

DALRRD INTERNAL NEWS

Human Rights Day



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agriculture, land reform & rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Note from the Editor-in-Chief



MS LINDA PAGE

HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH – *“Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights culture into the future”.*

With the year now in full swing, the March edition of our Internal Newsletter reflects on Human Rights Day and how far we have come as a country. Our reporters traversed the department and spoke to staff members to get their views about the importance of Human Rights Day, an important day in our national calendar.

Last year, we hosted a successful naming contest to help us find suitable names for the DALRRD Internal and External Newsletters, which would reflect the newly-merged department. I am excited to announce that, after an open and transparent adjudication process, we have winners! We received close to 100 suggestions for names from DALRRD staff members from all our offices countrywide. Look out for the new names of our publications along with a fresh new look and feel in the design of the newsletters in the upcoming editions.

Your health is your wealth. We can all agree that a healthy lifestyle, i.e., regular exercise, and a balanced diet, is important for everyone. Our article on the dangers of too much salt in our food is an eye-opener that can help you avoid severe illnesses.

With our country's economic woes always top of our minds amid the rising cost of living, we bring you an update on the ongoing public sector wage negotiations.

As always, we appreciate all the feedback, compliments, and comments we receive from you, our readers. We look forward to your continued support;

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HUMAN RIGHTS DAY COMMEMORATION

By Innocent Mhlanga

This year marks 27 years since South Africa commemorated its first Human Rights Day on 21 March 1996, it followed the inauguration of the Human Rights Commission in October 1995. Before the democratically elected government came into power in 1994, 21 March was unofficially called Sharpeville Day.

This day is historically linked to 21 March 1960, when 69 people were killed, and 180 others wounded, when police opened fire on a peaceful crowd that had gathered to protest against pass laws in Sharpeville in the West of Johannesburg.

Every year, the government embarks on a month-long programme of activities as part of commemoration initiatives. The 2023, Human Rights Month programme was launched under the theme: **Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights Culture into the Future**, by the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture.

Human Rights Day commemorations provides the country an opportunity to reflect on progress made in the promotion and protection of human rights and to reinforce the commitment to the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the Constitution. The Bill of Rights enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

As we commemorate this year's Human Rights Day, colleagues within the department have expressed their views and feelings about what human rights mean to them.

Ms Yanga Ntshinga says she believes in the notion that all people, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, colour, or cultural background must be treated with dignity.

"It means possibilities are endless, equal opportunity regardless of your status, it means success is at the tip of my hands, depends how far do I do want to go," she said.

What dampens all these dreams is the challenges around economic freedom, as majority of the youth is unemployed. High crime rates and gender based violence (GBV) are a pandemic that our beautiful country is still fighting to this day.



According to Mr Stephen Majadibodu, human rights are essential rights that put humans as equal, they do not discriminate, they were made to protect us from those who feel superior, who wish to abuse their power. They were also made to protect us from ourselves; they draw a line between do's and don'ts and rights are not laws, the two should not be confused.

"Human rights can protect you or harm you, depending on how you use them. For example, the right to vote. If you vote, you can influence the government of your choice. And if you do not vote, a government will be chosen on your behalf whether you like it or not," concluded Mr Majadibodu.

Mr Joseph Boshomane says South African labour laws strengthen all workers' rights and provide for fair working conditions.

Human rights are also applied at the workplace to ensure fair treatment of employees. This ensures that workers cannot be discriminated against due to their well-being status, and issues that are beyond their control.

