

## War vets

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was set up in 2006 to address this issue once and for all. Apart from setting up its organizational structure, the Ministry went on a registration drive to create a data base which would allow it to plan effectively. It was the lack of reliable data that had knocked many initiatives

off balance in the past.

"This challenge and others become our focus in this strategic plan in our advocacy for better quality of life for all veterans," said Dr. Tjiriange. "As we reflect on the journey we have travelled, we are mindful of the challenges we face.

"The final product, thus, provide systems and methods to outline priorities in addressing the socio-economic plight of veterans in a sus-

tainable manner. We consider the Strategic Plan as the first step in initiating our future success... With government fully behind our course, failure is thus not an option."

As the five-year plan rolls on and the Ministry mobilizes resources to achieve the objectives it has set itself, the challenges are many, but so too are the opportunities for success. Where there is a will, there is always a way.



## Zoom In

By Asser Ntinda



As Namibians prepare for the upcoming Presidential and National Assembly elections, the battle of ideas is heating up. While SWAPO Party is fine-tuning its 2009 Election Manifesto, which will be launched on September 6, next month, some, if not all, opposition parties are in secret talks once again trying to form a coalition whose sole objective is to dent SWAPO Party's two-thirds majority in the National Assembly.

If there is one thing opposition parties have in common and which temporarily unites them, it is their dream to at least just wake up one day and be told that SWAPO Party has lost its two-thirds majority. That dream, too, forms the symbiotic relationship between them and the main stream of Eurocentric media houses in this country, which have been frantically singing hyperboles about Namibia's democracy, which, they claim, was under threat by SWAPO Party's dominance on Namibia's political landscape.

In churning out such antics, this assortment of uppity whites and celebrated master puppeteers, who only yesterday, were quite happy and comfortable to dine and wine with the racist oppressors, they are joined, once again, by an assortment of some pseudo academics, blacks and whites, who spend most of their time conducting academic research on how and why SWAPO Party's two-thirds majority is "not good" for democracy, and that it borders on a "de facto one party system."

More than once, however, their research papers have only achieved the opposite—strengthening SWAPO Party's strong-base throughout the country. Even if those academics and former puppets were to combine and form a coalition, which would not last anyway because there is nothing that binds them together, such a coalition will only achieve the opposite. People will simply look at it as an elitist contempt for popular judgment.

Namibians have voted over the years and have unequivocally said that they would put their trust in SWAPO Party. Their confidence in SWAPO Party is not about to change. It will be repeated, come November this year. Let the opportunists, celebrated puppets and pseudo academics lose faith in popular judgments if they so wish, but they should also rise above their egos and political ambitions and be honest and smart enough to accept that the results of free and fair democratic elections are not to be questioned. For, doing so means negating the very values and acid principles of the democracy they claim to uphold.

In fact, it would be a blessing in disguise if these former puppets and the current crop of malcontents and turncoats, who now proclaim their loyalty to Western liberal values, could come together as a coalition so that SWAPO Party could just finish them at a go, rather than wasting our scarce resources facing a plethora of fragmented opposition parties.

Current efforts to revive talks about forming a coalition should be marked as evidence that none of the current opposition parties, old and new, has any hope of mounting a serious political challenge to SWAPO Party in the upcoming elections. That painful reality is now closing in on them, albeit a little bit late.

Shortly after its formation in late 2007, the Rally for Democracy and Progress, RDP, thought it would draw the attention of other opposition parties into buying the idea of a coalition. In fact some parties such as the DTA, the All People's Party, APP, and the Republican Party, RP, nearly bought the idea, but following RDP's humiliating electoral defeats at Eenhana and Omuthiya in Ohangwena and Oshikoto regions respectively, they moved back after realizing that they were merely dealing with a spent cartridge, glorified only by Hidipo Hamutenya's exaggerated popularity and indispensability in SWAPO Party.

For now, the coalition talks are off, for now at least. Political opportunism rarely pays. It is one thing to pursue a cause driven by genuine convictions which are informed by a felt-need for fundamental social and economic changes that will have a positive impact on the lives of the very people one seeks to lead.

It is quite another when such convictions are driven by self-serving egos and unrestrained ambitions. Such projects, however disguised they may be, rarely get off the ground. They flop because they are not anchored on such felt-needs and hard-rock realities.

The other day I saw APP's Ignatius Shixwameni addressing a "star rally" in a hall, which looked more like an evening church choir than a "star rally." The hall was virtually empty, save for the many empty chairs which were quite visible in the background, and yet Shixwameni had the gut to say they would "stay the course!"

Opposition parties must by now realize that their "long-march" to State House, even if they combine, has been knocked off balance. Only a fool who believes in fantasies and pipedreams will dispute this reality. Even some well-known hibernators have now started saying that RDP was "too early in coming."

Sources say that Hamutenya is quite uncomfortable going it alone as RDP, and is currently arm-reaching parties like the Republican Party, RP and the DTA, but his confidantes fear that cobbling former puppets and yesteryear's "meneer" together into a coalition of some sorts to contest an election and hope to win is an exercise in futility.

For, beyond their hatred against SWAPO Party, there is nothing they will show, rainbow style, to attract the voters. That is for sure. Morally also, it will be impossible for RDP to lead the show. What has it brought on the table, political carcasses from Eenhana and Omuthiya? With only a mere three months to go before the elections, only a political buffoon will entertain coalition talks.



## Namibia commemorates SADC Day on 17 August 2009

On the occasion of the commemoration of the Southern African Development Community Day, the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia remember the adoption of the Declaration and Treaty that resulted in the transformation of the regional grouping from a Coordinating Conference into a Development Community at the Summit in Windhoek on 17 August 2002.

SADC's transformation marked its first step towards reducing dependence and also laid the foundation for a genuine and equitable integration in the Southern African region.

It put the SADC ideal of economic well-being, the improvement of the standard of quality of life, freedom, social justice, peace and security high on the agenda for the wellbeing of the people of Southern Africa.

In commemorating SADC Day, the Government and people of Namibia pledge unwavering support to the SADC policies and programmes that are aimed at charting a common destiny for the people in the region and Africa at large.

*Long live Namibia!*

*Long live the Southern African Development Community!*

*Long live Africa'*

## Kalahari Holdings Pty (Ltd)



### CONGRATULATIONS



The Board, Management and Staff of Kalahari Holdings Group of Companies wishes Dr. Hage G. Geingob, Vice President of the SWAPO Party and Minister of Trade and Industry a Happy 68<sup>th</sup> Birthday. As the saying goes "age is a number", indeed Dr. Geingob is always young at heart and always display youthful energy.

During the prime years of his life, Dr. Geingob followed in the footsteps of other freedom fighters into exile to fight for the liberation of our country. He served the SWAPO Party in various leadership capacities including Head of United Nations Institute for Namibia and returned home to head the Election Campaign of SWAPO in 1998. He was the leading negotiator in the formulation of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and was appointed by the Founding President Dr. Sam Nujoma as the first Prime Minister in a free and independent Namibia.

*Happy Birthday and many Happy Returns!*

**Dr. Kalumbi Shangula**  
**EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN**