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MERRY Christmas

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS WITH TAX AMNESTY EXTENSION

MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPEAKS ON TAX AMNESTY EXTENSION TELLS PARLIAMENT REASONS FOR EXTENSION



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ABOUT THIS COURSE

Drones are becoming increasingly common for personal and professional use worldwide. This introductory course covers the basic knowledge required to safely and legally operate a drone in Botswana. Drone Technology Level 1 is a five-days course which is ideal for beginners. It will give you the skills and knowledge you need to explore drones & understand their functions in life and the entrepreneurship space. By the end of this course, you will have a basic understanding of drone technology and terminology, including the components, physics and business side of drones. This course includes class exercises, a nal project and an examination. These activities are purposefully designed to enhance the understanding of the course content.



PHAKALANE 30-YEAR ANNIVERSARY - A WEEK OF CELEBRATIONS AND GIVING BACK



Malebogo Ratladi

It has been an exciting and eventful week for Phakalane Estates, continuing to ring their 30th anniversary in, in the spirit of giving back. The Phakalane Estate team has in the last week hosted donations to Ikoga Primary School, a Christmas Carols by Candlelight evening and a charity golf day whose profits are to be donated to Cerebral Palsy Botswana.

Phakalane Estates firmly believes in playing a more integral role in the community in which it is proud to call home. This series of giving back in honour of such a milestone is a testament to that. Phakalane Estates continues to display preeminence and dedication towards building the lives of Batswana and started off their recent string of celebration activities in Ikoga Village on the 6th of December 2021. They donated 175 pairs of school shoes and socks. The donations were received by Kgosi Mombeko, who expressed his endless gratitude to

the Group CEO of Phakalane Estates, Subramaniam Parthiban, and Guest Relations Manager, Boitshepo Mpasopi. Kgosi Mombeko further explained how the gesture will go a long way as the parents of the Ikoga Primary School children often struggle to buy uniforms.

Said Subramaniam Parthiban, "It was an honor to travel to Ikoga Village and donate school shoes and socks to the children of Ikoga Primary School. It is our mission to improve the lives of Batswana and make efforts towards improving the lives of those that are less fortunate. Education is the pillar of our growth as a country; therefore, we saw it fit to donate to a school and encourage the education of our upcoming youth.

We hope that this will be just the start of a great partnership between Phakalane Estate and the leadership and residents of Ikoga Village."

The donation was followed by

the lighting of the Phakalane Christmas Tree and Christmas Carols by Candlelight, hosted at the Phakalane Convention Centre on the 7th of December. Guests were welcomed by Parthiban. Amongst the Christmas Carol performers were the Academy of Toddlers and Tswana Sanctified Voices Choir whose harmonious voices echoes through

the room to mark an unusual but equally special festive season.

In addition to spreading the Christmas joy with carols, Phakalane hosted a golf day on the 9th of December, designed to raise funds for Cerebral Palsy Botswana. It was only natural that this event would be a partial closing of the 30-year anniversary celebrations as

Phakalane is known for its 18-hole PGA Standard International golf course, beloved by players and fans alike. The event provided an opportunity to network as well as accept individual donations.

Said Subramaniam Parthiban "The organisation we chose to donate to for our 30-year anniversary is Cerebral Palsy

Botswana. Formed in 2012, they aim to empower parents with children living with this condition. I am proud to be part of an organisation that not only recognises the importance of the work we are doing but also willing to support causes in such a meaningful way. It is events such as this that our resolve to change lives for the better is strengthened. It is my hope that we can also assist them in the future.

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS WITH TAX AMNESTY EXTENSION

Upon its establishment in 2004, the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) inherited all taxation debts existing as at 1st April, 2004. Some of these arrears had a history of not being collectable due to a number of reasons, including; liquidated companies, non-operational entities, deceased individuals and insolvent individuals hence the implementation of the Tax Amnesty which came into effect on 1st July 2021.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development Peggy Serame explained that the BURS has therefore had to follow up the outstanding liabilities with a view to recovering the arrears. Some of these taxpayers requested for waiver of the interest and penalty amounts which, in many cases, had become exorbitant.

