

BOTSWANA

Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



Swaabe Cultural Day celebrates heritage

PAGE 7

Zebra skipper charts fresh path in Jordan

PAGE 8



20 DAYS LEFT



NEWS

Relief imminent for Bokamoso JSS and community

Page 2

BUSINESS

PAGC challenges enterprises to look beyond local market

Page 4

DIKGANG

Go ema kgosi nokeng go aga morafe

Page 5

Mental health education core



First Lady Kaone Boko (left) during the official hand over of the refurbished adolescent ward and outpatient department and therapeutic garden at Sbrana Psychiatric Hospital in Lobatse on Tuesday. She said the revamped facility would make adolescents feel welcome and receive help in a comfortable environment. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

STORY PAGE 3



BOTSWANA @ 60

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MoU to advance early childhood development

Kedirebofe Pelontle
GUMARE

Okavango District Council (ODC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with two development partners intended to further advance Early Childhood Development and other community development initiatives in the district.

The MoU signed on Monday between ODC, Save Wildlife Conservation Fund and Chobe Impact formalised and combined already existing efforts by the three parties.

The partners have been providing assistance in Early Childhood Development through structured play groups for children aged between one and five years across Okavango District.

Speaking during the MoU signing, ODC deputy council secretary-operations, Mr Michael Israel, said in the midst of economic challenges facing the country and the council, the district leadership welcomed such opportunities that helped the district attain its mandate.

Mr Israel therefore, said the MoU between ODC and the two development partners was a right step in the direction.

He observed that Early Childhood Development was one of the critical areas in the district, which had challenges of rural and remotest areas which did not have

day care centres in place.

Mr Israel said investing in children had a positive impact as would trickle down to the community, hence it was imperative for the MoU to translate into tangible results beyond the signing agreement.

“What is important is not the signing but the end result which is for the community to benefit fully”, he said.

Save Wildlife Conservation Fund Botswana country director, Ms Wabotlhe Letubo, said the agreement would help guide three partners, which have been working together in Early Childhood Development.

She said Save Wildlife Conservation Fund had been supporting 18 playgroups in Okavango District while the ODC and Chobe Impact also supported a certain number.

Through the MoU, the three parties will have distinguished roles to help achieve a greater impact.

Ms Setubo said their desire was for the agreement to help improve the existing playgroups, expand and establish in some areas currently left out.

Chobe Impact manager, Mr Ibo Madandume said as Chobe Holdings subsidiary, Chobe Impact established in 2024 solely focused on non-profit making initiatives.

Mr Ibo said Chobe Impact had playgroups in about three villages in Okavango therefore, had

experience and aware of challenges faced.

He said the formalisation of the efforts by ODC and both development partners would help improve impact on Early Childhood efforts and other community development efforts.

ODC Community Development and Social Services committee chairperson also councilor for Sepopa/Ikoga, Mr Botshelo Mapa, said playgroups were instrumental in empowering pupils with interpersonal skills, confidence, learning to communicate in English from their mother tongue languages such as Hambukushu and Sesarwa.

He wished for the development

partners to expand the playgrounds to other areas.

The three-year agreement covered Early Childhood Development and quality education as well as sustainable livelihoods, conservation and eco-tourism, support for youth and women led enterprises amongst some areas.

BOPA



Okavango district deputy council secretary-operations Mr Michael Israel (left) with Save Wildlife Conservation Fund country director, Ms Wabotlhe Letubo at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the council and two development partners. The MoU is intended to advance Early Childhood Development and other initiatives in the district. Photo courtesy: Okavango District Council

Relief imminent for Bokamoso JSS and community

Gontle Merafhe
GABORONE

Change is impending for Bokamoso Junior Secondary School and for learners and teachers who have long navigated the hurdles of the shifting timetable, it cannot come soon enough.

Stalled construction at the school is set to resume, spearheading a wave of much-needed community infrastructure upgrades funded by Gaborone South's P10 million Constituency Community Projects (CCP) allocation for the 2026/2027 financial year.

For Minister of Justice and Correctional Services and Gaborone South Member of Parliament, Mr Nelson Ramaotwana, bringing the project back to life was a matter of community urgency.

Addressing residents at a Kgotla meeting on Tuesday, Mr Ramaotwana, then acting President, recalled how the school's initial partnership with the Construction Industry Trust Fund (CITF) ground to a halt at the roof level due to funding shortfall.

“Seeing that the classrooms remained incomplete, we agreed to prioritise this project to curb the shifting system at Bokamoso, where some learners miss out on morning classes,” he said.

The solution is as practical as it is welcome and crews will return to roof the three lingering skeletons of classrooms and construct three brand-new ones right alongside them.

Once the project is complete, Bokamoso will boast a fresh block of 60 fully-furnished classrooms to put an end to the frustrating scheduling bottlenecks.

Gaborone City Council is expected to bring contractors back to work hand-in-hand with the CITF.

However, Bokamoso JSS is just the starting point of a broader community makeover. Further down the road, residents of Old Naledi can also look forward to a proper gathering space, given that the Kgotla shelter, long worn down by time and weather to the point of structural concern, will receive P1.4 million for a complete and safe overhaul.

Meanwhile, communities in Bontleng, Extensions 2, 4 and 10 as well as The Village are getting a sigh of relief.

Years of battling stubborn stormwater that threatens local properties during heavy downpours are finally being addressed.

With the rainy season looming, Mr Ramaotwana emphasised that fast-tracking such drainage repairs was critical to keeping neighbourhoods dry and secure.

BOPA

‘Bobirwa health journey at crossroads’

Manowe Motsaathebe
BOBONONG

Critical leadership and specialist vacancies continue to stretch the capacity of healthcare sector in Bobirwa District, chairperson, Mr Johannes Gaosikelwe says.

While speaking during a Bobirwa District Council (BDC) sitting, Monday, Mr Gaosikelwe who declared that the district stood at a ‘vital crossroads in our health journey’ said the district was navigating a landscape defined by profound and urgent healthcare challenges.

“Our greatest immediate challenge lies in our human capital, the heartbeat of our healthcare system,” Mr. Gaosikelwe said.

He revealed that the position of deputy council secretary (Primary Healthcare) role was running on acting basis while chief medical officer position remained vacant.

Additionally, the council chairperson said there were only two medical doctors serving 18 health facilities across the district.

“Similarly, in our pharmacies, where every prescription matters, we have no qualified pharmacist.

