

BOTSWANA

Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



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Mogae through BIUST





Dr Festus Mogae

Keith Ketl
SEROWE

Government is considering renaming the Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) after the late former president, Dr Festus Mogae, to immortalise his memory.
Speaking during consultative meetings at the Botlaote and Serowe Main Kgotla on Monday, the Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele, said that naming universities after departed presidents and statesmen was a deeply rooted global tradition driven by the desire to honour a legacy, preserve institutional prestige, and establish a foundational identity.
Furthermore, he stated that naming universities after late leaders served core historical, financial, and cultural purposes.
Minister Maele said that Dr Festus Mogae’s ideals, specifically democratic and scientific advancement aligned perfectly with the BIUST mission, signalling that the institution valued these same principles.

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Thuso Kgakatsi
HUKUNTSI

A retired registered nurse, Mr William Nkwane, looks back on Botswana's health journey with a perspective few can claim. Two years older than independent Botswana, Mr William Nkwane has spent his life witnessing the country evolve from a young nation with limited healthcare infrastructure into one with an extensive network of clinics, hospitals, trained health professionals and increasingly sophisticated medical services.

His is not merely an account of Botswana's health history, but a personal journey that began in childhood in Kgalagadi, where access to basic amenities was once a challenge, and continued into a professional career spanning more than 45 years in the health sector.

Growing up in an environment where healthcare services were limited, helped shape his desire to enter the nursing profession and make a difference in people's lives.

His professional journey took him through different healthcare environments. He spent a year at Debswana Jwaneng Mine Hospital operation before moving to Orapa Mine Hospital.

The greater part of his career was spent under the District Health Management Teams in Hukuntsi and Tsabong, where he served communities in some of Botswana's remote areas.

Through these assignments, Mr Nkwane gained experience not only in clinical care but also in community-based healthcare, giving him a front-row seat to the transformation of Botswana's health system.

As the country celebrates six decades of independence, he recalls a time when healthcare in many rural communities was delivered through mobile clinics, temporary tents and church buildings, long before permanent clinics and hospitals became common.

He remembers churches such as the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA), Roman Catholic Church and Seventh-day Adventist Church playing an important role in extending healthcare services to communities that were often located far from established facilities.

According to Mr Nkwane, government gradually strengthened and expanded its health services to complement the work being done by churches and other community institutions.

He said the early approach to healthcare placed considerable emphasis on prevention, with health education forming an important part of efforts to reduce disease.

Rather than relying solely on treatment after people fell ill, communities were taught how daily practices, hygiene and surroundings could influence health.

"The approach was largely based on identifying the problem, analysing it, taking action and evaluating the outcome," he explained.

Mr Nkwane said the approach produced positive results as people gradually became more knowledgeable about health matters and better equipped to prevent certain diseases.

He joined the nursing profession in the 1970s, at a time when medical supplies were limited and communities had relatively little knowledge about various health conditions.

He said health workers were

Nkwane reflects on six decades of healthcare transformation



“... Botswana's health achievements should be measured not only by the number of hospitals and clinics built, but also by the gradual change in how communities understand and take responsibility for their health.”

therefore expected to be both caregivers and educators, often taking health messages beyond the clinic to people's homes, churches and community gatherings.

"Resources were limited and scientific knowledge was not as advanced as it is today. Much of the work involved teaching people how to protect themselves from diseases," he said.

The philosophy of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, he said, gradually helped communities become more health conscious.

As Botswana's population grew, the health sector expanded alongside it, with government establishing more clinics and hospitals and increasing the number of trained personnel.

Mr Nkwane credited Botswana's early leadership, particularly founding President Sir Seretse Khama and former

President Sir Ketumile Masire, for placing emphasis on the health and welfare of citizens.

The expansion of services improved the detection and management of diseases that had previously affected many communities, including tuberculosis, scabies, chickenpox and diarrhoea.

He recalled that children were particularly vulnerable to skin conditions, eye and ear problems and diarrhoeal diseases, with poor hygiene and living conditions often contributing to their occurrence.

Tuberculosis was also a major concern, particularly before the 1970s. Mr Nkwane said smoking, overcrowding and poor living conditions contributed to its prevalence, while sustained health education and improved living conditions later helped reduce its impact.

As Botswana developed, so too did the scientific and technical capacity of its health sector.

Immunisation became an increasingly important component of child healthcare, helping protect them against preventable diseases. Greater attention was also directed towards hygiene, nutrition and environmental cleanliness, contributing to improvements in general wellbeing.

Maternal healthcare underwent a similar transformation.

Mr Nkwane recalled that pregnant women were increasingly encouraged to attend antenatal clinics and deliver at health facilities instead of relying solely on home deliveries.

This marked an important change in community attitudes, as families became increasingly aware of the importance of professional medical care during

pregnancy and childbirth.

The health infrastructure itself also improved, with better-equipped facilities, increased availability of medicines and the training of personnel in different fields.

Mr Nkwane said the country intensified the training of health professionals, particularly during the early 1990s, as it became increasingly apparent that a growing population and changing disease patterns required more specialised skills.

However, he emphasised that healthcare could never be the responsibility of health facilities alone.

Illiteracy remained a challenge in some communities, making it difficult for health messages to reach everyone effectively. Village leaders, churches and pastors were consequently engaged to help communicate important health information.

It was within this community-centred approach that initiatives such as Community Home-Based Care (CHBC) and Traditional Birth Attendants played an important role.

