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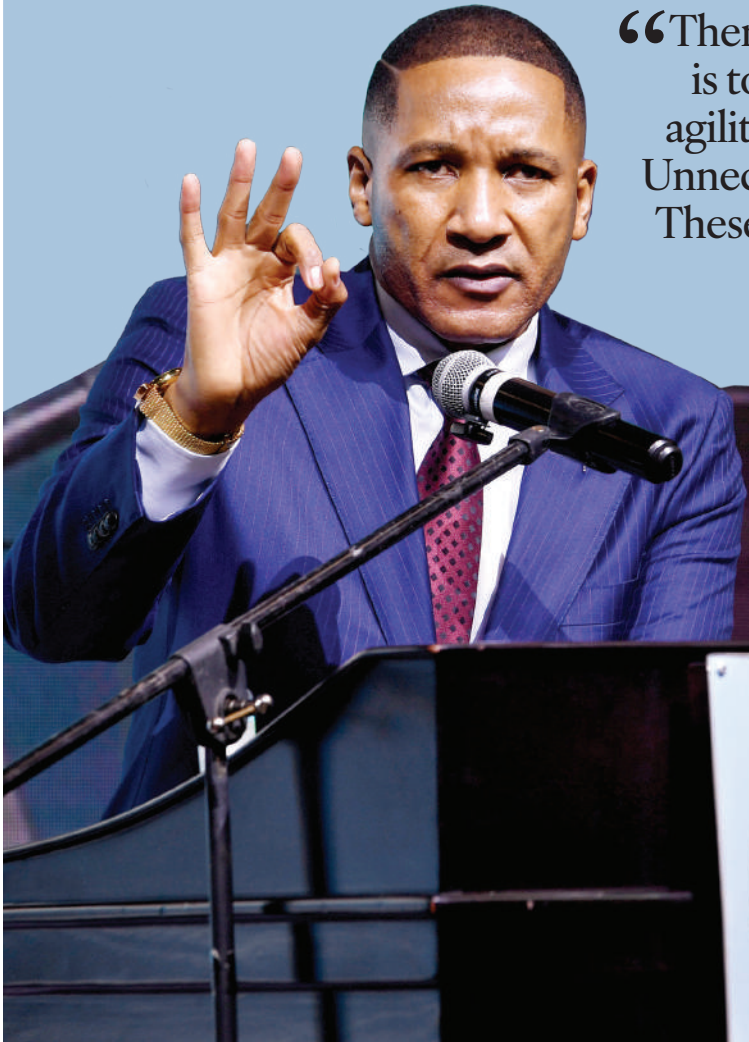
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President Advocate Duma Boko officially opening the the Pubic Service Leadership Conference in Gaborone yesterday. he urged public service leadership to inject agility into daily operations and rethink structures that continued to slow down government service delivery. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

My SPAR My BOTSWANA

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MOTSHELO CARD

SPAR Motshelo Card

Savings Never Looked This Good.

Boko bestows medals on police officers

Bonang Masolotatse
GABORONE

Deserving members of the Botswana Police Service were recently presented with the Botswana Police Meritorious Service, Distinguished Service Order, Jubilee Service, and Long Service and Good Conduct medals, in a colourful event that was staged in Gaborone.

President Advocate Duma Boko, who is also Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, did the honours of recognising men and women who have served the nation meticulously over the years.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Botswana Police public relations officer, Senior Superintendent Near Bagali, said the ceremony formed part of commemorations marking 142 years of service by the Botswana Police Service.

He said the awards ceremony recognised and thanked members of the service for outstanding performance and conduct in the execution of their duties.

For the Long Service and Good Conduct medal, members must have served a continuous period of 18 years with a record of good character.

An officer must not have been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude, or found to have conducted themselves in a manner

that brought the name of the police into disrepute.

They must also not have received six or more convictions for indiscipline in the last 16 years of service.

Recipients of the Jubilee Service medal must have served for 25 years and demonstrated character worthy of the award.

The Distinguished Service Order is awarded to members who have distinguished themselves through devotion to duty after 30 years of service.

The Meritorious Service medal is awarded to members with 12 years of service who have set a high and exemplary standard of conduct and diligence.

Senior Superintendent Bagali said the Botswana Police had transformed over the years and made significant strides.

He cited the Safety City project, which had been successfully implemented in Gaborone and Francistown and was now being rolled out to Molepolole and Mahalapye.

Investment in technology, including a high-tech forensic laboratory staffed by qualified personnel, has enabled the police to test, assess and produce results within a reasonable time, Snr Supt Bagali said and noted that development within the Botswana Police Air Support Wing, a part of the broader transformation of



President Advocate Duma Boko (left) pinning medals on Botswana Police Service officers during a medal awards ceremony in Gaborone recently. A total of 728 deserving officers were presented with the Botswana Police Meritorious Service, Distinguished Service Order, Jubilee Service as well as Long Service and Good Conduct medals. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

the service. He also talked about the growth in personnel over the years, a reflection of a commitment by the government to expand and grow the police service and invest in national security.

The awards are for officers who have excelled in their positions, with all recipients thoroughly vetted prior to being awarded.

Snr Supt Bagali reminded that service delivery by the police was guided by community needs and that the service worked hand in

hand with communities to address security concerns.

Inspector Uyapo Malikongwa, who was bestowed with a Distinguished Service Award, said he joined the police service in 1995 and had served with dedication over the years.

He added that the award was a vote of confidence recognition of the value he was adding to the service which demanded discipline, good working relations with the community and respect

for leadership. Inspector Mavis Mabele, who received the Long Service and Good Conduct award, said she had worked for 18 years in the police, noting that dedication and discipline paved the way for the award.

Vice President and Minister of Finance Mr Ndaba Gaolathe, Minister for State for Defence and Security Mr Moeti Mohwasa, and Assistant Minister Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti also presented medals to officers. **BOPA**

Gaolathe visit leaves learners with memorable assembly

Mpho Mosojane
GABORONE

Protocol took a back seat on Friday morning when Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe left his official schedule for an unannounced visit to Gaborone West Junior Secondary School, turning the regular assembly into a motivation session for stunned learners.

The school day began as usual. The siren sounded, feet hit the ground, and students in maroon, grey and white flooded the concrete assembly area with backpacks bouncing on their backs. Teachers in olive green blazers moved learners into rigid, uniform rows under the watchful eyes of school management.

The mood shifted instantly at the sight of the Vice President's

motorcade. Teachers froze mid-sentence and gave quiet signals for silence. Four security agents moved to the front of the stage, scanning the area before ushering Mr Gaolathe to the podium. Students craned their necks to catch a glimpse past the dark suits.

The formality broke when Form 3 learner Atang Letlole led the assembly in the choral

hymn Tsamaisa Mmoloki. Her clear voice turned the assembly into what the VP later called 'a majestic, melodic and deeply moving atmosphere.'

Mr Gaolathe stood, commended the learners, and said he had come for a 'humble check-in to connect with my people.'

He shared a personal story of his own secondary school years and

urged learners to focus on small, consistent choices over big titles.

"I was once exactly where you are, your age, just like you, doing my secondary school but having an intense desire to excel in my school work, inspired by my uncle who was studying abroad. I had a strong vision and knew where I was going," he said.

"You do not need to change the world today, rather take your time to dream, chase it and most importantly be kind to one another. Try your best in every assignment, then the next until you eventually graduate. Your worth is your heart, your effort and your choice to try again tomorrow. You matter, your future matters for a better Botswana tomorrow," the Vice President said.

He also highlighted the role of teachers, leading students in a chant of appreciation for their 'selfless' work as custodians of their academic journey. The visit ended with a donation of books to the school.

"No act is too small to make a change and these books come at a much needed time when we have begun preparing our strategy for the final JC exams," said School Head Mr Moreetsi Tautsagae.

