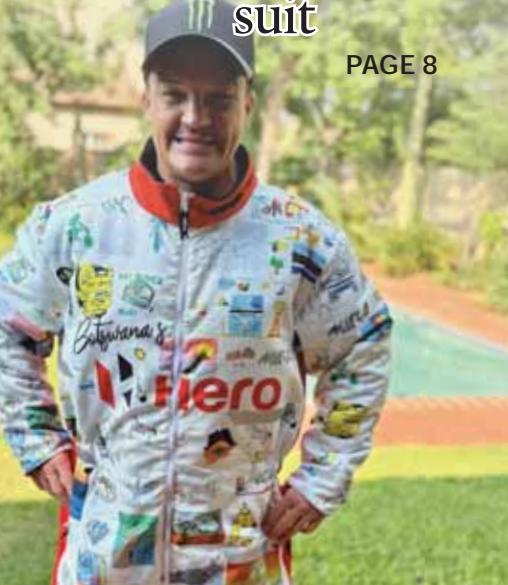


BOTSWANA Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES

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suit

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China wins
Grand Prix
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NEWS

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DIKGANG



Boko visits Princess Marina Hospital

Gontle Merafhe
GABORONE

President Advocate Duma Boko made a surprise visit to Princess Marina Hospital on Monday, where he toured the wards, to appreciate the challenges the hospital faces. President Boko has learnt that the hospital, one of the referrals in the country, is experiencing shortage of medication, delapidated infrastructure and does not have a single psychiatrist. The visit also allowed him to inspect patient welfare and conditions of medical equipment.

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Tiriso
botlhaswa
ya bana e a
tshwenya

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NEWS

Mogoditshane
primary
welcomes 120
new learners
despite capacity
strain

Benita Magopane
GABORONE

As Standard One learners across the country reported for their first day of school this week, Mogoditshane Primary School experienced a familiar first-day rush, welcoming 120 new learners and their parents on Tuesday.

Of the new intake, 60 learners were enrolled in reception, while another 60 began Standard One, joining an existing learner population of 1,026.

Search for
missing man
intensifies

Cont... Page 3



Smiles, excitement and a touch of nervousness were evident as children reported for the first day of school, marking the official start of the new academic year. School grounds were filled with activity as learners were welcomed by teachers and administrators, while parents looked on with pride and hope as their children embarked on another year of learning and personal growth. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

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BILL PAYMENTS



The Bed Experts



Chendzimu Manyepedza
SELEBI PHIKWE

Government has resolved to compensate former BCL employees in accordance with the 18-month soft landing payment and other benefits that were promised when the mine closed in 2016 due to liquidation.

This was stated by the Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa, during a consultation meeting with former BCL employees and other relevant stakeholders on Monday.

Mr Mohwasa said the government was aware that some promises made to employees when the mine closed had not been fulfilled. He said the situation had negatively impacted the well-being and social status of some of the former employees, hence it was necessary to take decisive action to address the issue.

Mr Mohwasa said that the primary compensation issue was that of the promised 18-month soft landing measure, an initiative that was designed specifically to provide critical support to employees affected by the mine's closure, ensuring they have a financial cushion while navigating the challenges.

"The 18-month soft landing measure will only apply to those who lost their jobs when the mine closed in 2016 under liquidation. The task force team and relevant stakeholders will be assigned to work collectively and round the clock on modalities of compensation and other related matters," he said.

He said while the assigned task team devised policies to roll out the compensation process, it was imperative to take collaborative measures for the success of the process.

Mr Mohwasa also highlighted government's commitment to establishing a Liquidation Protection Fund to safeguard stakeholders and mitigate the effects of potential liquidations



Govt reaffirms compensation for BCL former employees

BCL mine in Selebi Phikwe



Mr Moeti Mohwasa

within the sector in the future.

He said this would provide crucial support to affected parties, ensuring that they had access to necessary resources and assistance during challenging times.

Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware, stated that the 18-month soft landing compensation would not interfere with any other payments, especially for those whose health had been adversely affected by working at the mine.

He emphasised that proper procedures for compensating individuals with health issues would be followed carefully.

Currently, 107 former employees have received compensation for various health challenges related to their time at the mine.

The president of the Botswana

Mine Workers Union, Mr Joseph Tsimako acknowledged the 18-month soft landing compensation. However, he stated that while modalities were still being finalised, there should be clear and constant feedback, saying this would give the much-needed clarity to the former employees.

Meanwhile, a former BCL mine employee, Mr Dipogiso Ookeditse appreciated the efforts, while on the one hand he observed that government should have also taken a resolution on how the concerned individuals would be compensated.

He expressed concern that assigning the issue to the taskforce team for the formulation of comprehensive policies and guidelines regarding the rollout

of the compensation could potentially lead to further delays in the process.

Another ex-employee, Mr Rex Tambula, underscored the need to distinguish between the Insolvency Act and the Liquidation Act.

He said the practice of merging the two pieces of legislation led to significant overlap, which in turn created confusion.

He said conflation of the Acts resulted in ambiguities that could hinder effective decision-making and disrupt orderly resolution of matters.