Therefore, the vital task of drug management currently rests on capable shoulders of a single

pharmacy technician” he said.

Not only is the district dogged by the abovementioned personnel but by also shortage of midwives despite the intention to open the Molalatau Clinic maternity wing before end of September.

All the 18 health facilities reportedly require general maintenance, while Mabeleng, Mothabane and Damochujenaa health facilities required urgent structural upgrades to clinic statuses.

“Drug availability fluctuates under budgetary pressures, and while our nine operational ambulances and single utility vehicle work tirelessly across the district, none of our 18 facilities yet operate on 24-hour basis,” the chairperson said.

He stated that with the right mobilisation of resources, clinics like Borotsi, Sefophe, Tsetsebjwe, Mathathane and Semolale were poised and ready to step into 24-hour service.

However, despite the challenges, the community outreach and support systems have reportedly ‘seen moments of remarkable triumph paired with persistent hurdles.’

It is reported that the district, while navigating through

temporary absence of community alcohol volunteers, it is also awaiting new community health workers.

While faced with the mammoth challenges, the district prides itself with resilience, which has been put to test and conquered, according to the council chairperson.

He revealed that the health facilities capacities were put to test in August when an overwhelming surge of 1 828 influenza-like cases hit the district and stretched sites like Matsheke Youth Clinic and Bobonong Primary Hospital.

“However, through swift action, our rapid response team mobilised community leaders, ramped up public education and investigated samples that revealed a mix of influenza A SARS-CoV-2,” Mr. Gaosikelwe said.

On other health-related issues, the chairperson said he was committed to advancing his roadmap for health and social wellness as a defining priority.

He cited the recently held Mathathane Botsogo Pitso, held under the theme: Botsogo Jwame, Boikarabelo Jwame (My Health, My Responsibility) as one of the pointers to his commitment to a healthy district. **BOPA**

Dikoloti applauds dikgosi for innovation

Aobakwe Molefhi
MOSI

Since outbreak of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in March this year in the southern part of the country, two figures have featured in finding lasting solution to the disease.

The two are Kgosi Tiroentle Kgopo of Mokgomane and Kgosi Leabua Ikgopoleng of Cwaanyaneng. Thus, during- a kgotla meeting in Mosi on Monday, Good Hope/ Mmathethe MP, Dr Edwin Dikoloti took the opportunity to applaud the two traditional leaders for leading by example in the fight against FMD.

“Kgosi Tirontle Kgopo of Mokgomane and Kgosi Leabua Ikgopoleng of Cwaanyaneng did not only mobilise their people to help curb the spread of the disease but they also came up with ideas and innovations that ensured speedy and smooth erection of the containment zone fence,” he said. If it was not for their innovation and determination, he said the containment zone fence, which had recently been completed, would still be under construction.

Dr Dikoloti told Mosi residents that his wish was for all to do what the two leaders did, if they were to eradicate the spread of the disease. He encouraged every Motswana to own the fight as the spread of the disease affected all.

Meanwhile, Dr Dikoloti said failure to obey bio-security measures had led to the disease being detected in Kgatleng district, saying that had reversed the gains of having finished the containment zone on time.

The MP encouraged residents to look after the fence and police one another, saying law enforcement officers could not win the battle alone.

On what they did, Kgosi Kgopo said in an interview on the sidelines of the meeting, that they availed tools for volunteers and officers who were tasked with erecting the

containment fence.

He said they availed a two-wheel trolley that enabled them to pull a bundle of veldspan fence easily as compared to when the project started when they were pushing it with their feet.

They then went on to invent a tool that clips on the veldspan fence to tighten it and at length of even over 300 meters.

“After that, we then realised that there was another challenge with single strain fence because it had to be pulled for at least a hundred metres and it was not an easy undertaking especially for the women,” he said.

He revealed that they then came up with a stationery fence roller, which allowed even women to pull the fence with ease to any required distance without the fence tangling while at the same time requiring minimum force.

Kgosi Kgopo pointed out that when the project started, the progress was very slow but since the introduction of their new inventions, those on the ground started working smart and efficiently, covering at least 2km per day.

“We are saddened by the fact that most people are now poor because of the Foot and Mouth Disease. Farmers cannot sell to sustain their families, even in weddings families are forced to accept cash as dowry price while funerals appear to be more saddening because of lack of meat,” he said.

One of the officers from veterinary services tasked with fence erection Ms Kerwesitswe Judge applauded the innovations of Kgosi Kgopo and Kgosi Ikgopoleng.

She said that before they started using the tools, they covered a short distance daily but later with the use of new inventions, they managed to cover up to 15 bundles of veldspan a day which is 100 metres each.

Ms Judge said the tools eased their job hence they finished the fence on time. **BOPA**



Authorities will today launch a mass vaccination campaign targeting about 55 000 cattle in Kgatleng East, to intensify efforts to contain Foot-and-Mouth Disease outbreak in the district.

Kgatlang targets 55 000 cattle in mass vaccination

Michelle Mosebiwa
MOCHUDI

Authorities will today launch a mass vaccination campaign targeting about 55 000 cattle in Kgatleng East, to intensify efforts to contain Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak in the district.

Speaking in an interview, Ministry of Lands and Agriculture FMD coordinator, Dr Odireleng Tholowane said the primary objective of the current response plan was to prevent the disease from spreading into neighbouring disease-free regions. To execute the rollout, Dr Tholowane said 15 to 20 teams would be deployed starting from Tlokweng all the way to Leshibitse on the eastern side of the A1 Road, eventually pushing toward the Dibete veterinary checkpoint.

“Vaccinations will be carried out from Ramotswa to Dibete, but for now we are concentrating on the first phase, which covers the eastern side of the road,” he

explained, noting that surveillance teams would simultaneously assess the western side to ensure that the virus had not crossed over and thwarted containment efforts.

Before administering the shots, he said veterinary teams would inspect animals for sores to determine how long they had been infected and the cattle would undergo three rounds of vaccinations administered 28 days apart. Alongside the vaccination drive, officials are establishing physical barriers and movement controls along affected routes to curb unnecessary travel and prevent the virus from moving into clean areas. Authorities are reviewing 39 gates between Phakalane and Phala Camp to determine which checkpoints will be manned on the western side of the road, while extension workers have launched house-to-house public awareness campaigns.