The Minister explained that between 2015 and 2019, the Ministry considered many requests for waivers to waive over P984 billion under the Income Tax Act and VAT Act. Thus, over the years, a significant number of such requests were brought to the Ministry. Considering the high volume of requests for waiver of interest and penalties that were submitted by taxpayers to the Ministry, and we decided to implement a Tax Amnesty Scheme to run from 1st July, 2021 to 31st December, 2021.

She explained that this was aimed at giving taxpayers an opportunity to normalize their tax status by paying

off the outstanding principal tax in return for cancellation of interest and penalties. The Scheme is thus part of the Ministry's efforts to encourage taxpayers, with overwhelming and unmanageable tax arrears to clear their liabilities and start from a clean slate in terms of their tax obligations. As we have previously announced, the Scheme is intended to ease the burden on all taxpayers and it thus offers a limited time incentive to put one's tax affairs in order. This would go a long way in facilitating local businesses to get their Tax Clearance Certificates (TCC) from the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) to be able to participate in the wider economy.

To this effect Serame says the Scheme, which was expected to offer relief to taxpayers, particularly given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy, was effected accordingly with the following key features: It is available for a limited time of 6 months commencing on 1st July 2021 and ending on the 31st December, 2021; It is available under the Income Tax Act and the Value Added Tax Act and includes tax debts in respect of: Corporate Income Tax; Personal Income Tax; Pay As You Earn; Other Withholding Taxes; and Value Added Tax (VAT).

Penalties and interest charged under any of these tax types will be waived in full upon

full payment of the principal amount of tax; It is available in respect of penalties and interest accrued in respect of tax periods and tax years prior to the 1st July, 2021 under both the Income Tax Act and the Value Added Tax Act.

The Scheme targeted 22,839 taxpayers with Income Tax and VAT arrears amounting to approximately P6.8 billion. These arrears comprised of principal tax of P2.5 billion, interest of P3.5 billion and penalties of P800 million.

However, despite efforts by BURS, through different public and private media platforms, to encourage taxpayers to take advantage of the Scheme, uptake of the Scheme has been very low. As at 30th November, 2021, out of a total of 22,839 taxpayers in arrears, 3,377 taxpayers, representing about 15% of the taxpayers in arrears, had applied for the Tax Amnesty Scheme.

In terms of collection, a total principal tax of P64 million, comprising of Income Tax of P34 million and VAT of P30 million was paid. Total written-off (pardoned) interests and penalties stood at P95.6 million, comprising of P65.4 million in respect of the Income Tax and P30.2 million in respect of VAT. Overall, tax debtors who have sought to take advantage of the Scheme only contributed an average of 2%

of the outstanding debt.

Critically, fifty-four (54) of the taxpayers who have applied for Tax Amnesty have entered into

payment plans to clear their principal tax obligations of P44.9 million to enable them to qualify to benefit from the scheme by 31st December, 2021. Among the challenges faced by many taxpayers have been the continued problems due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses. To this end, BURS has been inundated with pleas from bodies representing taxpayers, such as Botswana Institute of Chartered Accountants (BICA) and Business Botswana (BB) and individual taxpayers; to extend the Amnesty period. The plea of representatives of taxpayers is based on the fact that a substantial number of their clients have the desire to take advantage of the Scheme but are constrained to pay their principal tax liabilities within the time remaining due to cash flow challenges occasioned by limited business as a result of

the COVID-19 pandemic. BURS has also received appeals for payment plans that would stretch beyond the deadline of 31st December, 2021 from many taxpayers with significant tax liabilities. Mr. Speaker, another challenge is that of data reconciliation at BURS as a result of migration of data from the legacy systems to the current tax administration system (Lekgetho Live), which was launched in May 2020. To mitigate against this challenge, BURS has engaged ninety five (95) temporary employees to expedite the reconciliation of taxpayer accounts by end of December 2021. Therefore, more time is necessary to allow taxpayers, after reconciliation of their accounts to enjoy the scheme. In this regard, an extension of the Scheme would, therefore, create an opportunity for BURS to engage with more taxpayers and

their taxpayer information. The Ministry, through BURS, commits to undertake the following initiatives to improve uptake of the Scheme:

To make direct contact with taxpayers that owe significant amounts of tax; make them aware of their obligations and encourage them to enroll on the Scheme; Ensure that initiatives for marketing the Scheme are more direct, deliberate, and frequent and to the extent possible engagement of influencers; and To continue to engage with industry representatives in expediting resolution of queries and challenges of their constituents. In this regard, Government has once more seen it worthwhile to extend the Tax Amnesty Scheme from 31st December, 2021 to 30th June, 2022 to allow more taxpayers to benefit from the dispensation.



BGI'S P10MILLION AEROMAGNETIC DATA PROJECT NEARS COMPLETION



Botswana Geoscience Institute (BGI)'s multimillion-pula project aimed at interpreting and assessing Aeromagnetic Data in Northern Botswana, is on schedule and budget

According to BGI incoming CEO, Olefile Mashabila, this project, undertaken at a cost of P10,125,670.00 Million and funded through the Development Fund of National Development Plan 11 (NDP 11) is primarily evaluating areas of

mineral potential such as Base metals, Rare Earth Metals, Precious metals and platinum group metals (PGMs). This project commenced on the 10th of July 2020 and it scheduled to complete in February 2022, now only left with two (2) months. The project is undertaken by BGI in partnership with a consortium comprising Paterson, Grant and Watson Limited (PGW), a Toronto based Canadian company and Botswana companies; Water Resources Consultants

(Pty) Limited (WRC) and Sky Tract (Pty) Limited. Mashabila explained that Due to COVID-19, Government of Botswana, rationalized the use of development budget and deferred some national projects. This project however he explains was retained because of its importance and relevance to a number of the Vision 2036 ideals, in particular, the nation's aspiration of Sustainable Economic Development, Human and Social Development and Sustainable Environment.

"The project will result in a revised National Geological Map of Botswana, understanding of mineral systems as well as providing value-added products," Mashabila said.

He further said the project will go a long way in satisfying the requirements of BGI customers in the exploration/ mining sector in particular, academia and applied research, thereby impacting the lives of Batswana and the nation at large positively.

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BUSINESS



STANBIC BANK BOTSWANA STANDS BY BEAUTY QUEEN, PALESA MOLEFE, WITH MISS WORLD SPONSORSHIP DESPITE POSTPONED PAGEANT FINALS

Stanbic Bank Botswana is passionate about supporting Botswana's youth in embarking on uncharted paths, displaying bold ambitions in working towards their dreams. Reigning Miss Botswana, Palesa Molefe, is the very embodiment of how a single bright spark can bring together a nation with grace, charisma, and courage, and the Bank is proud to stand beside her in sponsoring Palesa's final Miss World leg which will now be held in 2022, following a COVID-19 related postponement.

Palesa has made it to the finals after a successful head-to-head challenge the week prior and will therefore return to Puerto Rico for this in 2022, upon confirmation of a new date from pageant organisers. She joins fellow beauty queens as the Top 30 contenders make

their way to the stage for one final hurrah. The Bank's sponsorship of P60,000 goes towards travel and wardrobe costs in this regard.

Said Stephanie Stoneham - Head of Brand and Marketing, Stanbic Bank Botswana, "What Palesa has already done this far is nothing short of admirable., This is a young woman who has brought together the hearts of a nation even in the midst

of a pandemic. Her eloquence, courage and poise are magnetic, and show that with bravery and determination, it can be. One's dreams are possible if only we work towards them. We are proud to call Palesa our queen, and even prouder to stand behind her in this journey, knowing with full confidence that her story is only just beginning, for her work

in communities and advocating for progress for Botswana continues. Our hearts are blue and white for Palesa as we all cheer her on now and indeed when the finals are confirmed!"

Miss Botswana Organiser, Kaone M o r e m o n g , appreciated the Bank's relentless commitment to empower the local community. She said the cash injection will go a long way as organisers have

been struggling financially, highlighting that to plan a national pageant successfully without compromises is expensive. "It is unfortunate that the finals had to be postponed, but we will return when things have calmed down and the risk of COVID-19 has reduced. To manage a Queen for the whole reign is also pricey as we have to manage her wardrobe, transport,

accommodation, hair, and management costs for a year on top of these revised travel plans. The sponsorship from Stanbic Bank is therefore much appreciated," she said.

