclosure and there is no lifestyle audit. There is no way we can audit any of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) members and see how significant their life has changed. Those who have been in charge of Government coffers we know that most of them are rich including His Excellency the President. Thank you.

MR KEORAPETSE: It is true Honourable Tshere. If there is no targeted lifestyle audit, when a person comes



into office and becomes rich and their lifestyle changes for the better, you will never know how that transpired. I agree with you, there should be assets declaration and full disclosure. There should be protection for whistleblowers.

7 out of 10 of Batswana say they are afraid to report corruption because they are afraid of retaliation Deputy Speaker. So, we should protect the whistleblowers, it is very important.

So in short Mr Speaker, I do not want to get into the issue of dissolving committees then it is said we should join committees that are controlled by BDP, no. I think that comrades have adequately dealt with that issue, Honourable Hikuama, clarified it fully.

Mr Speaker, it should be known as we will be going to elections that the ruling party is clearly saying DCEC should remain toothless, the DCEC Director General can be hired and fired at will as we have seen that in the last five years we have had 6 Director Generals under the BDP Government. The current BDP Government says it does not want an independent DCEC, which does its own recruitment that does not report to Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) and Office of the President (OP). That is what the ruling party is saying. The Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) is clear that we should amend the Act and give DCEC powers, and enhance it, it should be independent so that it can perform its duties without any interruption. We should remove the possibility of the President hindering investigations hiding behind natural security. That is what we are saying about this Bill.

In conclusion Mr Speaker, I therefore move that the Corruption and Economic Crime (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 16 of 2023) be read a second time.

Question put and **Division called for.**

MR SPEAKER: Division, clock, give me a clock. Lock the door.

...Silence...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we are voting now, therefore activation. Do you remember? Do you remember? Those who agree that this Bill should be read a second time should press Number two, those who do not agree you press number three. Those who do not know where they fall can press number four. Honourable Members, let us vote.

...Silence...

MR SPEAKER: Now the voting is over, we are going now to counting. We are pressing five.

...Silence...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Members, 37 members present. The 'ayes' 15, the 'noes' 21 and one 'abstention.' So the 'noes' have it.

Question put and **negated.**

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Someone that side abstained.

MR SPEAKER: We do not know where he or she abstained. That is none of our business. Let us move on to the next Bill.

BILL

ELECTORAL (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 (NO. 21 OF 2023)

Second Reading

MR SPEAKER: Order! Order! Honourable Members, the question is that the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 21 of 2023) be read a second time. Honourable Saleshando, you may present.

MR SALESHANDO (MAUN WEST): Mr Speaker, I propose to read Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 21 of 2023) a second time. I would like to remind this House that I am tabling this Bill for the third time now. The first time when I tabled it it was debated and reject with reasons, particularly Honourable Morwaeng's argument that it would be incorporated in the Constitutional Amendment Bill. Even though I explained that this has nothing to do with the Constitution, a high number of members of the ruling party settled that it is a Constitutional issue. The Constitutional Amendment Act has been passed, it was tabled in Parliament. However, it did not say anything about elections, and this shows that what the legislators said was not true. With all due respect, the nation was misled.

What the this Bill briefly proposes is that, the ballot papers for Parliamentary candidates must be counted at polling stations because we know they are often transported to constituency headquarters during elections. The plea is that, we should stop doing that



but rather count them at the ward, where ballot papers for councillors are counted. This prevents a situation where ballot papers are transported in a hurry late at night. That is what this Bill says and we can only manage this by looking at Section 69 of the Electoral Act which says ballot papers for councillors should be counted in polling district headquarters, whereas ballot papers for Members of Parliament should be counted in constituency headquarters. Every time when we debate this issue here in Parliament I always emphasise that, it is wrong for ballot boxes to be transported to other places whereas there are lawfully secure areas with resources where ballot papers can be counted. In some of our respective constituencies, ballot boxes are transported for long journeys of more than three hours at night, on poor roads where there are wild animals. We plead that this should be changed.

