

GABORONE, Botswana, September 15 (Infosplusgabon) - Botswana's data authority has revealed that the country reduced its imported electricity during the second quarter of this year.

Statistics Botswana's latest electricity generation and distribution report released on Friday said the volume of imported electricity stood at 224,318 MWH during the second quarter of 2017, giving a decrease of 47.8 percent or 244,534 MWH over the importation of 468,852 MWH during the second quarter of 2016.

The authority further said the quarter-on-quarter comparison of imported electricity showed an increase of 18.7 percent representing 35,226 MWH, from 189,052 MWH during the first quarter of 2017 to 224,318 MWH during the period under review.

"This increase in imported electricity was necessitated by the decrease in generation," said Statistician General Anna Majelantle.

The report also indicated that the country's utility company - Botswana Power Corporation imported 24.9 percent (152,659 MWH) of its power needs during the second quarter.

“The imports were predominantly from the Southern African Power Pool - Eskom, Namibia Power Corporation and Electricidade de Mozambique,” said Majelantle.

Botswana’s power generation started in 1985 with a coal-fired thermal power station at Morupule operating at a capacity of 132 MWH and prior to this period, most of Botswana’s electricity was imported from South Africa’s power utility, Eskom.

In 2008 South Africa’s electricity demand started to exceed its supply, resulting in the South African government restricting power exports.

As a result, Botswana and the entire Southern Africa region experienced massive power shortages because of the reduced electricity exports from South Africa.

To avert the situation, Botswana government opted for alternative ways of sourcing power for the country which include increasing the local power generation.

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