

MY VIEWS, MY VOICE

BY JOY NDWANDWE (Guest Writer)

SIYINQABA: WE ARE A FORTRESS, INCWALA CEREMONY

His Majesty King Mswati III's speech when dispersing the regiments was in line with the Indigenous Cosmology: the King thanked God and ancestors for the blessings of rain and success of Incwala Ceremony.

His Majesty recognised the perseverance of his late father King Sobhuza II in persevering Incwala and acknowledged his father's cosmological presence during this ceremony. The King emphasised mutual respect as the grounding base for regiments, highlighted the shield as protection as the spear is tied to the shield, symbolizing cosmic and social order. Most significantly he emphasised that Incwala 2012 was intergenerational and international with participants from Africa and Qatar.

Indigenous Cosmology

Prophet LaNdwandwe in Akusiko Kwami Kwebantfu unearthing King Sobhuza II's Philosophy states thus: 'Authentic Identity based on Traditional African Cosmology and Ontology edifies on how we are members of society unborn, living and dead as cosmic beings. How upon birth the cosmic being must learn cosmic and social order in order to enjoy harmonious human existence and coexistence.....as cosmic beings or 'ntfu' or the 'soul' emerged from the Supreme Being or Ultimate Source, God, from the society of the unborn into the world.'

The King's seclusion marks the beginning of Incwala as this period enables him to connect with members of the society unborn, living and dead; as a cosmic being, leader and healer of the nation, as the old adage teaches us that when the head of the fish is rotten so will the rest of the body. This affirms that leaders are healers who have the cosmic responsibility to ensure rain, harvest and prosperity of the nation; thus sustaining the body. The seclusion enables the leader to meditate, contemplate and pray for the success and prosperity of the nation, cosmic responsibilities of the head of the nation.

This seclusion enables the King to connect with the Supreme Being or the Ultimate Source of all that is in order to ensure that all the negative elements of the year are cleansed of his psyche; in preparation for Divine Guidance for the new season that awaits him and his people. He also connects with members of the society of unborn and dead, as a source of inspiration for the future of those to come; and most significantly that who have been on earth, blessed with the wisdom of hindsight on how to deal with the society of the living.

Cosmic and Social Order

When the Little Incwala begins, the nation joins His Majesty in the dance to fortify him, through affirmations and meditative dances that shed the negativity of the year. The songs address negative utterances that the King is

expected to have experience during the year; and this also fortifies the people who participate from their own negativity. As healing the head of the nation is also healing the nation, and those who participate are representatives of the nation.

The Incwala dance is circular, symbolizing the circle of life with the men and women facing each other. This is symbolic of how the circle of life, balances the masculine and feminine energy; which is critical for preserving the essence of life, in the society of the unborn, living and dead. Although Incwala is predominately about the men and boys regiments, feminine energy is critical as women are the moral shields of society; hence the women bring this energy to fortify the King and celebrate the right of passage of *tingatja*.

The masculine energy for protecting the children unborn, living and the departed ancestors; expressing how life in the African paradigm is a continuum, hence a person does not have an expiry date. This understanding grounds cosmic and social order which is also expressed through the *Tingatja* when going on their pilgrimage of innocence which collecting the *Lusekwane*. This is symbolic of connecting with the society of the unborn, which has been preserved by *Tingatja* throughout the year and now being celebrated as pure or innocent energy during this ceremony.

The catching of the bull is also a significant component of the cosmic and social order, which we celebrate in Incwala; as the boys are inherently catching the bull inside themselves, to enable them to enjoy harmonious human existence and co-existence without bullying others. The involvement of both young and old members of the living society is an important part of how Incwala is a living tradition; that was preserved by ancestors for the living, and the living are preserving it for the society of the unborn.

Harmonious Human Existence

Prophet LaNdwandwe stated thus: 'The Traditional African Cosmology edifies us on how the soul in the middle of a triangular matrix of cosmic and social relationships; with humanity of the right as part of society of the living' (hence we greet with the right hand). *Kubutseka* is our source of emotional intelligence, which grooms us to enjoy harmonious human existence in the society of the living; therefore, an integral part of our indigenous cosmology.