"Separation of these two Acts would facilitate a more coherent legal framework, thereby enhancing clarity and efficiency in managing insolvency and liquidation matters," he said. **BOPA**

Modise advocates unity between politicians and technocrats

Naomi Leepile
TSABONG

Following his recent victory in the Kgalagadi South by-elections, the newly minted Member of Parliament, Mr Tokyo Modise, has officially hit the ground running.

In a high-level meet and greet session held in Tsabong this week, Mr Modise engaged with district heads of department to chart a collaborative path forward for the region.

The MP acknowledged the backbone of the district's operations - the civil service. He extended his sincere gratitude to the staff for their sterling performance and logistical dedication during the previous year's election cycle, noting that their professionalism ensured a smooth democratic process for the people of Kgalagadi South.

The centrepiece of Mr Modise's address was a call to transformative action. Rather than focusing solely on administrative routine, the MP urged civil servants to adopt a

legacy mindset.

"During my tenure, I intend to work tirelessly so that I may leave a tangible legacy behind," Mr Modise stated. He challenged the officials to do the same, reminding them that their time in Tsabong should be defined by the positive impact they left on the community.

To achieve this vision, he outlined a rigorous framework of values he expects to define the district's working culture. He emphasised that hard work alone was insufficient without the right temperament and strategy.

To realise this ambitious vision, the MP outlined a rigorous professional standard centred on emotional intelligence, unwavering focus, and a positive mental attitude.

He stressed that the unique challenges facing the region required a workforce that was not only hardworking but also deeply committed to the welfare of the constituents.

Mr Modise further underscored that technical expertise must be paired with human-centric values to truly serve the community.

...the unique challenges facing the region required a workforce that is not only hardworking but also deeply committed to the welfare of the constituents.

Closing his remarks, the MP placed significant emphasis on the mechanics of governance, citing communication, cooperation, and collective effort as the essential engines of development. He advocated for a unified front where the political leadership and the technical heads of department work in total harmony.

By fostering a culture of transparency and mutual support, Mr Modise believes the district can overcome its hurdles and set a new benchmark for service delivery. **BOPA**



Kgalagadi South MP, Mr Tokyo Modise (centre) and District Commissioner Mr Levis Thupa (right) during a meet and greet session held in Tsabong on Monday. He advocated for a unified front where the political leadership and the heads of department work in total harmony. Photo: Naomi Leepile

Boko visits Princess Marina Hospital to appreciates challenges

from page 1

Among the wards he visited was the Accident and Emergency where he met some patients who said they came for psychiatric attention but were yet to be assisted.

The President, who was accompanied by Minister of Health, Dr Stephen Modise, ministry permanent secretary, Professor Oathokwa Nkomazana, presidential advisor- projects, Mr Omphile Sehurutshe, also learnt from the head of A&E department, Dr Elijah Sivako, that even though Marina was without the service, it still received referrals from Gaborone Block 6 clinic, where there was a resident psychiatrist.

Assistance had been sought from the University of Botswana since S'brana Psychiatric Hospital in Lobatse was said to be

overwhelmed.

Another issue that was raised, was the poor state of the hospital kitchen.

The hospital manager, Mr Jacob Koti, reported that the kitchen operated with old equipment, and needed refurbishing.

The dishwasher for example, was said to be more than half a century old.

Mr Koti said the ministry had recommended new equipment with a budget that ran into millions.

President Boko advised the staff not to limit themselves when planning and come up with solutions that would allow them to provide quality service.

He emphasised the importance of strengthening diagnostic services at other hospitals, as well as upgrading district and referral facilities to enable Princess Marina Hospital to effectively focus on its role as a referral hospital. **BOPA**



President Advocate Duma Boko (third right), Minister of Health, Dr Stephen Modise (second right), Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Professor Oathokwa Nkomazana (left) and acting Princess Marina Hospital superintendent, Dr Mosimanegape Nkwane (right) and other officials during a tour of Princess Marina Hospital on Monday. Batswana who worked for companies undertaking outsourced services to Princess Marina Hospital also got the chance to air their complaints to President Boko who promised that the services provided to the hospital were to be absorbed back to public service. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Mogoditshane primary welcomes 120 new learners despite capacity strain

from page 1

The school atmosphere was marked by excitement and nervous anticipation among both returning and first-time learners, while some parents lingered anxiously, hoping their children would secure placement at the school.

With only five primary schools serving Mogoditshane amid the urban village's rapidly growing population, estimated at about 88,000 people according to the 2022 Population and Housing Census access to school placements remains a persistent challenge.

"There are still many children on the waiting list dating back to 2024," said Mogoditshane Primary School head, Mr Samuel Setuke.

He explained that although the school was originally designed to accommodate 801 pupils, enrolment rose to 1,126 last year, including 100 Standard 7 learners

Despite the challenges, Mr Setuke expressed optimism, noting that teachers were ready to deliver quality education. He added that the school had strengthened partnerships with parents, who had agreed to contribute P20 towards stationery to help ease resource shortages

who completed their studies. This year, the learner population has further increased to 1,146.

Mr Setuke outlined several challenges facing the school, including dilapidated classroom furniture, a situation worsened by the shift system which results in furniture being used throughout the day.

