TAPS OPEN IN MASEVEN
LOCAL MUNICIPAL-LED SUMMITS
CHINA MISSION – PERFECT TIMING

SIZZLING FACTS ABOUT SEZ
SDA RE-IGNITED AT AGM
Editorial

2018/2019 Financial Year took off on a high momentum. This edition we focus on profiling and popularising employment creation within District as carried out by different role players, in particular the local municipalities, the District Municipality and Public Private Partnerships.

The timing of this publication coincide with a period in which municipal communicators are expected to popularise the IDP/Budget, its implementation plans and how it will translate into delivery of services.

Our municipality is under siege to adhere to all the needs of the communities, owing to the vastness of rural and impoverished areas we have. On matters of improvement of sanitation in these communities SDM commits to a long-standing relationship with Amalooloo which was formalised by signing a Memorandum of Understanding to fast track skills transfer and localisation of input, and long term prospects such employment creation (read further in Page 7).

The overarching theme of this publication is employment and job opportunities. We begin by taking stock of all our efforts geared at creating quality employment opportunities across all sectors. Leading by example, the District has in the month of July 2018 turned the fortunes of pump operators by employing them as General Workers. This move created 80 jobs.

Creating more jobs means getting small businesses to get busy and breathe life into the District’s Local Economic Development (LED). LED encompasses all matters economic within the local environment and it is often pushed to the side when highlighting service delivery. We are dedicating parts of this publications to highlight initiatives and platforms to connect citizens with LED as a municipal function and as a driver of economic empowerment and inclusion.

The revitalisation of Sekhukhune Development Agency (SDA) is poised to exert enthusiasm among investors and locals to do business in Sekhukhune. We have also realised during the AGM of the SDA that there is an urgent need to amplify communication and awareness of economic opportunities within the District in an effort to get communities energised and informed about the economic potential of the District. This publication is part of many platforms to get communities on board in terms of the prospects created by the refashioned and re-ignited SDA.

The AGM has adopted unanimously the Strategy Document of the SDA which is centred on unlocking sustainable economic development, and rapid economic growth of the Sekhukhune region. The board of SDA has assured stakeholders during the AGM that they will refine the agency’s implementation capacity to provide an end-to-end solution for equitable and sustainable High Impact Projects, and strategic economic programmes that contribute towards inclusive growth and job creation in the region.

In this publication we extensively cover the local municipal LED summits, the China Mission on Special Economic Zone undertaken before the 10th BRICS Summit and facts about Special Economic Zone in Sekhukhune. I am so fascinated by the Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality’s Disability Economic Summit which was elaborate in its attempt to bring the economic interests and aspirations of disabled persons to the centre of economic development.

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We hope this publication helps you to gain knowledge and information to join the efforts to create jobs and sustainable livelihood.

We welcome feedback on the quality of the information or follow-up on some of the exciting issues covered in this edition of Sekhukhune News.

Thank you,
Embracing economic prospects and opportunities in the local sphere begins with getting the basics right. One of the basic building blocks is rooting out corruption and improving governance efficiency as a seed for economic recovery. Sekhukhune District Municipality remains committed to squeak clean governance by maintaining the unprecedented levels of unqualified audit opinion from Auditor-general of the Republic of South Africa. We are relieved that the recent Annual General Meeting of Sekhukhune Development Agency (SDA) reflected similar results which are indicative of an institution capable immediately attracting and retaining capital investment.

We view the District’s economic growth from a very broad perspective. We need an inclusively growing economy that help us resolve a spectrum of issues such as an enabling more local people to partake in formal and informal economy, all facets of trade and seize economic opportunities. Somehow we need to factor readiness of our citizens to anticipate and prepare to seize opportunities relating to Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The District through LED units in the five local municipalities and the District has a perfect opportunity to popularise LED projects – thus creating new investment towards prospects for growth that will address the problems associated with the fourth industrial revolution. Our political environment is stable, one investment that has been waiting on the sidelines for so long to flood into South African economy, and our district can be unlocked.

