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BUSINESS AND FARMING

Jozini pays out first dividend of E60 000

BY FAITH KHONGCIBI

MBABANE -The Jozini Big 6 development has paid out its first cash dividends to the Lavumisa community.

A dividend of E60 000 was handed over to the community during a meeting of the Lavumisa Community Trust, held last Saturday.

According to LDM's Corporate Communications Manager Sifiso Dlamini, the cheque was received by Chairman of the Lavumisa Trust, Wilmsot Gina who is also the Director of Jozini Leasehold Limited. "Upon receiving the cheque for E60 000, a delighted Gina said the community had never lost faith in Royal Jozini Big 6 and that the dividend cheque was the first of

many millions that the Lavumisa community would receive through the duration of the 99-year lease. He also explained that the Lavumisa Community Trust had 32 trustees representing the 16 *Imiphakatsi* within the region and that they would collectively decide how best to invest the revenue from Royal Jozini Big 6 into community projects," Dlamini said.

He said Gina also mentioned that His Majesty King Mswati III had encouraged the Royal Jozini lease to uplift the economic prospects of Lavumisa, one of the poorest regions in Swaziland, by creating jobs and SME's and that the project had already made a significant impact in that direction.

"Gina explained that the Royal Jozini sourced its labour through the Lavumisa Community Trust to ensure that new jobs were shared equally and that Royal Jozini Big 6 also paid a minimum wage 30 per cent higher than the gazetted rate. On a more somber note, Gina reported that further development of Swaziland's biggest tourism project was negatively affected by uncertainty created due to the unresolved work of the Ministerial Review Committee; that had been tasked with reviewing progress of various business enterprises in Swaziland including Royal Jozini Big 6. He said that the Review Committee had last met with the board of Jozini Leasehold Limited in August 2009

but had, since then, failed to advise his board of their findings or even conduct a site-inspection as promised. He commented that he found it hard to understand how the Review Committee could reach a conclusion without any of its members actually having seen the progress for themselves," Dlamini explained.

He added: "Gina then highlighted government's failure to relocate the king's herd of cattle from the Royal Jozini leasehold land in terms of a mitigation agreement, entered into between the parties, and despite Royal Jozini having completed all of the E5 million's worth mitigation construction works on three government farms almost six months ago. He said that the continued presence of the cattle, in breach of the mitigation agreement, meant that a number of foreign investors were holding back until the game reserve, without cattle, had been established."

He explained that the Ministry of Agriculture had worked closely with Royal Jozini to meet its obligations in terms of the mitigation agreement but was being frustrated by the officer in charge of the king's cattle who had suspended the relocation process. The mitigation agreement provided for king's cattle to remain in the northern portion of the Royal Jozini estate until the mitigation works had been completed.

At its own cost, the Royal Jozini continued to assist the MOAC in providing water and security to the cattle while waiting for the cattle to be relocated. He said that, as His Majesty had foretold during his speech at the Royal Jozini sod-cutting ceremony, the cattle inside Royal Jozini's electrified game fence were now safe from South African cattle rustlers but it was rumored that cattle had been going missing over many years before the development of Royal Jozini Big 6 had commenced.