

BOTSWANA

Daily News

THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES



Bangwaketse
ba isa mabele a
dikgafela

PAGE 7

Govt backs boxing
as catalyst for
development

PAGE 10



BOTS60



NEWS

Ministry intensifies efforts to address document fraud

Page 3

BUSINESS

Lobatse sets sights on regional trade centre

Page 6

ARTS & CULTURE

Thomas makes winning start at Miss World

Page 9

Summit designates
BVI vaccine bank



President Advocate Duma Boko arriving from South Africa yesterday, where he participated in the 46th Ordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government in Durban. According to a SADC communique, the summit designated Botswana Vaccine Institute to be a regional Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Antigen/Vaccine Bank to strengthen regional efforts for prevention and control of FMD outbreaks. The summit also urged member states to enhance preparedness in view of the anticipated el niño-induced climate shocks by implementing early warning systems. Also at the summit, former Presidents Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi and Dr Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique were appointed members of the SADC Panel of Elders to support mediation, conflict prevention and preventative diplomacy efforts in the region. Photo: Pheny Ramatu

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DailyNews

DWNP reviews elephant management plan

Gaolethoo Kgatitswe
MAUN

The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) is reviewing National Elephant Management and Action Plan as growing human-elephant conflict puts increasing pressure on communities, livelihoods and wildlife conservation efforts.

Speaking at a workshop to review the plan, Director of Wildlife and National Parks, Mr Moemi Batshabang, said the review was necessary to ensure that Botswana's success in conserving its elephant population was matched by measures to protect communities living alongside wildlife.

"Conservation must always strike a balance between protecting wildlife and safeguarding the livelihoods of local communities," he said.

Mr Batshabang said Botswana, which hosts one of the world's largest populations of African savannah elephants, had achieved significant conservation success through progressive policies and the resilience and tolerance of communities living alongside wildlife.

However, he said the continued growth and expansion of the elephant population had brought increasing management challenges, with human-elephant conflict resulting in crop destruction, property damage, injuries, loss of human life and pressure on rural development.

He also noted that increasing elephant densities could place pressure on habitats and biodiversity, potentially affecting other wildlife species.

Mr Batshabang said the revised National Elephant Management Plan should not be developed solely within government offices, but should reflect the experiences and aspirations of people who encounter elephants in their villages, cattle posts, farms and wildlife management areas.

"The National Elephant Management Plan must remain a dynamic and adaptive framework," he said.

He called for open dialogue among stakeholders, saying sustainable elephant management was a shared responsibility requiring collaboration among government, traditional leaders, communities, conservation organisations and other stakeholders.

Batshabang also acknowledged the contribution of Conservation Force, which has provided technical and financial support towards the development and implementation of Botswana's previous National Elephant Management Plan and the ongoing review.

He said the involvement of traditional leaders and communities was particularly important because they understood first-hand the realities of living alongside elephants.

"As we review this Plan, let us remain focused on our common

objective: to develop an inclusive, evidence-based, and forward-looking strategy that supports the delicate balance of ecological sustainability while safeguarding and improving the livelihoods of Batswana," he said.

For his part, Kgosi Moilwa Motshegwa of Gumare called for the continued compensation of people affected by human-wildlife conflict, while urging communities to take a more active role in developing measures to prevent elephants from entering human settlements.

He said communities could work through trusts to mobilise resources for practical interventions, including rebuilding buffalo fences and installing solar-powered lights to deter elephants from settlements.

Motshegwa also proposed that elephant movement corridors be clearly defined before development takes place, particularly the establishment of ranches, to avoid placing human activities directly in elephant pathways.

He said stronger community trusts could also play a role in compensating affected residents, potentially helping the country move towards full compensation for losses resulting from human-wildlife conflict.

The call for greater community involvement comes as the workshop seeks to assess achievements and gaps in the implementation of the existing plan and identify mitigation measures for the next phase.

Wildlife Officer at DWNP, Mr Phemelo Gadimang, said the review

was intended to assess progress under the current plan, identify areas requiring improvement and develop appropriate interventions for emerging challenges.

Mr Gadimang said communities that carried the burden of living with wildlife should also realise meaningful benefits from conservation.

He called on community-based organisations and other stakeholders to contribute to approaches that promote community empowerment, sustainable utilisation of natural resources and inclusive economic opportunities.

