

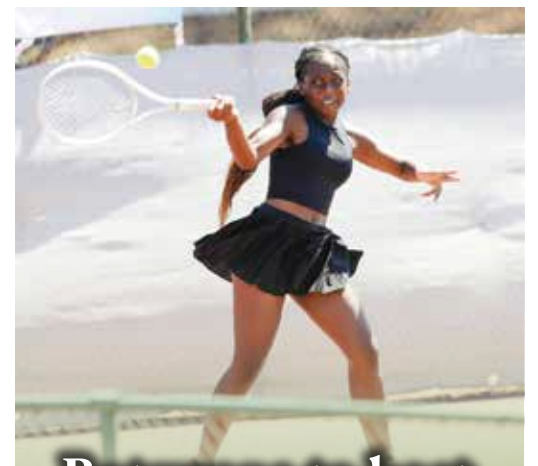
# BOTSWANA Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



Gen Z ready to make mark

Page 9



Botswana to host Billie Jean King Cup

Page 10

NEWS

Tourism Statistics Dashboard to track industry growth

Page 2

BUSINESS

Private sector partnerships central to revised youth policy

Page 6

DIKGANG

Thanolo ya Baebele ya Setswapong e simolotse

Page 7

## Meat traders seek balance on FMD control

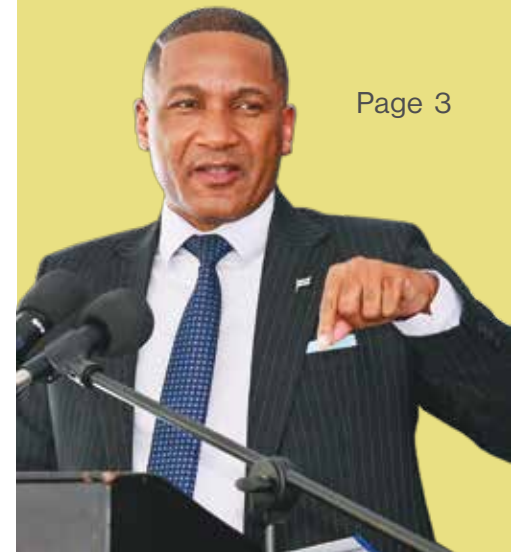


STORY PAGE 3

Butchery operators in Kgalagadi have expressed support for government's decision to suspend slaughter of cloven-hoofed animals following the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, but caution that extended restrictions could cripple their businesses and lead to job losses.

## Boko launches photovoltaic power plant

President Advocate Duma Boko is expected to officiate the launch of the Maun 500MW solar photovoltaic power plant today.



Page 3

**Ini tjauno yemula kuti tjisi tilashikile tili shango?**

#omang

**What do you wish we never lose about our country?**

#omang

**Ke shing she o eletsa gore she shegka sha he latheshela gka ga lehatshe lecho?**

#omang

# Tourism Statistics Dashboard to track industry growth

**Ketshepile More**  
**GABORONE**

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on Tuesday launched the Tourism Statistics Dashboard.

The Tourism Statistics Dashboard will allow tracking of visitor trends, measure sectoral performance, and identify

opportunities for growth.

It will strengthen Botswana tourism statistical system, enabling government to measure tourism's true contribution to the economy. By integrating tourism data into national accounts, government can better understand its impact on the Gross Domestic Product, employment, investment, and community development.

Launching the project, Minister of Environment and Tourism Mr Wynter Mmolotsi, said for tourism to thrive in a competitive global environment, decisions must be guided by accurate, timely, and

accessible data.

Therefore, he said the dashboard was a response to that need, since it was a bridge between evidence and action, as well as between aspiration and achievement.

"The launch of the dashboard is timely as government prepares for the implementation of National Development Plan 12 (NDP12). NDP12 calls for stronger systems of monitoring and evaluation, and for evidence-based strategies that ensure every sector contributes meaningfully to national priorities.

By embedding tourism statistics into our planning framework, we

are ensuring that tourism is not only celebrated for its beauty and experiences, but also accounted for in the hard numbers that drive national policy," said Mr Mmolotsi.

The Statistics Dashboard also aligns with the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP), which places emphasis on diversifying the economy, creating jobs, and building resilience.

Mr Mmolotsi said with its wide linkages to transport, agriculture, culture, and services, it was a natural engine for transformation.

He added that the dashboard would help government identify where tourism could accelerate diversification, stimulate innovation, and deliver inclusive growth.

Furthermore, Mr Mmolotsi said the data would ensure that Botswana tourism policies were inclusive, strategies sustainable and actions were impactful.

He said with the dashboard, Botswana was best equipped to be positioned as a destination of choice, a country where nature, culture and innovation meet.

Government has set ambitious goals to increase international visitor arrivals and annual tourism revenue significantly.

To achieve these targets, Ambassador of Japan to Botswana Mr Shindo Yusuke, said it required addressing challenges such as limited product diversification and the need for stronger data to support decision-making.

He said the launch of the Statistics Dashboard which was designed to transform raw data into evidence-based planning, would strengthen tourism development and statistical capacity.

"By visualising key performance indicators such as visitor arrivals, average length of stay, and tourism expenditure, this system will provide the clarity needed to understand market trends and seasonal fluctuations.

It is not just a technical achievement; it is a collaborative triumph that ensures both technical quality and strong government ownership," said Mr Yusuke.

He said the initiative would be guided by establishing data-driven tourism governance, strengthening regional competitiveness by positioning Botswana as a highly competitive destination within the region, as well as sustainability and ownership which was the ultimate success of the project.

For his part, JICA Botswana representative, Mr Hiroyasu Tonokawa, said in realising this project, JICA focused on three key areas of development of effective tourism product, product development methods including community-based tourism, the strengthening of capacity in tourism statistics and ICT as well as the promotion of information exchange and knowledge sharing with neighbouring countries in the fields of tourism product development and tourism statistics. He said among these three, JICA placed particular importance of the improvement and utilisation of tourism statistics.

Mr Tonokawa said although the project was still at early stages, continuous efforts would be required to improve data collection and integration, enhance data quality and timeliness and upgrade the system so that it becomes user friendly and responsive to users' needs.

"It is essential to expand awareness and usage of the dashboard.

More policy makers, private sector operators, researchers, and other stakeholders need to know that this tool exists and understand how to use it and actively incorporate its insights into their work," he said.

He said JICA remained committed to supporting the ministry in these continuous efforts so that the dashboard could grow into a widely used and trusted platform. **BOPA**



Interns petitioning the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs in Gaborone on Tuesday, requesting government to increase their allowances from P1,900 to P4,000. Director in the Department of Employment Services, Ms Tshenolo Omphithetse acknowledged their concerns and assured them a response would follow. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

## Interns petition government over delayed allowance increase

**Lesedi Thatayamodimo**  
**GABORONE**

Officers under the government internship programme have submitted a petition calling for the implementation of a previously announced increase in internship allowances from P1,900 to P4,000.

The petition was presented to the Director in the Department of Employment Services at the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, Ms Tshenolo Omphithetse in Gaborone on Tuesday.

Receiving the petition, Ms Omphithetse expressed appreciation for the interns' action and assured them that the matter would be reviewed, with a response to follow.

The petition, spearheaded by a recognised committee advocating for interns' welfare, highlighted concerns over stagnant allowances,

outdated programme guidelines, and limited career progression opportunities.

Speaking on behalf of the petitioners, policy advocate, Ms Precious Kiberu emphasised that interns were qualified, skilled and deserving of better conditions.