When we are able to integrate beyond our immediate family into the broader levels of society we are considered emotionally intelligent; our tradition of *kubutseka* enables us to learn the skill and art of living in the society of the living. *Kubutseka*, requires one to become a member of a regiment and this is an integral part of Incwala as the dance and the pilgrimage is organized according to *Libutfo* or regimentary programmes.



The older regiments in the society of the living become role models for the younger members of the regiments; and this is not by age, but experience in the art of enjoying harmonious human existence within the society of the living. They are also experienced in the meditative dance and most significantly in the songs that are affirmations of fortification for the King as head of the nation. These songs enable the regiments to connect with their own authentic identity whilst they dance on behalf of the society of the unborn whilst honouring the society of the departed ancestors.

Kuhlehla, paying homage to the King by working in the fields, is an important part of our emotional intelligence; as the regiments put into practice the art of synchronicity in the land of the living. They work side by side as a united team, and this year they were able to complete their task at dashing speed; indicative of how through *kuhlehla* they expressed unity of purpose. Unfortunately, this unity of purpose does not filter through into communities and most significantly in the present day '*infabantfu*' one of the fields are government offices; where the same regiments need to apply this invaluable experience of emotional intelligence.

Co-existence

Co-existence requires spiritual intelligence or *Kusima Kumdali* as it expresses our relationship with *Umvelinchati* or the Supreme Being and ancestors, part of the triangular matrix of our relationships. The Incwala is a fortification process as its entirety is based Divine Guidance, with the cosmological elements of the sky, sun, moon, stars, ocean and herbs coming from the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source of all that is. The water pilgrimage can-

not be manipulated by members of the living society, as it is guided by divine guidance; with the sky, sun, moon, stars and the ocean as the 'high priest.'

This requires a high level of spiritual intelligence of letting go of the human weakness of wanting to manipulate systems and processes for personal gain and enrichment. As the Incwala fortification also requires the collection of natural herbs in mountains that come from the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source of all that is. These herbs connect Incwala with the environment, which is a critical component of our indigenous cosmology; as we coexist with the environment, hence we do not manipulate it for personal consumption and enrichment.