To tackle illegal smuggling, law enforcement and security patrols

are actively monitoring the district to stop unauthorised livestock movements and the illegal transport of beef across barriers.

Dr Tholowane further emphasised that government could not fight the outbreak alone, thus called on farmers to cooperate by presenting their cattle for vaccination, keeping animals kraaled and strictly observing biosecurity measures, localised zoning laws and movement restrictions.

“We expect Batswana to understand what is expected of them both as a nation and as farmers,” he said, urging the public to immediately report any suspected signs of FMD.

He also expressed frustration that many citizens were ignoring official updates, noting that numerous public inquiries for information that had already been published demonstrated that ‘many people are not taking the time to read the material issued to them’. **BOPA**

Mental health education core - First Lady

Calviniah Kgauthe
LOBATSE

First Lady Kaone Boko has called for public education on mental health and interventions to curb the condition early.

She said this at the launch of the revamped adolescent ward and therapeutic garden at the Sbrana Psychiatric Hospital at Lobatse on Tuesday.

She further said parents and guardians needed guidance on behaviours to look out for as they might miss changes in their adolescent children, which might lead to mental health conditions.

Adolescents, she said were at a sensitive stage and as such proper parental guidance was critical to ensure that parents identified any early behaviours that might lead them to engage in alcohol and substance abuse.

Therefore, she said her initiative to revamp the adolescent ward came against the backdrop that

adolescents faced serious social ills, which included alcohol and substance abuse where some of them ended up requiring psychiatric health care.

She said the revamped facility would make adolescents felt welcome and receive help in a comfortable environment.

She said the therapeutic garden was not only beneficial for the physical health of a patient, but also for their mental well-being.

Ms Boko also encouraged parents to pay attention to all aspects of children’s wellbeing, which included emotional, psychological and not just the physical aspects.

She underscored that child neglect could cause social ills and lead to drug and substance abuse saying as such, parents must exercise caution.

In addition, she urged parents to open up to their children and encourage them to confide in them with their social life as that could go a long way in curbing social ills.

She further implored parents to refrain from selling illicit drugs and substances to children.

In addition, she urged the elderly to refrain from engaging in sexual relationships with youth, which some lead to teenage pregnancies.

She highlighted empowerment and holistic development of boys and young men adding that addressing the challenges they faced, focusing on their well-being and protection were pertinent as statistics reflected that they were the ones who were prone to using drugs.

“If they are not cared for, their anger turns into aggression,” she said. Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Dr Neo Tapela said revamping the facility was about renewing the commitment to the dignity, wellbeing, mental health and recovery of young patients.

Dr Tapela said it was about creating an environment where adolescents who needed

psychiatric help could receive it in safe surroundings, welcoming, nurturing, fit for purpose and healing.

She thus appreciated the office of the First Lady for the intervention. For his part, Sbrana Psychiatric Hospital Superintendent Dr Joseph Shama said the hospital was opened in 2010, while the adolescent ward was opened to cater for children aged between 11 and 19 in 2022.

He said the male adolescent ward currently had 13 patients adding that the separate and refurbished male ward would enable care takers to manage the young patients effectively.

Lobatse MP, Mr Kamal Jacobs appreciated the gesture by the Office of the First Lady, saying such health care developments directly benefitted the community.

He said every child deserved a secure future, adding that such facilities brought healing, dignity and hope to the youth who would seek service at the facility. **BOPA**

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PAGC challenges enterprises to look beyond local market

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

Batswana, particularly young entrepreneurs, should look beyond small domestic market and tap into opportunities across Africa, Pan African Game Changers (PAGC) founder and president, Dr Precious Gondwe has said.

Speaking at a media briefing in Gaborone on Tuesday, ahead of the PAGC Summit scheduled for September 17 and 18, Dr Gondwe said Botswana's population of about 2.5 million meant that businesses needed to explore regional and continental markets if they were to contribute meaningfully to economic growth and diversification.

She challenged young people to stop relying solely on government to create opportunities and instead seek opportunities within the region and beyond.

"Botswana, it is time for us to move away from expecting our government to be the one to solve our problems," she said. Dr Gondwe said African markets presented significant opportunities for Botswana businesses to export their products and services, while regional partnerships could help overcome some of the challenges associated with the country's landlocked position.

She cited Namibia's access to the sea and ports as an example, questioning whether Botswana businesses were making sufficient use of strategic partnerships with neighbouring countries to reach wider markets.

Dr Gondwe said small and medium enterprises also needed to understand how continental integration initiatives could translate into practical opportunities, particularly through increased regional trade.

The call came as PAGC partnered with Precious and Partners Legal Practice to create a platform aimed at helping businesses better understand and leverage opportunities arising

from continental integration.

The summit will feature panel discussions and sector-specific breakaway sessions, allowing participants to engage on issues affecting different industries.

More than 13 speakers from across Africa are expected to participate, with discussions focusing on continental integration, industrialisation, trade and participation of women and youth in policymaking.

Dr Gondwe said the summit would help young people understand frameworks such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and how such could create opportunities for them.

She added that the summit had attracted support from several partners, including the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC), Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Ba Isago University and Grand Palm, among others.

Dr Gondwe said collaboration and mutually beneficial partnerships were essential to advancing Africa's development agenda.

Head of business development at Precious and Partners, Mr Conor Masuku, said the partnership was driven by the need to translate agreements, policies and laws relating to regional integration into practical opportunities for businesses and ordinary citizens.

Mr Masuku said the PAGC

Summit would provide a platform for investors, entrepreneurs and businesses to explore partnerships across different sectors, including agriculture and technology.

He also urged businesses to participate as exhibitors, saying products and services would be showcased to delegates from about 12 countries expected at the summit, which would be held under the theme: Africa Is Rising and Her Leadership Responds.

Meanwhile, PAGC was established in Botswana eight years ago as a women and youth empowerment initiative, initially focusing on young women before broadening its programmes to include men during the COVID-19 period. **BOPA**



Pan Africa Game Changer (PAGC) founder and president, Dr Precious Gondwe (left) and Precious and Partners Legal Practice - head of business development, Mr Conor Masuku during a press briefing about the upcoming PAGC summit in Gaborone on Tuesday. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

District leadership welcomes tourism hub proposal

Esther Mmolai
MAUN

North West leadership has welcomed the implementation of the Maun Integrated Creative Tourism Hub (MICTH) proposal which aims to strengthen the region's destination brand and support the sustainable growth of the tourism sector.