"We are placed based on our qualifications, yet denied opportunities to apply for internal vacancies. We are contributing meaningfully, but earning wages that do not reflect our value or the current economic realities," she said.

Ms Kiberu further called for the amendment of the 2016 internship guidelines. She cited that as per the regulations, remuneration of female interns were suspended when on maternity leave.

"Such provisions are not only outdated but infringe on basic human rights. How does one survive on P1 900 under these conditions, especially given the rising cost of living," she said.

The petition calls for a comprehensive review of the internship framework, including an immediate allowance increase, revision of guidelines and improved welfare considerations.

Interns also indicted that they were underutilised in their respective workplaces, as there were often assigned menial tasks, unrelated to their qualifications.

"We are here to gain experience and develop professionally, not to be reduced to errand runners, we want meaningful work and fair compensation.

We matter and we want change now," Ms Kiberu said.

Concurring with Ms Kiberu, Ms Benita Magopane stressed that the demand for a P4,000 allowance was not arbitrary but based on commitments previously made by Minister of Labour and Home Affairs.

"This is what we were promised last year, the economic situation in Botswana has worsened since then, and the cost of living continues to rise. It is only fair that the government fulfills its promise," said Ms Magopane.

She also noted concerns about the future of the internship programme, including unfulfilled pledges of programme restructuring, international placement opportunities and potential absorption into permanent roles. **BOPA**



Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi (left) and Japan Ambassador to Botswana, Mr Shindo Yusuke at the launch of Tourism Statistics Dashboard in Gaborone on Tuesday. Mr Mmolotsi said the dashboard aimed to enhance national capacity to measure and grow tourism, as well as drive economic transformation. He further said the dashboard was accurate, timely and that accessible data was crucial for tourism to thrive in a competitive global environment. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

# Butchery owners seek balance on FMD control and business survival

Thuso Kgakatsi  
HUKUNTSI

Several butchery owners across Kgalagadi have expressed support for government's decision to suspend the slaughter of cloven-hoofed animals following the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), warning that while the move is necessary, prolonged restrictions could cripple their businesses.



Veterinary Services senior abattoir attendant, Ms Binah Sentle manning a Foot and Mouth Disease Disinfection point at Gopong on Wednesday. Principal veterinary officer Dr Leano Sethong said following the outbreak of FMD in Good Hope District recently, government took a decision to place FMD disinfection points at various places within the district and outside, which he encouraged the public to comply with to avoid spreading FMD. Photo: Calviniah Kgauthe

In separate interviews, the operators acknowledged that the suspension was a critical step to protect the country's cattle industry, which remained a cornerstone of Botswana's economy.

However, they appealed for a swift resolution to the outbreak, noting that the butchery trade was their sole source of income and prolonged disruption could result in permanent closures.

Rakutlwa Butchery owner, Mr Kitso Kamona, said although the decision had dealt a heavy financial blow, compliance was essential to contain the disease.

"It is crucial for all butcheries and the general public to adhere strictly to the directives issued by relevant authorities, including the total suspension of slaughter. This is the only way we can ensure a timely solution to this matter," he said.

Mr Kamona noted that the detection of FMD in Molopo, which was in close proximity to Kgalagadi District, justified the government's swift action.

He added that there were also allegations that some farmers in Zone 13, covering Kgalagadi North and South, had procured breeding materials from affected areas such as Ramatlabama, further heightening the risk of transmission.

"These developments made it necessary to halt slaughter activities and allow for thorough investigations," he said.

Despite his support for the measure, Mr Kamona said the two-week suspension had already

left his business struggling to meet operational costs, including employee wages and rental payments for leased premises.

He explained that the ban had also disrupted his ability to fulfill existing supply tenders to institutions such as Tshane Prison, Hukuntsi Primary Hospital and Lehutshelo Junior Secondary School.

"We are unable to meet our contractual obligations because alternative suppliers are selling meat at prices higher than our agreed contract rates. This makes it unviable for us to continue supplying," he said.

Mr Kamona noted that his business typically relied on purchasing cattle from nearby cattleposts for slaughter to meet market demand, adding

that, with this option unavailable, revenue streams had dried up.

"Cattle meat is our primary source of income. We have tried to shift to selling chicken, but the profit margins are significantly lower. Even our braai business has suffered because customers prefer beef to chicken," he said.

He further noted that the option to sell game meat was also not viable, as it fell under cloven-hoofed animals affected by the suspension.

Mr Kamona warned that if the ban persists, difficult decisions such as laying off workers may become unavoidable.

"Currently, we are exploring the possibility of temporarily laying off some employees as we struggle to pay salaries. If the situation

continues, we may be forced to close permanently," he said.

Echoing similar sentiments, Morelife Butchery owner in Magobelelo Ward, Mr Oagile Moruise, described the government's decision as both necessary and timely, given the highly contagious nature of FMD.

"As a country that depends heavily on cattle production, it is important to take precautionary measures to protect the national herd and avoid long-term economic losses," he said.

However, Mr Moruise said the suspension had already resulted in zero profits, making it increasingly difficult to cover operational expenses such as rent and staff wages.

He added that his business location, situated on the outskirts of the village, limited opportunities to diversify into alternative products such as spices and vegetables, which have previously proven unprofitable due to low customer traffic.

"I have been working hard to build a customer base despite the location challenges, but this disruption threatens to reverse that progress," he said.

Mr Moruise noted that he was currently selling the last of his meat stock, after which operations would be forced to cease until the ban is lifted.

Similarly, Khale-One General Dealer owner, Ms Ketsheleone Khwae, said her business was on the verge of closure following the depletion of meat stock.

She explained that while her target market included the general public, she also occasionally supplies institutions such as Lehutshelo Junior Secondary School and Hukuntsi Primary Hospital.

Ms Khwae said attempts to source meat from Botswana Meat Commission outlets had proven unsuccessful due to distance and high procurement costs, which exceed her selling price.

"In an effort to remain operational, I have introduced grocery items, but the response has been low as most customers prefer franchised shops and wholesalers," she said.

She warned that continued restrictions without relief measures could force small businesses like hers to shut down permanently.

While the butchery owners remain supportive of Government's efforts to contain the disease, they emphasised the need for a balanced approach that addresses both animal health concerns and the economic survival of small enterprises.

They collectively called for expedited investigations and interventions to curb the spread of FMD, expressing hope that normal operations would resume soon before irreversible damage was done to their businesses. **BOPA**

## Boko launches photovoltaic power plant

Esther Mmolai  
MAUN

President Advocate Duma Boko will today officiate the implementation of the Maun 500MW solar photovoltaic power plant.

The project is a government-to-government initiative undertaken by Botswana and the Sultanate of Oman and forms part of the infrastructure government is setting up to achieve self-sufficiency in electricity, provide clean, affordable, reliable and adequate energy for sustainable development.

It is expected to augment government's efforts of accelerating renewable energy development to secure electricity supply, expand electrification and lower its carbon

footprint.

It is hoped that the project will create job opportunities for locals, promote inclusive growth and support the development of local skills in the renewable energy sector.

As Maun is in the process of transitioning into a green city, the North West district leadership has welcomed the project saying it came at the right time to bridge the national energy gap.

"This is a large-scale initiative aimed to shift from coal to renewable energy and we appreciate that the project will significantly lower the need for our country to import electricity, improving national energy security and independence," said North West District commissioner, Mr Thabang Waloka.

He appreciated that solar energy was emerging as a promising renewable energy source, offering a clean and sustainable solution to meet the growing energy needs of all, especially for the rural community.

He also stated that as Maun turn green, the expectation was that there would be a transition to a total reliance on solar energy.