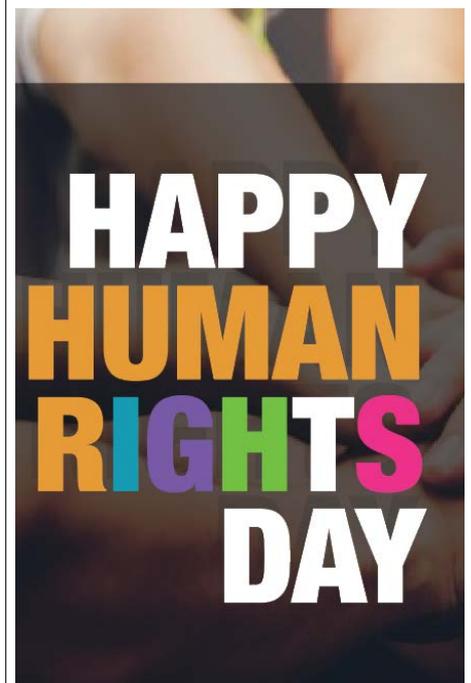
Every employee in South Africa should be provided opportunities to grow in their career, grow within an organisation they are working for, which can lead to their personal development that can benefit the country. Human rights should be adhered to, so that everybody can be treated fairly without discrimination.

Understanding human rights can improve quality of life in a sense that it serves as a guidance for people to treat each other with respect. By just understanding the

concepts of human rights one can easily avoid ill-treatment, abuse, harassment, and discrimination amongst people.

Talking to Tsumbedzo Nemanqalali, he said that human rights connect us through a shared set of rights and responsibilities.

"This means that human rights involve responsibility and duties towards each other and the community. Individuals have a responsibility to ensure that they exercise their rights with consideration for the rights of others. For example: when someone uses their rights to freedom of speech, they should do so without interfering with someone else's rights of privacy," highlighted Nemanqalali.



DISMANTLING OF TRADITIONAL GENDER STEREOTYPE ROLES AS THE WORLD CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

By Mphahlela M Rammutla

South Africa will join the world in celebrating the International Women's Day (IWD), an annual commemoration taking place on 08 March. Many countries from all corners of the globe will officially honour women's rights and achievements across the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

In honour of the IWD2023 and this year's **#EmbraceEquity** theme, the IWD website reads that the day seeks to mark a call to action for accelerating women's equality. Furthermore, it seeks to shine a spotlight on activity uplifting and inspiring women to pursue goals without bias or barrier. This year's theme resonates with the 2022 theme: **#BreaktheBias**, which urged people to call out gender stereotyping and discrimination when they see it.

IWD grew out of the labour movement to become a recognised annual event by the United Nations (UN). The day has been designated as an official UN observance since 1975, which was International Women's Year, and is a national holiday in many parts of the world. The call for establishing an IWD can be traced back to New York City in February 1908, when thousands of women factory workers went on strike and marched through the city to protest against their horrible working conditions.

The movement gained momentum in Russia against the backdrop of the war. Women in Russia chose to protest and strike for **"Bread and Peace"** on the last Sunday in February (which fell on 8 March on the Gregorian calendar). Four days later,

the Czar stepped down, and the provisional government granted women the right to vote.

However, not all women are independent, therefore IWD continues to be marked just as frequently with celebration as it is with protest, however, the day's legacy remains steeped in the struggle for women's rights—an element that has gained renewed relevance in recent years.

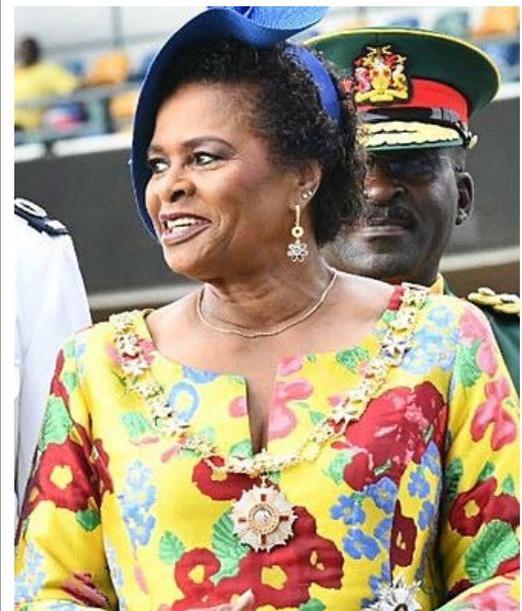
Evidence of the new world order indicates that the IWD mission to level the gender playing field is almost achieved and it has ushered in the new crop of female leaders, such as Sandra Prunella Mason, who was elected as the first female president of Barbados from 30 November 2021. In the same year, Vjosa Osmani, a politician and jurist, assumed office as the fifth President of Kosovo and the first female to assume the position from 4 April 2021. Osmani successfully ran on an anti-corruption platform to see her victory. Later she was followed by Iris Xiomara Castro Sarmiento, who became the first female President of the Honduras from 27 January 2022 after serving as a vice president.