Mr Nkwane particularly praised CHBC, saying its importance became more apparent during the HIV/AIDS epidemic when hospitals and clinics were at times overwhelmed by the number of patients requiring care.

Community members were trained in basic skills to care for patients in their homes, allowing families to participate in caring for their relatives while easing pressure on health facilities.

He said the programme also helped reduce some of the financial burden on government associated with prolonged hospitalisation.

Traditional Birth Attendants similarly served an important purpose in communities where home deliveries remained common. Their involvement, he said, demonstrated the importance of understanding community practices while gradually encouraging safer approaches to maternal healthcare.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic, however, presented Botswana with one of its greatest public health challenges.

Mr Nkwane witnessed the devastating impact of the disease on families and communities before seeing the country gradually strengthen its response through public education, prevention, testing and treatment.

He commended former President Festus Mogae for prioritising access to antiretroviral treatment and programmes aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Government was forced to make difficult choices and redirect resources towards addressing the epidemic, while strengthening public health interventions to protect communities, Mr Nkwane said.

He regards the response as one of the defining chapters in Botswana's public health history.

Just as the country had made progress against HIV/AIDS and other diseases, another unprecedented challenge emerged with the outbreak of COVID-19.

Mr Nkwane said the pandemic placed enormous pressure on the health system, communities and national leadership.

Mr Nkwane believes Botswana's health achievements should be measured not only by the number of hospitals and clinics built, but also by the gradual change in how communities understand and take responsibility for their health.

BOPA

Govt to immortalise Mogae through BIUST

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He explained that naming the university after such a towering figure would give the institution a sense of gravity, authority, and national importance, noting that this was a deliberate effort to build a unified national identity and instil patriotism in students.

To this end, he noted that linking the institution with such a revered leader would attract donors, alumni support, and government funding from entities wishing to align with and preserve Dr Mogae's historical legacy.

Mr Maele emphasised that Dr

Mogae was deeply connected to BIUST, making this renaming the most appropriate honour the country could bestow upon him.

Buttressing his point, he highlighted that Dr Mogae was the university's founding chancellor, who successfully advocated for the inclusion of the word 'International' in BIUST to ensure the institution gained global recognition.

"Dr Mogae was instrumental in establishing BIUST during his presidency from 1998 to 2008 and served as its inaugural chancellor starting in 2012," he said.

The minister confirmed he had

conducted broad consultations with Dr Mogae's family, who responded affirmatively and acceded to the request to use his name.

Mr Boikefho Motalaote, a royal uncle to the Botlaote chieftainship where Dr Mogae hailed from, praised the minister for the extensive consultations.

He noted that the process aligned with Setswana culture and governance, where consultation was a foundational pillar of traditional democracy, deeply tied to the proverb 'Mmualebe o bua

la gagwe'.

He added that Dr Mogae was such a towering figure that naming the institution after him was highly befitting.

Another royal uncle to the Botlaote chieftainship, Mr Royal Senna expressed his approval of the request, stating that renaming the institution after Dr Mogae was undoubtedly the right thing to do.

At the Serowe Main Kgotla, residents also praised the minister's words and acceded to the request. Kgosi Botswelelo Mogapi of Ditimamodimo, a headman of

arbitration, said immortalising Dr Mogae would preserve his legacy for posterity and gave the request a green light, noting that it matched a man of his stature.

Kgosi Sechele Kgari, a headman of records, also granted his approval, noting that he was part of the minister's delegation that consulted Dr Mogae's family.

For his part, the Council Chairman of BIUST, Dr Howard Sigwele, agreed that naming higher institutions of learning after prominent statesmen was a long-standing tradition.

Dr Sigwele noted that the practice spanned several continents and was categorised by the regional or national roles those statesmen played; therefore, Botswana was simply adopting global best practices.

He cited examples from the United States of America, where several prominent universities carry the names of early statesmen or modern presidents, such as George Washington University, Truman State University (named after Harry S. Truman), and Lincoln University (named after Abraham Lincoln).

In Africa, he highlighted the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, named after Dr Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and president of Ghana.

Having personally worked with Dr Mogae, Dr Sigwele described him as a visionary leader who recognised that for the country to move forward, it must harness science and technology as the primary vehicles for national growth, economic modernisation, and sustainable development.

Kgatleng battles rising FMD cases

Michelle Mosebiwa
ARTESIA

The number of reported Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) cases in Kgatleng has risen from five to 203, prompting authorities and stakeholders to intensify efforts to contain the outbreak and prevent its spread to unaffected areas.

District Agriculture Coordinator, Dr David Kitosi said this during an event in Artesia where National Development Bank (NDB) donated fencing materials valued at P22, 000 toward maintenance of disease control cordon fence in Kgatleng on Monday.

Dr Kitosi appealed to farmers to adhere to laid down protocols and interventions to combat the spread. He said vaccination was ongoing and would be done in three phases, administered 28 days apart. Despite these interventions, Dr Kitosi said the continued rise in cases was a concern.

"From five cases, the disease has spread and the current number is 203 cases," he said. He added that authorities remained hopeful that the outbreak of FMD would not spread further.

As part of containment efforts, authorities have introduced livestock movement restrictions, including confinement and checkpoints around affected areas.

Surveillance activities are also being carried out to monitor the situation and identify any further spread. Dr Kitosi said one of the major concerns was the movement of buffaloes from South Africa, which authorities feared could contribute to the spread of the disease particularly toward

Mahalapye District.