The review is expected to culminate in a revised framework to guide elephant management in Botswana beyond the current 2021–2026 plan. **BOPA**



The Department of Wildlife and National Parks is reviewing National Elephant Management and Action Plan as growing human-elephant conflict puts increasing pressure on communities, livelihoods and wildlife conservation efforts. Director of Wildlife and National Parks, Mr Moemi Batshabang, said the review was necessary to ensure that Botswana's success in conserving its elephant population was matched by measures to protect communities living alongside wildlife.

Trust moves to preserve culture and natural resources

Goweditswe Kome
MULAMBAKWENA

Established in 2023 and registered the following year, Mulambakwena Development and Conservation Trust (MDCT) is hard at working towards achieving its mandate of improving the lives of members of the community.

In an interview, chairperson of the trust, Mr Kabelo Kaunda said MDCT intended to focus on driving the social and economic development of the village through conservation of diminishing natural resources and the protection of culture against continued deterioration.

Mr Kaunda noted that some of the work that the trust will undertake include the documentation and preservation through proper storage of cultural and traditional souvenirs like carved wood, woven baskets, pottery, beads, dancing rattles and others which will be kept at a cultural village.

Preserving the legacy and cultural heritage of the village will allow future generations the opportunity to learn the way of life of their forefathers, thereby keeping the local culture alive.

He indicated that traditional cuisine and traditional medicines would also be on display at the cultural village and those with the knowledge of how they were used would be on site to share such knowledge with visitors.

"We need land in order to

implement all these ideas and carry out the various activities that we have lined up," he said, noting that they had proposed to acquire abandoned plots and ruins that have been left unoccupied around the village for many years, a move that has since proven difficult.

He explained that they had since applied for allocation of two plots from the land board, one of which they intend to construct a dam at, an application that he said had been successful and that inspection of the dam site had already been conducted.

Mr Kaunda said they intended to construct one of the biggest dams in the district, whose water they would use to run multiple agricultural undertakings.

He said the dam, which was within a walking distance to the proposed cultural village, would power projects such as fish farming, piggery, poultry farming, vegetable production and livestock watering.

At the cultural village, he said they would plant indigenous plants that were found in the village that were either extinct or on the verge of extinction.

Mr Kaunda said the trust would establish an organic farm where synthetic materials and fertilisers would not be used, that being in the bid to encourage and promote organic farming as the backbone of healthy eating. He said efforts were currently underway to secure funding from potential funders. **BOPA**

Council calls for joint efforts to improve service delivery

KANYE

Improved service delivery require collective efforts by all concerned stakeholders in the district.

Addressing a full council meeting on Tuesday, Moshupa District Council Chairperson, Mr Peter Sethibe says gave a frank assessment of key infrastructure projects and provision of health services.

While appreciating progress made by some sectors in the district, he was concerned by obstacles in service delivery.

He primarily highlighted the delay in the opening of the long awaited Moshupa Primary Hospital.

Although the hospital buildings were nearly complete, he said the facility was still awaiting installation of critical equipment including X-ray machines, communication systems and ICT networks.

Mr Sethibe said testing and installation of essential equipment were ongoing, while hydrological, hydraulic and structural assessments continued.

Even though concerned by the delay in availing the facility for public use to alleviate access to

health services, Mr Sethibe noted that it was important to finalise critical components before the hospital could begin operations.

Mr Sethibe also expressed concern on the declining availability of essential medicines in district health facilities. "As of July 31, 2026, overall drug availability stood at 32.4 per cent," he said.

He said Asthma medicines were reported at zero per cent, hypertensive medicines at 22.6 per cent, mental health and maternal health medicines at 39.5 per cent and Anti-retroviral medicines remained at 100 per cent availability.

Despite the shortage, Mr Sethibe highlighted a major public health success in Polio vaccination campaign.

"The district successfully conducted Polio vaccination campaigns in May and June, achieving a coverage rate of 98.9 per cent," said Mr Sethibe.

On mental health, he reported that the number of clinical psychology cases declined by 24 per cent, from 37 to 28 cases, while cases of depression and adjustment disorders decreased and registering an increase in

stress-related conditions such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

"New cases involving alcohol use disorder and parent-child relationship problems were also recorded," he said.