He thanked the VP for reaching out to the grassroots, describing it as 'a self-less, humble act of a leader who is truly inspirational, transformative and intentional.'

As Atang's voice filled the air once more to close proceedings, and the motorcade pulled away, students were left with what many described as a surge of emotion, proof for one morning, that power can pause for them. **BOPA**



Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe addressing Gaborone West Junior Secondary School pupils recently. He encouraged them to put more effort into their studies and respect staff, particularly teachers, who played an important role in their learning journey. Mr Gaolathe also donated academic books to supplement the school's reading materials. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

Botswana and US commit to global peace

Thato Mosinyi
GABORONE

The Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and the United States army have reaffirmed their shared history of cooperation, mutual commitment to global peace and steadfast dedication to defending democratic ideals.

Officially opening the multinational military exercise Southern Accord 2026, BDF director of general support services, Major General Molefi Seikanyo, stated that the geopolitical landscape of the 21st century was fluid, unpredictable and often asymmetrical, hence the need for synchronised responses and deep-rooted partnerships.

“No single nation, no matter how powerful or resourceful, can confront these security realities in isolation. The challenges of our time demand collective action. They require synchronized responses and deep-rooted partnerships,” Maj Gen Seikanyo said.

He emphasised that the exercise served as an institutional response to modern global security demands, a crucial opportunity during peacetime to test operational readiness and reinforce shared resolve to safeguard citizens.

The alliance, he noted, was built on a shared strategic vision, the belief that a secure, stable and prosperous Africa was vital to global peace.

He added that maintaining a

highly trained and disciplined military remained a cornerstone of Botswana’s national development strategy.

Maj Gen Seikanyo highlighted that such joint exercises were part of the BDF’s ongoing efforts to boost operational readiness, deepen defense cooperation and promote regional security.

The first initiative, Exercise

Southern Accord 2026 (Ex SA-26), is being conducted in partnership with the United States Africa Command (US AFRICOM) through the North Carolina National Guard from August 10-15.

Hosted under the theme, Strength through Collaboration, the exercise, first held in Botswana in 2012, is designed to strengthen

interoperability, improve interagency coordination and enhance capabilities in counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, cyber and space domain awareness, crisis response planning and whole-of-government coordination.

Following Ex SA-26, the BDF and the Namibian Defence Force (NDF) will co-host Exercise Tshwaragano III from August 30

to September 11, in Lobatse.

This marks the third instalment of the Tshwaragano/Hanganee bilateral training series, held under the theme, Enhancing Joint Cooperation: Ubuntu in Arms.

The initiative aims to strengthen the long-standing military partnership between the BDF and NDF through joint training, enhanced interoperability and the exchange of best practices.

Together, the exercises reaffirm the BDF’s commitment to building professional defense partnerships, elevating collective preparedness and actively contributing to regional and international peace and stability. **BOPA**



BDF director of general support services, Major General Molefi Seikanyo officially opening the multinational military exercise Southern Accord 2026 in Gaborone on Monday. He said no single nation, regardless of its power or resources, could confront modern security challenges in isolation, hence the need for collective action and partnerships. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Chobe district receives malaria drugs

Portia Keetile
KASANE

A donation of 1 500 first-line malaria treatments worth P75 000 is set to ease critical supply pressures across the Chobe District following the handover by Business Botswana’s Private Sector Disaster Response Fund (PSDRF) in Kasane on Monday. The intervention comes as the flood-prone district battles a surging malaria outbreak.

Speaking at the handover, Chobe District Council chairperson, Mr Johane Chenjekwa, said the heavy seasonal rainfall had created extensive stagnant water networks across the region, leading to a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Mr Chenjekwa said the district had recorded 113 malaria cases this year, including a fatality in Pandamatenga.

He added that drug shortages had previously forced local authorities to rely on preventative measures such as distributing mosquito nets and conducting Indoor Residual Spraying in Kasane and Kazungula while health workers closely monitored and immediately medicated every positive case to contain the spread.

For his part, PSDRF chairperson, Mr Butler Phirie explained that the donation was born out of an urgent need identified within the local healthcare system.

Mr Phirie advised local authorities to distribute the medicines directly to those in need across the district rather than stockpiling them.

He noted that the PSDRF was established in 2025 after private companies consolidated their resources to address severe nationwide medical shortages, having already dedicated over P1 million towards the national malaria response and provided test kits to Central Medical Stores (CMS).

Receiving the donation, Mr Chenjekwa commended the private sector for stepping in to support public health, emphasising that the donation did more than close a supply gap, but it enabled frontline healthcare personnel to deliver prompt and life-saving care to Batswana. He assured the fund that the drugs would be distributed efficiently throughout the district to maximise their impact. **BOPA**

Boko calls for radical reforms in public service

Thato Mosinyi
GABORONE

President Advocate Duma Boko has urged public service leadership to inject agility into daily operations and rethink structures that continue to slow down government delivery.

Officially opening the Public Service Leadership Conference in Gaborone yesterday, President Boko said many government institutions were configured in ways that made them ‘inherently dilatory and unnecessarily complicated.’

“There is maybe a reality that government is too bureaucratic. Configured not for agility. Inherently dilatory in its processes. Unnecessarily complicated in its operations. These are realities, maybe perceptions. We must deal with them,” he said.

The President challenged leaders to use the conference as a platform for self-examination and to assess

whether their institutions were delivering the results citizens expect.

“I hope this gathering avails you the opportunity to examine yourselves, individually and collectively. Reflect on the institutions that we have. On their efficacy. Are they able to deliver the result and the outcomes that we need?” he asked.

President Boko called for a “radical simplification” of processes and procedures to make government more accessible and human rights centric.

“In constitutional law we call it a means-ends calculus. And the means that we are deploying ought to be properly suited to the

attainment of the ends that we want to achieve,” he said.

He warned that any disconnect between means and ends would require transformational innovation and bold leadership to help lift Botswana’s ailing economy.

The President also cautioned public officers against hiding behind legal technicalities to avoid action.

“The excuse that the law does not permit makes absolutely no sense. It is not an excuse, much less is it antithetical. The law does not constrain you. In the doing of that which is good for the public, the law never constrains. It is your work and your interpretation of the

law that constrains you,” he said.

He urged leaders not to be ‘prisoners of their own conceptual moorings and limitations.’

President Boko further said government must be bold in taking decisions on State Owned Enterprises that offer no compelling case for continued existence.

He said some SOEs should be transformed to make them more responsive to current challenges, while others might need to be closed.

The three-day Public Service Leadership Conference brings together senior government officials to reflect on institutional mandate, efficiency and service delivery. **BOPA**



President Advocate Duma Boko (second right), Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa (right) and other dignitaries during the second Public Service Leadership Conference in Gaborone yesterday. He said the country must undertake an honest assessment of its institutions, policies and systems to identify weaknesses that prevented government from delivering effective services to citizens. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