He said the fence between Notwane and Dibete was broken and efforts were underway to repair it as part of measures to prevent livestock from moving between affected and unaffected areas. Authorities have also placed emphasis on community and stakeholder engagement, with Dr Kitosi highlighting the use of kgotla meetings to educate communities and encourage cooperation in containing the outbreak.

Meanwhile, farmers affected by the restrictions said they were working collectively to protect their livelihoods.

They said farmers were operating in 23 groups, using their own resources to support efforts on the ground and were hopeful that assistance from the NDB would help them acquire better equipment.

Another concern was over the impact of natural disasters, particularly heavy rains which could undermine the farmer's efforts.

NDB Head of Brand, Marketing and Communications, Ms Kealeboga Sebolai said the bank was grateful to have been given an opportunity to contribute to the national response of FMD outbreak.

"Agriculture has always been close to the heart of NDB," Ms Sebolai said, noting that the bank had financed farmers ranging from small livestock keepers to commercial producers and had witnessed how heavily families depended on livestock.

"When the sector suffers we all feel it," she said. Ms Sebolai said the restrictions on livestock movement made it important for NDB to make a practical contribution to efforts aimed at containing the outbreak.

She said the donation was intended to strengthen fencing in affected areas and help restrict the movement of livestock, which remained a key component of the containment strategy.

Deputy Permanent Secretary-Finance and Development in the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture, Ms Kebafentse Dikgokwane, welcomes the donation, saying the fencing materials would support government efforts to contain the disease.

She said government, together with various stakeholders had adopted several measures to prevent further transmission, including the construction of containment fences designed to restrict cattle movement into and out of affected areas. **BOPA**



The Duke of Gloucester, Prince Richard (right) and the Duchess Birgitte laying a wreath in tribute to fallen World War heroes at the Botswana Defence Force Monument for Fallen Heroes in Gaborone on Tuesday. Their Royal Highnesses were in Botswana on a four-day official visit on behalf of King Charles III as the country celebrates its Diamond Jubilee. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

Partnership to boost public service data literacy

Ndingililo Gaoswediwe
GABORONE

Statistics Botswana and Botswana Public Service College (BPSC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening data literacy and evidence-based decision-making across the public service.

Speaking at the signing ceremony in Gaborone on Monday, Statistician General Dr Khaufelo Lekobane, said the partnership would provide a national platform for rolling out a statistical literacy programme for public servants across the National Statistical System.

He said the programme, which formed part of Statistics Botswana's Corporate Strategy 2026-2030, would equip public officers with skills to understand data, assess its quality and use statistics confidently in decision-making.

The partnership will see the two institutions design and deliver training programmes incorporating official statistics, data literacy, research methods, and evidence-based policy and decision-making.

Statistics Botswana will provide technical expertise, including advice on statistical standards and classifications, quality assurance training, official data and case studies, while BPSC will provide its public service reach, professional development

expertise and training facilities.

Dr Lekobane said the collaboration would also support the development and implementation of professional standards, competency requirements and ethical norms for statistical personnel across the public service.

He said a statistician working in a line ministry or district council should be held to the same professional standards as one working at Statistics Botswana.

"This partnership is a force multiplier," he said, adding that common standards and curricula would help ensure that different parts of the National Statistical System spoke the same technical and methodological language.

He further said the partnership was intended to move statistics beyond merely being produced and published towards ensuring that they informed national decisions.

"Statistics have value only when they are understood and used," he said, stressing the importance of communication and report-writing skills in ensuring that statistical information reaches policymakers in a form they can use.

The Statistician General revealed that the partnership had already begun, with BPSC having trained 25 Statistics Botswana employees in records management. Further training in governance, management, communication and report

writing is planned.

Meanwhile, BPSC Acting Executive Director, Ms Boineelo Lobelo, said the MoU represented a practical commitment to building a competent, evidence-based and responsive public service.

She said the partnership would empower public officers to use statistics as a compass for evidence-based policy and decision-making, while providing professional development in leadership, governance and communication.

Ms Lobelo said the institutions would also create platforms for dialogue and knowledge exchange among policymakers, academics and practitioners, while jointly monitoring and evaluating training interventions to ensure that they produced meaningful results.

She said the collaboration would embed statistical literacy into public service training, enabling government to measure and manage performance with greater precision, accountability and foresight.

Ms Lobelo stressed that the MoU should not remain a document, but should translate into tangible results.

She said implementation teams would be established and progress measured to ensure that the partnership remained productive and aligned with national priorities. **BOPA**

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BALA and Maikarabelo join hands to drive economic growth

Lorato Gaofise
GABORONE

Botswana's current economic situation calls for individuals, corporates and communities to make concerted efforts toward its resuscitation.

"It is at this juncture that the country is compelled to pause and introspect for purposes of finding alternative avenues to keep the economy afloat," says BALA president, Mr Molatedi Selala.

Mr Selala was delivering a keynote address during the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Botswana Association of

Local Authorities (BALA) and Maikarabelo Movement in Gaborone Monday.

The MoU will focus on community stewardship, youth and women empowerment, and local economic development, while the collaboration will help BALA implement the mechanism through the full council, councillors and community level

Mr Selala, therefore, said Botswana found itself at yet another crossroads, where the mainstay on the national economy, diamonds, was experiencing a decline due to market complexities way beyond the country's control.

