

BOTSWANA Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



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President Advocate Duma Boko addressing Botswana Prison Services senior officers in Mahalapye yesterday. He said inclusive economic growth was a key government objective in addressing social challenges and reforming the justice system. The President said failure to achieve inclusive economic growth contributed to societal problems and crime. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

Inclusive growth central to addressing social challenges

Keith Keti
MAHALAPYE

Achieving inclusive economic growth requires a multi-faceted approach, and when attained, it can bring about solutions to many of the country's problems.

Speaking during the official

opening of Botswana Prison Service senior officers conference themed: Strengthening Leadership, Operational Discipline and Offender Rehabilitation in a Secure Humane Environment yesterday, President Advocate Duma Boko said it was government's vision

and priority to attain an inclusive economic growth.

He said such a move would make Botswana Prisons Service's job easier given that some offenders committed crimes because of economic hardships.

To this end, he said the attainment of an inclusive

economic growth would mean providing opportunities for people to make a decent living so as to keep them busy or engaged in order to frustrate crime.

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Fiscal position remains unchanged

PARLIAMENT

Since the mid-year budget review, updated information indicates that the fiscal position for the 2025/2026 financial year is broadly expected to remain unchanged with a deficit estimated at over P25 billion.

Presenting the 2026/2027 budget speech in Parliament on Monday, Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe said total revenues and grants had been revised downward to P71.22 billion from the P75.49 billion in the original budget.

"This revision primarily reflects a decline in mineral revenue which has decreased from P15.75 billion to P12.06 billion. SACU revenue has been revised upwards by P631.1 million from P24.36 billion in the original budget to P24.99 billion while VAT revenue has increased by P1.62 billion from P12.10 billion to P13.71 billion," he said.

Mr Gaolathe said non-mineral income tax had been revised downward by P2.69 billion from P19.01 billion in the original budget to P16.32 billion.

He said profits from Bank of Botswana, if any, would be communicated at the appropriate time and would provide an important additional revenue stream, helping ease fiscal pressures and narrow the fiscal deficit.

Mr Gaolathe said total expenditure and net lending had been revised downward to P96.70 billion from the original budget of P97.61 billion.

"Of this amount, recurrent expenditure estimates are maintained at their original budget levels while development expenditure estimates have been revised downward by P903.32 million to P22.85 billion," he added.

He said total revenues and grants for the financial year 2026/2027 were projected at P77.22 billion and that SACU receipts were expected to remain the largest revenue source at P26.79 billion followed by non-mineral income tax which was forecast at P19.76 billion.

Mr Gaolathe said VAT collections were expected to be the third largest contributor at P15.10 billion.

He added that mineral revenue was projected to broadly remain the same at P12.21 billion while the remaining P3.36 billion was expected to come from other



Profits from Bank of Botswana, if any, would be communicated at the appropriate time and would provide an important additional revenue stream, helping ease fiscal pressures and narrow the fiscal deficit.

VAT collections are expected to be the third largest contributor at P15.10 billion.

revenues and grants.

Minister Gaolathe said total expenditure and net lending for 2026/2027 was projected at P103.58 billion.

He said of this amount, total recurrent expenditure was expected to reach P80.32 billion, reflecting government's ongoing commitment to operations and service delivery, adding that the development expenditure was estimated at P23.38 billion while net lending was minus P121.92 million.

Mr Gaolathe said total statutory expenditure for 2026/2027 was estimated at P27.26 billion, representing a 20 per cent increase from the revised allocation of P22.70 billion in the 2025/26 financial year.

He said the provision covered government statutory obligations including debt financing, pension contribution for civil servants and other statutory commitments.

"The allocation towards pensions, gratuities and compensations is primarily driven by the recalculated transfer value of P5 billion for members of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF), an amount of P673.60 million required to rectify transactions related to government's capital injection into DeBeers, an obligation initially settled directly through Bank of Botswana in 2019 as well as anticipated pension contribution arrears of P5 million for C band employees arising from a Court of Appeal judgement on multiple grading of the positions," he said. BOPA

Botswana faces rising debt risks and reserve pressures - Gaolathe

GABORONE

Botswana's once-formidable financial buffers have thinned dramatically, leaving the country navigating tighter fiscal space, declining reserves and mounting debt risks, Finance Minister Mr Ndaba Gaolathe warned in his 2026 Budget Speech on Monday.

The Government Investment Account (GIA), long a symbol of Botswana's fiscal prudence, has fallen to just P2.91 billion, down sharply from its P37.2 billion peak in 2014. At the same time, the country's Net Financial Asset position has swung from a surplus of 40 per cent of GDP in 2008 to a negative 30.1 per cent in 2024.

This shift according to minister Gaolathe reflected years of budget deficits, weaker mineral revenues and growing reliance on borrowing.

He stated that the medium-term fiscal outlook had been revised downward, with government acknowledging that mineral revenues were unlikely to recover quickly, while spending pressures remain high.

Without consolidation, Mr Gaolathe said structural deficits were expected to persist, pushing public debt onto a steeper trajectory. Although debt remains within legal limits, the minister cautioned that continued slippage could threaten long-term

sustainability.

However, he said government's response would centre on gradual fiscal consolidation, prioritising essential spending, improving efficiency, reforming State-Owned Enterprises and strengthening domestic revenue mobilisation.

He nonetheless stated that social protection and growth-driving investments were expected to be shielded to avoid derailing economic recovery.

Minister Gaolathe further explained that external pressures are compounding fiscal challenges. For instance, he said Botswana recorded a P15.32 billion trade deficit between January and November 2025 as export earnings weakened and imports of fuel and food remained high.

Foreign exchange reserves, he said also declined from six months of import cover in 2024 to five months in 2025, tightening liquidity in the forex market.

The minister revealed that without recent exchange rate policy adjustments, projections showed that the pace of reserve depletion would have exhausted the country's foreign exchange by mid-2026.

Policy changes introduced in July 2025 and January 2026 he said have since reduced pressure on reserves and improved interbank foreign exchange trading. New

asymmetric exchange rate margins are also intended to make exports more competitive and support reserve rebuilding.

However, Mr Gaolathe said the fiscal outlook remained vulnerable to several risks including prolonged weakness in the diamond market, global economic slowdowns, climate shocks and domestic threats such as delays in economic reforms and the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease, which could hit beef exports and rural livelihoods.

Revenue shortfalls he mentioned remained the biggest concern, while rising recurrent spending and large infrastructure commitments pose additional strain.