Mr Waloka also acknowledged that the project would not break dependence on imported electricity but would also create job opportunities for the locals and boost local economy. **BOPA**



North West District Commissioner Mr Thabang Waloka

### DailyNews

Published by: Department of Information Services  
37795 Wellie Seboni Drive  
Private Bag BR 139 Gaborone

Printed by: Government Printing and Publishing Services

Online Edition: <https://dailynews.gov.bw>

email: [bopa@gov.bw](mailto:bopa@gov.bw) email: [dailynews@gov.bw](mailto:dailynews@gov.bw)

Circulation 20 000 per day except Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.

#### Editors

Ms Lorato Okaile

Tel: 365 3604

Email: [lgaleage@gov.bw](mailto:lgaleage@gov.bw)

Mr Sefhako Sefhako

Tel: 365 3589

Email: [sesehako@gov.bw](mailto:sesehako@gov.bw)

Ms Masego Pilane

Tel: 365 3569

Email: [mkipilane@gov.bw](mailto:mkipilane@gov.bw)

Ms Sereki Mpitse

Tel: 365 3595

Email: [smpitse@gov.bw](mailto:smpitse@gov.bw)

Head of Photography Head of Marketing Head of Graphics

Mr Yobe Shonga

Tel: 365 3604

Email: [yshonga@gov.bw](mailto:yshonga@gov.bw)

Ms Lucretia Chima

Tel: 365 3574

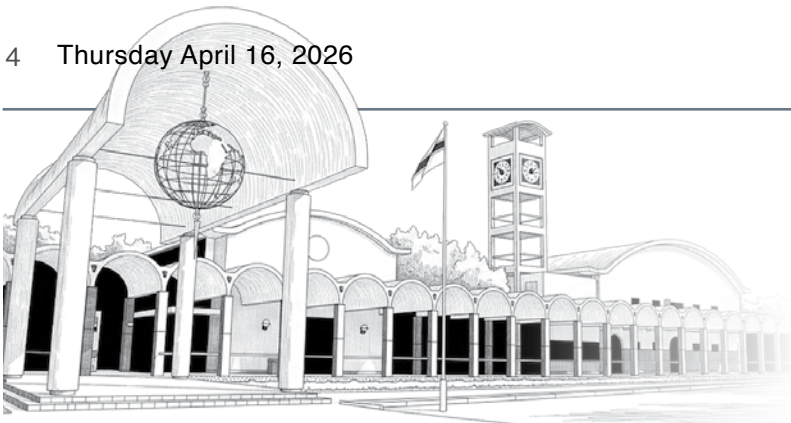
Email: [lchima@gov.bw](mailto:lchima@gov.bw)

Mr Edward Matlala

Tel: 365 3557

Email: [ematlala@gov.bw](mailto:ematlala@gov.bw)

Call: 365 3591 / 3592 / 3593 / 3599 To Advertise



## PARLIAMENT 2026

# Deeds Registry amendment to tackle land registration backlog

Marvin Motlhabane  
GABORONE

Batswana are a step closer to transforming their land into liquid capital following the presentation of the Deeds Registry (Amendment) Bill 2026 in Parliament on Tuesday.

By clearing a backlog of 830 000 unregistered plots, the Bill aims to turn dormant tribal land into an economic engine to allow citizens to secure bank loans and formalise their property rights.

Presented by Assistant Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Baratiwa Mathoothe, on behalf of acting Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti, the Bill also sought to modernise and strengthen the legal framework for land registration, with a primary goal to align the Deeds Registry with the Tribal Land Act of 2018 to facilitate a nationwide rollout of secure land titles.

Mr Mathoothe highlighted some challenges within the current system, particularly in old built-up areas on tribal land.

He noted that the existing requirement for a certificate of lease or title before registering general plans had created major bottlenecks, particularly in areas where historical land allocations were made without proper layout plans and made it difficult to produce accurate survey records.

“The urgency of this reform is clear. Botswana currently faces a backlog of approximately 830 000 unregistered plots, many of which were surveyed under programmes such as Land Administration Procedures, Capacity and Systems (LAPCAS). This delay prevents citizens from obtaining secure land rights and enjoying the full benefits of ownership,” he told Parliament.

He emphasised that the reform was as much about economic growth as it was about administration.

“Without registration, land remains a dormant asset. With registration, it becomes a driver of economic activity,” he said.

He explained that title deeds were important because they provided certainty of ownership, clearly defined property boundaries and enabled land to be used actively, including

as collateral to access finance from banks and other financial institutions.

“The Bill therefore seeks not only to improve administrative efficiency but to unlock the economic potential of land and empower citizens,” he added. He further said the reform was necessary, urgent and in the national interest, thus requested Parliament to approve the Bill, saying that if passed, the amendment was expected to ease longstanding administrative hurdles and enable more Batswana to leverage their land for immediate economic opportunities.

Debating the Bill, Kgatleng East MP, Mr Mabuse Pule supported the Bill and applauded the minister for amending the Act. He said citizens would benefit from secure land titles as they would be able to use the certificates as collateral to access finance from banks. Charleshill MP, Mr Motsamai Motsamai said the amendment came at the right time, when the economy was struggling due to low diamond sales.

He noted that the youth could use their parents’ plots to earn decent living. He added that delays in issuing title deeds led to regression in citizens’ ability to acquire loans and other financial opportunities to develop their lives.

He emphasised that it was paramount for the law to be passed with urgency. Once adopted, he said, the amendments would enable big projects to resume speedily due to the availability of land for infrastructure development, thereby creating more employment opportunities across various settlements.

Specially Elected MP, Ms Lesego Chombo said access to land was relevant to youth employment. Ms Chombo, also Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, pointed out that many youth were unable to access financing because they lacked land or adequate security. Francistown South MP, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi was happy that amendments would unlock 830 000 land certificates, saying that would provide investor confidence and help build the local economy.

Mr Mmolotsi added that unlocking these certificates would ensure that development covenants were fulfilled by bringing infrastructure to the sites. **BOPA**

# National Youth Policy presents glimmer of hope

Thato Mosinyi  
GABORONE

The revised National Youth Policy 2026 marks a pivotal moment in government’s approach to youth development as youth unemployment hovers at 38 per cent as at 2024. The comprehensive framework succeeds the 2015 policy and arrives at a critical time and is guided by national and global principles of youth development with the primary objective to ensure that young people are positioned to participate meaningfully and sustainably in the development of the country.

Presenting the policy in Parliament Tuesday, Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, Ms Lesego Chombo, emphasised that the new policy prioritised rights-based empowerment over traditional advocacy, signaling a shift toward tangible opportunities and active participation.

She said government’s commitment to youth development had evolved through deliberate policy interventions, citing that the 1996 National Youth Policy established the foundation by recognising youth as central to development and extending access to education, employment skills training and cultural participation. She said the 2010 revised policy on the other hand advanced inclusivity and expanded youth participation across economic, social and environmental sectors.

Ms Chombo said while such policies laid the necessary foundation, they however had not been sufficient in addressing persistent and emerging challenges. “Today’s youth are more educated and more globally connected than any generation before them yet many remain excluded from meaningful economic participation. This contradiction shows not lack of effort from young people but misalignments within the system,” she said.

She said the 2026 National Youth Policy therefore aimed to address that which had not worked and aligned itself with the National

vision 2036, National Development Plan 12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme.

Ms Chombo indicated that the consultations and data that informed the policy revealed a clear and urgent picture that there was a persistent misalignment between education and the labour market demands which reflected in the youth unemployment rate of 38 per cent as captured in 2024.