Mr Sethibe emphasised the need for stronger community support, awareness campaigns, support groups and improved referral systems to address emerging health challenges.

Reflecting on some of the ongoing infrastructural projects, Mr Sethibe said construction of Moshupa-Manyana road was nine months behind schedule.

He cited that progress stood at 45 per cent against a planned 84 per cent.

Mr Sethibe said the contractor has indicated that earlier financial challenges have been overcome and that teams were being mobilised to accelerate work and recover lost time.

He underscored the importance of sustained collaboration between council, contractors, health authorities and the community to ensure that outstanding projects were completed and that health services continue to improve. **BOPA**

Ministry intensifies efforts to address document fraud

Mpho Mosojane
GABORONE

The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs has intensified efforts to combat document fraud, including the forgery of identity cards, business permits, passports, work and residence permits and marriage certificates, which pose serious economic, security and institutional threats.

Addressing the media at the ministry headquarters, the Minister Major General Pius Mokgware said document fraud undermined public revenue, facilitated organised crime and compromised the integrity of national institutions.

He said the prevalence of fraudulent documents could also damage Botswana's international reputation and expose the country to increased international scrutiny, financial restrictions and economic isolation, citing the 2018 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey-listing as a tangible consequence of weaknesses in financial and institutional controls.

The minister said document falsification in Botswana was primarily driven by economic desperation, demand for legal status or employment, and administrative vulnerabilities.

"Immigration and employment pressures caused by strict work permit quotas and long processing delays push desperate foreign nationals to acquire forged permits, passports or national IDs to secure employment or residency. Furthermore, economic hardship increases fraudulent loan applications, where individuals and syndicates forge bank statements, payslips and employment letters to qualify for credit," he said.

Maj. Gen Mokgware also revealed that the ministry had

recently uncovered a cartel involving more than 13 officials, including senior officials, who were currently on suspension for allegedly working with external syndicates to process fraudulent work permits, visas and Omang identity cards for foreign nationals.

"We are also investigating an identified man, whose case is before the courts, after he was found in possession of ministry forms and official stamps which he used to produce fake Land Board certificates, employment confirmation letters, work and residence permits as well as marriage certificates," he said.

The ministry's permanent secretary, Mr Jimmy Opelo, said Botswana remained committed to maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to document falsification, forgery, immigration and administrative fraud.

"The government treats these breaches as serious criminal offences under national law, actively prosecuting offenders and cracking down on fraudulent permits, identity theft and institutional corruption," he said.

Mr Opelo also stressed the importance of addressing statelessness, saying it deprived people of basic human rights and limited their access to essential services such as education and healthcare, while increasing their vulnerability to poverty and exploitation.

He said the ministry was proactively addressing statelessness through legislative reviews, universal birth registration and international partnerships, noting that such measures helped stabilise communities and restore human dignity.

"The ministry is reviewing the Citizenship Act and National

Registration Act to resolve gaps that cause statelessness or difficulties in acquiring identity documents such as Omang, targeting especially communities in the national border periphery," he said.