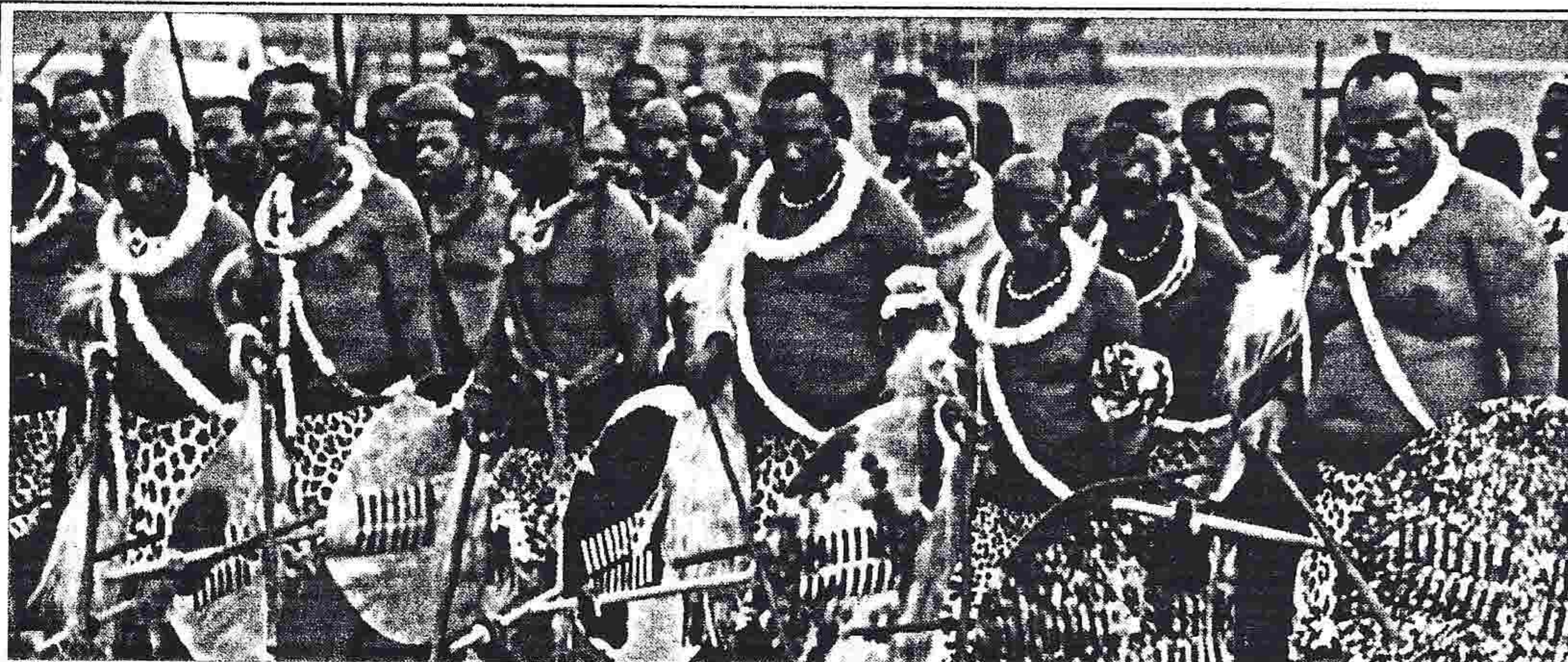
In our art of co-existence, there are the ancestors who are part of our society of the dead or departed, which we continue to honour as they are an integral part of our authentic identity. Ancestors we honour through knowing our genealogy, totems and most significantly family history; which enables us to be grounded in our authentic identity, whilst we co-exist with others without insecurity. To co-exist we require being firm as the authentic identity level, to feel secure such that we are not insecure on who we are, where we are coming from and where we are going.

Honouring ancestors is about the yesterday, today and tomorrow, which is an integral part of the indigenous cosmology of being part of society unborn, living and dead or departed. When we participate in Incwala, we honour those who preserved it for us whilst we were in the society of the unborn. We also affirm our role as preservers of Incwala for the society of the unborn, whilst ensuring that when we become ancestors ourselves we expect the society of the living to participate in our honour.

Incwala is our fortification process where we express our indigenous cosmology with its four edicts of supreme being or divine guidance, cosmic and social order, harmonious human existence and coexistence. Hence we celebrate our co-existence through the cosmological expression 'Siyinqaba, We are a Fortress' as we do not only fortify the King during Incwala; but our own authentic identities. Incwala enables us to experience the circle of life guided by the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source off all that is; through cosmic and social order, harmonious human existence and coexistence, from the Kings seclusion until the regiments are dispersed.

Conclusion

My journey into unearthing the indigenous cosmologies has been synonymous to a wilderness that will be published in my next book: By His Grace I Know Earth, reflecting Supreme Being and Divine Guidance, whilst honouring the teachings of King Sobhuza II on how '*wahlekwu live utawati umhlaba*' 'when the nation gags you, you will know earth.' The ending of my wilderness, marks the advancement in the honouring the late King Sobhuza II's legacy on how Swaziland will be a guiding star of Africa as part of the African Renaissance Agenda. This wilderness has enriched me with invaluable life learning experience of how being perceived as a drunkard, loser and failure comes with lessons in humiliation; which have restored my dignity and authentic identify as an indigenous prophet and the late Queen Regent LaZidze or LaZwide incarnate.



AYIBUKELWA: His Majesty King Mswati III joined by regiments in dancing to the Incwala songs.