He also cited a high learner-teacher ratio, limited resources such as stationery, occasional food shortages and financial constraints affecting the procurement of teaching materials, including Breakthrough, a teaching strategy used to help Standard One learners develop Setswana word-recognition skills.

Despite these challenges, Mr Setuke expressed optimism, noting that teachers are ready to deliver quality education. He added that the school had strengthened partnerships with parents, who had agreed to contribute P20 towards stationery to help ease resource shortages. **BOPA**

Empowerment key to sustainable development

Lesedi Thatayamodimo
GABORONE

As Botswana navigates economic uncertainty and shrinking donor support, the Resource Mobilisation Conference 2025 delivered a reminder that sustainable development is not about handouts, but empowerment.

The four-day conference, which brought together non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-profit organisations from across the country, was described as a timely intervention aimed at equipping civil society with the skills and strategies needed to survive and thrive in difficult times.

Addressing delegates in Gaborone Monday, the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Nelson Ramaotwana, reaffirmed that NGOs, CBOs and non-profit organisations remained central to Botswana's development agenda.

"These organisations have been and continue to be the backbone of our development as a country," he said, emphasising that their contribution cuts across social welfare, economic empowerment and community transformation.

Mr Ramaotwana stressed that civil society carried a standing obligation in shaping development outcomes, including environmental stewardship and community resilience.

He assured participants that government remained committed to creating an enabling environment for their work and partnerships, noting that his ministry played a direct role in the registration and monitoring of some non-profit entities, including foundations.

Beyond regulation, he highlighted practical collaboration, particularly within correctional services. He said NGOs, churches and civil society organisations had partnered with his ministry to support former prisoners, helping them rebuild their lives through skills training and income-generating projects.

"Last year, churches mobilised

resources for ex-prisoners to engage in agriculture, carpentry and other projects," Mr Ramaotwana said.

"These initiatives, he said was about giving people the means to stand on their own, not just temporary assistance.

The minister expressed gratitude for the role civil society played in the reintegration of former inmates, noting that such efforts reduced reoffending while restoring dignity and self-reliance.

Drawing from his own constituency of Gaborone South, Mr Ramaotwana reflected on how NGOs and CBOs had directly contributed to local development, reinforcing his belief in partnership-driven progress.

"There was no way I could turn down an opportunity to engage with my partners in development at national, ministerial and constituency level," he said.

The conference was organised by the Botswana Council for the Disabled, an umbrella body for organisations serving people with disabilities, working alongside a citizen-owned private company and supported by corporate partners. The blend of local NGOs, private sector expertise and corporate funding was praised as the kind of partnership government seeks to promote.

However, Mr Ramaotwana said traditional wisdom reminded people that no single entity could achieve greatness alone.

"Government cannot take this country to its glory days by itself, we need partnership, we need everyone to play a part," he said.

Mr Ramaotwana said the philosophy aligned with Botswana's current policy direction. With the adoption of National Development Plan 12 (NDP 12) and the Botswana Transformation Economic Plan (BTEP), the country was shifting towards a private-sector-led economy, supported by strategic collaboration with government and communities.

The conference theme, "Smart Resource Mobilisation: Key to Sustainable Development," was described as both challenging and necessary, particularly at a time when some donors were

withdrawing from the country.

The minister urged participants to view the theme not as a slogan, but as a tool for accountability and performance beyond the conference.

He noted that while government continued to pursue international financing including engagements with institutions such as the African Development Bank local organisations must also sharpen their capacity to mobilise resources independently.

For his part, the conference director, Mr Phillip Makgalemele, said the event aimed to strengthen the capacity of development-focused organisations to mobilise resources effectively at a time when donor funding in Botswana had been steadily declining.

He said participants would be equipped with essential skills, knowledge and strategies to diversify funding sources, engage donors and sponsors, and ensure organisational sustainability.

Mr Makgalemele noted that the conference was particularly timely as Botswana, now classified as an upper-middle-income country, had seen reduced support from international donors.

"This challenge has been compounded by a global economic slowdown and rising costs of living, which have increased pressure on both government and civil society organisations," he said.

"The reality is that many international donors no longer support Botswana as they once did, while government resources remain constrained due to an under-recovered economy," he added, expressing optimism that economic recovery would eventually take place.

The goal, Mr Makgalemele said was to leave delegates with practical tools, diversified funding ideas and a renewed sense of ownership over their missions, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to Botswana's sustainable development agenda despite evolving economic and funding challenges.

"People often want money but do not know how to mobilise it," he remarked. "You must invest in programmes that generate income and long-term impact." **BOPA**

