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Botswana explores new water solutions

Climate change has a negative impact on water, that is why the water sector is a big deal here at COP31.

Mr Onneetse Ramogapi, Minister of Water and Human Settlement



ANTALYA - *Leader's Summit of the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) is underway in Türkiye and Botswana will use its participation as an opportunity to contribute in shaping international climate policy. Speaking on the sidelines of the conference, Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Onneetse Ramogapi said Botswana's reliance on dams had become increasingly challenging as rising temperatures accelerated evaporation, reducing the amount of water available for consumption and economic activities.* Photo: Phenyo Moalosi

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Botswana explores new water solutions

Ndingililo Gaoswediwe
ANTALYA

Botswana is exploring other options to tackle growing water shortages worsened by climate change.

In an interview on the sidelines of the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Onneetse Ramogapi said water security remained national priority.

"Water is life and a necessary resource for all sectors, be it health or agriculture. Climate change has a negative impact on water, and that is why the water sector is a big deal here at COP31," Minister Ramogapi said.

The minister explained that Botswana's reliance on dams had become increasingly challenging as rising temperatures accelerated evaporation, reducing the amount of water available for consumption and economic activities.

He said government was exploring floating solar panels as one of the solutions, including promotion of efficient irrigation methods, particularly drip irrigation, to minimise water wastage in agriculture.

He said with irrigation, water is delivered directly to plant roots, making it more efficient than conventional irrigation systems, which could lose significant amounts of water through evaporation and runoff. He further said government was also encouraging the use of treated wastewater to reduce dependence on freshwater sources, particularly for irrigation.

The minister highlighted the importance of changing public attitude towards natural resource management, calling for greater action against overgrazing, deforestation and uncontrolled veld fires.

He said although environmental education and awareness had been ongoing, communities needed to translate that knowledge into responsible practices, supported by effective enforcement of environmental laws.

Botswana's water challenges are becoming increasingly urgent. In November last year, Mr Ramogapi informed Parliament that the country's national water deficit stood at 17.3 per cent and could increase by 51 per cent by 2035 if left unaddressed.

On one hand, the World Bank had also identified Botswana as one of four Southern African countries expected to experience high water stress by 2040.

Against this background, Mr Ramogapi said government was pursuing alternative water sources through proposed water transfer projects from the Chobe-Zambezi system and Lesotho.

The Lesotho-Botswana water transfer project, which envisages transporting water from Lesotho's highlands through South Africa, could provide an additional source for growing water needs.

Mr Ramogapi said Botswana was also advancing its climate adaptation priorities through its Third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0), which outlines the country's commitments to addressing climate change and strengthening resilience across vulnerable sectors.

Meanwhile, at the official opening of COP31 on Monday, COP31 President and Türkiye's Minister of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change, Mr Murat Kurum, called on countries to move beyond climate pledges and translate commitments into practical action, warning that the world was reaching a critical point in the fight against climate change.

He observed that climate change was increasingly interconnected, with drought in one country potentially affecting food supplies elsewhere, while declining water availability could have far reaching consequences for economies, migration and security.

Mr Kurum said extreme heat was simultaneously placing pressure on cities, agriculture and human health, making it necessary for countries to approach climate action as a development priority rather than solely an environmental concern.

"Climate policy is also development policy. It is food policy. It is energy policy. It is urban policy," he said.

He called for COP31 to become an implementation focused conference, where commitments translated into investments, technology transfer and practical solutions that improve people's lives.

He also highlighted the importance of climate financing, noting that delayed investment in resilience could increase the cost of future disasters, while failure to deliver adaptation finance could worsen humanitarian challenges in vulnerable countries.

Drawing on Türkiye's tradition of collective effort known as imece, Mr Kurum urged countries, institutions and communities to share responsibility in addressing the climate crisis.

He said the success of COP31 should ultimately be measured not by the statements made at the conference but by investments mobilised, technologies shared and communities made more resilient. ***BOPA***



ANTALYA - *Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Onneetse Ramogapi during an interview with Botswana Television reporter Keikantse Khumalo at 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Türkiye yesterday.* Photo: Phenyo Moalosi

Govt targets 95 per cent Measles - Rubella nationwide vaccination

Lesedi Thatayamodimo
GABORONE

Botswana is aiming for a 95 per cent measles-rubella vaccination coverage target through a nationwide integrated immunisation campaign running from November 16-20.

Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ketlhalefile Motshegwa, announced the drive at the official launch of the Integrated Measles-Rubella Vaccination Campaign in Gaborone on Tuesday.

Minister Motshegwa said the five-day campaign would run simultaneously across all 31 districts, targeting children aged six to 59 months.

Under the theme: Sireletsang Bana (Protect children, protect our future), the initiative aims to close community immunisation gaps by reaching children who missed routine doses.

He said health was both a developmental and human rights priority while child health was a shared responsibility among government, families, communities and development partners. Quoting former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, he reminded attendees that there was "no trust more sacred than the world's responsibility towards children."

He also referenced author Neil Postman, describing children as "living messages we send to a time we will not see."

The minister noted that the campaign aligned with government's commitment to universal health coverage, particularly following the transfer of primary healthcare services to the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs and local authorities. Decentralisation, he explained, allowed local leadership to better identify and respond to community needs.

He added that Botswana remained committed to Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aimed to reduce under-five mortality.

Despite COVID-19 movement restrictions and operational hurdles, Botswana's previous integrated campaign in 2021 achieved 91 per cent coverage.

"We are now working towards the 95 per cent target through stronger partnerships, improved routine immunisation and supplementary vaccination activities," Mr Motshegwa said.

He also noted that the country was pursuing certified measles elimination status by raising coverage for both the first (MR1) and second (MR2) doses of the measles-rubella vaccine.

The campaign delivers three integrated health interventions across target age groups. Qualified healthcare professionals would administer the measles-rubella vaccine to children aged nine to 59 months, targeting 95 per cent coverage.

Additionally, oral Vitamin A supplementation would be given to children aged six to 59 months, while oral albendazole suspension would be administered to children aged 12 to 59 months, with both supplementary interventions aiming for 90 per cent coverage.

Services would be accessible at local clinics, health posts and designated community sites across all districts.

Minister Motshegwa confirmed that district health teams had completed training and were fully prepared. Addressing resource limitations, the minister urged high operational efficiency, coordinated delivery, robust disease surveillance, early diagnosis and prompt clinical treatment.

He commended healthcare workers, the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF, traditional leaders and religious and community stakeholders for their support.

He appealed to parents, guardians and caregivers to take children and their welfare cards to the nearest facility, emphasising that the service was free and open to all children in Botswana regardless of nationality, race or economic status.

"By vaccinating our children, we are not just protecting their immediate health, we are protecting our collective future," he said, urging all stakeholders to focus on implementation, monitoring and measurable results so that no child was left behind. ***BOPA***



Angola: 51 years of freedom, resilience and achievements that build the future

Angola celebrates 51 years of National Independence on November 11, a historic achievement attained through the struggle, courage, sacrifice and determination of a people who never gave up on their dream of freedom.

At 00:00 (midnight) on November 11, 1975, a sovereign nation was born, driven by an unwavering desire to shape its own destiny and establish its place in the world.

Over more than five decades, the country has written a story of overcoming challenges, resilience and progress, facing difficulties, consolidating achievements and building paths towards development.

Throughout this journey, young people play a decisive role. They are not simply waiting for the future; they are actively participating in building it through innovation, entrepreneurship and talent in sectors such as healthcare, education, technology, media and culture.

Angolan women also continue to play a fundamental role in transforming the country. As leaders, artists, scientists, professionals and entrepreneurs, they are at the forefront of change, inspiring generations and contributing daily to building a more inclusive and developed Angola, with opportunities for everyone.

Thus, the story continues to be written by a people who have never allowed themselves to be silenced, finding in their identity, culture and traditions the strength to move forward. As long as there is an Angolan singing, dancing, creating and believing in their country, the spirit of resistance, the memory of the past and national pride will remain alive. These are 51 years of a free, sovereign and independent Angola, whose greatness lies in the strength and unity of its people.