Emphasis of this publication is on the tangible and quantifiable job opportunities created. While we maintain our coordination role as the District, we went further to absorb 80 pump operators into General Workers right at the beginning of this financial year 2018/2019.

Lastly, I would like to highlight that in August we celebrate the National Women’s Month. While noting that our country increased the access of girls to education, initiated bursaries and training programmes for young women and allocated funds for women entrepreneurs; more still needs to be done to ensure the full participation of women in the economy and women in leadership positions. We must work to remove the barriers which prevent women from entering and thriving in the labour market. The promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment is central to government’s efforts to combat poverty and stimulate sustainable development.

As we seek to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality and move from passive citizenry – only receiving services from the state – we have to put more women forward as drivers and beneficiaries of the future we envisage.

The women of Sekhukhune, for showing a brave face in the midst of their struggles, exemplify a formidable force and epitomise the saying: “When you strike a woman, you strike a rock.” In deed they are a rock upon which a strong local economy can be built with greater will by all role players.

We are not just striving for an employment generating local economy; we need investment that take us to apex of value chains, build expert capability, invests in SMMEs ecosystems and in investment for social capacity. In the spirit of open door policy I invite you to familiarise yourselves with the Local economic Development Offices in the District and Local Municipalities as well as economic development agencies (SEDA, SEFA, LEDA, the SETAs and SDA) so that you may get first-hand information on what these esteemed offices have in store for you.

Thank you,

Ms N.T Maseko
Municipal Manager
Executive Mayor’s foreword

It is well-known how important the areas of skills development, creation of job opportunities and provision of basic services are – and all three have featured strongly in the discussions we are locked with different role players. During my participation in the international investor mission to China recently, I focused on creating a solid platform for our district to continue its work towards improving the lives of our residents through sustainable service delivery. While the China Mission was about getting investors to unlock the Special Economic Zones in the province, it prompted the need for us to find innovative new streams of investing in infrastructure and augmenting capital budget deficits to accelerate the eradication of infrastructure backlogs and to fulfil our developmental role.

We join President Cyril Ramaphosa in his quest to revive the economy. Among his attempts he is seeking to lure R1.4 trillion ($100 billion) in new investment in the economy. This wave of investor confidence in the country is what we need to propel the district’s efforts to implement the Special Econimic Zone (SEZ) which require coordinated infrastructure across industries to deepen beneficiation of mineral sources extracted from our region. Let’s spare no effort in popularising the Tubatse SEZ and local economic development opportunities. When citizens voted us into office, they made a conscious decision to put people who are also respectful of the rule of law, considerate of the disparities of our society, committed to improving the lives of the poor and vulnerable, and desiring the safety and stability of our nation. They desired in us the values that reflect leaders that came before us and hoped that out of emulating them we will be the best to lead our society.

South Africa has got so much potential, with lots of it embedded in its youth; we need to enable them to unlock this potential through connecting them to local economic development projects and programmes – and employment opportunities. Not just to absorb them into programmes but to enable them to channel their energies into the core of the strategic focus of our region in the short, medium and long term. We are mindful of the considerable challenges facing the country pertaining to land reform. Acquisition and distribution of land according to the developmental priorities is a suitable foundation required for investment in the agrarian sector.

In conclusion, the month of August 2018 commemorates the 1956 Women’s March under the theme: “100 Years of Albertina Sisulu, Woman of Fortitude: Women United in Moving South Africa Forward”. The iconic march saw 20 000 women march to the Union Building to protest against the discriminatory pass laws. This march has been celebrated since 1995 as Women’s Day to recognise the important role political activism by women played during the struggle for liberation against colonisation and apartheid. This year’s commemoration takes on a special significance as it is the year of the "triple centenary”. South Africa celebrates the birth of struggle icon Mama Albertina Sisulu and Tata Nelson Mandela as well as the formation of the Bantu Women’s League. The Mama Sisulu’s centenary celebration will form a core thrust of Women’s Month as we pay tribute to her and the many women leaders of her generation. Mama Sisulu was one of the organisers of the anti-pass Women’s March in 1956 and played a key role in its planning.