With that being said the minister cautioned that the country now faced a delicate balancing act, rebuilding fiscal buffers while still supporting growth and protecting vulnerable households.

The success of this strategy minister Gaolathe stressed, depended heavily on accelerating economic diversification, improving public spending efficiency and restoring investor confidence.

The era of easy fiscal cushions, the minister made clear, was over. What lies ahead he suggested was a period of careful repair, disciplined spending and structural reform aimed at restoring the country's financial resilience. BOPA

New office to combat financial crime

GABORONE

Government has established the National Coordination Office on Anti Money Laundering, Combating the Financing of Terrorism, and Proliferation Financing.

Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe said during presentation of 2026/2027 budget that this comes at a defining juncture as Botswana intensified preparations for the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group Mutual Evaluation scheduled for January 2027. He said the establishment of this office demonstrated government's resolve to adopt a whole-of-government approach to financial crime risk management.

The office serves as the central mechanism for driving national coordination, strengthening inter-agency collaboration, and ensuring that Botswana's legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks fully comply with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) requirements.

Parliament also learnt that government has commenced the review of the Public Procurement Act, 2021, to align it with global best practices and strengthen transparency and accountability.

Mr Gaolathe said the review sought to improve efficiency, reduce delays, and create a deliberate and structured pathway for previously underrepresented groups, including local manufacturers and other key sectors, to participate meaningfully

in public procurement without distorting the economy.

Other reforms, the minister said, include, the review of the Public Finance Management Act, that aims to strengthen accountability, oversight, management and control of public funds. The Act would ensure compliance with international best practices, including anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing standards. Mr Gaolathe said the review of the Financial Reporting Act, 2020 which commenced in October 2025 would also introduce regulatory measures to promote fair competition between multinational and local audit firms.

The Act would further encourage joint audits between eight multinational and local audit firms for Public Interest Entities and empower the Botswana Accountancy Oversight Authority with adequate resources to conduct regular inspections of multinational firms. Mr Gaolathe said the review of the Public Procurement Act, Public Finance Management Act and the Financial Reporting Act would be tabled during the 2026/2027 financial year. He said the reforms aimed at addressing the declining performance on the global Corruption Perceptions Index. To this end, he said, urgent steps were being taken to operationalise the independence of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime. BOPA

Mohwasa sets record straight on ConCourt

Bonang Masolotate
GABORONE

Establishing the constitutional court is not about addressing same-sex marriages or abolishing the death penalty as some allege.

The court would instead be all-encompassing in addressing constitutional and human rights violations, Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa, explained on Monday when addressing Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations.

He cautioned against public misinformation by those with agendas, adding that there were civil society members who were meeting with politicians to solidify positions against the constitutional

Govt moves to rehabilitate public infrastructure

GABORONE

Government has proposed an allocation of P1.85 billion to rehabilitate and preserve existing government assets, including schools, health facilities, government buildings, roads, and wastewater treatment plants, in the next financial year.

Delivering the 2026/27 Budget Speech Monday in Gaborone, Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe said that it had emerged that Batswana held strong views about the poor condition of public infrastructure, which they rightly regarded as unacceptable.

Government shares this sentiment fully and agrees that the state of these critical public assets must be urgently addressed, Mr Gaolathe said.

With disciplined financial management and fair market pricing, where costs reflect the true value of work delivered rather than being inflated simply because the client is government, Mr Gaolathe said the allocation would be sufficient to restore basic maintenance standards across the public sector in the coming financial year.

He said that to ensure the effective utilisation of the investment, it was further proposed that no virement from maintenance votes be permitted.

The measure will ensure that maintenance funds are applied strictly for their intended purpose and that government finally breaks the cycle of deferred maintenance and escalating rehabilitation costs. **BOPA**

court. The court would serve to protect the rights of all people, as the government is a human rights-based government, it would be a body to oversee the review of the constitution, Mr Mohwasa said.

The minister clarified that the creation of the constitutional court was not anyhow kick-starting the processes of the envisaged constitutional review.

Minister Mohwasa said after passing a two-thirds majority vote by Members of Parliament, there would be a referendum for Batswana to have an input on the creation of the constitutional court.

Civil society and non-governmental organisations' members varied on the establishment of the court.

Mr Keabetswe Sesenao opined that the country desperately needed the court to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of its people, while Ms Tumisang Seabo called for people-driven and transparent consultations, since Batswana were never consulted on whether they wanted a constitutional court to oversee the constitutional review.

Although Batswana in the Dibotelo Commission indicated they wanted a constitutional court, the reasons they advanced differed from those advanced by the government, she said.

In the Dibotelo Commission, Batswana wanted a concourt to



help in the speedy delivery of justice and to relieve the High Court.

She further noted that under the current laws, the ConCourt would operate under the same laws which limit the High Court and the Court of Appeal, thus not having any significant impact.

Another contributor, Ms Lorato Mphusu, said the country faced significant morality and lifestyle

detention issues, and wondered how the ConCourt would help to uphold or erode those.

Thus, she called for the protection of the moral fabric of society.

Mr Mohwasa noted that the problem of morality was not a legal issue but a societal problem.

Generally, the minister said Batswana were an angry society, which bred intolerance leading to

violence.

"The anger also manifests in falsehood and, at times, vulgarity, which borders on criminality directed at the leadership."

Minister Mohwasa promised further consultations with civil and non-governmental organisations, adding that the government remained open to dialogue and consultations.

BOONGO board chairperson, Ms Cindy Kememi, stated that the civil society appreciated the opportunity to engage on the constitutional reform, noting that the process must be founded on meaningful, structured, and inclusive public participation.

She said the dialogue reaffirmed the importance of engagement between civil society and government in strengthening constitutionalism and democratic governance.

Ms Kememi noted that the concerns of civil society reflected the expectations and aspirations of society, adding that consultations must go beyond mere formality.

She called for the publication of clear and accessible information on the constitutional court, including its mandate, jurisdiction, composition, and implications for existing judicial structures.

She also urged for broader public consultations and sufficient time to be allowed for consultations and engagement, among other things. **BOPA**

Inclusive growth central to addressing social challenges

...from page 1

However, the President said that realising an inclusive economic growth remained elusive and had been always challenging to attain.

He said the reality of the country was that Batswana ranked among countries with glaring disparities in economic inclusion, alongside countries such as Namibia, noting that the disparity translated into an exclusion of a large proportion of the people from meaningful economic activity.

In addition, President Boko said the economically marginalised were condemned, side-lined and exist on the margins of the mainstream economy, which led to an interconnected web of daily challenges for societies.