The strategic initiative aims to transform Maun from a passive transit point for the Okavango Delta into a vibrant, self-sustaining cultural and arts destination.

It would also help diversify the local economy and spread tourism benefits to local communities by empowering local youth artists and local craft makers to benefit directly from tourists' revenue.

The leadership acknowledged that hubs offered cultural centres, stalls and shops where tourists could easily find authentic local items.

They also acknowledged that the project could promote citizen

participation in the tourism industry.

The district commissioner, Mr Thabang Waloka, appreciated the proposal during a District Development Committee meeting following a comprehensive presentation on the proposal by the project team noting that it was upon the district leaders to ensure the smooth implementation.

He said the project would provide central and organised market space connecting rural artisan directly to buyers and offering branding and marketing support.

"We need to ready ourselves to keep the ground running because this is a brilliant project that could transform Maun into a destination of choice. This initiative can also help support our beneficiaries who have been assisted through Poverty Eradication Programme and other available government schemes with consistent market," he added.

North West District Council, chief education secretary, Ms Lorato

Komanyane, advised the project team to explore other areas such as Thamalakane River Front which could be turned into a vibrant attraction site for tourists. Earlier, a member of the project team, Mr Gofaone Mosiakgabo, explained that the region had met the criterion for setting up a cluster and that it had potential for export growth and presence of comparative advantage among others.

In order to attract more tourists, he said they had identified areas of improvement such as development of locally sourced goods and services, product development, skills development and specialised marketing just to mention a few.

Currently, he said there was limited engagement with cultural and heritage actors hence the need to design new services and products.

A proposal is made to prioritise public private partnership and pilot the 24-hour economy highlighting a shared market hub similar to Mojo

Market model in Cape Town with food and beverages outlets, artifacts/curio shops, souvenir, clothing and a stage for music, art and performance for local artists and tourists.

Furthermore, Mr Mosiakgabo noted that phase one would comprise of Mojo Market, Airport Street precinct, walkways along open market stalls, galleries, auditorium, amphitheatre, local cuisine restaurants, cinema, arts and craft stalls, night life while phase two is the development of Maun integrated and inclusive smart eco city fostering cultural, heritage, creative industries, sport, art and medical tourism in Maun. The meeting was informed that clusters thrive through harnessing interlinkages between government, private sector cluster players, academia and support systems hence the collaboration and integrated approach by harmonising all plans and resources towards achieving the aspirations of transforming Maun into a smart green city. **BOPA**

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Industrial experience accelerates Zambia development

LUSAKA - Zambia's Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry on Tuesday said China's industrial experience helps the country accelerate its development.

Everness Nankala, the ministry's principal public relations officer, said in a statement that a Zambian delegation was currently participating in a seminar on processing trade innovation and development held by China's Ministry of Commerce in Beijing.

"Participants are gaining practical insights into China's experience in processing trade zones, value chain development, industrial park management and trade facilitation," she said. Nankala said exposure to China's experience in developing competitive processing industries would help Zambia formulate policies and programmes to support local businesses and boost export earnings. **Xinhua**

Rwanda launches road expansion project in Kigali

KIGALI - Rwanda and Chinese officials officially launched a road expansion and upgrade project in Kigali's transport network on Tuesday. The 10-km project from Prince House to Masaka in Kigali is the latest China-aided project undertaken in Rwanda, according to the African country's Ministry of Infrastructure. State Minister in Rwanda's Ministry of Infrastructure, Claudien Bizimungu hailed the project as another demonstration of the strong and long-standing friendship between the two countries. The development would "contribute significantly to better traffic flow, reduce travel time, improve road safety and strong connectivity across Kigali," he said, adding that it will also improve access to jobs, markets and essential services while supporting the city's continued economic growth. **Xinhua**

Retailers aim to create 100 000 jobs for young people by 2029

LONDON - Leading retailers in Britain are working with the government to offer work opportunities to young people, aiming to create up to 100 000 jobs by the end of Parliament in 2029, a government statement said Tuesday. A new work experience programme will provide 18- to 24-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training with two to four weeks of hands-on experience, at 16 to 35 hours per week, as part of more than 11 000 placements with Britain's biggest retailers, complete with dedicated workplace support and interview experience, according to the statement from the government's official website. The programme aims to give young people the skills and experience they need to get their first job. Participants could be offered a permanent role if one is available, placed in the retailer's talent bank, or directed towards apprenticeships and other opportunities. **Xinhua**

Dikgang

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Tiriso ya diritibatsi e a tshwenya

Relief Lephutshi
MOSHANA

Tiriso ditagi segolo jang motokwane e a tshwenya kwa Moshana mo kgaolong ya Kanye botlhaba.

Se se boletswe ke Kgosi Seate Marumo wa motse wa Moshana kwa tshimolodisong ya kgwedi ya merapelo kwa Kanye bosheng.

Kgosi Marumo a re ntswa go goga motokwane le go dirisa ditagi e le seemo se se diregang mo morafeng, sebe segolo ke gore ga go ke go bonala kwa ditagi di tswang teng fa e se fela gore tiriso ya tsone e itshupa ka go fetola boitshwaro ja baji ba tsone.

A re maduo a mangwe a tiriso diritibatsi ke tiriso botlhaswa ya maranyane a Facebook a re tiriso ya yone ga e jese diwelang ka go supa fa bana ba Moshana ba atisitse go bua matlhapa mo go yone.

A re ditlamorago tse dingwe di akaretsa dikgetsi tse dintsi tsa tiriso bana botlhaswa, tse le tsone a tlhalositseng fa bontsi jwa tsone di bakiwa ke gore batho ba go nna jalo ba a bo ba le ka fa tlase ga kgatelelo ya ditagi.

Kgosi a re ditagi di ama thuto ya bana a tlhalosa fa bana ba motse wa gagwe ba ba romelwang kwa Mmathethe go tsweladisa dithuto tse dikgolwane, gangwe le gape ba phuanganya dithuto mme ba boele ga ka makaba a go ja ditagi.

O buile a sa kgale mathe ka seelo sa bonana sa dingwaga tse di masome mararo le bothano a re seelo se ne se direlwa mabaka a go thusa setshaba go bona dithuso tsa madi.

A re jaanong selo se se baka gore setshaba se tshabe go gola le go tsaya boikarabelo ba re ke banana.