“This indicated that while excess to education has extended, transition to opportunities has nonetheless not kept pace,” she said. She said only 60 per cent of learners were able to transition to senior secondary school education with social economic barriers such as teenage pregnancy disproportionately affecting young women.

She stated that beyond economic and education challenges, social vulnerabilities were increasingly evident as substance abuse and mental health challenges were on the rise.

Ms Chombo said the policy therefore recognised that youth development must be addressed as an integrated system that aligned education and economic opportunities inclusive governance and social protection.

“The expected outcomes of the policy are the clearest expression of what Botswana is committing itself to achieve for its young people by 2036 and the period there between,” she said. That, she said were not broad aspirations but measurable national commitments intended to shift the literality of youth in education, health economic participation, leadership inclusion and environmental governance as well as global competitiveness. She said the policy aimed to ensure that young people were equipped not merely to complete school but to transition into meaningful economic contributors.

“We propose that by 2029, a significant number of young people should have excess to vocational training programmes aligned to market demands while 50 per cent should be accessing digital learning tools that strength employability and participation in the digital economy,” she said. **BOPA**



Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, Ms Lesego Chombo (right) and Minister of Sport and Arts, Mr Jacob Kelebeng during a Parliament session recently. Ms Chombo said the revised National Youth Policy 2026 was guided by national and global principles of youth development, with the primary objective to ensure that young people were positioned to participate meaningfully and sustainably in the development of the country. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

# All 17 foreign sport coaches fully qualified - Kelebeng

GABORONE

There are set minimum requirements to coach at national team level and that all those engaged must meet the set requirements as prescribed by individual sport codes, Minister of Sport and Arts, Mr Jacob Kelebeng says. Minister Kelebeng said this when responding to a question in Parliament on Monday.

The minister confirmed that all foreign coaches employed to coach in Botswana, for the national teams and the football premier league, possessed the relevant qualifications. “Botswana Premier League has club

licensing requirements, which all clubs must fulfil before participating in the league competitions,” he said.

He added that there were clear requirements of ‘A license’ that foreign coaches must possess to acquire a work permit to coach a Premier League team.

He promised that the ministry, through Botswana National Sport Commission (BNSC), would continue monitoring adherence to prescribed requirements to ensure that recruited foreign coaches possessed relevant qualifications. Further, he said, national sport associations

were encouraged and supported with funding by government through BNSC to capacitate coaches to reach the highest levels of coaching qualifications so as to elevate the performance and skills of local athletes.

He revealed that there were currently five foreign coaches for senior national teams in men’s senior national team, judo, netball, cricket and bowling and that they all possessed minimum requirements.

In addition, the minister said, there were 12 foreign coaches employed by various teams in the Botswana Premier League. Seven of them hold CAF A license, three

with UEFA A license and two with UEFA Pro license, which was the highest license in Europe.

Member of Parliament for Molepolole North, Mr Arafat Khan, had asked if the minister was aware that most sport foreign coaches employed in the country were not sufficiently qualified for the roles despite having being roped in.

Mr Khan also wanted to know the measures the minister would take to ensure that only qualified and competent coaches were engaged in developing Botswana’s sporting talent. **BOPA**



Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele told Parliament on Monday that government was still committed to increasing student's living allowance to P2,500 as indicated in the Umbrella for Democratic Change manifesto. He said the ministry had implemented the commitment in phases, first aligning brigades students' allowances with other tertiary institutions in August 2025 by raising them from P300 to P1,920 and then further increasing both on-and off-campus living allowance by 14.6 per cent effective end of April.

## Govt commits to increase student allowances

### GABORONE

The Ministry of Higher Education is still committed to increasing student's living allowance to P2,500 as indicated in the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) manifesto.

Responding to a question in Parliament on Monday, Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele stated that it had not been possible due to country's current economic constraints.

Minister Maele said under the circumstances the ministry was currently not in a position to provide the timeline for the increase of students' allowance to P2,500 as promised.

"The sustainability of this allowance increase will solely

depend on the economic status of the country from time to time," he said.

He added that the ministry had taken a gradual approach in fulfilling such commitments in phase as detailed, the first phase was to align living allowance for brigades students with those of other tertiary institutions and effected in August 2025, increasing it from P300 to P1,920 to ensure equity.

Again, he said the second phase, in the past was an increase of living allowance to P2,200 effective end of April and the off-campus allowance would increase from P1 919.70 to P2,200 reflecting a 14.6 per cent increase.

On-campus allowance would increase from P1,550 to P1,776.90

reflecting a 14.6 per cent increase while on-campus allowance for full boarding would increase from P296.30 to P339.60 reflecting a 14.6 per cent.

Member of Parliament for Kgatleng East, Mr Mabuse Pule had asked the minister to indicate if he intended to increase student allowances in line with the current government's commitment to raise the amount to P2,500.

Mr Pule also asked the minister to state the timeline for the increase and outline how government planned to ensure the sustainability of the allowance given the current economic condition and measures government would take to ensure that such support effectively addressed the financial challenges faced by students. **BOPA**

## Various factors delay Mmokolodi Road project completion

### GABORONE

Parliament has been informed that construction of the Mmokolodi Kgotla access road commenced on November 19, 2024 and was scheduled for completion by end of October 2025.

Answering a question in Parliament on Tuesday, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Noah Salakae, however explained that the road had not been completed due to various reasons, the most prominent of which was abnormal rainfall experienced during the late 2024 and early 2025 rainy season.

"These rains caused disruptions, resulting in a lot of hours lost on site and the most notable disruption was the significant rise in the water table, prompting issuance of variation orders to provide subsurface drainage.

In that regard, substantial extension of time was awarded to make up for the lost period," he said. He said other issues that bordered on the project were to do with land expropriation, which the ministry was working round the clock to manage.

He said over and above the challenges highlighted, the contractor's rate of progress had also not been satisfactory, largely

due to failure to adequately provide such requisite resources as skilled human resources and plant or machinery.

"This has resulted in financial strain on the part of the contractor, subsequently affecting payment of suppliers and procurement of materials," he added.

Mr Salakae also acknowledged that there had been instances where the contractor failed to pay monthly salaries to the workforce and personnel seconded to the supervising engineer.

"This has been on account of the poor cashflow by the contractor, partly due to the long periods between submission of Interim Payment Certificates (IPCs) by the contractor, oftentimes three to four months.

In the 16 months that have elapsed since commencement of the project, the contractor has submitted five Interim Payment Certificates," he said.

Mr Salakae added that currently, payments for four of the five certificates had been made and the only outstanding payment was for the last one which was submitted on April 2 and was still within the prescribed payment standard time.

He also acknowledged that of the four IPCs paid, the first two were paid late by 57 days and 22 days respectively, while the last two

were paid within the set standard payment time.

Thus, he said, the issue of delayed payment to the contractor had already been addressed and the ministry would continue to monitor compliance to contractual timelines for payments.

Mr Salakae further admitted that delayed consultation created unnecessary anxiety, therefore, time permitting, the ministry would arrange a kgotla meeting to address the Mmokolodi community and update them on the status of the project.

Mr Salakae noted the suggested 2km road link between Mmokolodi, Goo Nku, Tloaneng and Gabane villages would, by far, enhance connectivity and ease traffic congestion in roads with close proximity to Mmokolodi.

He added that the ministry would explore other funding modalities for the project, outside the on-going Mmokolodi kgotla access road project.