The Ndwandwes and Incwala Ceremony

By Joy Ndwandwe
(Guest Writer)

According to uMnguni Baba Bongani Ndwandwe descendant of Mawewe the son of Soshangane the brother and authorised person to King Zwide; the late King Mswati II was the first Swazi King to be 'Indla Liselwa' 'the Gourd eater' symbolic of being guided through Incwala protocols by the Mkhathshwa our 'chief priests' brought to Swaziland by his mother the late Queen Regent LaZwide or LaZidze.

Historical Perspectives

Eileen J. Krige in *The Social Systems of the Zulus*: "Tradition has it that Zwide succeeded by magical means in taking Dingiswayo Mthethwa prisoner, whereupon he killed him and defeated the leaderless Mthethwa force. Zwide was now paramount, but Shaka was becoming too powerful for his liking, so he next turned to attack the Zulus. Shaka, a master of strategy, fled at first, but was careful to remove all food before him, so that the enemy should go hungry. Then he thought it prudent to give battle, with the result that he defeated the Ndwandwe.

This perspective indicates how the Ndwandwes have been 'chief priests' with the ability to magically imprison opponents depicts the existence of 'indigenous scientific' knowledge in the 1800 epoch. I admire Eileen's choice of terminology 'magical means' as she did not fall into what Professor Bjorn Sandgren has coined the Elephant La Rouge (Red Elephant) Syndrome of viewing other people's knowledge as unscientific and irrational; due to the western world's inability to control and manipulate for production, consumption, material gratification and profit making.

This history lesson explicates the Ndwandwe's love for food and sheds interesting insights on how they did not give into Shaka, but were hungry when attacked by this Military Strategist. In mist of that hunger the Ndwandwes fled from Shaka to present day Mozambique, Swaziland, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia.

They ran away with the magic hence Shaka may have captured the land and cattle but not the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect; as prior to his death, Zwide presented his lead-

ership rod to the authorised person, Soshangane.

The Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect created the Shangaan clan or tribe, named after Soshangane in present day Mozambique; after capturing the indigenous tribes and clans, who conceded to being called Shangaan or People of Soshangane. This spiritual and organic intellect is well preserved in the legacy of Soshangane's grandson, son of Mzila; the last Emperor Ngungunyane who was captured, humiliated and exiled by the Portuguese for refusing to concede he is no longer Emperor but a subject of the then Portuguese Kingdom.

Why Ndwandwes and Incwala?

Queen Regent LaZidze knew of her father's spiritual and organic intellect, appealed to Swazi Royalty to allow her to bring the children of Mkhathshwa; her bother's children, assigned with fortification duties as the families 'chief priests'. The songs sung during this fortification process are in the Ndwandwe dialect language 'ukuyeyeza or ukutefuya'; the Children of Mkhathshwa neither are traditional healers nor initiated *Sangomas* for fortifying the king. Thus they use the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect, which has mutated in to diverse spiritual and organic intellectual capacity of the Ndwandwes within the Southern African region.

Secondly the Ndwandwes cannot survive without food, hence Shaka defeated them; taking into consideration that this fortification process is intertwined with the celebration of the first fruit; which Basil Davidson explicates as follows: "Kings were supposed to be killed if they broke any of the royal taboos on personal behaviour, fell seriously ill, or ruled in time of famine or server drought: whenever they could no longer be regarded as fit guardians of the right and natural."

I suppose Zwide knew he had to die, when he failed to protect his people from hunger as he was no longer regarded as a fit guardian; but the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect had to be preserved in the celebration of the first fruit to prevent future hunger.

Ghanaian scholar and author Ayittey in *Africa Betrayed* states thus: "to understand the role of kings, we should first consider the African concept of the universe; as Africans believe that their universe comprises three levels: the sky, the world, and the earth. The sky was domain of spirits of both living and the yet to be born as well as of powerful forces such as lightning,

thunder, rain and drought. The earth was the domain of dead ancestors, other dead tribesmen, and the activities of the living, such as agriculture, fishing and hunting. The world, occupied by the people and other tribesmen, was therefore the domain of war, peace, trade, and relations with other tribes." This encapsulates the Incwala Ceremony from the King's seclusion until he disperses the Regiment, where his speech through indigenous

policy and politics focuses on the world.