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Editors

Ms Lorato Okaile
Tel: 365 3640
Email: lgaleage@gov.bw

Mr Sefhako Sefhako
Tel: 365 3589
Email: seseffhako@gov.bw

Ms Masego Pilane
Tel: 365 3569
Email: mkpilane@gov.bw

Ms Sereki Mpitse
Tel: 365 3595
Email: smpitse@gov.bw

Head of Photography

Mr Yobe Shonga
Tel: 365 3604
Email: yshonga@gov.bw

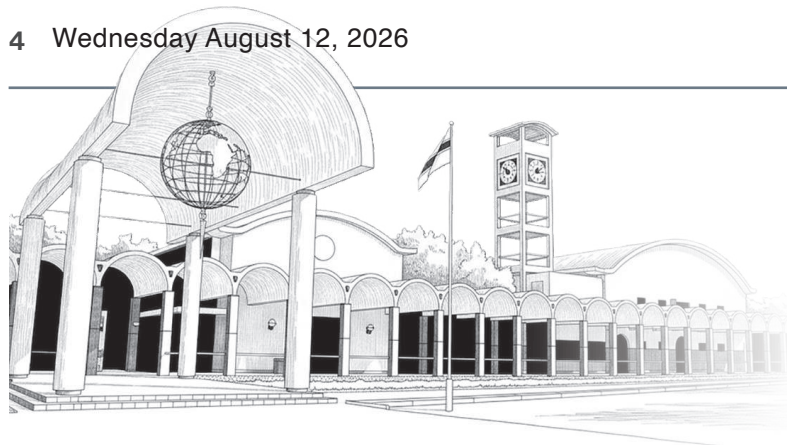
Head of Marketing

Ms Lucretia Chima
Tel: 365 3574
Email: ichima@gov.bw

Head of Graphics

Mr Edward Matlala
Tel: 365 3557
Email: ematlala@gov.bw

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PARLIAMENT 2026

Parliament rejects motion on allocation of unserviced plots

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

Parliament has rejected a motion that advocated for allocation of unserviced land to address the long waiting periods.

An amendment to the motion seeking government's commitment to allocate residential plots to 50 per cent of all persons on the waiting list for such residential plots in the next three years was also rejected.

The motion by Bobirwa MP, Mr Taolo Lucas requested the government to commit to allocate residential plots to all persons on the waiting list for such residential plots in the next three years to facilitate home ownership for a significant proportion of the people of Botswana.

In his debate, MP for Boteti West and also Assistant Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Keoagile Atamelang argued that it would be impossible to implement what the motion required considering the current economic challenges and the costs associated with land servicing.

However, he wished the mover of the motion could have advised government on alternatives for land management to address the national backlog.

Kanye East legislator, Mr Prince Mosanana concurred that while the demand for land allocation was high, serviced land was key as currently those who had been allocated in unserviced land were complaining of lack of basic services.

He rejected the motion with amendments, saying government had plans to address the allocation backlog.

"Currently people in the waiting list are 680 000 and to allocate half of the total number will not be practical because it requires more funding," he said.

MP for Moshupa-Manyana, Mr Karabo Gare who made the amendment to the motion argued that since the majority of members agreed that land allocation must be prioritised, it was advisable to have a constructive amendment to make the motion more practical, measurable and implementable.

The motion, he said should be fair to both the mover and the implementers.

Rejecting the motion, Specially Elected MP and also Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware said it was advisable to come up with motions that were practical, questioning the capability and resources to allocate plots to all persons in the waiting lists in three years considering the growth of the budget.

"We are rejecting the motion basing on the issue of resources and capability.

We cannot afford to allocate

plots in the set target because we have other challenges faced by the nation," he said.

In support of the motion, MP for Kgatleng West, Dr Unity Dow argued that having a proper target gave one a definite path to follow, and questioned why the proposal that government should allocate plots to at least 50 per cent of people in the waiting list was still rejected.

MP for Ngami, Mr Philemon Aaron said land servicing should not be an excuse as in other areas plots had been allocated in unserviced land.

Owning a plot, he said gave one a safe investment, total freedom to build their dream home and wished the government could deliver on the promises they made to Batswana to improve their quality of life.

He also argued that some sub-land boards faced shortage of surveyors, hence the delay in land allocation.

Responding to MPs contributions, Mr Lucas said the motion advocated for acceleration of land allocation of residential plots to clear massive waiting lists.

He said some citizens had been waiting for ages to be allocated residential plots.

"The issue is not inadequate budget but lack of capacitation of land boards and sub-land boards, which are delaying the process of allocation. Some land boards have been slow in allocating plots over a long period of time as some applicants waited 30, 20 to 10 years," he said. **BOPA**



Bobirwa legislator
Mr Taolo Lucas



Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti (right) and MP for Ngami, Mr Philemon Aaron arriving for a Parliament session. Dr Dikoloti said it was not practical and realistic for government to commit to allocate residential plots to all people on the waiting list in the next three years as that required adequate budget.

Plot allocation requires adequate budget - Dikoloti

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

It is not practical and realistic for government to commit to allocate residential plots to all people on the waiting list in the next three years as that requires adequate budget.

The current clean waiting list stands at 778,152 applicants, comprising 696,167 applicants on Tribal Land and 81,985 on State Land. Responding to a motion in Parliament on Thursday, the Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti noted that the level of demand represented more than half of the country's eligible population noting that additionally, there were more than 900 000 plots allocated in tribal land.

The motion by Bobirwa MP, Mr Taolo Lucas called on Parliament to request government to commit to allocate residential plots to all persons on waiting list for residential plots in next three years to facilitate home ownership for a significant proportion of the people of Botswana.

Dr Dikoloti explained that the country's land administration system was governed by a process noting that before any plot could be allocated, several statutory processes must be completed.

Furthermore, he said environmental assessments must be undertaken where necessary, physical development plans and layout plans must be prepared and approved.

"The budget provision within the NDP 12 is not adequate to deliver the plots as required by the motion and I do not oppose the principle of equitable access to land. Indeed, every Motswana aspires to own a home and the government equally recognises that aspiration," he added.

However, Dr Dikoloti further noted it would be irresponsible for the house to direct government to commit itself to an undertaking that could reasonably be fulfilled within the proposed timeframe, questioning where would the funding be coming from.

He said the cost of allocating those on the waiting list within a period of three years would be astronomical, mentioning that the estimated cost of producing a plot within land services was P240,000.

Dr Dikoloti pointed out that citizens lost trust when government announced ambitious targets that could not be achieved, conversely, confidence grew when government set realistic objectives, delivered on them and progressively improved

performance.

"While the intention behind this motion is commendable, its implementation would place impossible obligations upon government, create expectations that cannot reasonably be fulfilled and ultimately erode public confidence in our institution," he added. Dr Dikoloti said lasting solutions required careful planning, sustained investment, institutional reform and sound fiscal management.

"The answer is not to adopt arbitrary timelines that disregard technical, financial and administrative realities," he added. In the NDP 12, he said his ministry had been allocated a budget of P165 million for land surveying and at the current rates, which could yield about 66,000 plots.

On the other hand, he said land acquisition has been allocated P215 million and at the current rates, "we can acquire about 6,000 hectares of land, which would translate to about 40 000 plots.

Dr Dikoloti said these figures demonstrated that the land sector had not been adequately resourced by this Parliament to provide land to all persons in the waiting list within a period of three years, which fell within the NDP 12 period. **BOPA**

Amendments to address gaps in Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Nelson Ramaotwana has presented the Proceeds and Instruments of Crime Amendment Bill 2026 that

seeks to amend the Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act. The amendment aims to address deficiencies in the current Act to ensure full compliance with international obligations. Presenting the Bill in Parliament on Monday, Minister Ramaotwana stated that the Act was enacted in

2014 to deprive offenders of the proceeds and instrument of crime, combat money laundering and facilitate the covering of criminal assets. It was subsequently amended in 2018 to align with the international standards on combating money laundering, terrorism financing

among others. Mr Ramaotwana said Botswana was currently preparing for the Eastern and Southern African Anti-Money Laundering Group third round of the mutual evaluation, which would assess the country's compliance to Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards and its effectiveness of the anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing system. Since the country's last mutual evaluation in 2017, he said FATF had revised serial recommendations necessitating further legislative reforms. To support the preparation, Mr Ramaotwana said the Anti-Money laundering, Counter-financing of terrorism and counter-financing of proliferation (AML/CFT/CFP) national coordinating office in collaboration with the Institute For Combating Illicit financial Flows conducted a national self-assessment in January 2026.

and Instrument of Crime Act. The national assessment, he said identified specific provisions, citing section 35, sub-section 8 of the Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act as potential judicial to the rights of the affected parties as it does not describe a timeframe within which, a decision by a law enforcement officer or the receiver to cease property without a court order must be submitted to judicial review. Mr Ramaotwana highlighted that the proposed amendment sought to address the gap by introducing appropriate safeguards mechanisms.