Volunteerism cornerstone for development - Sehurutshe

Phodiso Rankwe
TLOKWENG

African governments and the private sector have been implored to recognise, finance and institutionalise volunteerism as a cornerstone of continental workforce development.

Deputy Permanent Secretary to the President Mr Omphile Sehurutshe made this plea on behalf of President Advocate Duma Boko during a four-day Africa Volunteerism Conference in Tlokweng on Tuesday.

Highlighting the grassroots foundation of continental development, Mr Sehurutshe asserted that true economic and social progress could not rely on government machinery alone but required the active and selfless commitment of citizens.

"Renaissance is not delivered by government alone. It is carried by people who make the choice to give and give freely from their hearts," Mr Sehurutshe stated.

Drawing from President Boko's recent State-of-the-Nation Address, he likened volunteerism to the Biblical mustard seed, explaining how small, localised acts of service compounded into generational transformation.

"Volunteerism is that mustard seed. One person, one hour of hands planted in a community, that small act grows branches, grows into a tree. You are not just leaders of tomorrow, but you are the builders of today," he added.

Addressing a critical systemic gap across the continent, he stressed that unpaid community service must be officially counted, certified and respected as legitimate professional experience rather than being dismissed. Detailing Botswana's proactive measures, he highlighted key institutional investments, including the Ipelegeng Public Works Programme which had engaged nearly 27 000 young people, 79 per cent of whom were women, with over P820 million spent on labour since 2025 and P274 million directed specifically to trained youth. He also mentioned the Human Resources Development Fund, which placed 804 youth in private sector internships valued at P17.6 million.

Founder of the International Volunteer Hub and national coordinator Ms Olerato Mathodi reflected on how the journey began in Botswana in 2019 out of a personal and collective concern to bridge the gap between youth potential and professional platforms.

Tracing the grassroots evolution of the initiative into a continental platform, Ms Mathodi highlighted tangible success stories, noting how volunteers from their network had successfully transitioned into prestigious international roles, such as serving with UN Women in New York and Bonn, or securing permanent professional placements with the Friedrich Foundation through the Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations.

Adding a powerful local leadership perspective, Member of Parliament for Tlokweng Mr Phenyo Segokgo, shared his personal journey of grassroots community engagement, reflecting how starting as a volunteer at 15 shaped his trajectory into local governance, mayoral leadership, and parliamentary service.

Mr Segokgo emphasised that volunteering was a profound investment in human potential and community resilience rather than merely giving time, noting that continuous community service enabled him to champion support for autistic and intellectually disabled children before returning to legislative leadership.

Expanding on the conference's broader strategic goals, regional and international representatives underscored the urgency of structured, policy-driven volunteer frameworks across the continent.

Representing the African Union Commission's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate, Mr Daniel Adugna highlighted that 2026 marked both the UN International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development and the 20th anniversary of the African Youth Charter, praising how volunteerism, whose service sustained communities across the continent, remained deeply embedded in traditional tenets of solidarity and Ubuntu.

Echoing that momentum, Dr Dabiwa Kamuruko, chief of the Volunteer Advisory Section at United Nations Volunteers praised Botswana's exemplary leadership and announced that deliberations were expected to culminate in the historic adoption of the Gaborone Declaration of Volunteerism.

Furthermore, Good Deeds Day International chief executive officer, Mr Kaynan Rabino commended Africa's inspiring volunteer spirit, noting that the continent's volunteering rate surged well above the global average at 58.5 per cent.

The conference convened approximately 500 delegates representing 43 African nations including 125 international participants under the theme: Investing in the Force of Africa's Renaissance: Safeguarding, Financing, and Recognising Volunteers. ***BOPA***



Acting President Ndaba Gaolathe (left) and Statistics Botswana Statistician General, Dr Khaufelo Lekobane at the launch of Statistics Botswana Corporate Strategic Plan 2026-2030 in Tlokweng on Tuesday. Mr Gaolathe said the true value of statistics lie not simply in publication but in the ability to inform decisions, guide investment, anticipate challenges and ultimately improve people's lives. Photo: Felicity Male

Reliable statistics essential for growth

Baleseng Batlotleng
TLOKWENG

The Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP) presents a particularly important test of the national statistical capabilities as it prioritises projects that carry significant expectations for investment, employment, productivity and economic diversification.

Acting President Mr Ndaba Gaolathe made the assertion when officially launching Statistics Botswana corporate strategic plan 2026-2030 in Tlokweng on Tuesday.

He said to distinguish between investment announced and investment realised, jobs projected and jobs actually created and projects launched and economic value delivered require credible baseline, consistent monitoring and discipline to adjust intervention where results fell short.

"Ultimately the credibility of our transformation agenda will rest not on what we promise but on what we can demonstrate and what Batswana experience in their daily lives. I equally welcome the strategy's emphasis on institutional sustainability, sound governance, responsible resource management and performance accountability," he said.

Mr Gaolathe said an institution entrusted with measuring national progress must demonstrate excellence in execution and accountability for results.

He said implementation must be deliberate, measurable and responsive and where progress slowed identify the obstacles and act and where innovation offered better solutions should be embraced.

Mr Gaolathe said by 2030 the success of the strategy should be visible in statistics that reach decision makers sooner, inform investment more effectively and enable government to account more credibly for the impact of its policies.

> "Statistics must reach policymakers when decisions are being made, businesses when investments are being considered and citizens seeking to understand the direction of their country"
>
> **Acting President Mr Ndaba Gaolathe**

"Above all it must strengthen our ability to translate national ambition into tangible improvements in people's lives. The figures we produce today will inform the choices we make tomorrow, but history will judge those choices by their consequences for our people," he added.

He applauded Statistics Botswana board and management for developing a strategy that recognised the growing importance of credible evidence to Botswana's development.

Mr Gaolathe said the true value of statistics lie not simply in their production or publication but in the ability to inform decisions, guide investment, anticipate challenges and ultimately improve people's lives.

He said achieving BETP targets required knowledge of where jobs were emerging, which skills the economy needed and how competitive exports were and whether public services were reaching those who needed them most.

"Statistics must reach policymakers when decisions are being made, businesses when investments are being considered and citizens seeking to understand the direction of their country. I therefore welcome the four pillars of this Strategic Plan, which focus on statistical excellence and leadership, data use and impact, institutional resilience, and innovation," said Mr Gaolathe.

For his part Statistician General, Dr Khaufelo Lekobane said the launch of the strategic document marked a renewed institutional ambition and commitment to making statistics matter more in the development of Botswana.

Dr Lekobane said government needed reliable evidence to formulate policies, allocate resources and assess results while businesses needed information to make investment decisions.

Additionally, he said researchers and citizens needed credible statistics to understand the conditions affecting their country.

"In this environment, producing statistics, although fundamental to our mandate, is no longer enough. We must ensure that statistics are trusted, accessible, understood and, most importantly, used," he said.

Dr Lekobane highlighted that the transformation did not mean moving away from producing official statistics but building on the responsibility and taking greater leadership in how data was generated, integrated, managed, analysed and used across the country.

