

BOTSWANA

Daily News

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MAUN

North West District possesses sufficient natural resources and economic opportunities to transform the lives of its people, deliberately shifting from relief-based interventions to sustainable livelihood programmes, says Chief of Staff, Dr Oupa Tsheko.

Addressing North West District leadership consultative meeting on sustainable livelihoods in Maun recently, Dr Tsheko said the district's wealth should be reflected by the standard of living of its communities. He observed that despite North West's rich tourism assets, infrastructure and other economic opportunities, poverty remained prevalent, underscoring the need for government and other stakeholders to intentionally empower communities through sustainable economic initiatives.

"There should not be widespread poverty in a district endowed with such immense economic opportunities, as the richness of the district must be reflected in the lives of its people," he said.

Dr Tsheko said extensive consultations were necessary to develop practical and inclusive livelihood models tailored to the unique realities of different districts, noting that a one-size-fits-all approach could not effectively address poverty.

He further revealed that Botswana currently spent approximately four per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on social protection programmes, yet many communities continue to struggle economically.

He said the situation called for a rethink of existing approaches by creating sustainable alternatives that would enable citizens to become economically self-reliant while reducing dependence on government assistance.

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Rewards start with one simple Sign-Up.

Boko condemns adult-minor sexual relationships

Calviniah Kgautlhe
DIGAWANA

Sexual relations between minors and adults are a moral decay which exposes teenagers to the risks of getting pregnant before maturity, childbearing as well as Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), including HIV and AIDS, says First Lady Kaone Boko.

Addressing teen mothers, pregnant adolescents and community members at Digawana Kgotla on Friday in line with her landmark MPEPU initiative, Ms Boko said age discordant sexual relations involving adolescents with older partners could result in increased unintended teenage pregnancies and STI.

As such, she said collective interventions targeted at teenage populations and the community would go a long way in assisting to deal with the challenging environment.

She added that prevention efforts should target potential teenage and adult partners.

Ms Boko expressed concern that early child birth had its own challenges as the body of a young mother was not fully developed.

Additionally, she cited that after an adolescent gets infected with HIV from the elder sexual partners, it would be spread to their peers, making it an uphill battle for the nation to win the fight against HIV and AIDS.

She underscored that it was critical to identify mechanisms through which relationships, especially those with older partners were to be discouraged.

Ms Boko said age discordant sexual relations between minors and elders had complicated dynamics, involving unique social lifestyles and power considerations linked to increased risky sexual behaviours and negative reproductive outcomes.

Ms Boko acknowledged that adolescents were vulnerable and bound to make mistakes, adding that such faults should not be used against them by the community or parents.

She added that adolescent mothers should not be subjected to stigma, rather be supported by all means to build a better future.

Ms Boko also underscored the significance of having youth friendly health facilities where adolescents freely access health education on family planning, birth control devices without being ridiculed.

Ms Boko expressed concern on the increasing gender based violence cases as well as passion killings, which she noted were a menace to the society, appealing for all to rise to the challenge and enforce behavioural change.

Speaking at the same event, a 17-year-old pregnant adolescent of Gopong, poured out her fears.

The expectant teenager said her condition has left her in the whirlwind as she was subjected to stigmatisation and facing rejection from her family.

She cried out that she had no one to turn to and had resorted to doing temporary employment to be able to fend for herself and prepare for the expected baby's birth.

She said pregnant teenagers had

to deal with emotions, therefore in need of tailor-made programmes, encouraging them to go back to school and learn life skills.

Additionally, she pleaded for counselling services for girls and parents so that families did not reject them during a time when they need their support the most.

"I know I have made a mistake but I still have dreams, I am asking you to stand with us so that we and our children can have a better future," she cried out.

Good Hope District Deputy Council Secretary for Primary Health, Dr Tom Baaisi said of the four healthcare facilities in the area namely; Mogojojo, Lorwana, Gopong and Digawana, only one, being Digawana was a 24 hour clinic with a maternity wing.

Dr Baaisi said the health facilities assisted adolescent mothers by offering them sexual reproductive health education.

Dr Baaisi said in 2024, the district health facilities registered 22 teenage mothers, 28 in 2025 and so far has registered six in the current year.

Good Hope - Mmathethe Member of Parliament, Dr Edwin Dikoloti appreciated the First Lady for her Mpepu initiative and for actively involving Bahumagadi in the realisation of the initiative.

Dr Dikoloti said the programme focused on early childhood development, child protection, maternal care and positive parenting.

Therefore, Dr Dikoloti was optimistic that Mpepu was destined to yield the desired results for the community and future generation. **BOPA**



Lucara Botswana managing director, Ms Naseem Lahri (left) and Debswana Diamond Company chief people officer, Ms Matlhogonolo Mponang during the 5th Annual Labour Conference in Gaborone recently. Photo: Pheny Ramatu

Adapt to shifting workforce needs - official

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

Employers have been urged to move beyond simply complying with labour legislation and instead transform workplace practices to reflect changing demographics, technological advancements and the evolving needs of employees.

Speaking at the 5th Annual Labour Conference, held under the theme: Turning Law into Practice: Implementing the Employment and Labour Relations Act in a Digital and Transforming Economy, Debswana Diamond Company Chief People Officer Ms Matlhogonolo Mponang said compliance should be regarded as the minimum requirement for organisations.

Ms Mponang said the implementation of the Employment and Labour Relations Act should encourage organisations to examine how they operated and created workplaces that were more inclusive, adaptable and responsive to employees' needs.

She said employers needed to recognise the different demographics within their organisations and understand that employees from different generations may have different approaches to work.

"We cannot have a one-size-fits-all approach," she said, adding that organisations should consider how employees of different ages and backgrounds worked and responded to technology.

Ms Mponang said organisations should also rethink traditional approaches to productivity, arguing that employees should be assessed on their ability to deliver results rather than simply on whether they arrived at work early.

She highlighted the need for employers to understand and implement changes introduced by the new legislation, including provisions relating to maternity and paternity leave. She said maternity leave should also take into account adoptive parents, while paternity leave should be considered within

the changing nature of families and caregiving responsibilities.

Ms Mponang encouraged organisations to ensure that workplace policies and processes reflected modern realities rather than simply introducing new technology onto outdated systems.

She also called for stronger action against workplace bullying, harassment and intimidation, saying policies should not only exist on paper but must be actively implemented.

On performance management, Ms Mponang said the new labour environment required employers to have regular conversations with employees about their performance. She said supervisors should not simply label employees as underperforming without first understanding the reasons behind their challenges, providing mentorship and offering constructive criticism.

Ms Mponang further challenged organisations to reconsider how they distributed and utilised technology, saying access to digital tools should not necessarily be determined by an employee's position or seniority, but by their ability to effectively use the technology.

She cautioned against overreliance on artificial intelligence, urging people to use AI as a tool and not allow it to replace independent thinking.

"Organisations need to broaden their understanding to include neurodiversity, because while people are born different, organisational diversity is a choice that employers can actively promote," Ms Mponang said.

She also called for greater balance between older and younger employees, saying experienced workers should not be pushed aside but should instead mentor and guide younger employees through structured succession planning.

Successful organisations she said would be those that understood generational differences and created workplaces where employees could contribute according to their strengths. **BOPA**

Maun General Hospital revival to expand healthcare services

Gaolethoo Kgatitswe
MAUN

Selected healthcare services currently operating at Letsholathebe II Memorial Hospital are expected to be relocated to the old Maun General Hospital facilities.

The move is expected to revive the partially completed infrastructure to improve healthcare delivery and decongest existing services.

Speaking during an inspection of government infrastructure projects in Maun on Friday, Letsholathebe II Memorial Hospital Superintendent, Dr Lebogang Mokotedi said the development would allow the hospital to maximise available space while expanding access to specialised services that were currently constrained by limited accommodation.

She said the transition came at an opportune time as Maun continued to grow, noting that healthcare infrastructure had to keep pace with the area's rapid expansion.

"We see this facility serving as a downstream referral centre while plans are underway for it to operate as a primary hospital for this area," she said.

Dr Mokotedi said services such as the dental clinic will be relocated to the old hospital to ease congestion at Letsholathebe II while reducing travelling costs for patients living closer to Maun General Hospital.

She further said the existing laboratory facilities at the old hospital would enable the introduction of cytology services currently referred elsewhere because of inadequate space.

"We have trained personnel capable of providing these services, but the limitation has been space, therefore activating these facilities will improve turnaround times and strengthen service delivery," she said.

Dr Mokotedi added that moving into the old health facility will also help curb vandalism, which has affected the facility while standing idle.

Speaking to staff during the facility inspection, Assistant Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Keoagile Atamelang said government had prioritised projects nearing completion to ensure they began serving communities without further delay.

He said sufficient funding had been secured to complete the projects after prolonged delays caused mainly by financial constraints.

"We have deliberately prioritised projects that are close to completion so that they can immediately contribute to service delivery," he said.

Mr Atamelang also appealed to residents to protect public infrastructure, saying vandalism

continued to slow government efforts and diverted public resources toward repairs instead of fast tracking development.

"These facilities belong to the people and the money used to repair damage is still taxpayers' money, therefore communities must take ownership and safeguard them," he said.

The assistant minister also inspected progress on the Department of Public Prosecution and Ombudsman office projects.

Providing an update, Department of Buildings Head in Maun, Mr Katlarelo Molapisi, said construction of the Ombudsman offices was at about 56 per cent before works stalled following termination of the contractor due to cash-flow challenges and unrealistic completion timelines.

