

# BOTSWANA Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



Bodutu commits to culture preservation

Page 7



Swimmers defy the odds to win medals

Page 8

NEWS

Government looks to implement fan shaped pay structure

Page 2

BUSINESS

Financial pressure slows infrastructure progress

Page 4

DIKGANG

Ba Gabamochoa ba itela mo go mopalamente

Page 5



## Govt secures more medical supplies

Minister of Health Dr Stephen Modise has assured the nation that government was making progress in addressing medicine shortages across the country, with large consignments of essential medicines already arriving and more expected in the coming weeks. Addressing the nation in Gaborone on Tuesday, he said the ministry had implemented a series of emergency procurement measures, including securing six to 12 months' worth of supplies through international procurement agencies such as the IDA Foundation and seven months' worth of medicines through a special arrangement with the United Arab Emirates. In addition, he said, government had expanded sourcing to other regions to reduce risks associated with global supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions.

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# Office lifts water abstractions from Thamalakane River

Esther Mmolai  
MAUN

The suspension of the sourcing of water from Thamalakane River, which has been in place since last year, has been lifted.

The suspension was made by the Office of the District Commissioner in Maun following growing calls by local leaders and community members that extracting water excessively from the river had negative environmental outcomes.

The office had suspended the sourcing of water from the river and its tributaries of Gomoti, Boro and Nhabe in response to the assertion by the community that when the river receives flood, it comes back to life, thereby allowing their economic activities to bounce back.

They had contended that it was disturbing that some companies were sourcing huge volumes of

water from the river to undertake construction projects and other developmental works.

While the decision was made to ensure fair water distribution and to protect the delicate ecosystems of the river and to prevent it from running dry, the suspension did not cover abstractions for domestic uses such as watering livestock.

However, the district commissioner for the North West District, Mr Thabang Waloka told members of the District Development Committee that a decision had been taken to lift the suspension because the river was currently over-flooding.

Heavy seasonal rains in the Okavango Delta have created an exceptional high-water year across Ngamiland with the Thamalakane River system surging earlier and fuller than usual.

Mr Waloka said it was expected that the river would overflow even more once the annual flood waters from the Angolan highlands and from Mohembo arrived at the end of this month, a situation that he said would likely wreak havoc on

households along the river bank.

This, he said was why a decision was made to lift the suspension in order to allow for a reduction in the level of water.

"You will recall that we urged the general public to stop the unsustainable abstractions from the Thamalakane River last year to ensure the river's recovery and long-term sustainability but this time the system is flooding hence we allow members of the public and those with water rights to source water from the river," he added.

Nonetheless, Mr Waloka appreciated that some members of the community had taken advantage of the flood to venture into economic activities such as fishing, boat cruising and harvesting of the local traditional food, Tswii.

He however, urged them to exercise extreme caution near waterways, noting that despite water being essential to life, it could be a destructive force too.

"We acknowledge the significance of the floods on the livelihoods of our communities but

I encourage them to be vigilant as the river is a home to dangerous animals," he said, acknowledging that when rivers flood, the effects could be cartographic as rising

waters could displace wild animals and rivers carried dangerous species such as hippos, crocodiles and snakes, which could then pose a danger to the community. **BOPA**

## Government looks to implement fan shaped pay structure

Gontle Merafhe  
GABORONE

The Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) is planning to negotiate with public service unions to implement a new fan shaped pay structure, says DPSM representative, Ms Mmoninyana Rantsudu.

The structure was recommended by AB Consultancy, the firm formerly known as PEMANDU.

Addressing the Standing Committee on Government Assurances in Gaborone on Monday, Ms Rantsudu explained that previous negotiations failed in 2025 when the unions requested to discuss the salary structure within a specialised forum.

However, she noted that since January, both the DPSM and the unions had been actively drafting the terms and conditions for the new structure to ensure fair compensation.

"AB Consultancy has been re-engaged for this process. While the existing salary disparities have been acknowledged and agreed upon in principle, the specific modalities of implementation are still being finalised," She stated.

On the ongoing issues of workforce congestion and

stagnation within the public service, Ms Rantsudu revealed that 26 460 civil servants were currently stuck at the top of their respective salary grades and that the fan shape structure would alleviate this gridlock.

Furthermore, she announced plans to reintroduce a lagging Performance Management System, which aimed to ensure that public servants advanced based on measurable performance rather than mere length of service.

In response, committee member Mr Reason Lekutlane pointed out that when civil servants hit their salary scale ceilings, inflation eroded their disposable income since their wages remained flat.

Another committee member, Mr Mpho Morolong, expressed strong displeasure regarding the lowest basic salary for public servants, which stood at P4,000.

He noted that this baseline was only made liveable through additional housing and upkeep allowances.

Mr Morolong also criticised the high number of executive public servants holding roles in an acting capacity, and highlighted that teachers were heavily congested within the C-Scale, with many performing extra duties without additional remuneration. **BOPA**



The newly constructed Special Support Group accommodation and ablutions blocks were officially opened by Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa in Gaborone on Monday. The project comprises four prefabricated accommodation blocks and two ablution facilities, which together are capable of accommodating 368 officers.

Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

## SSG officers receive new accommodation facility

Benita Magopane  
GABORONE

Hundreds of officers from Special Support Group (SSG) will soon move into improved living facilities following the completion of a housing project valued at more than P16 million.

A total of 368 officers are expected to benefit from newly constructed accommodation and ablution facilities officially handed over at the SSG camp on Monday.

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister for State President, Defence and Security Mr Moeti Mohwasa said the project demonstrated government's commitment to improving the welfare and working conditions of public servants.

Mr Mohwasa said decent

accommodation directly influenced officers' morale, productivity, discipline and overall performance.

"Officers who live in safe and dignified conditions are better positioned to execute their responsibilities with focus, commitment and professionalism," he said.

He described adequate shelter as a basic human need and linked the initiative to government's broader efforts under the Bonno National Housing Programme to promote dignity and inclusion in public service delivery.

While acknowledging that effective policing required officers to have secure and conducive living conditions, Commissioner of Police Dinah Marathe said some

SSG officers were forced to live in tents and overcrowded barracks. Currently, she said SSG had 1

496 officers.