Demonisation of Incwala

Colonial and recent history has demonised the Incwala Ceremony and the Ndwandwe fortification processes; thus motivating me to wish I was male. A very rare moment, which occurs only during Incwala; as throughout the year, I enjoy being Ndwandwe female who emasculates men with my constant and consistent equality status.

The reason I wish I was male during Incwala, to witness the fortification processes conducted by my fathers, brothers, nephews and all my relatives who have been demonised. I wish to be male to unearth what is perceived to be demonic with my Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect and Makhubu academic genre, to bring to the foe the embedded Indigenous Cosmologies.

It is tragic to deal with the Elephant Le Rouge Syndrome, from a westerner, but when this judgmental mentality emerges from your own African family it is demoralising; as it affirms the success of colonisation, and its transference of all the western prejudice and shallow view of our Indigenous Cosmologies.

Thus reading on the Ghanaian Indigenous Cosmologies articulated in *Africa Betrayed* was encouraging to know that not all Africans sold out to the Elephant Le Rouge Syndrome of demonising our own Indigenous Cosmologies. Incwala has lessons on Indigenous

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Cosmologies as it is directed and guided by the universe; the sky with its moon, stars and sun being the 'High Priests' of this Ceremony. The four edicts of these Indigenous Cosmologies being: Supreme Being or Divine Guidance; Cosmic and Social Order; Harmonious Human Existence; and Coexistence. Why would any conscious society let go of these invaluable edicts, which should be the constitutive rules for all knowledge systems to translate into sustainable peace in Africa?

This evokes my appreciate of the third reason of why the Ndwandwe's spiritual and organic intellect is critical during Incwala; in my discussions with Professor Santos from the Centre of Social Science Studies in Portugal, Emperor Ngungunyane said: "I am an Emperor, I do not kneel on uncleaned ground."

This earned him thrashing, gagging and humiliation including being paraded as a fool in Lisbon for calling himself Emperor or King.

He maintained a high level of dignity as there is thin line between humiliation and dignity; hence this level of dignity is genetic with all the demonisation that my family has gone through. The king's fortification still continues every year, conducted by 'chief priests' who are spiritual and organic intellectuals.

Ndwandwe's inherent spiritual and organic intellect that does not allow them to kneel to living beings; rendering it impossible to be initiates (*twasa*) that have to kneel to their *Gobela*, a critical process of initiation for traditional healers. Initiates (*twasa*) always humble themselves to their *Gobela*; this would prove to be an impossible task for uMnguni to subdue their power to a living being. This strength is a blessing for purposes of Incwala as it has been well preserved for generations to come. It is also a blessing to the Swazi Royalty, our children, grand children, great grand children and great-great grand children; as the Ndwandwes do not kneel, therefore will not succumb to the negativity of demonisation.

Conclusion

The Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect has had tremendous impact on my rising above being labelled demonic; as an indigenous prophet blessed with visions which enable me to see deeper than the rational eyes. If this is demonic then 'my demons rock' as I was guided by Queen Regent LaZidze or LaZwide (the Indigenous Cosmologies guide) and the late King Sobhuza II (Indigenous Leadership guide) into creating the book on King Sobhuza Cosmology as Epistemology for the Future.

This King Sobhuza legacy book is competing within the Academy as material: African History; African Literature; African Philosophy; and African Leadership. Through this book I am now a Board Member of the African Renaissance Foundation, which will empower youth and young adults on Authentic Identity and Dignity in Africa. "If you believe I am demonic, watch the space, for the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect combined with the Makhubu academic genre."

MY VIEWS, MY VOICE



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Sibaya system our indigeous governace tool II

According to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland: Sibaya (the Swazi National Council) Section 232: (1) the people through Sibaya constitute the highest policy and advisory council (*Libandla*) of the nation.