He said procurement processes for consultants, including quantity surveyors, architects and engineers, were underway to facilitate resumption of the project.

On the Department of Public Prosecutions office, Mr Molapisi said a new mechanical contractor has recently been appointed after the previous contractor's services were terminated.

He said remaining works included installation of air-conditioning systems, elevated water tanks and other mechanical components required before the building could be occupied. **BOPA**

MoU to enhance accountability

Thato Mosinyi
GABORONE

Corruption remains one of the greatest threats to national development, as it is no longer confined to isolated acts of bribery or abuse of office.

Speaking during the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoU) between the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) and Debswana recently, DCEC Director General, Ms Botlhale Makgekenene said corruption undermined economic growth, eroded public trust, weakened institutions, distorted fair competition, and diverted resources that should otherwise improve the lives of citizens.

She noted that corruption increasingly manifested through procurement manipulation, complex financial transactions, illicit financial flows, complex beneficial ownership structures, and technology-enabled financial crime.

Consequently, she stated that institutions responsible for protecting Botswana's resources must evolve with equal determination.

Because these negative effects impact both the public and private sectors, Ms Makgekenene emphasised that it was imperative to work together to effectively reduce corruption vulnerabilities.

"As the DCEC, we recognise that no single institution can successfully combat corruption in isolation. Therefore, meaningful progress can only be achieved when government institutions, state-owned enterprises, private sector organisations, civil society, the media, and citizens unite around a common purpose. In our case, that common purpose is a corruption-free society," she said.

She explained that the memorandum provides a framework to govern cooperation in corruption prevention, investigations, and information and knowledge sharing.

She highlighted that the success of the MoU would be measured by the governance systems it strengthened, the institutional capacity it built, and the corruption risks it collectively mitigated.

Ms Makgekenene added that, collectively, these areas of cooperation would strengthen institutional resilience, promote

ethical leadership, and contribute to effectively safeguarding Botswana's strategic resources.

"The Directorate appreciates Debswana's commitment to continuously strengthening integrity systems, promoting accountability, and transparency.

Such collaboration demonstrates responsible corporate governance and reinforces the important contribution of the private sector to Botswana's governance agenda," she said.

Similarly, Debswana Chief Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Motsomi noted that corruption and economic crime were not victimless offenses, as they undermined investment, weaken institutions, distort fair competition, and erode public confidence.

He cautioned that if left unchecked, corruption could threaten both economic growth and social progress.

Therefore, he said it was incumbent upon both the public and private sectors alike to work together to safeguard the integrity of their institutions and the resources entrusted to them.

To that effect, Mr Motsomi highlighted that the MoU provided a platform for practical and meaningful collaboration between the two organizations.

He cited that it established a framework through which both organisations could share knowledge, strengthen corruption

prevention measures, enhance due diligence processes, and build capabilities to stay ahead of emerging risks and threats.

"Through this partnership, Debswana and DCEC send a clear message that integrity is not negotiable. We are committed to conducting business responsibly, protecting stakeholder value, and ensuring that our operations continue to contribute positively to Botswana's development and prosperity," he said.

He concluded that the partnership reflected both organisations' shared commitment to protecting the values that underpinned good governance, responsible leadership, and public confidence. **BOPA**



DCEC director general, Ms Botlhale Makgekenene (left) and Debswana chief executive officer, Mr Andrew Motsomi during the Debswana and DCEC memorandum of understanding signing in Gaborone recently. Ms Makgekenene said corruption continued to threaten Botswana's development by weakening institutions, undermining economic growth and eroding public trust. She urged stronger collaboration between the public and private sectors. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Tsheko advocates localised poverty solutions

...from Page 1

Dr Tsheko also spoke strongly against corruption and misuse of public resources, saying such practices undermined government efforts to improve livelihoods and deny communities opportunities for development.

"Corruption blocks progress and deprives communities of opportunities to improve their livelihoods, therefore it must stop if we are serious about transforming people's lives," he said.

He said government was already working toward developing an inclusive policy framework that would mobilise resources and support sustainable livelihood initiatives tailored to the specific needs and economic potential of different communities.

For his part, Deputy District Commissioner of North West District, Mr Ramogapi Gaborekwe said North West District remained one of Botswana's most resource-endowed regions, possessing significant tourism, environmental and economic assets capable of improving livelihoods if properly managed and governed.

He said collaboration of government institutions, the private sector and communities would be critical in unlocking the district's full economic potential.

Presenting the district's sustainable livelihoods profile, North West District Deputy Council Secretary for Operations, Ms Kebalapile Horatius said the council was implementing a sustainable livelihoods strategy aimed at reducing poverty by harnessing opportunities available within the district. She said the strategy

sought to strengthen economic sustainability by promoting local economic opportunities, creating employment and reducing dependence on government social protection programmes.

Ms Horatius said the district has identified key sectors capable of driving inclusive economic growth, including tourism, agriculture, fisheries and community-based natural resource management, adding that strengthening these sectors would improve household incomes and promote self-reliance.

She said the district continued to implement various social protection programmes, including the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP), which supports remote area communities through housing, socio-economic empowerment, employment initiatives and improved access to education.

However, Ms Horatius acknowledged that implementation continue to face challenges such as budget constraints, delay in processing social protection benefits, staff shortage, inflationary pressure and logistical barriers affecting service delivery.

Despite these challenges, she said the district generated significant revenue through tourism activities, including hunting and concession fees, demonstrating the untapped potential that could be leveraged to strengthen local economies and improve community livelihoods.

Ms Horatius said the district's long-term vision was to move communities away from dependence on relief programmes toward sustainable self-reliance through effective utilisation of available resources and stronger partnerships. **BOPA**



Republic of Botswana

MINISTRY OF LABOUR
AND HOME AFFAIRS

MLHA 1/15/21 (55)
TO: ALL MEDIA HOUSES

04 August 2026

PRESS RELEASE
COMMENCEMENT OF THE NEW
EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR
RELATIONS ACT, 2025

The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs wishes to Inform members of the public, Employers and Workers that the Government, Employers' Representatives (Business Botswana) and the Workers' Representatives (BOFEPUSU and BFTU) have agreed that implementation of the Employment and Labour Relations Act, 2025 will commence on **01st September, 2026.**

The tripartite commends Government, Employers, Workers and all other relevant stakeholders for their patience, during finalization of this process.

Thank you.



Veronica M. Moioke
Commissioner of Labour



Robert R. Rabasimane
Secretary General - BOFEPUSU.



Tshepiso Mberek
Secretary General - BFTU.



Tumi Mbaakanyi
Chief Executive Officer - BB



BUSINESSBOTSWANA



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BFTU

DailyNews

Published by: Department of Information Services
37795 Wellie Seboni Drive
Private Bag BR 139 Gaborone

Printed by: Government Printing and Publishing Services

Online Edition: <https://dailynews.gov.bw>
email: bopa@gov.bw email: dailynews@gov.bw

Circulation 20 000 per day except Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.

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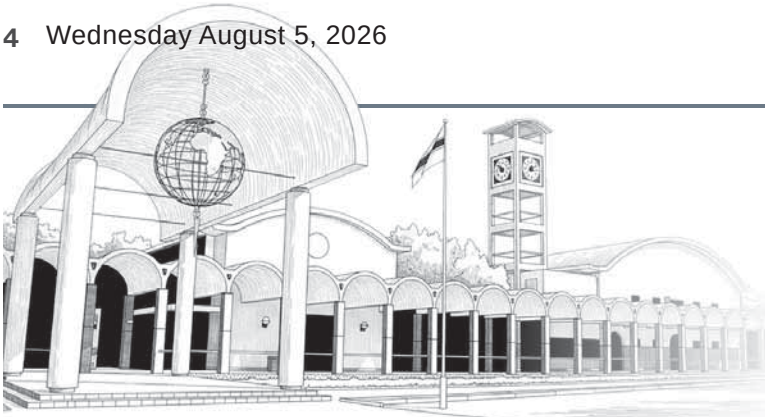
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PARLIAMENT 2026

Livestock import taxes critical for disease control - Gaolathe

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Revenue collected from livestock import duties directly funds the essential veterinary services and quarantine systems needed to protect biosecurity, Vice President and Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe told Parliament on Monday.

Debating a proposed motion to scrap the levy, Mr Gaolathe, also, Gaborone Bonnington South MP, outlined government's firm stance against removing import taxes on livestock from neighbouring countries.

Mr Gaolathe acknowledged the desire to enhance national herd quality, however emphasised that import taxes served as a strategic safeguard to ensure that animal movement remained strictly controlled, a necessity made even more critical by ongoing disruptions from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreaks.

He warned that increasing livestock imports, even for genetic improvement, posed severe disease risks that could jeopardise the country's international export standing and erase years of livestock management progress.

"Botswana's standing as a responsible trading partner hinges on adherence to stringent animal health standards," he stated, noting that any policy shift must carefully evaluate economic and biosecurity consequences.

He further cautioned that a blanket tax exemption would distort domestic market signals and favour imported livestock at the expense of local breeding initiatives.

Sustainable growth, he explained, required building local genetic capacity rather than displacing it.

On broader economic priorities, Mr Gaolathe added that tax policy must remain balanced within the nation's fiscal framework to ensure continuous support for general agriculture, veterinary protection and rural development.

Contributing to the debate, Minister of Lands and Agriculture and MP for GoodHope-Mmathethe, Dr Edwin Dikoloti, agreed that the import tax levy remained a vital tool for managing agricultural challenges.

