

# BOTSWANA Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES

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# e-procurement system game changer

Gontle Merafhe  
**GABORONE**

The national e-procurement system will serve as a safeguard against waste, a generator of real-time intelligence and a strong defence against corruption, says Vice President Ndaba Gaolathe.

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Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe at the National Public Procurement Pitso in Gaborone on Tuesday. He said the national e-procurement system that government intended to develop by 2027, would serve as a safeguard against waste, a generator of real-time intelligence and a strong defence against corruption. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

# DailyNews

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# GCC intensifies crackdown on illegal outdoor advertising

Lesedi Thatayamodimo  
**GABORONE**

The Gaborone City Council (GCC) has identified 373 illegal advertisement cases that have been submitted for legal proceedings.

“Of these, 160 involve advertisement boards belonging to unidentified owners, while the remaining 213 belong to known entities whose lease agreements have expired,” said Gaborone City Mayor Oarabile Motlaleng during the council session on Monday.

He reiterated that the council held the exclusive mandate to approve the erection of advertisement structures within the city.

Even though the council had submitted illegal advertisements cases for legal action, Mr Motlaleng said they continued to face the challenge of new advertisement boards being erected without the involvement or approval of the authority.

Nonetheless, he said the council remained committed to eliminating illegal advertisements in the capital, despite continued challenges.

On the growing number of unauthorised billboards, Mr Motlaleng said the council had adopted a stricter enforcement

approach based on legal advice.

“The law permits the council to intervene and demolish any unlawful erection without the need for a court order if construction is ongoing,” he said.

Mr Motlaleng warned individuals and companies involved in erecting illegal advertising structures that the council would enforce provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act and the Gaborone City Council (General) Byelaws.

He said the rapid spread of illegal advertisement boards deprived the city of much-needed revenue required to fund social services.

“We want to warn all those involved in these illegal activities that we will not tire of doing what is right,” he said.

As part of the council’s long-term strategy, Mr Motlaleng said some advertisement spaces would be reclaimed and managed through the council’s investment company, wholly owned by GCC, to generate additional revenue while ensuring proper regulation of outdoor advertising.

Mr Motlaleng also announced stricter enforcement measures to address the growing problem of self-appointed parking assistants and abandoned roadside structures across the capital.



Gaborone Mayor, Mr Oarabile Motlaleng announced during a full council meeting on Monday that stricter measures would be enforced to address the growing problem of self-appointed parking assistants operating across the city. He said while some may have good intentions, many were forcefully demanding payment, littering, disturbing drivers and in some cases, even damaging vehicles. Photo: Felicity Male

He said the council had received numerous complaints from residents and motorists about individuals who had taken it upon themselves to act as informal parking assistants.

“Many of these individuals aggressively demand payment from motorists, litter in public spaces and disturb drivers,” he said, adding that some vehicles had allegedly been damaged when motorists refused to pay.

Mr Motlaleng said law enforcement officers had been instructed to take action against the illegal practice.

He also raised concerns about abandoned and illegal roadside structures, saying they negatively affected the city’s cleanliness and appearance.

While acknowledging the importance of the informal sector, Mr Motlaleng said traders must operate within regulations.

He added that hawkers were required to use portable structures that must be removed after business hours, failing which the council would remove them.

He urged residents and traders to cooperate with authorities as enforcement intensifies. **BOPA**

## Minister warns school bullies

Aobakwe Molefhi  
**GOODHOPE**

Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Ms Nono Kgafela-Mokoka has implored learners to stop misbehaving and bullying one another.

She made this call when on tour at GoodHope Senior Secondary School and Montshiwa Junior Secondary School on Monday.

Ms Kgafela-Mokoka said ever since the call for abolishment of corporal punishment was made, there were some learners who think that they could misbehave.

However, the minister warned that such individuals should self-introspect and ensure that they socialised with others well.

She revealed that failure to follow protocols put in place to make the school environment a safer and secure place to study, bullies would be expelled from school.

The minister went on to warn them against abusing and bullying of teachers and support staff.

She urged the staff to explore alternative disciplinary measures when dealing with unruly learners just like it was being done in private schools.

“We cannot socialise our learners with violent tactics such as corporal punishment because we are trying to mould responsible citizens, which are not violent toward one another,” she said.

Meanwhile, she told the staff at Montshiwa Junior School that the ministry was aware of their grievances and that they would be sorted once funds permitted.

She applauded them for working under conditions, which were stressful and were not conducive, noting that efforts to address shortages of classrooms, teacher accommodation, laboratory spaces and others was ongoing. **BOPA**

# Ministry reviews youth programmes

Marvin Motlhabane  
**KANYE**

The Ministry of Youth and Gender Affairs (MYGA) is accelerating comprehensive reviews of key youth empowerment programmes.

The exercise forms part of a wider push to enhance skills development, economic inclusion and gender mainstreaming amid persistent high youth unemployment.

The review, which would also cover the National Youth Policy, is extended to among other programmes, Youth Development Fund and the Botswana National Service Programme (Tirelo Setshaba).

Recent data from Statistics Botswana’s 2024/25 Multi-Topic Household Survey indicated that youth unemployment (ages 15–35) stands at 28.9 per cent, increasing from 25.1 percent in 2015/16.

Broader or narrower measures often cite figures approaching or exceeding 38–44 per cent, underscoring the urgency of the ongoing reforms as a core priority for the current administration in tackling job creation and sustainable livelihoods.

In an interview, Ms Thapelo Gasemotho, District Coordinator for Youth and Gender Affairs in Kanye, shared the YDF review emphasised government Return On Investment (ROI), focusing on local recovery, loss minimisation and programme sustainability in



Kanye District Coordinator for Youth and Gender Affairs  
Ms Thapelo Gasemotho

order to benefit more citizens.

She said the proposed innovation included structured mentorship through business matchmaking to provide ongoing handholding, sharpening skills, boosting productivity, generation of employment and support to national GDP growth.

Ms Gasemotho highlighted previous shortcomings such as a uniform approach that ignored constituency-specific opportunities and capital needs, adding that the review also prioritises stronger affirmative action for persons with disabilities to promote true inclusion.

Meanwhile, she said during the 2024/25 financial year, Kanye East approved and funded 15 businesses valued at P1,492,128.71, while Kanye West funded 28 businesses with a combined value of over P2,768,832.94.

“Each constituency was allocated P3 million,” she said.

She reiterated that monitoring remained constrained by government-wide financial limitations, including shortages of vehicles and travel budgets. However, she said the district had responded by prioritising accessible businesses and developing a targeted visit schedule.

Even though monitoring of projects was constrained by resource and financial limitations, Ms Gasemotho said through diagnostic assessments, they had identified enterprise challenges and proposed remedies.

“For complex issues, the ministry partnered with the Local Enterprise Authority and Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency for specialised interventions,” she added.

YDF currently funds youth businesses for P100 000, which is 50 per cent grant and 50 per cent loan.

As for Tirelo Sechaba, Ms Gasemotho said the review would evaluate relevance, particularly on whether the attachments delivered practical experience for improved temporary employment.

The programme served out-

of-school youth with form five qualification and below, the unemployed, and those under the age of 30 years.