To re-ignite and inculcate the

national principles of Self-Reliance, Unity, Botho, Democracy and Development, that sustained the nation but eroded over the years, Mr Selala said BALA and Maikarabelo Movement found it fitting to join hands and contribute towards economic growth.

He said the principles and aims resonated with BALA's aspirations of capacitating Botswana entities and industries through the national-led framework, to elevate production qualities to be able to compete in the global market.

"We need to see our products outcompete foreign products in the shelves of local markets," he said.

Mr Selala said the solution was

in individuals, corporates, private enterprises and communities, taking responsibility to contribute towards national economic growth.

Maikarabelo Movement conveyor, Mr Callistus Phologolo, said the movement was aimed at developing the skills of 100 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), to compete in regional and continental markets as part of efforts to unlock jobs, markets and contribute to economic diversification.

The initiative, Mr Phologolo said had three strategic pillars: social cohesion and nation building, skills development and capacity building, and community revitalisation and mindset shift.

As part of the initiative, he said Maikarabelo Movement had developed the Maikarabelo National Development Textile Programme, with training for SMEs in Francistown and Maun.

Mr Phologolo said Botswana had a market of 2.4 million people, while the African Continental Free Trade offered access to a market of approximately 1.4 billion people.

For that reason, he said the movement had partnered with OptimaLean, a Lesotho based manufacturing enterprise development and capacity building consultancy, to train and facilitate transfer of regional manufacturing skills, knowledge and expertise.

The training takes place in Gaborone, Mahalapye and Selebi-Phikwe, with Maun and Francistown to follow.

Mr Phologolo said the SMEs would also produce the Maikarabelo Pride, Patriotism and Legacy Jersey, adding that every P50 from the jersey sales would be remitted for community development, through Maikarabelo Development Fund.

"The partnership with BALA is important, because BALA already reaches communities and understands their dreams and aspirations. Maikarabelo is just a call to every Motswana to take part in growing the country's economy," he added. **BOPA**



Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) president, Mr Molatedi Selala (left) and Maikarabelo Movement conveyor, Mr Callistus Phologolo during the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between BALA and Maikarabelo Movement in Gaborone on Monday. Mr Selala said the partnership sought to promote self-reliance, empower communities and contribute to economic growth. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Proposal to establish aquaculture hub gains traction

Esther Mmolai
MAUN

A proposal by Aquaculture Consultancy Botswana to establish an integrated aquaculture training and production hub within a Special Economic Zones Authority (SEZA)-designated zone has received support.

Founder of Aquaculture Consultancy Botswana, Mr Seloilwe Seloilwe, confirmed in an interview, the Department of Fisheries and Apiculture support, noting that the next step was to engage SEZA to consider zoning the aquaculture hub.

He said the company's prospect was to establish a world-class Integrated Aquaculture Hub within a SEZA-designated zone.

The proposed zones are Shakawe

and Pandamatenga, and he highlighted that the hub would be Botswana's first fully integrated aquaculture value chain, from fingerling to fork and from feed to training.

He also said the project had secured a Memorandum of Understanding with Ba Isago University for curriculum development, certification and delivery of Human Resource Development Council-accredited short courses in hatchery management, fish health and feed formulation, among others.

"Our mission is to commercialise sustainable aquaculture in Botswana and make the country a net producer of fish and fish products, while the vision of the hub is to create a Special Economic Zone anchor that transforms Botswana

into a regional centre of excellence for climate-smart aquaculture production, value addition and human capital development," he said.

Mr Seloilwe further said the Integrated Aquaculture Hub was not just a fish farm, but an industrial ecosystem that addressed three national challenges at once: food security, youth unemployment and import dependency.

With SEZA's support and the strategic MoU with Ba Isago University, he said Botswana could become a Southern African Development Community (SADC) leader in sustainable aquaculture technology, training and production.

"We are ready to present detailed designs and financial models to SEZA's Investment Committee

and to host a site visit to our pilot operations. We believe SEZA will consider this proposal and look forward to building Botswana's Blue Economy together," he said.

The Department of Fisheries and Apiculture noted that the proposed model had the potential to strengthen the aquaculture value chain and contribute to the development of local technical capacity.

The model incorporates fish hatchery production, recirculating aquaculture systems, fish feed production, fish processing and value addition, as well as training and innovation.

The proposed initiative is considered relevant to Botswana's efforts to develop a sustainable and commercially viable aquaculture industry. **BOPA**

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Rwanda and IMF agreement unlocks US\$35.7 million

KIGALI - Rwanda and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached a staff-level agreement on the first review of the country's Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, following discussions on the implementation of the economic programme. The agreement recognises Rwanda's performance under the programme and its continued commitment to sound economic policies, Rwanda Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning said in a press statement on Tuesday. Upon completion of the IMF Executive Board review expected in December, Rwanda will have access to about US\$35.7 million. According to finance minister, Yusuf Murangwa, the ECF programme would cushion the impact of the Middle East conflict and declining budget support while sustaining Rwanda's growth, investment ambitions and structural transformation. **Xinhua**

Ethiopia projects 10.1 % economic growth

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia's economy is projected to grow by 10.1 per cent during the country's current 2026/2027 fiscal year, which started on July 8. Ethiopian President Taye Atske Selassie said made the remarks while outlining the East African country's key economic, social, and political targets at the joint opening session of the House of Peoples' Representatives and the House of Federation, in Addis Ababa on Tuesday. Building on economic growth of 10.2 per cent last fiscal year, he said comprehensive efforts were underway to sustain the positive momentum and achieve a growth of 10.1 per cent this fiscal year, against global and domestic challenges. According to the president, strategic fiscal measures were being implemented to support a thriving and diversified economic base. He said the measures were intended to improve domestic revenue collection. **Xinhua**