A re go ka nna maleba fa puso e ka fefogela go tsaya tshwetso ya go busetsa morago seelo se kwa dingwageng tse di masome mabedi le bongwe.

“Ka nako ya rona, batho ba ne ba ipelela go tshwara dingwaga tse di masome a mabedi le bongwe” go tlhalosa Kgosi a tlatsa ka gore e ne e le go ipelela go nna bagolo le go tsaya boikarabelo e seng go bona tetla ya tlolo molao.

A re go le gantsi setshaba se supa bana ka monwana gore ba nwa nnotagi mme boammaaruri e le gore setlhopho sa dingwaga tsa bonana ke sone se nang le batsadi ba bana ba ba nwang bojalwa.

A re mo godimo ga se, batsadi ba, ba kopakopana le bana ba bone kwa maitisong mme go tlhoke yo o tsayang boikarabelo jwa go kgalemela bana.

A re morago ga maitiso batsadi ba, ba tsaya bana go ba dirisa botlhaswa ntle le segakolodi.

O tlhalositse fa tlolomolao e le ntsi ka jaana batho ba iteba dinala, a tlhalosa fa seemo se se letlelela lehuma le letlhoko tse di bakang boitshwaro jo bo tsisang masula ka bontsi mo gare ga setshaba.

Kgosi a re le fa go le jalo ga a

ipone tsapa go thusa morafe go hema letlhoko ka go rotloetsa morafe go ipelega.

A re bogologolo malwapa a ne a jeswa ke papadi go tswa mo digotlong, pele ga letsema le bolodiwa.

A re o lemoga fa setshaba jaanong se atisitse go nna baji-bareki, go namolwa leuba boemong ja go re ba ithute methale ya go ipelega

Rre Kenneth Siele wa Kenneth and Evelyn Siele Trust yo le ene a tshwenyegileng ka tiriso ya ditagi mo setshabeng e bile e le motswa setlhabelo wa tiriso ya tsone le ene a re gore lefatshe la Botswana le bone phenyo kgatlhanong le tiriso tsone, ke gore go etelediwe pele thibelo fela jaaka tautona wa pele Rre Festus Mogae a ne a eteletsa go rotloetsa thibelo ya mogare wa HIV gore lefatshe le bone phenyo kgatlhong le bolwetse jwa HIV/AIDS.

A re ga gona jaaka fa go ka buiwa ka HIV/AIDS go sa buiwe ka tiriso ya diritibatsi le nnotagi ka e le tsone bothata jo bo lebaganyeng setshaba le gore go tshwanetswe go tsewe boikarabelo ja go dira se se maleba morago ga thapelo.

O sedimositse fa kokelo ya matshwenyego a tlhaloganyo ya Sbrana Psychiatric Hospital e e nang le lekalana la (Substance Use Disorders Unit) e supa fa ka ngwaga wa 2025 kokelo eo e nnile le dipalopalo di ka nna makgolo a marataro, masome, mararo le boferabobedi a balwetse ba ba neng ba thusiwa ka seemo sa mabaka a tiriso nnotagi le diritibatsi tse e bileng di ba baketse mathata a malwetse a tlhaloganyo.

A re mo palong e, borre ba makgolo matlhano le masome mane le boferabobedi (548) fa masome a ferabongwe (90) e le bomme ba ba magareng ga dingwaga tse di lesome le bone (14) le masome a supa le metso e mene (74). A re tse ke dingwaga tse di supang fa e le batsadi ba ba ka bong ba kgalemela bana mme jaanong go a tshwenya gore batsadi ke bone ba tlhokang thuso.

A re dipalo tsa kgaolo ya Kanye di supa fa balwetse ba basha ba ka tshwara masome a matlhano le metso e mene mo lekgolong (54 percent) ba na le mathata a tlhaloganyo mme e le ba ba lemogilweng ka go dirisa motokwane, fa masome a mararo le bone (34 per cent) ba lemogilwe fa e le mathata a tiriso phetelela ya bojalwa.

A re dipalo tse di rurifiadiwa ke se se bonagalang mo setshabeng ka jaana borre ba di goga kwa pele mo tirisong botlhaswa ya diritibatsi e bile ba goga kwa tlhogong kgokgontsho ya bong mo malwapeng.

A re maikaelelo a lekgotla la Kenneth and Evelyn Trust ke go ruta ka tiriso botlhaswa ya nnotagi le diritibatsi. Maikaelelo a mnagwe ke go aga lefelo la tlhokomelo ya ba imetsweng ke tiriso ya ditagi. **BOPA**



Kgosi Seate Marumo wa Moshana, o lela ka tiriso ya ditagi.

‘Go ema kgosi nokeng go aga morafe’

Gaolethoo Kgatitswe
SEHITHWA

Tirisanyo fa gare ga kgosi le morafe ke motheo wa go aga motse o o nonofileng, ka gonne boeteledipele bo ka atlega fela fa morafe o ba ema nokeng, ba ba gakolola le go nna le seabe mo ditlhabololong tse di ba amang.

Se se builwe kwa Sehithwa ka Labotlhano fa morafe o amogela Kgosi Keokeditse Dithapo mo setilong sa gagwe kwa kgotleng.

Fa a tlhalosa maikaelelo a letsatsi, Kgosi wa Bothatogo, Kgosi Tjazako Munduu o rile morafe o kopane go amogela Kgosi Dithapo mo setilong sa gagwe se se mo tshwanetseng, a re moletlo ke sesupo sa boitumelo le tshwaragano ya morafe.

“Go ema kgosi nokeng re le morafe go supa botlhale le ponelopele, ka go nne kemo nokeng ya morafe e nonotsha bogosi go bona ditharabololo tsa dikgwetho tse di amang motse,” a rialo Kgosi.

O gateletse gore morafe o tshwanetse go tsaya karolo mo ditirong tsa bogosi, a re tirisanyo mmogo ke yone tsela ya go netefatsa gore maiteko a boeteledipele a fetoga ditlhabololo tse di solegelang baagi molemo.

Fa a tswa la gagwe, Rre Charles Madise o gateletse botlhokwa jwa go ema boeteledipele nokeng le go gakolola bogosi, a re morafe o o dirang jalo o thusa go aga tshaba e

e nonofileng.

A re go gakolola bogosi ga go a tshwanela go tsewa e le go nyatsa boeteledipele, mme ke karolo ya maikarabelo a morafe mo go netefatseng gore bogosi bo nna le kitso ka dikgwetho tse batho ba lebaneng le tsone.