Dr Dikoloti pointed out that government already offered reasonable subsidies to cushion farmers, arguing that the sector should be protected through alternative avenues rather than waiving import duties on foreign livestock. Following the opposition from the ministers, Member of Parliament for Serowe West, Mr Onalepelo Kedikilwe, subsequently withdrew the motion.

Prior to withdrawing the motion, Mr Kedikilwe had argued that waiving import duties would help local farmers upgrade their animal breeds by lowering costs, broadening access to diverse genetics and driving farm productivity.

He indicated that importers already bear heavy transport, feeding and accommodation expenses at a time when the country continued striving to grow its national herd.

The legislator drew parallels to agricultural equipment, which was currently exempted from import taxes to boost national food security, contending that breeding livestock deserved the same treatment.

He had also noted that government would likely offset the initial tax revenue loss through higher income taxes generated from increased farm productivity and sales. **BOPA**



Member of Parliament for Serowe West, Mr Onalepelo Kedikilwe has withdrawn the motion requesting government to stop charging farmers tax on livestock imported from neighbouring countries.

Multi-agency task force investigates foreign work permit abuse

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs is already at an advanced stage of investigating foreign work permit abuse and immigration syndicates.

This was said by labour and home affairs minister, Major General (Rtd) Pius Mokgware Parliament on Monday, debating a motion that called for an independent inquiry into work permit abuses and non-compliance with citizen subcontracting mandates, tabled by MP for Nkange, Mr Mothaleemang Moalosi.

Mr Mokgware confirmed that sophisticated criminal cartels producing fake passports and work permits remained a concern, but insisted active measures were already underway.

He said an existing multi-agency task force, comprising experts from the Department of Immigration, Directorate of Intelligence and Security Services (DISS), Botswana Police Service and the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), was currently on the ground and would produce



Minister of Labour and Home Affairs
Major General Pius Mokgware

a comprehensive report upon completing its task.

"These issues are of a serious concern as recently we have arrested close to 100 people who are involved in those criminal activities. Some are from Pakistan, Bangladesh and India among

others. We also raided the mine at Toteng where we charged some individuals and companies engaged there," he said.

He noted that authorities had observed frequency of culprits using farming permits, adding that all permits were currently being scrutinised under special measures to curb the problem.

He urged MPs to be patient and await the ongoing task force's results, adding that new systems had been put in place to detect fraudulent bookings.

Subsequently, Parliament rejected the motion on the grounds that the existing task force was already executing the proposed mandate.

MP for Kgatleng Central, Mr Mpho Morolong, argued against the motion, stating that there was no need for a new body while active investigations were underway to dismantle criminal networks.

However, he quizzed the efficacy of the DISS, saying despite deploying officers to the Department of Immigration, fraudulent work permits and passport forgery remained rampant.

"It is unfortunate as the national forensic audit did not cover the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. This is a serious omission. In other countries, immigration issues are a concern and they do overlap to other departments like labour.

Other legislators supported the motion and emphasised the need for an independent body.

MP for Tswapong South, Dr Kesitegile Gobotswang, argued that only an independent task force could dig deeper without fear or favour.

He stated that Botswana's low statutory fines failed to deter repeat offenders and advocated for the deportation of those charged.

He added that major culprits included mine and truck operators, claiming that many in the trucking industry were damaging local water sources through illegal mining.

"We want a task force that will investigate all individuals without fear or favour and come up with solutions on issues of compliance and enforcement of existing laws among others," he said.

MP for Kgatleng East, Mr Mabuse Pule, also backed the motion, pointing out the complex network of forged travel documents, fake permits, human trafficking and marriages of convenience.

He argued that the complexity required an independent body with specialised expertise to look at the issues objectively. Mr Pule emphasised that locals were being denied opportunities, with foreigners being hired for jobs that did not require rare and specialised skills.

Similarly, MP for Maun West, Mr Goretetse Kekgonegile, supported the motion as highly relevant, citing widespread local unemployment due to unfair practices.

He highlighted that foreigners mostly occupied farming roles and sub-contracting jobs that should go to local companies.

Mr Kekgonegile acknowledged the existence of District Law Enforcement Committees, but he however argued that they were failing to curb the problem and argued that the proposed task force could protect local jobs by restricting foreign work permits and enforcing sector reservations for citizens. **BOPA**

Govt sources foreign funding for village electrification

GABORONE

Government is currently sourcing funds from international development partners to finance a major P505 million national electrification programme targeting 112 communities, Parliament heard on Monday.

Responding to a parliamentary question, Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Bogolo Kenewendo said funding was being sought from organisations including the World Bank, African Development Bank and European Union to connect 20 new villages to the grid and expand network extensions across 92 others.

The beneficiary communities listed for the 2024/2025 financial year include Mahotshwane,

Kanaku and Thankane villages.

However, the minister said financial constraints had slowed implementation in some areas.

"A contractor was appointed for the electrification of Mahotshwane village in June, with anticipated completion in January 2027. Given the current financial challenges, the project has not been fully executed as construction works have not commenced in a number of villages including Kanaku and Thankane," Ms Kenewendo said.

The minister explained that full-scale works in Kanaku and Thankane would proceed once international funding was finalised.

Jwaneng-Mabutsane MP, Mr Omphemetse Kwapa, had asked when the affected villages would be electrified. **BOPA**

No study yet to assess security of judicial officers

GABORONE

Government has not yet conducted the proposed study to assess the security of judicial officers, Parliament has heard.

Answering a parliamentary question on Monday, Assistant Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti, said the ministry recognised the importance of strengthening security for the judiciary.

Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti explained that protecting judicial officers fell under the broader mandate of the Botswana Police

Service, as outlined in Section 6 of the Police Act (Cap. 21:01), which emphasised the protection of life and property, prevention and detection of crime as well as maintenance of public tranquillity.

The assistant minister assured legislators that government would continue engaging with the judiciary to explore alternative measures to enhance their safety.

Tswapong South MP, Dr Kesitegile Gobotswang, had asked the minister for an update, including timelines for each phase of the exercise, on previous assurances regarding the proposed security assessment study. **BOPA**



Assistant Minister of Health, Mr Lawrence Ookeditse said the long-delayed hospital project was now 99 per cent complete and the ministry had already occupied the administration block and procurement stores ahead of the facility's commissioning.

Ministry prioritises safety over speed

GABORONE

The Edison Setlthomo Masisi Memorial Hospital in Moshupa will only open once all critical systems are fully tested, regulatory approvals are secured and the facility is equipped to deliver safe care.

This was said by Assistant Minister of Health, Mr Lawrence Ookeditse, responding to a parliamentary question on Monday. Mr Ookeditse assured legislators that while the official opening date would be announced upon handover, government remained

committed to safety over speed. The assistant minister was responding to questions from Moshupa-Manyana MP, Mr Karabo Gare regarding why the facility missed its targeted April 2026 launch. Mr Ookeditse stated that technical and installation hurdles prevented operationalisation.

He indicated that key delays involved the installation and commissioning of X-ray machines, hospital communication system (PABX) and ICT networking infrastructure. “The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure is resolving these issues, while the health ministry expedites furniture, computer and medical equipment procurement, targeted for completion by August 14,” he added. He further said despite equipment setbacks, workforce preparation was on track, adding that 80 per cent of the approved staff establishment had been recruited and meeting operational requirements.

“Some officers are currently stationed at the hospital, while others have been deployed to nearby health facilities within Kanye District, Moshupa, Mabutsane and Jwaneng District Council to continue providing services pending commissioning of the hospital,” he said. To date, he noted, only the administration block and procurement stores had been occupied since January this year.

CITF centres to open next financial year - Maele

MAUN

Construction Industry Trust Fund (CITF) satellite centres in Sojwe, Phitshane Molopo and Ncojane are on track to open next financial year, Parliament has heard.

Answering a question in Parliament recently, Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele, said the rollout followed completion of the accreditation process by the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA).

Minister Maele noted that the facilities were built in phases, where phase one, the physical construction, had been completed, while phase two involved accreditation of learning programmes.

The minister confirmed that all three centres had been included and budgeted for under the National Development Plan 12 (NDP 12).

He, however, dismissed reports of falling ceilings at the facilities, stating that the Ncojane centre was completed recently and was scheduled to enrol its first cohort of students next year.

Regarding ongoing internal management concerns, Mr Maele admitted that he received a petition from CITF staff dated 29 April 2025 complaining about a lot of administrative issues.

He explained that efforts were made to instruct the Board of Trustees to respond, which they did in writing on 12 May 2025.

“Unfortunately, when I was about to give feedback to staff, they wrote to me that they had escalated the matter to the Office of the President so there was nothing I could do in terms of the petition. Despite that I still believe we can still resolve some of the issues such as money owed to them,” he added.

He stated that staff were owed about P8 million out of which management paid about P800 000 last month, representing 10 per cent of their owed dues.

He added that letters were written to employees acknowledging the outstanding debt as per their request.

On other issues, Mr Maele acknowledged that some senior officers had increased their salaries by 16 per cent as approved by the board following a remuneration study by Tsa Badiri Consultancy.

He added that efforts had been made to address staff in all centres across the country to appreciate their challenges and successes.

He further dismissed allegations that the acting executive director claimed night-outs and converted them into local per diem upon return.

“The officer was given a local per diem amounting to P17 400 and upon return from the trip, paid back P9 322 as retirement. I have documents here as proof of evidence that the officer embarked on a 10-day trip visiting various satellite centres of Kazungula, Nata, Francistown, Maun, Palapye and Chadibe,” he said.