She said Kanye District currently has 448 Tirelo Setshaba participants attached to government offices, schools, clinics, councils and similar entities.

Ministry of Youth and Gender Affairs senior gender officer, Ms Onneile Tauyatswala said reviewing the National Policy on Gender and Development was meant to strengthen gender mainstreaming nationwide.

Ms Tauyatswala said consultations with all relevant stakeholders including civil servants, Dikgosi, religious bodies, gender organisations and the public were ongoing.

Additionally, she said the department had received approval to draft a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Bill, to address prevention, protection and support GBV more comprehensively.

Ms Tauyatswala said the interconnected reforms demonstrated the ministry’s dedication to adaptive, inclusive policies that empowered youth and advanced gender equality in Botswana’s changing economic environment.

She said the ministry was seeking to equip young people and marginalised groups for resilient livelihoods while advancing national development objectives.

**BOPA**



Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele (centre), permanent secretary, Prof. Richard Tabulawa (left) and Business Botswana higher education sector chairperson, Mr Golekanye Setume at the Higher Education Sub-High Level Consultative meeting in Gaborone on Tuesday. Mr Maele called for urgent and coordinated action to transform higher education into a driver of economic growth. Photo: Tshoganetso Mokowe

# Education transformation requires collective efforts

Lorato Gaofise  
GABORONE

There is a need for an urgent and coordinated action to transform higher education sector into a key driver of economic growth.

This was said by Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele at the inaugural meeting of the Higher Education Sub-High Level Consultative (Sub-HLCC) in Gaborone on Tuesday.

Thus, Mr Maele said the transformation required collective leadership rather than fragmented efforts.

Placing human capital development at the centre of national transformation, Mr Maele said higher education must be repositioned from a social service to a strategic economic sector capable of driving innovation, productivity and diversification.

He further noted that Botswana's long-standing reliance on a consumption-driven economy must transition toward a production-oriented model, an evolution that depended heavily on a responsive and agile education system, particularly higher education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

He further commended participants from government, academia and the private sector for their presence at the Sub-HLCC, saying the ministry was the first to establish such a platform,

positioning it as a model for cross sector collaboration.

He said the Sub-HLCC would serve as a structured platform to strengthen collaboration between government and industry in shaping policies, programmes and investments aligned with Botswana's economic transformation agenda.

He emphasised the need to maintain momentum ahead of the main High-Level Consultative Council (HLCC) meetings scheduled for September, proposing July 7 as the next engagement to allow stakeholders to consolidate

positions and present a unified strategy.

He added that the forum should play a critical role in tracking reform progress and ensuring accountability among stakeholders.

Also, he said the Sub-HLCC must evolve beyond a discussion forum into a results-driven platform capable of translating policy into implementation and commitments into measurable outcomes.

The minister also highlighted systemic inefficiencies that continued to constrain the sector, including delays in programme

accreditation, misaligned student sponsorship frameworks, infrastructure limitations and regulatory bottlenecks.

Calling for a renewed culture of collaboration, the minister outlined complementary roles for key stakeholders.

Government, he said, must provide clear policy direction and enabling frameworks, adding that higher education institutions must deliver quality education and foster innovation while the private sector must take a more active role in shaping the skills ecosystem. **BOPA**

## e-procurement system game changer

from page 1

Addressing the inaugural two-day National Procurement Pitso in Gaborone on Tuesday, Mr Gaolathe, who is also, Minister of Finance therefore reiterated government's commitment to the development of the national e-procurement system by 2027.

He said centralising procurement information would strengthen oversight, improve decision-making and build a system that was efficient, transparent and sustainable.

"We must be honest about the hurdles. We know that our legacy systems and capacity constraints exist, but we are committed to overcoming them," he said.

He added that the world's most transparent procurement systems ran all tender stages on a single digital platform where bids, evaluations and contract awards were publicly visible in real time.

Citing international best practice, he said Georgia had implemented a fully electronic system administered by its State Procurement Agency, integrating digital bidding, open access to tender information and market analysis to promote transparency, competition and public confidence.

The Vice President further said linking procurement data to anti-money laundering frameworks would protect public funds and reinforce Botswana's commitment to international financial integrity standards.

He emphasised that the success of an e-procurement system depended not only on technology, but also on a clear and robust governance framework.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority, Ms Tumelo Motsumi, said procuring entities awarded 78,800 tenders valued at P33.5 billion during the 2024/2025 financial year,

reflected the dynamism of the procurement ecosystem and its significant share of the national budget.

"It vividly underscores procurement's vital role in driving infrastructure, services and ultimately economic growth," she said.

Ms Motsumi noted that the expenditure aligned with global trends, where public procurement accounted for an average of 12.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product across Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.

She said Botswana's procurement stood at 12.4 per cent of GDP, equivalent to P33.5 billion, adding that it remained a key tool for inclusive growth and citizen empowerment.

She highlighted that citizen-owned companies, including those ran by youth, women and persons with disabilities, were awarded contracts worth P8.7 billion, 36 per

cent of the total surpassing the 20 per cent target set under the local procurement scheme.

The CEO said the achievement aligned with the goals of National Development Plan 10 and the African Union's Agenda 2063, both of which emphasised inclusive growth, gender equality and youth empowerment.

However, she acknowledged ongoing challenges, including the lack of professionalisation within the procurement cadre and system.

Ms Motsumi said these gaps contributed to weak compliance monitoring, as the authority lacked real-time data on procurement transactions.

"Monitoring the progression of procurement from one stage to another is also a great challenge, as a transaction can remain at one stage without the authority noticing and intervening. Hence, we have delays in project execution," she said. **BOPA**

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## PARLIAMENT 2026



Assistant Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Motsamai Motsamai (left) and Assistant Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Baratiwa Mathoothe during Parliament session. Mr Motsamai said Water Utilities Corporation did not cover areas or settlements that were not gazetted. He however noted that communities could connect to nearby pipelines for potable water.

Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

# WUC services gazetted settlements - Motsamai

## GABORONE

Water Utilities Corporation (WUC), does not cover areas or settlements that are not gazetted.

Responding to a question in Parliament on Monday, Assistant Minister of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Motsamai Motsamai said although the ministry had a desire to provide clean drinking water for all Batswana, such provision should occur within the context of resource constraints and laws and policies in place.

"It is not prudent to initiate a programme which cannot be implemented because it is not lawful and not financially viable," he said.

However, the minister explained that WUC had taken steps to permit individuals in ungazetted settlements and farming communities to connect to nearby water pipelines for potable water, which were not pumping main lines.

"The full cost of connection is borne by the customers... communities in agricultural lands near such suitable pipelines can team up and contribute towards the cost of water connection," he added.

He, however, said that WUC already had a backlog of water infrastructure projects to supply and reticulate water to gazetted towns, villages, and settlements.

He explained that any increase in the scope of work would require additional financial resources, which were not available.

He further explained that gazettment and recognition of rural settlements was done by the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs in line with the National Settlement Policy.

Okavango West MP, Mr Kenny Kapinga, had sought whether or not the Ministry of Water and Human Settlement had any intentions of reviewing unrecognised settlements to access treated water, which passed through or near their settlements to recognised villages.