Therefore, President Boko said some of them reacted to such a status quo by drifting into crime, while others try to shield themselves from the harsh reality by drifting into drugs and substance abuse, which in turn created a lot of social ills such as violence of all forms and disregard for the wellbeing of others.

He said society had collectively failed to mould such individuals, resulting in the Botswana Prison Service having to carry the burden of rehabilitating them into responsible citizens of the country - free from re-offending.

For his part, acting Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Augustine Nyatanga urged the nation to understand that the work of the prison service was

restorative in nature as it sought to rehabilitate offenders and reshape their character.

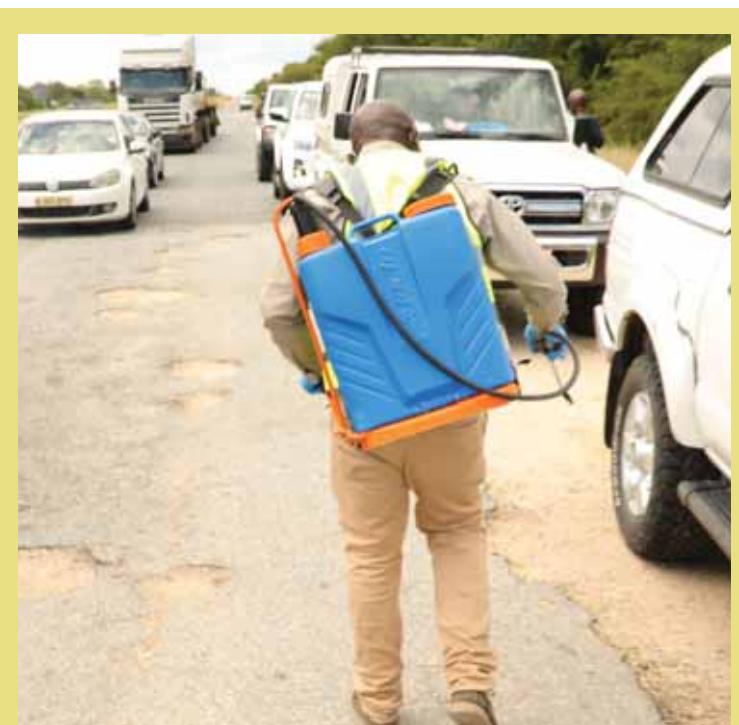
Mr Nyatanga, who is also MP for Mahalapye East, commended President Boko for his message on leadership, saying it was timely and relevant to the work and responsibilities carried by senior officers at the Botswana Prison Service.

He said leading effectively was a collective responsibility of all team members and that possession of great leadership skills would drive

“Society has collectively failed to mould such individuals, resulting in the Botswana Prison Service having to carry the burden of rehabilitating them into responsible citizens of the country - free from re-offending”

the prison service's aspiration to realise and even exceed its objectives.

He called on the senior officers to take to heart President Boko's message and use it as guiding light for the organisation's operations going forward.



An officer fumigating vehicles before leaving Zone 6b at Bisoli Veterinary Gate. Bisoli gate is part of a broader system of 14 main veterinary disease control zones used by government to protect the beef markets since the outbreak of Foot & Mouth Disease at Jackals No.1. Photo: Opopoleng Kgomoethata

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State President, defence and security ministry receives highest share of budget

GABORONE

The Ministry for State President, Defence and Security has been allocated the largest share of the 2026/2027 national budget. P13.05 billion stake is an increase of P502.77 million or 4.01 percent over this year's approved budget.

Delivering the National Budget for the financial year 2026/2027 in Gaborone on Monday, Vice President also Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe said the proposed budget would largely cover operational requirements of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and the Botswana Police Service (BPS), reflecting government's continued commitment to safeguarding national security.

The proposed budget will also finance the absorption of Special Constables into Regular Constable Cadre as well as procurement of their uniform.

In addition, provisions have been made for Termination Allowances; Service Charges and Static Plant under the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC).

The two security organs have been incorporated into the Ministry for State President while National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA) has been transferred back to the Ministry of Health following the rescission of the earlier decision to transfer it to the Ministry for State President, Defence and Security.

The second largest share, P12.99 billion, is allocated to the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, representing an increase of P1.71 billion or 15.2 per cent, compared to the allocation for the previous financial year.

Mr Gaolathe said the substantial allocation underscored government's commitment to strengthening social development and enhancing service delivery within local government structures and traditional affairs. The allocation is intended to improve the ministry's operational capacity, ensure effective functionality and sustained provisions of essential services to communities across the country, he said, adding that the significant growth was primarily attributable to the transfer of funding from the Ministry of Health to support the Primary Health Care function, which was reassigned to the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs as part of the 2024 rationalisation of ministerial portfolios.

Further, a substantial portion of the budget is also allocated to the social welfare programmes, which continue to experience significant growth. These, the minister said, included Destitute Allowances, Old Age Pension Scheme, Orphan Care Programme and the newly introduced Sanitary Ware Support Initiative for mothers and babies, which is scheduled for roll out this budget year.

The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will likewise continue to receive increased subvention in response to rising demands. However, to mitigate escalating pressure on the RSG, Mr Gaolathe urged local authorities to

expedite the review and valuation of properties in districts such as Gamalete and Palapye. This initiative is expected to broaden the revenue base, strengthen local revenue mobilisation and reduce over-reliance on Government funding.

The third largest share of the proposed budget is allocated to the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education, amounting to P11.83 billion, an increase of P147.85 million or 1.3 per cent over the

current year's approved budget. It will cover teachers' salaries and allowances, the development and implementation of Child Welfare policies and programmes, the payment of service charges in schools and operational costs for SOEs under the ministry. It also provides for temporary teaching staff necessitated by the expansion of schools.

The Ministry of Health has been allocated the fourth-largest share of the proposed budget amounting

to P7.51 billion, representing a 16.4 per cent decline over the current year's approved budget. The decline in the ministry's budget, the minister said, was mainly attributed to the transfer of personnel-related funds to the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, following the reassignment of the Primary Health Care function. The proposed budget further includes funding for NAHPA and provision for the establishment of the NHI.

The fifth largest share of the proposed budget is allocated to the Ministry of Higher Education with a total of P7.37 billion, representing an increase of P2.70 billion or 58 per cent over the current year's budget allocation. The significant growth

in the allocation is primarily due to increased provisions for tuition fees to accommodate the rising number of new tertiary students.

The Ministry of Lands and Agriculture has been allocated the sixth largest share of the proposed budget amounting to P2.41 billion, representing a decline of P28.34 million or 1.2 per cent compared to the current year's approved budget.