Miss World organisers will confirm a new date for the finals in 2022. Until then, the Bank looks forward to continuing to support Palesa and to welcome her home as the queen we know she is.

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AgriNews



BOTSWANA'S OKAVANGO DELTA: WORLD HERITAGE SITE UNDER THREAT



Malebogo Ratladi

Environmental organizations are raising the alarm over mining for oil and gas in the world's largest cross-border nature reserve, known for its biodiversity and unique landscapes. Five African countries have joined forces to protect the region around the Okavango Delta, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Botswana. The transnational Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, or KAZA, is known for its biodiversity and unique landscapes. It is home to 500 bird species and a diverse variety of mammals, including

elephants, buffalos, rhinos, lions and leopards. Even wild dogs roam the region. The delta is fed by several large rivers, and because border fences have been dismantled in many places, wild animals can once again migrate and follow the water along their former routes. This gives African elephants in particular more space, and conflicts with humans are becoming less frequent. In addition to national parks, there are also so-called "conservancies" in the protected area where people live. These locals are involved in the conservation measures and are supported in developing ecotourism. The German government is

involved in supporting KAZA through the Reconstruction Loan Corporation (KfW). Now the nature reserve is under threat. The Canadian company Recon Africa has begun

drilling for oil and gas in the Namibian part of the reserve, and further oil production is to follow in Botswana. Environmentalists warn of consequences for the ecosystem. The oil wells and associated heavy

traffic are expected to cause considerable pollution of the waters. Local and international nature conservation organizations are calling for an immediate ban on drilling.
Source: Deutsche Welle

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**JANUARY
2022
INTAKE**

APPLICATION FOR RE-ADMISSION, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION



Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN) wishes to inform all its former students who were previously enrolled in various programmes but were not successful (Fail & Discontinue and Withdrawal) that the University is open for applications for re-admission and re-instatement. In order to qualify for re-admission, students should satisfy all University regulations on Fail and Discontinue (FD) and Withdrawal.

Students who are currently studying with other tertiary institutions, whose programmes articulates with BUAN programmes and wish to transfer to BUAN are also invited to apply. This includes students who are not currently enrolled and they satisfy requirements to enrol back with their institution, they may also apply.

Graduates with Diploma qualifications that articulates with BUAN programmes who may qualify for exemptions in excess of 30 credits may also apply to enrol in the January intake.

Applicants are notified that they can submit their forms through the admissions email and they are also required to attach their proof of payment

NOTE: All applicants (excluding applicants for reinstatement and retakes) are required to pay a non-refundable application fee of **BWP 150**.

Application forms can be obtained from the University website (www.buan.ac.bw) or at Academic and Student Services office in Sebele.

Academic and Student Services Office

Block 302, Office No. 003

Enquiries: (+267) 365 0330/332/325/328 or 77330665

Email address: admissions@buan.ac.bw

Deadline for submissions: 25 February 2022

Inspiring Sustainable Growth

COVID-19 FORCES MISS WORLD TO POSTPONE



Malebogo Ratladi

Just hours before the global broadcast finale, Miss World organizers announced devastating news of the postponement of the event.

Miss World team took it to their social media platforms, through a press release, confirming that the postponement which was caused by health and safety precautions following contestants, staff, crew and general public testing positive for covid-19.

"Additional safety measures were implemented in the best interest of the contestants, production team and spectators, understanding the event increased risks on the stage and in the dressing room, however, after additional positive cases were confirmed

this morning after consulting with health officials and experts, the postponement decision was made." They said. However, the Miss World organizers said that the next step according to the medical experts is immediate quarantine, pending observation and further testing according to best practices in situations like this and once and only when contestants and staff are cleared by health officials and advisors, will contestants and related staff return to their home countries

After the news broke, Miss Botswana 2021/22 Palesa Molefe who is representing the country at the Miss World 2021 assured Botswana that she is safe and tested negative on their daily Covid tests.