Mopalamente wa kgaolo ya Ghanzi, Rre Noah Salakae a re tirisano mmogo e supa botho jwa moeteledipele, a tlhalosa Kgosi Dithapo e le motho yo o nang le mowa o o iketlileng. O rile boikokobetso le go iketla ke dingwe tsa dinonofo tse di supang botlhale le boeteledipele jo bo tlhwathwa, mme a rotloetsa Kgosi Dithapo go tswelala jalo gore a kgone go direla morafe wa gagwe sentle.

“Boikobo jwa gago bo netefatsa botlhale mme seo se tlaa go nonotsha go direla morafe,” ga bua jalo Mopalamente Salakae.

Kgosi ya Goo- Seetso mo Maun, Kgosi Gakemoeng Molaetsi o ne a lebisla molaetsa wa gagwe kwa maikarabelong a a tlang le setilo sa bogosi, a gakolola Kgosi Dithapo go nna kelotlhoko mo go buseng

morafe.

O mo rotloeditse go ikaega ka thapelo le go kopa botlhale mo Modimong gore a kgone go busa ka tekatekano ka dinako tsotlhe.

“Le fa motho a go file podi kana kgomo ga go tsena mo tirong ya bogosi o beela kgakala dilo tsa go nna jalo e le go supa tekatekano mo morafeng,” a gakolola.

Moemela Kgosi ya Batawana, Kgosi Oleyo Ledimo, o gateletse fa tirisanyo mmogo fa gare ga Kgosi le morafe e tlhoka bopelotelele.

A re go bereka le morafe go tlhoka go reetsana, go tlhaloganyana le go naya mongwe le mongwe sebaka sa go nna le seabe, ka motse ga o ka ke wa agiwa ke motho a le mongwe.

Kgosi Keokeditse Dithapo o ne a leboga morafe, ditsala le ba lelapa ka tirisanyo mmogo le kemo nokeng e ba mo neileng yone, a re o leboga morafe go bo ba eme le ene mo loetong lwa gagwe lwa boeteledipele.

O rotloeditse morafe go nna le seabe mo go godiseng motse, a re tlhabololo ya Sehithwa e tlhoka seabe sa botlhe. **BOPA**



Morafe wa Sehithwa o amogela Kgosi Keokeditse Dithapo semmuso. Senepe: Galeothoo Kgatitswe

National Health Insurance to bridge gaps

Samantha Gabaeme
ZUTSHWA

The National Health Insurance Policy is expected to improve access to quality healthcare by ensuring that people receive timely and equitable health services regardless of their financial status. .

Speaking during a consultative meeting on Monday, public physician Dr Lorato Sekhomba said the policy would enable every Motswana to access healthcare services at affordable costs regardless of where they lived, eliminating the need for people in rural areas to travel to urban centres in search of better healthcare.

She added that the policy would also cover foreigners who are legally permitted to stay in Botswana, as it was intended to provide healthcare access to everyone.

Dr Sekhomba further said the policy was designed to strengthen the country's health system and ensure that it remained resilient in the face of future health emergencies.

She said the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed challenges within the health sector, but that the National Health Insurance would help the country better withstand similar challenges in the future.

Dr Sekhomba emphasised that the policy was intended to be a permanent system, ensuring that everyone has equal access to healthcare benefits regardless of their circumstances or place of residence. She explained that registration for the National Health Insurance Policy would be conducted mainly through online platforms. However, those aged 16 years and above would be required to present their national identity cards when registering, while parents or guardians registering children below the age of 16 would be required to present their birth certificates at their nearest health facilities.

Dr Sekhomba said the policy was still being developed, with the ministry working on its implementation framework to ensure that it responded effectively to the needs of the health sector.

She explained that investigations would be conducted into areas such as the availability of medicines, healthcare infrastructure and other essential resources before the policy was fully implemented, to ensure that its implementation aligned with the country's healthcare needs.

Dr Sekhomba further explained that the National Health Insurance Policy would be implemented in three stages, with the country currently at the first stage, which involves developing the implementation framework.

She said the stage included assessing the availability of medicines, healthcare infrastructure and other essential resources to ensure that the policy was aligned with the needs of the health sector.

She said the second stage would involve piloting the policy in selected areas to assess its effectiveness and gauge the response from beneficiaries. If the pilot produced positive results, the policy would then be rolled out nationwide.

However, she noted that any challenges identified during the



Zutshwa residents during a consultative kgotla meeting where health officials unpacked the new National Health Insurance Policy. The nationwide policy is expected to benefit all Batswana by ensuring equitable and affordable access to quality healthcare. Photo: Samantha Gabaeme

pilot phase would be addressed and the necessary amendments made before nationwide implementation.

Policy planning and financing officer, Ms Onalenna Mokena said the National Health Insurance Policy would be implemented in accordance with the law, making it mandatory for Batswana to be covered under the scheme.

She explained that government would finance the insurance, while ongoing assessments would determine the cost of the scheme and identify sustainable sources of funding.

Ms Mokena said contributions would also be required from Batswana, businesses and other identified sources, with the amount payable determined after assessing an individual's income and economic status.

According to Ms Mokena, the policy would strengthen strategic planning in the sector by requiring thorough research and price comparisons before the procurement of medicines, equipment and other essential resources. She said the approach

would help ensure that only necessary items were purchased at competitive prices, allowing government to reduce wastage and make better use of funds allocated to healthcare.

Ms Mokena said the government was working with the private health sector to reduce the cost of healthcare services and minimise price disparities between private healthcare providers.

She said efforts were also underway to introduce a performance-based incentive system for doctors and nurses, through which health workers would receive additional payments based on their performance.

Ms Mokena stated that the initiative was intended to motivate health workers to improve service delivery and ensure that patients received the care they deserved.

She further said the policy would promote medical outreach initiatives, through which doctors and nurses would identify and engage people with health concerns, allowing diseases to be detected and addressed at an early stage.

She said early intervention would help prevent conditions from worsening and ultimately improve health outcomes.

Ms Mokena said the policy would also introduce an essential healthcare package outlining the benefits and services to which every beneficiary would be entitled.

She said this would promote transparency by clearly defining the healthcare services that government was obligated to provide, enabling citizens to hold it accountable if it failed to deliver on its commitments under the policy and the law.