**BOPA**

## PARLIAMENT BRIEFS

### Ministry acquires fields for new plots

Ngwaketse Land Board has repossessed three ploughing fields at Sese, under Maokane Sub Land Board for village expansion. Answering a question in Parliament on Tuesday, acting Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti said the total area for the repossessed fields was approximately 280 hectares, which was estimated to yield 2 000 residential plots and few business plots within the same layout. Dr Dikoloti said there was one ploughing field which was still not yet repossessed due to incomplete process of compensation. "The process of repossession of this particular ploughing field was anticipated to commence as soon the grantees submits the name of person authorised for compensation. The base map is still under preparation, however the site reconnaissance has been completed and a detailed design is expected to be concluded by the end of September 2026, which will then be presented to various committees for consideration and approval," he said, adding that there had been no acquisition or repossession of plots under Mabutsane Sub Land Board and there were no plots available for advertisement. Jwaneng/Mabutsane MP, Mr Omphemetse Kwapa, had asked the minister to indicate categorically the number of plots which had been repossessed by Ngwaketse land Board, Maokane Sub Land Board and Mabutsane Sub Land Board and whether there had been advertisements for such plots to be allocated to applicants.

### Govt considers revision of retirement age

Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa, has told Parliament that government may consider revising the official retirement age for public employees, currently set at 60 years, depending on existing employment conditions. Responding to a question in Parliament on Monday, Minister Mohwasa emphasised that any proposal to raise the retirement age beyond 60 would require a comprehensive examination of the current job market and public service delivery needs. The minister stressed the need for a balanced approach, saying while government aimed to effectively leverage the skills of seasoned human resources, it must also remain sensitive to graduate unemployment. "Any policy change would need to ensure that extending the careers of older employees does not inadvertently limit opportunities for the younger workforce entering the public service," he added. Kgatleng East MP, Mr Mabuse Pule had asked the minister to state the possibility of aligning the general public service retirement age with that of judges and other specialised professions, set at 65 years, with a view to enhance economic participation among experienced professionals.

### No tertiary institutions for Letlhakeng

The Ministry of High Education does not have any tertiary education institution in Letlhakeng constituency and does not have any plans to establish any such institutions or higher education services in the constituency in the next five years. This was said by Minister of High Education, Mr Prince Maele in response to a parliamentary question on Monday. However, Minister Maele said that there were plans through the National Development Plan 12 (NDP 12) and Botswana Economic Transformation Plan (BTEP) to refurbish and equip facilities of institutions of higher learning in the ministry to increase access to education and training. He indicated that some of the institutions adjacent to Letlhakeng constituency were Molepolole Institute of Health Sciences, Molepolole College of Education, Kweneng Rural Development Association Brigade in Molepolole and Kweneng Bophirima Brigade in Takatokwane. Minister Maele was responding to questions by Member of Parliament for Letlhakeng constituency, Brigadier Domcaza Mokgwathi who sought the minister to apprise Parliament on the strategic and state of higher education in his constituency in the coming five years, considering human resource placement and envisaged structure development for both lecture rooms and staff accommodation, amongst other things.

# Ministry champions e-voucher system for farmers

## GABORONE

Acting Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti says through the Lemang Dijo programme e-voucher system, farmers procure seeds including the open pollinated varieties from private suppliers.

Answering a question in Parliament on Monday, Dr Dikoloti indicated that during the current ploughing season, the ministry had issued 526.8 tonnes of seed to micro-scale farmers, 63 per cent (33.3 tonnes) of which were open-pollinated (OPV) varieties while 37 per cent were hybrid seeds.

He said the OPV seed distributed, 5.6 per cent was Segaolane, while Kalahari Early Pearl Maize was not available on the market.

He added that farmers in Kanye did not procure Segaolane.

He said a total of 41.4 tonnes of seed was procured, 9.14 tonnes of which were OPVs and 32.4 tonnes

were hybrids.

Also, he said a higher uptake of hybrid seeds was observed in Kanye, which differed from national uptake pattern.

He further indicated that under the Lemang Dijo programme, farmers received e-voucher that they used to procure seed from private suppliers.

"The uptake of OPVs is a positive development because farmers can save seed from the harvested crop for planting in subsequent seasons, thereby reducing dependence on purchasing new seed each year. In addition, OPVs are well adapted to local soil, climates conditions and farming systems," he said.

Parliament also heard that government, in partnership with International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), was coming up with a new initiative called Botswana Livestock Commercialisation Livestock Project (BoLCoP) that was focused of commercialising

livestock production, particularly targeting poultry and small stock enterprises by improving access to capital, breeding stock and technical support to enhance productivity.

He said the Lobatse, Kanye Jwaneng poultry cooperative (LOKAJWA) cluster was approved in 2009 to construct poultry abattoir.

However, he said connection of electricity and water was done before the project was interrupted due to financial constraints.

He added that the project would be completed through the BoLCop).

In terms of horticultural production, Dr Dikoloti said the Impact Accelerator Subsidy (IAS) was being reviewed to improve its implementation to attain the intended objectives.

The programme, he said, targeted all eligible farmers irrespective of gender, age and socio-economic status.

He said the imposition of quantitative import restrictions

had encouraged farmers to venture into commercial horticultural production.

In Kanye, he said, a total of 41 beneficiaries, 14 females and 27 males, had benefited from IAS.

He further said the Food and Agriculture Organisation one country priority, aimed to enhance the horticulture subsector.

"Under this initiative, potato production demonstrations will be conducted at four strategic sites which were Kweneng, Good Hope, Palapye and Ngamiland districts with one demonstration at each site," he explained.

He said targeted farmers within each catchment area would receive practical training on key production processes, followed by continuous support to ensure that the necessary skills were acquired.

Dr Dikoloti indicated that the performance of the horticultural sector in Kanye district indicated steady growth in participation.

Currently, he said a total of 86 farmers were enrolled in horticultural production, comprising 48 males and 38 females, 13 of which were youth farmers, including nine males and four females, reflecting growing youth involvement in the sector.

Furthermore, he said as January this year, the district youth recorded a total horticultural production of 1 604.97 tonnes, 927.17 tonnes of which were produced by male farmers while 680.80 tonnes were produced by female farmers.

Kanye East MP, Mr Prince Mosanana had asked the minister whether the ministry was able to supply indigenous seeds of Kalahari Early Pearl Maize and Segaolane that used to be main seeds for local farmers and what programmes were in place to assist the youth and women in Kanye to enter commercial farming, especially horticulture, poultry and small stock production. **BOPA**



Minister of Communications and Innovation Mr David Tshere has requested P1.42 billion from Parliament to spearhead Botswana's digital transformation and infrastructure development for the 2026/27 financial year. He said funds would be used for implementation of several projects, including Information and Communication Technology, research and development, as well as detection and disposal of radioactive materials.

## Tshere requests P1.42 billion to power digital leap

Tebagano Ntshole

### PARLIAMENT

Minister of Communications and Innovation has requested a total of P1.42 billion from Parliament to spearhead Botswana's digital transformation and infrastructure development for the 2026/27 financial year.

Presenting the budget request on Tuesday, Minister David Tshere, said funds would be used for implementation of several projects, including Information and Communication Technology, research and development as well as detection and disposal of radioactive materials.