In Sekhukhune we memorise the connective event in March 1992 when Mama Albertina Sisulu addressed the funeral service of Mohumagadi Madinoge Kgoloko in Ga-Mashabela. Mohumagadi Madinoge Kgoloko will be commemorated for her role as the matriarch of the Sekhukhuneland Uprisings of 1958 which marks its 60th Anniversary this year.

We pay tribute to the many heroines of the women’s struggle who sacrificed everything to free our nation and ensure women to take their rightful place in our society.

Ke a leboga
Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila
Executive Mayor
Statistics South Africa’s Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Quarter 2: 2018 recently released on 31 July 2018 shared with the nation key findings of the survey (QLFS) conducted from April to June 2018 (Q2: 2018). The report stated that South African working-age population increased by 154 000 or 0,4% in the second quarter of 2018 compared to the first quarter of 2018. The number of employed persons declined by 90 000 in Q2: 2018, which led to 0,4 of a percentage point decline in the absorption rate to 43,1%. This means in this period the unemployed increased by 102 000 persons to 6,1 million, raising the unemployment rate to 27,2%.

There is no doubt that South Africa continues to face a huge problem of high levels of unemployment especially amongst the youth. This prompted the ruling party and President Cyril Ramaphosa to urge all state organs to use their budgets towards job creation and economic development. And the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality Cllr K.S Ramaila heed to this clarion call.

Sekhukhune District Municipality as a water authority and water service provider has for the past 13 years used the service of more than 200 pump operators on a volunteer basis, paying them a stipend. The municipality took a progressive decision to start gradually employing all the pump operators on a permanent basis in 2014/2015 financial year. There were still 80 outstanding pump operators during the 2016/2017 financial year. The Executive Cllr K.S Ramaila made a public declaration during the 2018 SODA held at Moreku to absorb all pump operators permanently. This public commitment by his worship was realised during the month of July 2018 when SDM issued appointment letters to all the 80 Pump operators.

“I am glad that we have given our people job security. The essential meaning of this decision is that our people will now enjoy the perks of a permanent salary such as medical aid, pension fund, housing allowance and other benefits” remarked the Executive Mayor Ramaila.

Ramaila further said the decision to employ pump operators permanently will also assist the municipality to improve efficiency in delivery of water services to the communities of Sekhukhune. “Pump operators are an essential component of our service delivery machinery - they are actually the pillar of our water services team” added Executive Mayor Ramaila.

Among those who welcomed the bold move by the district to absorb former volunteer pump operators into the workforce is Mr Seswae Madisa who volunteered for years as pump operator in Ntwane village under Elias Motsoaledi Municipality. He shared his joys with fellow pump operators now employed as General Workers in different parts of the district including new posts and further responsibilities in the Water and Infrastructure Department. Madisa, who is now permanently employed General Worker is also part of the Groblersdal Maintenance Team, was delighted by this decision and couldn’t hide his excitement.

“I would like to thank the Executive Mayor for changing our lives and giving us permanent jobs, we promise to deliver water to our people with sense of urgency and pride” said Mr Madisa.
Government’s fourth outcome amplifies the need for decent employment through inclusive growth. Sekhukhune District Municipality’s response to the call for ‘the year of jobs’ was signified by the employment of the residents of District under Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). According to Member of Mayoral Committee for Planning and Economic Development Cllr Samson Nkosi there were employment opportunities created in 2017/2018 financial year.

“In 2017/2018 financial year 894 employment opportunities were created under Sekhukhune District Municipality. These opportunities put much-needed income in the hands of unemployed residents of the district. These employment opportunities included infrastructure projects, environment and culture as well as social development initiatives” MMC Nkosi explained.

He added that “the total picture of the district including local municipalities is that 2162 employment opportunities were created under public works programme (EPWP). While we are excited about this figure there is a backlog of 6959 job opportunities that were supposed to be introduced in the same period”.