She revealed that 296 officers were currently accommodated in substandard facilities, with some having lived under such conditions for as long as eight years.

The situation, she said, exposed officers to harsh weather conditions and fell short of Botswana Police Service housing standards.

The Police Commissioner therefore thanked government for prioritising public security and supporting the housing initiative.

The completed project consists of four prefabricated housing units and two ablution blocks capable of accommodating 368 officers.

The ablution facilities were constructed at a cost of P1.26 million, while the housing units were built by Express Link at a cost of P16.38 million. **BOPA**



Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) acting director, Ms Mmoninyana Rantsudu (right) and Ministry for State President, Defence and Security acting permanent Secretary, Mr Jeremiah Makgwa appearing before Standing Committee on Government Assurances in Gaborone on Monday. Ms Rantsudu said DPSM was planning to negotiate with public service unions to implement a new fan shaped pay structure. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

# Govt secures more medical supplies

Lesedi Thatayamodimo

GABORONE

Minister of Health has assured the nation that government is making significant progress in addressing medicine shortages across the country, with large consignments of essential medicines already arriving and more expected in the coming weeks.

Addressing the nation on Tuesday in Gaborone, Minister of Health, Dr Stephen Modise, acknowledged that the shortage remained a major challenge, a situation he described as 'unfortunate and totally undesirable'.

"The declaration of the State of Public Health Emergency last year was a recognition of the challenges we inherited. However, we could not allow the situation to continue indefinitely and we have taken decisive steps to stabilise medicine supplies," said Dr Modise.

To address the crisis, Dr Modise said the ministry had implemented a series of emergency procurement measures, including securing six to 12 months' worth of supplies through international procurement agencies such as the IDA Foundation.

The procurement covers critical products including antiretroviral medicines, cancer treatments and surgical sutures.

He further noted that government had procured seven months' worth of medicines through a special arrangement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and expanded sourcing to other regions, to reduce risks associated with global supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions.

The minister said medicines continued to arrive, despite delays affecting some UAE consignments.

Of the 338 product lines ordered through the UAE arrangement, Dr Modise said 37 had already been received, while another 105 product lines began arriving last week.

Additional shipments are expected over the next two to three weeks.

"All products received are immediately tested and distributed to health facilities for use," said Dr Modise.

He pointed out that medicines already delivered included antibiotics, intravenous infusion fluids, allergy medications, insulin and eye-care products.

Despite the progress, Dr Modise admitted that shortages continued

to affect certain categories of medicines since those used to treat hypertension, diabetes and asthma remained in limited supply, with stock levels currently standing at 20, 22 and 17 per cent respectively.

The arrival of expected consignments is projected to increase availability to 75, 60 and 58 per cent respectively.

Dr Modise said overall stock levels for key medicines remained relatively stable, with antiretroviral medicines at 93 per cent availability, cancer medicines at 87 per cent and tuberculosis medicines at 76 per cent.

He said the ministry was pursuing long-term reforms aimed at strengthening procurement systems and preventing future shortages.

Plans include establishing more efficient and resilient supply chains, implementing long-term supplier agreements, improving forecasting and inventory management and enhancing real-time stock visibility through digitalisation.

Furthermore, the ministry is engaging international development partners to improve procurement practices, ensure value for money in medicine purchases and reduce reliance on costly private-sector sourcing.

In a broader effort to strengthen national medicine security, Dr Modise said the ministry was promoting local pharmaceutical manufacturing as a strategic priority.

He said developing Botswana's pharmaceutical industry would not only improve medicine availability but also contribute to economic growth and regional supply stability.

"We recognise that establishing local production capacity will take time, but these are critical investments that will secure affordable and reliable access to medicines for future generations," he said.

He also expressed gratitude to healthcare workers who continued to deliver services under difficult conditions and called on citizens to use available healthcare resources responsibly. **BOPA**



Vice President and Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe (right) and Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) director general, Ms Bopelokgale Soko during FIA Unit Day commemoration and launch of Strategic Plan 2026-2029 and the agency's website in Gaborone on Tuesday. Mr Gaolathe said government was committed to ensuring that FIA had the legal authority, operational independence and resources necessary to effectively fulfill its mandate effectively. Photo: Thompson keobaletswa

## FIA instrumental in financial stability promotion

Thato Mosinyi

GABORONE

Government recognises the Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) as a strategic institution in promoting financial stability, investor confidence and economic development.

Speaking at the commemoration of the International Financial Intelligence Unit Day, Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe emphasised government's commitment to ensuring that FIA possesses the legal authority, operational independence and resources required to fulfil its mandate effectively and in accordance with international standards.

Mr Gaolathe indicated that financial integrity was strengthened when vigilance became a shared responsibility and compliance and accountability became a culture and a national value, respectively.

"Financial integrity is ultimately about people; it is about protecting livelihoods. It is about protecting

opportunity and about ensuring that the wealth generated within our economy serves legitimate aspirations rather than criminal interests," he said.

He stated that government was seeking to build a country that must be characterised by fairness, transparency, accountability and trust.

The values, he said were foundational as they shaped the quality of governance and influenced economic outcomes, thus determining how future generations would judge the current stewardship.

Mr Gaolathe noted that it was hence important to build a Botswana that remained a beacon of integrity, a paragon of fairness and a model of shared prosperity.

As Botswana prepares for its Third Mutual Evaluation in 2027, a process which would assess the effectiveness of the country's systems, its institutions and its response to financial crime risks, Mr Gaolathe said the success would depend on sustained collaboration, institutional

discipline and demonstrable results.

"It will depend on our collective commitment to ensuring that intelligence continues to deliver impact across every part of our national response to financial crime," he said.

He thus encouraged all institutions to continue working closely with FIA in an effort to strengthen the national response to financial crime.

With the day also marking an important milestone with the launch of the FIA Strategic Plan, its new corporate identity and enhanced digital platforms, the Vice President said the initiatives reflected an institution preparing itself for the future.

Mr Gaolathe stated that resilience required continuous improvement, investment in capability and a willingness to embrace change.