He said it would further strengthen the asset recovery regime by ensuring that it operated efficiently and effectively while upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms and maintaining adequate checks and balance consistent with the rule of law. Furthermore, he stated that the amendment Bill aimed to address deficiencies identified through the national risk assessment, mock evaluation exercise and the revised FATF standards in particular the FAFT recommendation 4, criterion 4.5, which granted authorities power to cease/freeze criminal property in urgent circumstances without prior court authorisation subject to judicial review and appropriate legal safeguards. **BOPA**

Gaolathe commends MPs for cross-partisan debate

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Members of Parliament have been commended for their patriotism and commitment to enhancing the integrity of the country's financial system.

Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti in her support of the Bill said the amendment underscored the fact that modern security necessitated robust financial intelligence to counter organised crime and terrorism, which relied on financial resources.

Affairs, said the nature of Botswana democracy should be aligned to national policy frameworks, good and governance. He said implementing the objective of the Bill would contribute to the economic landscape of Botswana, as investors would be lured into the country.

The assessment identified the legislative and institutional gaps requiring reform to strengthen the country's AML/CFT/CFP framework and to ensure compliance with the revised FATF standards and methodology. Furthermore, he said a national self-assessment, national risk assessment and the mock mutual evaluation exercise identified the gaps in the current legal framework including the Proceeds

and Instrument of Crime Act. The national assessment, he said identified specific provisions, citing section 35, sub-section 8 of the Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act as potential judicial to the rights of the affected parties as it does not describe a timeframe within which, a decision by a law enforcement officer or the receiver to cease property without a court order must be submitted to judicial review. Mr Ramaotwana highlighted that the proposed amendment sought to address the gap by introducing appropriate safeguards mechanisms.

Appreciating the MPs sentiments of support following his presentation on the Financial Intelligence (Amendment) Bill in Parliament on Monday, the Vice President also Minister of Finance Mr Ndaba Gaolathe encouraged legislators to protect Botswana at all costs.

Therefore, she said the inclusion of counter-proliferation financing within the Act enabled authorities to disrupt financial flows associated with such activities. Additionally, she said the Bill enhanced coordination among the National Coordination Committee on Financial Intelligence and various investigative and regulatory bodies, acknowledging that a unified approach was vital for effective action against financial offences.

Tlokweneng MP, Mr Phenyio Segokgo said Parliament should manage predictability of such laws and have proper framework of domesticating them.

Furthermore, he said a national self-assessment, national risk assessment and the mock mutual evaluation exercise identified the gaps in the current legal framework including the Proceeds

and Instrument of Crime Act. The national assessment, he said identified specific provisions, citing section 35, sub-section 8 of the Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act as potential judicial to the rights of the affected parties as it does not describe a timeframe within which, a decision by a law enforcement officer or the receiver to cease property without a court order must be submitted to judicial review. Mr Ramaotwana highlighted that the proposed amendment sought to address the gap by introducing appropriate safeguards mechanisms.

He said with an adverse outcome, investors would price Botswana as a higher compliance-risk jurisdiction.

Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti said the need for national risk assessments to address the changing landscape of financial crime, including the rise of account takeover fraud, further emphasised the Bill's importance in adapting to technological advancements in business and finance.

He also called for centralised communication when it comes to financial issues, saying a clear communication should come from the Ministry of Finance. He said communication in Botswana had never been an asset and that had derailed public confidence in government.

Furthermore, he said a national self-assessment, national risk assessment and the mock mutual evaluation exercise identified the gaps in the current legal framework including the Proceeds

and Instrument of Crime Act. The national assessment, he said identified specific provisions, citing section 35, sub-section 8 of the Proceeds and Instrument of Crime Act as potential judicial to the rights of the affected parties as it does not describe a timeframe within which, a decision by a law enforcement officer or the receiver to cease property without a court order must be submitted to judicial review. Mr Ramaotwana highlighted that the proposed amendment sought to address the gap by introducing appropriate safeguards mechanisms.

He commended the legislator's input on national issues, noting that it was important to recognise and nature Botswana's participation in the global financial system.

For his part, Mmadinare MP, Mr Ketlhalefile Motshegwa said the amendment would help Botswana comply with FATF standards. He added that government institutions should be capacitated to effectively implement the objectives of the amendment.

Similarly in support of the Bill, the MP for Chobe Mr Simasiku Mapulanga said indecisiveness of implementation was what put the country's reputation at stake. Therefore, he urged the minister to amend the Bill with the intention to further enhance public confidence. **BOPA**

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Mr Gaolathe said he was ready to give further guidance as Parliament worked collaboratively on the Financial Intelligence Amendment Bill of 2026.

In addition, Mr Motshegwa who is also the Minister of Local Government and Traditional

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Green Climate Fund project targets investment in livestock industry

GABORONE

The Green Climate Fund project is strategically aligned with the National Development Plan (NDP) 12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP), positioned as a cornerstone in stimulating the agricultural sector.

certifications and climate-smart financial products.

He said the financial system globally, imposed specific standards and expectations, including the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) ecosystem, which established such standards at a macro level.

In addition, Mr Motshegwa who is also the Minister of Local Government and Traditional

Similarly in support of the Bill, the MP for Chobe Mr Simasiku Mapulanga said indecisiveness of implementation was what put the country's reputation at stake. Therefore, he urged the minister to amend the Bill with the intention to further enhance public confidence. **BOPA**

Answering a question in Parliament on Friday, the Minister of Land and Agriculture Dr Edwin Dikoloti said the project complemented government's policy goals, aiming at building livestock production and productivity including building cattle numbers.

Minister Dikoloti said the project's primary goal was to strengthen the adaptive capacity of Botswana's people, institutions and rangeland ecosystems to respond to the impacts of climate change long after project funding had ended. He said these would be achieved through measures such as strengthening local institutions such as Farmer Facilitation Teams, Village Grazing Committees, Farmers' Committees and government extension services at district level; institutionalising sustainable rangeland management, capacity development with training provided to farmers, community and leaders.



Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe (right) and Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa in Parliament. Mr Gaolathe commended Members of Parliament for contributions that put the nation first.

He also said the project contributed to the national objectives of enhancing climate resilience within the livestock sector, to raising agriculture's contribution to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the current two percent to six percent within five years.

Dr Dikoloti said environmental and social sustainability with inclusive governance, gender equality, youth participation and effective grievance mechanisms were measures to strengthen the primary goal of the project. He was responding to a question from MP for Shoshong, Mr Moneedi Bagaisamang who had asked the minister how the Green Climate Fund Project was linked with BETP and NDP 12.

Dr Dikoloti also said it would strengthen the competitiveness of the beef industry through rangeland restoration and value chain development.