MMC Nkosi indicated that in 2017/2018 financial year R1,085,000.00 was spent on the EPWP programme of Sekhukhune District Municipality. He also welcomed the increase of the annual budget to R1,746,000.00 in 2018/2019. However, he was not excited by the fact that even though they already created 397 employment opportunities, it is far below the target for the current financial year.

“Unlike in 2017/2018 where we had an annual target of 9121 and only created 2162 employment opportunities leaving a whopping 6959 backlog behind, we are striving to amass additional resources to meet the annual target as we are convinced it is necessary to improve the livelihood of the people of Sekhukhune” said MMC Nkosi.

Taking cue from MMC Nkosi, the Member of Mayoral Committee for Corporate Services Cllr Makaeya Alfred Matlala said the SDM is offering learnerships to academically deserving students.

“We have 16 external bursaries awarded already to members of public through a rigorous and open adjudicating platform that focused on merit. Another 16 bursaries were awarded to SDM employees pursuing studies in line with their skills development plans” said MMC Matlala.

MMC Matlala further said in terms of Adult Education and Training which targets the skilling of out-of-school youth SDM together with Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) is offering lessons in Maklerekeng in Moutse West, OR Tambo High School in Moutse East, Moutse Central Primary School, Tshabelang Dinoko in Leboweng and Mangaka Primary School.

“Through this programme we are orchestrating the recovery of lost opportunities and shape careers for out-of-school and unemployed youth and adults to become legible for career prospects such as further and higher education and training. In total there are 88 beneficiaries” added MMC Matlala.

MMC Matlala concluded by highlighting the fact that Sekhukhune District Municipality is organising career exhibitions and providing training opportunities for its employees.
Capacitating the employers of the future from the ranks of young people of Sekhukhune might sound like a wishful thinking but not in Sekhukhune District. Sekhukhune District Municipality through its Infrastructure and Water Services Department has successfully recruited young people, and is ready to put them in a position to run sustainable businesses as contractors in the construction industry.

According to Executive Mayor Cllr K.S Ramaila, the Sekhukhune District Emerging Contractor Development Programme (ECDP) is part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), and aims to develop skills and promote business sustainability for emerging contractors in the construction industry. Executive Mayor said the Beneficiaries include contractors with a Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Grading of 1-3 particularly youth and women from the District. He further said potential beneficiaries were identified through an open call for applications where applications were handed in all the District’s offices and local municipalities. And that there is a fair selection criteria after which the appointed contractors will be chosen on the expected activity in the local area. MMC Mahlangu added that the ECDP programme will be offered to contractors on CIDB Grade 1-3 who have applied during the application window and demonstrating the interest to grow within the industry.

“The beauty about this programme is that it’s structured and geared for tangible results. It is also accredited and contractors who complete the programme will receive a certificate of competence that will make them credible and skilled service providers not only for delivery of quality projects for the municipalities but the entire sector” added MMC Mahlangu

Executive Mayor advised that the implementation of the emerging contractor’s development is about advancing young people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome their challenges, meeting the skills requirements and address youth participation in mainstream economy. It’s also upgrading the status of youth in business for performance and quality of work.

“We were prompted by the slow pace of development from small and medium-size contractors to large contractors. We realised that sustainable contractor development is dependent on enterprise factors which often take time to grow and develop, including financial resources, management skills, and technical capabilities. We noted over the years that other factors such as construction experience, as well as process maturity (business and construction processes) are also relevant for growth” advised Executive Mayor.

In our quest to address youth employability and positioning young people as job creators, we aim to emphasise the importance of maintaining high standards, work ethics, investment in fixed assets and the overall growth of contractors.