He also informed Parliament that there was an officer who had tried to illegally change the work contractor and the issue was before the courts of law.

Parliament also heard that CITF was not swallowing Madirelo Training and Testing Centre (MTTC), but was only using workshops for some programmes because some at CITF had no capacity.

Mogoditshane West MP, Mr Galenawabo Lekau had called for accountability regarding issues of maladministration, poor governance and unfair treatment across CITF centres.

The MP had also raised concerns over financial mismanagement and unchecked practices such as staff unilaterally converting short-term contracts into permanent and failure by management to attend longstanding employee petitions. **BOPA**

Infrastructure programmes to address sanitation in Boteti schools

GABORONE

Government is deploying targeted infrastructure programmes and emergency maintenance funds to fix school toilet facilities across Boteti West and prioritise purpose-built reception amenities while rolling out repairs across the constituency.

Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ketlhalefile Motshegwa, told Parliament on Monday that despite fiscal constraints, government was addressing infrastructure gaps through the Backlog Eradication Programme, Constituency Community Projects (CCP) and the Ikageng Public Works Programme.

Minister Motshegwa said under the current financial year, a new reception classroom equipped with dedicated junior toilets would be constructed at Xere Primary School.

“Simultaneously, the ministry has utilised P2.4 million in drought mitigation funds through the Boteti District Council to execute urgent minor maintenance across primary schools in the region,” he said.

He added that maintenance work had already been completed at Baipidi, Moreomato, Khumaga, Etsile, Mmadikola, Xhumo and Motopi primary schools.

Again, he said facilities at Kedia Primary School remain functional and were being monitored for minor repairs by in-house teams.

He further told Parliament that ongoing refurbishments at



Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs Mr Ketlhalefile Motshegwa

Nicodemus, Tsienyane, Toromoja, Mopipi, Xere, Manthabakwe and Mokobaxane were slated for completion between August and November this year.

“Specific works include the reconstruction of a conservancy tank at Mopipi, while Tsienyane’s remaining two toilet blocks will be built under the Ikageng Programme,” he said.

On policy concerns, Mr Motshegwa emphasised that government regulations mandated reception pupils to use age-appropriate junior toilets, particularly designed for young children.

He acknowledged that while 12 out of 15 primary schools in Boteti West currently lacked fully-fledged junior toilets, forcing reception pupils to share facilities with mainstream learners, the shared arrangement was a temporary measure resulting from past budget limitations.

Parliament also heard that when pre-primary education was introduced in 2016/2017, local authorities were forced to convert existing structures, such as old kitchens, into classrooms without junior toilets due to spatial and financial limitations while only Motopi, Etsile and Mokobaxane primary schools were initially equipped with purpose-built facilities.

“The ministry remains committed to progressively normalising the situation through construction of new junior toilets or conversion of existing facilities where feasible, subject to availability of resources,” Mr Motshegwa stated.

Boteti West MP, Mr Sam Digwa, had asked for an update on the dire state of school sanitation in the constituency, the timeline for interventions and whether sharing toilets between pre-primary and mainstream learners complied with national education policy. **BOPA**



Adopt climate smart farming - Dikoloti

Calviniah Kgautlhe
GOODHOPE

Applying climate smart agriculture can help farmers prepare for the predicted calamity of el niño in the upcoming ploughing season.

Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti, said the time was now for farmers to start planning.

“As we prepare for the anticipated El niño conditions, access to reliable weather information has become essential for agricultural planning. Climate information enables farmers to make better decisions regarding planting dates, crop selection, water management, and risk mitigation. Climate-smart agriculture is no longer optional but a necessity,” said Dr Dikoloti when addressing farmers at the DEKALB maize live harvesting demonstrations at Mosisedi Farms in the Goodhope District on Friday.

He said with the possible development of El niño conditions in the coming ploughing season, farmers must consider ploughing according to reliable seasonal forecasts, select hybrids that fit the expected rainfall pattern, avoid over-populating fields where water may become limiting, and ensure that weed control was effective from the start so that every millimetre of rainfall benefits the crop.

Speaking during a live demonstration of maize harvest, Dr Dikoloti highlighted that successful maize production was not based on seed alone or population alone, but on the correct combination of hybrid choice, plant density, soil fertility, moisture management, and timely agronomic decisions. “This is how we build resilience, protect profitability, and strengthen food security even under uncertain climate conditions,” he said.

He said Botswana continued to import significant quantities of maize every year which presented an opportunity for local farmers. “We will begin as a ministry to give a weekly report of tonnes of maize entering the country on a weekly basis to provide data,” he said.

He said plans were to turn around the economic impact of Agriculture through implementation of progressive policies adding that government had invested a lot in agriculture, but the financing part needed to be improved.

“We have been investing in inputs rather than rewarding the output which has stalled progress. We have been financing Agricultural activities rather than the value chains to strengthen them and so we are going to transform this,” he said.

He underscored application of sound farming practices at individual farmer level noting, “if we increase productivity through improved seed, better agronomic practices, and efficient farm management, we can reduce our dependence on imports, strengthen national food security, and create wealth within our farming communities.”

Furthermore, Dr Dikoloti said the ministry needed to close the monitoring and evaluation gaps with regards to research on hybrid



Minister of Lands and Agriculture Dr Edwin Dikoloti has urged farmers to adopt climate-smart agriculture and use reliable weather forecasts to guide planting decisions, saying early planning would be key to mitigating the anticipated effects of el niño during the upcoming ploughing season.

Photo: Calviniah Kgautlhe

seeds to ensure optimal benefits to the farmer. “Research must be done on the DEKALB maize hybrid seed. The academia need to come a lot closer. The good tonnage of maize per hectare that Mr Cronje gets from the DEKALB maize seed can only be found in books only and so it is important to share such information with other farmers,” he said.

Botswana Meteorological Services representative, Ms Lorraine Ketshabile, said scientists worked round the clock to monitor the el niño. She revealed that the June, July, and August report reflected that its intensity was between weak to moderate but from September, October and November the intensity of the Elnino would increase to around 90 per cent. The potential disaster she said indicated a high probability of below-normal rainfall, rising temperatures, and growing pressure on water and food systems across the country.

“We must adequately prepare for el niño as farmers and have

mitigation and adaptation strategies in place, we encourage climate smart farming, we recommend the drought tolerant varieties during this time of dry spells,” she said.

Agrifeed senior agronomist, Mr Paul Tlhase, said with regards to adaptability of the DEKALB maize seed in various regions in the country they intended to work with farmers and Agricultural extension officers, “we want to have a partnership with farmers so that when we produce seed we roll it out accordingly. We will have trial sites across the country and we encourage farmers to cooperate and allow us into their farms for trials using a hectare or two of their fields,” he said.

He said DEKALB maize seed was a highbred which was drought resistant and they shall identify three farmers from each region to plant DEKALB maize seed to check its performance.

“There is generally no market for maize and so when you grow DEKALB you have guaranteed

market for your produce. We follow the fair and transparent pricing and our price is competitive,” he said.

Sharing nuggets of wisdom with farmers, a Mosisedi commercial farmer Mr Jan Cronje who has planted 600 hectares of DEKALB maize seed already yielding a good six tonnes per hectare said four years ago he made a decision to plough smart.

He had a challenge with the seed he was planting and he was looking for help with seed and DEKALB came to his rescue. he tried the seed on 5 percent of the field and it gave quality results.

“Right now we are planting DEKALB on 80 percent of the farm and the results are good. Yes, the seed is expensive but is capable of giving the farmer optimum plant population,” he said

Mr Cronje has planted 600 hectares of maize, 50 hectares each of peanuts, sunflower, and soy beans. He said by the first week of August, they would be done with harvesting maize. **BOPA**

Bayport pioneers investment-embedded female loans

Mpho Mosojane
GABORONE

Bayport Financial Services is changing the financial landscape for women through a newly launched loan product that builds wealth while you borrow.

By embedding a direct investment feature into the credit package, the institution moves past traditional lending to actively grow female financial portfolios.

The solution, termed Atlega Kgarebe, is a declaration of empowerment, reflecting on the financial responsibility of women as managers of family funds with prudence and wisdom through budgeting, saving, and smart spending while balancing daily needs with keeping funds safe for the future. The product name reflects the ambitious nature of women – as bold, elegant, resilient yet accountable with extreme audacity for financial independence and a deep desire to be empowered to succeed.

Speaking at the launch in Gaborone on Thursday, Head of Sales Strategy and Digital Channels, Ms Gosego Makgale, highlighted that the facility was not just an innovation that dares to be different but creates value as a solution that

genuinely improve people’s lives.

“Most people picture investors as people with a stock market portfolio, speaking corporate jargon and rocking an expensive tailor made suit. With this product, we aim to demystify that narrative and honour women as true wealth creators,” she said

Ms Makgale highlighted that generally women were more disciplined, sacrificial, borrow responsibly, utilising funds for their intended purpose, intentionally investing beyond themselves but also in family and community and creating endless future opportunities in the process.

“We are excited to support such an inclusive, game-changing course such as this Atlega Kgarebe. Women are the cornerstone of households and there is no better way to enable them in facilitating their journey in creating financial wealth,” highlighted Mr Sean Rasebotsa, the Chief Executive Officer of African Alliance Management Botswana who are the investment partner of the product. “Our 24 hour contact centre and emergency road side assistance will attend to minor mechanical faults and provide towing service, extending much needed safety for women, providing peace of mind in the process.”

asserted Mr Seeletso Reikeletseng, Business Development Manager, Emergency Assist 991.