Mr Bagaisamang also asked how the project would contribute to an increase of the national herd and support investment in the livestock industry as well as other value chains and what sustainability measures were in place beyond the life of this project. **BOPA**

He said the project further aimed to promote investment in livestock and other value chains by turning degraded land into a productive, high return asset class, also improving forage quality and water availability, which lowered production costs, boosted livestock yields and attracted private capital through eco-labelling, premium

DailyBusiness

Gaolathe lauds EU and World Bank ties

Lorato Gaofise
GABORONE

The Vice President and Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe, has hailed the lasting partnership between Botswana, the European Union (EU) and the World Bank, saying development advances when partnership is patient, practical and rooted in

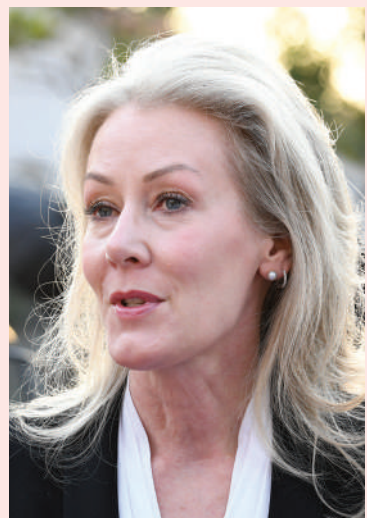


World Bank Resident Representative Mr Liang Wang

trust. Speaking during a dinner organised to bid farewell to the outgoing World Bank country director Mr Liang Wang and EU ambassador to Botswana and Southern African Development Community, Ms Petra Pereyra in Gaborone, recently, Mr Gaolathe said the two development partners had helped turn broad commitments into practical cooperation that supported Botswana's ambitions for a greener economy, a more diversified economy and wider opportunity for its people. Under Ambassador Pereyra's stewardship, Mr Gaolathe said the EU supported renewable energy, digital transformation, innovation, enterprise development and civil society. He said the partnership helped place skills in the hands of young people, strengthen communities and link enterprise to job creation. For that reason, the Vice President said Botswana would also remember Ms Pereyra for her elegance, warmth and determined spirit, as the country shared common values with her. Turning to Mr Wang, he

said the World Bank helped government think more deeply about productivity, human capital, small enterprise, public finance and the systems through which services were delivered. He said the Bank's contribution was matched by dialogue on reform and investment in water, energy, health, education and social protection. Under Mr Wang's leadership, Mr Gaolathe said the World Bank supported stronger social protection systems and expanded access to reliable water in drought-prone communities. "A functioning tap may appear ordinary. In a water-scarce community, it is public policy made visible. It is dignity flowing into a household," he added. Furthermore, the Vice President commended Mr Wang's intellectual rigor and discipline, his listening ear, patience and tenacity in engaging hard questions rather than walking around them. While the EU widened the country's pathways into green growth, skills and enterprise, he said the World Bank sharpened how government thought, spent and delivered.

"Together you showed that development advances when partnership is patient, practical and rooted in trust," he said. Mr Gaolathe thanked the teams that worked alongside the two outgoing leaders, adding that the country looked forward to carrying the relationships forward. **BOPA**



European Union Ambassador to Botswana and SADC Ms Petra Pereyra

Letsema programme aims for food security

FRANCISTOWN - The Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) has called for stronger collaboration across the horticulture value chain to ensure that the Letsema Horticulture Market Programme delivers food security, jobs and reduced reliance on imported produce. Speaking at the Letsema Horticulture Market Stakeholder Engagement, CEDA chief operations officer Mr James Moribame, said agriculture remained a priority sector for economic diversification, employment creation and rural development. "The Letsema Horticulture Market Programme seeks to bridge this gap by creating a modern, organised market system that benefits everyone from the producer to the consumer," Mr Moribame said. He said the programme was developed to address long-standing challenges including inconsistent market access, post-harvest losses, fragmented supply chains, inadequate aggregation and limited bargaining power for farmers. **BOPA**

China zero-tariff policy boosts exports

HARARE - China's zero-tariff policy for African products is expected to create new opportunities for horticultural products to access one of the world's largest consumer markets, Zimbabwean exporters have said. Analyst Tungamirai Eric Mupona said that Zimbabwe was implementing its National Development Strategy 2, which prioritised trade and investment facilitation as key drivers of structural transformation. "Against this backdrop, Zimbabwe is putting in place measures to diversify its export portfolio," Mupona said, adding that the policy opened up significant opportunities for blueberries, citrus fruits, and avocados. **Xinhua**

Libya central bank governor submits resignation

TRIPOLI - Governor of the Central Bank of Libya Naji Issa submitted a formal request to the House of Representatives to resign, according to a letter published by local media on Monday. Issa did not disclose specific reasons for his request in the letter, saying only that the reasons were related to "sensitive matters," according to various media reports. The move came as the Libyan economy faces growing pressures, including fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Libyan dinar against foreign currencies, rising prices, and continued disputes over the unification of public spending and monetary policies. Issa assumed the post in October 2024, succeeding Sadiq al-Kabir. **Xinhua**

Effective execution vital to reform efforts

Gontle Merafhe
GABORONE

The Africa Development Bank (ADB) 2026 Botswana Country Focus Report has identified areas central to the direction of government reforms among them, strengthening project preparations, deeper domestic capital markets, better public investment management and greater mobilisation of private capital. Botswana is looking to the bank, to help deepen and accelerate the work particularly in project preparation in institutional capability, and in the mobilisation of capital around viable investments. "Government and the Bank are in this sense breeding from the same school. Our institutions bring different instruments and expertise but, the development direction is the same. The value of such a partnership can be seen in what remains within the country," said Vice President and Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe, at the Launch of the 2026 Botswana Country Focus Report, Monday in Gaborone. He said there was a scope for a sharper emphasis on execution, project preparation and on the institutional capacity required to move viable projects to financial growth and implementation. Mr Gaolathe also said government was building a more productive and diversified Botswana, digitally enabled and increasingly connected to markets beyond the border of Botswana. "Opportunity, employment, empowerment and fulfilment must be widened as the economy grows. The two tests are execution, more

execution, super execution, ultra-execution, mighty execution," he stated. The report comes at a difficult point in Botswana's economic cycle, evident in the weakness of the diamond market which exposed how heavily Botswana's fortunes remained tied to one commodity, a difficulty, Mr Gaolathe said government sought to address by building a high-income Botswana that was digitally enabled, export driven, people centred, economically diversified and every citizen was empowered, employed and fulfilled. Africa Development Bank group deputy director-Southern Africa Regional Office, Ms Moono Mupotola, said the report came at an important time for Botswana as it navigated one of the most consequential turning points marked by the turndown of the global macro-economic environment since 2020. She said the downturn associated macro-economic vulnerabilities of the economy had been emphasised, especially those associated with the continued dependence of the civil economy. In 2025, Botswana's economy contracted by 0.77 per cent, reflecting a weak dynamic demand and production, Ms Mupotola said. She also stated that the report estimated that Botswana's development conditions under Vision 2036, 12th National Development Plan and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme would require significant investment that could not be financed through traditional public finances alone. "Cognisant of this, the

Government of Botswana has indicated 60 per cent private-sector-led projects under BTEPs, 116 private projects with

an estimated total investment pipeline of P510 billion over the next decade," said Ms Mupotola. **BOPA**



Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe (right) and African Development Bank Group Deputy Director, Southern Africa Regional Office and Country Manager for Botswana, Ms Moono Mupotola during the official launch of the 2026 Botswana Country Focus Report in Gaborone on Monday. Mr Gaolathe said Botswana looked to the bank to deepen and accelerate its work, particularly in project preparation and for strengthening institutional capacity. Photo: Pheny Moalosi

Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

Ipapatse Fa Leletsa

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261 0480 | 241 3402 | 365 3500