Josa Osmani-Sadriu is a Kosovar Albanian jurist and politician serving as the 5th and



Iris Xiomara Castro Sarmiento is the 56th president of Honduras



Dame Sandra Prunella Mason is the first woman president of Barbados since 2021

MEET THE NEW PROVINCIAL SERVICES CENTRE (PSSC) HEAD, LIMPOPO

By Obed Makgoale and Humphrey Nkgadima



Dr Modumo Madidimalo Aaron Ramodumo assumed duty on 1 February 2023, as the newly appointed Chief Director Limpopo Provincial Shared Service Centre (PSSC)

Dr Modumo Madidimalo Aaron Ramodumo assumed duty on 1 February 2023 as the newly appointed Chief Director: Limpopo Provincial Shared Service Centre (PSSC).

He hails from Ramodumo Village in Limpopo.

The Limpopo PSSC has been without a permanent chief director for more than two years and Ramodumo's appointment will bring much-needed stability for the office.

Prior to joining the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Dr Ramodumo held various positions. He served as a teacher (11 years), data quality specialist (Statistics South Africa, one year), deputy director (SASSA, six years), director (Home Affairs,

eight years), acting chief director (one year), and as chief director: Free State Province (one year). What holds dear to Dr Ramodumo are the lives of ordinary people (less privileged) and geography.

He holds a Higher Diploma in Education (GCE), BA degree (UNISA), Honours degree (University of Pretoria), Postgraduate Diploma in Social Security (University of Johannesburg), Master of Management Degree in Public and Development Management (Wits) and PhD in Entrepreneurship (Wits).

Dr Ramodumo is an astute researcher and strategist. He says that he achieved almost everything in his career by constantly relying on research to find answers and solutions to the societal challenges he was confront-

ed with. To achieve his strategic objectives in the workplace, he would rely on the five Ps (*“Proper planning prevents poor performance”*), as well as the 7S (Strategy, shared values, style, structure, system, skills, and staff) that the department espouses. He says that he uses a systems approach to achieve the tasks assigned to him. He also relies on a coordinated approach to systematically achieve the set objectives, be it those in the NDP, Vision 2030, or any other.

Dr Ramodumo believes that, through proper planning and realistic targeting, the vision and mission of DALRRD shall be achieved. He further indicated a need to re-engineer the programmes of the Limpopo PSSC because they are extremely and unnecessarily compartmentalised. *“For instance, some programmes still depend on other professional institutions to develop plans for them, therefore raising the question why does DALRRD not develop plans on its own and implement them? Lastly, for government to achieve the NDP Vision 2030 we need to ask this question, what kind of Africa do we want? Thus, a need to ensure that in every work that we do, we address issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality,”* Dr Ramodumo concluded.

During his spare time, Dr Ramodumo is found among the people of Ramodumo Village. He draws strength from these people who formed part of his upbringing. When time permits, he watches cricket matches with them as he is passionate about it and has represented Limpopo as a cricket player. He also loves being around his family.