He also said the total length of the Mmokolodi Kgotla access road was 5.46km from Gaborone-Boatle (A1 road), around 2km out of 5.46km fell outside Gamaletle Development Trust's land (Farm Forest Hill 9-KO) while the remaining 3.26km was within the Gamaletle Development Trust's Farm Forest Hill 9-KO. **BOPA**

## Abolishment of bank cheques disrupts govt vehicle auctions

### GABORONE

Minister of Transport and Infrastructure has acknowledged that the abolishment of bank-guaranteed cheques by the Bank of Botswana in December 2023 has disrupted the auctioning process.

Responding to a parliamentary question on Monday, Minister Noah Salakae noted that the Government Fleet Management (GFM) had previously used them to collect deposits, which were a prerequisite for participating in an auction. Minister Salakae said GFM had explored alternative payment methods, including a Bank of Botswana deposit account, which resulted in refund delays.

As a result, he said, GFM requested approval for a non-refundable deposit of P200, which was granted and implemented during the September-October 2025 auction sale. Furthermore, he dismissed the notion that only 10 per cent of boarded vehicles were auctioned as untrue, stating that GFM auctioned all vehicles that had been boarded and approved for sale.

He added that 1 403 vehicles were approved for sale during the last auction. He explained that private auctioneers were engaged because of their expertise in maximising final sale prices, often securing values higher than market rates, which in turn generated more

revenue for government.

Moreover, he said engaging external auctioneers was cost-effective, as using internal staff or personnel from other departments incurred additional costs such as subsistence, travel and overtime allowances.

He further cited a high risk of corruption between staff and bidders as an additional concern.

He said conducting countrywide auctions in a single day would require more auctioneers and would reduce participation and competition, thereby affecting revenue generated. He added that the current staggered schedule was also intended to provide opportunities for individuals who may not have secured any lots in previous auctions.

Member of Parliament for Mogoditshane West, Mr Galenawabo Lekau, had asked the minister to state why GMF auctioned vehicles once a year compared to three times per annum as they did in former years. Mr Lekau also asked why only 10 per cent of the boarded vehicles were auctioned.

He further asked for clarity why private auctioneers were used instead of internal personnel or those from other departments and state what made it difficult to carry out a countrywide auction in a single day. **BOPA**

## Presidency houses Wealth Fund to leverage convening power

### GABORONE

The decision to house the new Botswana Sovereign Wealth Fund (BSWF) under Office of the President, Ministry for State President, Defence and Security, rather than Ministry of Finance, is a deliberate strategic choice based on the fund's developmental mandate and better national coordination amongst other things.

The approach was similar to other key development entities such as National Planning Commission (NPC) and Public Private Partnerships unit, Assistant Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti said when answering a parliamentary question on Tuesday. "In addition, as members are aware the constitution under section 50 (4), a minister is responsible, under direction of the President for such business of government as the President may assign to him or her," Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti explained.

The assistant minister further explained that it was not only a cash pool, but also an assets management entity that would capture state owned entities, owned or managed by various ministries.

"Had it been a cash only entity, the fund would be at the Ministry of Finance. But the diverse nature of its cash and non-cash portfolio means it will require the convening power of the presidency to truly execute its mandate. And sometimes, it may need inter-ministerial collaboration," she explained.

On chief executive officer of the BSWF, Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti said the selection was based on his expertise of running the largest fund in Botswana. She argued that if the CEO could protect, preserve and grow the pension funds of the

country, then he could run and manage BSWF. She also explained that the selection of the CEO followed a rigorous, recruitment process designed to attract world-class talent.

"Despite this, we ran a comprehensive induction programme, which included working with African sovereign fund forum and other sovereign wealth funds," she said, confident they were on the right track.

Also, the assistant minister said the selection process for the board directors of BSWF was done in accordance with part X of the Companies Act. She said the appointments adhered to the principles of merit, transparency and professional competency as required by the Santiago Principles.

She revealed that the chairperson of the BSWF was the immediate past chairperson of Nigerian Sovereign Wealth Fund.

"The Nigerian SWF has been ranked the highest in Africa for over a decade when it comes to transparency and governance. This means we have been able to tap African and global experience and expertise to set our fund," she said as she justified the selection of the BSWF board chairperson.

However, Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti said that the CEO was better placed to provide information regarding the amount invested in the fund. Member of Parliament for Maun North, Mr Dumelang Saleshando, had sought clarity on why the BSWF was managed under the Ministry for State President, Defence and Security but not of that of Finance. Additionally, the Maun North legislator wanted to know how the board members were selected, how much had been invested in the fund up to date and the applicable law under which the fund had been established, among other things. **BOPA**



# DailyBusiness

## Private sector partnerships central to revised youth policy

**Thato Mosinyi**  
**PARLIAMENT**

Youth economic growth and job creation remain central to the revised National Youth Policy 2026, with focus on partnerships with the private sector and programmes targeting rural employment.

That was revealed by Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, Ms Lesego Chombo, when presenting the policy in Parliament on Tuesday.

Minister Chombo indicated that the revised framework balanced the economic dimension with holistic health priorities, including mental wellness, gender-based violence prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness.

She said the policy aimed to create a generation capable of driving economic growth, social cohesion and environmental stewardship through targeted programmes, institutional reforms and strategic partnerships.

She added that the policy also recognised the need for strong collaboration with the private sector to guide curricular development and absorption rates into tertiary institutions and ensure seamless transition from education into the labour market.

“The revised National Youth Policy 2026-2036 represents a bold step toward equipping Botswana’s youth with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to lead in an increasingly complex world,” she said. Minister Chombo highlighted that the revised policy underscored government’s commitment to addressing unemployment, fostering innovation, promoting mental and physical well-being and empowering young leaders across sectors.

“By linking education, technology and leadership development with practical pathways for employment and entrepreneurship, Botswana is positioning its youth as active contributors to national development.

The policy sets the stage for a decade of measurable progress to ensure that young people are not only beneficiaries of national growth but also active architects of the country’s future,” Ms Chombo said.

The policy, she noted, spoke to the young entrepreneur whose ideas could not scale due to limited access, not only to capital but to resources currently controlled by red tape.

She further highlighted that approximately 60 per cent of the population was below the age of 25, while 35 per cent fell within the 15-35 age bracket. “This demographic reality positions Botswana to harness a significant demographic dividend.”

On youth economic empowerment, Ms Chombo stated that the policy intended to shift young people from exclusion to productivity, arguing that 80 per cent of youth completing internships should transition into sustainable employment by 2030.

She said the policy also provided for a 40 per cent target by 2030 of graduates of entrepreneurship programmes to establish registered

enterprises and cooperatives, while a significant portion of youth-owned businesses should become globally competitive and export-ready.

Recognising the challenges youth faced in accessing start-up capital, Ms Chombo noted that the ministry was in the process of remodelling the Youth Development Fund (YDF) to make it more sustainable and efficient.

“The policy recognises the creative sector as a driver of youth economic participation and will support commercialisation of creatives through access to funding, digitalisation, market linkages and intellectual property protection,” she added. Furthermore, she said the ministry was committed to implementing tangible interventions through its subsidiary body, the Botswana

National Youth Council (BNYC). She said it was envisaged that once remodelled, the programme would improve financial and operational sustainability, automation and strengthen governance.

“The programme is expected to create decent employment for young people coupled with mentorship, post-funding support and facilitation to access markets,” said the minister. **BOPA**



*Ms Gorata Gaerogwe (left), Ms Segolame Gaerogwe (centre) and Ms Kebuang Gaerogwe are among many young people turning to Phane harvesting as a lucrative income generating venture, supplying local markets amid limited employment opportunities in the country. They said the trade offered quick returns and growing demand, making it an attractive alternative livelihood despite operational challenges in the field. They added that phane, found mainly in central, eastern and north eastern Botswana, made the business even more viable as it required minimal capital, relying largely on labour and time. Photo: Baldwin Nyamande*

## Mounting developmental setbacks stalls countries progress - report

**NEW YORK** - Development financing trends are going in the wrong direction, with progress in many areas not only stalled but reversing due to weakened global collaboration, rising trade barriers, increased geopolitical tensions, repeated climate-related shocks, and an alarming assault on multilateralism, a UN report said Thursday.

