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Revolutionise the working relationship to speed up service delivery...

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By Herminah Phoshoko

MAFIKENG: North West public servants on Monday joined their counterparts elsewhere in the country to participate in the annual Africa Public Service Day (APSD) commemorations held at the CSIR Conference center in Tshwane.

According to the Public Service and Administration department, June 23 has been adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly as the UN Public Service Day to "celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community" by public servants.

The key objective of the day is the provision of quality public services to African citizens, whilst acknowledging the working conditions and the quality public service cadres who devote their lives to diligently serving the citizens of our continent.

The activities for the day involved live interaction between public servants, academia, public administration experts, representatives from the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) as well as the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Through the satellite screenings of the proceedings via the Parliamentary Channel 408 on DSTV, telephone and short message service (sms) line, public servants from across the country were able to take part in the discussions.

In North West, the public servants converged at the Mmabatho Civic Center, Mafikeng to watch the live transmission of the proceedings and also take part in the discussions.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said service delivery needed to be brought to people in a timely and efficient manner.

"Service delivery should be people-driven," she said speaking via a video link from Morocco where she was attending a conference.

She said the day served to deepen democracy by promoting good governance while recognizing public service workers.

Commenting on the theme for the day (From policy to result based implementation), Fraser-Moleketi said it encompasses the need to accelerate current national projects to bring services to the people in an integrated, timely and efficient manner.

Professor Shadrack Gutto from the University of South Africa said there was a need to change the paradigm where public servants regarded themselves as “public bosses”.

He said that until this paradigm is changed, public servants would not offer sufficient service delivery to the society. “We need to revolutionise the working relationship in order to speed up service delivery,” he said.

One of the attending public servants from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, Zikhanyile Tekana (42), said he came to learn more about what the day means to him as a public servant.

“Considering the importance of the information disseminated here today, I wish all my colleagues were here,” he said.

Lungelwa Magobiane from Public Works district office in Itsoseng, who is relatively new to the public service field, said she had learned a lot about the Batho Pele (People First) principles.

ENDS

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