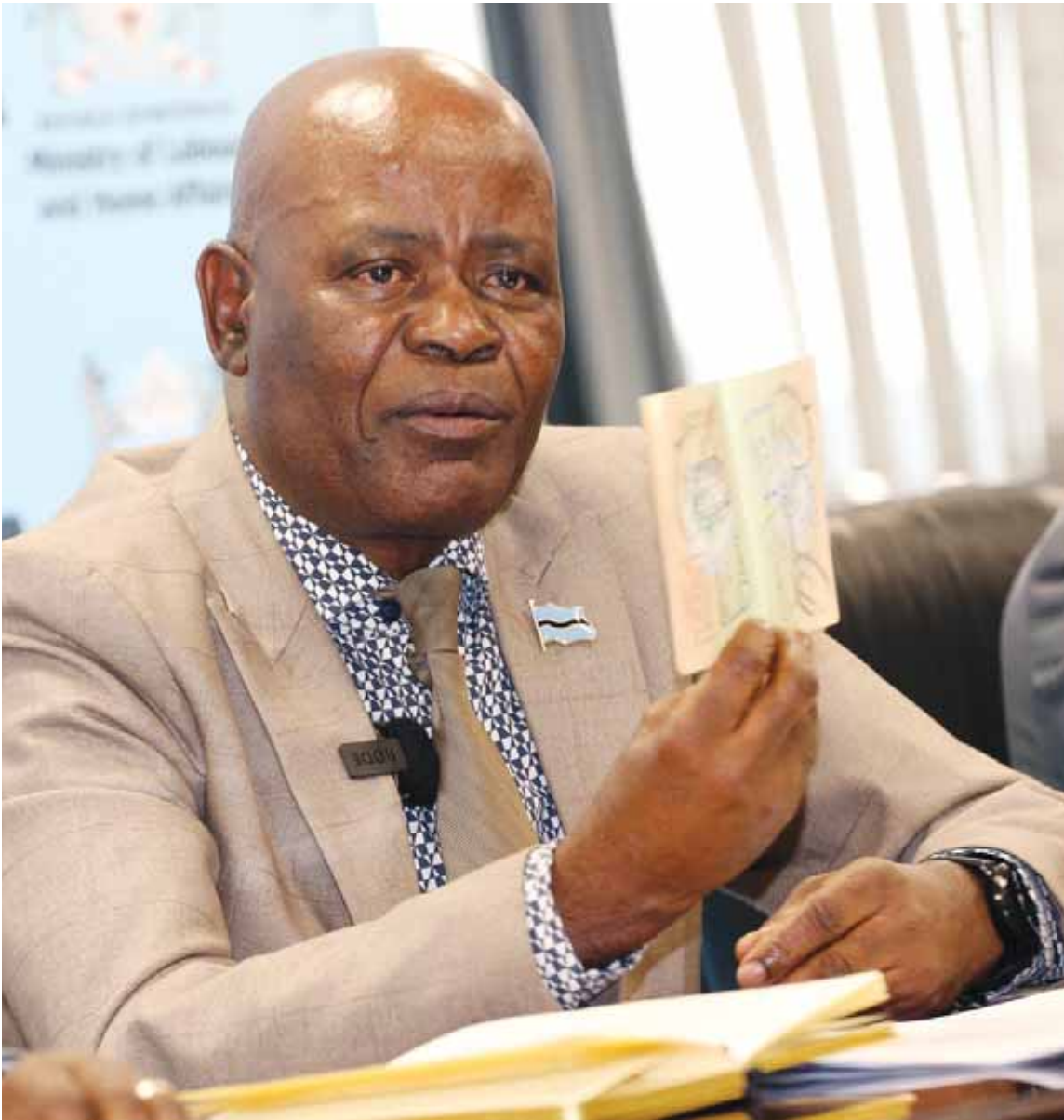
Mr Opelo said providing identity documentation and clear pathways to citizenship helped prevent

marginalisation, exploitation and unlawful detention, while providing legal protection and enabling Botswana to fulfil its international commitments.

He said document fraud was no longer merely an administrative challenge, but a direct threat to Botswana's sovereignty, economic

wellbeing and institutional integrity.

He added that strengthening institutional accountability and enforcement was essential to restoring investor confidence and protecting the country's economic future from the damaging effects of document fraud. **BOPA**



Addressing the media at the Ministry headquarters, the Minister Major General Pius Mokgware said document fraud undermined public revenue, facilitated organised crime and compromised the integrity of national institutions. The Minister also said the prevalence of fraudulent documents could damage Botswana's international reputation and expose the country to increased international scrutiny, financial restrictions and economic isolation. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

BoMRA recalls Flumed syrup batch over crystallisation

GABORONE

Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority (BoMRA) has recalled one batch of Flumed Syrup manufactured by Varichem Pharmaceuticals (Pvt) Ltd of Zimbabwe after crystallisation was observed in the affected product.

According to BoMRA, the recall affects batch 260180 of Flumed Syrup, a 100ml product manufactured in March 2026 and

due to expire in February 2028.

The syrup contains paracetamol 120mg, phenylephrine hydrochloride 2.5mg, dextromethorphan hydrobromide 2.0mg and chlorpheniramine maleate 0.5mg per 5ml.

In a press release, BoMRA says the recall is limited to the specified batch and advises the public who have the affected product to stop using it immediately.

Consumers have also been urged to return the syrup to the pharmacy, health facility or point of purchase where it was obtained and follow the supplier's instructions on its return or replacement.