Deputy MMC for IWS Cllr L Manganeng concluded by indicating that they continue to pull role players such as Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) which is no only responsible for the registration of contractors, but carries with it the mandate to support, facilitate and promote the industry. “The government is spending a lot on infrastructure delivery, construction industry must be transformed to address the socio-economic objectives such as employment creation. And the Expanded Contractor Development Programme is one of the bold steps towards the transformation we envisage” concluded Deputy MMC Manganeng.
Board Directors of Sekhukhune Development Agency (SDA) told the Annual General Meeting sitting on Friday 29 June 2018 at Tubatse Crossing Conference Centre, Burgersfort that the current prospects of SEZ being introduced in Sekhukhune is a sea of opportunity – and that SMMEs must go with the current when it still surfs or lose the chances.

The presentation of Tubatse Special Economic Zone followed the presentation of the Annual Report 2016/17 and the SDA strategy document. Both documents were meticulously presented to the acclaim of the AGM sitting by the Acting Chief Executive Officer of Sekhukhune Development Agency Mr Kgopelo Phasha. Among the resounding successes of the SDA is the positive audit outcomes from Auditor-General of the Republic of South Africa.

One of the Directors Mr Madulo Mampuru said entrepreneurs from Sekhukhune must not wait but think futuristically about the entire value chain of SEZ.

“The coming of SEZ is power to the people of Sekhukhune, and they must not let this power to pass its crest and begin to ebb. If an opportunity is missed you’ll find yourself stranded in miserable shallows” said Mampuru Mampuru used his address to the AGM on behalf of the board to highlight the need for entrepreneurs to seize the moment to further propel their businesses to greater heights and not miss he chances.

He further said the opportunity presented by government policy framework to drive enterprise and suppliers development will remain incomplete if not complimented by local initiatives. This presents an opportunity to small businesses, especially those owned and managed by black people.

“The SEZ is a flood of opportunities that could easily lead to fortune for all the people of Sekhukhune but without anticipative readiness the flood might pass to fast. It is therefore our duty as to SEZ to drive the levels of youth unemployment down south (to their lowest). SEZ allow SDA to lead the better coordinated and greater leadership of all incubation initiatives and interventions. He concluded by emphasising the need to create conditions for small business sector to compliment and not be suffocated by large businesses to create a healthy relationship between the two sectors while highlighting the significance of small businesses for a thriving and jobs generating small business sector.
It is a known fact that the sanitation backlog in Sekhukhune is one of the stubborn challenges that can’t be dealt with through conventional means. This prompted the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila to entrust the role of facilitating acceleration of a safe basic sanitation to the citizens in the capable hands of Sekhukhune Development Agency (SDA).

Executive Mayor Ramaila explained that the District as the sole shareholder of SDA advocated for the agency’s establishment in order to give it the responsibility to act as a special purpose entity to identify and implement high impact economic projects, create sustainable job opportunities and secure a stable and sustainable financial base for its future development.

“We looked at our water and sanitation challenges, and realised we are far behind what is expected of us in terms of Water Services Act (Act no 108 of 1997) which compel us to ensure every person in the District has access to basic water supply and basic sanitation. As you know our municipality is a water service authority in terms of the Water Services Act. It has the responsibility to progressively ensure efficient, affordable, economical and sustainable access, by the communities in the District” advise Executive Mayor Ramaila.

He further explained that in pursuance of its responsibilities in terms of Water Services Act, the municipality took a Council Resolution to support the establishment of a manufacturing facility in Sekhukhune District. According to Ramaila the technical expertise of establishing the manufacturing facility will be provided by the company called Betram whose CEO Mr Lukas Fourie and the Acting CEO of Sekhukhune Development Agency Mr Kgopelo Phasha signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 22 May 2018 in Pretoria.

In outlining out the details of the MoU Mr Phasha said it’s the basis for cooperative relationship between Betram Sanitation Solutions company which is commonly known as Amalooloo.

“The factory name will be called Amalooloo Factory and it is aimed at supporting the municipality in the implementation of its Rural Household Sanitation Programme and in support of Local Economic Development” Phasha said.