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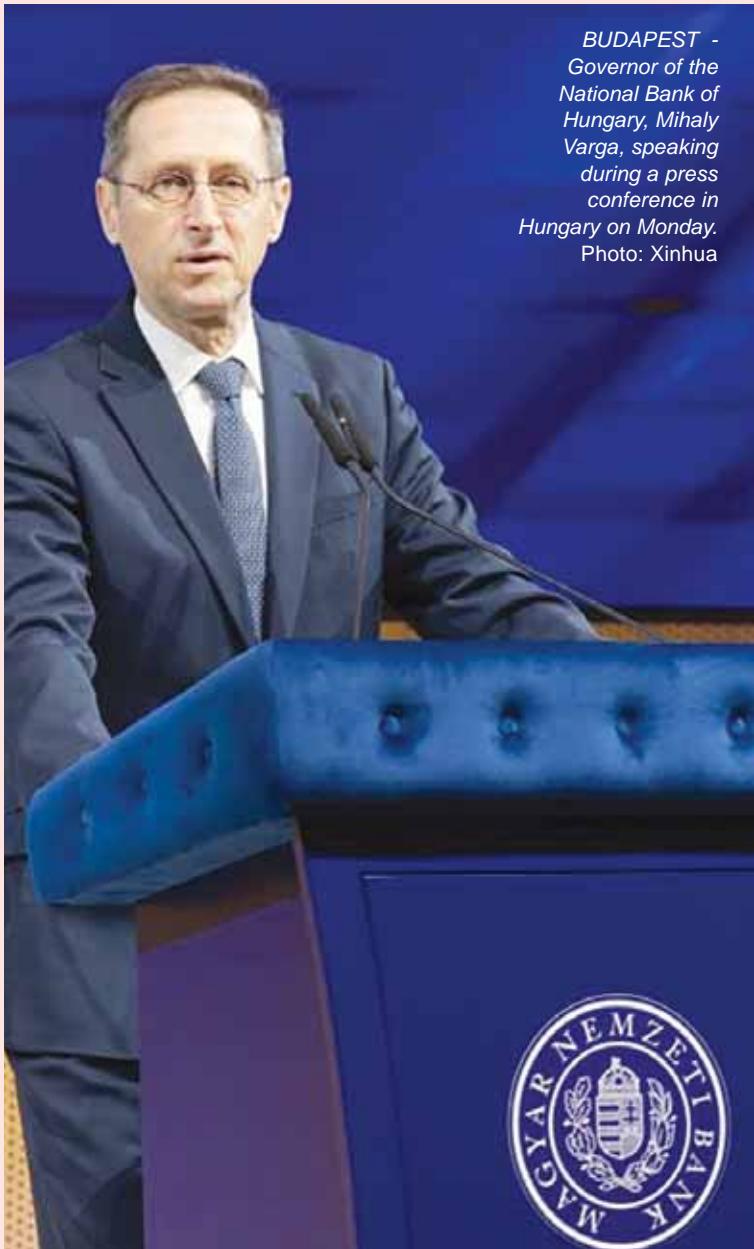
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DailyBusiness



Hungary stock market hits record high as central bank eyes stability

BUDAPEST

Hungary's stock market delivered a record-breaking performance in 2025, reflecting strengthening economic stability, Mihaly Varga, governor of the National Bank of Hungary (MNB), said on Monday. Speaking at a year-opening press conference at the Budapest Stock Exchange (BSE), Varga emphasised that economic success was rooted in the synergy between central banking and capital market activities.

"Economic success requires stability and trust," Varga said, noting that the BSE maintained its position as a regional leader, posting the second-best performance among its peers last year.

The BUX index, which tracks blue-chip shares on the BSE, surged to record levels of approximately 110 000 points in 2025.

Varga attributed this milestone to the broader strengthening of the Hungarian economy.

Regarding monetary policy, the

governor reaffirmed that curbing inflation remains the MNB's primary objective.

Inflation fell from around 5 percent at the beginning of last year to below 4 percent by the end of 2025, bringing it back within the central bank's tolerance band, Varga said.

He added that the central bank was on track to reach its 3 percent inflation target in early 2026.

The governor also highlighted the stabilisation of the Hungarian forint as a pillar of the nation's financial health.

The currency followed a sustained appreciation trend, moving from around 410 against the euro a year ago to its current level near 385. According to Varga, Hungary's banking system is well-capitalised, providing ample financing for economic players.

He added that foreign currency reserves have reached a historically high level of over 50 billion euros (US\$58.39 billion), further underpinning sustainable economic development. **Xinhua**

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Namibia to host summit to attract investment

WINDHOEK - Namibia is set to host the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) Africa Conference and Exhibition from February 24 to 25, as the country seeks to strengthen its position as a destination for offshore energy investment. The high-level two-day event, organised by the IADC, will gather more than 250 oil and gas professionals from over 20 countries in Windhoek, according to an IADC statement released on Monday. Conference discussions will cover a wide range of topics, including the outlook for Africa's drilling market, partnership opportunities in Namibia, bankable contracts for drilling contractors, artificial intelligence in drilling operations, carbon capture and storage, geothermal drilling, automation and digitalization, well control, plug and abandonment, as well as strategies for attracting and developing Generation Z talent. **Xinhua**

China welcomes foreign enterprises

BEIJING - China welcomes foreign enterprises including Warburg Pincus and long-term capital to continue expanding their investment in China and deepen mutually beneficial cooperation with China. Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng made the remarks when meeting with former US Secretary of Treasury Timothy Geithner, now chairperson of Warburg Pincus. For his part, Geithner said he was optimistic about the prospects of China's economic development, and Warburg Pincus was willing to continue to deepen its presence in the Chinese market and promote the deepening of economic and trade cooperation between the United States and China. **Xinhua**

Crude palm oil output lifts Malaysia supply

China and EU agree on price undertaking guidance for electric vehicles

BEIJING

China and the European Union have agreed on the necessity of providing general guidance on price undertakings for Chinese companies exporting battery electric vehicle (BEV) passenger cars to the EU, according to China's Ministry of Commerce on Monday.