BYD enters Namibia car market

WINDHOEK - Chinese automaker BYD has officially launched its new energy vehicle brand in Namibia, expanding its presence in the African market. Namibian automotive distributor Pupkewitz Motors announced on Tuesday that it will represent BYD in the country, with the brand to be offered through retail outlets in Windhoek, Walvis Bay and Ongwediva. "Our ambition is not simply to introduce new vehicles to the market, but to create an experience around new energy mobility that is relevant to Namibian customers. We look forward to building awareness, educating consumers and allowing customers to experience BYD for themselves," said Nico Pieters, a franchise executive at Pupkewitz Motors, in a statement. **Xinhua**

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Banni ba dumalana le mogopolo



Dr Festus Mogae

Portia Rapitsenyane
PALAPYE

Banni ba Palapye ba dumalana le mogopolo wa gore sekole sa ithutelo ditiro tsa boranyane le boitseanape sa Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) se fetolwe leina go bitswa ka tautona wa pele, Dr Festus Mogae.

Ba buile jalo mo phuthegong ya therisano e buisiwa ke tona wa lephata la thuto e kgolwane, Rre Prince Maele ka Mosupologo. Mongwe wa dibui kwa phuthegong eo, Kgosi Martha Lebang wa Palapye, o ne a supa fa Dr Mogae a diretse lefatshe leno ka bokgabane.

Kgosi Lebang a re ditiro tsa Dr Mogae di na le motlhala, di akaretsa go lwantsha segajaja sa mogare wa HIV le bolwetse jwa AIDS, selo se se neng sa boloka matshelo a ba le bantsi.

Ka jalo a re go botlhokwa go bo puso e supa keletso ya gore a lemogiwe jaaka mongwe wa ba ba diretseng lefatshe, ka jalo a sa tshwanela go lebalwa.

Kgosi Boretetse Ketlogetswe wa kgotla ya Madibana a re leina la ga Dr Mogae le na le motlhala o

itsiweng ke mongwe le mongwe mme go le maleba gore a tlotlomiwe.

Rre Dean Serumola fela jaaka dibui tse dingwe o ne a supa fa ba lebogela thulaganyo e puso e e tsereng ya go rerisanya le banni.

Rre Nonfo Botseka le ene o ne a iteela mafoko ao kobo moroko a supa fa mogopolo wa go fetola leina o le botlhokwa. A re kakanyo ya gore leina BIUST le ka fetolwa go nna Festus Mogae International University of Science and Technology.

Mo pegong ya gagwe, Rre Maele o tthalositse fa a romilwe ke Tautona Advocate Duma Boko go tla go ba rerisa ka megopolo wa go fetola leina la BIUST, maikaelelo e le gopola le go tlotlomiwa ditiro tse di dirilweng ke tautona wa pele yo o tlhokafetseng, Dr Festus

Gontebanye Mogae.

Rre Maele a re morero o tla akaretsa motse wa Serowe le kgaolo ya Tswapong Bokone ka bophara. A re puso e bonye go le botlhokwa go rerisa morafe mo go tseletseng ka se ba se akantseng.

A re ba lemogile fa sekole sa BIUST e le nngwe ya ditiro tsa ditlhabololo tse di nang le tomagano le Dr Mogae. A re Dr Mogae o kile a nna mookamedi wa sekole sa BIUST.

Tona Maele a re Dr Mogae o dirile thata mo go tsa itsholelo ya lefatshe, gape o kile a nna mopalamente wa Palapye.

A re keletso ya puso ke gore go ntshiwe leina Botswana mme go tsenngwe la ga Dr Mogae ka jalo sekole se bitswe Festus Mogae International University of Science and Technology. **BOPA**

Balemi ba malala a laotswe

Masego Tabengwa
TSHESEBE/SECHELE

Balemi ba metse ya Tshesebe le Sechele kwa kgaolong ya bokone botlhaba ba setse ba simolotse go baakanyetsa temo.

Kgosi Mosikari Sechele wa Sechele o tthaloseditse BOPA fa e ne ya re kgwedi eno e tlhola ga ne ba bolotsa letsema kwa kgotleng kgolo ya Makaleng, go bulela paka ya temo.

O gakolotse balemi go agelala le go ntshafatsa magora le diterata tsa masimo, go itsa tshenyo e e ka bakiwang ke leruo.

Kgosi Sechele a re go na le terata e e kgaoganyang mafudiso le masimo, mme bangwe barui ba itlhokomolosa botlhokwa jwa go disetsa leruo la bone kwa mafudisong, a bo a kopa morafe go tsibogela go e baakanya.

O boletse fa paka ya temo e tshabelelwa ke kgotlhang fa gare ga beng ba dikgomo le balemi,

a kgothatsa balemi go agelela masimo a bone fa barui bone a re ba tshwanelwa ke go disa le go tthatlhela leruo.

Kwa Tshesebe gone, Kgosi Motlotlegi Kachana yo gape e leng moemedi wa kgaolo ya Bokone Botlhaba kwa Ntlo Ya Dikgosi, o tthalositse fa ba ise ba bolotse letsema, selo se se ka bong se setse se dirilwe.