Phasha added that the agreement includes supply of Amalooloo on-site sanitation technologies to communities in the District which will translate into provision of services to the communities in a sustainable manner while promoting social and economic development as well as promoting a safe and healthy environment.

In welcoming the bold move made by SDA the Executive Mayor Ramaila said a day is not far off when the people of Sekhukhune will be proud of being part of manufacturing input.

“We welcome the establishment of a manufacturing facility (‘the Amalooloo Factory’) as it speaks to our people’s dignity that sanitation provides, more so the dignity of manufacturing the supplies to address the sanitation backlog in the communities – by the communities is even exciting” commended Executive Mayor Ramaila.

He concluded by calling on all the role players to fast track the establishment of the factory, accelerate the operation of the facility, including manufacturing of the complete Amalooloo toilet structures for the construction of on-site toilets. And that this will assist the municipality in addressing the sanitation backlog of an estimated 185 865 toilet structures with Amalooloo sanitation technologies.
Sekhukhune News (SN) interviewed Sekhukhune District Municipality’s Executive Mayor Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila (EM) about the Limpopo Ministerial Mission to China that was led by the Premier, Mr Chupu Mathabatha.

SN: Thank you for accepting the challenge to sit on this interview. Tell us briefly about The Ministerial Mission to China.

EM: The Limpopo Ministerial Mission to China forms part of concerted efforts to strengthen and deepenened the bilateral relations between Pretoria (capital of South Africa) and Beijing (the capital of People’s Republic of China). The relations between the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and South Africa dates to ancient civilization, but more recently, to the struggle for the national liberation movement from around the 1950s, when the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the African National Congress (ANC) forged close ties of anti-apartheid solidarity.

SN: Please contextualise this relationship with the people of China?

EM: The PRC and Apartheid government re-established relations through the establishment of representative offices in the respective countries in 1992. In the 1970s, the apartheid government recognised the Republic of China (Taiwan) as representative of the Chinese people. South Africa formally recognised the PRC in 1998, immediately after the de-recognition of Taiwan in December 1997. A critical aspect of the bilateral relations between democratic South Africa and the PRC is the “One China Policy” which was adopted in 1998. Beijing-Pretoria relations are at the highest level diplomatically after the establishment of the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership in 2015. The Limpopo Province has previously entered into cooperation agreement with Henan Province of China, and there has been cordial interaction between the two provinces over the last decade. The membership of South Africa to the BRICS countries has further strengthened the Economic relationship between the Republic South Africa and People’s Republic of China.

SN: What was the purpose of the China Mission?

EM: The purpose of the ministerial mission was mainly to strengthen the bilateral relations between Limpopo Province of South Africa and PRC Provinces, and to pursue cooperation agreements in various areas of mutual interest and benefits, i.e. mining, agriculture, tourism, industrialisation and skills development. Three Provinces of PRC (Shanxi, Henan and Hubei) formed core of the ministerial mission by Limpopo Province.

SN: It sounds very broad. What were the specifics?

EM: The mission specifically intended to strengthen the ever-growing bilateral relations between Republic of South Africa and PRC by consolidating provincial ties with Shanxi, Henan and Hubei Provinces. It included strengthening the relation between Henan Province and Limpopo Province through promoting cooperation agreements in various areas of common interest and mutual benefit for both provinces. And further establish new cooperation agreements between Limpopo Province and two PRC Provinces namely Shanxi and Hubei. This helped us to gain better and practical understanding of industrialization through implementation of Special Economic Zones in Limpopo Province, informed by the high success rate of the Special Economic Zones in People’s Republic of China.

SN: What are the specific sectors that you will be working in?

EM: We went there to promote trade and investment between Limpopo Province and the three Provinces of People’s Republic of China, with more emphasis on mining, agriculture, tourism and industrialization. To this effect we are in the process of establishing relationship between institutions of higher learning in People’s Republic of China specifically amongst the three provinces (Shanxi, Henan and Hubei) with Limpopo Province’s institutions of higher learning with the intention to support skills development in line with the Limpopo Development Plan and Limpopo Human Resource Development Strategy.