Minister Tshere said 53 per cent or P251 million would fund ICT programmes and the second largest budget of P213.7 million would fund research and development programme.

The minister proposed P8.5 million for detection and disposal of radioactive materials programme, saying funds would be used for the construction of the orphan radioactive storage facility in Palapye and the installation of a border detection systems at Pioneer Border gate at P8 million and P500 000 respectively.

Minister Tshere also proposed P949,920,900 for recurrent budget for the next financial year.

Meanwhile, the minister called upon Parliament to support government's endeavour of accelerating its digitalisation agenda, particularly the scaling up of digital public services to improve efficiency, curb corruption, reduce bureaucracy and enhance service delivery across government.

"These efforts are complemented by targeted investments in research, development, and innovation, pursued through strategic partnerships with academic and research institutions, the private sector, and development partners," he said.

He said the proposed estimates supported key flagship initiatives across government, including the continued rollout of the village connectivity programme, connecting government offices, the Digital ID as well as the National

Retail Payment Switch system.

"These interventions are critical to enabling inclusive access to Government services, strengthening secure digital transactions, and laying the foundation for a resilient and competitive digital economy," he said.

He added that the implementation of the Digital Services Act provided a legal and policy framework for a digital-by-default government, setting standards for digital services, system interoperability, secure services and governance across all Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

He said the Digital Services Authority would serve as the central body to coordinate ICT investments and accelerate the rollout of priority e-Services and shared national digital platforms, including secure information exchange and payment systems.

"This will support the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme by leveraging digital infrastructure to drive economic diversification, productivity and private sector growth. The process of establishing the DSA is ongoing and is expected to complete in the financial year 2026/2027," he said.

He further said the ministry was also moving towards the nationwide deployment of a secure and resilient Software Defined-Wide Area Network (SD-WAN), a modern software-managed approach that intelligently connected sites using the best available connections for faster, more reliable and cost-effective networking infrastructure.

Again, he said the ministry continued to expand and strengthen the Government Data Network to ensure reliable connectivity to all government institutions across the country.

He said following the successful launch of BOTSAT-1, government was now focused on the commercialisation of satellite data.

"The objective is to unlock economic value from earth observation data in sectors such as precision agriculture, urban planning, climate monitoring, and mineral exploration," he said.

He also said the drone programme was being implemented to strengthen capacity in unmanned

aerial systems for applications in agriculture, mining, environmental monitoring, disaster management and border surveillance.

"This initiative is not only building local technical skills among the youth but is also positioning Botswana as a regional hub for drone services and regulatory excellence," he said.

Regarding the Botswana Innovation Fund, the minister said it supported 33 innovation projects, with a total approved value of P37.3 million, P20.4 million of which had been disbursed across sectors including ICT, agritech, cleantech and mining technologies.

"Botswana's participation in the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project presents immense scientific and economic opportunities. Through collaboration in radio astronomy and big data science, we are developing high-level research capabilities while enabling technology transfer, advanced computing infrastructure, and international partnerships," he said.

Debating the budget, Members of Parliament called for an improvement in network coverage, with Charleshill MP, Mr Motsamai and Jwaneng/Mabutsane MP, Mr Omphemetse Kwapa decriing poor network coverage along the Trans Kalahari Highway, saying even the radio reception was poor.

Nkange MP, Mr Motlhaleemang Moalosi said government should come up with ways to employ the ICT graduates who were roaming the streets, adding it should refrain from awarding foreign companies tenders whilst Botswana had the capacity and knowledge to undertake the project.

MP for Kanye East, Mr Victor Phologolo called for the delinking of Btv from DSTv to enable Botswana to watch the channel without having to subscribe.

He further said Botswana were against the expiry of data and also wanted community radio stations.

Leader of the Opposition, Mr Dumelang Saleshando said youth engaged as interns should be employed on a permanent basis.

He further decried the frequent network problems, saying it made it difficult for citizens to access services leading. **BOPA**

## Robust asset declaration system underway

Mmoniemang Motsamai  
GABORONE

Initiatives are underway to establish a robust asset declaration system aimed at systematically monitoring the interests, income, assets and liabilities of public officials, Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa has told Parliament.

Presenting the budget proposals for the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity (DEI) in Parliament on Tuesday, Minister Mohwasa said the initiatives underscored the directorate's unwavering commitment to promoting accountability and ethical governance in public office.

"This is in line with the Ethics and Integrity Directorate's commitment to fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within public office," the minister said.

In that regard, he said the DEI was currently digitising its asset declaration system and the initial phase, aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, involved automation of the asset declaration form.

"This phase has been successfully completed and is ready for pilot implementation.

The digitised form is expected to streamline the declaration process by providing declarants with improved accessibility and greater ease in submitting their declarations electronically," he stated.

He added that the second phase, entailing development of the back-end system, was slated to commence in the 2026/2027 financial year and would facilitate the processing of declarations, encompassing receipt and verification of submitted information to detect potential corruption, money laundering or acquisition of assets derived from

criminal proceeds.

Additionally, he said, it would establish a digital register accessible to the public upon payment of a prescribed fee.

"The system will be designed to interface with external systems to enable verification of submitted data.

The register will include a list of individuals who have submitted their declarations, as well as those who have not complied after being served with a notice and it will also contain a list of those who have been subjected to penalties for failure to declare," he added.

Meanwhile, Minister Mohwasa requested Parliament to approve over P29.1 million for use by the Directorate in the 2026/27 financial year, over P25.6 million of which would cover the recurrent budget and P3.5 million for the development budget.

Under the recurrent budget, P13.2 million was requested for salaries and staff allowances and P920,000 would cater for transport and per diem for external travel by staff.

About P3.4 million would be used for advertising and publicity, service charges, postal charges and office supplies while departmental services had been budgeted P2.6 million to be used for consultancies and office rentals.

The rest of the recurrent budget would cater for maintenance and running equipment, training, exhibitions, government hospitality and other expenses.

Under the development budget, P3.5 million would be used for the procurement of ICT infrastructure upgrade and digitalisation project, digitalisation of the asset declaration system and development of national code of ethics and guidelines to conflict of interest. **BOPA**

## Social workers to benefit from support programmes structures

GABORONE

The Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, in 2023, agreed to start structured retreats and professional reflection sessions within the Department of Social Development and Department of Social and Community Development (S&CD) through a programme called Helping the Helpers.

This was said by Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Kethalefile Motshegwa, responding to a parliamentary question on Tuesday.

Minister Motshegwa said the aim was to provide an opportunity for social workers and case managers through retreats to discuss operational challenges, develop coping mechanisms and reinforce professional support networks.

"Due to constraints, this initiative

has not been fully implemented. The ministry will continue to assess the needs of social workers and strengthen institutional support systems, including resuscitating structured retreats, wellness programmes and professional support mechanisms," he said.

He added that the initiatives would ensure that social workers remained psychologically supported, professionally motivated and able to provide effective services to the people of Botswana.

Kgatleng Central MP, Mr Mpho Morolong had asked the minister to state government's plans to introduce structured retreats and psychological support programmes, including emotional therapies or mindfulness-based stress reduction, for social workers to address occupational stress and trauma. **BOPA**



# DailyBusiness

## Rare minerals to lead mining diversification

Thato Mosinyi  
GABORONE

Amid challenges in the natural diamond sector, significant opportunities remain within Botswana's mining industry, particularly in rare earth minerals, which are key to repositioning the country in line with the global shift toward alternative resources.