He said the strategy was aligned with NDP 12, BETP and its True North, Vision 2036 the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Dr Lekobane said the responsibility was to provide trusted evidence needed to measure progress, identify development gaps and inform national priorities. ***BOPA***

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PARLIAMENT 2026

BRIEFS

Government plans phased reforms for Bogosi institution

Government has acknowledged that the working conditions of some traditional leaders, particularly in respect of office accommodation, furniture, ablution facilities and staffing, are not commensurate with the status and responsibilities of their offices.Responding to a question in Parliament, Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ketlhalefile Motshegwa, said despite prevailing financial constraints, his ministry remained committed to progressively improving the working environment of traditional leaders.He said the improvements would include the provision of appropriate office furniture, better office accommodation, enhanced staffing levels and the refurbishment of Kgotla offices. Where feasible, the improvements would also include personalised ablution facilities to enhance privacy, dignity and convenience for traditional leaders.Mr Motshegwa said the ministry intended to implement the improvements in phases during the 2027/28 and 2028/29 financial years, taking into account available financial resources and competing national priorities.He said improving the working environment of traditional leaders was among the ministry's priorities as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen Tribal Administration and enhance the dignity and effectiveness of the Bogosi institution.Tswapong South MP, Dr Kesitegile Gobotswang had sought to establish whether the conditions under which traditional leaders operated were commensurate with their status, particularly regarding office furniture, ablution facilities and staffing. He had also asked about plans in place to improve their working environment, including clear timelines for implementation. ***BOPA***

Grader breakdown disrupts road maintenance

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure has been unable to maintain gravel roads in Moshupa District due to a grader breakdown. Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Keoagile Atamelang told Parliament that the ministry maintained its gravel road network through in-house dry grading teams on a quarterly basis. He said the district council was enagaged to assist with grading the Moshupa-Tshwane-Ralekgetho-Pitseng road and other roads in the district. He added that a request for payment of subsistence allowances for the grading team had been submitted to the Ministry of Finance. He also highlighted the importance of the road in facilitating access to agricultural and production areas and recognises its contribution to economic activities in the area. Mr Atamelang said the ministry would continue maintaining the gravel roads through quarterly dry grading to ensure accessibility and support economic activities. Member of Parliament for Moshupa/Manyana, Mr Karabo Gare, had asked the minister to state short-term measures the ministry intended to undertake to make the Moshupa-Tshwane-Ralekgetho-Pitseng road usable and safe for motorists and other road users. He also wanted to know whether the ministry was aware of the route's economic importance. ***BOPA***

WUC promises end to Molongwa JSS water woes

Water Utilities Corporation (WUC) is targeting the end of November 2026 to complete the connection of Molongwa Junior Secondary School to the pipeline supplying Ithokole village, following delays caused by unforeseen infrastructure challenges. The project involves the construction of a 2.9-kilometre pipeline and is expected to improve water supply to the school, where some teachers' houses have been experiencing inadequate supply. Responding to a question on behalf of the Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Assistant Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Baratiwa Mathoothe, said the project had taken longer than anticipated after WUC encountered old pipelines along the route to the school. He said WUC had initially committed to completing the pipeline by end of August 2026, following a previous parliamentary response on July 29, during which the corporation undertook to construct the 2.9-kilometre connection. Meanwhile, he also highlighted vandalism at the newly developed borehole, BH 10292, which had contributed to inconsistent water supply. Mr Mathoothe was responding to a question from the Member of Parliament for Jwaneng/Mabutsane, Mr Omphemetse Kwapa, who had asked whether the minister was aware of inadequate water supply at some teachers' houses at Molongwa Junior Secondary School and what measures were being taken to address the situation. ***BOPA***



Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi said government had developed a National Human-Wildlife Conflict Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2030) aimed at reducing human-wildlife conflict cases and mitigating ecological and socio-economic impacts.

Ministry develops strategy to mitigate human-wildlife conflict

GABORONE

Government has developed a National Human-Wildlife Conflict Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2030) aimed at reducing cases of human-wildlife conflict and mitigating its ecological and socio-economic impacts.

Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi, told Parliament that human-wildlife conflict could not be completely eliminated, hence the need for strategies that promote coexistence through long-term planning and adaptation.

He said the strategy outlined short, medium and long-term interventions to address the challenge.

The short-term phase (one to two years) focuses on addressing urgent conflict situations, establishing monitoring and reporting systems, protecting crops and livestock, and identifying areas with high incidences of conflict.

Mr Mmolotsi said the phase also included community awareness programmes on conflict prevention and the importance of wildlife conservation, as well as the establishment of early warning systems and rapid response teams.

The medium-term phase (three to four years) would focus on expanding successful interventions and implementing broader landscape-level solutions.

These include landscape planning, livelihood diversification, habitat restoration, wildlife corridors and buffer zones to reduce wildlife encroachment into human settlements and agricultural land.

He said the long-term phase (five years) sought to ensure sustainable and resilient human-wildlife coexistence through institutionalising conflict management, scaling up successful strategies and fostering long-term partnerships for wildlife conservation and community development.

Mr Mmolotsi said the strategy had been approved and its rollout kick-started, although full implementation had been constrained by limited resources.

He added that he planned to deliver a statement during the current Parliament session on the National Human-Wildlife Conflict Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2030) to brief the House on its implementation.

Mr Mmolotsi was responding to a question from Chobe Member of Parliament, Mr Simasiku Mapulanga, who had sought an update on the Ministry's medium and long-term strategies to address human-wildlife conflict and when the strategy would be rolled out. ***BOPA***

Duo in talks to establish proper administrative systems

GABORONE

There are new engagements to establish proper administrative systems in primary schools, despite budgetary constraints, Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Mr Justin Hunyepa, has said.

Responding to a question from Nkange MP, Mr Motlhaleeng Moalosi, Mr Hunyepa said the ministry was in constant communication with the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, which is responsible for recruiting support staff at primary schools, to address the matter.

He said although a comprehensive assessment had not been conducted, the ministry was aware that some schools had more than 1 000 students, over 50 teachers and other employees, creating a significant administrative workload.

To ease the burden, he said, most administrative duties were clustered and handled by regional and sub-regional officers as well as district councils.

On supplies officers, Mr Hunyepa said the ministry was aware that some teachers had been assigned supplies-related duties, including serving on school-level evaluation committees.

He noted that schools differed in size depending on their enrolment, adding that measures had been put in place to ensure that teachers were not distracted from their core teaching responsibilities.

"In an effort to ensure that these teachers do not neglect their core mandate, especially in bigger schools such as those stated above, some Heads of Department and Deputy School Heads at Junior Secondary and senior schools have been relieved of teaching functions in order to assist in handling some of the administrative duties of the school," he said.He added that at primary schools, some deputy school heads and school heads were also relieved of teaching duties to concentrate on administrative responsibilities.

Mr Moalosi wanted to know whether government had plans to establish proper administrative structures in primary schools, including the appointment of administrative officers, secretaries for head teachers, supplies officers and driver-messengers, as well as the provision of utility vehicles.

Mr Moalosi also sought to establish whether the ministry had assessed the need for such systems, particularly in schools with enrolments exceeding 1 000 pupils and more than 50 teachers and other employees.

He further raised concerns that teachers assigned supplies duties spent considerable time handling supplier disputes and receiving deliveries, potentially compromising their teaching responsibilities and the quality of education. ***BOPA***

BOCRA moves to curb fraud

GABORONE

The Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) has directed mobile network operators (MNOs) to suspend SIM card replacements at agents from May 2025 as part of efforts to curb SIM swap fraud.

Minister of Communications and Innovation, Mr David Tshere, said the directive was issued after investigations revealed that scammers were increasingly using SIM swap techniques to gain access to victims' telephone numbers without their knowledge.

Responding to a parliamentary question on Tuesday, he said the suspension would remain in place until more secure and verifiable identity solutions were deployed to prevent SIM swap fraud.

He said mobile network operators had since introduced more robust SIM replacement systems designed to reduce human error and strengthen consumer protection.

Mr Tshere said BOCRA had also established mechanisms to address suspected fraudulent telephone numbers. Upon receiving reports or detecting suspicious activities through its monitoring systems, the authority reports the identified numbers to the relevant operators for investigation.

The operators are then required to investigate the numbers through their legal and fraud departments and take appropriate action, including suspending implicated subscribers pending further investigations.

He said operators had successfully blocked numbers reported and identified as being associated with fraudulent activities.However, Mr Tshere noted that telecommunications-related scams often involved financial transactions, with perpetrators seeking to unlawfully obtain money through bank accounts and mobile money wallets, which fall under the regulatory oversight of the Bank of Botswana.