SN: How does Sekhukhune District Municipality fit into the picture?

EM: It does a lot; the mission was also elaborately designed to promote cooperation and twinning agreements between the municipalities of Limpopo Province and the municipalities of the three provinces (Shanxi, Henan and Hubei). We actually concluded two Memorandums of Understanding with two of the three provinces. All these agreements give political impetuous to Limpopo-Henan MoU by adopting the governance model and programme of action. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the leader of our delegation Premier Chupu Mathabatha, Mr Charles Sekoati (MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism), Mr Ben Mphahlele (Group CEO: LEDA), Ms. Nomasonto Ndlou (CEO: LTA) and the senior government officials for helping us put together a strong case for Tubatse SEZ. In deed our case of getting Chinese corporations to beneficite iron ore and platinum mineral resources. I am far more excited about the exchange programme that is geared to get students from our district to study in China so that as we will be establishing the Tubatse SEZ, they will be in a better stead to occupy strategic positions.

SN: What other sectors are going to benefit from the District’s relationship with China?

EM: Some of the cities we visited in China are big in tourism and agriculture, and we want to tap into that space looking at the fact that it’s our duty as government to encourage South Africans to tour Mzansi and to know their country better. Domestic tourism serves as a key economic factor and is essential to creating job opportunities. As you would know tourism sector contributes 3.9% to the country’s GDP.

SN: We are in the Women’s Month, what is your parting shot and message to the residents of Sekhukhune?

EM: Firstly, I wish to thank the residents of Sekhukhune for standing firm to end gender based violence. Violence against women and children has no place in communities and should be confronted head on. Making SA safe is everybody’s business. We appeal to the public to support victims and those affected must seek help. Let’s make life better for the women in our lives to make South Africa a better place.
Maseven village bordering the dam wall of De Hoop Dam had a good story to tell as the life of a destitute family changed for better. To top it the entire long struggle to get access to clean portable water is nearing its conclusion. This was witnessed by more than 200 residents of Maseven village gathered at the sports ground near Magolego Traditional Authority kraal on 31 July 2018. Gracing the event were the ward 29 councillor, MMC Yvonne Mmakola, MMC Makaeya Alfred Matlala, MMC Samson Nkosi and the Sekhukhune District Municipality Councillors.

The event coupled the handover of houses to destitute families and water project to the community of Maseven covering areas of Maphoko where capacity of the water reticulation system was the problem. In her opening remarks as the Programme Director of the day MMC Yvonne Mmakola explained that a briefing session held with community leaders and inspection conducted by the District leadership confirm that there is water supply for the community of Maseven, although they are currently being supplied through rotational basis due to capacity issue. She expressed her excitement about the fact that members of the community are very much pleased with the progress made regarding water supply.

In his address to the community Executive Mayor Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila said it was time for the district to open taps house to house as he can no longer tolerate giving excuses to members of the community when concerns are raised on water issues.

“The purpose of this handover of these two projects is to heed to the call of Thuma Mina campaign by President Cyril Ramaphosa as a global call to action for people to recognise their individual power to make an imprint and help change the community around them for the better” said Executive Mayor Ramaila

He explained that the handover of a house to a destitute family on the last day of International Nelson Mandela Month on 31 July 2018 takes place when the conscience of the nation is measured by what it does for its destitute.

“We are here to advocate for the advancement of our people especially those that can’t care for themselves. Meeting
the residents of Maseven village Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality is part of Mayoral Outreach programme, which started with the official hand-over of a water project and a house to destitute Magole family.

In his visit to Mogole family Executive Mayor explained how he was heartbroken to find that the Mme Maleke Magole, an old aged grandmother lived in a muddy house since 1973 when Maseven village started.