Speaking at the Botswana Mining and Energy Conference on Monday, Presidential Envoy on International Relations and Economic Development, Dr Farzam Kamalabadi, said the recent discovery of substantial rare earth mineral deposits in north west part of Botswana could play a pivotal role in diversifying the country's mineral base away from diamonds.

Rare earth elements are critical in the production of electric vehicles, wind turbines, battery storage systems, defence electronics and advanced telecommunications infrastructure.

Demand for these resources

## Nvidia unveils new AI technologies

SAN FRANCISCO

US chipmaker Nvidia unveiled a series of artificial intelligence (AI) innovations spanning graphics, computing infrastructure and software at its four-day annual GTC developer conference, which opened Monday in San Jose, California.

Among them was a new AI graphics rendering technology called DLSS 5, which Nvidia founder and CEO Jensen Huang said could significantly enhance image realism while reducing computational workload.

According to Nvidia, DLSS 5 delivered an AI-powered breakthrough in visual fidelity for games. The system combines traditional 3D graphics data with generative AI models that can predict and automatically fill in missing visual details, enabling GPUs to render richer and more lifelike images.

"Twenty-five years after NVIDIA invented the programmable shader, we are reinventing computer graphics once again," said Huang.

"DLSS 5 is the GPT moment for graphics, blending handcrafted rendering with generative AI to deliver a dramatic leap in visual realism while preserving the control artists need for creative expression." *Xinhua*

"The recent discovery of substantial rare earth mineral deposits in north west part of Botswana could play a pivotal role in diversifying the country's mineral base away from diamonds."

continues to surge alongside the global transition to renewable energy.

"As much as the diamond sector is facing global challenges, the mining industry still provides a lot of opportunities not only in diamonds, but also in base metals and rare earth minerals," he said.

Dr Kamalabadi noted that the downturn in the diamond market had created the impression that the entire mining sector was in decline.

However, he emphasised that there were emerging growth areas beyond diamonds.

He said government was prioritising copper and rare earth minerals as key drivers of economic transformation, supported by increased exploration in the Kalahari Copper Belt and improved digital access to geological data.

To maximise national returns from its mineral endowment, Botswana is advancing a new strategy focused on value chain development in non-diamond minerals.

According to Dr Kamalabadi, the country's mineral policy will promote copper- and rare earth-led diversification, aimed at enhancing local empowerment, increasing citizen participation, and attracting sustainable investment.

"Buy all accounts Botswana is a mining economy and the mining sector remains the backbone of the country's economic structure and even in the face of adversity there are abandoned opportunities in other mineral mining that waits to be unlocked," he said.

He added that plans were underway to implement a mineral resource development, exploitation and value chain beneficiation strategy.

The initiative aims to accelerate development of diversified mineral value chains, drive investment into sustainable projects, and ensure meaningful citizen participation.

"We need to promote exploration in the Kalahari Copper Belt to discover new deposits. This should be achievable, as the necessary geological information is already available," he said.

While acknowledging that diamonds have long been Botswana's economic mainstay, Dr Kamalabadi stressed the importance of leveraging this legacy to position the country as a leader in the next phase of global mining.



Presidential Envoy on International Relations and Economic Development, Dr Farzam Kamalabadi at the Botswana Mining and Energy Conference in Gaborone on Monday. He noted that the recent discovery of huge deposit of rare earth minerals in the north west part of Botswana was key to the country's mineral diversification away from diamonds. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

He said this transformation would require collaboration between government, the private sector, business associations and other stakeholders.

Dr Kamalabadi also called for

the reduction of bureaucratic barriers in governance and urged the private sector to play a stronger stewardship role in accelerating implementation of mining initiatives. *BOPA*

## Expert urges SADC to accelerate oil and gas exploration

CAPE TOWN

Countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) hold significant untapped oil and gas resources but must accelerate exploration to reduce reliance on imports, an industry leader said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the Southern African Oil and Gas Conference 2026, Satish Roopa, board chairman of Petroleum Agency South Africa, said the region had "world-class" gas resources yet remained dependent on imported energy.

Roopa made the remarks on the final day of the two-day conference, held in Cape Town and hosted by the South African Oil and Gas Alliance, Petroleum Agency South Africa and the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources.

The conference, themed: Oil and Gas without Borders: Unlocking Southern Africa's Shared Future, examined developments in the region's upstream petroleum sector and broader energy landscape.

Roopa outlined the scale of resources across the region, saying that Mozambique alone could supply energy to at least 11 African

countries.

According to him, Angola had 8 to 9 billion barrels of proven oil reserves as Africa's second-largest producer, while Tanzania holds about 57 trillion cubic feet of offshore gas and significant liquefied natural gas potential.

Mozambique, he added, had more than 100 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, with development of the Rovuma Basin offshore project already underway.

Meanwhile, Namibia's Orange Basin could contain billions of barrels of oil and is considered one of the most significant recent discoveries.

"So the resources are here, the window is for us to act now," Roopa said. South Africa's deputy minister of mineral and petroleum resources Phumzile Mgcina, reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting the sector's growth.

"We are committed to helping accelerate the sector's growth by advancing policy, finance, strengthening capabilities and fostering strategic partnerships that will enable South Africans to fully recognise its oil and gas potential," she added. *Xinhua*

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### Ghana records six per cent economic growth in 2025

ACCRA

Ghana's economy recorded a six per cent growth rate in 2025, up from 5.8 per cent in 2024, according to data released by the Ghana Statistical Service on Tuesday. Excluding petroleum production, gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 7.6 per cent in 2025, up from 6.1 per cent the previous year. Addressing a press briefing in Accra, the capital, Government Statistician Alhassan Iddrisu said the growth rate was 0.2 per centage points higher than in 2024. "The services sector, with a share of 45.9 per cent in the economy, remained the largest contributor to economic activity, growing by 8.1 per cent," Iddrisu said. Compared with 2024, the agriculture sector, with a 22.8 per cent share of total GDP, expanded by 6.8 per cent in 2025, up from 2.7 per cent the previous year. *Xinhua*

#### South Africa backs small businesses with new reforms

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa is committed to creating a conducive environment for small businesses to thrive through regulatory reform and expanded financial support, an official has said. Speaking at the 14th annual Proudly South African Buy Local Summit and Expo in Johannesburg on Tuesday, Minister of Small Business Development Stella Ndabeni said the government aims to support 1 million micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) during its current term through both financial and non-financial assistance. "MSMEs play a crucial role in addressing unemployment and inequality in our country," Ndabeni said, adding that the sector employed millions of people and was a major driver of job creation and inclusive growth. *Xinhua*

#### China zero-tariff treatment to boost ties with Africa

BISSAU

China's decision to eliminate tariffs on products from 53 African countries marks a structural shift in bilateral relations and will further strengthen South-South cooperation, Afonso Gomes, a Guinea-Bissau economic analyst, has said. In a recent interview with Xinhua, Gomes said China's policy reflected its commitment to multilateralism and deeper cooperation with Africa. "China realised very early that the future of the world economy requires multilateralism. The decision now taken confirms its strong medium- and long-term strategic vision," he said. Noting that it could open new opportunities for African countries to export more value-added products, create local jobs and increase tax revenues, the analyst said the initiative would help African countries reduce poverty and strengthen the continent's economic independence. *Xinhua*

# Dikgang

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## Bodiredi bo rotloetsa bojanala

Esther Mmolai

**NXAI PAN**

Badirelapuso ba makalana a a ka fa tlase ga lephata la Ofisi ya ga Tautona le Itshireletso ba ne ba boloditse letsholo la go katolola le go phepafatsa matangwana a a nosang diphologolo kwa lefelong la Nxai Pan National Park.