The medicines regulator further encourages healthcare professionals and the public to report any suspected adverse drug reactions associated with the product.

Reports can be submitted to BoMRA through its adverse drug reaction reporting platforms, including the email address: reportadr@bomra.co.bw and the Med Safety App, which is available on Google Play and the App Store.

BoMRA further urges the public to take the recall seriously and cooperate with the recall process as part of efforts to protect public health. **BOPA**

Govt, unions reach settlement on per diem and leadership programme

GABORONE

Government and six public service trade unions have reached a settlement agreement over the implementation of changes to the local per diem arrangement and the Leadership Transformation Programme.

In a press release, the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) announced that the agreement follows an urgent application filed by the unions at the Lobatse High Court, seeking, among other things, to stop the implementation of the two programmes.

The agreement, which was made an order of the court on August 17, provides for continued consultations between government and the unions on the two matters.

Under the agreement, government will not implement the local per diem arrangement scheduled to take effect on September 1 for members of the six unions, as well as public officers in the D band and below who fall

under collective bargaining.

The release further says the implementation will remain on hold pending meaningful consultations with the recognised trade unions.

The unions involved are the Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU), Botswana Doctors Union (BDU), Botswana Nurses Union (BONU), Botswana Teachers Union (BTU), Botswana Landboards, Local Authorities and Health Workers Union (BLLAHWU) and Botswana Sectors of Educators Trade Union (BOSETU).

Government is required to provide the unions with written reasons for the proposed changes to the local per diem arrangement and the Leadership Transformation Programme by close of business on August 19.

The unions will then submit their representations by August 26, with the parties expected to meet by August 28 to consider their respective positions. Government will thereafter make a final decision

on the proposed changes to the local per diem arrangement.

Meanwhile, government remains at liberty to proceed with the Leadership Transformation Programme for members of the executive cadre who are eligible to benefit from opportunities under the programme.

According to the release, for public officers, on the DI scale and below, the parties are required to meet by September 28 to discuss the proposed implementation before a final decision is made.

DPSM says government welcomed the settlement, saying it affirms its position that employment matters affecting public officers are best resolved through meaningful social dialogue and constructive engagement.

Government has also reaffirmed its commitment to working with public service unions as important social partners and said stakeholders will continue to be updated on developments arising from the consultations and implementation processes. **BOPA**

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PARLIAMENT 2026

Labour relations Act commences next month

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

Botswana’s Employment and Labour Relations Act of 2025 will come into effect on Sept 1, 2026, the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware, told Parliament on Tuesday. The Act consolidates previously fragmented labour laws into a single comprehensive framework.

Presenting a statement, Major General Mokgware said the ministry, in consultation with social partners Business Botswana and trade unions, had agreed on the commencement date. Regulations to facilitate implementation were being finalised.

He described the Act as integral to Botswana’s domestic and international obligation to reform employment and labour laws, and as a culmination of collective efforts by employers, workers and government to comply with International Labour Organisation standards.

According to the minister, the Act brought Botswana into conformity with International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise.

It also provides for fundamental employment rights and international labour standards, and establishes a National Social Dialogue Structure and the Employment Labour Relations Council. However, he said the Act has 33 parts, which inter alia covered the following; Part II of the act provided for protection against child labour by amongst



Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware

others, prohibiting persons from employing children who are under the age of 15 years and with restriction allowed persons to employ children who are 15 years and above. He said Part II also prohibited persons from permitting children from performing hazardous work, employment underground and working at night.

In Part III, he said the Act provided for the protection of fundamental rights of the workers by prohibiting forced labour and as a deterrent measure, the part also imposed a penalty on persons who forced workers to perform work.

Minister Mokgware said the Act in Part IV protected the fundamental rights of workers by providing measures to promote equality in the workplace and prevented any form of discrimination, violence and harassment in the workplace while Part V protected fundamental rights of workers to freedom of association. Maj Gen Mokgware also highlighted Part XII of the Act regulated general matters relating to trade unions, federations of trade unions and employers’ organisations, which included the requirements for registration of trade unions, federations of trade unions and employers’ organisations amongst other things.

Maj. Gen. Mokgware noted with concern a rise in retrenchments, which the ministry views as an attempt by some employers to avoid changes brought by the Act.

