



# MY DISTRICT TODAY



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## Deputy Minister Bapela urges protesters not to destroy property

The Deputy Minister in The Presidency for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr Obed Bapela, has called on Thohoyandou community members not to destroy government-owned property.

“People have a right to voice their concerns, but it has to be within the law,” he said, referring to recent service-delivery protests in which people destroyed state property.

Deputy Minister Bapela was speaking at an information session in April, which was organised by the Government Communication and Information System in the Vhembe District in Limpopo.

During the session, Mr Bapela spoke to residents about the plans that President Jacob Zuma outlined in his State of the Nation Address in February and gave community members a chance to ask questions about government’s programmes.

Deputy Minister Bapela said that while government was facing challenges, it was doing everything in its power to improve the lives of the people. He admitted that some of the protests were about fundamental issues such as a lack of water, electricity and infrastructure.

“Each day government focuses on ensuring a better life for all South Africans,” said Mr Bapela.

The Deputy Minister called on the organisers of protests to speak to their communities and urge



Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Deputy Minister, Obed Bapela shares a light moment with Vhembe District Municipality, Acting Executive Mayor Lucas Manyuwa.

them not to destroy schools and libraries during the protests.

The Deputy Minister further urged residents to pay their electricity and water bills. “For municipalities to render effective services, people must pay for it.”

Responding to concerns about unemployment, Mr Bapela said government was doing every-

thing in its power to ensure that people were employed.

He said there were about 20 000 vacancies in government that must be filled. He also encouraged people to get creative and start their own small businesses.

Source: *BuaNews*



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## Clara Masinga not your ordinary Thusong Service Centre Manager

Clara Masinga knew exactly what she wanted to do when she resigned from teaching in 1991 after serving the Department of Education for 10 years.

She wanted to serve her community and she has done just that. She started the Kgautswane Development Centre, a community service centre, in 1992 with the help of the Government. The centre is now known as the Kgautswane Thusong Service Centre (TSC) and Ms Masinga is the volunteer manager.

That is how her community work started and since then she has never looked back. "I started with 36 volunteers working at the centre and today we have 160 men and women assisting. The centre has become a core of activity rendering government services as well as non-governmental organisatio (NGO) services."

Ms Masinga first caught the public eye when she was voted community builder of the year in 1997 and in 2000 she was voted community builder of the century. In 2002 former President Thabo Mbeki bestowed the Order of the Boabab on her for her sterling and altruistic work. This is to mention only a few of Ms Masinga's achievements Masinga in her 20 years as a community worker. She has also received accolades and recognitions from the University of South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the World Bank, Old Mutual and the South African Lottery.

Government initiated the TSC Programme (formerly known as Multi-Purpose Community Centres) in 1999 as one of the primary vehicles to implement development communication and information and to integrate government services into mostly rural communities.

They aim to empower the poor and disadvantaged through access to information, services and resources on government, NGOs, parastatals, business, etc. enabling them to access government programmes to improve their lives.

Government's vision for Thusong Service Centres is to provide every South African citizen with access to information and services close to

where they live and in each local municipality by 2014 with the purpose of improving the quality of their lives through integrated service delivery.

In the last six months the centre has provided government information to more than 4 000 people from the departments of home affairs, education, health, social development, justice, public works and labour as well as the South African Police Service, Office of the Premier, Greater Tubatse Municipality, clinics and the South African Social Security Agency.



Clara Masinga (centre) and seven volunteers from Germany