Ka fa tlase ga boeteledipele jwa ofisi ya ga molaodi, bodiredi bo ne jwa bona go le molemo go phepafatsa le go katolola matangwana ao ka jaana e le one a okang diphologolo go akolwa ke bajanala. Ba dirile jalo morago ga go wetsa bokopano jwa go nonotsha tirisanyo mmogo mo tirong, ka jalo ba lemoga botlhokwa jwa go dira tiro ya boithaopo.

Nxai Pan National Park e humile dimela tsa tlhologo, diphologolo tsa naga ka mefuta ga mmogo le dinonyane tse di ngokang bajanala. Lefelo le, le fitlhela mo tseleng ya Maun-Francistown, dikhilomithara di ka tshwara lesome le botlhano go tswa mo motseng wa Phuduhudu. Mogokaganyi wa lephata la diphologolo mo kgaolong ya bokone bophirima, Rre Thebe Horatius o lebogetse tiro eo ya boithaopo a supa fa matangwana ao a le botlhokwa thata mo kgolong ya bojanala.

A re gantsi ba pompela metsi mo matangwaneng ao, bogolo jang ka nako ya lenyora mme

a supa fa tlhokomelo ya one e le botlhokwa ka jaana a ngoka diphologolo ka go farologanya go tla go nwa metsi a a phepa. O supile fa matangwana ao, a katelwa ke boloko jwa diphologolo bogola jang ditlou ka di tsema mo teng ga metsi.

Rre Horatius a re gantsi ba thusiwa ke mekgatlho e e ikemetseng ya baithuti ga mmogo le bao ba ba etelang lefelo leo go tla go akola bontle jwa lone le gone go bona diphologolo.

Molaodi wa kgaolo ya bokone bophirima, Rre Thabang Waloka o lebogetse bopelontle jo bo supilweng ke bodiredi, a tlatsa ka gore mo nakong tse di thata jaaka seemo sa gompiano se lefatshe le wetsweng ke seru sa letlhoko la madi, go tlhoka mowa wa boipelego o o agaileng lefatshe leno.

Molaodi o supile fa seemo sa gompiano se batla tshwaragano ya popota mo maphateng ka go farologana gore ba kgone go isa ditlamelo kwa Batswaneng.

“Seemo sa gompiano ga se a iketla, se batla re eme ka dinao re ipelega. Ke lo akgolela tiro e lo e dirileng bogolo jang ka kgaolo ya rona e le yone boremelelo ja bojanala,” a tlatsa jalo.

Rre Waloka o ne a rotloetsa bodiredi go tswaledisa mowa wa neelano le tshwaragano le kwa ba berekelang teng, a ba kgothatsa go thusa setshaba ka lorato le tlotlo. **BOPA**



Badirelapuso ba makalana a a ka fa tlase ga lephata la Ofisi ya ga Tautona le Itshireletso jaaka ba ne ba boloditse letsholo la go katolola le go phepafatsa matangwana a diphologolo kwa Nxai Pan National Park bosheng. Mogokaganyi wa lephata la diphologolo mo kgaolong ya bokone bophirima, Rre Thebe Horatius o lebogetse tiro eo ya boithaopo a supa fa matangwana ao a le botlhokwa mo kgolong ya bojanala. Senepe: Esther Mmolai

## Mapodisi a tlhotlhomisa polao kwa Tsabong

Cathrine Simane

**TSABONG**

Mapodisi kwa Tsabong a tshageditse rre wa dingwaga tse di masome a mararo go ya kwa go tse di masome a mararo le botlhano go ba thusa mo ditlhotlhomisong mabapi le loso la mme mongwe.

Mookamela mapodisi kwa Tsabong, Superintendent Monnathebe Mphela, o tlhaloseditse BOPA ka Mosupologo gore mapodisi a ne ba begelwa tiragalo ke mongwe moagisanyi morago ga go utlwa mme mongwe a kua a kopa thuso, kgwedi eno e le lesome le boraro makuku.

Supt Mphela a re mapodisi a ne a ragogela teng mme ba fitlhela mme wa dingwaga tse di fa gare ga masome a mararo go ya kwa go tse

di masome a mararo le botlhano a rapaletse fa gare ga bobidibidi jwa madi, go lebege a tlhabilwe ka sengwe se se bogale.

A re mapodisi a ne a mo ragosetsa kwa kokelong ya Tsabong, kwa ba bongaka ba fetileng ba kaya fa a setse a tlhokafetse.

E ne yare morago ga tiragalo, mmelaelwa a inaya naga mme mapodisi a mo tsaya ka motlhala go fitlhela ba mo tshwara maitseboa a lone letsatsi leo,

Supt Mphela o supa, a bo a tlholosa fa mmelaelwa a ne a ile go itshupa fa pele ga leggotla la ga mmakaseterata kwa Tsabong ka Mosupologo.

O tlaa ya go itshupa gape kgwedi eno e le masome a mararo le bongwe.

Supt Mphela a re tiragalo e, ke ya ntlha mo kgaolong fa e sale ngwaga o no o simologa. **BOPA**

## DailyNews

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# Plan to split Mogoditshane/Thamaga District gains support

Lindi Morwaeng  
**MOGODITSHANE**

Government plan to restructure the Mogoditshane/Thamaga District into two new administrative districts has received support from community, the District Council Chairperson, Mr Molatedi Selala has revealed.

Addressing a full council session in Mogoditshane on Monday, Mr Selala said extensive consultations conducted under phase II of the Local Government restructuring reform indicated that residents of the affected villages largely supported the proposed division.

He said the aim was to improve access to government services.

"The proposal seeks to divide the district into Kweneng South and Kweneng East to enhance administrative efficiency and bring services closer to the people," he said.

Under the proposal, Kweneng South will include Thamaga,

Gakgatla, Kubung, Ramaphatle, Kumakwane and Mmankgodi, while Kweneng East will cover Mogoditshane, Mmopane, Gabane, Metsimotlhabe, Mmokolodi and Tloaneng.

Mr Selala said the restructuring followed concerns raised during earlier consultations about the district's vastness, rapid population growth and difficulties faced by residents in accessing services.

While support for the split was widespread, Mr Selala noted that communities raised some key concerns that required further consultations and consideration.

"These include proposed district names, possible realignment of some villages and fears that the new districts may face staffing and budget constraints if not adequately resourced," he said.

Mr Selala also revealed mixed reactions regarding the proposal to upgrade Mogoditshane to assume Township status.