Therefore, he commended FIA for embracing the journey of transformation and for positioning itself to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex financial environment. **BOPA**

## Boko hails BHP for raising Botswana research profile

Bonang Masolotatse

GABORONE

President Advocate Duma Boko has commended the Botswana Harvard Partnership (BHP) for elevating Botswana's profile in scientific research and development, describing the institution as a key contributor to the country's growing presence in the global knowledge economy.

The President, who received BHP delegation during a courtesy call at the Office of the President on Tuesday, noted BHP's contribution to the discovery of the Omicron COVID-19 variant of SARS-CoV-2 in 2021, which helped shape global preparedness and intervention strategies during the pandemic.

The achievement, he said demonstrated that Botswana was not merely a consumer of knowledge but an active contributor to scientific advancement.

"What it indicated to us is that in this knowledge economy, we are not coming as mere consumers. We are

grateful for raising our profile in that manner," he said, describing BHP as a storehouse of knowledge

Despite these achievements, President Boko noted that Botswana continued to face emerging public health challenges, particularly cancer, including cervical cancer, where prevention efforts remained inadequate.

Therefore, he urged BHP to play a more visible and vocal role in raising awareness among leaders and the public, saying government systems were often large and sometimes ineffective in responding swiftly to challenges.

As a result, he said voices from outside government were essential in highlighting issues requiring urgent attention.

On the issue of funding, President Boko said dependence on international donors remained a challenge for many African institutions.

"When one is dependent on external funding, they are at the mercy of those who provide it," he

said, stressing the need to develop sustainable domestic funding mechanisms.

The President also encouraged BHP to widely publish and share its research findings, noting that numerous studies conducted during the peak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic had not been sufficiently disseminated.

Reiterating President Boko's comments on BHP's significant role in the research field, BHP Executive Director, Dr Gaerolwe Masheto, noted that BHP had contributed to many of Botswana's major public health milestones, particularly in HIV prevention, treatment, care and policy development, as well as in tuberculosis, maternal and child health and cancer research.

He said the organisation had grown into a globally respected institution that had contributed significantly to Botswana's public health achievements and international reputation.

He said BHP currently employed approximately 300 full-time staff

members and was managing 90 active research studies and capacity-building grants across key sites in Gaborone, Molepolole and Francistown.

Dr Masheto said competitive grants constituted the largest share of the institution's funding, averaging about US\$10 million annually.

"This is therefore an inward capital influx into Botswana per year for the various projects being undertaken by BHP," he said.

Dr Masheto also invited President Boko to serve as guest of honour at BHP's 30th anniversary gala dinner in November and to visit Harvard University in September to explore opportunities for expanded collaboration beyond the existing partnership.

Established in 1996 through a strategic partnership between the government and Harvard University at the height of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, BHP is a non-profit institution dedicated to advancing research, training and public health outcomes. **BOPA**

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# DailyBusiness

## Economic recovery projects remain on course

Calviniah Kgautlhe  
LOBATSE

While the government is currently grappling with sluggish economic growth and Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, some key priority projects targeted at economic resuscitation, and strategic employment creation opportunities are on course, says Member of Parliament for Lobatse Mr Kamal Jacobs.

Addressing a kgotla meeting at Peleng ward on Monday, Mr Jacobs said government had made substantial progress in implementation of various programmes and policies as well as major projects, some of which were being implemented in Lobatse.

He cited the Botswana Development Corporation led Milk Valley Farm project which continued to make significant progress through its expansion programme aimed at strengthening Botswana's domestic milk production and supporting agricultural value chain development.

The dairy farm, he said was currently undertaking a herd expansion and optimisation programme which would see procurement of 200 cows expected to arrive at the end of June 2026 from Brazil.

MP Jacobs emphasised that the expansion programme was expected to enhance milk output and contribute substantially towards reducing Botswana's reliance on dairy imports.

He said the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC), Lobatse Tannery Project and the Meat value-addition and secondary processing plant to replace the current ECCO Cannery plant were currently progressing well. The Lobatse legislator said other developments were ongoing at the BMC such as the tannery, meat processing plant adding that once complete the projects would create more employment opportunities.

He underscored that the BMC was the bedrock of Lobatse local economy and a profound national asset adding that the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in Zone II had abruptly caused its temporary closure. As such, he called for the nation to continue standing together in the fight against the disease as well as collectively working together towards nation building.

He said government was committed to the fight against FMD having dedicated resources to halt the spread of the disease. He advised Lobatse residents and farmers to adhere to FMD protocols as well as employ biosecurity measures in their farms such as kraaling their cattle, following rules and regulations set by veterinary officials on how to take care of their livestock. He warned that the outbreak of FMD had caused a major blow to the economy.

On a positive note, he said the Pioneer commercial border Post facilities have been completed and would soon begin to operate for



Lobatse MP, Mr Kamal Jacobs (left) and residents during a meeting at Peleng Kgotla on Monday. He said government had made progress in implementation of various programmes, policies and projects meant to resuscitate the economy, some of which were in Lobatse. Photo: Calviniah Kgautlhe

24 hours along with Tlokweg and Martin's Drift border posts. He further mentioned that the development would open door to more 24-hour business opportunities between Botswana and its neighbouring countries as well as revive Lobatse Local economy.

He also highlighted that government had transformed the Ipelegeng programme into Ikageng Public Works Programme as part of efforts to strengthen social protection and improve livelihoods. The revitalised programme, he said was aimed at responding to the long term objective of inclusive growth and creation of quality lives through generating sustainable livelihood opportunities for citizens.

The new programme, he said was expected to go beyond temporary relief measures and contribute meaningfully towards sustainable socio-economic development. Additionally, he said the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs had drawn rules and regulations for the programme adding that those who were above 65 years would not benefit from the Ikageng programme as a way

to give the youth opportunity to work.

He said government was currently working to review the national minimum wage framework through introduction of the P4,000 minimum wage bill aimed at observing workers' rights and driving economic stability. The bill, he divulged would be tabled during the winter National Parliament.

Mr Jacobs told residents that Parliament recently amended Section 201(a) of the Penal Code in Botswana, aimed at imposing mandatory minimum sentences of 20 years in prison including life imprisonment for offenders found in possession of human remains, a proposal which he had made.