The move aims to address relevant concerns in a way that is more practical, targeted and consistent with WTO rules, the ministry said in a statement.

It noted that in the spirit of mutual respect, the two sides have conducted multiple rounds of consultation in order to implement the consensus of the China-EU Summit and properly resolve the EU's anti-subsidy case concerning Chinese BEVs.

To that end, the European Commission on Monday issued guidance on the submission of price undertaking offers, covering various aspects that should be addressed in any such offer, including the minimum import price, sales channels, cross-compensation, and future investments in the EU.

Each price undertaking offer is subject to the same legal criteria, and the commission will conduct each assessment in an objective and fair manner, following the principle of non-discrimination

and in accordance with WTO rules, the commission said.

The progress fully reflects the spirit of the dialogue and the outcomes of the consultations between China and the EU, showing that the two sides have the ability and willingness to resolve differences properly - through dialogue and consultation, under the framework of WTO rules - and to maintain the stability of automotive industrial and supply chains in China, the EU, and throughout the world, the commerce ministry said.

"This is conducive not only to ensuring the healthy development of China-EU economic and trade relations, but also to safeguarding the rules-based international trade order," the ministry added.

The China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products has noted that the proper resolution of the EU's anti-subsidy case against Chinese electric vehicles (EVs) is a shared expectation among industry players across the EV value chain, in both China and the EU.

The move will enhance the security and stability of related industrial and supply chains, safeguard overall China-EU economic and trade cooperation, and uphold the rules-based international trade order, the chamber said.

The China Chamber of Commerce to the European Union has said it welcomes the progress China and the EU have made in resolving the EV case through dialogue, noting that this will boost market

confidence, improve the investment environment for Chinese EV firms in Europe, and support deepened China-EU cooperation in technological innovation and green transition. **Xinhua**



KIGALI - Dean of Musanze International College at Jinhua University of Vocational Technology (JUVT), Qian Xiangming (second left), providing employment guidance to graduates at a Chinese-funded enterprise in Eastern Province in Rwanda. Qian said Rwanda had sent 60 students to JUVT for advanced studies for two consecutive years. Photo: Xinhua

KUALA LUMPUR - Malaysia's crude palm oil (CPO) production rose to a record high in 2025, underscoring resilient output even as prices are expected to start 2026 on a softer footing due to elevated stockpiles, according to research houses. Maybank Investment Bank said Malaysia's CPO production remained resilient in December and hit record production for the year 2025 with 20.28 million tons of output. CPO Hong Leong Investment Bank said Malaysia's palm oil stock level may have peaked in December, as it anticipates a continuation in the seasonal cropping trend and a continued rebound in exports, supported by restocking activities ahead of the Ramadhan festival and the recent widening of palm oil's price discount against soybean oil. **Xinhua**

Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

Tsayang karolo mo go oketseng palo ya dikgomo



Mopalamete wa Tswapong North, Rre Prince Maele o kopile banni ba Manaledi go tsaya karolo mo moonong wa go oketseng palo ya dikgomo go tswa kwa go 1.7 million go ya kwa go 5 million.

Omphile Ntakhwana

MANALEDI

Mopalamente wa Tswapong North o kopile banni ba Manaledi go tsaya karolo mo moonong wa go oketseng palo ya dikgomo mo Botswana.

Mo nakong eno, palo ya dikgomo ke 1.7 million, mme puso e na le maikaelelo a go godisa palo eo go ya kwa go 5 million.

Fa a buisa phuthego ya kgotla kwa Manaledi, Rre Prince Maele a re go oketseng palo ya dikgomo, ke nngwe ya mogopololo o Tautona A d v o c a t e Duma Boko a o setseng morago.

Go oketsa dikgomo, ke nngwe ya mogopololo o Tautona Advocate Duma Boko a o setseng morago.

le seabe mo moonong oo.

Rre Maele, yo gape e leng, tona wa lephata la thuto e kgolwane, o rotloeditse barui go oketseng palo ya diruiwa diakaretsa ditonki, dipudi, dinku, dipitse, le tse dingwe.

Gape, o ne a kopa banni go dirisa mananeo a temo thu o akaretsa la Lemang Dijo.

A re go dira jalo go ka thusa go tswakanya itsholelo ya lefatshe leno ka see mo sa itsholelo sa theko ya diteemane se sa tokafale.

Rre Maele o tlhalositse fa lenaneo la Botswana Economic Transformation Programme le

tsweletse ka tsholofelo e le gore le tla thusa go tlhama mebereko.

Ka jalo, o kopile botlhe go nna

O tlhalositse fa puso e tsere tshwetso ya go itshwarela dikoloto tsa metsi go fitlhelela Tlhakole e ya fizing. **BOPA**

Omphile Ntakhwana

MANALEDI

Dikgang tsa thubetsa le tiriso botlhaswa ya bana le ditagi di a tshwenya.

Se se builwe ke Mopalamente wa Tswapong North, Rre Prince Maele kwa phuthegong ya kgotla kwa Manaledi bosheng.