There is absolutely no doubt that transporting ballot boxes on the day of elections before counting ballot papers distorts the integrity of our elections. Transporting ballot boxes in high speed at night causes unnecessary uncertainties. It causes unnecessary risks during the day of elections. Mr Speaker, the question now could be whether there are best standards. In 2024, has the country developed to a point where there are standards which we can refer to, to establish which system or standard is good? There is... standards that have been set, Botswana signed certain standards. I will talk about Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum which briefly talks about election norms and standards. I will quote Clause 11, Subsection 1, "the counting of votes should be done at polling station." Botswana is one of the countries that signed that standard. Botswana signed a simple English standard which says ballot papers should be counted at polling stations. SADC also has standards which emphasises this issue and Botswana signed it. African Union (AU) also has those set standards. I do not want to list them all, but Botswana agreed to that. Electoral Commissions Forum is an independent organisation that manages Election Management Bodies or Electoral Boards, and in collaboration with the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), they drafted Principles for Election Management Monitoring and Observation in the SADC region. Botswana had a representation and this draft underscores standard that are good for fair elections.

Page 56 says, "the counting process should take place in the polling station immediately after the close of

voting." Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) once held an all parties conference for all parties, including Domkrag. A report was released after recommendations were made in 2005. I know that you often say that when some people make recommendations, it does not mean you have to implement them. This recommendation was made even by Domkrag representatives.

Page 47 says, "the counting process should take place in the polling stations immediately after the close of voting." Representatives of Domkrag also agreed to this at a conference that was held in 2005, that ballot papers should be counted in the polling stations. Some remark that they started this during primary elections. It is indeed true that during recent primary elections, parties which held elections counted ballot appears at polling stations. If this is good for Domkrag, Congress Party and Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), why is it not good for Botswana? Why do we want to follow proper procedures at our parties and sabotage the country where we are assigned substantial responsibilities by saying there is no need to adhere to international standards which we have even signed?

Mr Speaker, the most ideal and appropriate thing is for all ballot papers to be counted at the polling stations. We are aware of the situation in Botswana, some polling stations do not have resources. All polling stations in Botswana should have secured and lawful areas with everything that is needed for counting Councillors' ballot papers. We are saying that those areas should also be used for counting ballot papers for Members of Parliament. So instead of each polling station, we plead that they should be counted at the polling district. In a ward, ballot papers should be counted in an area that is selected as a polling district. As is said, what we are currently doing or where... Botswana population which votes is plus/minus a million people. I think only under a million people voted during the last elections and this time around just under 1,2 million people registered to vote. This means that just over a million people might vote. We count about one million ballot papers in Botswana, and we take between two and three days. An officer will report for duty day one at five in the morning to open the polling station, day two they have not rested and are continuing to count, day three counting is ongoing. Do we really want to implement a system whereby people take 60 hours, 70 hours on duty whereas we say election is a serious issue? In other countries; recently at Britain, 48 million people voted. The counting was done one-one and they finished



counting within 24 hours after polling stations were closed. Our population is one million but we take two days in some instances more than two days.

Mr Speaker, this cannot advance our country because election is commonly known as an exercise which evokes deep emotions. People are very emotional about their vote such that if there can be a hint of misconception that the exercise might have been unfair, it creates deep emotional pain which as we speak some are still recovering from, may they heal. We know in this Parliament that if you take a tea break, every member of the ruling party pulls you aside to complain about the elections. Some have even written letters of appeal, where is Honourable Molebatsi, he should read us his letter of appeal and tell us that this embarrassing trait does not suit the ruling party.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ... (Inaudible)...

MR SALESHANDO: I saw the letter Mr Speaker, it is not a secret. If you do not believe me, I will read it in my closing remarks where I will tell you that most of the members of the Botswana Democratic Party are hurting because of lack of transparency.

I want to emphasise on being transparent. This thing of transporting boxes at night kills the transparent manner in which we manage elections. For example, if the first ballot box is transported from Khwai to Maun on a road which is not tarred and is common for vehicles to get stuck. Even if you had the desire to get vehicles to stop at Mababe, one at Ditshiping and one at Xaxaba, you cannot have the resources to follow ballot boxes from different areas. We cannot afford, so can we not agree that counting should be done at ward level. Some vehicles which follow the truck carrying ballot boxes are sometimes more than an hour behind it. That is the reality that we are facing.

I therefore implore members of the ruling party that, the arguments they raised in the past which I hope you will not raise today, were that, the candidate should be present during the counting of ballots. They argue that if you are a Parliamentary candidate and the constituency had 20 polling stations, you should observe each and every box that is why they have to be brought to a central place. Why can our trusted agents observe. We can be represented by our agents who we can entrust to observe on our behalf. I hope you are not going to raise that argument that we want to observe ballot boxes whereas during the Botswana Democratic Party primaries you

did not argue for boxes to be brought to a central place so that you can observe as candidates.

