

BY SIBUSISO DLAMINI  
Mbabane

# Libraries finally open up

IN line with government easing up on previously enforced COVID-19 measures across all sectors of the economy, the ministry of information, communication and technology (ICT), has announced the re-opening of libraries.

This was confirmed by Director of National Library Services Jabulile Hlophe, who said since schools and universities have also opened, they felt it was imperative for them to also open to offer their services.

"Look, libraries are important because access to information is fundamental in shaping lives. Libraries bring

with them a spirit of intellectualism, culture of reading and reflect the ideas and directions taken by nations. They create spaces for debate and inspire others to write their own books in order to influence the world," she stated.

Adding, Hlophe said with schools and universities having opened about a week ago, it was clear that their services were needed.

She said all types of students have had to deal with some distractions due to the pandemic, and this means libraries have a role to play in terms of helping them to get back in action.

The director implored the public to still follow all COVID-19 precautions.

## Oblivious

"As much as we have re-opened, we can't be oblivious to the fact that COVID-19 is still out there, so we plead with the public to follow all COVID-19 protocols as they visit the various library centres country-wide," said Hlophe.

Bongani Matsebula, a 23-year old student at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA) Mbabane Campus, was found at the library and expressed his pleasure with the re-opening.

"Well, I am a book worm by nature, even when it's not really about my schoolwork, so I am happy about the re-opening of the library.

As I am here today, I am taking a break from my schoolwork and reading a couple of literature books.

"Yes, we now live in the age of the internet, but reading actual books is a foundational skill of which all learning is built, and I think there's a lot that must be done in our country to improve the culture of reading," he said.

There are 15 branches of the national library services namely; Bhunya,

Big-Bend, Hlatikulu, Lavumisa, Lomahasha, Mankayane, Manzini, Mbabane, Mhlume, Mpaka, Nhlangu, Pigg's Peak, Simunye, Siteki and Tshaneni.

## Improved

Part of national library objectives are to develop information centres at tin-khundla centres, to develop ICT infrastructure for improved information collection, organisation and dissemination, to develop school libraries, to empower the Eswatini population with information and knowledge and to support culture and oral tradition, amongst others.

**UMGJIMI COURIERS**  
"We are efficient & reliable"

**The New Sign For Courier & Freight**

OVERNIGHT DELIVERIES

> Johannesburg > Pretoria > Nelspruit > Durban > Lesotho > Botswana

Tel: 2410 0073

f t @ in +268 7639 3696

DOC-23719



**HELPING HAND:** Chairperson of the Eswatini Members of Parliament Housing Project Committee Kubuta MP Musa Mabuza handing over walking sticks to Nyokase Judidah Dlamini and Ntulo Cowboy Dlamini from Nkhaba during the hand over of the house to the former. (Pic: Sifiso Dlamini) MORE ON PAGES 16, 17



Discover The Touch



## RENAC LAUNCHES TRAVEL AGENCY SUBSIDIARY

ESWATINI TRAVEL AGENCY (RETA)"

Royal Eswatini National Airways Corporation (RENAC) was established and commenced operations in 1978 as a national airline of the Kingdom of Eswatini. The airline ceased operations around 1999, after which RENAC continued trading as a travel agent selling airline tickets and travel insurance.

RENAC's operations were reassessed during 2017 and a fresh mandate was given, which would see the organization fulfill its objectives, i.e. to establish and operate an air transport undertaking for the carriage of passengers and goods of all descriptions within the Kingdom of Eswatini and elsewhere, amongst others.

As part of the process of re-establishing itself to fulfill the revised mandate, RENAC prepared a 5 Years' Strategic Plan, which aims to transform it into a commercially self-sustainable organization.

Initiatives for transforming RENAC into a commercially self-sustaining organization include establishment of a wholly owned subsidiary to be entrusted with the responsibility of managing travel agency business affairs.

To this end, it gives us pleasure to announce that the subsidiary company was established and duly registered under the name of Royal Eswatini Travel Agency (RETA), and that RENAC's travel agency business operations were transferred to RETA effective 1 April 2021.

We believe that by running RETA as a separate legal entity and business, its operations will be more competitive and a

player to be reckoned with in Eswatini's travel and hospitality industry in the near future. Some of the many initiatives included on the transformational programme for RETA include becoming IATA Accredited and therefore participate in relevant International Air Transport Association (IATA) payment and settlement plans. Through organizational alignment, RETA seeks to improve operational efficiencies and costs in a quest to enhance customer satisfaction.

As a travel agency, we acknowledge and have not been spared from the adverse effects of COVID-19 on the travel and hospitality industry. However, with all the losses taken, we are grateful to be still standing and are hopeful that the skies will open again. Whilst operating as a business unit for RENAC, we witnessed large numbers of passengers embarking on essential travel such as to tertiary universities, for work purposes, and some repatriated to their respective countries.

Worth mentioning is that travel agents remain the most reliable distributors of air travel services because of their high expertise in air travel and the ability to understand the complexities of the airline operations and policies. Although airlines engage in direct sales, they prefer to handle travel agents as opposed to individual customers, especially in cases where changes to existing itineraries are concerned.

Current offering comprises air tickets, travel insurance, airport lounges, holiday packages, cruise packages, hotel bookings, shuttle bookings, car rental, amongst others. RETA's transformational program also embraces the diversification of products and services and collaboration across the value chain to enrich the holistic customer experience.

Initially and for the period of this business plan, RETA will operate from two business centres,

one in Mbabane and another one in Manzini at the following addresses.

As a company registered per the Company's Act, RETA will be managed and directed by its own Board of Directors who are appointed by RENAC's Board of Directors. Operations of RETA will be headed by a manager. RENAC employees working in the travel agency business unit will remain employees of RENAC but will be placed on indefinite secondment at RETA, performing the same functions as while working in RENAC, effective 1 April 2021.

As a company managed and run separately from RENAC, RETA will have its own identity and its Logo and Slogan are presented above.

RENAC wishes RETA the best in their endeavors, and calls on all relevant stakeholders to support RETA in its endeavour of fulfilling its mandate and purpose, i.e. -To globally connect the Kingdom of Eswatini

through safe, efficient, and competitive aviation services, along with its strategic intent of becoming the continent's pride in travel service excellence.



**RETA Mbabane Office Address**  
Clicks Extension,  
Shops 43 & 44 Swazi Plaza,  
Mbabane Tel: +268 2404 3157/3487  
Email: sales@reta.co.sz  
Website: www.reta.co.sz

**Manzini Office Address**  
Shop 26, Sivuno House,  
Nkoseluhlaza Street, Manzini  
Tel: +268 2505 9704 Email:  
sales@reta.co.sz  
Website: www.reta.co.sz