Rre Maele a ka jalo go matshwanedi gore ba sepodisi le morafe ba tshwaragane go

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Letlhoko la madi le ama lenaneo la NDP 12

Masego Tabengwa

MASUNGA

Banni ba Masunga ba tlhaloseditswe fa dingwe ditlhabololo di sa akarediwa mo lenaneong la ditlhabololo la bo lesome le bobedi (National Development Plan 12) ka lebaka la letlhoko la madi.

Se se builwe ke Mopalamente wa Tati West, Rre Justin Hunyepa kwa phuthegong ya kgotla kwa Masunga bosheng.

A re ditlhabololo tse di amegileng di akaretsa kago ya sekole se se botlana, ka banni ba Masunga ba ne ba kopile go agelwa sekole sa bobedi.

Rre Hunyepa, yo gape e leng mothusa tona wa thuto e kgolwane, o kopile banni go nna pelotelele.

Le fa go ntse jalo o ba soloeditse fa ditlhabololo di akaretsa go agelwa lefelo la setimamolele le mealo ya kgopo ya metsi a a leswe di akaretsa mo NDP 12.

O tlhalositse fa tsela ya Al go tswa Ramatlaba go ya Ramokgwebana e tla dirwa ka thuso ya ba beeletsi bangwe ba -ba setseng ba supile kgatlhego.

Mo go tse dingwe, Rre Hunyepa o supile fa mananeo a akaretsa Lemang Dijo le A Di Tsale, a direletswe go rotloetsa Batswana go inaakanya le go tlhabolola

mohama wa temo thu o nne le seabe se se haphegileng mo go tsosoloseng itsholelo ya lefatshe leno.

A re seemo sa itsholelo ya Botswana se a tshwenya ka e ntse e ikaegile ka ditswangmmung di akaretsa diteemane.

A re go tswakanya itsholelo ka temo thu go ka thusa go tlhamela Batswana mmereko.

Mo dikakgelong tsa bone, mongwe monni wa Masunga, Rre Amos Nthuru nako e gorogile ya go puso e tlhome tollgates mo ditseleng dingwe go dira madi a ka thusang mo dtlhabololong. **BOPA**



Rre Justin Hunyepa

Tiriso botlhaswa ya bana e a tshwenya - Maele

Omphile Ntakhwana

MANALEDI

Iwantsha dikgang tse.

Mo go tse dingwe, o kopile banni ba motse oo, go nna sekao mo baneng ba bone ka ba ithuta dilo di le mimalwa mo go bone.

O buile jalo morago ga go uthwa famotse oo o aparetse ke dikgang tsa ntwa le dikgogagogano.

Rre Maele, yo gape e leng tona wa thuto e kgolwane, o gakolotse banni gore tsamaiso ya dikomiti tsa ditlhabololo tsa motse e hetogile.

A re maloko a masha a dikomiti tseo a tla tlhophiwa mo nakong e khutshwane lefatshe ka bophara.

O ne gape a akgola sekole se sebotlana sa Manaledi mo phenong ya sone ya maduo a dithhatlhobo tsa lekwalo la bosupa ka 100 per cent.

Fa ba tswa la bone, banni ba kopile Rre Maele go laletsa Tautona Advocate Duma Boko go tla go ba lekola le go bona motse wa bone. **BOPA**



Kasane residents have joined the search team for Mr Tlwaelo Elias at the Chobe-Zambezi river confluence.



Kasane Police station commander Superintendent James Maabong said an airboat from Maun and scuba divers had been deployed to intensify the search, with a helicopter expected to provide aerial surveillance. Photos: Portia Ikgopoleng

Search for missing man intensifies

By Portia Keetile
KASANE

More resources have been deployed to intensify the ongoing search for the missing 27-year-old Kasane man, Mr Tlwaelo Elias.

In an interview, station commander for Kasane Police, Superintendent James Maabong stated that an airboat had arrived from Maun to reinforce surveillance as the search continued.

Furthermore, he said scuba divers had also been deployed to conduct an intensive search in the river.

Superintendent Maabong said as days progress, a helicopter would be dispatched at the Chobe Zambezi River confluence for aerial surveillance.

He said police investigations were ongoing to establish what could have transpired for Mr Elias to go missing.

He said Elias was reported missing by his family on Friday, upon which the police launched a search which covered areas from Kasane as far as the CTO fuel depot in Kazungula.

Superintendent Maabong revealed that on Saturday, some whistle-blowers told the police that they spotted clothes that appeared to be a men's along Chobe River near Cresta Mowana Lodge.

He stated that police rushed to the scene where they discovered a trouser, a jacket, flip flops and a cellphone in one of the pockets of the clothing items.

He alleged that it appeared that the owner of the clothes undressed to take a bath in the river because there was a bath soap at the scene.

Furthermore, Mr Maabong said the sister confirmed to had given Mr Tlwaelo a bar of soap after he expressed the desire to take a bath at the river.

"We found the clothes hanging on a tree which could mean that he left them there to take a bath in the river but we do not yet have substantive leads to what could have transpired if at all he dipped into the river."