In addition to that, Molefe took it to her social media saying that an interesting observation she has made about seasons is that they all have a

unique set of guidelines, each different from the next and the more we not only acknowledge but embrace this the easier it is to remember our convictions and find the good. Molefe also thanked Botswana for their continued support during these times.

"To my Botswana, thank you for being my strong pillar throughout this experience. Our journey continues." She wrote.

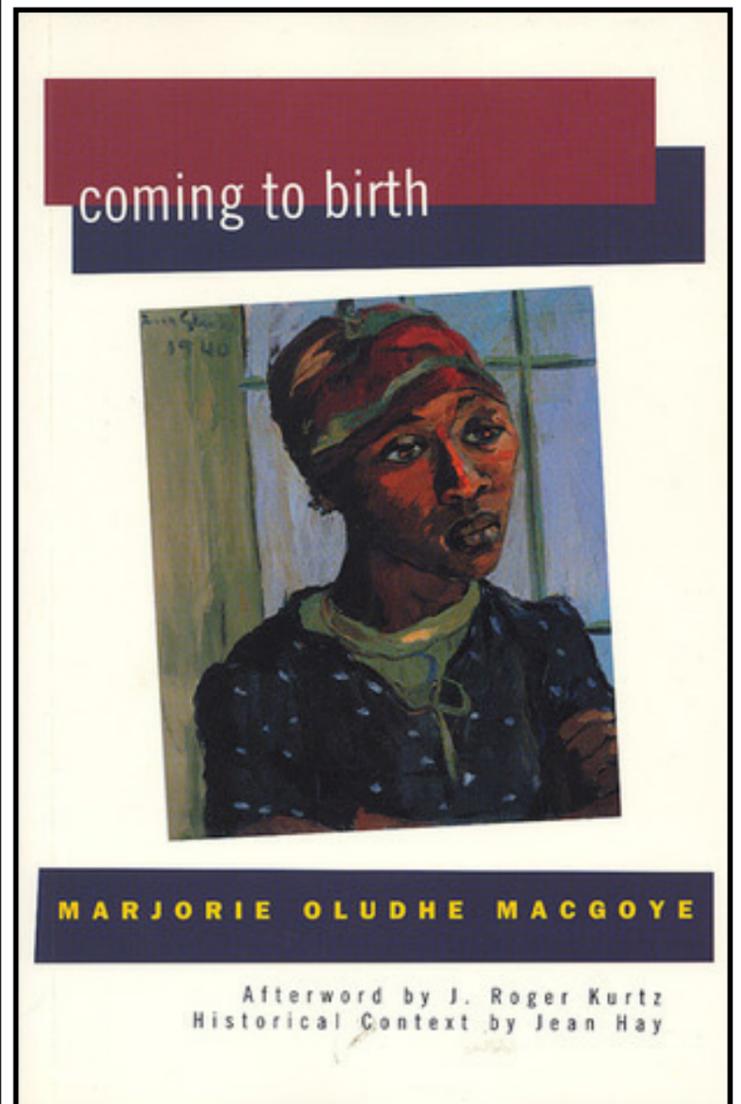
The CEO of Miss World Ltd, Julia Morley said that they are very much looking forward to the return of the contestants to compete for the Miss World crown. She continued to say that Puerto Rico offers a safe environment and a spectacular backdrop for filming the Miss World Festival.

Palesa is expected to return home to wait for the final crowning in her Botswana. The finale will be rescheduled at Puerto Rico Coliseum Jose Miguel Agrelot within the next 90 days.

COMING TO BIRTH

Author: Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye

Published: 1986



Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye works skillfully to weave the narrative of Martin and Paulina's experiences in marriage with that of Kenya as a young developing country. The struggles that Martin and Paulina face in their marriage, mainly through the state of childlessness, gives an impression of the disillusionment faced by citizens in the hope that they will enjoy their new found freedom in the country. The hopelessness and despair seen in the relationship between Martin and Paulina is similar to that of prevailing politics in the country. The citizens seemingly protest for getting less than that which they bargained for, and neo-colonialism is most likely to take center stage in Kenya, as a young independent nation.

