

WORLD SCOPE

BOTSWANA SET TO BE DIAMOND CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

(GIN) — Botswana is set to have one of the world's largest and most sophisticated diamond sorting and valuing operations. This month, the world's largest and lowest cost producer of diamonds, with annual production worth over \$2.5 billion, will be taking over diamond sorting and valuation operations of the Botswana Diamond Valuing Company. Board seats of the new valuing company will be shared equally between the Government of Botswana and the De Beers gem company. The UK-based Firestone Diamonds is the largest holder of mineral rights in Botswana's 'kimberlite' fields, controlling over 21,000 square kilometres of rich mineral mines. But diamonds have not served all in equal measure. Over the past two decades, the government has successfully evicted the Basarwa, Gana and Gwi people of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve from their traditional lands, in a move that was challenged in the country's High Court. At least 1,500 of the Kalahari residents were forcibly relocated, according to the UK-based Survival International. Evictions will be examined by the UN Human Rights Committee.

NAMIBIA-SOUTH AFRICA VETS SOUGHT FOR MERCENARY WORK

(GIN) — Private security companies operating in Iraq and other war zones are cruising Namibia and South Africa for veterans of those country's independent wars who may need a job. Alex Kamwi, 55, a former battalion commander and the current executive director of Namibia Ex-Freedom Fighters and War Veterans Association said many veterans were unemployed, had few marketable skills and were "very, very poor." A recent 'help wanted' ad by a Nevada-based security firm brought out hundreds of Namibians seeking supposedly non-combat positions in Iraq and Afghanistan. About 35 percent of Namibia's about 2 million people are unemployed. Meanwhile, some 6,000 Ugandans are in Iraq serving as security guards. Minister of Labor Mwesigwa Rukutana confirmed that the last batch of 190 Ugandan youths reportedly contracted by the U.S. government headed for Iraq on Saturday. "The guards earn between \$700 and \$900 per month, with 90 per cent of their pay remitted home," the Minister said. "As a country we are happy that Ugandans have continued to be contracted to work in Iraq and we are happy with the way they have been treated."

KENYA TURNING THE CORNER ON ELECTION VIOLENCE

(GIN) — As Kenya's political leaders patch up their disputes that brought the country close to chaos, the international Human Rights Watch has called for prosecution of those who instigated the worst abuses. "In many cases the chief architects of post-election violence were prominent and well-known individuals," stated HRW in a report entitled "Ballots to Bullets: Organized Political Violence and Kenya's Crisis of Governance." Unrest in January and February left at least 1,500 people dead and 300,000 forced into internally displaced persons' camps. The report also faulted foreign governments for turning a blind eye to corruption, impunity and mismanagement by Kenya's government that contributed to the recent crisis. Meanwhile, Kenya's president Mwai Kibaki signed into law two bills passed hours earlier by parliament, enshrining a power-sharing deal between his party and that of opposition leader Raila Odinga.

UGANDA ELIMINATES A DEADLY DISEASE

(GIN) — Hib meningitis has been virtually eliminated in young children in Uganda just five years after the country introduced a Hib vaccine nationwide, according to an independent study. Haemophilus influenzae type b is a leading cause of pneumonia and meningitis, an inflammation of the lining covering the brain and spinal cord. It kills approximately 400,000 children under five years of age, most of them in the developing world, each year. The Ugandan vaccination program now prevents almost 30,000 cases of severe Hib disease and 5,000 child deaths (under five years) annually, equivalent to the successful control of measles in the country. Said Rana Hajjeh, director of the Hib Initiative: "Uganda has been a frontrunner in the Africa region in adopting this life-saving vaccine... and reducing mortality in children."

Kilpatrick

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Hart Plaza, you helped bury the word and critics now say what an oxymoron. How could you revert back?

KK: I was kind of surprised and shocked that people gravitated to what I said and not what I've been called. And the threats, the assaults on my family. Once again I think one of the stations and newspapers here did a whole series on race in the city of Detroit. And I remember they went to a lot of different leaders and people said, — ah there is no race issue. — And then they came to me and I said we have a race issue. And I think I always, for some reason, see these kinds of situations a little different. I mean I've been shocked by it. There's been absolute silence on the end of what I've been called, what my wife and children have been through and called, the threats on their lives. Absolute silence. But the power of that word now and assigning it to me has been a real deliberate thing. I know we buried it. I buried it on my spirit.

MC: So what happened? Why was it resurrected?

KK: I think that the spirit somehow has found a way to creep into this discussion and it goes back to me to that environment that's been created by all of the false things, the no research, no data, and this tenacious attempt to just say anything at any time. What I hope is that from here we can say enough is enough and move forward.

MC: Do you think if it was a White mayor the standard would be different in this city, given the circumstances and everything that's happened?

KK: I don't know. I think that I'll fuel the flames of the fire if I even differentiate it right now. I would just simply say that, you know... what I don't want to negate is the mistakes that I've made in this job and hold myself accountable and responsible for those things. And like I said, I apologize to the city, the community and my wife. But I have to be bold enough to move from here. I think if nothing else, we don't teach quit to our young people. I don't teach quit to my sons. We teach fight when the going gets rough. So I think more than dealing with whether it was another mayor, I would deal with the fact that I'm mayor. I don't even want to see this city with another mayor right now. I think it would be detrimental to the city.