The other argument which was raised was that, there is inadequate security at the wards that is why there are brought to a central place. That is not true because in the afternoon we deploy police officers at every polling station. Our point is, if a ward has 15 polling stations and there are police officers stationed there, in some instances two police officers per polling station, do you want to tell us that when these 30 police officers knock off we cannot deploy two police officers in each ward. This is not true, this is not honest, this is disingenuous. Please let us put the country first. If we run the country using the power of majority we are going to overpower them. We know the risk of transporting ballot boxes at night but since we were told to reject it we oblige. The opening line of the Minister, Honourable Morwaeng was, "please let us reject," I am pleading with you, do not take heed of that, listen to your conscious because the truth is in the open.

The other issue I usually hear being raised is that, the ballot boxes for Parliamentary candidates should be at a central point because they hold the Presidential votes. This is one of the arguments which is in the Hansard. If the President is voted and we were to follow your logic, that a Parliamentary candidate should observe all ballot boxes, it then means that if there was direct election of the President then all ballot boxes will be transported to Gaborone so that the President can also personally observe. I am happy that you display a surprise reaction towards the argument you once raised, maybe today you will come up with a better argument than this one.

We cannot use the President's vote as an excuse because when Batswana were asked about the direct election of the President, they supported the proposal. Members were convinced to reject the proposal. I plead that today we should not agree to reject but rather consider what is best for our country.

Botswana is more important than all our political parties; Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) and Botswana Congress Party (BCP). Botswana signed and made a commitment at Southern African Development Community (SADC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) and African Union (AU) there was a consensus to count ballots at polling districts. Botswana Democratic Party conceded at the meeting convened by the Independent Electoral



Commission (IEC) in 2005 for counting to be done at polling districts. If we are going to stand here and reject our commitment, can a person actually trust you? If you are at SADC, AU and IEC meetings you support counting to be done at polling stations but when you come to Parliament you oppose. Is it not enough...

MR TSOGWANE: On a point of clarification. We hear you Honourable Member of Maun West. We also hear your point about signing but we do not deny that we are signatories. These are agreements, that this is a good arrangement which has to be implemented but there are other reasons which might lead to failure of implementing such. There is idealism and practicality which if you sit down and think, you can see that there are reasons which make it impossible to implement.

MR SALESHANDO: In short what the Vice President is saying is that, they signed with other countries; South Africa, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe are implementing but

but here it is only incompetency. Let us admit that not everyone is capable, we should accept that there will be incompetency somewhere. We want Batswana to know that Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe are capable. Let us accept that we are incompetent. We should not try to rectify incompetency and do what we have signed for. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I conclude by moving that the Electoral (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (No. 21 of 2023) be read a second time. I thank you.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MINISTER FOR STATE PRESIDENT (MR MORWAENG): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me focus on the Honourable Member. Mr Speaker, it is important that we note that when we talk to other people irrespective of our reasons we are selective of our words. We should not use oppressive words and mock others. We should not call the elderly people useless (*dikopa*), our children and parents at home are listening to us. Mr Speaker, is there anyone who can support you if you make a request in Parliament regardless of our emotions, and start hurling insults and mocking others? What kind of behavior is that if you make a request and then at the same time you insult and mock...

MR SALESHANDO: Point of order. Mr Speaker, he even concludes by saying insulting ...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SALESHANDO: He just said that...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Minister, he stands on a point of order.

MR SALESHANDO: Mr Speaker, the word uselessness (*bokopa*) in Ngwaketse it is not an insult, ... (*Interruptions*)... it means an incompetent person.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: *Sekopa ke wena ga o na ngwana.* (You useless person, you do not have a child).

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Stop foolishness.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!) ...

MR SALESHANDO: It is not an insult, if someone could say in their village it is an insult, I will withdraw it. In Ngwaketse District because at least in the case...

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: Let us hear him, he says he knows how they speak from his uncle's side.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SALESHANDO: I did not want to single out anyone even Honourable Kwape who is saying I am imposing it on them that, his own relatives have used the word against him, he is being reprimanded for being incompetent.

MR MORWAENG: Mr Speaker, if you allow me to continue...