An increasing number of developing countries, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, confront large unmet Sustainable Development Goals spending needs amid an overall financing squeeze, and they simultaneously face falling aid, rising costs from environmental degradation and climate impacts, high costs of capital, and high debt service, according to the Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2026.

The report assessed progress on the Sevilla Commitment, the blueprint for action on financing for sustainable development agreed at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in 2025.

Many of the reforms envisioned

under the Sevilla Commitment would give developing countries better and more nimble access to the funding they need.

The developing countries face heavy debt burdens, falling financial aid, declining foreign direct investment, and high tariffs, the report showed.

According to the report, debt service in developing countries reached 20-year highs in 2024. “Global development requires working together for common goals. Implementing the Sevilla Commitment is our best chance to demonstrate the global community’s enduring commitment to cooperation and to unlock the finance needed to keep the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals,” said UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed.

This, the report says is an extremely perilous time for international cooperation, as geopolitical considerations are increasingly shaping economic relations and financial policies.

“However, there has been welcome resilience in many areas, such as renewable

energy investment, in part due to determined inter-country collaboration in the face of rising attacks on multilateralism.”

According to the report, capital spending on renewable energy reached a record high in 2024 at US\$2.2 trillion, with investment in renewables totaling twice that of fossil fuels, which fell to a historic low. The value of South-South trade also increased more than fourfold in the last 20 years.

However, due to global fragmentation and deepening geopolitical divisions, the reforms agreed in the Sevilla Commitment have become more difficult to implement, the report said.

Given global geopolitical challenges, the report concluded that economic hyper-globalization is no longer viable and recommends instead a multilayered approach to international cooperation that emphasizes moving forward on impactful reforms. Countries should not retreat from multilateralism and should link their domestic investments in their people and climate-proof infrastructure with regional and global support, the report said. **Xinhua**

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### World Bank lifts suspension on disbursements to Guinea-Bissau

**BISSAU** - The World Bank has lifted its suspension of disbursements for projects in Guinea-Bissau effective April 3, the government said recently.

In a statement, government says that the decision follows a review by the World Bank and would allow ongoing operations in the country to resume normally.

The statement says a letter from World Bank Division Director Djibrilla Adamou Issa to Transitional Prime Minister and Finance Minister Ildio Vieira Te, states that payment processing and project activities under existing financing would restart immediately. **Xinhua**

#### Uganda to launch first national IP data exchange

**KAMPALA** - Uganda is set to launch its first-ever National IP Peering Exchange (NIPX), a system designed to accelerate data exchange, reduce costs and keep local internet traffic within the country.

The system, scheduled for official launch on Friday, will enable internet service providers, content providers, cloud platforms, data centers and government networks to exchange traffic locally and more efficiently, according to a statement issued Tuesday by the National Information Technology Authority.

“By keeping local traffic local, the platform is expected to significantly reduce latency, lower the cost of internet services, enhance network resilience, and strengthen Uganda’s digital sovereignty,” the statement said. **Xinhua**

#### World Drone Games take off in China

**CHENGDU** - The inaugural World Drone Games, underway in Chengdu, the capital of southwest China’s Sichuan Province, have once again focused global attention on the country’s fast-growing low-altitude economy.

By merging cutting-edge drone technology with competitive sports, the event offers the world a glimpse into the future direction of unmanned aerial systems and creates a global stage for low-altitude innovation.

The event, running from April 11 to 25 across three competition zones in the city, has attracted over 800 teams from around the world, including 30 international squads from Russia, Myanmar, Cameroon, Pakistan, Tanzania and other countries and regions.

Co-hosted by the China Communications Industry Association and the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China (UESTC), the Games feature four innovative disciplines: drone weightlifting, fencing, equestrian and basketball. **Xinhua**

# Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

## IPAPATSE FA



LELE TSA

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



## Thanolo ya Baebele ya Setswamong e simolotse

Mothusa Tautona, Rre Ndaba Gaolathe (mojeng) le mogolwane go tswa kwa Bible Society of Botswana, Mme Tumelo Tlhong jaaka Mothusa Tautona a ne a ribolola Baebele ya puo ya Khwedam kwa Tobera bosheng. Mme Tlhong a re lekgotla leo le simolotse go ranolela Baebele mo puong ya Setswamong mono ngwaga, mme e le tiro e e tlaa tsayang lebaka go wediwa.

**Kedirebofe Pelontle**  
**TOBERA**

Lekgotla Bible Society of Botswana le tswelletse ka maiteko a go ranolela Baebele mo dipuong tse di farologanyeng tsa mo gae. Maikaelelo a se, ke go dira gore lefoko la Modimo le balwe ke batho ba bantsi ka puo e ba e tshaloganyang.

Se se builwe ke mogolwane wa Bible Society of Botswana, Mme Tumelo Tlhong kwa Tobera bosheng fa go ribololwa Baebele ya puo ya Khwedam bosheng.

Mme Tlhong o tshalositse fa lekgotla leo le simolotse go ranolela Baebele mo puong ya Setswamong mono ngwaga, mme ele tiro e e tlaa tsayang lebaka go wediwa.

A re Baebele ya Khwedam e oketsa dithanolo tse di teng le tse di tswelletseng ka go dirwa. O

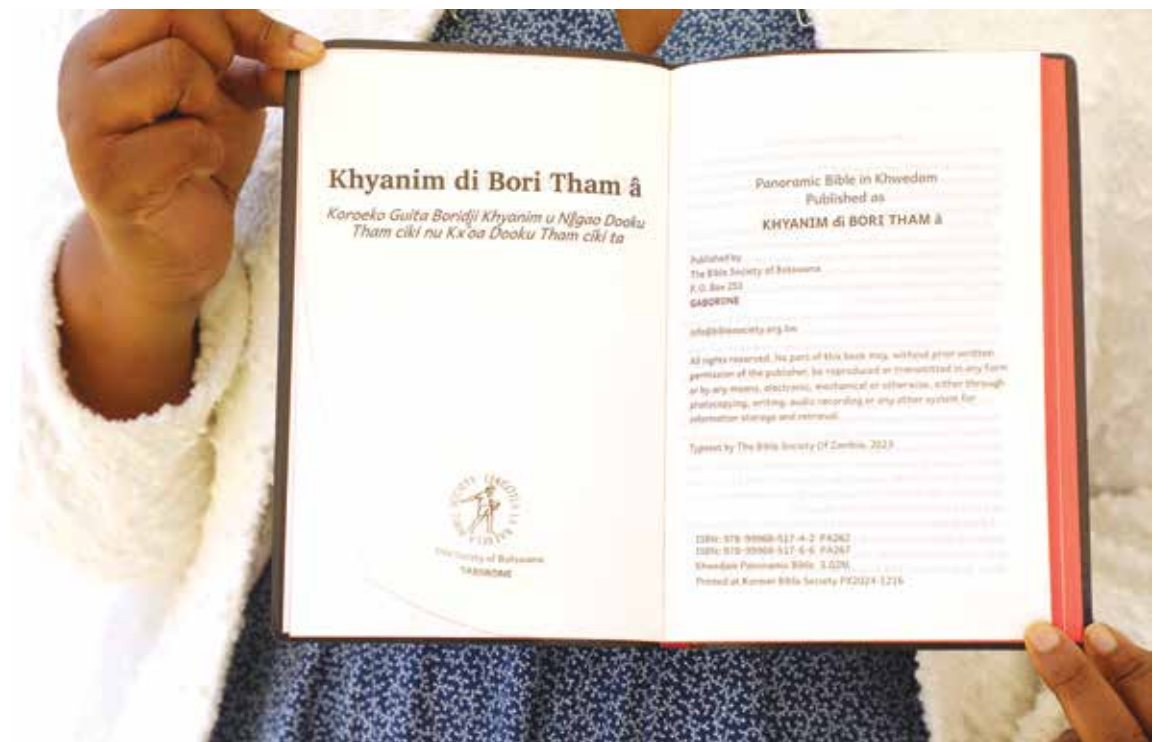
tshalositse fa lekgotla le kgonne ka thanodi e feletseng ya Baebele ya puo ya Sekalaka ee ribolotsweng ka ngwaga wa 2018.