He explained that while BOCRA dealt with telecommunications infrastructure, subscriber services and misuse of communication networks, financial investigations and consumer redress required the involvement of the Bank of Botswana and law enforcement agencies.

On the effectiveness of SIM registration, he said the process facilitated the identification of registered subscribers but did not entirely eliminate the risk of telecommunications fraud.

He said perpetrators continued to employ various techniques to conceal their identities, access personal information and circumvent existing safeguards.

Mr Tshere urged members of the public to register their numbers, update their Know Your Customer (KYC) details when legitimately requested through official channels and avoid lending their telephone numbers or mobile money wallets to other people.

He also advised the public against sharing personal identification and banking information with unknown callers, clicking on suspicious links and urged them to promptly report suspected fraudulent activities to their mobile network operators and the Botswana Police Service.

The minister was responding to a question from Shoshong MP, Mr Moneedi Bagaisamang who wanted to know measures in place to address fraudulent calls, why numbers used by scammers were not blocked and whether perpetrators were being prosecuted.Mr Bagaisamang also sought clarification on how scammers obtained citizens' contact details despite SIM card registration and regular KYC updates, as well as the penalties imposed on those found guilty of such offences. ***BOPA***



Minister of Communications and Innovation, Mr David Tshere has told Parliament that mobile network operators had been directed to suspend SIM card replacements at agents to curb SIM-swap fraud and strengthen consumer protection. He said the suspension would remain in place until more secure and verifiable solutions were deployed to prevent SIM swap fraud.

Three DM projects earmarked for Molepolole await funding

GABORONE

Three development projects earmarked for Molepolole under the Development Manager (DM) Model are awaiting funding following the revocation of the programme in August 2025.

The projects, comprising Molepolole internal roads, the Molepolole bypass and Department of Forestry and Range Resources offices and staff houses, had not progressed beyond feasibility or concept design stage when Government revoked the model through Presidential Directive CAB 22B/2025.

Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Keoagile Atamelang, told Parliament that the three projects fell under the mandate of a task team established to oversee the close-out process following the revocation.

He said final accounts for services already rendered on the projects had been submitted and agreed with the responsible development manager, DEVMCO, with payments awaiting direction and expected to be made from close-out funds.

Mr Atamelang clarified that the projects had not been delayed in the ordinary sense, but that their implementation under the DM Model had ended following its revocation.

He said no construction funding had been allocated to the projects, adding that their future implementation would depend on securing funds through the normal budgeting process or private sector financing.

He said it was therefore not possible to predict their completion dates.

Meanwhile, two other projects earmarked for Molepolole under the model, the new primary schools at Legonono and Lekgwapheng, were authorised to continue and are currently under construction.

Giving an update on Legonono Primary School, Mr Atamelang said as of October 2026, the project had an approved budget of Pl19.77 million, with P57.70 million spent and a balance of P62.07 million.

He said physical progress stood at 68 per cent against a planned 75 per cent, with completion expected in February 2027.

At Lekgwapheng Primary School, the approved budget was Pl19.28 million, of which P51.3 million had been spent, leaving a balance of P67.97 million.

Physical progress stood at 55 per cent against a planned 65 per cent, with completion expected on May 8, 2027.

Mr Atamelang said both projects had approved budgets and were provided for in the 2026/27 development budget.

However, construction at the two schools was interrupted in May 2025 due to financial constraints cited by the development manager, with work only resuming in May 2026.

He said the 12-month interruption had left both projects behind schedule, with Legonono trailing by seven percentage points and Lekgwapheng by 10 percentage points.

Mr Atamelang further informed Parliament that Government revoked the DM Model in August 2025, when the programme comprised 148 projects managed by nine development managers.

He said the projects were divided into two categories, with the first comprising 132 Phase One projects that were still at feasibility or concept design stage and were being closed out by the task team.

The task team had reviewed project budgets and was verifying services already rendered by the development managers to facilitate agreement on final accounts. Negotiations on all 132 projects were targeted for completion by November 30, 2026.

The second category comprised 16 projects authorised by Government to continue. As of October 20, 2026, five had been completed, nine were under construction, one was at contractor appointment stage and one was on hold.

Mr Atamelang said final accounts had so far been agreed with three development managers, while negotiations with the remaining six, including the manager responsible for the Molepolole portfolio, were ongoing.

Molepolole North MP, Mr Arafat Khan, had asked the minister to update Parliament on the implementation status of the DM Model and projects earmarked for Molepolole, including their funding, progress, expected completion dates and reasons for delays. ***BOPA***

Occupational safety and health policy implementation ongoing

GABORONE

The implementation of the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy is ongoing, Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major Pius Mokgware, has told Parliament.

Major Mokgware said the policy seeks to provide a clear strategic framework and direction for establishing and strengthening systems that promote safe and healthy workplaces.

He acknowledged that there was no specific local legislative provision making it mandatory for construction companies to recruit or appoint safety officers.

"It is true that there is no specific local legislative provision that expressly makes the recruitment or appointment of safety officers mandatory in the construction industry," he said.

He, however, said occupational safety and health (OSH) in the construction industry was regulated under the Factories Act and the Factories, (Building Operations and Works of Engineering Construction Safety) Regulations.

Despite the legislative gap, Major Mokgware said the Ministry continued to encourage construction companies to employ qualified and competent safety officers to oversee the implementation of OSH requirements and safeguard the health, safety and welfare of employees.

He said the Ministry, through its Department of Occupational Health and Safety, also continued to conduct statutory safety and health inspections across various sectors of the economy, with particular attention to high-risk sectors such as construction.

On the recruitment of more safety officers across government ministries, Major Mokgware said government recognised the importance of occupational safety and health expertise in ensuring compliance with safety requirements and protecting public officers.

He said the deployment of occupational safety and health personnel across ministries had to be considered within the broader framework of Public Service establishment and staffing requirements, adding that the responsibility was currently handled under the Safety,

Health and Environment (SHE) portfolio.

"My Ministry will therefore continue to engage the relevant authorities, which is DPSM, on the need to strengthen occupational safety and health capacity within Government, including the provision of appropriately qualified personnel, to support effective implementation of occupational safety and health measures," he said.

Major Mokgware was responding to a question from Tonota Member of Parliament, Mr Gaefele Sedombo, who had asked for an update on the implementation of Botswana's Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Mr Sedombo also wanted to know whether the Ministry was aware that safety officers employed by construction companies were not fully executing their mandate due to the absence of legislation compelling companies to recruit them.

He further asked when government would employ more safety officers across its ministries, citing the need for their expertise. ***BOPA***



DailyBusiness



Management and Board members of Kwa Nokeng Oil during the company's listing on Botswana Stock Exchange in Gaborone on Tuesday. Founded as a single-depot family operation in Machaneng, the company has grown into one of Botswana's leading citizen-controlled petroleum and lubricant distributors, supplying an estimated 25 to 30 per cent of the country's diesel requirements and creating over 400 direct employment opportunities. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Kwa Nokeng Oil lists on Botswana Stock Exchange

Mpho Mosojane
GABORONE

Kwa Nokeng Oil Holdings Limited has officially listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE), raising over P1 billion in its initial public offering (IPO) and oversubscribing by 21 per cent.

Speaking at the opening bell ceremony in Gaborone Tuesday, the company's executive director and founder, Mr Clinton Van Vuuren, shared how a family-led operation, which began with one depot, scaled into a national energy powerhouse, driving citizen empowerment by supporting local transport, mining and supply firms and channeling over millions to fuel suppliers annually.

"Our story dates back decades, launched from a humble, single trading operation on Machaneng, which evolved into Botswana's biggest citizen-controlled petroleum and lubricant distributor, supplying roughly 25-30 per cent of the nation's diesel," Mr Van Vuuren said.

He further highlighted the firm's deep-rooted local integration, noting that it had created over 400 direct employment opportunities.