Ms Mokena further explained that the National Health Insurance scheme would operate as a State-owned enterprise (SOE), independent from direct government administration.

She said this would allow the scheme to purchase healthcare services from both public and private providers, creating competition between the two sectors and encouraging improvements in the quality and efficiency of healthcare services. She added that the scheme would also recognise the role of

traditional healthcare practitioners in the country's health system.

According to Ms Mokena, the Ministry of Health was exploring ways of working with traditional practitioners so that they could contribute to treating certain illnesses and potentially claim payment for eligible services through the insurance scheme.

Zutshwa councillor Mr James Kakego welcomed government's efforts to address challenges facing the country's healthcare system, saying the National Health Insurance Policy was a step in the right direction.

He particularly welcomed the proposed inclusion of traditional healthcare practitioners, saying traditional medicine has long been part of Batswana culture and could complement modern healthcare.

Mr Kakego encouraged Zutshwa residents to make use of both modern and traditional healthcare where appropriate, noting that some less serious ailments could be treated using traditional herbs found within the community.

BOPA

North West records 98 per cent ARV suppression

Esther Mmolai
MAUN

The North West region has recorded an impressive 98 per cent HIV viral suppression rate among diagnosed patients on antiretroviral therapy (ART).

Giving an update on the district's HIV/AIDS and non-communicable diseases situation during a combined church service held at Maun Main Kgotla, Principal Registered Nurse from Primary Health, Ms Neo Kokomoga, said 16 161 people were registered on the ARV programme.

She said women constituted the majority of those on treatment, while 5,560 were men and 59 were children below the age of 12.

She expressed concern over the low uptake of HIV testing

services among men, encouraging them to know their HIV status to enable them to protect their health, access early treatment and prevent transmission to their partners.

To further curb HIV transmission, she said the Ministry of Health had introduced additional prevention programmes, including Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and emergency Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), which reduce the risk of HIV infection.

Ms Kokomoga also expressed concern over the low uptake of voluntary medical male circumcision, saying this slowed progress in reducing HIV transmission and other sexually transmitted infections.

She encouraged men to come forward and take advantage of the programme. On Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission

(PMTCT), Ms Kokomoga said the district had made significant strides, reporting that no baby born under the programme had tested positive for HIV. She commended mothers for their commitment to eliminating mother-to-child transmission. Turning to non-communicable diseases, Ms Kokomoga said cancer remained a major concern, with cases on the rise. She said some clinics had been identified where members of the community could undergo screening for early detection.

"Early cancer detection significantly increases the chances of successful treatment and can save lives. I encourage all to visit identified health facilities to undergo some tests," she said.

Meanwhile, Chaplain Lieutenant Jeremiah Nelson of the Botswana Defence Force said gender-based

violence remained a concern, noting that men statistically accounted for the majority of perpetrators. He urged men to desist from violence, saying it violated fundamental principles of respect and safety within relationships and families.

Lieutenant Nelson described abusive behaviour as a failure of moral responsibility and personal character, encouraging men experiencing pressure to seek assistance rather than resorting to violence. He noted that cultural expectations that men should be tough and emotionally restrained could sometimes make it difficult for them to speak out about abuse.

He urged men to speak against gender-based violence and report their experiences, stressing that seeking help was not a sign of weakness. **BOPA**

Arts & Culture

National Boipuso Activities

☆ GABORONE CRAFTS MARKET, CULTURAL FOOD AND CARNIVAL

Date: 30.09.2026

Venue: GABORONE MAIN MALL

Time: 9AM

☆ TSABONG CULTURAL SHOW

Date: 30.09.2026

Venue: TSABONG

Time: 9AM

☆ KANG CRAFTS MARKET, CULTURAL FOOD AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

Date: 30.09.2026

Venue: KANG

Time: 9AM

☆ MAUN CRAFTS MARKET, CULTURAL FOOD AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

Date: 30.09.2026

Venue: MAUN

Time: 9AM

Swaabe Cultural Day celebrates heritage

Thuso Kgakatsi
HUKUNTSI

The rhythmic beat of drums, traditional dances and the rich aroma of Tswana cuisine filled the Kang Main Kgotla recently as the Bashaga community celebrated its heritage.

But beneath the colourful display of culture was a pointed message: Botswana must return to its traditional values if it is to strengthen its economy and restore the appeal of its natural diamonds.

Speaking at the second annual Swaabe Cultural Day, held under the theme: Sustainable Livelihood and Effective Governance, Debswana Diamond Company, Chief Operations Officer, Koolatotse Koolatotse called on the nation to revive the principles that had traditionally bounded communities together. He said, the Swaabe Cultural Day provided a practical expression of the heritage he was urging Batswana to reclaim, with traditional choirs, dance, food and game meat bringing generations together at the Kang Main Kgotla.

Koolatotse said the event was particularly timely as Debswana prepared to launch its own cultural initiative.

As part of its support for the community’s efforts to preserve and promote its heritage, Debswana donated P100 000 to the Swaabe Cultural Festival.

“We love you as Debswana and so we want you to continue with this spirit of reviving our culture,” he said.

He said Botswana’s economic challenges should not be attributed solely to declining diamond sales or the change of government, arguing that the erosion of culture, traditions and customs was also contributing to the country’s difficulties.

“Diamonds are not selling, but we still rely on them,” he said. Koolatotse said Botswana had gradually lost some of the values that once defined its communities, particularly love, respect, unity and truthfulness. Our economy is down due to the fact that we have lost our culture. We have lost love for each other. We gossip about each other and defame each other,” he said.

He warned that unless such behaviour was addressed, efforts to improve livelihoods would remain difficult. Koolatotse therefore underscored the need for the nation to “go back to the crossroads” and rediscover the values embedded in Tswana culture, saying they had played an important role in holding the nation together.

He argued that cultural renewal could also strengthen Botswana’s economic

prospects, particularly its position in the global natural diamond market.

According to Koolatotse, Botswana was selling more than diamonds to international consumers through selling the nation’s story and values behind those diamonds.

“At Debswana, these are the values that we uphold,” he said, referring to love, respect, unity and truthfulness.

He said international consumers increasingly wanted assurance that the diamonds they purchased were responsibly sourced and were not associated with conflict or the mistreatment of communities.

“Through selling the diamonds, we are selling our culture,” he said. His remarks came at a challenging time for Botswana’s diamond-dependent economy, with the global natural diamond industry facing weaker demand and growing competition from laboratory-grown diamonds.