The amendment, he said formed part of a broader effort to address the increasing trend of ritualistic crimes and to ensure that such offenses were treated seriously. He emphasised that the current legal framework had been too vague, which contributed to recidivism and the rise of cases linked to ritualistic practices citing the 2022 ritual murder case of a 6-year old Tlotso Karema in Lobatse. **BOPA**

## Financial pressure slows infrastructure progress

Manowe Motsaathebe  
BOBONONG

Due to prevailing financial constraints, the Bobirwa District Council's infrastructure budget continues to face a downward trend, says Council Chairman Mr Johannes Gaosikelwe.

Delivering his welcome remarks on Monday, Mr Gaosikelwe stated that the reality of the infrastructural fiscal challenges, when measured against the need for improvements across all sectors of the Bobirwa District, was sobering.

"However, I want to reassure you that we are not merely folding our hands in resignation; instead, we are working tirelessly to optimise every available Pula," the chairman said.

He added that this approach would stretch their limited resources to make the most meaningful impact on the state of local infrastructure.

**'The reality of the infrastructural fiscal challenges, when measured against the need for improvements across all sectors of the Bobirwa District, is sobering.'**

He further noted that the council was actively transitioning toward a more self-reliant model to enhance its operational capacity.

As part of this transition, the council has ordered a new bulldozer and a crane truck, which are expected to be delivered by the end of June this year.

These strategic acquisitions are anticipated to be "game changers" for service delivery.

The bulldozer will significantly reinforce the council's efforts

in road maintenance and the rehabilitation of dumping sites, while the crane truck will provide the specialised utility required for the efficient maintenance of streetlights.

Additionally, the crane will facilitate the installation of upcoming solar streetlight projects in both Mmadinare and Bobonong villages.

"By shifting this work to be done in-house, we are not only reducing costs but also reclaiming control over our project timelines," Mr Gaosikelwe explained. Although he painted a somewhat bleak financial picture for infrastructural improvements, the chairman noted that ongoing projects were showing positive momentum.

He cited the Tobane stormwater drainage project, which is near completion, as one of those progressing extremely well.

Furthermore, the chairman told the full council that the contractor was about to begin resealing the Bobonong Access Road as part of

their commitment to building a better Bobirwa. On other issues, Mr Gaosikelwe spoke highly of the operationalisation of BOMMA Investments, a special purpose vehicle for the council.

He stated that it stood as a beacon of hope for the Bobirwa economy, representing "the engine of our future financial autonomy."

"I am thrilled to report that the company is now in full swing, and the council is in the final stages of transferring several of its strategic assets to this entity," he said.

Consequently, the chairman drummed up support for the entity, emphasising that it would unlock the potential of these assets to generate sustainable revenue and create much-needed employment opportunities for local youth.

Backed fully by the council, BOMMA Investments is tipped to become the catalyst for the long-envisioned prosperity of the region. **BOPA**

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### Forum aims to enhance agricultural modernisation

**NAIROBI** - The 2026 China-Africa Agri-Tech and Industrial Cooperation Forum opened on Tuesday in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, bringing together policymakers, researchers, and industry leaders to deepen agricultural cooperation and drive continental modernisation through innovation, technology transfer, and strategic partnerships. The high-level forum attracted more than 100 delegates who discussed opportunities for expanding China-Africa collaboration in agricultural technology, innovation, trade, and investment. In her opening remarks, Chinese Ambassador to Kenya Guo Haiyan said that as China and Africa continued to deepen cooperation under the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, agricultural modernisation had been an essential area for a mutually beneficial partnership. **Xinhua**

#### IMF grants Rwanda US\$250m to support economic reforms

**KIGALI** - The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved Rwanda's request for a 38-month arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF), providing access to Special Drawing Rights (SDR) 185.031 million (about US\$250 million, equivalent to 115.5 per cent of the country's quota. In a statement issued on Monday, IMF said the approval authorised an immediate disbursement of SDR 26.433 million to support the country's economic programme. According to the IMF, the ECF-supported programme was designed to help Rwanda adjust to tighter global financing conditions while maintaining economic growth, safeguarding priority social and development spending, and rebuilding policy buffers. "Rwanda's economy has remained resilient amid successive shocks, reflecting strong reform ownership and agile policymaking," Li Bo, IMF deputy managing director and acting chair of the executive board, was quoted as saying in the statement. **Xinhua**

#### QatarEnergy makes new oil discovery offshore Namibia

**DOHA** - QatarEnergy announced on Tuesday a new oil discovery at the Merlin-1X exploration well in Petroleum Exploration License 39 (PEL 0039), located offshore Namibia, according to a statement issued by the company. Merlin-1X is the 10<sup>th</sup> well drilled under the license and has delivered the most promising subsurface results to date, including good reservoir quality, light oil and limited associated gas, said the statement. "These results represent a significant step that further strengthens confidence in the Orange Basin as an emerging world-class hydrocarbon province and aligns with QatarEnergy's strategy to expand its international upstream portfolio through high-impact exploration," the statement quoted Qatar's Minister of State for Energy Affairs, the President and CEO of QatarEnergy, Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, as saying. **Xinhua**

# Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

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# Ba Gabamochaa ba itela mo go mopalamamente

Esther Mmolai

MAUN

Mopalamamente wa Maun North, Rre Dumelang Saleshando, o solofeditse banni ba Gabamochaa fa a tlaa ikgolaganya le ba botsogo go latedisa se se emisitseng go isa ditlamelo tsa botsogo kwa motseng oo.

Rre Saleshando o ne a tsibogela selemo sa banni mo phuthengong ya kgotla bosheng, a supa fa botsogo e le konokono ebile Motswana mongwe le mongwe a na le tshwanelo ya go akola ditlamelo tsa botsogo.

E re ka motse oo o ise o tthomamisiwe, banni ba supile fa bagodi ba ne ba koleka go aga ntlwana e ba amogelelang mo go yone mme ba dumalana gape ka bongwefela jwa pelo gore e nne yone e ba tlaa akolelang ditlamelo tsa botsogo mo go yone, go ba kgaola mosepele wa go ya kwa Shorobe.