MC: Why? Are you not replaceable?

KK: I am definitely a per-

son that has to be in a position to be replaced because life can never stop our city. Let me just say that. But it would be a much different environment than it is now; it would be a much different focus. And to pause right now in the middle of this administration where we've been going and what we've been doing would be detrimental to the progress. When you look at the \$300 — \$330 million for the economic stimulus package we talked about with our bond rating agencies which we developed a relationship with over the past six years. We go out to Wall Street to talk to the finance community, a lot of bonds and going to the market is salesmanship. It's who's selling it, who's pitching it. It's who comes in the room. And if a different person comes in the room they might be a good person but there's instability in leadership. There's not consistency.

MC: When things happen, we say let's leave it to the justice system. Do you have faith in the justice system to

lieve in it and who work in it to make sure it's fair. And so that's what I have to believe. But that process... when people say that process would work itself out. I think even more than that.

MC: You don't sound optimistic.

KK: Oh no. I told you before. I think we're going to be completely vindicated politically, completely vindicated legally, we're going to keep moving. We're going to do our thing, stay focused.

MC: You said you've made mistakes. Can you give me key things you've done that shouldn't have been done?

KK: Hmmm. You know people ask that a lot. They want an itemization of mistakes. I don't know of anybody that properly itemized their mistakes. I think it's incredibly hard to do. What I would say as one thing because I think the overwhelming majority of the mistakes I made in my life nobody knows. I would say on this particular issue as the leader of this city, I've lived up to

"I believe that over time when this community is allowed to... look at the facts I will be vindicated first of all. I will be politically vindicated, I will be legally vindicated...."

— Kwame Kilpatrick

adjudicate the issues you are dealing with, especially with you being a lawyer yourself?

KK: I have, as most Detroiters do, tremendous issues with the county circuit court system. That's not a secret here. When 86-90 percent of the jury pool is not from the city of Detroit, when we lost Recorder's Court, that became the big issue. Of course that's not a secret to Detroiters. But at the same time I have to have faith in the system that we have. It's the only system that we have. And I have to have faith in the process more than the system. I'm an American, a Michigianian, a Detroitier. I didn't sign up to be that. I was born here. And many people who came before me bled, died for the right for us to have this type of system. So I have to have faith in it. I have to believe in it. And I have to continue to work to make it better. But are there flaws in it? Yes. But at the same time, it's all we have. And I think there's an incredible amount of people who work in this system, who be-

that. But also there is another side to that. When the city is in a moment like this where people are angry, continuing to get up every day and work, teach school, in a moment like this when the discussion is about me, I don't like that. So I would say without being specific about this thing or that thing, it's more as a leader of this city I wear the work ethic, the pain, the joy, the sorrow, the laughter of everybody in this town. So that's what I would say more than anything. To itemize my mistakes, it probably was a mistake the first time I sat down with you when you were at the *Michigan Citizen* and we had a conversation that I said something. I've had mistakes in hires, mistakes in events that we went after.

MC: So, Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick is not going to resign?

KK: I said in the beginning and I said this in my speech. We have a lot of people out here that are enduring some incredibly hard times with this economy.

We're trying to figure out as fast as we can how we can train a man or woman to leave Ford, because they're getting laid off and retrain them to become nurses, or in service industries, hotel workers, etc. They're not quitting. They're trying to pay their house notes. They're not quitting on their homes. They're not quitting on anything. And if they won't quit, I won't quit.

MC: Mike Cox investigated the alleged party at the Manoogian Mansion and came up with the now-famous term — urban legend. — Now he calls on you to resign, and said he will take a second look at doing another investigation. How do you react to that?

KK: I have been involved in [politics] since I was 8 years old as a little fat kid on the west side of the city of Detroit in grown folks business. It forces people to do things sometimes that are not what they would normally do or what they would normally say. Just very briefly because people need to know this: When Mike Cox came in the first time over 100 people were interviewed, over 55 people were subpoenaed, all the hospital records from every hospital in the region were pulled together. All of the videotapes, all of the 911 calls, \$5 million, or a little more, was spent on the investigation of this party and all of the rumors surrounding it.

Every neighbor was talked to, 12 different scenarios of what happened that night were presented and they came back and not only said it was an — urban legend, — they said there was nothing there. Nothing happened and it was all a part of what I call and this is from Mike Cox, an — urban legend. — What's been done now in this environment is when you have a situation where people now are just saying anything, you have people that have not been credible before and held as such that are now have validity in their statements because of the environment. You now create the kind of frenzy that we have today.

And so it's then politically okay for someone who is Republican and running for governor to come back and say I'm going to take a second look. I don't necessarily think it's the right thing, but I think that the political environment is such that's been driven by the underlying environment that's been created.

Bankole Thompson writes for the *Michigan Chronicle*.