SALT, THE SILENT KILLER: DALRRD OFFICIALS PROMISE TO REDUCE THEIR INTAKE

By Samuel Kgatla

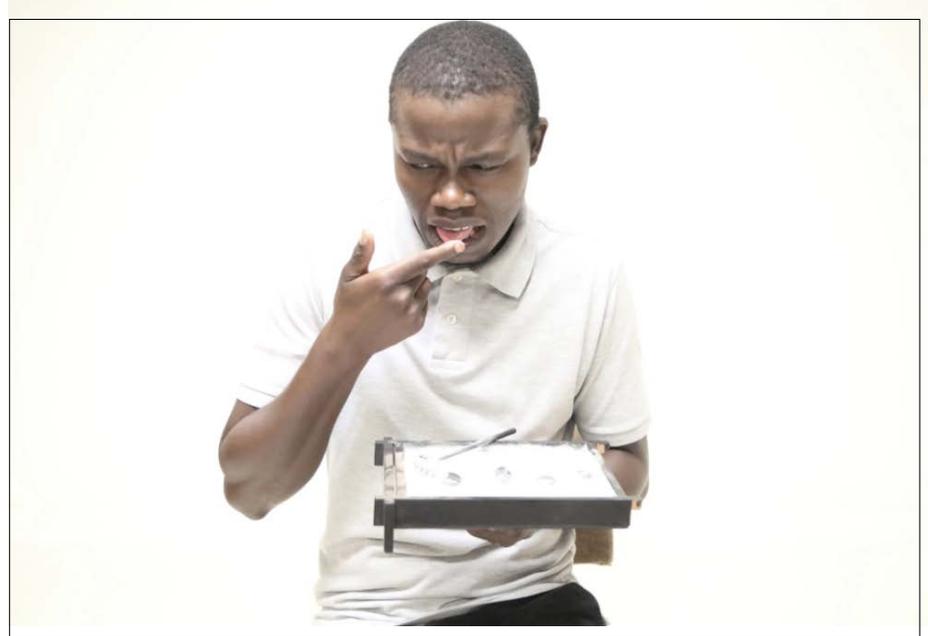
Health experts unanimously concur that high blood pressure (hypertension), heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and kidney stones are some of the severe long-term health complications people who overconsume salt (more than 2,300 milligrams per day) could suffer from.

The overconsumption of salt could strain the heart, blood vessels and kidneys, as a result, people who are not aware that their intake is above the recommended daily average should look out for the following signs and start reducing:



- **Needing to urinate more frequently;**
- **Experiencing persistent thirst;**
- **Swelling in strange places (most commonly in your fingers and around your ankles);**
- **Finding food bland and tasteless;**
- **Experiencing frequent mild headaches and cravings for salty foods.**

If you are aware of these potential health risk factors, you should watch your salt intake and stay on the safe side. The Department of Agriculture



Mr Thabang Mafaralala from IGR wants to reduce taking too much salt

Land Reform and Rural Development will join the world to commemorate the Salt Awareness Week due to start from 14 to 20 March 2023. This year's theme is **"Shake the Habit"**.

The awareness aims to educate people about the damage salt can cause to their health and its link to serious health conditions such as stroke and heart failure. It is an opportune way of cautioning the public about the hidden salt in our favourite food products and encouraging those who consider salt essential in their food and their children's food to re-evaluate their choice. Excess salt intake is a major risk factor for high blood pressure, which in turn leads to cardiovascular disease and strokes. It is also linked to kidney disease, osteoporosis, stomach cancer, and obesity.

An estimated 2,5 million deaths could be prevented each year if global salt consumption were reduced to the recommended level, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

WHO recommends that adults consume less than 5 g (just under a teaspoon) of salt per day. For children: WHO recommends that the recommended maximum intake of salt for adults be adjusted downward for children aged 2 to 15 years based on their energy requirements relative to those of adults.

Thabang Mafaralala from Directorate: Intergovernmental Relations said he has been reading a lot about the dangers of salt and wants to change. *"Salt is addictive, but too much of it can cause health problems for any human being. It is true that eating too much salt may raise your blood pressure and increase your risk of developing heart and circulatory diseases. It is important to look after our health. Salt is good when added in food, but we should try to reduce it,"* he said.

His sentiments were shared by fellow colleague, Petrus Nyathi who realised the need to try to and reduce his salt intake going forward.