Borre ba rotloediwa go etleetsa kamuso ka lebele

Loago Thomas
GABORONE

Go bothokwa gore borre ba rotloetse bomme ba ba tshotseng bana le bone go amusa masea ka lebele. Kgakololo e e ntshitswe ke kgosi wa kgaolwana ya Gaborone West, Mme Keneilwe Ramosiane bosheng. Erileabwakwamoletlong wa segopotso sa beke ya kamuso ka lebele ya mafatshefatshe mo Gaborone, Mme Ramosiane o rotloeditse borre go tsena diphuthago tsa go tshwana le e, ka gore di ba ama fela thata ka le bone e le batsadi. O tlhalositse fa kamuso ka lebele e thusa ngwana go tsaya tshireletso e ntsi mo mashing, e bile a ka se

tshabelelwe ke ditlhabi jaaka ba ba sielwang mashi a boupi. A re bana ba kamuso ka lebele masole a bone a kgona go lwantsha bolwetse mo mmeleng. Mme Ramosiane o tswelsetse a tlhalosa fa go amusa ka lebele go dira kgolagano ga-reng ga ngwana le mmangwana. E rile a bua kwa moletlong o, moitseanape wa tsa botsogo jwa setshaba, Rre Kebayaone Gare a re maikaelelo a beke eo ke go tsaya kamuso ka lebele ka motlhala le go itsise setshaba ka bothokwa jwa kamuso ka lebele, le fa bangwe ba tshwarwa ke diemo tsa tiro le tse dingwe fela jalo. O ne a rotloetsa batsadi go tswelela ba amusa ka lebele ba beile mo melawaneng e e teng ya tsa botsogo jwa ngwana. “Kamuso ka lebele efa ngwana tshimologo e e nonofileng ya botsogo jwa ka moso, ga se kgang ya go ithophela,



Kgosi wa kgaolwana ya Gaborone West, Mme Keneilwe Ramosiane a re masole a mmele a bana ba kamuso ka lebele a kgona go lwantsha bolwetse mo mmeleng.

ke kgang e e tlhomameng ya go beeletsa mo botsogong jwa ngwana jo bo tlhomameng ka mashi a na le dikotla tsotlhe tse di tlhokafalang e bile a nonotsha go gola ga boboko,” ga tlhalosa jalo Rre Gare. Mokhanselara wa kgaolo ya Difetlhamolelo mo Gaborone, Rre Sesupo Jacobs fa a latlhela la gagwe o ne a re dipatlisiso di supile fa mo kgaolong ya Gaborone ka ngwaga wa 2025 batho ba le lesome le motso mo lekgolong ba ne ba ikaegile ka go amusa ka lebele. O ne a tlhalosa fa dipatlisiso di tswelela di supa fa mo baneng ba le lesome, ba le ba babedi ba amusiwa ka lebele mo kgwedding tsa ntlha tse thataro. Se se supa fa go na le mabaka a a farologaneng gore seemo se bo se ntse jalo.

Rre Jacobs o ne a tswelela a tlhalosa fa lebaka la ntlha e le kgatelelo ya tsa tiro, e e tlhokisang motsadi nako e e tsepameng ya go amusa ngwana. Ya bobedi ke tumelo ya gore kamuso ka lebele e le nosi ga e a lekana. O tswelsetse a gwetlha borre go etleetsa kamuso ka lebele. O kopile gore makalana otlhe a a itebagantseng le tsa boimana a rute mo go tseneletseng gore mashi a lebele a bothokwa fela thata morago ga ngwana a sena go tsholwa. “Kamuso ka lebele, ke motheo wa sennela ruri wa go simolola botshelo,” Mokhanselara Jacobs

a bua jalo. Mme Thato Grey, yo e leng monni wa kgaolo ya Difetlhamolelo o ne a gatelela bothokwa jwa go amusa ka lebele. O tlhalositse fa bo mmabana ba na le ditlhong tsa go amusa bana ba bone fa gare ga batho, mme dilo tsa go tshwana le tseo e le tsone tse di ba busetsang kwa morago. Mme Grey rotloeditse bo mme go amusa bana gongwe le gongwe fa ba leng teng, e bile ba fokotse go ba siela mashi ka tami ka jaana bomme bangwe ba sa tlhatswe ditami sentle mo go felelang go ka baka malwetsi mo baneng. **BOPA**



Kgosi ya kgaolwana wa Gaborone West, Mme Keneilwe Ramosiane a le kwa moletlong wa segopotso sa beke ya kamuso ka lebele ya mafatshefatshe bosheng. O kopile borre go rotloetsa bomme ba ba tshotseng bana le bone go amusa masea ka lebele, a re kamuso eo, e thusa ngwana go tsaya tshireletso e ntsi mo mashing. Dinepe: Phenyio Ramatu

Gotsang o tlhomilwe moruti wa UCCSA

Gaboselwe Olesitse
SEFHOPHE

Reverend Pono Gakekgonwe wa UCCSA kwa kgaolo ya Kolobeng /Lesoso a re go a itumedisa go bona bomme ba tswelsetse ka go tsena mo thomong ya boruti jwa dikereke e gantsi e dirwang ke borre. O buile se fa go ne go tlhongwa Moruti Portia Gotsang, go etelela phuthago ya UCCSA kwa Sefhophe mme a mo kgothaditsa go dira ka natla a itshwareletse ka lefoko la Modimo, go tlhomamisa gore o etelela phuthago ka boammaaruri. Reverend Gakekgonwe a re bomme ke thari ya setshaba mme phuthago ya Sefhophe e segofetse go bo e eteletse pele ke mme. O rotloeditse baruti le baphuthegi go mo ema Moruti Gotsang nokeng le go mo gakolola fa go tlhokafalang teng. Reverend Gakekgonwe o tlhalositse fa Moruti Gotsang a tlaa kopana le dikgweho mme a tshwanetse go ikaega thata ka lefoko la Modimo. A re ga a na pelaelo epe mo thomong ya gagwe ka a tsamaile ditsela tsotlhe tse di neng di

tlhokafala go ka nna moruti. UCCSA e na le ditsamaiso le melao ya yone e e tlhokang go salwa morago ntleng ga seo, o tsile go palelwa ke go laola ba o ba eteletse pele, Reverend Gakekgonwe a gakolola. O mo kgotlhaditse go tsepama mo boammaaruring le go tsaya baphuthegi ka tekatekanyo, gore a nne moruti wa tlhotlha mme phuthago le yone e gole. Reverend Gakekgonwe o rotloeditse Moruti Gotsang go tshwaragana le boeteledipele go tlhabolola Sefhophe. Fa amogela thomo Moruti Gotsang o tlhalositse fa a tsile go tsweleditse thomo e Modimo a e mmileditseng, mme a dira jalo ka tshwaragano le baruti ba ba bangwe. Moemedi wa UCCSA kwa Sefhophe, Kgosi Goutwa Alethaeng, ene o tlhalositse fa ba sa le ba kopane le fa ba tlaa tswelela le go ema Moruti Gotsang nokeng, go godisa kereke. Kgosi Alethaeng o tlhalositse fa Reverend Gotsang a eteletse kereke ya Mogapi le Sefhophe mme a le tlhaga mo tirong ya go direla Modimo le setshaba. **BOPA**



New house brings relief to fire victim

Thokozani Matiha
MOLEPOLOLE

In the wake of a devastating fire that gutted Ms Khumo Kgosimotho's three bedroomed house, the Department of Buildings Maintenance (DBM) restored her hope, handing over the keys to a newly constructed two and a half room house in the Lekgwapheng ward recently. Molepolole DBM in collaboration with the Department of Roads Transport Services (DTRS), Department of Wildlife and National Parks and other stakeholders came together to successfully complete the project.

Speaking on behalf of Transport and Infrastructure Minister Noah Salakae, Corporate Services Permanent Secretary Ms Agnes Mothobi emphasised that community service, usually termed Corporate Social Responsibility was an essential component of local development, echoing the event's theme of restoring hope through unity and compassion. "Community Service Day was officially launched on November 5, 2010, by former President, Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama together with Cabinet-

members.

The purpose of this day is to uplift disadvantaged communities, revive the spirit of compassion and contribute to sustainable development. Each Ministry is thus expected to set aside one day each month to give back to the community," she stated.

She further highlighted that securing shelter, food and self-reliance remained vital for community stabilisation. "Ms Kgosimotho reportedly earns a living through tailoring, but her sewing equipment was also destroyed in the blaze, severely impacting her livelihood.