MR MOATLHODI: Procedure. Mr Speaker, the word that Honourable Saleshando uses is an insult and therefore I pray you allow the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) to walk out. We cannot be insulted by him.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: No, those are not the procedure of this House. You do not ask the Speaker to tell people ... (*Interruptions*)... Deputy Speaker, you cannot do that.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR LEUWE: Procedure. Thank you, Mr Speaker. The word *sekopa* (incompetent) is not an insult, but when Honourable Saleshando was on the floor Mr Speaker, he explained that he wants to withdraw and I request



that he withdraws it. It is not an insult but the word mocks, especially when he is requesting us to support his Motion. I am requesting that he does so. Stand up, you incompetent person and withdraw your words.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!) ...

MR SALESHANDO: Mr Speaker, dialects differ per constituency, that means I heard it from a different constituency. If in other constituency it is a word that mocks, insults and demean, I withdraw it. Thank you.

MR TSOGWANE: Procedure. Honourable Member is not withdrawing that word whole heartedly ... (Interruptions)... he is only withdrawing it because he is under pressure, he should know the saying that, lefoko ga le boe go boa monwana (the words uttered cannot be taken back), we do not agree with taking yours back.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: That is a different issue, he withdrew that word.

MR MORWAENG: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Honourable Saleshando indicated that, he has brought this issue many times, and it was explained that it will be considered. I want to state that issues dealing with elections should be assessed. Mr Speaker, I wish to explain to this honourable House that, as the Chairman for the All Party Conference, negotiations are in progress. In those negotiations there are clauses that address electoral reforms of our country. Honourable Saleshando's party has representatives there. Honourable Saleshando, should you not give us an opportunity as political parties which you have sent to the All Party Conference, in fact we are discussing the issue of electoral reforms there ...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Clarification.

MR MORWAENG: There are those that they sent me to take them to the Government.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Point of clarification.

MR MORWAENG: Sir, we are going to meet on the 8th of next month.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Point of clarification.

MR MORWAENG: Should I yield for you so that you insult me?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Laughter!) ...

MR MORWAENG: No, I would not Honourable Never Tshabang.

MR MMOLOTSI: Point of correction. Thank you Mr Speaker. I thought to correct Minister because he is deliberately misleading the nation and in fact misleading this Parliament when he says, this is one of the issues that he deals with at All Party Conference. Honourable Morwaeng, All Party Conference has the issue of political party funding on the agenda. There is nothing politically related there because our people brief us. So Honourable Saleshando brought this issue to Parliament where laws are made.

MR MORWAENG: I thank you...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Further correction Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Saleshando, further correction.

MR SALESHANDO: Point of correction. Mr Speaker, it is correct that we are briefed by those who sent us there. The briefing that I got indicates that Minister Morwaeng told All Party Conference to take the issue of counting of ballots at polling stations to Parliament. Now that it is presented in Parliament, he is telling us to take it back to All Party Conference, that is unacceptable.

MR MORWAENG: I indicated that we are still discussing and are yet to report so I am not surprised when Honourable Saleshando starts saying that we already agreed at the All Party Conference. The truth is, Government has assigned me, I have done my assignment and I am ready to present my report. Thereafter, I will proceed to report at the All Party Conference and it does not matter if Botswana Congress Party (BCP) wants me not to carry it out.

MR KEKGONEGILE: Point of correction. Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Morwaeng should make this issue easy; he mentioned at the All Party Conference that Government does not allow us to count ballots at polling stations so all political parties agreed that it is better to count them in our respective wards. This is what this Bill says, exactly what we agreed at the All Party Conference. Right now, we expected Honourable Morwaeng to tell us that Government approved what we agreed at the All Party Conference, so this Bill should pass.

MR MORWAENG: Honourable Members, do you



realise that what the President of Botswana Congress Party (BCP) says contradicts what his Secretary said before the nation? People should note the kind of people they are based on their statements.

Let me move on Mr Speaker by indicating that, some of us honour our procedure, we do not demean All Party Conference but take it serious. We are yet to discuss some issues there, sir...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR MORWAENG: Can you give me a chance to debate Mr Speaker?

HONOURABLE MEMBER: So nothing is wrong when you ask for corrections.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Kekgonegile, correction.

MR KEKGONEGILE: Point of correction. Mr Speaker, Honourable Morwaeng should indicate whether indeed All Party Conference agreed that ballots should be counted at the wards. If so, what is wrong with saying it is true so that we may proceed?