Koolatotse said the origin and ethical production of natural diamonds could therefore be important in maintaining their appeal to consumers.

He stressed that buyers wanted to know whether communities where diamonds were mined were being treated well, making social responsibility and good governance important components of Botswana’s diamond story.

The cultural revival he advocated, he said, should therefore not be confined to annual celebrations. It should be reflected in how Batswana treat one another,

conduct business and contribute to their communities.

He also linked cultural values to the fight against poverty and hunger, saying difficult economic conditions could pressure people into abandoning their principles.

“For this hunger to disappear, we should feed ourselves,” he said, calling for greater self-reliance and stronger community cooperation.

For her part, Kgosi Basadi Seipone III of Kang, thanked Debswana for the financial support, saying the contribution would strengthen their efforts to preserve and promote their cultural heritage.

She wished the company success as it engages international clients, expressing hope that more doors would open for Botswana’s diamonds in overseas markets.

“We wish Debswana the very best and hope that more diamonds will be sold so that the lives of Batswana can continue to improve,” she said. Kgosi Seipone said the community had embarked on the cultural initiative without a budget, making Debswana’s support particularly significant.

She described the assistance as a blessing, saying the community had “met an angel” through the company’s intervention.

She said culture had a unique ability to bring people together, fostering unity, love and a shared sense of identity.

“For this, we will forever be indebted to Debswana,” she said. **BOPA**



Kgosi Basadi Seipone III of Kang receiving Dikgafela from Gamonyemana Ward traditional leaders Kgosi Morabeng Phori (left) and Kgosi Molemini Pego during Swaabe Cultural Festival which was held in Kang recently. Photo: Thuso Kgakatsi



Six to compete at World Athletics Ultimate Championship

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

With global titles already secured and a historic season drawing to a close, six elite track stars head to Budapest, Hungary for the World Athletics Ultimate Championship scheduled for September 11-13.

When the starter’s gun echoes through the National Athletics Centre, the team will be anchored by Olympic 200m champion, Letsile Tebogo and World 400m champion, Collen Kebinatshipi, who both qualified automatically.

Joining them through hard-earned season ranking points are Oratile Nowe in the women’s 800m, Lee Eppie and Bayapo Ndori in the 400m as well as Kemorena Tisang in the 400m hurdles.

In an interview, Botswana Athletics Association (BAA) acting president, Oabona Theetso, said seeing the nation’s roster expand from two automatic



Kemorena Tisang

qualifiers to a six-person delegation reflected significant structural progress and athlete dedication across the board.

“Having four additional athletes secure their places through points accumulation is a clear demonstration that they worked hard across the season to earn their spots,” Theetso said, adding that BAA was proud of how the athletes continued to place Botswana on the global sporting map.

Despite the high stakes at the multi-million-dollar season-closer, Theetso urged the athletes to focus on execution rather than expectations.

With the athletes already proving their calibre across the Diamond League circuit, priority remains long-term health and personal fulfillment on the track.

“Yes, if they win trophies, we will celebrate, but there is absolutely no pressure. They have already made us proud. While we would be thrilled to bring home silverware, our main focus is for them to enjoy themselves, run their races and cross the finish line healthy,” Theetso said.

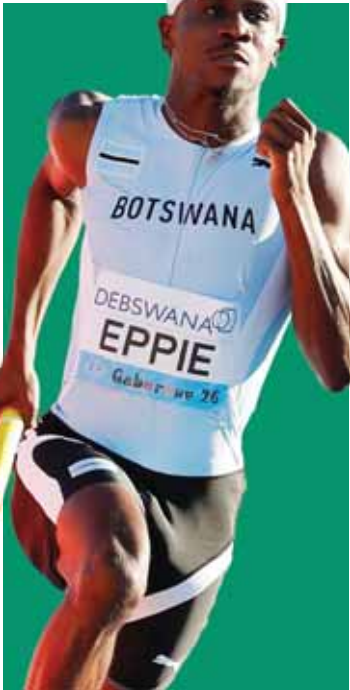
Meanwhile,



Letsile Tebogo



Oratile Nowe



Lee Eppie



Collen Kebinatshipi



Bayapo Ndori



Thatayaone Ditlhokwe

Zebras skipper charts fresh path in Jordan

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

For national football team captain, Thatayaone Ditlhokwe, the road to professional football abroad has been anything but linear.

His journey has been defined by patience, challenging spells, relentless work ethic and an unyielding determination to break through borders.

The 27-year-old Zebras skipper is now set to add another country to his resume following reports of a one-year deal with Jordanian powerhouse, Al-Wehdat SC.

Ditlhokwe’s professional path has seen him rise from local pitches to top leagues in South Africa, Libya and now the Middle East.

Born in Gulubane, the towering defender honed his craft in street football before climbing the domestic ranks with Nico United, Gaborone United and Township Rollers.

His international breakthrough came in 2020 when he joined South African side, SuperSport United.

Displaying exceptional versatility at both centre-back and left-back, Ditlhokwe established himself as a dominant defensive presence, earning a high-profile transfer to Soweto giants, Kaizer Chiefs in 2023.

However, his upward trajectory came with tests of character. Ditlhokwe initially struggled for regular game

time during his early days at SuperSport before fighting his way into the starting line-up.

Zebras head coach, Morena Ramoreboli views those testing periods as critical components of the captain’s development.

“He struggled for game time when he arrived at SuperSport, but he worked hard and never looked back. Young players just need to work hard, focus, and take any opportunity they get.”

Ramoreboli believes Ditlhokwe’s latest career move represents a milestone that extends far beyond individual achievement, serving as validation that local talent is gaining traction globally.

“When opportunities such as these open, it means a lot to upcoming talent to see that it is possible. It shows that if you are patient and passionate, you can go far,” Ramoreboli added.

Ditlhokwe’s transition abroad was built sequentially. After anchoring the SuperSport defense for three seasons and enduring the intense pressure at Naturena, he moved to North Africa in 2025 to join Libyan heavyweights, Al-Ittihad.

His upcoming shift to Amman-based Al-Wehdat SC offers another distinct environment to test his capabilities and enrich his tactical depth.

No longer just a prospect trying to prove his worth, Ditlhokwe stands as an experienced international professional whose journey serves as a benchmark for the next generation. **BOPA**