WORLD BIRTH DEFECTS DAY

By Rony Moremi



Every year more than eight million babies are born with serious birth defects globally, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) while in South Africa, one in 15 births is affected by birth defects.

The CDCP defines birth defects as structural changes present at birth that can affect almost any part of the body, such as the heart, brain, or foot, which in turn may affect how the body looks or works. While other birth defects, such as cleft lip are easy to see—others such as heart defects are not—which is why it is important to create awareness about the causes of birth defects and how some can be prevented.

World Birth Defects Day is observed annually on 3 March to raise aware-

ness about the birth defects across the lifespan, before and during pregnancy, infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Common birth defects are Down syndrome, cleft lip, congenital heart defects and muscular dystrophy.

According to the CDCP, not all birth defects can be prevented, however, people can improve their chances of having healthy babies by managing their health conditions and adopting healthy behaviours before pregnancy. Most birth defects occur in the first three months of pregnancy when the organs of the baby are forming while other defects can occur at a later stage of the pregnancy.

The CDCP recommends consulting with a health practitioner before stopping or starting any medication, familiarising yourself with vaccinations, such as the flu shot and the whooping cough shot, and avoiding harmful substances, such as alcohol and tobacco during pregnancy. Folic acid can help prevent major birth defects of the brain and spine, therefore, it is important to take 400 micrograms of folic acid before and during pregnancy.

Babies born with defects need special care. Families who have a child with a birth defect can get support from health care providers, support groups, and other families with children who have the same birth defect.

PUBLIC SERVANTS LIKELY TO GO ON STRIKE SOON

By Ndivhuwo Thenga

South Africa's public servants are likely to embark on a strike next month. This comes after government, through the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), tabled a below-inflation 4,7% offer for the 2023/24 financial year during a special council meeting at the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) on Friday, 17 February 2023. The offer is lower than the 5,4% average inflation projected by the South African Reserve Bank for 2023 and is in line with its average projection of 4,8% for 2024. The meeting was not attended by all parties, with only affiliates of the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) attending the meeting. Public service trade unions affiliated to both the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) snubbed the special council meeting citing the unresolved 2022/23 salary dispute. The employer had angered unions when it unilaterally implemented 3% salary increase.

The Public Servants Association (PSA), an affiliate of FEDUSA, is likely to put through a demand of 10% salary increase as it did during the 2022/23 negotiations. It says that its demand is informed by the rising cost of living, high inflation rate, and by the fact that public servants have not received an increase for the past three years. What is unusual with this year's negotiations is that government negotiators made an offer on the first day of negotiations before unions could present their consolidated demands. The non-pensionable R1 000 cash gratuity, which will fall away at the end of March, had been converted into pensionable pay in the government's new offer. This is a big point of contention between the employer and labour unions who argued during last year's negotiations that the gratuity is not



National Day of Action

helpful to members as it is non-pensionable.

Other unions organising in the public service, including the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU), Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA), South African Emergency Personnel's Union (SAEPU), Public and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (PAWUSA), South African Medical Association Trade Union (SAMATU), National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (NUPSAW) and South African Policing Union (SAPU), reiterated their demand for the employer to implement clause 3.3 of PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2018 during their media briefing on 16 February 2023. Government failed to implement this above-mentioned clause during 2020, arguing that it is not affordable, and that the resolution was never submitted to the National Treasury for certification before signing, and was therefore not budgeted for. Instead, the State took the matter to Labour Court to have the clause set aside. The court ruled in favour of the State and unions took the matter to the Constitutional Court on appeal where

justices agreed with the judgement of the Labour Court. Meanwhile, these unions served the employer with a notice on Friday, 24 February 2023 to strike over the 2022/23 salary dispute and the State's attack on collective bargaining.

Public service unions are also likely to litigate against the employer if employees do not receive their gratuity. The 2021/22 salary agreement contained a clause that says that the gratuity shall continue if there is no new agreement. For now, it is a game of wait-and-see if indeed the gratuity will fall away come end of March.



Labour union members picketing for increased wages