(2) The Sibaya is the Swazi National Council constituted by *Bantfwabenhkosi*, the *tikhulu* of the real and all adult citizens gathered at the official residence of the Ndllovukazi under the chairmanship of *iNgwenyama* who may delegate this function to any official.

(3) Sibaya functions as the annual general meeting of the nation but may be convened at anytime to present the views of the nation on pressing and controversial national issues.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES OF SIBAYA 2012

His Majesty King Mswati II in his opening speech challenged the nation to contribute to this nation building process, by deliberating on the following issues: Financial Crisis Solutions; Employment Opportunities; Economic Recovery and Poverty Alleviation; Elections 2013 and the Ratification of International Treaties and Charters. A long overdue nation building process after the protracted judicial crises; then the teacher's protracted strike compromising the peace and stability brand of the nation. Approximately 250 citizens contributed during this nation building process over the six days, they were either cheered or booed for their contributions by the magnitude of attendees at Sibaya 2012.

FINANCIAL CRISIS SOLUTIONS

The country's leadership was challenged to consider whether the nation's silence means peace prevails, as the nation is not blind to the corruption and greed that prevails in Swaziland. Contributors felt initiatives to curb corruption and greed were eminent for restoring peace and stability; whilst leaders were reminded of their responsibility in serving the people and not their personal interest or the interests of a selected few.

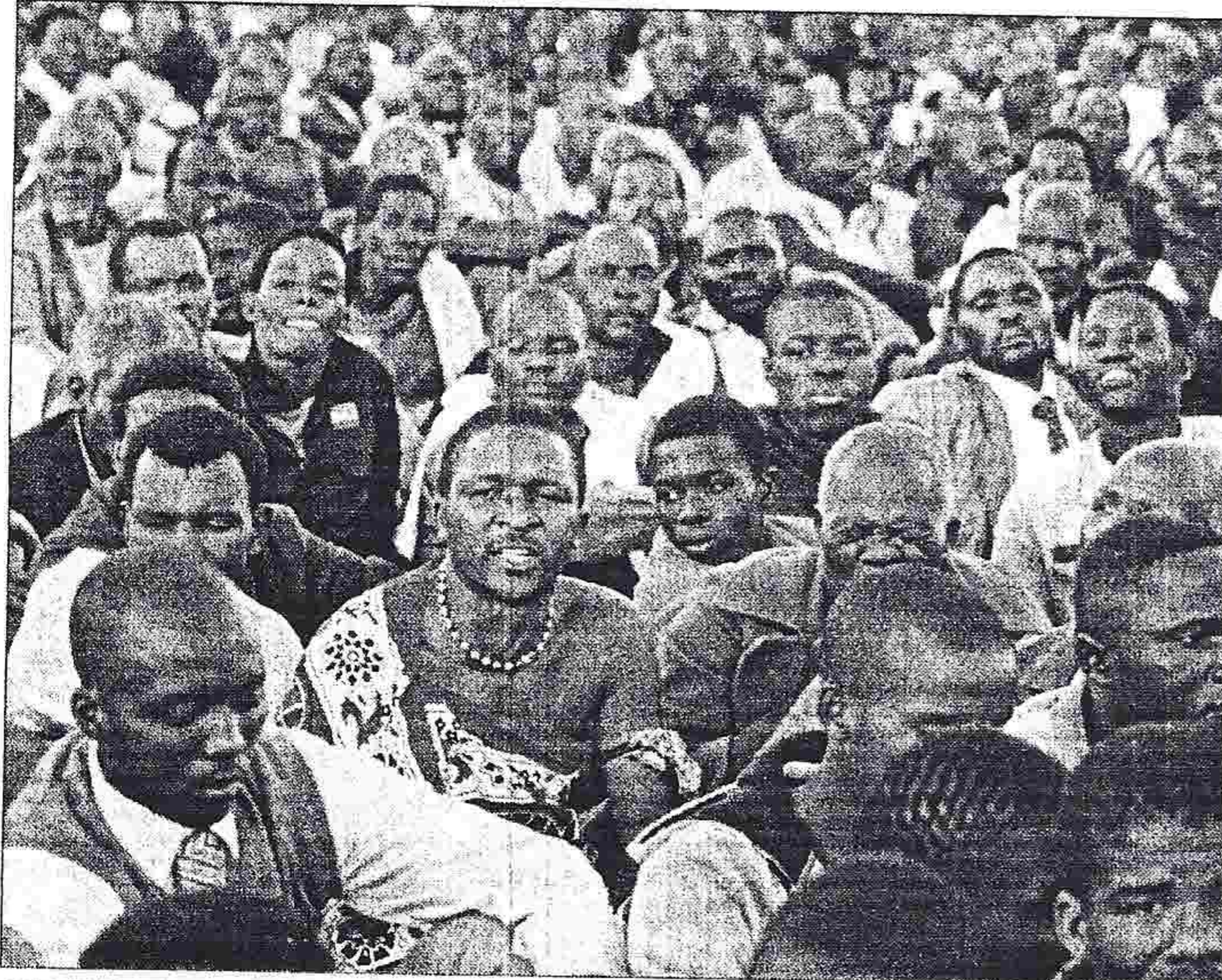
The main highlight of the financial crisis solution was the removal of 'notorious' Circular No. 1; the nation felt this circular further widened the income gap between the rich and poor and was an unnecessary expenditure in a country experiencing a financial crisis. Numerous contributors insisted that the country is not poor but suffering from server financial mismanagement, such as the E80 million lost per month through corruption.