Despite this modest decline, the proposed budget remains strategically aligned to national priorities aimed at enhancing food security through support for agricultural production, promoting self-reliance by empowering farmers, strengthening extension services and investing in climate-resilient farming practices.

The allocation further supports initiatives to expand employment opportunities across the agricultural value chain. In addition, the proposed budget provides for the continued formulation, implementation, monitoring and management of land policies to ensure equitable access to land, enhance productivity and promote sustainable land use.

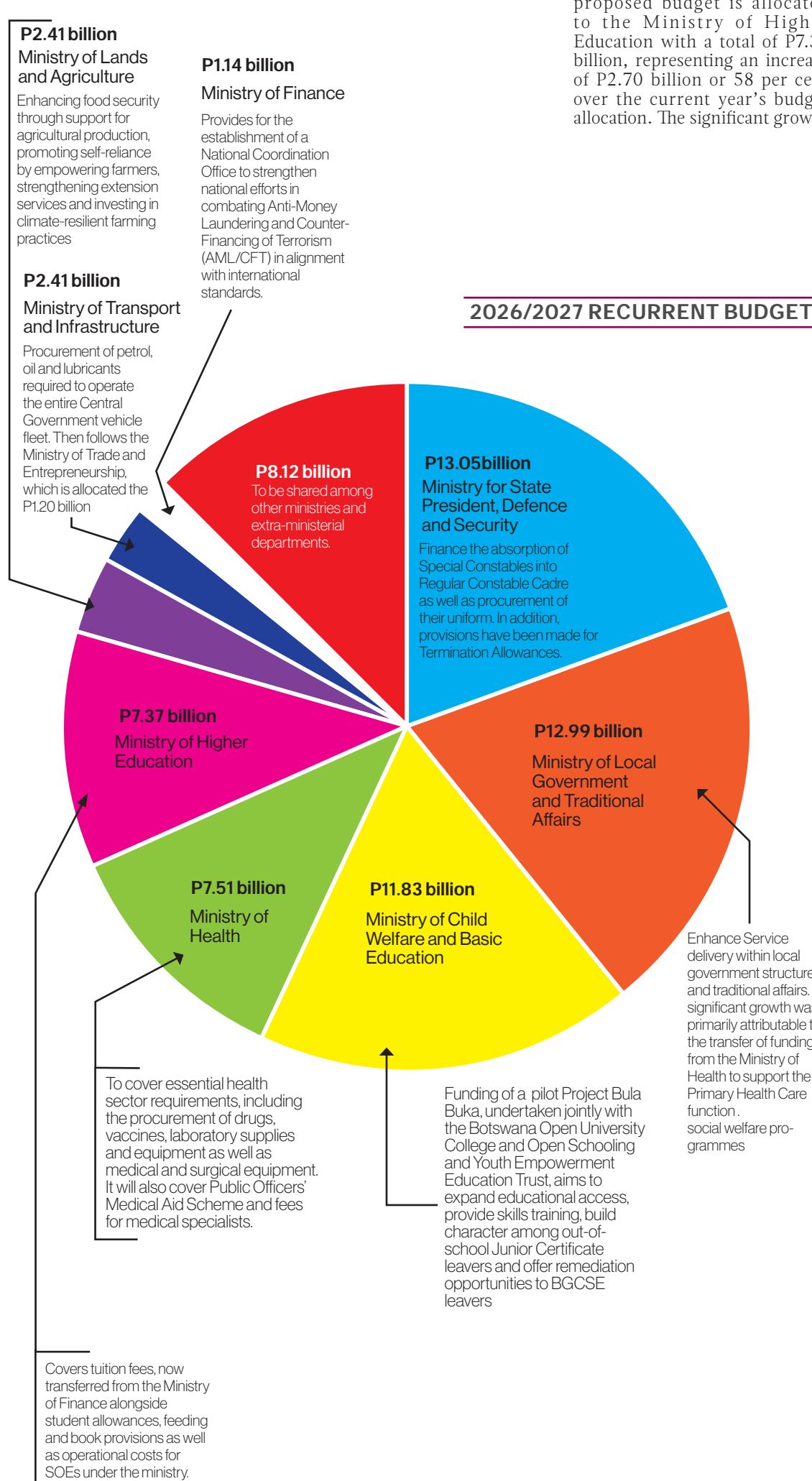
The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure has been allocated the seventh largest share of the proposed budget amounting to P1.93 billion. This represents a decrease of P7.98 million or 0.4 per cent, compared to the current year's approved budget. The bulk of the allocation will cater for the procurement of petrol, oil and lubricants required to operate the entire Central Government vehicle fleet. Then follows the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship, which is allocated the P1.20 billion. This represents an increase of P30.35 million or three per cent increase over the current year's budget.

The Ministry of Finance has been allocated P1.14 billion, a significant decline of P1.92 billion, or 62.68 per cent compared to the current year's approved budget, largely due to the transfer of the tuition fees vote back to the Ministry of Higher Education.

The proposed budget also provides for the establishment of a National Coordination Office to strengthen national efforts in combating Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) in alignment with international standards. This office, Mr Gaolathe said, would play a key role in facilitating Botswana's participation in the third round of Mutual Evaluation, scheduled for 2027.

Furthermore, the allocation includes provisions for the establishment of the Banking Tribunal in accordance with the new Banking Act and its accompanying regulations, which came into effect in August 2025.

The remaining share of the Ministerial Recurrent Budget allocation of P8.12 billion or 12 per cent has been recommended to be shared among other ministries and extra-ministerial departments. BOPA





Habu residents during the Constitutional Court consultations by Assistant Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship Mr Tiroeaone Ntsima in Habu recently.
Photo Kedirebofe Pelontle

Land issues dominate Habu consultations

Kedirebofe Pelontle
HABU

Some residents of Habu have expressed support for the proposed Constitutional Court, hoping it will address what they describe as longstanding injustices related to land ownership. Their comments came during consultations conducted by Assistant Minister of Trade and

Entrepreneurship, Mr Tiroeaone Ntsima recently.

One resident, Mr Uauanaro Kandjou highlighted escalating land conflicts in the village, pointing to instances where the Land Board had allocated the same plots to multiple individuals particularly farmland.

Mr Kandjou argued that inheritance laws contributed to such disputes as some beneficiaries claimed plots as inherited property to the benefit of certain groups. He

suggested that inheritance laws be reviewed or phased out to resolve such anomalies.