Compared with similar market products, the facility attracts a 25 per cent discount on administration fees which would then be invested, earning compounded interest at the prevailing market rates, for the duration of the loan.

The investment is locked into and managed as a money market account which while encouraging long-term savings, provides flexibility by allowing the owner to access up to 50 per cent of their investment after 12 months and the full investment after 24 months onward provided the loan remains in good standing.

Beyond the financial benefit also comes added value through road-side assistance as Bayport has also partnered with Emergency Assist 991 to provide emergency support services in case the customer is distressed. True financial wellbeing is built on a system of complete ecosystem support with a goal to provide ultimate empowerment.

Bayport is redefining what financial inclusion looks like for women, proving that the right support today can build lasting generational wealth for tomorrow. **BOPA**

BUSINESS SERVICES

Zimbabwe foreign currency earnings rise

HARARE - Zimbabwe has recorded a sharp increase in foreign currency inflows during the first half of 2026, driven largely by strong export earnings and increased diaspora remittances, a development that Treasury says is strengthening the country’s economic stability. Presenting the 2026 Mid-Term Budget and Economic Review in Parliament on Thursday, Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion Professor Mthuli Ncube said total foreign currency receipts reached US\$10.72 billion between January and June, representing a 47.8 percent increase from US\$7.25 billion recorded during the same period last year. **New Ziana**

Zimbabwe manufacturing industry soars

HARARE - Zimbabwe’s manufacturing sector is soaring, with industrial capacity utilisation projected to reach the highest level in more than a decade, Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion Minister, Prof. Mthuli Ncube said. Presenting the 2026 Mid-Term Budget and Economic Prof. Ncube said manufacturing capacity utilisation was expected to rise from 61.2 per cent in 2025 to 63.5 per cent in 2026, the highest level recorded since 2013. He said this signaled growing confidence in domestic production, and fruition of ongoing efforts to re-industrialize the economy. Prof. Ncube said the manufacturing sector has also benefited from stronger demand for locally produced goods as the economy maintains macroeconomic stability and businesses expand production. Zimbabwe’s manufacturing industry has faced years of challenges, including obsolete machinery, limited access to affordable capital, power shortages and competition from imports, factors that contributed to capacity utilization falling below 40 percent during parts of the last decade. However, recent Government policies promoting local production industrial financing and value addition have gradually reversed that trend. Manufacturing remains one of the country’s largest employers, and plays a vital role in processing agricultural produce and minerals into higher-value products for domestic consumption and export. With capacity utilisation continuing to improve, Treasury says the sector is expected to play an increasingly important role in supporting Zimbabwe’s industrialization agenda and the drive towards attaining an upper-middle-income economy by 2030. **New Ziana**

Dikgang

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Morafe o kopiwa go somarela di-tsa tlholego

Calviniah Kgautlhe
LOBATSE

Ba lephata la Motlobo wa Ditso, Matlotlo a ngwao le Tlholego ba kopa setshaba go tlhokomela lefelo la fa mogaka wa pele wa molwela kgololesego ya batho bantsho e bile e le tautona wa pele wa lefatshe la Afrika Borwa Rre Nelson Mandela, a fetileng teng (Mandela's Hide Out Spot). Lefelo leo le kwa godimo ga lentswe la Peleng kwa Lobatse.

Fa a bua mo potsolotsong, Mookamela lephata la Motlobo wa Ditso, Matlotlo a ngwao le Tlholego mo kgaolong ya borwa Rre Onkgopotse Moseki a re ba itemogetse kgotlelesego ya tikologo, bogolo jang kwa godimo ga thaba ya Peleng kwa lefelong le le neng le dirisiwa ke mogaka wa pele rre Mandela go iphitlhela ba mmuso wa tlhalele wa nako eo ka lobaka lo lo leele. O supile gore lefelo leo le tshwailwe ke lephata leo jaaka lengwe la mafelo a a popota a ditso tsa lefatshe la Botswana le tsa borwa jwa Afrika.

Rre Moseki a re lefelo leo ke lengwe la mafelo a a faphegileng le le sireleditsweng ke ba ditso ka le tshwere matlotlo a ditso tsa lefatshe leno mo kgololesego ya batho bantsho go ralala kgaolo ya borwa jwa Afrika. A re ka jalo le supa seabe se setona se lefatshe la Botswana le nnileng le sone go sireletsa bagaka ba ba fetotseng ditso tsa lefatshe ka bophara ka nako ya mmuso wa tlhalele.

Rre Moseki o supile gape gore lefelo leo le le boatlhamo kwa 4.5 Km le dirisiwa e le thuto mo bajanaleng ba ba etelang toropo ya Lobatse mapapi le ditso tsa yone ka jalo a re go botlhokwa go le somarela. A re go na le badumedi ba ba ikalafelang fa lefelong leo mme ba felele ba kgotlela tikologo ka go tlogela matlakala foo. O tlhalositse gore bontsi jwa

matlakala bo fitlhelwa fa tautona wa Pele wa Lefatshe la South Africa Rre Mandela a neng a iphitlhile teng, a iphitlhetswe batho basweu. A re batho ba ikalafelwa foo ka tumelo ya gore mogaka o fetile foo.

A re ba tshwenngwa ke gore go tlogelwa matlakala foo a tshwana le mabottlele, go kwala matlapa

ka dipente, go tlogela dipampiri, diaparo, marapo, dikerese, ditoisi, matsela, magata a diphologolo mme seo se kgona go tshosa bajanala ka jalo a kopa gore go somarelwe di-tsa tlholego ka di isa serodumo sa lefatshe leno kwa godimo.

A re go botlhokwa gore ba ba dirisang lefelo leo mo go tsa

kgwebo ka go tsaya mesepele ya go palamelela di-tsa tlholego ba emise go kwala mo matlapeng go supegetsa batho tsela mme ba dirise mekwalo e e kareng ba fetsa go dira se ba se dirang ba boe ka yone go itsa go kgotlela selebego sa tlholego sa matlapa ao.

Mogolwane yo, o supile gore lefelo leo ke lengwe la mafelo a a etelwang kgapetsa-kgapetsa ke bajanala gotswa kwa mafatsheng a a farologaneng go tla go le bona ka jalo ga ba a tshwanela go le fitlhela le kgotlesegele.

Godimo ga seo, o ne a supa gore mo nakong eno go na le dimela tsa naga tse di bapalwang ke dingaka tsa setso go dira melemo ka jalo a kopa gore ba di kgetle ka kebelelo gore di tswelele di le teng go fitlhelwa ke dikokomane tse di tlang. Fa a tswa la gagwe mogolwane wa Samora Machel Museum e bile e le mosomarela

matlotlo a Lobatse yo mogolo Rre Francis Joao a boletse gore thaba ya Peleng e humile ditso mme e bile e tswa goo lowe e dirisiwa ke bo-re-a-itse go alafa batho ka jalo a re ba tshwanetse ba dirisa dimela tseo ka kebelelo.

A re fa tlase ga thaba ya Peleng go motswedi wa metsi wa tlholego wa Peleng Gorge yo o nnang o eleda metsi ngwaga yotlhe mme o ne o nosa motse, batho le leruo lwa bone, a re mo nakong eno motswedi oo o kgadile ka mabaka a phetogo ya loapi.

Rre Joao o ne a supa gore ka nako ya dipula tse di namagadi lefelo leo le tswela metsi jaaka pele metsi a gogole matlakala a a kwa godimo ga thaba mme tebego e nne ee sa siamang mo bajanaleng ba ba etelang lefelo leo.

O kopile badirisi ba lone botlhe go tsa boikarabelo jwa go le somarela. **BOPA**



Mogolwane wa lephata la motlobo wa ditso, matlotlo a ngwao le tlholego, Rre Onkgopotse Moseki, o supile fa ba tshwentswe ke matlakala le mekwalo e e mo thabeng ya Peleng kwa Lobatse. Thaba e, e humile ditso ka seabe se lefatshe le se dirileng go emisa mmuso wa tlhalele. Senepe: Calviniah Kgautlhe

Tshwaragano e ka godisa mokgatlho

Kefilwe Selotlegeng
MAHALAPYE

Banni ba Mahalapye ba kopilwe go tshwaragana go godisa serodumo sa moletlo wa Moko Cultural Festival gore o nne le bokao mo isagong.

Se se builwe ke tona wa ditlhaeletsano le botlhami Rre David Tshere kwa moletlong wa ngwaga le ngwaga wa Moko Cultural Festival mo Mahalapye. O ne a re keletso ke go bona moletlo o, o godile mo o tlaa ngokang merafe e mengwe le dikhampane ka go farologana.

O sedimoseditse banni ba Mahalapye gore le fa ba farologana ka dingwao le ditso, mme ke morafe ole mongwe wa Mahalapye. O ba gakolotse go tlotla ditso le ngwao ya ba bangwe le go emana nokeng ele morafe wa Mahalapye.

Tona a re merafe e lekana yotlhe, ka jalo ga gona baba tshwanetseng go nyenyafatsa letso la ba bangwe ka gope.

