

Kendo Federation receives equipment valued at N\$100 000



• BY MICHAEL UUGWANGA

NAMIBIA Kendo Federation (NKF) president, André Pienaar, says the Federation is fortunate to have been spotted by the All Japan Kendo Federation (AJKF), who recently showered them with a N\$100 000 donation of old and new kendogu and shinai equipment.

Pienaar attributed the donation to the efforts of Harada Hideake and Nishimaki Hisao, both Japanese ambassadors to Namibia, and Kendo instructor Shinichi Hamada.

"My desire to receive a donation from the AJKF began in 2015 when I was training with Shinichi Hamada, a Japanese sensei from the Japanese Embassy. I discussed the subject with him, and we agreed that it would be prudent first to construct the NKF and then request support from the AJKF when we established

other dojos, such as the Hope Dojo and the Fowler Dojo. Bogu, or armour, is costly since it must be imported from Japan or Europe at a generally negative exchange rate", he said.

Kendo in Namibia began a few years ago with only two people practising for over a year before more people expressed interest.

Kendo is now exclusively practised in Windhoek, although plans are to expand it to coastal towns.

"Most students continue to practice Kendo and form the backbone of the Musashi Kendo Dojo in Windhoek. Two more dojos were established, one at Hope Village and one at the Fowler School. Discussions have taken place with interested parties to establish Kendo as a traditional martial art at the coast, either in Swakopmund or Walvis Bay," Pienaar explained.

Namibia is one of four countries chosen to receive the grant, along with Latvia, Cuba, and Kazakhstan.

Kendo is a modern Japanese combat art sport that evolved from kenjutsu and employs bamboo swords and protective armour.

It is commonly practised in Japan and has expanded to many countries worldwide.

Kendogu or Chengdu is a type of training armour used exclusively in the Japanese martial art of Kendo, whereas shinai is a Japanese sword made of bamboo used for practice and competition.

The donation included three new kendogu sets (Men, Kote, Do and Tare), a helmet, gauntlet/gloves, chest protection, protective apron, 17 previously used kendogu sets (Men, Kote, Do, and Tare), and 48 new shinai/training swords.