Banni ba boletse fa ba botsogo ba ntse ba ba etela gangwefela mo kgwedding mme thulaganyo eo e na le dingwaga e emisitswe.

Gape, ba supile fa merwalela e ba paledisa go latela ditlamelo tsa botsogo kwa Maun le Shorobe ka jaana metsi a tswetse ditsela le marogo.

Mothusa modulasetilo wa komiti ya ditlhabololo tsa motse, Rre Tshiamo Forembe, o supile fa ba na le marogo a le mararo mme otlhe a penologa.

O tlhalositse fa marogo ao ba a diretswe ke ba mokgaltlho wa Elephant Havens, o o tlhokomelang ditlowana tsa maisela le tse di nyeleletsweng ke bo mmatsone.

Elephant Havens gape e ruta setshaba ka tshomarelo diphologolo le tikologo.

Rre Forembe o boletse fa bagodi ba tlamega go tloa dinoka ka ditonki go ya go bona ba botsogo mme bangwe ntateng ya bogodi.

"Re leboga go menagane ka jaana ba Elephant Havens ba



Banni ba Gabamochaa kwa phuthengong ya kgotla e e neng e buisiwa ke mopalamamente wa Maun North, Rre Dumelang Saleshando bosheng. Ba kopile mopalamamente go latedisa se se ka tswanag se emisitse go isa ditlamelo tsa botsogo kwa motseng wa bone. Senepe: Esther Mmolai

ne ba re tswa thuso gape bosheng, ba dira gore re kgone go tloa, ke ka moo le kgonneng go gogora kwano. Mokgatlho o, o tswa

kgakala o re tshageditse ka jaana le metsi re nwa a a phepa ka ntlha ya bone," Rre Ferembe a supa. Mo dikgannyeng tse dingwe,

banni ba ne ba itela mo go mopalamamente ka tshenyho e e dirwang ke diphologolo, ba supa fa ba itshetsa ka temo le go rua

mme ditlou le ditau di ba jesetsa mo kgobedung. Ba re sebe sa phiri ke go re le fa ba ikuela, go tsaya nako gore ba thusiswe. **BOPA**

# Tona o kopa banni go ithaopa

Aobakwe Molefhi  
**MMATHETHE**

Tona wa lefatshe le temo-thuo Dr Edwin Dikoloti o kopile banni ba Mmathethe le metse e e mabapi go potlakela go aga terata e e kganelang motsamao wa leruo.

Fa a buisa phuthego ya kgotla kwa motseng oo ka Labobedi, Tona o supile fa puso e lemoga manokonoko a go emisa thekiso ya dikgomo.

Arekekamoogoleng bothokwa gore terata eo e potlakelwe gore bolwetse jo mo nakong ya gompieno bo utlwalelwang

kwa Molapowabojang le Kgomokasitwa bo seka jwa anamela kwa pele.

O supile fa seo gape seka thusa gore gongwe e kare mo bogaufing, puso ya sekaseka seemo sa bolwetse mme kwa bo seong teng barui ba ka letlelelwa go rekisa.

Dr Dikoloti o supile fa mo nakong ya gompieno gole bothokwa gore mongwe le mongwe a eme ka dinao go lwantsha bolwetse, a supa fa bo sa babalele barui fela mme bo ama le itsholelo ya lefatshe. O supile fa terata eo e simolola kwa Ramotswa, mme e fete ka

Otse, Ranaka, Kanye, Mmalore, Banyana Farms go fitlhela e wela kwa Werda mme e le sekgala sa dikhilomethara tse 330.

"Go tlaa nna le balebedi ba dikgoro tsa terata eo go netefatsa gore ga gona dikgomo tse di fetelang ka fa ntlheng e nngwe," ga bua jalo Dr Dikoloti.

O kopile setshaba gore morero wa go aga terata eo, o seka wa nna moleele ka jaana bolwetse bo ka tloga jwa jwelelela go santse go rerwa jaaka go diragetse kwa dikgaolong tsa Barolong.

E ne e rile gole pele, Kgosi wa Mmathethe Kgosi Thabo Mathiba a supa fa mephato ya

motse wa gagwe e le malala a laotswe go dira tiro eo ya go aga terata.

O ne gape a kopa morafe wa gagwe gore ope fela yoo kgonang a ithaope go thusa, a supa fa seo seka dira gore bolwetse bo fenngwe ka bonako.

Mongwe wa ba-tsenana phuthego, Rre Lesedi Legkowane o supile fa a amogela kopo ya ga Tona Dikoloti mme a tlhalosa fa dikgomo tsa matimela e le tsone di tsileng go dira gore bolwetse bo nne dingalo go fela.

O kopile ba ba maleba gore ba leke go tsaya dikgomo tseo ka di sa laolesege. **BOPA**

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# Residents reject private control of paving stone mining

Keith Ketji  
**SEROWE**

Residents of the KHUMASE lands in Serowe have decried the private mining of paving stones in their area, noting that these resources are known to be a cash cow in other countries.

Speaking to BOPA after handing over a petition to Serowe District Commissioner Ms Angelina Leano-Bakoko on Thursday, destined for the President, the secretary general of the envisaged KHUMASE trust, Mr Boitshwarelo Tiroyamodimo expressed deep disappointment.

He stated that local natural resources were not benefiting the community, but rather a single individual.

He explained that residents of Khumanego, Maumo, Mangolwana, and Sepalamoriri, had expressed a desire to form a community trust, dubbed KHUMASE, back in 2017.

He has thus pointed accusing fingers at Mr Gotlamang Kelapile for acquiring a prospecting license to mine the area while the community was still working on the trust's logistics and modalities.

Furthermore, he alleges that Mr Kelapile, who was the chairperson of the KHUMASE Farmers Committee back then, took advantage of his position to apply for the prospecting license for personal benefit instead of the community.

To thwart the move, Mr Tiroyamodimo said they wrote several letters of objection to the Paje Sub-Landboard, but to no avail. Frustrated by lack of response, residents organised a peaceful march to the District Commissioner's office in Serowe on Thursday and handed over a petition signed by 37 participants.