I urge everyone to support her recovery by financing the machine replacement. Notably, the Member of Parliament for Molepolole North, Mr Arafat Khan has already stepped forward to contribute," she said.

Ms Mothobi said it was inspiring and heartwarming for Molepolole DBM staff to pool resources from their own salaries and fundraising through sales of fat-cakes to raise P90 000.00 to build a home for Ms Kgosimotho.

"I urge the department under the Ministry to be encouraged to

grow, flourish and to continue with the spirit of giving," she concluded. Giving an overview of the project, DBM Area Manager, Ms Kegomoditswe Sibusibi shared that Ms Kgosimotho walked through her office seeking help last December. However, because it was the holiday season, she informed her she would follow up the issue in the next year. "Early this year, I conducted a site visit to assess her situation, and I discovered it was in dire state.

She was sleeping in the chicken coop. I immediately consulted my team, and we launched the project," she said.

The team initially met Kgosimotho in March during an International Women's Day celebration, where they presented her with food and clothing gifts. Ms Sibusibi explained that the housing project was an initiative aimed at restoring hope, improving the beneficiary's living conditions, and fostering team work and compassion.

She expressed hope that the new home would provide a safe, stable environment filled with love, and happiness for the children.

Reflecting on the day of the

incident, Ms Khumo Kgosimotho vividly recalled stepping outside to rest near a chicken coop due to a chronic headache. The coop housed 200 chickens, none of which survived. While resting, she heard a loud boom, and by the time she reached the entrance, the house was already consumed by an uncontrollable fire.

On her part, one of the donors representing Furnmart furniture shop, Ms Baikanyi Pauline Radikara said when the department

approached them for donations, they saw no reason to side-line the beneficiary because they always supported good causes when possible.

On behalf of Kgosi Kgari III, Kgosi Moffat Bakwena of Lekgwapheng ward thanked the departments for their generous support and stressed the importance of a generous hand. Kgosi Bakwena also noted that community outreach aligned with human and social development pillar of Vision 2036. **BOPA**

Letsholo refuses court appearance

Bonang Masolotale
GABORONE

First accused in the Kopong murder case, Moagi Letsholo, has refused to appear before Justice Oteng Motlhala of the Gaborone High Court, demanding a written court order.

Letsholo, who was appearing before Justice Bafi Nlanda on a separate matter, informed the prosecution that he was not aware of the murder case mentioned before Justice Motlhala.

Monday's court appearance before Justice Motlhala was the initial appearance after the matter was committed to the High Court for the commencement of the trial.

"The accused has just arrived but is refusing to come to court,

demanding a written court order to appear before this court," prosecutor, Ms Seeletso Ookeditse told the court, explaining his non-appearance.

Meanwhile, Letsholo's attorney, Mr Kole Koke, withdrew from representing the accused, citing a relationship with the deceased's family.

Mr Koke told the court that he was a close associate of Dr Kefilwe Selema, whose aunt is the deceased.

Letsholo, Gaolemogwe Kosie, Outlwele Aston, the victim's husband and Kebaleboge Ntsebe are charged with the murder of Barulaganye Aston on July 14, 2022. Aston was a teacher at Kopong Junior Secondary School.

The accused are facing charges after the victim was found brutally

killed in her home.

The case will be mentioned again for a status hearing on November 4 to allow the other accused persons to secure legal representation of their choice. The prosecution, when committing the matter to the High Court, indicated that it intended to call a total of 27 witnesses and would also provide various exhibits to support its case against the four accused persons.

Letsholo will be awaiting allocation of another pro deo lawyer following the withdrawal of Mr Kole, while the second accused person, Aston, is represented by Dr Obonye Jonas. The other accused persons, Kosie and Ntsebe, are yet to finalise their legal representation for the murder trial. The case is scheduled for August 13. **BOPA**

Court admits confession in murder case

Bonang Masolotale
GABORONE

Gaborone High Court judge has admitted into evidence the confession of a Zimbabwean man accused of slitting his girlfriend's throat with a piece of a mirror.

Abraham Ngwenya, 36, is on trial for the April 30, 2018, murder of Itumeleng Botho Poloko in Tlokeng. At the start of his trial, Ngwenya challenged the confession, claiming that police had coerced him into giving it. However, ruling on Monday, Justice Oteng Motlhala stated that careful analysis of the evidence showed that the statement was lawfully obtained.

"I am satisfied that the confession statement was made freely and voluntarily," Justice Motlhala ruled.

Ngwenya had testified that armed police officers intimidated him during his arrest, caused him to panic and admit to the crime using a script provided by the arresting officers. Rejecting those claims, Justice Motlhala

noted that the judicial officer who recorded the statement, Ms Botho Kgerethwa, conducted a standard pre-assessment and evidence that Ngwenya was acting of his own free will. The judge added that before the recording, Ngwenya was asked to check his surroundings for any police presence and confirmed none were present.

Furthermore, the court heard that Ngwenya led the police to the crime scene in the presence of two independent witnesses, who testified that the accused was the last person to be seen with Poloko and that he had admitted to killing her upon his arrest.

Prosecutors allege that Ngwenya, a farmworker, killed Poloko following an argument, slit her throat with a small mirror and dumped her body in the bush, which was later discovered days later and decomposed, by a passer-by. Ngwenya is represented by defense attorney King Tshebo. The trial is scheduled for May 19 next year. **BOPA**

Arts & Culture



Miss World Botswana Ruth Thomas departing for Vietnam at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone on Saturday. She is representing Botswana at the 73rd Miss World in Vietnam. Her project is "The Beauty Movement" under the motto "Wonderfully and Fearfully Made". Photos: Pheny Moalosi

Thomas in Vietnam for 73rd Miss World

Loago Thomas
GABORONE

Miss World Botswana, Ruth Thomas is in Vietnam for the first time in her life and, for the first time, she had set foot outside Africa. She is one of more than a hundred delegates streaming into the country this week for the 73rd Miss World Festival, an anniversary edition of the pageant that will culminate in the grand finale in Ho Chi Minh City on September 5. Somewhere in that wave of arrivals, gowns packed in garment bags, sashes still folded and jet lag setting in, was a girl from Masunga who, six months ago, was not sure she would ever leave the continent at all. She had admitted as much before leaving. The journey itself frightened her more than the competition. "I'm very nervous about the travelling itself. I've never had the privilege to travel as much in my life... that alone is such a big deal, and it's all scary at the same time." But she also promised herself that there was something waiting for

her on the other side of that fear: a version of herself she had not yet met. Now, she is there. And the story of how she prepared for this moment says almost as much about her as the moment itself. Given the freedom to choose a talent for the world stage, the girl who can actually sing chose to dance instead, despite admitting that she was not very good at it initially. "I have two left feet for the death of me, okay?" Singing would have been the safer and more obvious choice. But she could not shake a nagging question: if she sang, who exactly would be left out? "If I sing, will every African that wouldn't make it to the talent finale feel represented?" She did not like her own answer. So she abandoned the plan and spent months learning traditional dance instead, something clumsier, harder-won and, ultimately, designed to carry more people than her own talent alone could. The preparation did not stop at choreography. Swimming laps helped build the stamina she will

need for the competition's physical rounds. Then, almost quietly, came a complete rethink of what she eats. "I believe that you're what you eat." For Thomas, however, the statement is about more than nutrition. It is also about what she allows into her mind, the people she surrounds herself with and what she permits to occupy mental space as she prepares for an experience of this magnitude. None of that discipline, the dance steps, the swimming, the changed diet, the faith and the fear was visible when she stepped off the flight when she arrived in Vietnam. What people saw was a young woman from Botswana, standing on Vietnamese soil for the first time, with one leg of a much longer journey behind her and the biggest one still ahead. She has until September 5 to turn six months of preparation into three unrepeatable minutes on a stage in Ho Chi Minh City. If the last few months are anything to go by, she is not planning to waste a second of them. **BOPA**