Speaking on behalf of the Basarwa community, Ms Keikanetse Letshabamang said they were relocated from their ancestral land decades ago to make way for tourism concessions. She said they were yet to receive formal allocations given that the land board had suspended allocations in Habu for 17 years.

Mr Lasaro Reakae emphasised the need for Botswana laws to reflect the cultures and traditions of all tribes to ensure that the rights of indigenous groups such as the

Basarwa were protected.

Meanwhile, Mr Uatja Nguvauva raised concerns about Human-Wildlife conflict, noting that current compensation laws failed to cover losses, injuries or fatalities, leaving affected families without support.

Some residents, including Mr Eric Alin, welcomed the establishment of Constitutional Court, noting that it should hold superior powers over the President to safeguard human rights effectively.

In response, Assistant Minister Ntsima explained that the Constitutional Court would serve

as a supreme court focused on protection of human rights.

He said matters related to land administration, tourism management, socio-economic traditions, agriculture and natural disasters must align with the Constitution because they impacted citizens' rights.

He added that the ConCourt would also strengthen Botswana's integrity to make the country more attractive to international investors. He assured residents that the Constitutional Court would operate independently from the President and be led by appointed judges. **BOPA**

Moswaane urges objective thinking over partisan judgement

Gaboselwe Olesitse
SELEBI PHIKWE

The Assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ignatius Moswaane has called on stakeholders to work in unison in the interest of the proposed Constitutional Court.

He said overcoming partisan differences was crucial for the country to realise the objective of having a Constitutional Court.

Mr Moswaane was addressing a kgotla meeting in Selebi Phikwe recently, where he solicited meaningful discussions around the initiative and reassured attendees that establishing the court did not mean that government would neglect pressing issues the country was facing.

Instead, he said it was a development that sought to strengthen the country's legal framework, including the protection of human rights.

Nonetheless, residents held different opinion on the matter, some for, and others against the proposal.

Mr Abale Ketsitile said

government should consider reviewing and amending the Constitution. He also Batswana ought to have adequate knowledge about the institution, first and foremost

Mr Ketsitile elaborated on the numerous concerns regarding the constitution that had left many Batswana feeling dissatisfied.

Mr Batani Rauwee agreed to the establishment of the Constitutional Court on the basis that it would safeguard human rights.

Member of Parliament for Selebi Phikwe West, Mr Reuben Kaizer said rather than investing substantial resources into a referendum aimed at establishing the court, an initiative he believed could impose further financial strain on the already struggling economy, practical measures should be implemented to address the concerns of the populace.

He advocated for exploring alternative strategies to bridge any perceived gaps in the legal system, focusing on approaches that would ensure immediate needs of the citizens were met without exacerbating the country's fiscal challenges. **BOPA**

Thandy Tebogo
MMATHETHE

Consultations on the establishment of Constitutional Court were met with high expectations, as Mmathe the residents expressed eagerness for the court's immediate takeoff.

During a meeting addressed by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware, recently community members requested specific updates on the implementation timeline, viewing the court as a significant step toward greater transparency and government accountability.

In her comment, Ms Cathrine Moabankwe described the court as long overdue, stressing that the community had struggled to find closure on unresolved legal issues.

Similarly, Ms Gabanthe Kemoabe expressed hope that the court would resolve long-standing tribal grievances.

She highlighted historical disputes regarding leadership, noting that her tribe had lived under

the Bangwaketse rather than the Barolong and was hopeful that the court would restore their rights.

Residents eager for ConCourt establishment

the Bangwaketse rather than the Barolong and was hopeful that the court would restore their rights.

On one hand, the potential for the court to address social grievances was also a key theme.

Mr Joseph Baipili raised the plight of men forced to pay maintenance for children who were not biologically theirs. He suggested the court could offer a path to justice for fathers who

Community members requested specific updates on the implementation timeline, viewing the court as a step toward greater transparency and government accountability.

discovered the truth only after years of financial support.

Conversely, Ms Omphile Motlapele urged government not to lose sight of basic needs. While not opposing the court, she questioned the consultation process, noting that the proposal seemed to originate in Parliament before reaching the public. She emphasised that daily challenges facing citizens should remain government's priority.

Earlier on, the minister, Maj. Gen. Mokgware, assured residents that once established, Constitutional Court would provide a vital platform for justice.

He noted that under current laws, Batswana faced limitations such as the inability to choose preferred burial site and that customary law was yet to be fully incorporated into the Constitution.

"Anyone who feels their case has not been adequately addressed by the Constitution may take it to the Constitutional Court, the Minister stated, emphasising that the court would serve those seeking clarity on their fundamental rights." **BOPA**



DailyBusiness



China Ambassador to Botswana, Mr Fan Yong (left), Kgosi Tawana II of Batawana (second left), Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Bogolo Kenewendo (right) and Maun East MP, Mr Goretetse Kekgongeile at the official groundbreaking ceremony for Khoemacau Copper Mine expansion project. MMG CEO, Mr Zhao Ivo said the expansion was designed to align with Botswana's national development agenda through several high-impact initiatives, including long-term employment. Photo: Esther Mmolai

Khoemacau expansion to drive job creation

Esther Mmolai

TOTENG

The expansion of the Khoemacau Copper Mine is set to transform Botswana into a key global copper exporter and inject substantial employment and training opportunities into the local economy.

The project, which officially broke ground last Friday, centres on the development of three new mines.

The next phase of growth directly fulfils the promise made by MMG Limited during its 2023 acquisition to create a long-life operation with a lifespan exceeding 20 years.

Speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony, MMG CEO, Mr Zhao Ivo, said the expansion was designed to align with Botswana's national development agenda through several

high-impact initiatives, including long-term employment.

Mr Zhao assured that the next two years would see a significant increase in local hiring, with impacts extending far beyond direct mine labour.

Additionally, MMG was launching a new programme alongside government, international universities and technical partners.

The initiative, Mr Zhao said aimed to address labour shortages by creating a talent pipeline of job-ready Batswana graduates through accelerated certification and practical experience.

He added that it also aimed to support a low-carbon future given that the company was progressing with pre-feasibility work for a future 200 000+ tonne per annum expansion.

"This includes studies into electric

surface haulage trucks and bulk solar power initiatives," Mr Zhao said.

Again, he said by strengthening the base-metals sector, the project bolstered Botswana's reputation as a premier mining investment destination.

The ground-breaking ceremony at the Zone 5 site was attended by the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Bogolo Kenewendo, Chinese Ambassador to Botswana, Mr Fan Yong and North West district leadership.