Swaneng Ward Councillor, Mr Lebogang Motseothata, whose jurisdiction encompasses KHUMASE, stated that when he took office in 2024, he found a pending mining rights issue that needed resolution.

Mr Motseothata concurred with Mr Tiroyamodimo, noting he was reliably informed that KHUMASE residents wanted to form a trust to benefit the entire community through local natural resources.

He said the community had initially agreed in unison with Mr Kelapile to form the trust, who later turned round and pursued the venture alone, leaving the community in the lurch, a thing he relayed had left a lingering feeling of unease and betrayal among the KHUMASE community.

How Mr Kelapile acquired



*KHUMASE Trust secretary general, Mr Boitshwarelo Tiroyamodimo (left) handing over a petition to Serowe District Commissioner, Ms Angelina Leano opposing the private mining of paving stones in their area recently. Mr Tiroyamodimo said the natural resources were not benefiting the community, but rather an individual. Photo: Baldwin Nyamande*

surface and mining rights and was allotted the green light by Paje sub-landboard to mine stones used for paving, decoration and building beats logic according to Councillor Motseothata.

Giving his own account on Monday, Mr Kelapile confirmed that he indeed possessed surface and mining rights obtained from the Department of Mines for the venture and that he had as per the dictates of the remit of the law submitted an expression of interest to the Paje Sub-Landboard, which responded textually in the affirmative.

He noted that proper channels were followed throughout his journey to acquire the rights, making his claim to the land legitimate.

Besides, the land in question belonged to his forefathers, who occupied the area during the pre-

independence era.

Mr Kelapile turned the accusations back on the residents, claiming they were mining the stones illegally.

He added that he had in the past reported this illegal mining to the relevant authorities, but no appropriate action was taken and had upon noticing the environmental degradation caused by the illicit stone mining, advised residents to form a trust, after which he was elected chairperson of the envisaged entity.

It was then that he partnered with the community to form a trust and inquiries about a prospecting licence were effected forthwith.

According to Mr Kelapile, hefty acquisition fees, combined with the fact that the trust was not yet registered, prevented

the residents from turning their dreams into reality.

He claimed he informed the residents about the required processes, but they lost interest after realising they could not afford exorbitant license fees.

He stated that he then informed them of his intention to proceed with the venture on his own, and no one objected at the time.

Mr Kelapile accused the political leadership and senior government officials for inciting the community to revolt against his mission. He remained adamant that his project would continue, reiterating that the place belonged to his forefathers, which made him the legitimate owner of the land.

Meanwhile, efforts to contact the Paje Sub-Landboard for comment were futile. **BOPA**

## Council projects experience delay

Esther Mmolai  
**MAUN**

The construction of the much awaited 25-kilometre internal roads project in Maun is experiencing some delays due to unavailability of G2 material in the area.

G2 material is a high-quality, graded crushed stone used primarily as a structural base or sub base layer in civil engineering and road construction. The project comprises of 10km tarred roads and 15km paving across the tourism township and it was awarded at the tune of over P40 million, which includes compensation for those that will be affected.

Presenting the District Technical Committee report to the district leadership on Monday, North West District Council principal physical planner, Mr Bishop Mthethwa highlighted that currently the project progress status stood at

47 per cent as compared to the planned 74 per cent and yet its completion date was expected to be December this year.

The project entails 11 roads which would be implemented in two phases and he acknowledged that the contractor was working on finding an alternative commercial burrow pit to rectify the situation.

The project is among those implemented under the Transitional National Development Plan which focuses on infrastructure, digital connectivity, agriculture and land management.

He also noted that most developmental projects across the district were at standstill due to lack of funding, poor supervision while some were slow as they were still at evaluation stage.

Mr Mthethwa cited that three projects under Department of Roads were still at evaluation stage while two were in progress.

Another project that sparked debate was the multi-billion

Maun Water Supply and Sanitation project which was reported to be stuck since last year as it was said to be awaiting electricity connection.

The project, which includes borehole equipping, borehole collector lines, water treatment plant and transmission line project from Nxaraga to Shashe Booster Station was reported to be at 99 per cent for borehole equipping and 96 per cent for the transmission line and is awaiting completion of installation of a transformer and a mini sub-station by Botswana Power Corporation.

The project aims to address acute water and sanitation challenges for Maun and its satellite villages and has been a long-standing problem even though villagers pinned their hopes on it.

Maun has been affected by water shortage due to supply deficit arising from limited water resources and the situation obliged Water Utilities

Corporation to implement water supply demand management strategy optimising on available sources and rationing.

With the commencement of the project in 2021, residents celebrated with high hopes that it would offer a permanent solution to inconsistent water access.

The project was originally planned to be completed in 2023 but that was not the case as it is still ongoing due to several challenges encountered by contractors.

Furthermore, leadership also learnt that the upgrading of Semolo water treatment plant and associated works were at 21 per cent as compared to the planned 70 per cent.

The contractor has been terminated and sourcing of additional funds to procure another contractor is ongoing.

Meanwhile, the district disability coordinator, Mr Montsusi Morake reported on the critical gaps in disability services. He highlighted the

flagship project, Maun Centre for Special Education, saying the non-operationalisation of the centre represented the single greatest bottleneck in the district's disability support framework.

He stated that it was the complete absence of a localised multi-disciplinary assessment and early intervention system. The state of the art centre which aims to cater for learners with severe to profound intellectual and multiple disabilities was initially set to open September 2024.

Mr Morake also pointed out that the district also faced a critical shortage of specialised after-school transitional services, noting that the systemic gap left youth with disabilities without structured pathways to develop the essential life skills, vocational competence and social capabilities required to successfully navigate the shift from structured schooling to independent adulthood. **BOPA**

# Arts & Culture



*Wame Bodutu, popularly known as Art by Wame through her Afrocentric artwork, continues to celebrate African culture, heritage, identity and wildlife while inspiring other women to pursue their creative passions.*  
Photos: Courtesy of Art by Wame

## Bodutu commmits to culture preservation through art

Keetile Bontsibokae  
**MOLEPOLOLE**

Wame Bodutu, popularly known as Art by Wame, is challenging the notion that visual arts is a man's world. Through Afrocentric work celebrating African culture, heritage, identity, and wildlife, she is inspiring other women to pursue creative passions.