Rre Tshere a re o ema nokeng mogopolo wa go aga Mahalapye Moko Cultural village and Eco-Tourism Park a tlhalosa gore lefelo le, le ka ngoka bajanala, mme la tlhabolola Mahalapye. O kopile batsadi go rotloetsa banana go ithuta ngwao ya bone le ditso tsa bogologolo ka gore dina le bokao jo bogolo jo ba ka ithutang mo go jone

Tona Tshere a re banana ba dumela gore ka fa go neng go tshelwa ka teng bogologolo, go dirwa dilo ka teng e ne e le tshotlego.

A re golo moo ke tsone ditso ka go supa gore batho bane ba tshela ka se ba nang le sone e bile ba na le maano a go dira dilo go itshidisa.

Mothusa Mokwaledi wa lephata la banana metshameko le bong Rre Tebogo Matebesi a re go ipelela

letsatsi la ngwao go botlhokwa ka jaana go thusa merafe go somarela le go boloka ngwao. A re lephata la metshameko le bodiragatsi le amogela thata maikaelelo a go aga lefelo la Ngwao go sireletsa matlotlo, le go le dirisa go tlhabolola itsholelo.

A re Ngwao e fa morafe seriti sa, e ruta tlotlo, e kopanya setshaba, ka jalo e tshwanetse go sireletswa, go godisiwa le go e tlogelela bana e sa senyega.

Rre Matebesi a re lenaneo le fa le ka rulaganngwa sentle le bo le tsamaisiwa ka kelothoko le ka nna motswedi wa ditiro tsa batshameki ba mmimo wa setso, go ngoka bojanala mme go tlise maduo mo morafeng wa Mahalapye le Botswana ka kakaretso

O ba kopile go tswela ka go tshhegetsang moletlo ya ngwao, ba tlhokomele mafelo a matlotlo a tlholego, botaki le mhama wa botaki ka jaana Ngwao e se go itumela fela mme e ka aga itsholelo. Rre Matebesi a re tiro ya go sireletsa Ngwao gase ya puso fela mme ke boikarabelo jwa botlhe.

A re dikgosi di tshwanetse go tswela ba godisa Ngwao le go fitisetse kitso ya Ngwao ko bananeng.

A re malwapa a rute bana mekgwa le dipuo tsa segabone, a kgothatsa le dikolo go tsenya letsogo mo go ruteng ngwao. Rre Matebesi o gwehlile morafe go bua dipuo tsa bone gammogo le go kwala ditso go di somarela kokomane e tlang.

Kgosi Tshipe Tshipe wa Mahalapye o rotloeditse morafe go tswela ba ema moonoo wa letsatsi le nokeng gore ba fithelele maikaelelo a bone.

A re ba na le toro ya go tlhabolola lefelo la Moko ka jalo a kopa kemo nokeng ya morafe ka kakaretso. **BOPA**

Lwantshang kgokgontsho - Kgosi

Ka Gaboselwe Olesitse
SELEBI PHIKWE

Kgosi Ishmael Legwaila o kopile bomme go ema ka dinao go lwantsha kgokgontsho ya bana.

Kgosi Legwaila o buile se kwa pitso ya bomme ka Laboraro kwa kgotleng ya Botshabelo, maikaelelo magolo e le go amogana maele, go thusana go tswa ka metlhale go lwantsha kgokgontsho.

O tlhalositse fa dikgosi le baeteledipele ba bangwe ba tshwenyegile thata ka tlolo molao le botlhoka tsebe mo kgaolwaneng ya Botshabelo, mme a tlhalosa fa boikarabelo bo le mo batsading.

O kaile fa bontsi jwa batsadi bo bipa mpa ka mabele fa go tla mo dikgannyeng tsa go tlhoka tsebe ga bana ba bone.

Kgosi Legwaila o supile fa kgaolwana ya Botshabelo e le nngwe ya tse di hupeditsweng ke botlhoka tsebe jo bo dirwang ke

batho ba le mo maibing a nnotagi le diritibatsi. A re le fa ba sepodisi le magosi ba leka go kgaolela le go otlhaya ba dira melato, seemo se tswetsetse ka go bifela pele.

Ka jalo a re tsholofelo ke gore morago ga bokopano jo, go nne le pharologanyo mabapi le dikgang tse di tlhorang boroko.

O rotloeditse bomme go tsaya nako ba nna fatshe le bana, ba ba lemotsha bo diphatja ja go tsena mo maratong ba santse ba le bannyne.

Kgosi Legwaila a re go botlhokwa go ruta bana go tla go inaakanya le mekgwa e ka dirang gore ba wele mo boraing jwa go kgokgontshiwa.

Detective Sub Inspector Portia Botsang go tswa mo ofising ya sepodisi ya Botshabelo o tlhomamisitse fa go le boammaaruri ditiro tsa botlhoka tsebe di le dintsi kwa Botshabelo.

Ka jalo, a re o rotloetsa bomme go rata bana, go nna ditsala le bone

gore ba kgone go phuthologa fa ba sa itumela.

O tlhalositse fa motheo wa kwa lwapeng e le o ne o bopang ngwana gore e nne motho yoo nang le boikarabelo mo setshabeng.

Mme Botsana o rotloeditse bomme go phuthologa go bua ka dikgang tsa marato le bana ba bone ba santse ba le dingwaga tse di kwa tlase.

Go tlhomamisana fa e le ruri botlhokwa tsebe kwa kgaolwaneng ya Botshabelo bo le kwa godimo, Mme Botsang a re mono ngwaga go tswa ka kgwedi ya Moranang go ya go ema ka Seetebosigo, ba gatisitse dikgetsi tsa tiriso botlhaswa jwa bana ba ba kwa tlase ka dingwaga tse di lesomele boroba bobedi di le tlhano, tsa thubetso di le pedi fa ya polao e le nngwe.

A re se se ngomolang pelo ke gore melato e e dirwa ke batho ba ba ka bong e le bone batlhokomedi ba bana. **BOPA**

Sehube signs off from air waves

Thamani Shabani
FRANCISTOWN

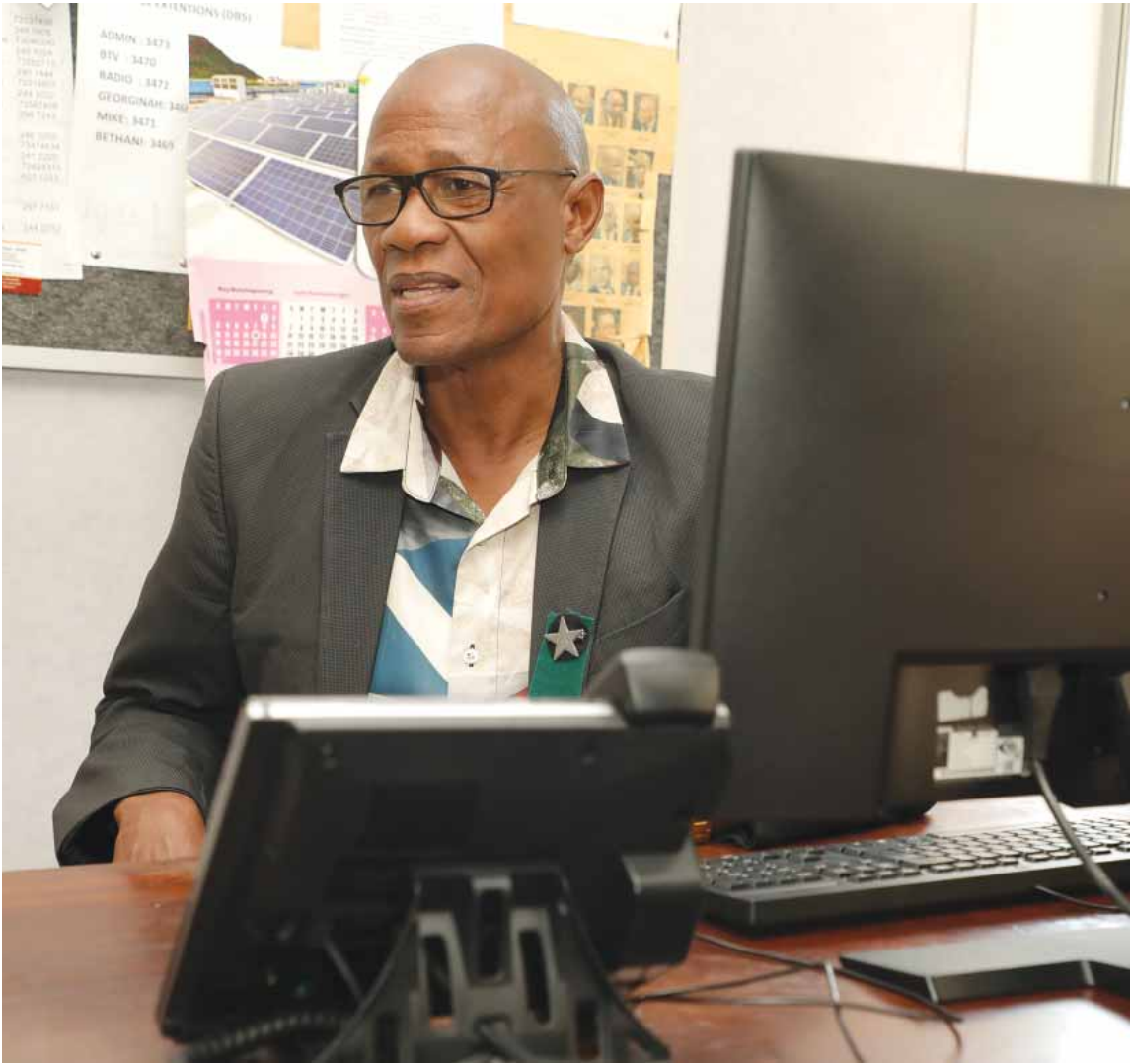
For more than three decades, his voice rolled out of radios across Botswana like thunder in a drum. Deep, deliberate, unmistakable. If radio had a mascot, it was Mr Bampeile ‘Mascot’ Sehube. This week, the son of Nata will sign off from public service for the last time. But he will not be leaving the airwaves quietly. He will be trading his headphones for a hoe, retiring into agriculture. From steel fixer to news anchor, Mr Sehube’s journey to the microphone began with curiosity. Growing up in Nata, he was inspired by former Radio Botswana announcer, Mr Gaomang Mosi, whose voice he listened to daily. “What inspired me most was to know how someone could speak through a radio,” he recalled. “Where does he sit? Is he inside the talking machine? It gave me sleepless nights.” Motivated, he left his six-month piece job as a steel-fixing labourer in Sowa and caught a bus to Gaborone. Colleagues warned him he would never find work with only a Form Five ‘C’ pass and that cattle herding was his best option. He proved them wrong. He presented himself at Radio Botswana for an interview conducted by the late Mr Jerry Masite, then Station Manager. Six candidates turned up for three posts. Among them were Mr Mmoloki Mothibi and another Mr Mothibi from Mahalapye. Mr Sehube and Mr Mothibi were successful, though the Mahalapye candidate later resigned, saying the P342 monthly salary was too small. The decisive question was:

“Which radio programme do you like most?” His answer: Newsreel. Little did he know it would be the very programme that would make him a household name. Candidates were also tested on whether they were regular listeners. Because he had been travelling the day before, Mr Sehube could only recall the previous day’s Newsreel. He recounted the stories. The panel sighed and said: “This is the person we are looking for.” After three months of silence, an offer letter arrived. On arrival, on 21 October 1990, he was assigned to Mr Michael Ditlhakeng, Head of the Newsreel programme. He joined a few days after Ms Lesego Kgajwane. With equipment of the time manual typewriters, second-hand Nagra tape recorders from Britain, Mr Sehube mastered the job in three days. A supervisor remarked, He is extremely ready to present the programme with his deep voice.” On his first day behind the mic, he panicked, thinking people outside could see him. He later presented the programme live twice. His brand on Newsreel became synonymous with trusted field reporting characterised by other household names in the likes of Mr Mojaboswa Jabeng. “He needed not to be edited and he had no mistakes in his stories. He knew his story and told it,” Mr Sehube said. Others who excelled on the programme included Ms Kebaeditse Baitlotli who reported from Lobatse, Ms Dyna Mfulwane from Selebi Phikwe and Bobonong, Ms Selinah Samson from Palapye,

and Ms Kitso Simon from Serowe. Born and bred in Nata, Mr Sehube walks in the footsteps of another son of the village who made his mark in the radio, Mr Gaomang Mosi. From one small village, two voices that helped shape how Batswana heard their news. He credits Mr Raymond Tsheko of Radio Botswana as a mentor and voice therapist who always advised him “not to change his voice.” To those staying behind, Mr Sehube’s advice is simple: “Know

that you are the eyes of the people. The art of journalism requires that. Do not be carried away by being celebrities. What you hear from the general public is feedback on what you are doing.” His deep voice, he says, refused to fade in the minds of many. On his first return to Nata on leave, villagers wondered if he was the man they heard on radio. “Those who worked for Radio Botswana and DailyNews commanded respect because these two were the most powerful

mediums of disseminating information in those years,” he added. Now, with a Degree in Mass Communication under his belt, Mr Sehube is retiring but is not tired. “I have served with my voice and now I want to serve with my hands. Agriculture is where I am going next,” he added. As the mic is passed on, one thing is certain, radio in Botswana will sound a little quieter. The drum has gone silent, but the echo of Mascot remains. **BOPA**



Veteran Radio Botswana broadcaster Bampeile Sehube, whose voice became synonymous with Tatediso Ya Dikgang in the 1990s, says he was ready to pass the baton to a new generation while remaining committed to serving the nation through public and community initiatives. Photo: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata.

Police destroy 299 firearms

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

As part of ongoing efforts to curb circulation of illegal firearms and combat firearm-related crime in the country, the Botswana Police Service (BPS) has destroyed 299 firearms voluntarily surrendered by members of the public. The destruction of the firearms was done at Otse Police College on Friday. According to Superintendent Piet Gabotose from police headquarters, the destroyed firearms comprised 214 shotguns, 75 rifles and 10 pistols or handguns. Supt Gabotose said none of the firearms destroyed during the exercise had been used in the commission of a crime. “The firearms were surrendered for various reasons, including some being considered too old for continued use,” he said. He said the destruction followed an arms listing campaign conducted last year, which encouraged members of the public to surrender firearms, including illegally possessed firearms, without fear of prosecution. Supt Gabotose said the latest exercise saw 36 more firearms destroyed than the 263 firearms

destroyed by police in 2025, reflecting continued efforts to remove unwanted and illegally possessed firearms from circulation. The initiative forms part of Botswana’s broader efforts to prevent illegal firearms from falling into the hands of criminals and contributing to violent crime. Inspector Seikaneng Molamu, of BPS Central Arms Registry said the police service was doing everything possible to work toward a country free from illegal firearms and firearm related crime, with dedicated initiatives aimed at addressing the issue. Members of the public have been encouraged to cooperate with law enforcement authorities and surrender firearms they no longer require or were unable to safely keep, rather than allowing them to fall into the wrong hands. The destruction of the firearms also highlights the importance of public participation in efforts to strengthen community safety and prevent firearms from being used in criminal activities. The BPS continues to encourage responsible firearm ownership and cooperation from the public as the country works toward reducing the availability of illegal firearms. **BOPA**

Okavango registers high cases of teenage pregnancy

Kedirebofe Pelontle
GUMARE

A total of 60 cases of teenage pregnancy and 15 cases of defilement have been recorded in the first quarter of 2026 (April to June) in the Okavango District. This was revealed by Okavango District Council, acting Chief Social and Community Development Officer (S&CD), Ms Tebogo Letshabamang. According to Ms Letshabamang, the Okavango District still hold tight to some cultural practices perpetuating risks and vulnerability of some societal groups like children. Ms Letshabamang was presenting at a consultation meeting between Okavango

District leadership and the Chief of Staff, Dr Oupa Tsheko, who is the chairman of a task force on Social Protection Programme aimed at assessing challenges of poverty on Thursday in Gumare. However, she said efforts on sensitising to change and do aware with cultural norms that oppress some sectors of the society were hampered by shortage of funds. Ms Letshabamang said sensitisation and education on sustainable livelihoods would go a long way in improving the status quo. Therefore, she said government’s plan to develop a social protection policy and framework was a welcome development, as it will prioritise district based on peculiar challenges contributing

to extreme poverty such as outbreaks of animal diseases, limited markets for agriculture produce. Currently, she said the district has registered 3 848s destitute, 2 720 needy students, 611 children in need and receiving protective care and 755 orphans. In his address, Dr Tsheko said government was concerned by the level of poverty in the country, despite having programmes aimed at its alleviation. Therefore, Dr Tsheko said the task team was consulting district leadership and other economic and development stakeholders to appreciate the challenges at hand and gather evidence to help formulate a policy and framework on social protection. **BOPA**



Modiakgotla turns gospel teachings into inspirational book

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOLOLE

Even in her early 70s, Kgomotsego Modiakgotla of Mokgalo Ward in Molepolole remains steadfast in her mission to spread the gospel.

After years of preaching from house to house and sharing messages of faith with local communities, the devoted Apostolic Faith Mission deaconess has now compiled her sermons and teachings into a book titled: *The Golden Diary of a Christian Mother*.

Modiakgotla explained that the inspiration behind the book came from her daily devotional writings, which she had been compiling over the years. Encouragement from fellow church members, Fatima Selaledi and Isabella Makgatwane, also played a major role in the project. Both recognised the spiritual value of her handwritten scripts and advised her to publish them.

“I love writing every day, and I was encouraged to put my writings into a booklet format so that I could expand my mission of spreading the gospel. A book can reach a wider audience, allowing more people to read and understand the word of God,” she said.

Modiakgotla further described her life as centred around the gospel, adding that her vision is to continue teaching people about God while producing more inspirational booklets.

“The book seeks to teach non-believers about repentance, living according to God’s will, and understanding His purpose for humanity. It caters for everyone, both the elderly and the youth. I also write to help the church understand what God expects from His people,” she said.

She acknowledged that compiling years of handwritten scriptures

into a single publication was a lengthy and demanding process. Funding the publication of the book also proved to be one of her greatest challenges.

Modiakgotla said her passion for God has remained deeply rooted in her spirit since she was born again, and, despite at her age, her zeal for spreading the gospel continues to grow.

“I love serving God through preaching His word. I constantly read the Bible and write down what I learn. Whenever I see people repenting, I gather them to evangelise. Sometimes I visit schools, clinics, and even invite neighbours to worship and pray together at home. After sharing the word, I rewrite the teachings so I do not forget them. Eventually, the scriptures become enough to compile into a book,” she revealed.

She appealed to government authorities to support local authors by purchasing their books for schools, stating that the initiative would help writers earn an income while encouraging a reading culture among students.

“Reading books is better than constantly browsing the Internet, where attention is easily distracted. A book can be read, preserved, and passed from one generation to another,” she noted.