A re bothata e nnile go tshwarwa ke ditiro tse dingwe tsa motse mme seo, se tlaa diragadiwa.

Le fa go ntse jalo, Kgosi Kachana a re ga go kganele ba ba batlang go tshwara bokgola jwa pula tsa nthla go baya tema.

Bobedi joo, so supile fa borukutlhi bo bepile kwa metseng ya bone.

Kgosi Kachana o rotloeditse morafe wa gagwe go tselela ba itshwera sentle go fitlha le mo malatsing a go lebilweng kwa go o ne a go ipelela keresemose le ngwaga o mosh. **BOPA**



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Ramokweni abandons third bail bid

Bonang Masolotatse
GABORONE

Murder accused, Edwin Ramokweni has abandoned his third bid for bail after Justice Oteng Motlhala advised him to take his grievance to the Court of Appeal.

Ramokweni (22) had approached the High Court in an attempt to be admitted to bail pending trial.

However, Justice Motlhala on Tuesday told him that having previously tried before Justice Barnabas Nyamadzabo and Justice Itumeleng Segopolo, his court was hamstrung to deal with the application.

“The difficulty is that once there is an order from the High Court, I cannot entertain the matter here,” he explained, noting that the right procedure was for him to approach the Court of Appeal.

“Justice Nyamadzabo indicated that you have a number of cases, you need to go to the Court of Appeal and argue that you do not have a number of cases,” he explained to the accused.

However, he added that the Court of Appeal would not be compelled to admit him to bail, but would rather look at the strength of the evidence.

Ramokweni had earlier argued that although the High Court denied him bail on the basis that he had numerous cases, which was not true.

He said the High Court relied on the word of the prosecution without any evidence.

That prompted Justice Motlhala to advise him of his alternative to address his grievance, hence he decided to withdraw the application.

Ramokweni, who also argued

that he had spent over three years in prison awaiting trial, is charged with the murder of Ntukunu Makubate in Block 9, Gaborone

in May 2023. He had previously also tried bail before the Village Magistrate Court in 2023 following his arrest

on the murder charge, which was denied. The Magistrate noted that

Ramokweni had a propensity to commit crime, having previously been convicted of housebreaking, theft and escape from custody, as well as three pending rape cases in Thamaga, Kanye and Ditshegwane.

Among his complainants in those cases are a 10-year-old and an 11-year-old girl.

Meanwhile, the trial is scheduled to begin from April 7 to 9 and he will mention to confirm trial dates on April 15 next year. **BOPA**



Murder accused, Edwin Ramokweni (right) has withdrawn his third application for bail pending trial. Justice Oteng Motlhala advised him to take his grievance over previous bail refusals to the Court of Appeal.

Court grants murder accused bail

Kelebogile Taolo
FRANCISTOWN

Obokile Barelathile, a 25-year-old woman from Francistown facing a murder charge, was on Tuesday granted bail by the Magistrate Court during a status update.

Barelathile is accused of murdering Janice James on September 19 in Block 2, Francistown, following a dispute between the two and was arrested on the day of the incident.

During her initial arraignment, she was remanded in custody as the prosecution argued that the case was still in its early stages and investigations were ongoing.

Appearing for a status mention, the prosecution updated the court that investigators had gathered statements from several witnesses.

The state, citing heightened tensions, requested for further remand, arguing that the deceased’s grieving family and relatives were emotional and might react negatively if bail were granted.

However, Chief Magistrate Daniel Nkaiya rejected the request, noting that the prosecution failed to provide satisfactory grounds for continued detention.

The court granted bail on the condition that Barelathile bound herself with P5,000 and provided two sureties who each bound themselves with P5,000.

Additional conditions stipulate that she must not interfere with state witnesses, not commit any criminal offenses while on bail and must attend all court sessions whenever required.

Chief Magistrate Nkaiya warned that any violation of bail conditions would lead to immediate revocation of bail and return to custody.

Given the opportunity to address the court, Barelathile apologised to both the deceased’s family and her own.

She is scheduled to appear again on November 26. **BOPA**

DRTS rules and route poaching shake up travel

Thandy Tebogo
KANYE

Sticking strictly to departure times and following approved route descriptions is not just good practice, but the law.

Responding to a questionnaire recently, Mr Andrew Paledi from the Department of Road Transport and Safety (DRTS) office in Kanye, said this therefore meant that operators had to stay glued to their

approved time slots, saying ‘the number of trips is determined by the number of approved time slots allocated to the permit, that is, if a permit has two time slots, that means the operator departs from Kanye to Gaborone then back and knocks off’.

With a 30-minute load interval for the Kanye-Gaborone route via Ranaka, such slots apply around the clock to keep things moving whether it is a quiet Tuesday or a busy holiday demand spike.

Break the rules and one might find themselves facing a fine anywhere from P400 to P1, 000.

Meanwhile, route descriptions have also sparked a bit of local drama.

Mr Paledi noted that the Gaborone-Kanye via Ranaka permit required combis to roll right through Ranaka rather than dropping passengers off at roadside stops outside.

In fact, the DRTS office caught

just one infraction in 2026, polled and penalised in the last two weeks with a P400 fine for a driver who gave passengers the slip instead of dropping them inside the village.

On the association side, things are equally lively. Southern Region Combi Association secretary, Mr Masilonyane Masilonyane, pointed out that the golden rule of public transport was simple, saying ‘the procedure is that public transport should transport people regardless of the number of passengers onboard at departure time’.