"Residents of Mogoditshane expressed reservations, particularly around the potential impact on traditional leadership structures and land tenure systems," he said.

He said other concerns included fear of increased cost of living and perceptions that consultations were not sufficiently comprehensive.

Mr Selala said all views gathered during the consultations would inform government's next steps in the proposed reform process. **BOPA**



Botswana Ash in Sowa Town has donated two multipurpose photocopying and printing machines, along with notebooks to schools in the Tutume Sub-Region, valued at P760 000. Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Mr Justin Hunyepa expressed appreciation for the donations.

## Botswana Ash donates to schools

Goitsemodimo Williams-Madzonga  
**SOWA TOWN**

Botswana Ash (BotAsh) Mine has donated two heavy duty photocopying machines to Nxakatsoe and Madau Junior Secondary Schools as well as notebooks to Dukwi Junior

Secondary School worth P760 000.

Officiating at the donation handing over in Sowa Town on Tuesday Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Mr Justin Hunyepa said government resources were under increasing strain, therefore not enough to address the challenging environment in schools.

Mr Hunyepa said the schools were the most affected by shortage of resources coupled with dilapidated infrastructure, therefore impacting negatively on teaching and learning.

He said the situation would be managed through the support partners, hence commending companies such as BotAsh for coming forward through their Community Social Initiatives and contributing in resuscitation of education in schools.

Mr Hunyepa noted that teaching and learning were enhanced by availability of equipment such as photocopying machines.

He said the contribution was an investment to the future of the children and development of the nation.

"This demonstrates sustainable partnership with the education sector," he said.

Acting Managing Director of BotAsh, Mr Othusitse Seokamo said the company was dedicated to fostering self-sustainable community initiatives and engaging in collaborative efforts with the local communities to enhance sustainable and long term impact projects.

Mr Seokamo said in 2025 alone, BotAsh dedicated P14 million to community programmes focusing on sports, education, industry and environment.

He said the photocopying machine would bring positive change to Nxakatsoe JSS in Sowa Town.

As for Madau JSS in Nswazwi village, Mr Seokamo said the school had over the past years exhibited academic excellence maintaining its position among the top 10 best performing junior secondary schools nationally and being exemplary that geographical location did not matter in education as long as teaching and learning took place. **BOPA**

## Court grants Sethibe bail



Tshepo Sethibe of Moeladilothoko News Boiler was on Tuesday granted bail by Judge Bafi Nlanda of the Gaborone High Court. Sethibe, who faces a charge of offensive electronic communication, was released on condition that he would bind himself with P500 and provide two Batswana sureties each binding themselves with the same amount.

Ndingililo Gaoswediwe  
**GABORONE**

Judge Bafi Nlanda of Gaborone High Court has on Wednesday granted conditional bail to Tshepo Sethibe.

Sethibe, commonly known as Moeladilothoko, the founder of the Moeladilothoko News Boiler Facebook page was previously denied bail by Molepolole Magistrate Court, and appealed the decision to the High Court.

He is facing a single count of offensive electronic communication.

Justice Nlanda ordered that Sethibe be admitted to bail on condition that he would bind himself with P500 and provide two Batswana sureties each binding themselves with the same amount.

He further ordered him to refrain from interfering with witnesses, must not commit any related offence and must present himself before the court as and when required to do so.

The particulars of the offence allege that on February 17, 2026 the accused person posted on his Facebook page: "Ba jele mosimane yo mongwe jaana malome... batho ba

utlwa go nkg a sebedu... Kgosi wa ko Medie o ja batho."

The judge said that the post attracted negative comments, including suggestions to burn the chief's house.

Investigations were initiated following reports by Mr Moathodi Kgabo, a headman at Medie, who claimed that the comments from the post incited fear and suggested violence within his family.

Although the investigating officer has previously argued that Sethibe should be denied bail on the grounds that his post disturbed peace and incited violence, and that there was no evidence of ritual killings in the area, the court found that the accused person was not a flight risk, more so that following the report, he voluntarily surrendered himself to the police.

Judge Nlanda acknowledged that, although the complainant stated that he had moved to Gaborone with his family, he continue to report for duty in Medie without any security arrangements in place.

The offence that Sethibe is charged with, carries a potential prison sentence of between ten and twelve months. **BOPA**

# Arts & Culture

## Lucara boosts Miss Botswana pageant



**Benita Magopane**  
**GABORONE**

With only 12 contestants remaining in the Miss Botswana 2026 competition, the road to the coveted crown has entered its final stretch, buoyed by corporate support after Lucara Botswana pledged P500 000 to the pageant and an additional P600 000 to Change Africa to support initiatives aimed at empowering women ahead of the grand finale on Saturday.

Speaking at the handover ceremony in Gaborone Monday, Lucara Botswana managing director, Naseem Lahri said the sponsorships marked the continuation of their strategic partnership with the Miss Botswana organisation as well as continued commitment to supporting initiatives that promoted women's empowerment, leadership development and social impact.

She highlighted that the renewal of their partnership with Miss World Botswana aimed to empower and uplift young Botswana women who were poised as the best exporters of Botswana's beauty and culture on the international platform while the funding allocated to Change Africa, a social enterprise that supported innovative entrepreneurship and thought leadership development, would help advance a pilot programme in Maun aimed at uplifting and teaching women how to grow crops, rear animals, and to sustain themselves and the community, while building entrepreneurial skills.

The programme



Lucara Botswana managing director, Naseem Lahri (right) and Miss Botswana organisation director, Benjamin Raletsatsi during a sponsorship ceremony in Gaborone on Monday. Lucara Botswana has sponsored Miss Botswana grand finale to the tune of P500 000. Photo: Pheny Moalosi

titled, Tshwaragano Young Mothers Development Centre, is a women led 10-hectare agricultural and enterprise hub of which Lahri noted complimented her organisation's commitment of empowering women.

In addition, Change Africa Founder, Kaene Disepo, said that the centre was also a childcare facility, a wellness space, and a GBV awareness hub.

"We understand that a young mother cannot build an enterprise if she has nowhere

safe to leave her child," said Disepo adding that the centre would train and empower fifty young mothers as well as create five permanent jobs and approximately 20 seasonal roles, all prioritising women and youth in Maun.

Meanwhile, Miss World Botswana Organisation director, Benjamin Raletsatsi, expressed gratitude to Lucara Botswana's commitment to supporting initiatives that promoted women's empowerment.

He stated that the growth of the organisation was owed to Lucara's continued support.

The prestigious Miss Botswana Grand Finale is scheduled to take place at Molapo Creative Hub under the theme: Diamond Jubilee, as part of the 60<sup>th</sup> Botswana Independence national celebrations.

Top 12 finalists set to strut it out for the crown are: Casey Esmeraldo, Abale Matsoma, Miss Mochudi BW District Winner Thando Makhoba, Talent Competition Winner Mosa Gontshwanetse, Kgalalele Lentebanye, Sports Challenge Winner Michelle Bagoleng, Gaselesire Phalanyane, Head-to-Head Challenge Winner Angelah Phuthago, Magdeline Modipane, Ogaufi Seakgo, Top Model Winner Thabiso Segokgo as well as Kimberly Kotewa. **BOPA**

## Sandoh blends Shona and Setswana into unique sound

**Keetile Bontsibokae**  
**MOGODITSHANE**

From the vibrant heart of Mogoditshane township, Aron Kulube, better known by his stage name Sandoh, is carving out a unique space in the music scene.