The call for the arrest of those who are depleting national resources, as this was unjust to the nation carrying a heavy tax burden after the introduction of the VAT, hence demanding government's transparency and accountability. The leaders were reminded on how the rule of law was pertinent in dealing with financial mismanagement in government; and how truth must prevail in ensuring sustainable financial management.

The contributors felt the country's leadership was not following in the footsteps of King Sobhuza II, who listened to all citizens; the fools, the drunk, the insane, the poor, the rich and those he disagreed with. King Somhlo's vision of choosing the Bible and not the coin, for the current leadership was perceived to be choosing both the coin and the Bible; to the extent that the coin was the major preoccupation, hence eroding peace and stability.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dagga or marijuana was considered a potential



SIBAYA: Sibaya functions as the annual general meeting of the nation.

solution towards creating employment opportunities, if it is properly regulated and legally traded. The current focus on exporting primary goods from Swaziland was highlighted as of disservice towards creating employment opportunities. Particularly as current employment opportunities industries subjected their employees to low wages, unfavourable working conditions and seasonal employment with minimal benefits.

There were appeals for the King to consider the mining sector as a potential employment opportunity generator and economic driver; whilst improving the strategies for curbing greed and corruption, which is a deterrent for investors. Youth unemployment was highlighted including the call for leader's early retirement to create jobs for youth.

The change of curriculum to empower youth with technical and business skills was a highlight; such that they can participate in agriculture development, infrastructure development and sports development.

There were appeals to His Majesty for employment opportunities projects from foreign investors whilst also capitalising on all the country's natural resources. Thus ensuring development projects are not limited to the Mbabane-Manzini corridor; thus narrowing the gap between the rural and urban areas, through decentralisation such as expanding government service delivery programmes; whilst curbing rural-urban migration, which is a threat to rural development.

This is in line with the Constitution and His Majesty's vision of Eswatini's first world status; through ensuring access to service delivery in rural communities. Contributors applauded the King's employment creation initiatives but they have not translated into economic development with sustainable employment opportunities. Sibaya called for the leadership to advise the King with truth, and the King's advisors to advise truthfully; to enable His Majesty to have an honest view on the state of the nation.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

There was a call for competition within the telecommunications industry as the monopoly of MTN and SPTC was not economically viable for the country. Agriculture was a high priority

during this nation building process as an economic recovery and poverty alleviation; hence water harvesting is the national priority. Investment of irrigation was also highlighted as a national priority, particularly as the King has invested in dams in certain areas.