However, Kanye-Ranaka combi operators have been venting over ‘route poaching,’ alleging that Kanye-Gaborone operators were jumping in and swiping their clients. Mr Masilonyane assured everyone that the Kanye-Ranaka route would be given special attention to help drivers stay on track and respect their boundaries.

Ultimately, the policy twists hit closest to home for Ranaka residents, who had been left waiting and watching for rides. Ms Mosetsanagape Scotch of Ranaka shared her frustration.

“We hardly find transport especially in the evenings after working hours,” Ms Scotch said adding that it was also difficult to find transport on weekends to and from Ranaka.

Ms Mmamane Sentoba also shared how Gaborone-Ranaka bus operators routinely passed them by, even though their licenses clearly showed their path included Kanye--Gaborone via Ranaka. **BOPA**



Department of Road Transport and Safety says public transport operators are required to adhere to approved departure times and route descriptions.

Arts & Culture

Short dramas rewrite the script for China

HANGZHOU

Wang, a retired teacher from Shanghai, has just wrapped up her turn as an emperor’s mother, filming a scene inside a replica palace at Hengdian World Studios, known as ‘China’s Hollywood’.

“I never imagined I would get to act. I finally got my drama fix,” Wang said, smiling as she adjusted her headdress.

“I rehearsed the lines three times to memorise them and the director even said I had a real air of authority.” Wang is part of a holiday phenomenon.

During the National Day holiday from October 1 to 7, tourists paying to star in short dramas have become a common sight in Hengdian, east China’s Zhejiang Province.

As destinations across China explore new ways to attract visitors, Hengdian has flipped the script, transforming tourists from spectators into actors. Hengdian drew over nine million visitors in the first half of this year, up 21.2 percent year on year.

At peak times, more than 100 people would sign up for the short-drama experience a day. During the holiday, it rolled out upgraded short-drama shoots and film-themed activities designed for different types of visitors. An admission ticket is all it takes to join more than 10 short-drama crews.

Directors hand out scripts and coach performers on the spot, and visitors can complete a scene in 10 to 45 minutes.

For a more professional experience, full production resources are available, including costumes, makeup, lighting and set design, along with chances to perform alongside veteran actors. “Our team of over 30 people has been working around the clock,” said Ma Qianyi, a staff member at Hengdian Micro Film.

“We film more than a dozen shoots a day, and we often bring in external costume, makeup and camera crews. From costume selection and script reading to filming and post-production, a finished video is ready within two days,” Ma added.

“The best way to turn film from something you watch into something you feel is to let tourists become the actors,” said director Zhang Jinquan. Imperial palace dramas, “dragon king” fantasy and time-travel stories are the most popular genres, Zhang noted, with a dedicated screenwriter updating scripts to keep pace with audience tastes. Visitors can choose from more than 40 scripts. A solo short drama starts at 218 yuan (about US\$32.37) and a full package with professional makeup and styling costs 388 yuan. With overnight stays, role-playing continues well into the night, extending immersion beyond the sound stage.

At the Roslyi Hotel in Hengdian, check-in marks the start of production and check-out the wrap.

Guests can even trade the “film fees” they earn for perks like a personalised wake-up call.

Hengdian is not alone in this

shift. Across China, scenic spots are turning landscapes into interactive stages.

Zhusha Ancient Town in southwestern Guizhou Province offers period-drama shoots against nostalgic backdrops, while “the Longest Day in Chang’an,” a themed immersive cultural block in northwestern Shaanxi Province, lets visitors travel back in time to live a day in the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

For industry observers, the phenomenon signals a broader shift: tourists are paying for

emotional resonance and immersive experience.

As a report by market analytics firm Meadin Research Institute put it, tourists are no longer satisfied with a tour that is just about moving from one place to another.

They want a trip that connects them with a culture, lets them express who they are, or offers something new.

That is what Hengdian is betting on. Using its filmmaking know-how, it has broken production into replicable modules, so tourists can star in their own short dramas.

Staff are on hand to help solo visitors get into character, ensuring no one feels awkward on set.

“The model is lightweight, fast to produce, and boosted by free social media promotion, as visitors share their clips online,” said Chen Shaofeng, a professor at Peking University’s Institute for Cultural Innovation.

To keep visitors coming back, experts suggest giving them more say, such as choosing scenes, adjusting camera angles, even tweaking dialogue, so each shoot feels unique.

Hengdian is already planning ahead. Serialized short-drama experiences are in development to draw visitors back, and the studio aims to combine AI short dramas with cultural tourism, alongside public training programs and merchandise.

“We came specifically to act,” said Huang Yanfang, who drove from Suzhou, in neighboring Jiangsu Province, after seeing videos of the experience online.

“I want to know what it feels like to be the lead, even for just a few minutes.” *Xinhua*



HANGZHOU - Crew of a micro-short drama shooting at Hengdian World Studios in Dongyang, east China's Zhejiang Province. Tourists paying to star in short dramas have become a common sight in Hengdian. Photo: Xinhua

StarTimes launches new season of dating show in Kenya

NAIROBI

Chinese pay-TV operator StarTimes on Tuesday launched a reality show, scheduled to premiere later this month, to promote local content development in Kenya. Senior executives, celebrities and content creators attended the launch in Nairobi for the fifth season of *Hello Mr Right*, which explores modern dating, relationships and marriage.