She encouraged young people

to develop a love for reading, noting that it refreshes the mind and steers people away from unproductive habits.

Addressing aspiring writers of Christian literature who may feel incapable of expressing themselves, Modiakgotla urged them to trust in God and remain steadfast in their calling.

“I encourage them to continue spreading the word of God, just as Matthew 28 commands us to go into the world and preach the gospel to all nations. They should not lose hope because God gives us the strength and direction we need,” she said.

Modiakgotla explained that the design of the book cover carried a symbolic message. She said the blend of purple and lilac colours was intentionally chosen to reflect spirituality, grace, compassion, and the sacred role of motherhood within the Christian faith.

“Purple is associated with royalty, wisdom, dignity, and spirituality, while lilac symbolises grace, peace, tenderness, and compassion. Together, these colours create a balance between strength and gentleness, reflecting the journey of a Christian mother guided by faith, resilience, prayer, and unconditional love,” she explained.

She added that the elegant font



Kgomotsego Modiakgotla

style was selected to complement the overall message of the book by conveying warmth, femininity, reflection, and timeless inspiration.

“The overall design aims to invite readers into a personal, faith-filled journey that is both uplifting and comforting,” she concluded.

Many people in her society have testified to benefiting from Modiakgotla’s calling.

Pastor Bathusi Tonoko of the Bread of Life Church in Molepolole said she met

Modiakgotla during social gatherings and regards her as an icon of redemption, and a humble lady of Faith.

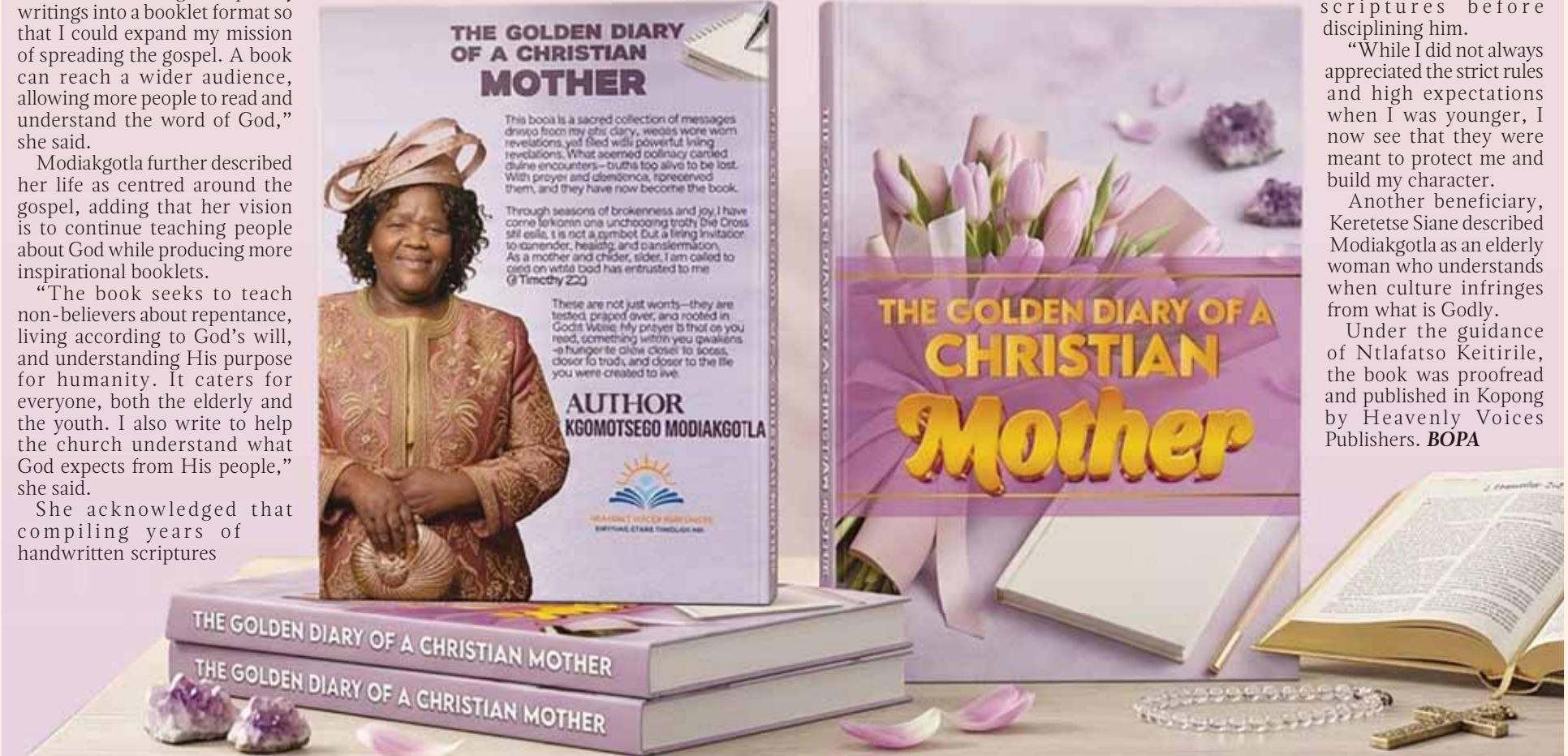
“I observed her life as a life that can save other people’s lives. I have never arguing about anything except about aligning people to the word of God. She is full of love and ignores nasty sayings. She is great preacher. Even though I am a pastor I feel so belittled when a gauge myself with her,” she said.

Her grandson, Thabang Tese, said he loved her grandmother’s habit of reading disciplinary scriptures before disciplining him.

“While I did not always appreciated the strict rules and high expectations when I was younger, I now see that they were meant to protect me and build my character.

Another beneficiary, Keretsetse Siane described Modiakgotla as an elderly woman who understands when culture infringes from what is Godly.

Under the guidance of Ntlatfatso Keitirile, the book was proofread and published in Kopong by Heavenly Voices Publishers. **BOPA**





Botswana hosts global junior tennis talent

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

Botswana Tennis Association (BTA) is preparing to host the World Tennis Tour J30 tournament on August 10 to 22 at the National Tennis Centre.

The high profile, two-week tournament has attracted around 80 elite junior tennis players from across the globe, including the United States, Europe, China, Israel and African countries.

The tournament will feature top tier and international tennis players, giving local athletes a prime opportunity to earn valuable world tennis ranking points without incurring the heavy financial burden of traveling abroad.

Competing against quality international opposition is expected to accelerate the

development, skill and match experience of the host junior players.

BTA president, Oaitse Thipe said the tournament carried immense strategic value, serving as a critical preparatory platform for the African Junior Championships (AJC) slated for Morocco next month.

He said the local players who are in the junior team slated to represent the country in Morocco would be exposed to a life changing pathway.

Furthermore, he said the J30 tournament would allow players to accumulate points enabling them to secure spots in the 2027 edition of the African Junior Championships.

Additionally, Thipe said the tournament would be used to condition and sharpen the national squad ahead of the 12th AUSC Region 5 Youth Games, to be held in Maputo, Mozambique, in December 4-13.

On the economic front, Thipe emphasised that the J30 showcase would serve as a powerful driver for sports tourism and national economic growth.

He said Botswana was actively reinforcing its commitment to youth athletic empowerment while simultaneously positioning the country as an attractive, highly secure, and capable destination for future global sporting spectacles.

The host nation will field a formidable and highly motivated line-up of promising young talent eager to leave their mark on the international stage.

Among the local athletes carrying the country's hopes are Tunisia-based star Malak Macheng and Tinashe Phatshwane.

Botswana's formidable squad will also comprise of Camilla Seetso, Bashali Phatshwane, Angela Chakanyuka and Martin Seetso, who are expected to showcase their readiness to battle the world's best on home courts. **BOPA**

Independence Kids Run set for September

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOLOLE

Preparations are underway for the 2026 Independence Kids Run, which is set to take place September 26 in Gaborone's Central Business District as Botswana marks its 60th Independence Anniversary.

The event builds on the success of the Absa Summer Kids Marathon that took place April and attracted more than 1 800 children from across the country,

a sign among young people of the growing enthusiasm for sport, healthy living and community participation.

"The Independence Kids Run aims to build on that momentum, by bringing together children, families, schools, corporate partners and the wider community in a vibrant celebration of Botswana's Diamond Jubilee," said one of the organisers, Moagi Madisa.

Beyond promoting physical fitness and healthy lifestyles, the event seeks to instil patriotism,

national pride and social inclusion through sport.

Madisa said preparations were progressing smoothly to ensure participants enjoyed a safe, exciting and memorable event worthy of the country's historic milestone.

"As we celebrate 60 years of independence, the Independence Kids Run offers another opportunity to unite families, honour our nation's journey and inspire the next generation through healthy recreation," he said.

The race forms part of the wider programme commemorating Botswana's 60th Independence celebrations and is expected to attract thousands of participants and spectators to the capital.

Madisa appealed to corporate organisations, development partners and community stakeholders to support the initiative through sponsorships and partnerships, noting that the event contributed to child development, wellness and national unity.

He said celebrating Botswana's

60th Independence aligned with the aspirations of Vision 2036, which recognised sport as a key driver of national unity, social cohesion and pride.

Madisa added that investing in children through sporting initiatives laid the foundation for a sustainable sports industry while supporting Vision 2036's goal of positioning sport as a contributor to Botswana's Gross Domestic Product and producing elite athletes capable of competing successfully on the international stage. **BOPA**