Bodutu, who hails from Molepolole and now residing in Kopong, journey started while he was at primary school in 2008. She filled the back pages of exercise books with sketches of personalities like Rihanna, as well as houses and cars. What started as a childhood pastime became a lifelong passion.

Despite her love for art, Bodutu did not study it at Kopong Junior Secondary School or Mogoditshane Senior Secondary School. "I knew art was part of who I am. It truly runs in my blood," she said.

Juggling academics left little time for her craft, and she painted mainly during holidays and school breaks.

A turning point came in 2022 when she connected with renowned artist Bezuba Kaunda after listening to his radio interview.

Kaunda became her first professional

mentor, introducing her to the art industry.

After graduating from the University of Botswana with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 2024, Bodutu moved beyond portraits into mural art.

She met fellow artist Rodney Keitemoge, who guided her through technical aspects of mural painting and the creative industry. "I am incredibly grateful to both mentors for their patience, support and belief in my abilities," she said.

That year also brought a career milestone when she sold two artworks at the Kweneng District Council Mini Show. It was only her second exhibition.

Bodutu credits her older brother for sparking her interest.

"My love for art began by watching my brother create beautiful drawings. His creativity inspired me to explore my own abilities," she said.

Her artwork targets game lodges, safari hotels, African-themed restaurants, corporate offices, interior designers, private collectors and international tourists seeking authentic African-inspired pieces. Prices range from P500 to P10 000, depending on size, complexity and materials.

Like many artists, Bodutu is faced with challenges of expensive materials, irregular sales and clients who fail to pay

for commissioned work.

Still, she pursued art as a dedicated side business while maintaining professional standards.

On artificial intelligence, Bodutu believes traditional art will retain its value.

"People will continue to appreciate the authenticity, texture, and human touch behind handmade artwork. However, AI-generated art is gradually threatening traditional art culture," she noted.

Bodutu is preparing a historical masterpiece for Botswana's 60<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary.

The piece is inspired by the journey of the Three Dikgosi, Khama III, Sebele I, and Bathoen I, and Botswana's legacy of peaceful democracy. It will also reflect the country's historic democratic transition of power from the Botswana Democratic Party to the Umbrella for Democratic Change.

Through her work, she hopes to communicate Botswana's strength peace through dialogue and diplomacy.

Among her notable pieces is Leitlho la Pele, a mixed-media portrait of a Mosarwa woman.

It combines charcoal, traditional fabrics, colourful beads, modelling paste, and acrylic paint to create a textured, realistic representation of African identity.

Another standout, Silent Gaze, is a hyper-realistic leopard rendered in acrylic inks and paints.

The animal's striking blue eyes contrast with natural tones for a captivating effect.

Bodutu advocates intellectual property protection, stressing the importance of copyright laws to safeguard artists from exploitation and unauthorised commercial use.

She also calls for government support through international cultural exchange programmes and a secure national digital marketplace for local artists.

Her advice to aspiring artists is direct, "take your talent seriously. Passion and natural ability can take you far if you approach art as a profession. Seek mentorship, continue learning and never limit your creativity."

Mentor Rodney Keitemoge said Bodutu had grown significantly and is now creating original themes that could lead to a solo exhibition.

Fellow creative Engemadzo Opiyo Lentswe commended Bodutu's reliability, creativity and positive attitude.

As she grows her brand, Art by Wame remains committed to preserving African stories, culture, and heritage through art that resonates locally and internationally.  
**BOPA**

# DailySport

## Kanye United appreciate MP support

Marvin Motlhabane  
**KANYE**

Fresh off a fairytale promotion that has set the village buzzing, officials and players from Kanye United rolled up to the office of Kanye West Member of Parliament, Victor Phologolo, in a heartfelt show of gratitude and unity.

The visit, which took place recently after the club clinched the 2026 BFA Southern Block Promotional Playoffs title in style, was more than a courtesy call, it was a celebration of a historic milestone and a forward-looking chat about taking Kanye football to greater heights.

Kanye United did not just earn promotion, they dominated. After storming through the Southern Region Division I, the team delivered a masterclass in the playoffs, finishing with a perfect 12 points and +7 goal difference (GD).

On the second place is Mochudi Eastern Tiger with 9 points, +4 GD; with third spot being Thamaga Swallows with 6 points, -1 GD; fourth placed is The Crowns with 3 points, -2 GD and fifth position is Mogobane United with 0 points, -8 GD.

This marks the club's first-ever appearance in the Debswana First Division South. For a passionate, community-driven side from Kanye, it's a dream realised.

Team Manager Matthews Ramolala could not hide his pride as he reflected on the campaign.

"The players, technical team and our supporters showed incredible unity and determination. This promotion is for the entire village, he said.

Next season, Kanye United will lock horns with established heavyweights like Notwane FC, Gabane Santos FC, Security Systems FC, Dinare FC, and Black Lions FC as they chase the ultimate prize; promotion to the FNBB Premier League.

Club representatives have showered praises on MP Phologolo for his consistent support of sports in the constituency. They credited his advocacy for youth empowerment and community programmes with creating the perfect environment for local talent to flourish.

The MP described the teams promotion as 'a proud moment for Kanye and a testament to what dedication and collective effort can achieve.'

"Sport builds nations, develops young people and fights social ills," Mr Phologolo said. He promised to continue backing the club and explore partnerships for better training facilities, sponsorships and youth football development.