Kuru dance culture faces extinction

Malebogo Lekula
D'KAR

Ghanzi District Deputy Council Chairperson Xukuri Xukuri has appealed for the revival of the Kuru Dance Festival, warning that the rich culture of indigenous communities is slowly facing extinction. He made the call on Saturday evening during a D'Kar cultural event organised by Cynthia Soso, a Cultural Survival grant beneficiary from D'Kar settlement. The Kuru Dance Festival, once an annual crowd-puller held every August at Dqae Qare San Lodge, has been on a dry spell due to alleged mismanagement. Xukuri said the festival used to showcase traditional San music, sacred healing dances, storytelling and other rites of passage. He described Soso's mini event as a stepping stone that could inspire the D'Kar community and the Kuru Development Trust to fast-track the festival's return. Xukuri said youth participation was critical to exposing young people to cultural lifestyles through songs, storytelling, food exhibitions and indigenous herbs demonstrated by elders. He applauded young people learning cultural preservation, adding that failure to embrace it would lead to



instant extinction. He also called on the community's diverse ethnic groups to practice cultural tolerance to foster harmony. Kgosi Waynard Morris, in his welcome remarks, urged D'Kar residents to preserve Naro culture for future generations. He noted that while the world was evolving and youth were exposed

to other cultures, communities must uphold indigenous identity in dress, language and practice. He said cultural identity could also help economically challenged communities generate income. Soso, who holds a Bachelor's degree in Lifelong Learning and Community Development from the University of Botswana, said she applied for a Cultural Survival

grant to respond to elders' pleas to safeguard Naro culture. She observed that many youth were no longer fluent in their mother tongue. Through her project, she ran a youth cultural workshop in July focused on Naro language teaching, survival skills, traditional medicine and sacred healing knowledge. Soso said she plans to mobilise youth to

Ghanzi District Deputy Council chairperson, Xukuri Xukuri has appealed for the revival of the Kuru Dance Festival, saying it had the potential to safeguard the rich culture of indigenous communities.

form cooperatives that advocated indigenous culture. Cultural Survival representative Bhibo Maruping said the US-based NGO supported indigenous cultural preservation. Applications open in September and do not require company or society registration. Approval depends on originality, local leadership confirmation and project strength. The grants include five components: Youth fellowship at US\$2,500 - US\$6,000 and Keepers of the Earth at US\$6,900 - \$8,000 for first-time applicants, rising to US\$8,000 - US\$12,000 for second applications. The Bazaar Grant which facilitates market access for women crafters Media Fellowship aims at training youth to document culture and prevent distortion as well as Community Regime Groups which targets cultural exchange programmes Maruping said five youth from D'Kar, Lokgwabe, Qangwa, Chobokwane and Tsodilo have already been funded under the Youth Fellowship. Village elder Xonxlae Qubi closed the event by applauding Soso and urging others to follow her example. She said youth involvement in cultural activities builds strong personal identities and social cohesion. **BOPA**



BAA lays foundation for Brisbane 2032

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

The Botswana Athletics Association (BAA) is currently laying the groundwork for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games cycle, using the recent World Athletics U20 Championships as a crucial proving ground for the nation's next generation of elite talent.

For a nation accustomed to global track podiums, returning from an international meet without silverware can easily be misconstrued as a step backward.

However, inside the BAA high-performance offices, the mood is one of strategic optimism. Despite missing out on the medal standings, the association views the junior contingent's performance as definitive proof that Botswana's track conveyor belt is operating at full speed.

"We are highly encouraged by this junior team's performance. This squad is a foundational pillar for the future. Looking closely at the juniors' composure and execution on the world stage, it is overwhelmingly evident that there will be a seamless continuity beyond our current crop of senior global champions," said BAA sport development manager, Patrick Moesi.

That continuity comes on the heels of a major structural shift in how Botswana produces world-class athletic talent.

Historically, the nation relied heavily on public school systems and school sports pipelines to scout and nurture base-level athletes. When systemic pauses disrupted those traditional school sports frameworks, BAA had to independently pivot its developmental programmes.

"Remember, over the years we have been relying strictly on the school system. If BAA, in the temporary absence of school sports frameworks, can independently scout, train and present athletes who can seamlessly compete at an elite international level, to us that is an achievement," Moesi added.

The developmental squad deployed to the world stage proved the strength of this independent pipeline across multiple disciplines after 100m sprinter, Wadzha Matakule demonstrated elite pedigree by storming through competitive heats to book a spot in the prestigious final, ultimately placing ninth in the world with a time of 10.54 seconds.

The squad also showcased strong individual depth across distances, featuring 400m specialists in Junior Phatshima and Tsaone Dintwa, alongside 200m sprinters Same Mhutsiwa and Jack Newman.

The team's relay entries further signalled a bright future. The men's 4x400m relay quartet of Warona Mokgosi, Phatshima, Resego Mabua and Dintwa, provided a thrilling performance in the heats, winning first place with a Season Best time of 3:08.22 to cruise into the global final, complementing a competitive effort from the 4x100m squad.

For Moesi, the tactical discipline, baton exchanges and pacing of the junior relay teams directly mirrored the trademark style of Botswana's senior world-beaters. This systemic alignment offers concrete proof of a working developmental ecosystem. Rather than fixating on short-term medal counts, BAA is using this raw performance data to build a steady pipeline heading into the 2032 Olympic Games.

With junior athletes already executing with the maturity of senior giants, the association is confident that the road ahead promises a sustained era of dominance. For Botswana, the path to the podium remains a marathon and the structural foundations laid today are quietly cementing the triumphs of tomorrow. **BOPA**



Men's 4x400m relay quartet: Junior Phatshima (left), Resego Mabua (second left), Tsaone Dintwa (second right) and Warona Mokgosi. Botswana Athletics Association is currently laying the groundwork for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games cycle
Photo: Courtesy of Botswana Athletics Association



Wadzha Matakule



Same Mhutsiwa



Jack Newman

BFA emphasises grassroots development

Pako Lebanna
GABORONE

As Botswana football seeks to make an impact in the international space and further improve the professional and commercial operations of the national sport, grassroots development has become a critical enabler.

These were the sentiments echoed by the Botswana Football Association (BFA) president, Tariq Babitseng during the association's ordinary general assembly in Gaborone recently. Babitseng said the assembly theme: From Grassroots to Greatness, underscored the importance of investing in the youth towards the development of the game. "We must create the structures, pathways and opportunities

that allow a young boy or girl who starts playing football at grassroots level to believe that greatness is possible," he said.

He added that this year not only marked the 60th anniversary of Botswana as an independent nation but also the diamond jubilee of the BFA, established in 1966 as the Botswana National Football Association.

"We are custodians of a football institution that has existed for 60 years.

The question we must ask ourselves is, what will we leave behind for the next 60 years?" he said.

The assembly, attended on behalf of government by Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, Lesego Chombo and fraternal football partners, president of the Cameroon Football Federation, former FC Barcelona, Real Madrid, Inter

Milan and Cameroon striker, Samuel Eto'o, former South African national team coach, Pitso Mosimane and South African football administrator Sibongile Marokana deliberated on leveraging on global best practice.

A panel discussion featuring BFA and COSAFA president Babitseng, Minister Chombo, Eto'o and Mosimane deliberated on the future of football, leadership, development under the topic, From Grassroots to Greatness: Transforming Botswana Football Through Impact and Inclusion.

During the assembly delegates from across the BFA regional structures countrywide had closed door discussions, deliberating on key decisions regarding the administration of the local game. **BOPA**