The under utilisation of government farms became a high priority at this nation building process as these farms would have a huge impact in economic recovery and poverty alleviation. Contributors felt the current funding channelled through Tinkhundla was not easily accessible; hence it has not contributed to the curbing of poverty.

Contributors were adamant on how its time for industrial sites, tourism and arts and culture activities to be initiated in rural areas.

Small businesses were considered an integral part of economic recovery and poverty alleviation; as foreign businesses enjoy tax holidays, bank outside the country. The current education system was criticised for encouraging white collar jobs, instead of developing small business acumen and blue collar job seekers. The use of local transport businesses in the transporting of Iron Ore as opposed to foreign businesses; which has been the current practice under the Salgaocar.

The issue of ex-miners pension, widows and children being left vulnerable due to lack of compensations and payout was critical during this nation building process. The establishment of ex-miners cooperatives was also highlighted by ex-miners, as this was perceived as delaying tactics; for many ex-miners have passed on without payouts leaving their widows and beneficiaries vulnerable over the years.

The participation of persons with disabilities was a major highlight during Sibaya 2012; as they attended and contributed freely to this nation building process.

They felt empowered as in most instances they were discriminated from meeting with the King, due to their disability. Contributors called for a disability grant, to curb politicians and persons with political ambitions from using their vulnerability through donations, as they require jobs.

ELECTIONS 2013

The Tinkhundla system was considered to have failed the nation as cabinet and Parliament were unaccountable to the nation and their constituen-

cies. It was strongly suggested that elections in 2013 should result in the election of dignified citizens; who will not disappear from constituencies after elections. Contributors also felt the parliamentary term should be reduced or there should be maximum four years of representation in each constituency.

Contributors raised concerns on how the King's supporters and advisors are ill-advising him; hence His Majesty required a team of 15 advisors, who will be honest and dignified. This King Council must be predominately chiefs as their understand grassroots' issues and challenges. There were calls for the recalling of this government as it was considered to have failed to protect the economy of the country in accordance to the constitution.

Tinkhundla Decentralisation process was perceived as too slow thus negatively impacting on service delivery at the local level. It was suggested that Tinkhundla become local authorities to fast track service delivery and development; as they are currently entangled in greed and corruption, as who you know is the operative strategy. The ineffectiveness of the Anti-Corruption unit was also highlighted as unjust as corruption and greed are prevalent.

Progressives were challenged by contributors to come forward and present their manifestos publicly and issues openly at the Sibaya. The response to this call resulted in contributions on how its time to consider the party system, where the King will be a constitutional monarch similar to Lesotho and Britain.

This was opposed by some conservative proponents in the nation building process; this opposition resulted in more members of the progressives intensifying their call for multi-party elections in 2013.

On the elections 2013 a call for an interim government to declare the elections, to enable multi-parties to participate and be part of Parliament debate for fine-tuning the Tinkhundla system. Contributors were clear on how Parliament required an opposition, as the current debates are linear and focused on protecting the status quo. They reminded the nation that Tinkhundla was an experiment, and its time for multi-party to be our governance experiment.

CONCLUSION

The national teacher's strike and the return to school of learners was eminent as Sibaya even took the responsibility to 'Kwembula Ingubo' to plea for pardon on behalf of the teachers to His Majesty, as teachers respect their culture. It was also suggested that an independent investigation into the teachers' strikes be undertaken and a report to His Majesty, independent from government.

The issue of women empowerment and involvement in conflict resolution was also highlighted, including the establishment of a ministry of women affairs. On scholarship payments I was personally guilty; as I invested on the King Sobhuza II Legacy, unsupported by any government institution.

The contributors felt due to the current greed and corruption prevalence rate, government needed to set up an independent fund operated through a designated non-government bank for the scholarship fund.

The international charters were rectified at the Sibaya 2012; contributors were adamant of their support to the King, vehemently opposed to Circular No.1 and most significantly expressed their lack of confidence in the current executive and legislative arms of government. There were numerous contributors who requested for Christianity and Christian principles to prevail in our leadership and the entire nation.