Furthermore, Mr Zhao described the milestone as a long-term

The expansion was designed to align with Botswana's national development agenda through several high-impact initiatives, including long-term employment.

commitment to building a modern and high-performing copper operation that would create enduring value. He emphasised

that the mine's vision was built on the pillars of safety, operational excellence and environmental stewardship.

While the economic outlook was positive, the event also highlighted the importance of worker welfare.

Maun East MP, Mr Goretetse Kekgongeile, welcomed the expansion's timing during a difficult economic period but urged management to prioritise employee working conditions.

"The Ministry of Labour is overwhelmed by complaints from employees and Botswana Mines Workers Union against unfair working conditions," Mr Kekgongeile said.

In response, MMG CEO reaffirmed its commitment to ensure that every person returned home safe every day as well as working closely with the Ministry of Labour and the Botswana Mine Workers Union to address concerns regarding fair conditions.

Mr Zhao further indicated that the company would maintain strict adherence to international safety and footprint management expectations.

Meanwhile, the expansion represented the realisation of the ambitious outlook MMG presented in 2023. Supported by its major shareholder, China Minmetals Corporation, MMG aims to leverage world-class Chinese and international expertise to turn the Kalahari Copper Belt into a sustainable powerhouse for the essential minerals the world increasingly depends on. **BOPA**

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Govt launches strategic policy instrument

GABORONE - Government will launch the Botswana Mercantile Exchange (BMX) as a strategic policy instrument to support economic diversification. Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe outlined in the 2026 budget speech on Monday that the BMX would introduce an organised, market-driven pricing mechanism for commodities such as sorghum and beef, aligning domestic prices with international benchmarks. This is expected to reduce income volatility for local producers and to improve price discovery, he said. Minister Gaolathe added that the BMX would contribute to reducing Botswana's over-reliance on diamonds by creating new value chains, positioning the country as a regional trading hub, and strengthening integration into global trade networks. **BOPA**

BVI sets up lab to scale up production

GABORONE - In an effort to address ageing infrastructure and unlock additional capacity, a new Blending and Filling Laboratory is currently under development at the Botswana Vaccine Institute (BVI). The 2026 budget speech highlights that the investment will significantly increase production capacity, ensure full compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices and enable the diversification of vaccine products, thereby positioning BVI to strengthen regional supply chains and contribute meaningfully to export-led growth. The facility is expected to be completed in the 2026/2027 financial year. **BOPA**



NARDI laboratories to undergo upgrade

GABORONE - Government will upgrade NARDI's laboratories towards accreditation, expand testing capabilities and modernise the seed processing plant. These strategic investments are expected to strengthen the national seed system, generate revenue, and create employment. Complementing these efforts are high-impact, technology-driven initiatives, including organic fertiliser demonstrations and drone-assisted crop nutrition.

Meanwhile, the expansion represented the realisation of the ambitious outlook MMG presented in 2023. Supported by its major shareholder, China Minmetals Corporation, MMG aims to leverage world-class Chinese and international expertise to turn the Kalahari Copper Belt into a sustainable powerhouse for the essential minerals the world increasingly depends on. **BOPA**

Private sector investments boost Africa food sector

NAIROBI

Experts on Monday convened in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss ways to mobilise private sector investments to accelerate growth in Africa's agricultural sector.

The two-day Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) public-private dialogue on mobilising the private sector for sustainable trade and investment in Africa's agrifood sector brought together over 100 delegates, including government officials, industry executives and representatives from regional

economic blocs.

Themba Khumalo, director of the private sector unit at the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) secretariat, said that the continent's rising food import bill continues to strain fiscal balances and expose millions of Africans to external shocks.

"These realities underscore the urgency of the private sector to support governments in enhancing agricultural output and incomes for farmers, processors, traders, and consumers," Khumalo said.

He added that the AfCFTA will catalyse private investments because it

provides a platform to unlock Africa's vast agricultural potential through trade.

Florian-Emil Dumitru, secretary of state at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania, added that private companies often invest in innovations, such as climate-smart technologies and mechanisation.

Yemi Osinbajo, former vice president of Nigeria, revealed that private investors could support African governments to enable small-holding farmers to overcome challenges such as access to affordable credit and agricultural extension services. **Xinhua**

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Go tsibogela tlhako le molomo go botlhokwa

Gowedswe Kome
JACKALAS NO 1

Go botlhokwa go tsibogela go lwantsha bolwetse jwa tlhako le molomo go itsa gore bo kokonele itsholelo ya malwapa le ya lefatshe phetelela.

Mothusa Tautona Rre Ndaba Gaolathe o buile se fa a ne a buisa phuthego ya kgotla kwa Jackalas No. 1 ka Labotlhano.

Rre Gaolathe a re tlhako le molomo ke segajaja se se tlhokang go potlakelwa, a re ntle le go dira jalo, bolwetse joo bo ka busetsa kwa morago maiteko a lefatshe la Botswana a go godisa mhama wa thuo ya kgomo.

"Kgomo mo go lona ga se itsholelo fela, ke botshelo jwa lona, ke yone e supang boleng jwa monna le mosadi yo o e ruileng," ga rialo Rre Gaolathe a gatelela botlhokwa jwa kgomo mo

botshelong jwa Motswana.

A re go ipoa seaboaboane ga tlhako le molomo kwa kgaolong ya Bokone Botlhaba mo kgaolwaneng ya taolo matlhoko a leruo ya 6b go a tshwena ka go setse go diragetsa ka dingwaga tsa 2002, 2003, 2010 le 2022.

Le fa go le jalo, o tlhalositse fa go nametsa go bona barui ba dikgomo ba ba tsamaileng mosepele o o bothhoko mo go kalo ba santse ba tshwere ka thata mo thuong ka tumelo ya gore ba tlaa kgona.

Fa a phophotha legetla barui bao, Rre Gaolathe o boletse fa ntwa kgatlhanong le tlhako le molomo e tlhoka tshwaragano ya botlhokwa, a supa fa puso e ka seke e e kgone e le esi.

Sebueledi sa lekgotla la baruakgomo la Botswana National Beef Producers Union (BNBPU) Rre Andrew Seeletso a re e rile ba utlwalela tlhagogo ya bolwetse jo, ba kopa ba Botswana Ash go ba thusa ka ditone di le 60 tsa bopi ja letsmai.

Rre Seeletso o tlhalositse fa letsmai leo le ya go gasiwa lefatshe ka bophara go leka go laola le go bolaya mogare wa tlhako le molomo mo mmung le mo leruong.