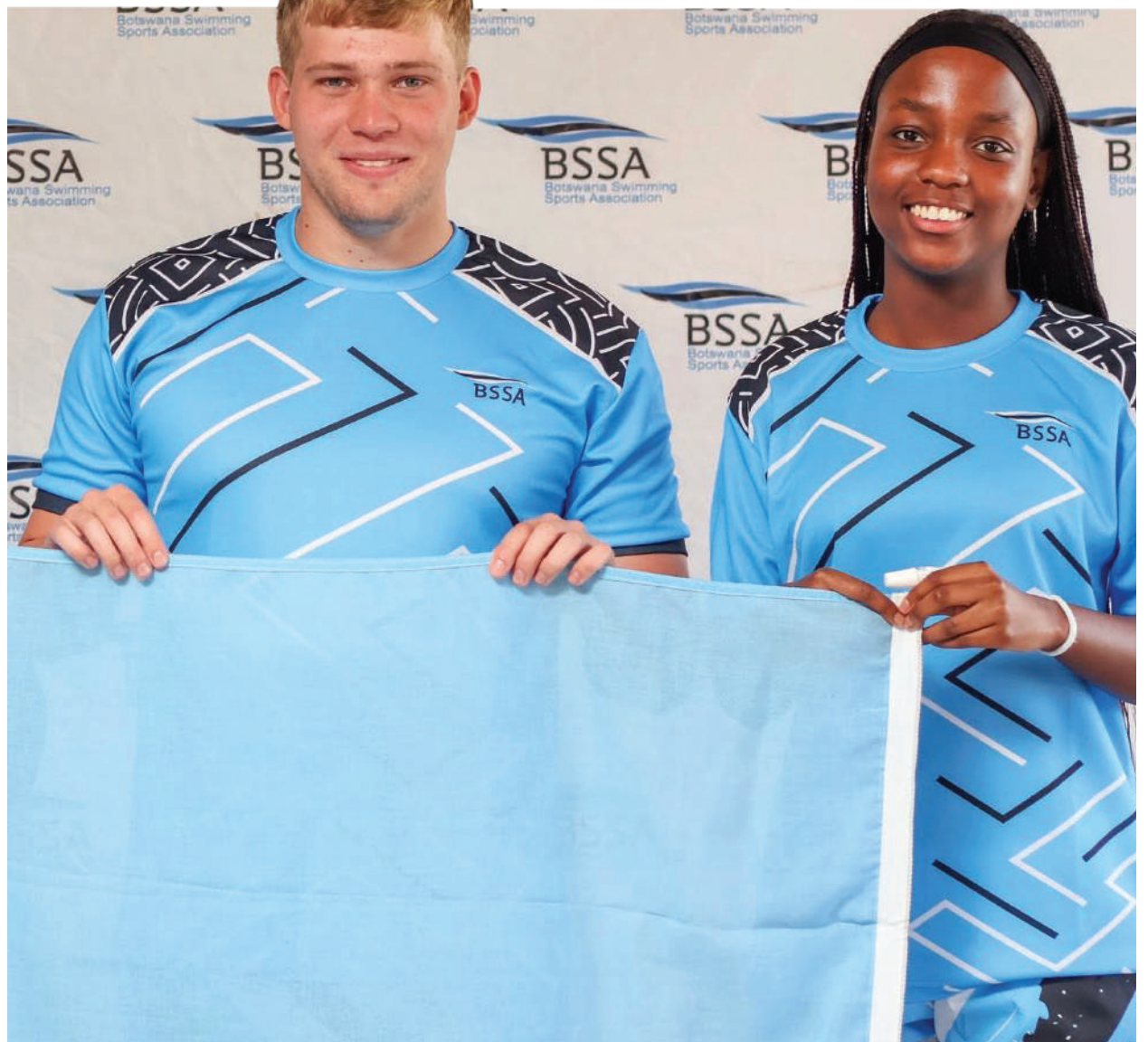
In a particularly exciting revelation, the MP disclosed that he had already engaged the Minister of Sport and Arts about transforming Kanye into a Special Economic Zone for Sport. He pointed to the region's rich talent pool, headlined by Olympic 200m champion Letsile Tebogo, as clear evidence of its potential.

He also revealed that government had already set aside P90 million for the construction of modern community stadiums in Goodhope, Kanye, and Tsabong.

"The team is already ahead of the village. We must now fast-track these infrastructure projects to meet them halfway and put Kanye on the national and hopefully continental sporting map," he said.

The meeting ended on a high note, with both parties aligned on a shared vision using football as a vehicle for youth development, community pride and national glory.

For Kanye United, the journey from village heroes to First Division contenders has only just begun. **BOPA**



Benco Van Rooyen and Muela Mutie brought bronze medals from Africa Aquatics Zone IV Open Water Championships held in Mauritius.

# Swimmers defy the odds to win medals

Anastacia Sibanda  
**GABORONE**

Botswana swimmers have defied geographical limitations to win two bronze medals at the recently concluded Africa Aquatics Zone IV Open Water Championships in Mauritius.

The achievement is considered remarkable for a country that lacks natural marine environments for training and competition.

The medals were won by Benco Van Rooyen in the boys' division and Muela Mutie in the girls' category.

The duo led a four-member Botswana team that also included Hannah Jobe and Aahana Sohoni, who delivered commendable performances throughout the

competition.

Competing against athletes from coastal nations with year-round access to oceans, rivers and other natural open-water training facilities, Botswana swimmers demonstrated that determination, discipline and effective preparation can overcome infrastructural limitations.

Botswana Swimming Sport Association (BSSA) spokesperson, Bokang Mokobi, commended the team's performance against some of the continent's top open-water swimmers.

"Open water swimming is naturally common in other countries because they possess natural resources like seas and big rivers where they can train," he said.

Mokobi noted that Botswana did not have such natural water bodies, making preparation for open-water competitions particularly challenging.

While their rivals refined their skills in natural aquatic environments, Botswana's swimmers were required to adapt pool-based training and endurance to the unpredictable conditions of open-

water competition in Mauritius.

He said the medals were a testament to the dedication, commitment and resilience of both the athletes and the coaching staff.

"For athletes to win medals in that competition is a clear demonstration of dedication, commitment and resilience," he said.

Mokobi said Botswana swimmers had competed against athletes who train daily in environments equipped with the necessary resources and infrastructure, yet they were still able to challenge them successfully.

He said the achievement represented an important milestone for local aquatics, which has traditionally focused on pool swimming.

Mokobi expressed hope that the success would inspire more young swimmers to explore open-water competitions and broaden their sporting ambitions.

He said the athletes' achievements should encourage other aspiring swimmers to believe that success was possible despite the country's limited resources and geographical challenges. **BOPA**