“What saddens me, and I think it should sadden every one of us gathered here today, is that Koko Magole has since the advent of democracy in 1994 to date been excluded from the list of RDP housing beneficiaries. Koko Magole is a mother of two sons, one residing with her full time and the other is on his own and owns a tin house next door from the mother. She also takes care of her five grandchildren and two great grandchildren whom she can’t afford to buy school uniform not to mention school shoes. I have personally spoken to all of them Thabo (16), Hendrick (13), Lebo (11), Junior (6) and Longi (5). Two of her grandchildren Lesego (4) and Gift also 4 year old are in early childhood development centre. I noted that the family of koko Magole is heavily dependent on SASSA old age grant and child support grant” Executive Mayor Ramaila said

He added that the idea of building RDP-type house for the family is a collective initiative spearheaded by the leadership of the community working closely with the community. The construction of the house started on the 1st July 2018 and it took a labour intensive Letsema style, where the consultant in a water project supplied the material and fifteen volunteers from the community tasked with the main job.

Executive Mayor Ramaila handed the complete four roomed house (2 x bedrooms, 1 Kitchen and 1 Sitting room) and urged business people to use their goodwill to donate furniture to make the family’s stay comfortable.
After completing weeks long visit to different parts of the People’s Republic of China the Executive Mayor Cllr Keamotseng Ramaila together with the Limpopo provincial delegation led by Premier Stanley Chupu Ramaila had their efforts rewarded in an amazing way.

A week after their return from China which is one of the member states of Brazil Russia India China and South Africa (BRICS) the Limpopo delegation became one of the signatories for multibillion dollar deals with Chinese corporations. Among the deals signed with Chinese corporation were the activation of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) during the BRICS Business Forum which was a site session of the BRICS Summit held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg on 25 to 27 July 2018.

According to Executive Mayor Ramaila BRICS leaders’ summit in Johannesburg was perfectly timed as it gave recognition to their efforts on the ground. The BRICS leaders - South Africa’s President Cyril Ramaphosa, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Brazilian President Michel Temer together with their envoy of corporations, civil society and SMMEs made a resounding presence through signing of Memorandums of Understand and other forms of formal and informal corporate on economic and other developmental aspects.

“The fact that our visit was complimented by the hosting of the 10th milestone of BRICS summit in our country was a mind blowing coincidence. We are highly satisfied with the BRICS Member States and the achievements of this important economic bloc over the last 10 years, most especially the fact that they affirmed their commitment to navigate development imperatives as a united front” Ramaila said

The Heads of State and Governments have unanimously agreed that the 10 years of BRICS is not an ordinary milestone rather a strong demonstration of BRICS cooperation toward the attainment of peace, harmony and shared development and prosperity, and deliberated on ways to consolidate them further.

Ramaila explained that the five major emerging national economies that form the BRICS grouping reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of mutual respect, sovereign equality, democracy, inclusiveness and strengthened collaboration.

What truly energise us about the BRICS developments is that the BRICS leaders committed themselves to enhancing strategic partnerships for the benefit of their people.

“We welcome efforts directed at the promotion of peace, a fairer international order, sustainable development and inclusive growth. This would also be done through strengthening the three pillar-driven cooperation in the areas of the economy, peace and security and people-to-people exchanges. Even more assuring is the fact that BRICS Business Forum allowed different role players to air its concerns around the global economy, which is currently facing challenges with the onslaught of trade wars and the move from multilateralism to unilateralism” added Ramaila

Ramaila concluded by assuring the community of Sekhukhune that the work done during the China Mission and the BRICS Summit was meant to localise the benefits in the form of getting the Tubatse Special Economic Zone off the ground.
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Political Management Team

Council Speaker
Cllr Maria Manamela

Executive Mayor
Cllr Stanley Ramaila

Chief Whip
Cllr Tseke Lepota

Members Mayoral Committee

MMC Corporate Services
Cllr Alfred Matala

MMC Budget & Treasury
Cllr Thembekile Shangu

MMC Infrastructure & Water Services
Cllr Mbusi Mahangu

MMC Office of the Executive Mayor
(Citizens, People with disabilities & Youth Development)
Cllr Yvonne Mmakola

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