"Out of 81 contracted fuel tankers, 56 (69 per cent) are fully owned by Batswana entrepreneurs, underscoring an intentional corporate culture of staff and local enterprise empowerment rather than pure extraction," he said.

On one hand, South African-based private equity firm, Chroma Capital non-executive director, Mr Roshen Gala, noted that the listing was significantly driven by cross-border capital, reflecting a deep-rooted trust in Botswana's macro-economic foundations.

"Investors recognise that the country is anchored by strong, predictable institutions, regulatory clarity and enduring political stability.

In such an unpredictable commodity landscape, Botswana stands out as safe, transparent and an ideal place to deploy log-term capital," he said.

BSE chief executive officer, Mr Aupa Monyatsi hailed the listing as a key milestone that proved a strong and domestic appetite for local markets.

"This listing is testament to our core mandate of connecting ambition with opportunity through the provision of transparent, accessible and sustainable platforms for capital-raising.

Kwa Nokeng's listing confirms that our market can support substantial high-impact offerings and draw participation on a broad base," he said.

Kwa Nokeng Oil CEO, Mr Mahube Mpugwa, acknowledged that the public listing brought heightened governance scrutiny while showcasing the firm's operational rigor.

"Transitioning to a publicly listed company brings with it a huge responsibility of financial prudence and heightened regulatory scrutiny and opening up the shareholder base demands rigorous transparency. We are ready for it," Mr Mpugwa said.

He emphasised that with operations stretching into neighbouring markets such as Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the company aimed, going forward, to use the listed public profile and governance standards to expand its regional footprint and deliver steady value to its shareholder base. ***BOPA***



Kwa Nokeng Oil Executive Director and founder Mr Clinton Van Vuuren



Kwa Nokeng Oil CEO Mr Mahube Mpugwa

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Egypt remittances hit US$13 billion

CAIRO - Remittances from Egyptians working abroad rose to about US$13 billion in the first quarter of fiscal year 2026/2027, an increase of 20.4 per cent year on year, the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) said Tuesday. Remittance inflows also reached a record US$38.2 billion in the first nine months of 2026, up from around US$30.2 billion in the same period of 2025, the CBE said in a statement. The first-quarter figure covers July-September 2026, the opening three months of Egypt's fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. Remittances, one of Egypt's main sources of foreign currency, have risen steadily since March 2024, when the CBE allowed the exchange rate to be determined by market forces. ***Xinhua***

Ghana announces new offshore oil discovery

ACCRA - Ghana President John Dramani Mahama on Tuesday announced a new oil and gas discovery off the country's western coast. Mahama said during an official visit to the Western Region that the discovery was made in the Deepwater Cape Three Points block in the Tano Basin, following the drilling of the Nya Gyidie-1X exploration well. "I am pleased to announce that Planet One Oil and Gas Limited, together with its partners, Goil Upstream Limited and the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation, has made a new offshore discovery," the president said in Western Region, during the 2026 Local Content Conference and Exhibition, organized by the Petroleum Commission. ***Xinhua***

China remains Namibia largest export destination

WINDHOEK - China remains Namibia's largest export destination in September, accounting for 36.2 per cent of the country's total export revenue, said a report released by the Namibia Statistics Agency on Tuesday. In September, South Africa ranked second as an export destination at 19.6 per cent and was Namibia's largest import source with a 30.7-percent share, while China ranked second with 12.2 per cent, the report said. Namibia's exports amounted to about US$744 million in September, down 3.4 per cent from the previous month but up 64.8 per cent year-on-year. Namibia recorded trade surpluses with China, Zambia and Botswana, while its largest trade deficits were with South Africa, Canada and the United States, said the report. ***Xinhua***

Dikgang
PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

Ipapatse Fa Leletsa
659 6315 | 625 0353 | 533 0379 | 297 8237
261 0480 | 241 3402 | 365 3500

Patayamatebele o bona tharabololo ya metsi



Mogolwane wa lephata la metsi wa kgaolo ya bokone, Mme Keatlaretse Machete (botlhano go tswa molemeng), Kgosi Mpho Molema wa Patayamatebele (fa gare) le mogolwane kwa Metropolitan Life Botswana, Mme Keamogetse Kekwaletse-Dabutha (botlhano go tswa mojeng) le banni Patayamatebele kwa moletlong wa go rola semmuso sediba se se abilweng ke ba Metropolitan Life Botswana ka Labobedi. Mme Kekwaletse-Dabutha a re ba ne ba dirisanya le lephata la metsi go rarabolola bothata jwa tlhaelo ya metsi. Dinepe: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

Kgosi Mpho Molema wa Patayamatebele o lebogetse sediba, a kaya fa se, e le ditso ka jaana motse wa gagwe o tswa bogologolong o kokonelwa ke letlhoko la metsi.

Kelebogile Taolo
PATAYAMATEBELE

Selelo sa letlhoko la metsi kwa Patayamatebele e tlaa nna selo sa maloba morago ga gore khamphani ya Metropolitan Botswana ka tshwaragano le ba Water Utilities Corporation (WUC) ba epe le go gokela sediba se se tlaa nosang motse.

E rile fa a bua kwa go rolweng semmuso ga sediba seo, Kgosi Mpho Molema wa Patayamatebele o ne a kaya fa se e le ditso ka jaana motse wa gagwe o tswa bogologoolo o kokonelwa ke letlhoko la metsi.

"Se ke ditso mo motseng wa rona. E ne ya re mo bekeng e e fetileng ra amogela baeng go tswa kwa Metropolitan go re begela dikgang tse di molemo gore re phunyeditswe sediba," ga buwa jalo Kgosi Molema.

O ne a tlhalosa fa se, se ne sa tlisa boitumelo jo bogolo ka jaanong metsi a le teng mo motseng.

Kgosi Molema a re kgang ya letlhoko la metsi kwa Patayamatebele e ntse e ba tlhora boroko mme a supa fa ba lebogela gore mathata ao a bone a bo a bone tharabololo.

Kgosi o ne a lebogela ba Metropolitan tiro e ntle e ba e diretseng morafe wa gagwe, a kaya fa tshwaragano ya bone le WUC e ntshitse maduo a molemo.

Fa a lebogela mpho eo, molaodi wa kgaolo ya Bokone Botlhaba, Mme Wame Samapipi o ne a tlhalosa fa kgaolo eo e aperetswe ke dikgwetlho di le mmalwa jaaka tlhaelo ya dilo tsa botlhokwa di akaretsa metsi, lefatshe, ditsela ga mmogo le motlakase.

Mme Samapipi a re se se dirilweng ke ba Metropolitan Botswana e le tharabololo ya nngwe kgwetlho e e ntseng e tshwenya mme ka jalo a ba lebogela tiro e ntle eo.

"Tshwaragano ya dikhamphani tse e tlisitse boitumelo mo motseng. Go goroga ga metsi go tlaa dira gore banni ba kgone go dira mananeo a ba neng ba sa kgone go a dira jaaka jaaka go lema, go rua ga mmogo le go tlhofofatsa ditirelo tsa botsogo kwa kokelong," ga tlhalosa jalo Mme Samapipi.

O boletse fa go nna teng ga metsi e le tsela ya go isa ditlamelo kwa bathong le go tlhofofatsa go ntshiwa ga ditirelo, mme a supa fa kgangkgolo e le go tokahatsa matshelo ga mmogo le go tlhabolola motse.

E rile fa a fa bopaki ka go tla ga metsi mo motseng, mogolo wa motse oo Mme Nnana Thowang o ne a tlhalosa fa a tletse la boitumelo jo bogolo.