In the same way that Martin and Paulina are seen to reconcile and nurture the hope of having a child together, so does Marjorie shows the possibility of citizens experiencing the reality of freedom in their country. Freedom and joy seemingly come after trying times, which also serve to make the characters in the novel stronger and independent. The employment of imagery and ideas that are relative to the African experience lays the foundation for the success of Marjorie's work. It a masterpiece, written simply, clearly, and skillfully, to communicate the author's thoughts and experiences concerning culture, politics and influence of cultural traditions.

Source: African literature reviews

MOTORING



2021 Alfa Romeo Giulia GTAm Radicalizes the Sports Sedan

Italian sports cars don't get much prettier than this

The Alfa Romeo Giulia GTAm is a car that is more about the past than it is about the future. It's a gas-burning, fender-flared winged beast of a sports sedan whose origins can be traced back to the 1960s.

Back then, Alfa's racing engineers slimmed down the weight of the Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT, upgraded its engine considerably, and anointed their creation the Giulia GTA. One of the most successful touring cars of its time, the GTA had everyday life and checkered-flag greatness baked in.

Alfa Romeo engineers recently applied the spirit of that GTA, which stands for Gran Turismo Alleggerita, the final word meaning lightened in Italian, to the Giulia Quadrifoglio. The GTA cut a claimed 100kg while adding various aerodynamic aids. To drop the weight, the doors are aluminum and the drive shaft, hood, roof, front bumpers, and wheel-arch extensions at the front and rear are carbon fiber. New engine electronics, higher boost pressure, and an Akrapovic titanium exhaust system tickled out 533 horsepower from the twin-turbo 2.9-liter V-6, 28 horses more than the standard Quadrifoglio. Only 500 of the Giulia GTA will be made, and included in that short run is the even more extreme GTAm, a race-ready and street-legal version that ditches its rear seat to shed another 25kg compared to the GTA.

In place of the GTAm's back seat is a roll cage, helmet rack, and fire extinguisher. The rear windows are made of lightweight polycarbonate. The carbon-fiber racing bucket seats only move fore and aft, but there's plenty of Alcantara trim and carbon-fiber bits to take in. Fabric loops replace the interior door handles, a very Porsche touch.



the twin-turbo six pushes it forward like hell. Alfa says the launch-control programming for the ZF eight-speed automatic transmission will call up 99km/h 0.2 second quicker than in the Giulia Quadrifoglio, which would put the GTAm at 3.3 seconds.

At higher speeds, drivers can safely rely on the aerodynamic improvements on the GTAm. Alfa Romeo's Formula 1 partner, Sauber, developed the parts in the wind tunnel, and Kimi Räikkönen from Alfa F1 Team Orlen fine-tuned them. The changes increase the downforce of the significantly lightened body and foster high-speed stability. The larger and manually adjustable front splitter on the GTAm and the huge rear wing—both made of carbon fiber—are not just to distinguish it from the GTA.

Specifications

2021 Alfa Romeo Giulia GTAm
Vehicle Type: front-engine, rear-wheel-drive, 2-passenger, 4-door sedan

ENGINE
twin-turbocharged and intercooled DOHC 24-valve V-6, aluminum block and heads, direct fuel injection
Power: 397kw @ 6500 rpm
Torque: 600nm @ 2500 rpm

TRANSMISSION:
8-speed automatic

PERFORMANCE
100km/h: 3.3 sec

the GTAm engine starts with the push of a steering-wheel-mounted start button. The V-6 engine roars, much more aggressively than in the Quadrifoglio, before falling to a stable idle. Pedestrian heads swivel, other drivers glance into their rearview mirror in response to the new exhaust system that ends in the center of the carbon-fiber diffuser.

A conversation with your passenger is pretty much impossible. Companionship in this car is about the GTAm and the driver, not another person. It makes the driver wonder if the weight savings actually came from completely removing all of the sound insulation.

The claimed weight reduction would put the GTAm at about 1632kg comparing to previous Giulia Quadrifoglios and