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Botswana Institute For Technology Research and Innovation

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NEWS RELEASE

07 December, 2015

For Immediate release

BITRI SETS-UP CENTRE FOR MATERIAL SCIENCE

The Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation is in the process of setting up a state of the art Centre for Material Science that will benefit both local and international research institutions. Speaking at a media briefing this morning, the Chief Executive Officer Professor Nelson Torto said BITRI has invested huge amounts of money in nanotechnology and has procured pilot and laboratory scale instrumentation so as to ensure that it drives its research that is geared towards products. He indicated that BITRI is undoubtedly one of the best equipped organization in the area of electrospinning in the world, and he hoped that should facilitate innovative products.

On other issues Prof. Torto said BITRI as a research organization has done well in terms of promoting research and development with its seminars. BITRI has been hosting bi-monthly seminars addressing different topics that have been presented by local as well as international speakers. He said BITRI has done well in participation and articulation of research and development in line with its co-creation and collaboration motto, especially in the area of Climate Change. In terms of integration of science and technology into society, he said BITRI was instrumental in the formation of the Botswana Academy of Sciences which was launched by the Minister of Infrastructure, Science and Technology Mr Nonfo Molefhi last month.

He mentioned that through the Seding solar street light, BITRI has addressed street lighting problems especially in more than 6 villages which are off the national grid. BITRI is also currently rolling out the Kgalagadi Sand Building Block Technology (KSBB). KSBB is a technology where BITRI uses fly-ash from coal fired power stations such as at Morupule Colliery and Sowa, which is mixed with Kgalagadi sand and ordinary Portland cement to make bricks. The initiative takes advantage of the vast resources of the Kgalagadi sand and eliminates river sand in the brick making process. Brick moulding facilities (depots) will be set up across the country to facilitate the availability of affordable housing for Botswana.

Prof. Torto mentioned that BITRI is currently re-focusing on the area of specialty chemicals which will facilitate research in areas such as Coal beneficiation.

Directors: O. Totolo (Chairman) | M. C. Bonyongo | L. K. Chakalisa | M. B. Conlon | E.T. Elias |
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Notwithstanding the successes, BITRI faced Challenges one of which is attracting personnel. "I believe the best brains should be based at BITRI, but we are struggling in this regard" said Prof. Torto.

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END

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