A re kgolagano e ntsha ya puo ya Shekgalagari e weditswe mme thanolo ya kgolagano e kgologolo ya yone e tswelletse ka go dirwa.

O supile gape fa thanodi ya Baebele ya dipuo tsa Shiyeyi, Naro le puo ya diatla e dirisiwang ke batlhoka kutlo e santse e tswelletse.

Mme Tlhong a re Lekgotla la Baebele le itlamile go ranolela Baebele mo dipuong tsa mo gae, maikaelelo e le go ipelela dingwao tse di farologanyeng tsa lefatshe leno le go fithelela batho ba bantsi.

O lebogetse lefatshe la Botswana go bo le tswelletse ka go tlotla diteme tse di farologanyeng jaaka e simolodisitse go kgaso ya dikgang. **BOPA**



Baebele ya puo ya Khwedam e e neng ya ribololwa bosheng kwa Tobera. Mogolwane kwa Bible Society of Botswana, Mme Tumelo Tlhong a re ba tswelletse ka maiteko a go ranolela Baebele mo dipuong tse di farologanyeng tsa mono gae. Dinepe: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

# Celebrating Nationhood

## O itse eng ka lefatshe la gago?



Sanah Coetzee

**B**otswana ke lefatshe la kagiso. Ke lefatshe le le itsegeng ka go ntsha diteamane tsa boeleng Jo bo kwa godimo tse itsholelo ya lefatshe e ikaegileng ka tsone. Ke lefatshe le le nang le bojanala bo tshwana le makgobokgobo a Okavango le diphologolo tse ditona jaaka Tlou, Tau, pitse e tilodi le tse dingwe le dinonyane tse dintle. Botswana o ipela ka ngwao ya Setswana, mmimo wa setswana le Diyo tsa setswana.  
**Naledi Radibeke**

Ek verstaan dat ons land is nie meer afhanklik van 'n ander land nie. daar is verskei kultuur en taal groepe onafhanklikheid het ons laat besef dat ons moet saam werk om ons land voorspoedig te maak, daarom bly ons in vrede saam. ek is bevoorreg om in 'n onafhanklike vrye land te bly waar ek my geloof in Jesus Christus kan uit leef. ek sal graag die feesvieringe by die hoof 'kgotla' wil vier.  
**Elizabeth Steenkamp**

Tae ta xan ti Botswana xa boipuso xa. xoresisa da ge ho khoine di gaosic khoineira. Ou tsi dara khei gaia gaoba uha kholsa te ||khab di unise (1966) neises gose ra gaia gao.  
**Sanah Coetzee**

Lefatshe la rona le ne le bidiwa Bechunaland dikgosi tse tharo di be di ya go kopa boipuso ka ngwaga wa 1966, lefatshe le bo le bitswa Botswana. Lefatshe la rona re buwa setswana le sekgowa re dirisa Omang, madi a rona ke pula le thebe.  
**Kedirelang Buka**

Lantlha re ne re busiwa ke Mmamosadinyana, mme ya re morago ka 1966 ra tsaya Buipuso. Lefatshe la rona le kgonne go tlabologa gore le nne fa le leng teng mo mererong ya ditlabologo.  
**Tiiso Mpedi**

Dilo tse ke tsone tse di thusitseng go nonotsha boleng jwa rona re le Batswana.  
**Tantane Toto**

Botswana is n land van vrede. Ke rata lefatshe lame ka gore go na le kagiso le thokgamo, ke motlotlo ka seo le fa go na le dikgwetho, batho betsho, mme re rata Botswana jwa rona jo re bo ikagetseng.  
**Elsie Stegling**

Botswana is well known for its peace and tranquility from its independence in 1966 to date, it has been welcoming to expatriates which was why many foreigners experiencing hardships would choose to come to Botswana.  
**Isaac Keemisitswe**

Botswana values it's people, culture, it's history. It has quality diamonds and prides itself with tourism.  
**Boitshemo Kgosiemang**

I love the fact that Botswana is the best in tourism and is the best producer of diamonds.  
**Kabelo Ramodikeng**

Ke itse gore Botswana ke lefatshe le le nang le kagiso, seriti le batho ba ba ikokobeditse. Mme gape ke itse gore re lebane le dikgwetho - go tlhoka ditiro, go ikaega thata ka diteamane, le mathata a loago. Tharabololo ke go aga ikonome e e akaretsang batho botlhe le go nonotsha setshaba ka tsotlhe tsotlhe.  
**Louis Sibanda**

I know Botswana is a semi desert country which produces the world's most diamonds by value and cattle rearing as well as subsistence farming form a major part of their aspect of the country's society.  
**Tiiso Mpedi**

Lefatshe lame ke itse e le lefatshe la kagiso, lorato, boutlwelobothoko mo bathong ba lone.  
**Lenah Tshupelo**

Botswana is a peaceful country, although something has to be done to educate Batswana about their country, as for some hardly travel and therefore rely on education and other medium of communication such as radio to know about their country.  
**Masire Baishinyi**

Botswana is a landlocked country and a home to the world's richest diamond mines where democracy is upheld and the spirit of Botho. Botswana is the best tourism destination in the world and a beacon of peace in the region and the world, as illustrated by the peaceful transition in the last general elections.  
**Polelo Ntwapelo**

Agriculture is part of Botswana's DNA., a true Motswana relies solely on agriculture.  
**Kopano Mogwera**

Mo lefatsheng lame ke itse gore bagolo ba a tlotlwa, go a dumediwa fa go tsogwa e bile o fa mongwe le mongwe monyenyo fa o bua le ene.  
**Pelonomi Philisani**

Ke rata lefatshe lame ka gore go na le kagiso le thokgamo. Ke motlotlo ka seo. Le fa go na le dikgwetho.  
**Thatayamodimo Setaela**

Botswana is known for its diamonds, tourism, and beef. Even though our meat industry, especially BMC, has been badly affected by Foot and Mouth Disease, beef remains part of who we are. These two things tell the story of our country to the world.  
**Susan Mohotshwa**



Lenah Tshupelo



Isaac Keemisitswe



Pelonomi Philisani



Kedirelang Buka



Elizabeth Steenkamp



Tantane Toto

**Ini tjauno yemula kuti tjisi tilashikile tili shango?**

#omang

**What do you wish we never lose about our country?**

#omang

**Ke shing she o eletsa gore she shegka sha he latheshela gka ga lehatshe lecho?**

#omang

# Arts & Culture

## Gen Z ready to make mark



Gen Z took to the Office of the President, demonstrating unity, grit and courage as they confronted President Advocate Duma Boko and his cabinet over the fare increase, as well as the long-promised increment to their student living allowance. Within hours, Minister of Higher Education Mr Prince Maele announced a P300 increase in the allowance, effective end of April 2026, while transport fares were revised downward to P9 for minibuses and P10 for taxis.