The station commander explained that the clothes were taken to the police forensic lab in Gaborone for tests to confirm if they belonged to Mr Elias.

He thanked Kgaphamadi Ward residents for joining hands with the police to search for their neighbour, adding that this made police endeavours more effective. **BOPA**

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Arts & Culture

Turandot deepens cultural exchange between China and Italy

CHONGQING

On Saturday evening, the main auditorium of the Chongqing Grand Theatre in southwest China was at maximum capacity. As a familiar melody rose, a tenor delivered one of Giacomo Puccini's most celebrated arias, *Nessun dorma*, drawing sustained applause from the audience after the final note.

The classic Italian opera *Turandot*, produced by the Puccini Festival, was staged for two performances at the Chongqing Grand Theatre recently.

Since the start of the new year, the Italy-born opera, set against a Chinese backdrop, has toured several Chinese cities, including Xiamen, Wuhan and Chongqing, continuing a long-standing tradition of cultural exchange between China and Italy.

Premiered in 1926, *Turandot* has remained a cornerstone of the global operatic repertoire. By blending the grand traditions of Western opera with his own interpretation of the East, Puccini crafted a work that continues to inspire fresh interpretations across diverse cultural contexts, securing its enduring presence on stages worldwide.

One of the most distinctive elements of *Turandot* is the recurring use of the Chinese folk song *Jasmine Flower*.

During this year's China tour, the song became even more

special when local children joined the Italian performers on stage, turning the familiar melody into a lively celebration of cultural exchange. In Chongqing, 41 local children formed a choir to perform alongside the Italian artists.

One choir member told Xinhua that she had previously sung *Jasmine Flower* only in Chinese, but for this production, the Italian instructors taught her how to perform the song in Italian. "Singing the same song in a different language felt very special," she said.

Principal conductor Stefano Vignati said that close cooperation with local Chinese dancers, extras and stage technicians was among the most rewarding aspects of the production.

"Everyone worked together on the same stage for the same opera. This is the most authentic charm of opera. For more than a century, *Turandot* has been continuously reinterpreted. Yet its themes of love, choice, and redemption remain universally understood across cultures, he said.

The Chongqing itself also left a strong impression on the Italian cast and crew. Luca Bruno, who played Ping, said he was struck by the city's multi-layered urban landscape, noting that its mountains and rivers reminded him of his hometown, Cosenza.

Andrea Tanzillo, who portrayed Pang, said he was fascinated by how Chongqing blends tradition

and modernity, with ancient-style architecture, contemporary buildings and urban life coexisting in harmony throughout the city.

After the performance, many audience members were drawn to an exhibition outside the theatre showcasing more than 20 artworks created by Chongqing middle school students, each illustrating their unique visions of Princess *Turandot*. Zheng Yan, a local middle school student, incorporated elements of traditional Peking Opera costumes into her design of *Turandot*'s attire.

"Princess *Turandot* is strong and resilient. Her ability to grow and transform through love and trust is something I truly admire," she said.

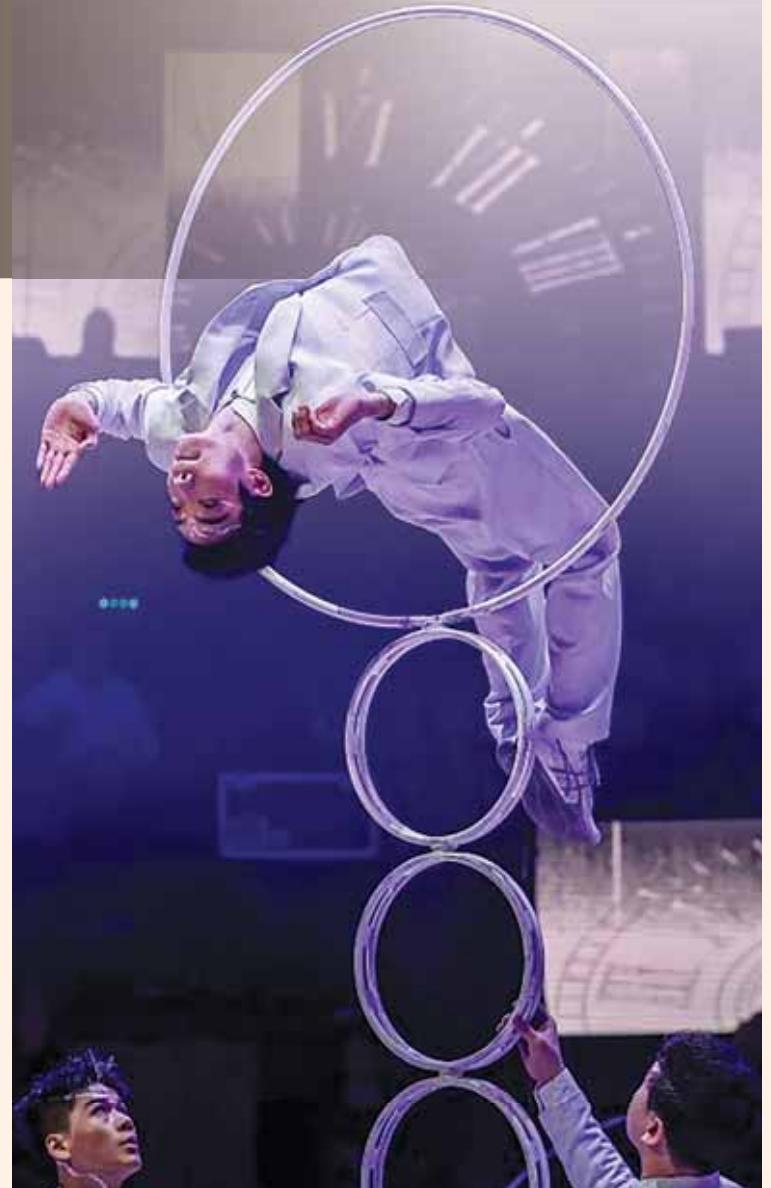
In recent years, exchanges between Italy and China in the performing arts have continued to deepen, expanding from stage productions into education and youth engagement.