Morui Rre Gideon Mpinyane o ne a gatelela botlhokwa jwa tshwaragano le tirisanyo mmogo, a re ke tsone di ka ba thusang go fenza mmaba yo o ba tlhaseletseng.

Rre Lawrence Mpotu ene o ne a supa fa dikgomo tsa Jackalas No. 2 le Matshelagabedi di hula mo mahudisong a le mangwe mme tsa kwa Matshelagabedi di sa tipiwa kana go kentiwa.



Mothusa Tautona Rre Ndaba Gaolathe morago ga go buisa phuthego ya kgotla kwa Jackalas No. 1 bosheng. Rre Gaolathe a re go botlhokwa go tsibogela go lwantsha bolwetse jwa tlhako le molomo go itsa gore bo kokonele itsholelo ya malwapa le ya lefatshe phetelela. Senepe: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

A re se se ka busetsa morago maiteko a a tsweletseng a go laola bolwetse.

Rre Mpotu o kopile gore dipolase tse di rekilweng ke puso mo Tati Company di kgaogangwe ka dikgomo tse di iseng di tsenwe ke bolwetse le tse di kileng tsa tlhaselwa.

Monni yo mongwe Rre Samson

Masole o ne a ngongorega ka terata ya molelwane, a tlhalosa fa batho ba e sentse mo ebileng dikoloi le dikotsekara di feta ntle le sekgoletsi.

Rre Masole o ne a tshwaela gape ka go supa fa lefatshe le le rekilweng mo Tati Company le ka thusa go fetsa kgang ya tlhaelo la mahudiso, mme mo

ntlheng e nngwe a kopa gore go tsenngwe motlakase mo terateng ya molelwane go fokotsa tshenyo ya diphologolo le batho.

Rre Thomas Tshabalala o ne a kopa gore go kentela tlhako le molomo e nne selo modiro go leka go thibela bolwetse joo ka nako, go lebilwe gore bo tlhagoga gangwe le gape kwa kgaolong ya bone. **BOPA**

Itireleng JSS e tokafaditse maduo

Grace Sebape
LOBATSE

Sekole se segolwane sa Itireleng kwa Lobatse se akgoletswe go itlhoma kwa pele mo toropong ya Lobatse le mo kgaolong ya borwa mo maduong a a golotsweng bosheng a lokwalo la boraro.

Mogolwane kwa lephateng la thuto go tswa kwa mading kwa Lobatse, Rre Barutwa Khwae a re sekole se se gapile maemo a ntlha mo kgaolong, se longwa serota ke sa Pitikwe se le sone se leng kwa Lobatse.

Rre Khwae a re go a itumedisa go bo dikole tse di tsereng maemo a ntlha le a bobedi mo kgaolong di tswa kwa toropong ya Lobatse, a supa fa kgaolo ya borwa e akaretsa Lobatse le kgaolo ya Goodhope go ya go fitlha kwa Khakhea.

A re go bo baithuti ba le bararo ba sekolo sa Itireleng ba pasitse ditlhatalhobo ka letshwao la MERIT go tlolomaditse sekolo sa Itireleng le go feta.

Mo go tse dingwe, Rre Khwae a re maduo a ne a ka tokafala fa go ne go sena dikgwethlo di tshwana le tlhaelo ya matlo a borutelo a a fekeediwang ke dipalo tsa baithuti, ga mmogo le tlhaelo ya barutabana le bodiredi jo bongwe.

Go sale foo, o boletse fa kemo-nokeng ya batsadi e le bothhokwa thata mo dithutong tsa bana, mme o ne a akgola batsadi ba ba sa iponeng tsapa go tsenya letsogo mo tirong ya bana ya sekole. **BOPA**

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African Mining Indaba highlights partnership-driven development

CAPE TOWN

The Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026, started on Monday in South Africa, highlighting cooperation and partnership-led development across the continent's mining sector.

Speaking at the opening ceremony on Monday, South Africa Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources Gwede Mantashe said the conference was taking place amid growing global uncertainty.

"We are witnessing

heightened geopolitical tensions, driven largely by the competition of some developed economies seeking greater control over the natural resources of developing nations," he said.

"This dynamic represents a serious threat to the sovereignty of resource-endowed countries, the majority of which are here on the African continent."

Against this backdrop, Mantashe said the theme of the event was particularly timely.

"It is, therefore, befitting that the theme of this year's Indaba is: Stronger together: Progress through partnerships. To us, this is not merely a slogan, it is a strategic imperative for Africa to act collectively, speak in one voice, and avoid the destructive race to the bottom in our engagement with global powers and investors," he said.

Highlighting Africa's development priorities, Mantashe stressed the need for

deeper cooperation across the mining value chain.

"Our objective is to deepen collaboration, accelerate responsible exploration and mining, and ensure that Africa captures greater value from its own mineral endowment," he said.

The four-day event, held at the Cape Town International Convention Center, marks the 32nd edition of the African Mining Indaba.

It is expected to draw more than 10 500 delegates from Africa and beyond, including over 1300 global investors, 1450 corporate executives, and about 1400 government officials.

In addition to a mining exhibition featuring over 500 companies, the conference agenda includes intergovernmental summits, investment forums, interactive workshops, and technology and innovation hubs. **Xinhua**

UN mission plans protection site handover to South Sudan

JUBA

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) said on Monday that talks are underway with the South Sudanese government to hand over the remaining Malakal Protection of Civilians (POC) site in Upper Nile State.

UNMISS spokesperson Priyanka Chowdhury said that the process is progressing in a coordinated and orderly manner, with the safety and protection of residents remaining a central priority.

"UNMISS is working closely with Upper Nile State and national authorities as well as humanitarian partners to facilitate the transition of the Malakal UN Protection of Civilians site into a settlement area, for which the government will take full responsibility under its sovereign obligations to protect civilians," Chowdhury told Xinhua in Juba, the capital of South Sudan.

In 2020, the POCs in Bor, Bentiu, Wau, and Juba were redesignated as internally displaced persons camps under government authority.

The Malakal POC site, which hosts approximately 40 000 residents, remains the only safe shelter for civilians fleeing violence amid intermittent clashes between the South Sudan People's Defense Forces and the opposition Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO).

Tensions between the two forces escalated after an attack on the SSPDF base in Nasir, Upper Nile State, in March 2025 by the White Army, a militia which the government claimed to be linked to the SPLA-IO. **Xinhua**

Nigeria president vows to end terrorism and ensure inclusive growth

ABUJA

Nigeria president Bola Tinubu said on Monday that the West African country would defeat terrorism and banditry, describing the threats as 'unacceptable' and alien to core values.