“I therefore call upon employers who do not genuinely undertake this exercise to think twice about the future of the workers and do the most desirable thing to benefit them and the workers,” he said.

The ministry has started public awareness through social media and other platforms to explain the Act. Meetings will also be held across the country and with district leadership through full council meetings. **BOPA**

Parliament has been informed that the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education will conclude outstanding refunds for self-sponsored teachers by August 30 2026.

Answering a parliamentary question on Tuesday, Assistant Minister for child welfare and basic education ministry, Mr Justin



Parliament on Tuesday debated a motion to adopt the National Health Insurance Policy of 2026, with MPs across party lines welcoming it as a move to guarantee quality healthcare for every Motswana regardless of income.

MPs welcome National Insurance Policy

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

Parliament on Tuesday debated a motion to adopt the National Health Insurance Policy of 2026, with MPs across party lines welcoming it as a move to guarantee quality healthcare for every Motswana regardless of income.

Moving the motion, Minister of Health Dr Stephen Modise said the policy is designed to close gaps left by the current system where rising costs have left many citizens vulnerable.

Supporting the motion, Minister of Communications and Innovation and MP for Mahalapye West, Mr David Tshere, described the proposal as revolutionary.

He said healthcare costs had climbed sharply over the last 20 years, leaving some Batswana bankrupt and others owing private hospitals despite having medical aid.

“The medical aid industry has failed Batswana, as it does not guarantee that they will access quality health services. With the adoption of this policy, government is answering a very serious and fundamental problem of giving health to every Motswana,” Mr Tshere told Parliament.

He compared the plan to ‘Obama Care’ in the United States, which aimed to make insurance more affordable and protect consumers from unfair practices.

“This is a shift on how things had been done here because we have realised that the majority of the people had been left behind,” he added. Other MPs highlighted equity and access as key benefits.

MP for Letlhakeng, Brigadier Domcaza Mokgwathi, said the policy was critical for transforming the healthcare system. “Equity in healthcare services ensures fair access to medical treatment and health resources for all



Minister of Health Dr Stephen Modise

people regardless of income or background,” he said, and urged government to fast-track implementation.

Shoshong MP, Mr Moneedi Bagaisamang said the policy aligned with the Umbrella for Democratic Change manifesto that every citizen should have medical aid. “This policy aims to strengthen primary healthcare and we believe that every citizen irrespective of his or her location will benefit,” he said.

Minister of Sport and Arts and MP for Takatokwane, Mr Jacob Kelebeg, cited cost pressures. He noted that only about 17 per cent of



MP for Ngami Mr Philemon Aaron

people in the formal sector were on medical aid and just 5 per cent in the informal sector, meaning over 80 per cent rely on government for primary care. “With this policy, it will ensure universal health coverage for all,” he said.

MP for Ngami, Mr Philemon Aaron, backed the policy but asked when implementation would begin, noting communities in hard-to-reach areas were struggling.

He also questioned funding sources given the current financial climate. Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education and MP for Tati West, Mr Justin Hunyepa, said the policy would improve access to pharmaceutical services and help reduce the urban-rural healthcare divide through investment in facilities “thus bringing services closer to the people.”

Kgatlang East MP Mr Mabuse Pule cautioned that the proposal was not very different from the current primary healthcare model, where patients pay P5 and government subsidises the rest. The main difference, he said, was ‘who pays.’

He also asked whether government would cover specialised treatment outside the country. **BOPA**



Kgatlang East MP Mr Mabuse Pule

Govt to conclude refunds for self-sponsored teachers by August 30

GABORONE

Hunyepa said 17 of the 21 remaining teachers were currently being paid in stages as they complete their modules. The final four will receive their payments by the end of this month.

Mr Hunyepa said the reimbursements were guided by General Order 259, which allowed government to support teachers pursuing self-development through private study.

Support may include financial assistance, 10 working days of study leave, or a combination of both, depending on eligibility and available funds.

“From 2017 to date, a total of 213 teachers have been authorised to pursue self-study. Of these, 192 have already been reimbursed. Further payments will be processed once the respective teachers submit the required documentation,” he

said.

The Assistant Minister added that the total value of the 17 outstanding refunds was estimated at P490,337.00.