MR SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Maun East, you say that as if you are asking a question and as if you do not know the answer. I thought in your correction you will tell the Honourable Minister on the floor the truth regarding this issue so that you can differ. If at all you attended the All Party Conference, you should tell Honourable Morwaeng what was agreed and what he says about it. Now it is as if you are questioning instead of stating the correction position. Honourable Kekgonegile.

MR KEKGONEGILE: Yes sir, that is the gist of the issue Mr Speaker that Honourable Morwaeng is not telling the nation the truth when he says this issue was discussed at the All Party Conference and agreed. Honourable Morwaeng should just be saying 'this issue was discussed and agreed at the All Party Conference, Government will be responding at the All Party Conference next week on the 8th, we will giving feedback as Government pertaining to what Honourable Saleshando is moving,' then we can proceed knowing that this year's ballots will be counted at the wards.

MR MORWAENG: Honourable Members, I take it that you get the logic of this issue, so allow me to proceed. Mr Speaker, Honourable Saleshando's main

request is such that ballots should be counted at polling districts. He goes on to indicate in his request that, Domkrag committed itself to agree to count ballots at polling stations based on the agreement signed with Southern African Development Community (SADC). He also stated that, Government also committed herself to agree to count ballots at polling stations based on the agreement signed with other organisations. So he came here to request us to count at polling districts. Before I proceed, I must highlight that, All Party Conference should know that we are yet to discuss this issue, so they should not be confused by what we discuss in this House. I am compelled to correct some of the things that are said in this House so that they will not be confused when we finally have a discussion there.

Mr Speaker, Government is still committed to counting ballots at polling stations.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR MORWAENG: Honourable Saleshando stated that Government committed herself through signing agreements with various organisations including SADC and it is true. However, we cannot count at polling stations for the sake of security just as Honourable Saleshando indicated that it is actually not safe to count at some of them. So since we committed ourselves through signing at SADC and...

MR TSOGWANE: Point of clarification. I take it that you clearly explained the agreement signed with SADC and other African organisations and I believe Batswana have a better understanding now. Honourable Saleshando indicated that it is not safe for us to count ballots in some polling stations, does it mean we can go on to count some ballots there and others in polling districts?

MR MORWAENG: Thank you sir. Honourable Saleshando indicated that Botswana committed herself through the agreements signed with SADC and other organisations but they do not talk about counting at polling district, Batswana should know this. In short, Honourable Saleshando is misleading us to do what is contrary to the agreements that we signed. Thereafter, he will go on to condemn us for failing to comply with SADC because SADC and other organisations recommend polling stations. We are also saying we want the same but in short, we want that when we do something Honourable Saleshando, we should do the right thing and at the right time. Honourable Saleshando,



you also admitted that some of our polling stations cannot be used as counting centres. Given what you said, do you want us now to go against SADC? Honourable Saleshando, we have no intentions of amending things and they get stuck halfway. Why do you not allow us to amend and do the right thing by counting at polling stations? Counting at the polling stations...

HONOURABLE MEMBER: Correction Mr Speaker.

MR MORWAENG: ...we are saying...

MR SPEAKER: Correction again Honourable Member for Maun East.

MR KEKGONEGILE: Correction. Mr Speaker, I believe you will guide us. The object of this Bill is for counting to be done at the wards. However, I am hearing the Minister talking about polling stations but the issue here is that, counting should be done at the wards which the Minister agreed at the All-Party Conference. I believe the debate of the Minister should centre around wards. That is the correction that...

MR SPEAKER: No, you are not correcting; you are arguing and repeating yourself.

MR KEKGONEGILE: ...guide him to debate on wards.

MR SPEAKER: Anyway, order! order! Honourable Members, it is 6 o'clock.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: ...(Murmurs)...

MR SPEAKER: Tomorrow Mokwena.

HONOURABLE MEMBER: ...(Inaudible)...

MR SPEAKER: May I call upon the Leader of the House, His Honour the Vice President (VP) to move a Motion of adjournment.

MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

LEADER OF THE HOUSE (MR TSOGWANE):
Mr Speaker, as it is now 6 o'clock and as you have requested, I move that this House do now adjourn. Thank you Mr Speaker.

Question put and **agreed to.**

The Assembly accordingly adjourned at 18:01 p.m. until Wednesday 31st July, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.



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