"E rile maloba fa ke goroga mo lwapeng, ka utlwa bana ba re 'nkuku metsi a a tswa', mme le nna ka ya go bula pompo mme ka boammaaruri ka fitlhela a tswa. Ke ne ka itumela fela thata ka jaana re sale re sokola ka tlhaelo ya metsi," ga bua jalo Mma Thowang. ***BOPA***

Mosele wa pula o epiwa go sale gale

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOLOLE

Mo maitekong a go lepalepana le go tlhagoga ga paka ya komelelo le mogote o ntshang kolobe mo okong, ba lephata la dijalo ba inaakantse le go baya balemi mo dinakong gore ba tle ba kgone go bona thobo e e rileng. Le fa magosi a boloditse letsema, a rebola balemi go baya tema, sebe sa phiri ke gore pula e santse e kaletse, magodimo a gana go bulega. Bosheng, ba lephata la dijalo kwa Molepolole, ba ne ba kokoanya balemi le ba-na-le-seabe ba bangwe go thulanya ditlhogo, ba abelana maele, gore fa seemo sa El Nino se phagetse jaana tselapedi ba tsaya efe.

Thuto-seka-dipuisano e ne e itebagantse le go ruta molemi go lepalepana le dikgwetlho tse di tlang le seemo sa El Nino ka go ba ruta go tlhopha dipeo tse di ka emelanang le mogote o tseneletseng le pula e boutsana.

Ba supile botlhokwa jwa go ntsha dijo, ka jalo ba tshwanetse go lema dijwalo tse di tla kgonang go emelana le manokonoko a leuba.

Mogolwane wa balemisi wa kgaolo ya Kweneng, Rre Onne Monamisi a re balemi ba kopana kgapetsa kgapetsa go buisana ka gore ba ka dirang jang go ntsha dijo le fa diemo di le thata jang. "Go botlhokwa gore balemi ba nne ba kopana go fana maele ka tse di amang temo. Kgangkgolo ke gore re baakanye re kgone go ntsha dijo," ga bua Rre Monamisi.

A re nngwe ya ditshetlana tsa lephata la temo-thuo ke go nonotsha tomagano le ba-tsaa-karolo mo temong ka gore ga gona gore balemi ka esi ba ka kgona sepe ntle le bone.

O supile fa ba-tsaa-karolo mo temong ba akaretsa ba ba thusang ka madi, dikhmaphani tse di ikemetseng di gwebang mo mohameng wa temo jaaka ba ba dirang dichefi tse di lwantshang diji le mohero le ba ba dirang le go rekisa dipeo jalo jalo.

Rre Monamisi a re molemi o tshwanetse go tlhaloganya peo e a yang go e lema a lebeletswe gore e tlhokana le mmu ofe, menontshane, metsi, seemo sa loapi, diji le paka ya temo jalo jalo. "Jaaka mono ngwaga e le paka ya mogote o o feteletseng le komelelo jaana, ga o kake wa lema peo e eleng gore ga e a nonofa go emelana le diemo tse. Ga o kake wa lema peo e e leng gore ga se yone," Monamisi a tlhalosa.

Ka jalo a re balemi ba ba botlana ba tshwanetse go ikwadisa gore ba kgone go thusiwa ka lenaneo la Lemang Dijo.

"Fa o ikwadisitse, fa o batla peo, menontshane, kana sengwe o ka tsena fela mo maranyaneng wa ikgolaganya le molemisi wa kgaolo ya gago gore a go thuse ka tsotlhe tse o di tlhokang," Rre Monamisi a tlhalosa.

Rre Monamisi a re balemi ba ba neng ba ikwadiseditse go thusiwa ka lenaneo la Lemang Dijo mo pakeng ya temo ngogola mo kgaolong ya Kweneng ba ne ba le 9 875. Mo godimo ga moo, o gwetlhile balemi go tlhomamisa gore ba sala morago ditsetlana tsotlhe tse di lopiwang ke lenaneo la Lemang Dijo gore ba kgone go thusiwa.

Mongwe wa balemi ba bagolo mo kgaolong ya Kweneng, Rre Tshenolo Mogotsi wa masimo a Mmaothate o ile a rotloetsa balemi-ka-ene gore temo e tshwana le leruo e berekela yo e ratang ebile a e tlhokomela.

Rre Mogotsi a re le fa dipeo tsa segompieno tse di dirilweng ka maranyane di le bogadi bo gaufi, balemi ba seka ba lebala tsa setswana. "Bagaetsho, re seka ra lebala segarona mme ra iphitlhela re nyeleditse dipeo tsa rona ka gonne sedibana pele ga se ikanngwe. Gongwe kamoso e tla re re thaa! go bo gotwe tse kwa di tswang teng go na le ditshwarego a bo jaanong re iphitlhela go sena se re se lemang, mme re bolawe ke tlala," ga tsibosa Rre Mogotsi.

"Nna ke santse ke na le peo ya mmidi wa botomane le mabele a nkorwane. Ke tlhomamisa gore fa ke sena go rekisa ke nna ke sala ka dikgetsi tsa dipeo tse," ga papamatsa Rre Mogotsi.

Moemedi wa khamphani e rekisang dipeo le tse dingwe tse di thusang mo temong, Mme Lorato Malatsi a re ba na le dipeo ka mefuta tse di dirilweng ka boranyane mme mo gareng ga tsone go na le tse di siametseng paka ya komelelo le mogote.

Mme Malatsi o ile a re ba nna ba butse dikgoro go tlhatlhelela balemi ka mefuta ya dipeo.

Fa a tswa la gagwe, Mme Amogelang Kaisara wa khamphani ya Agrizor e e gwebang ka dichefi tse di lwantshang diji, malwetsi le menontshane a re go botlhokwa gore balemi ba tlhaloganye gore dichefi tse di siametseng dijalo tsa bone, mohero le menontshane ke dife. "Fa o itemogela seemo se sa tlwaelesegang mo temong ya gago o tshwanetse o bitse molemisi kgotsa o tseye senepe gore baitseanape ba tle ba kgone go lemoga gore tharabololo ke efe," ga bua Mme Kaisara.

Mme Kaisara o ne a sedimosa fa ba itemogetse gore balemi ka bontsi ba tlaabo ba re dichefi ga di ba berekele ka ntlha ya gore ga ba di tswakanye ka fa tshwanelong, ka jalo di tlhoke boleng kana di nna borai. ***BOPA***

Ba Mophane Bushwalk ba rolela sekole ditafole

Portia Rapitsenyane
KGAGODI

Maloko a mokgatlho wa Mophane Bushwalk ba baakanyeditse sekole se segolwane sa Kgatadimo kwa Kgagodi, ditafole di le masome a supa, tse di neng di senyegile e bile di sa tlhole di dirisiwa.

Mophane Bushwalk ke mokgatlho o o ietebagantseng le botsogo, segolobogolo go itshidila mmele.

Basimolodisi ba mokgatlho, Rre Palo Mokwena le mohumagadi wa gagwe, Mme Mphoentle, o supile fa ba kgonne go thusa sekole seo ka dithuso go tsweng kwa batho ka go farologana le beng ba dikgwebo.

O kopile setshaba go thusa, gore mokgatlho o kgone go wetsa tiro, a supa fa ba tlaa tlhokomela sekole sa Kgatadimo ka sepe se ba ka se kgonang. Mme Mokwena o supile fa se mokgatlho o se dirileng, e le lengwe la matshego a bone, go direla setshaba.

Mme Mokwena a re mokgatlho o, o thailwe monongwa mme o tlaa rolelwa morafe gore e nne o ne o o tsamaisang.

Mme Mokwena a re ka Mophane Bushwalk e le mokgatlho wa morafe, ba tshwanetse gore go nne le sengwe se ba se direlang morafe. A re tsholofelo ke gore mokgatlho o gole o tlhamele banana mebereko mme, seo se ka kgonega fela ka thotloetso ya morafe.

Mogokgo wa sekole, Rre Christopher Mudala, o lebogile pharologanyo e mokgatlho e o dirileng kwa sekoleng.

Rre Mudala a re sekole se tlhaelelwa ke ditilo le ditafole tsa barutabana le baithuti mo barutabana ba felelang ba dirisa ditilo tsa baithuti tse le tsone di tlhaelang.