Insecurity remained a major hindrance to economic growth and development, requiring urgent collective action, Tinubu said while opening the country's high-level second National Economic Council (NEC) Conference in Abuja.

According to him, insecurity had kept all citizens sleepless at night. He assured the citizens that all would soon come to an end, citing his earlier promises. "We will overcome this unacceptable terrorism and banditry. It is not part of our culture. It is foreign to us."

Tinubu tasked NEC, statutorily comprising the vice president and all governors of the country's 36 states and the Federal Capital

We will overcome this unacceptable terrorism and banditry. It is not part of our culture. It is foreign to us.

Territory, to drive inclusive growth, stressing the need for the effective implementation of the Renewed Hope National Development Plan 2026-2030.

Themed: Delivering Inclusive Growth and Sustainable National Development: The Renewed Hope National Development Plan 2026-2030, the two-day conference is attended by state governors, ministers, members of the National Assembly, development partners, and private sector leaders.

Describing the Renewed Hope National Development Plan 2026-2030 as "evidence-based, realistic and anchored on inclusive and sustainable growth," the president said it was also designed to deepen grassroots inclusion through a bottom-up approach.

"Nigeria's diversity is our strength. When every state grows, Nigeria grows," he said, adding that infrastructure development across transportation, power, digital connectivity, housing, and irrigation had been prioritised. **Xinhua**

Ruto underlines bilateral cooperation as core of foreign policy

NAIROBI

Kenyan President William Ruto on Monday pledged to further widen and deepen diplomatic engagement in 2026 with the international community.

Ruto, who delivered his annual diplomatic address to Heads of Mission and International Organizations in Nairobi, said Kenya would advance bilateral cooperation frameworks globally, promote peace and security, strengthen trade and investments, expand scientific, technological, and cultural exchanges, foster regional integration, facilitate labor mobility, and harness collective efforts toward shared continental and multilateral aspirations.

He said Kenya remained a firm proponent of a rules-based international order and reaffirmed the government's commitment to sovereignty and territorial integrity as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

"The world stands at a critical inflection point with multilateralism under increasing strain."

It is our firm belief that a strong United Nations, and steadfast adherence to multilateral

principles, remains indispensable in addressing the complex and interconnected challenges of our time," Ruto said.

The Kenyan leader said Africa's continued exclusion, despite bearing a significant share of the Security Council's agenda and peacekeeping responsibilities, undermined the legitimacy and effectiveness of the UN.

Ruto underlined regional peace and security as a core focus of Kenya's foreign policy, stressing that stability in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region is inseparable from Kenya's own national security, economic prospects, and development trajectory.

"Kenya, therefore, remains actively engaged in regional and continental efforts to prevent conflict escalation, strengthen governance, and build resilience in fragile and conflict-affected states," he said.

According to Ruto, Kenya maintains that international initiatives, including the Washington and Doha processes, must reinforce and remain aligned with the consolidated African-led framework to support sustainable outcomes. **Xinhua**

Arts & Culture

Budget speech red carpet moments



Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Dithapelo Keorapetse (left) and wife, Katlego graced the red carpet with poise and sophistication, setting the tone for the occasion.

The 2026/27 Budget Speech was not just a political milestone, it was also a red carpet moment where style took centre stage. Legislators, executives and public figures showcased fashion elegance, blending classic tailoring with modern fashion sensibilities. From impeccably cut pinstripe suits to minimalist yet striking designs, the red carpet became a stage for personal expression, proving that even at formal state events, fashion speaks volumes. Photos: Phenyo Mogolosi



Botswana Tourism Organisation CEO, Ms Keitumetse Setlang showcased the beauty of Leteisi, wearing a design that celebrated both culture and contemporary elegance.



Maun West legislator, Mr Caterpillar Hikuama (left) and wife brought a touch of refined sophistication to the event, embodying both elegance and charm in their Herero attire.



Lucara Botswana managing director, Ms Naseem Lahri made a striking entrance, showcasing a confident and contemporary style that commands attention.



Leader of the Opposition, Mr Dumelang Saleshando (left) and wife, Dineo turned heads on the red carpet, perfectly blending political presence with stylish elegance.



SAFDICO CEO, Ms Rutang Moses impressed with a sharp, tailored look that commanded professional authority balanced with modern style.



Comedian, Mr Onkgopotse 'Mdala ka Tje' Mugende (left) and Nkange MP, Mr Motlhaleemang Mogolosi sharing a light hearted moment, proving that humour and fashion can coexist effortlessly.

DailySport



Botswana's Godknows Ketlhabanetswe returning a serve during the All Africa senior badminton championships in Tlokweng yesterday. He lost 21-12, 21-7 to Ibrahim Ahmed of Nigeria. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe



Team Botswana coach Oreeditse Thela



Botswana's Tefo Kabomo during the All Africa senior badminton championships in Tlokweng yesterday. He lost 21-9, 21-3 to Nigeria's Joseph Abel. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Botswana badminton team starts on low note

‘ What let the team down was a number of unforced errors that gave Nigeria the upper hand. ’



Team Botswana Tsamorena Kgosidialwa during the All Africa senior badminton championships yesterday where he lost 11-21, and 21-10 to Nigeria's Aljaji Shehu. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

Team Botswana started the All Africa Senior Badminton Championships on a low note after the men's team lost 5-0 to Nigeria. Nigeria, which is regarded as one of Africa's superpowers, came out guns blazing, winning all their matches by convincing margins.

First on court for Team Botswana was Tsamorena Kgosidialwa, who lost 21-11 and 21-10 to Nigerian Aljaji Shehu.

In the second match, Botswana's Tefo Kabomo lost 21-9, 21-3 to Nigerian Joseph Abel, while Godknows Ketlhabanetswe went down 21-12, 21-7 to Ibrahim Ahmed.

In the doubles, Botswana lost 21-14, 21-13 in the first match, and in the second match they were defeated 21-12, 21-15.

Team Botswana coach Oreeditse Thela said in an interview that his team did not have a good start, adding that although they lost 5-0, the team did well considering that Nigeria also beat them with a big margin.

The coach said what let them down was a number of unforced errors that gave Nigeria the upper hand.

Thela said they still have some matches to play, but decried that their preparations ahead of the tournament were affected by financial constraints.

He, however said training in India helped them to keep Nigeria at bay, considering that the set margins were not as wide as in previous competitions.

“We were in India for 21 days just to improve the intensity of play for our players, because the game of badminton requires speed and control,” he said. BOPA