For many Italian artists, China has become not only a significant destination for performances, but also a vibrant space for sharing, reimagining, and passing on operatic traditions.

Noting the China tour as his fifth visit to the country, Vignati said, 'I hope to return again to introduce Italian opera to more young Chinese artists. I believe such cooperation will continue to bear fruit in the years to come.' Xinhua



CHONGQING - The cast and crew of the opera *Turandot* acknowledging the audience after the performance at the Chongqing Grand Theatre in southwest China's Chongqing on Saturday. Photo: Xinhua



BUDAPEST - Members of the China National Acrobatic Troupe performing a hoop-diving act during the gala show of the 16th Budapest International Circus Festival in Hungary on Monday. The China National Acrobatic Troupe claimed the Grand Prix. Photo: Xinhua

Chinese troupe wins Grand Prix at Budapest International Circus Festival

BUDAPEST

The China National Acrobatic Troupe claimed the Grand Prix at the Budapest International Circus Festival, which concluded late Monday with a gala performance marking the 30th anniversary of the event since its launch in 1996.

The Chinese troupe received the festival's highest honor for its hoop-diving act, which was praised by the international jury for its technical precision, artistic expression and innovative choreography.

At the biennial festival, three

gold prizes were awarded.

Flying Tabares from Argentina and the United States won gold for flying trapeze, Ukrainian artist Kateryna Kornieva received gold for swing pole, while the Martinez Brothers of Colombia and Japan claimed gold for Icarian Games.

Silver prizes were awarded to acts from Israel, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Italy.

Bronze prizes went to performers from Italy, France and Switzerland, Russia, and Canada.

Budapest International Circus Festival is widely regarded as one of the world's most prestigious professional circus competitions. Xinhua



BUDAPEST - Members of the China National Acrobatic Troupe celebrating after winning the Grand Prix of the 16th Budapest International Circus Festival in Budapest on Monday. Photo: Xinhua

DailySport

Family to auction Branch Dakar Rally suit

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOOLE

The Branch family has decided to auction the outfit that Botswana's rally rider Ross Branch wears at the ongoing FIA/FIM Dakar World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC). His manager Aimee Branch said their family decided to auction the rally outfit given the significance that such an act would have.

"Ross and I decided to auction the suit at the end of the Dakar Rally 2026 because we felt its true value lies in giving back.

Proceeds from the auction will go toward supporting children's education in Botswana," revealed Aimee.

Aimee, who is also wife to Branch said the special significance of Ross Branch's Dakar cold-weather suit lies entirely in its design and meaning, rather than from the materials from which it was made.

She said the design was a one-of-a-kind; being visual collage made up of drawings created by children from schools and playgroups across Botswana, based on the theme: What Botswana means to You.

"Each drawing represents a child's view of home, culture, wildlife, and dreams.

Together, they form a deeply personal artwork that Ross will carry with him during Dakar," Aimee said.

She said the materials and technical specifications were not the focus of the project.

The suit, she said, itself meets Dakar regulations and performance requirements, but the story behind it is about representation, creativity, and purpose, not fabric or construction details.

The suit was produced by MIRA Active Wear in Cape Town, South Africa, in close collaboration with Branch and his team.

Aimee said like all professional Dakar gear, the suit was designed for extreme cold conditions and rider comfort.

She however revealed that what truly stands out for Branch was the emotional connection; carrying a piece of home and the voices of children from Botswana with him during one of the toughest races in the world.

"The motivation was to allow Ross to represent Botswana in a meaningful, authentic way - not just through the flag or colours, but through the creativity of its children.

We wanted the suit to tell a story of home, pride, and possibility," she said. Aimee also said the concept originated with Gerrit and the MIRA Active Wear team, and the artwork was created entirely by children across Botswana.

She said herself and the 'Kalahari Ferrari' alias Ross have worked closely with the team and schools to bring the final vision together.

Its worth, she added, cannot be measured by material cost and it is priceless because of the stories, creativity, and purpose it represents. **BOPA**

Ross Branch in the rally suit he plans to auction, with proceeds set to support children's education in Botswana. His wife and manager, Aimee Branch, said the suit's value lies in its meaning rather than its materials. The Dakar cold-weather suit features a collage of drawings by children from across Botswana depicting what the country means to them.

Photo: Courtesy of Ross Branch Facebook Page.