O kopile baithuti go tlhokomela ditafole, a re mokgatlho o tlhabolotse seemo sa sekole ebile baithuti ba tlaa ithutele mo tikologong e e siameng. ***BOPA***

BMC settles outstanding payments

GABORONE

The Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) has settled outstanding payments amounting to P8.38 million owed to Ngamiland cattle farmers who supplied livestock during the May-June 2026 buying period.

The payment, made on October 9, clears all outstanding amounts, including balances previously withheld because some farmers had not submitted their banking details.

Assistant Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Mr Motsamai Motsamai told Parliament that the payment amounted to P8,381,663 and fulfilled a commitment made by BMC to the North West District Full Council on September 17, 2026, through the acting chief executive officer and plant manager.

He explained that the delay resulted from the failure of BMC's Lobatse plant to provide financial support it had pledged towards the Maun plant's scheduled cattle purchases.

Although the Lobatse plant had committed to fully funding the buying programme, its ability to provide the assistance was affected by the Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak, which disrupted production and cash flow.

"During the May-June buying period, BMC purchased more than 2 500 cattle against its target of 1 000, further increasing the financial demands of the programme," he said.

Mr Motsamai said since the introduction of the Direct Cattle Purchase (DCP) programme in Ngamiland in October 2025, BMC had generally honoured its payment commitments.

However, one of the challenges had been farmers' failure to provide banking details when selling their cattle, making it difficult to process payments promptly, even when funds were available.

On measures to improve payment turnaround, he said financing opportunities had become limited due to the ongoing FMD outbreak, as potential lenders were assessing the risks associated with the disease before making financial commitments.

"BMC is exploring ways of replicating at the Maun abattoir a financing arrangement previously used at the Lobatse abattoir, where a financier paid farmers directly, enabling quicker payment turnaround," he said.

Meanwhile, the FMD outbreak has affected Botswana's access to the European Union export market in zones 11 and 13, prompting BMC to explore alternative markets.

Mr Motsamai said the commission was pursuing opportunities in Angola, Ghana, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Qatar.

He expressed confidence that securing alternative markets would help normalise payments to farmers and revive cattle and beef trade, although full recovery would take time.

He was responding to a question from Maun West Member of Parliament, Mr Caterpillar Hikuama, who sought clarification on outstanding payments to Ngamiland farmers, the constraints behind the delays and when BMC would settle the amounts owed.

Mr Hikuama also wanted to know measures being put in place to establish a reliable payment cushion to prevent recurring cash flow disruptions affecting rural livestock producers. ***BOPA***



Parliament has learnt that Botswana Meat Commission has settled outstanding payments amounting to P8.38 million owed to Ngamiland cattle farmers who supplied livestock during the May-June 2026 buying period.

Govt commits to improve business environment for SMMEs

GABORONE

Government recognises small and medium enterprises (SMMEs) as key drivers of economic growth, diversification and job creation and is committed to improving the business environment to support their growth.

Answering a parliamentary question, Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Tiroeaone Ntsima, said the main challenges facing SMMEs included limited access to finance, business management skills, limited market access and technology adoption.

He said improving the business environment remained a priority, adding that the ministry was implementing the Doing Business Reforms Roadmap and developing a one-stop service system that would enable entrepreneurs to access key services online.

These include company registration, licensing, tax registration and other business services.

Through the Wealth Creation Programme, government provides grants to qualifying enterprises, with particular focus on youth, women, persons living with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

In addition, Mr Ntsima said the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) provided concessionary loans, while the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) offered training, mentorship and product certification support.

"Together, these interventions are strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem and expanding opportunities for wealth creation," he said.

On concerns about Companies and Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA) fees, Mr Ntsima said the authority last reviewed its fees in 2019 and currently had no plans to either increase or reduce them.

He explained that the existing fees were set below the actual cost of service delivery to balance support for small businesses with the sustainability of CIPA's operations.

He further explained that entrepreneurs could register either a business name or a company name with CIPA, noting that many SMMEs overlooked the distinction between the two.

A business name, he said, was simply the name under which a person conducted business, while a company was a separate legal entity capable of owning property, entering into contracts and suing or being sued in its own name.

Mr Ntsima advised entrepreneurs to choose the registration option that best suited the size and stage of their businesses.

He said a business name was often suitable for sole proprietors and micro-enterprises because it had simpler compliance requirements.

A company, however, was more suitable for enterprises with growth ambitions, multiple owners or more complex operations, although it carried additional obligations, including the filing of annual returns.

Entrepreneurs not yet ready to meet those obligations could opt for a business name, which required returns only once every three years.

He added that CIPA had digitised its services, making business registration and compliance easier and more accessible.

The minister said the ministry was also working with relevant ministries, departments, agencies, local authorities and the private sector to review regulations, licensing requirements and administrative processes.

"Our objective is to create a practical, business-friendly environment that reduces unnecessary compliance costs while supporting enterprise growth. Government also recognises that many citizens now operate informal home-based, mobile and digital businesses that do not fit neatly within traditional regulatory frameworks," he said.

To address these challenges, Mr Ntsima said government was reviewing the Small Business Act of 2002, the Industrial Development Act of 2020 and the Cooperative Societies Act of 2013, while also developing a dedicated informal sector programme.

He said the reforms would ensure that policies remained relevant, responsive and aligned with evolving business realities and international best practices.

Government, he added, remained committed to fostering entrepreneurship and supporting start-ups and small businesses across the country.

The reforms were intended to ensure that regulatory requirements were affordable, proportionate and supportive of enterprise development, thereby encouraging formalisation, growth and job creation rather than creating barriers to entry.

The question was raised by Member of Parliament for Kgatleng West, Dr Unity Dow, who sought to know steps the ministry was taking to promote the success of SMMEs and whether government would consider reviewing licensing processes to reduce bureaucratic red tape and provide grants and subsidies for start-ups.

She also asked whether government would consider reviewing CIPA fees and removing unnecessary and burdensome requirements relating to parking bays, the number of toilets and classroom sizes for pre-schools , among other regulatory provisions.

Dr Dow further sought to know whether regulations and requirements could be realigned to reflect the changing realities of businesses on the ground. ***BOPA***

Arts & Culture

Kemo leverages pageantry for social change

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOLOLE

At 23, Karabo Nteko, affectionately known as Kemo, has embraced pageantry as far more than a platform for beauty and recognition.

For the Mokgware-born youth leader, pageantry is a catalyst for personal growth, leadership and creating meaningful opportunities for young people. A Logistics and Supply Chain Management graduate from the University of Botswana, Nteko's interests span modelling, entrepreneurship, pageantry and youth empowerment.

Her ambitions, however, extend beyond the glamour of the runway to building a legacy anchored in purpose, creativity and social impact. Through her youth empowerment initiative, YaMasa, she nurtures young talent, promotes creativity and equips youth with financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills.

Nteko explains that her advocacy stems from recognising the pressing challenges facing young people, particularly unemployment and financial uncertainty, which often compromise their mental well-being. "Many young people abandon their childhood talents in pursuit of conventional career paths, only to encounter limited employment opportunities after graduation. YaMasa was established to bridge that gap by encouraging youth to explore their innate abilities and build sustainable livelihoods," she says.

While pageantry offers a powerful stage to amplify her initiative through strategic networking, business partnerships and organisational engagement, Nteko maintains that making a difference does not require a crown. "Advocacy must extend beyond titles and recognition," she adds.

Behind the glamorous stage presence lies a demanding regimen requiring discipline, rigorous preparation and substantial financial investment. In the lead-up to major competitions, her routine includes devotion, physical fitness, current affairs research, public speaking, walking rehearsals and interview preparation.

She dedicates four to six hours weekly to walking practice, alongside three to four hours for media and interview training, while balancing advocacy research and personal development. Financially, the demands extend well beyond entry fees and gowns to encompass footwear, makeup, transport, accommodation, professional photography and national costumes.