By Benita Magopane  
GABORONE

Stories abound from many adults who speak of a childhood defined by long barefoot walks to school, journeys across distant lands for firewood and water, and a resilience forged in hard times.

Days when, as they put it, eating rice was considered a luxury; those times when maize meal paper packages were used for covering schoolbooks.

Before things got easier, they would say and shake their heads as though in disbelief before adding, 'you kids have no idea what life used to be like in the old days.'

I have heard my father say, Go ne go aparwa makgabe le ditshoga, tse di neng di tlogela re sa ikatega kwa morago." Meaning, they use to wear traditional clothes that left posterior exposed.

Others would say, "Today you have all this public transport at the snap of your finger. You have TV, technology, cheese, cornflakes and mayonnaise. You children have it easy."

However, whether boomers and other older generations had it harder while Gen Z gets to have an easier life is entirely subjective.

While Gen Z benefits from advanced technology, social progress, general convenience and comfort that other generations lacked, a UNICEF study revealed that a worrying combination of geopolitical conflict, climate and ecological crisis, economic uncertainty and mental health challenges, that plague today's

modern world, is leaving young people feeling overwhelmed, disempowered and adrift without adequate mental health support or services.

While Gen Z has often been called too soft, too fragile, a generation born into ease and comfort, unlike boomers, who endured wars and colonial oppression; hardships Gen Z may never directly experience because they face a new kind of battle, one shaped by these evolving and often less visible pressures.

More often, social media parodies and comedy skits have mocked what a future led by Gen Z speaking their own slang-might look like, subtly calling into question whether this generation has the grit to lead as those before it did. Bringing into question, "Can they be really taken seriously?"

However, those doubts may have been put to rest recently. Amid rising living costs in Botswana, a transport fare hike - implemented two weeks back, increasing minibus fares from P7 to P13 and taxi fares from P8 to P14, sparked an unexpected response.

Gen Z took to the Office of the President, demonstrating unity, grit and courage as they confronted President Advocate Duma Boko and his cabinet over the fare increase, as well as the long-promised increment to their stipend.

Within hours, Minister of Higher Education Mr Prince Maele announced a P300 increase in the allowance, effective end of April 2026, while transport fares were revised downward to P9 for minibuses and P10 for taxis.

The feat earned Gen Z - commonly referred to as 'Ma 2000', a new level of recognition and admiration, not only for their

fashion-forward style, slang and cultural nonchalance, but for their audacity and resolve to demand accountability and advocate for their welfare.

Their bold stance drew widespread praise on social media, with comments such as, "This generation ya Ma 2000

is going to make a change in this country. The economy is in the hands of Ma 2000. They can liberate a country, these ones," and "Ma 2000 are brave."

Weeks before, ICT graduates had taken to parliament to voice their grievances over lack of jobs too.

These demonstrations show the power of the youth to fight for themselves if need arises.

Recent occurrences offer insight to the fact that there may be no better generation, but that there is only a better future with "Ma 2000" at the helm of leadership.

BOPA



The youth during a peaceful "Justice for Tshiphe" protest march in Gaborone recently. The protest follows the tragic death of 13-year-old Retshepile Setso Tshedu of Sehithwa, which had sparked national outrage and called for swift justice.

## Discoveries offer insights on early humans

ADDIS ABABA

The Ethiopia government on Tuesday announced the discovery of ancient Homosapiens fossils and stone tools dating back about 100 000 years, which it said provided 'important new insights' into human evolution and early human lifestyles.

The Ethiopian Heritage Authority (EHA) said the latest archaeological findings include fossils and stone tools of ancient Homo sapiens that lived around

100 000 years ago, uncovered at a site in the Awash Valley of Ethiopia's Afar Depression, about 300 km northeast of Addis Ababa, the country's capital.

Addressing a media briefing on Tuesday, EHA Director General Abebaw Ayalew said the latest archaeological discoveries were of great importance in improving understanding of early humans.

The research project also uncovered the remains of apes, monkeys, horned animals, rats and birds, indicating that the

area was once lush and forested rather than the desert landscape it is today, he said.

Ayalew said the discovery helps fill a long-standing gap in the evolutionary journey of humans and their early lifestyles, as well as in understanding the level of technological development achieved during that period.

The discovery was made through extensive archaeological research conducted over several years, bringing together scientists from 24 countries, according to the EHA. *Xinhua*

# DailySport




**Ticket Prices**

**PREMIUM STAND**  
(Southern Stand at the finishing line):

Day 1 – \$170  
(approximately BWP 2251)

Day 2 onwards – \$200  
(approximately BWP2468)



# Botswana to host Billie Jean King Cup

**Anastacia Sibanda**  
**GABORONE**

Different sporting codes in the country continues to grow and win the confidence of the world sport governing bodies by getting rights to host high-profile world-class tournaments.

The latest recipient of such an honour is the Botswana Tennis Association (BTA), who has been granted rights to host the Billie Jean King Cup Group III Africa for the first time.

As such 11 countries, including the host nation are expected to descend on Botswana for the July 13-17 showpiece to be held in Gaborone at the National Tennis Centre.

Botswana will host Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Namibia, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

BTA president, Oaitse Thipe said Billie Jean King Cup, which is also known as World Cup of Tennis, was the largest annual

international team competition in women's sport.

Therefore, he said he was excited for the country to host a tournament of such magnitude adding that such a honour would mean a lot to the local tennis players.

He expressed confidence in the team that the association would assemble to compete against Africa's best.

Thipe said the team was made of Ekua Youri, who is based in University of Santa Barbara California.

The team also has Chelsea Chakanyuka, who is at Hampton University in Virginia, Leungo Monnayo, Naledi Raguin who is based in France and Tshogofatso Tsiang, who is in the US.

"We also have young players like Malak Macheng and Angela Chakanyuka who are also looking forward to be playing in this tournament," he said.

Thipe said it was a tough competition, but looking at the girls' performance at their respective colleges, he was confident that they would bring positive results.

Before hosting the Billie Jean King Cup Africa Group III, he said, they would host Professional Women and Men's tennis.

Thipe said the professional tournament would be used by some of the players to gauge their readiness for the World Cup of Tennis. **BOPA**



Angela Chakanyuka

Ekua Youri

Naledi Raguin

Malak Macheng

Leungo Monnayo



Chelsea Chakanyuka

## Mascherano steps down as Inter Miami manager

**WASHINGTON DC**

Javier Mascherano has stepped aside as manager of Inter Miami for personal reasons, the MLS club said on Tuesday.

The announcement came less than five months after Mascherano led the Florida side to its first MLS Cup title with a 3-1 win over Vancouver Whitecaps in the final.

"First and foremost, I would like to thank the club for the

trust they placed in me, every employee who is part of the organisation for the collective effort, but especially the players, who made it possible for us to experience unforgettable moments," Mascherano said.

"I also want to thank the fans and La Familia, because none of this would have been possible without them. I will always carry with me the memory of our first star, and wherever I am, I will continue to wish the club all the

best moving forward."

Mascherano oversaw 38 wins, 15 draws and 14 losses after taking charge of Inter Miami in January 2025.

In addition to the MLS Cup triumph, the 41-year-old led the club to the knockout rounds of the FIFA Club World Cup last year.

Guillermo Hoyos will take over the role on an interim basis until a permanent replacement is named. **Xinhua**