The show airs on Rembo TV, a StarTimes-owned channel. Tamima Ibrahim, the marketing director at StarTimes Kenya, said the reality show was expected to rejuvenate the local entertainment scene by offering content that tackles complex social issues in a

fun-filled environment.

“So far, *Mr Right* is the biggest dating reality show in Africa and at StarTimes, we are very happy with the show’s performance. Our subscribers have been very loyal in terms of supporting it for the many years it has been on air,” said Ibrahim.

The fifth season of *Mr Right* will be co-hosted by Kenyan male and female artists with large online followings who will challenge the audience to unravel the meaning of modern love, courtship and marriage, Ibrahim said.

The audience will also take part in conversations on family, wealth and financial literacy, Ibrahim said, adding that StarTimes was committed to airing content that

Kenyan audiences can relate to.

Chloe Yang, director of the content department at StarTimes Kenya, said the fifth season of *Hello Mr Right* was more than a dating show and reflects the company’s commitment to investing in and developing local content.

“Through programmes like this, we want to bring our Kenyan audiences stories and entertainment that feel real, relatable and close to their everyday lives,” Yang said.

She added that StarTimes had been airing the dating reality show in a number of African countries, including Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia, providing a platform for local content creators to refine their craft.

Sande Bush Oyolo, the show’s lead host known by his stage name Dr Ofweneke, said the previous four seasons had broken new ground in using entertainment to spotlight complex social challenges.

Ofweneke said season five of *Hello Mr. Right* would highlight realistic expectations about love, relationships and marriage, with audiences expected to air their views about family, finances and wealth.

“Basically, I am very keen as the lead host to handle pertinent issues that revolve around choosing partners. We will be looking at the authenticity of ideas in terms of what love or marriage is all about,” Ofweneke said. *Xinhua*



Young Zebras' Tlotlo Keipidile (right) in action against Naythan Barbe of Seychelles during the second leg of CAF Under 23 African Cup of Nations qualifiers in Gaborone on Tuesday. The Young Zebras have progressed to the second round following a 4-2 aggregate win.

Young Zebras turn attention to Guinea

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

The Young Zebras have advanced to the second round of the CAF Under 23 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers, where Guinea awaits in what promises to be a tougher test for Botswana.

Botswana beat Seychelles 4-2 on aggregate in the first round, winning both legs 2-1.

Losika Ratshukudu put Botswana ahead in October 6 return leg at the National Stadium before Seychelles levelled, but Tlotlo Keipidile restored Botswana's lead in the second half to secure their passage to the next round.

In an interview, Young Zebras coach, Michael Mogaladi said the

team had executed its plan but acknowledged that concentration remained an area that needed attention, particularly when matches became difficult.

Mogaladi said there was still plenty of work to be done and enough time to prepare for the next challenge.

Guinea was among 14 teams given a bye into the second round based on their performances in the previous three editions of the tournament.

The West Africans therefore enter the qualifiers at this stage, with Botswana their first opponents in the

first leg is

scheduled for November 9, with the return leg set for November 17.

The winner will advance to the third and decisive round, where a place at the 2027 CAF U-23 Africa Cup of Nations will be at stake.

The tournament also forms part of Africa's qualification pathway to the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

Botswana is still chasing its first Olympic appearance in men's football tournament, with the 2008 Young Zebras coming closest to achieving that feat.

2008 side recorded victories over Guinea, Tunisia and Morocco during the qualifying campaign, including a 2-0 home victory over Morocco at the National Stadium in November 2007.

The Guinea test will provide the Young Zebras with another opportunity to test themselves against a strong opposition as they try to advance to the final qualifying round and keep their Olympic dream alive. **BOPA**



Botswana is still chasing its first Olympic appearance in men's football tournament, with the Young Zebras coming closest to achieving the feat. Photos: Washa Bofelwang

BAA races against time for 2028 African Senior Championships

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

The Botswana Athletics Association (BAA) is working around the clock to establish a Local Organising Committee (LOC) and a skeletal secretariat to ensure the successful delivery of the 2028 African Senior Championships.

Botswana secured the hosting rights for the 2028 edition and BAA acting president, Oabona Theetso, said in an interview that the upcoming Ordinary General Assembly (OGM),

to be held in Palapye on October 24, would serve as the launchpad to map out the LOC's structure. "For the African Championships, we want everyone to be involved. This bid was won by Batswana for Botswana," Theetso said.

In that regard, he emphasised the importance of remaining strategic when assembling the LOC and drawing valuable lessons from the World Athletics Relays.

He said the skeletal secretariat would be tasked with aggressively pursuing event sponsors, as hosting an event of such magnitude required substantial financial

backing.

Following the successful delivery of the World Athletics Relays, Theetso noted that the nation's expectations had never been higher.

"I think the World Relays will always be used as a baseline, but if you look at the stature of the World Relays versus the African Senior Championships, one is a global stage while the other is continental," he added.

He acknowledged that the conditions and qualification standards would differ between the two competitions.

However, he assured that the association would not drop the ball simply because they were hosting a continental showcase.

The event falls during a critical 2028 athletics calendar that also features the Los Angeles Olympic Games and the newly introduced World Athletics Ultimate Championship.

Consequently, Theetso stressed that the onus was now on all relevant stakeholders to organise a memorable event that would enable both local and international athletes to clock peak qualification times for the major global tournaments. **BOPA**