Nteko navigates these costs through careful budgeting, prioritising and pursuing strategic sponsorships, though she emphasises that financial resources alone do not dictate a contestant's success. "Preparation, character, intelligence and purpose remain equally vital," she says.

Beyond the stage, pageantry exposes contestants to intense public scrutiny regarding their appearance, confidence and performance. Nteko has learned to filter constructive feedback from negative commentary, protecting her mental health while maintaining a grounded self-image.

She also stresses the importance of sisterhood, proving that competition does not preclude mutual support. Recalling her experience at the Miss Diamond Botswana pageant, Nteko shared how fellow contestant, Sharon Mankaka, came to her rescue when her evening gown corset lace went missing moments before the runway parade. She recalls how Mankaka quickly tore a bow from her own outfit to fashion a replacement lace to allow her to step onto the stage seamlessly.

"That moment reinforced my belief that genuine friendship and kindness can thrive even in highly competitive environments," she reflects. The pageantry journey has honed her communication, networking, time management, organisational and interpersonal skills, assets she considers invaluable in both her personal and professional life.

She views a crown as a solemn responsibility rather than a mere trophy, noting that titleholders must demonstrate integrity, fulfill commitments and serve as exemplary representatives of their communities. Meanwhile, Nteko plans to scale YaMasa while exploring opportunities across entrepreneurship, brand partnerships and the creative sector.

Ultimately, she wishes to be remembered not for stage appearances or titles earned, but for the opportunities created and lives inspired. For her, the ultimate achievement is becoming a woman whose influence extends far beyond aesthetics and whose purpose endures long after the applause fades. *BOPA*



Through her youth empowerment initiative, YaMasa, Karabo Nteko nurtures young talent, promotes creativity and equips youth with financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills.
Photo: Courtesy of Karabo Nteko

Tsabong hosts culture day tomorrow

Letticia Nnokotema
TSABONG

Tsabong is set to celebrate, for the first time, its rich cultural diversity tomorrow, through the Tsabong Culture Day.

The event is expected to bring together different ethnic groups in the Kgalagadi District to showcase their traditions, music, dance, food and attire in a celebration of unity in diversity.

Held under the theme: Different Cultures, One Community, it will highlight the importance of preserving cultural heritage for present and future generations.



Tsabong Culture Day, which takes place tomorrow is expected to bring together different ethnic groups in the Kgalagadi District to showcase their traditions, music, dance, food and attire in a celebration of unity in diversity.

According to the event coordinator, Cynthia Modungwa, the celebration aimed at promoting social cohesion, mutual respect and appreciation of diverse cultures that made up Tsabong community. According to Kgosi David Toto of Tsabong, the celebration was aimed at recognising diverse cultural backgrounds within the community and fostering mutual understanding among people.

He noted that the occasion would also provide an opportunity to encourage the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, ensuring that traditions and cultural practices were passed onto future generations.

The event, he said was about recognising that despite cultural differences, the people of Tsabong remained one community,He emphasised that the celebration would bring together members of the community to appreciate the importance of embracing cultural differences as a unifying factor in building an inclusive and harmonious society.

Various cultural groups are expected to perform traditional dances like namstap, polka, and herero dances, exhibit traditional dishes, display artefacts and showcase traditional attire. Kgosi Khama IV of Bangwato is expected to grace the district's Culture Day celebrations as the guest speaker at Tsabong main Kgotla. *BOPA*

DailySport



Karabo Sibanda (left) and Baboloki Thebe won silver medals in the 200m and 400m respectively at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. Their achievements highlighted Botswana's talent development system, which sports analysts now say needs revitalisation.

Youth Olympics highlight need for grassroots revival

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

Team Botswana's medal-less campaign at the 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal has exposed a void in the nation's athletic pipeline and this has sparked urgent calls from sports analysts to revive the country's once-thriving school sports system before elite-level talent dries up.

When the team departed for Dakar, expectations were high that the young squad would salvage at least one or two medals.

However, following the conclusion of their events on Monday, Botswana was missing from the final medal tally table.

The results are a contrast to the country's last successful Youth Olympics outing, which dates back a decade to the 2014 Nanjing Games where Baboloki Thebe secured a silver medal in the 200 metres final behind American Noah Lyles, while Karabo Sibanda claimed silver in the 400 metres behind Jamaica's Martin Manley.

For the 2026 Games, Botswana sent a delegation of six athletes across three sporting codes. On the track, Mpho Maano competed in the 800 metres and Geza Reinious ran the 400 metres.

Precious Masaba represented the country in boxing, while Theresa Tagarira competed in judo. Tema Modirelabangwe and Melodi Saleshando took to the pool in swimming.

While both Maano and Reinious showed promise by reaching the finals in their respective track events, the rest of the squad found the going tough.

Masaba was knocked out in the quarterfinals, while judoka Tagarira narrowly missed out on a podium finish after losing her bronze medal match.

Swimmers Modirelabangwe and Saleshando were both eliminated in the early heats. Prior to the team's departure, Botswana National Olympic Committee (BNOC) president, Tshepo Sitale said no official medal targets had been set because the team was young, adding that that the primary objective was for them to gain international exposure.

However, Botlhale Koothopile of Sunday Standard newspaper, who had long monitored the country's development teams, argued that the team's performance boiled down to the ongoing absence of vibrant school sports.

Koothopile said school sports served as the core of grassroots development, helping sports authorities unearth raw talent before nurturing it through regular and age-based competitions.

In the absence of school sports, he said the nation cannot fully guarantee that athletes sent to the Youth Olympics were the absolute best of their youth.

"This is not to dispute their talent, but rather to point out they may not be the top choice available and lack of regular competition means they simply have not tested themselves enough to be truly competition ready," he explained.

He added that the medals won a decade ago by Thebe and Sibanda were a direct product of the once thriving school sports system.

The performance in Dakar, he said, was a warning to the country's political and sports leadership, to bring back sports or watch Botswana sports regress.

"We have to do something fast before the current generation of Letsile Tebogo and Collen Kebinatshipi fade. Otherwise, it will take us a few years before we see another world beater once they retire," he said. ***BOPA***

Botswana hosts WTT Youth Contender series



Reneilwe Lekorwe is one of the table tennis players expected to make an impression at the World Table Tennis Youth Contender Series Gaborone 2026, which started yesterday.

Tumisang Moilwa
GABORONE

The Botswana Table Tennis Association (BTTA) is hosting the World Table Tennis (WTT) Youth Contender Series Gaborone 2026, which started yesterday until Saturday.

The competition has attracted entries from the host, Botswana, Sri Lanka, India, Croatia, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, eSwatini, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

According to BTTA publicity secretary and tournament media liaison officer, Tshegofatso Malepa Botswana would field a 30-member squad comprising 16 boys and 14 girls competing in the U-11, U-13, U-15, U-17 and U-19 categories.

Malepa said the selection was guided by the association's technical structures, taking into account players' performances, development and readiness to compete internationally.

She said the squad had also been broadened to include players from different development centres and clubs, allowing more young athletes to benefit from the opportunity presented by hosting the competition.

Among the local players expected to make an impression are Boitlamo Nkele and Reneilwe Lekorwe, although Malepa said the association was keen to give all members of the squad an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.

She said the association hoped the home-ground advantage would help the team compete confidently and fight for podium finishes.

Malepa said hosting the tournament would allow local players to gain international exposure without the financial and logistical demands of travelling abroad.

She added that the competition would also expose coaches, technical officials and administrators to international standards and provide opportunities to exchange knowledge with their counterparts.

Beyond athlete development, the association hopes the event will strengthen Botswana's reputation as a reliable host of international table tennis competitions.

Malepa said the association had also secured hosting rights for the 2027 ITTF-Africa Youth Championships, following Botswana's hosting of the 2024 edition, which attracted 18 countries. She said the association's long-term ambition was to produce athletes capable of representing Botswana at major international competitions, with qualification for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games among its aspirations. ***BOPA***