Blending Afro-soul, Afro-beats, and Bolo house, his artistry is deeply rooted in the

Shona language, yet enriched by the traditional rhythms of Setswana.

This cultural fusion, already evident in his recorded projects, defines his signature sound.

Sandoh's musical journey began at Mogoditshane Junior Secondary School, recording at Kabo Kelebile alias DeeJay KBlaze's studio.

His path was interrupted in 2022 when he mourned the passing of his beloved grandmother, a figure he credits as the foundation of his identity.

"I lost someone close to my heart, the person who made me who I am, my grandmother," said Sandoh.

Grief muted his creative voice at that point, but resilience brought him back.

Supported by industry heavyweights Kopano 'Berry Bone' Boduwe, Presley 'Prezz Beats' Nhlapo, and Seane 'Dj Skizoh' Kgotshane, Sandoh reignited his passion, channelling everyday struggles and triumphs into lyrical storytelling.

"My inspirations come from life's ups and downs, the challenges people face daily. I put them on paper, then sing them into songs," he explained.

On March 3, Sandoh released a double single with tracks, *Chema Chete* (Afro-


soul), featuring Berry Bone and Tabona Maseko (TabonaMsk) and also *Mamenemene* (Bolo house), featuring Dj Skizoh Bw.

The title track, *Chema Chete*, meaning, ever crying, is a tribute to his grandmother and a balm for his grief.

Sandoh envisions international recognition, collaborations, and eventually his own record label.

With confidence and determination, Sandoh promises more musical variety this year, alongside initiatives to uplift other creatives. His journey is not just about personal success, it is about building a legacy that bridges cultures and inspires resilience. **BOPA**

# DailySport




**Ticket Prices**

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Day 1 – \$25  
(approximately BWP 331)

Day 2 onwards – \$35  
(approximately BWP463)



## Lefika Relays ready to go

### GABORONE

Both the National Stadium and the University of Botswana stadium will be ready for the Lefika International Relays on March 28.

The stadia will be also used for the upcoming World Athletics Relays and were expected to be certified by the world athletics body before the May 2-3 event.

This was said by World Athletics Relays Gaborone 26 chief executive officer, Moses Bantsi during a press conference hosted by Lefika Athletics Club, ahead of the Lefika International Relays.

Also, at the event, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two organisers, and Bantsi said they

found it fitting to sign a MoU since the Lefika Relays would be used as a dry run for the World Relays.

Already, the World Athletics Relays Gaborone 26 have signed an MoU with the 2026 Botswana Golden Grand Prix planned for April 26.

He said they would use the two events to gauge their readiness for the World Relays.

While eight countries had confirmed their participation in next week event, Lefika Athletics Club chairperson, Thari Mooketsi, said they were still faced with financial challenges as they only managed to attract few sponsors.

The eight countries, which had confirmed participation, he said were Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa,

Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Poland.

He said their intention was to host a memorable event.

Therefore, he has called on the nation to support them by buying tickets on time and attend the event in large numbers.

He said the objective of hosting the Lefika International Relays was to bring Southern Africa and

Africa together as well as to show the world that Botswana was an athletics hub.



World Athletics Relay Gaborone 2026 local organising committee chairperson, Professor Martin Mokgwathi (left) and Lefika Athletics Club chairperson, Thari Mooketsi after signing a Memorandum of Understanding at a media briefing in Gaborone yesterday. Mooketsi said while the club aimed to deliver a memorable event, it faced financial challenges due to limited sponsorship.

Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Botswana Athletics Association acting vice president Oabona Theetso said, as a federation, they were happy that one of their clubs was hosting a high-profile meet, which was also used as a

qualifier.

He said qualifying period for the World Athletics Relays would close at the end of this month, saying while some nations would be using the Lefika Relays to prepare for the

May 2-3 spectacle, others will be vying for qualification.

"This is also an opportunity for teams and athletes to come showcase their talent on March 28," he said. **BOPA**

## CAF overturns AFCON final result

### RABAT

Morocco has been awarded the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations title after the Confederation of African Football overturned the result of the final following Senegal's walk-off.

Senegal had beaten Morocco 1-0 in the January 18 final, but the match was marred by controversy when Senegal's players refused to continue after Morocco was awarded a stoppage-time penalty with the score level.

Play resumed after a 17-minute delay. Brahim Diaz's penalty was saved before Pape Gueye scored the winner for Senegal in extra time.

CAF said an appeals board had since ruled that Senegal forfeited the match. The result was recorded as a 3-0 victory for Morocco.

In a statement, CAF said Senegal breached Article 82 of the Africa Cup of Nations regulations, triggering the application of Article 84.

Article 82 states that a team that refuses to play or leaves the field without the referee's authorisation is considered to have lost and is eliminated from the competition. Article 84 adds that such a violation results in a 3-0 defeat and permanent elimination. **Xinhua**

### YUSHAN

Defending champion John Higgins suffered a shock first-round exit at the World Snooker Open in Yushan county, south China's Jiangxi province on Tuesday.

The four-time world champion was edged 5-4 by Britain's 19-year-old Stan Moody, who reached the quarterfinals of this season's Wuhan Open after back-to-back wins over established names including Ding Junhui and Zhou Yuelong.

Moody, ranked 47<sup>th</sup> in the world, seized control early with his accurate long-potting and solid cueing, racing to a 4-1 lead after the first five frames to move within one frame of victory. Higgins adjusted his rhythm in the sixth frame and made the most of his chances at the table, reeling off the next three frames in a row.

That run included a superb 135 break in the seventh frame, and he eventually leveled the match at 4-4 to force a decider.

In the final frame, Moody capitalised on a critical Higgins error and compiled a match-winning 65 break, taking the frame 65-15 to book his place in

the last 32.

World No. 1 Judd Trump of Britain defeated Austria's Florian Nuessle 5-1 in the afternoon session.

"I am really eager to get my form back on track here. It is great to travel the world, but you never really know where you are living half the time. I love it out here in Asia, the events here are completely different, they are run incredibly well. Being here in China is so

much easier to get around, and the time zone is really manageable too," Trump said in his post-match interview.

Under the tournament schedule, Trump will face fellow Briton Jackson Page in his next match. Speaking about the upcoming tie, Trump said:

"Jackson Page is a tricky, complex opponent, he's got an incredibly dangerous game. I have heard his game has improved loads,

he is been putting the work in on the practice table, and he is still getting better all the time.'

Highly watched China's prospect, Zhao Xintong defeated Long Zehuang 5-4 in the evening session to advance to the last 32. Meanwhile, fan favorite Ronnie O'Sullivan received a walkover into the last 32 after India's Ishpreet Singh Chadha withdrew from the tournament. He will face Matthew Selt on Wednesday. **Xinhua**



YUSHAN - World No. 1 Judd Trump of Britain has advanced to the second round after defeating Austria's Florian Nuessle 5-1 at the World Snooker Open in Yushan county, south China's Jiangxi province on Tuesday. Photo: Xinhua