He was responding to a question from Kanye East MP, Mr Prince Mosanana, who sought clarity on the ministry’s position regarding refunds for teachers who undertook private academic development at their own cost. **BOPA**

Dikgosi hold unique place in protocol order

GABORONE

Government has clarified that the National Order of Precedence is a protocol tool and not a ranking of social worth, amid questions in Parliament about the placement of Dikgosi.

Answering a question on Tuesday, Assistant Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti, told Parliament the order was designed to determine ceremonial recognition at official functions. It does not diminish the dignity or importance of any office.

“The National Order of Precedence was not intended to constitute a hierarchy of social worth or importance, nor does a particular position in the Order diminish the dignity, status or significance of the institution or office concerned,” Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti said. She explained that the order was structured around Botswana’s constitutional and institutional framework. It considers the nature of an office, its mandate, and the authority attached to it.

The assistant minister said the order “necessarily begins with the highest constitutional and governmental offices, including the President, Vice-President and Ministers,” followed by senior offices in the Legislature, Judiciary and other public institutions.

On the role of traditional leadership, Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti said Dikgosi occupy “a unique and important place in Botswana’s governance and national identity.”

“Dikgosi played a significant role in preserving Botswana’s culture and traditions, promoting social cohesion, providing community leadership and contributing to the stability and unity of the country,” she said.

Addressing concerns about their ranking, she noted that

Members of the Ntlo ya Dikgosi, when considered as a group, are placed ahead of several senior public offices. “Within the overall structure of the National Order of Precedence, Members of the Ntlo ya Dikgosi... are accorded a significant position, being placed ahead of a number of senior public offices, including the Permanent Secretary to the President, the Attorney General, Judges of the High Court, Heads of International Organisations, the Governor of the Bank of Botswana, and Mayors and Council Chairpersons,” she said.

Ms Mophuting-Dikoloti stressed the difference between protocol precedence and actual recognition.

“It is important to distinguish protocol precedence from the recognition, status and importance accorded to an office or institution. The placement of Dikgosi should not be interpreted as indicating low recognition or diminished status,” she said.

She added that government remains mindful that the order must reflect Botswana’s constitutional, institutional and cultural circumstances. Any amendments, she said, would have to be considered holistically, taking into account the roles of all institutions concerned.

“Government would therefore continue to keep the Order of Precedence under review and would consider any appropriate amendments where these are justified in the interests of maintaining a coherent and appropriate protocol framework for the Republic of Botswana,” she said. The assistant minister was responding to MP for Lentsweletau/Lephephe, Mr Tshenolo Bogatsu, who asked if government would consider amendments to give Dikgosi greater honour, noting they are currently placed at No. 14 in the order. **BOPA**



Assistant Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Mr Motsamai Motsamai said Botswana exports poultry, adding that the country had already exported 315 380 hatching (fertilised) eggs to Mozambique and 20 000 day-old chicks to Angola.

Botswana exports poultry to Mozambique and Angola

GABORONE

Botswana is already exporting poultry meat, eggs and related products, government has confirmed.

Answering a question in Parliament on Tuesday, Assistant Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Mr Motsamai Motsamai said the country had exported 315 380 hatching eggs to Mozambique and 20 000 day-old chicks to Angola.

“Botswana is already a net exporter, however, it is dependent on the importing country’s willingness to accept the products,” Mr Motsamai said. He explained that export of poultry and poultry products was subject to meeting the animal health requirements of importing countries and their import policies.

The assistant minister added that the ministry continued to engage potential trading partners on animal health and policy issues through

established bilateral mechanisms. Mr Motsamai was responding to Shoshong MP, Mr Moneedi Bagaisamang, who had asked whether the country exported poultry meat and eggs.

Mr Bagaisamang also wanted to know what constraints continued to hinder exports despite local self-sufficiency, and the time frame within which government expected the poultry industry to become a net exporter. **BOPA**



Assistant Minister for State President, Defence and Security Ms Maipelo Mophuting-Dikoloti

Over 4 000 await secure title certificates

GABORONE

Nearly 20 per cent of Secure Land Title certificates are still waiting in the system, with 4 668 of 24,506 Deeds of Customary Land Grants pending at various stages in the Deeds Registry.

Assistant Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Mr Motsamai Motsamai, told Parliament on Tuesday that the backlog was not solely the fault of the Deeds Registry, but part of a wider ‘value-chain problem.’ “The delay is not attributable to the Deeds Registry

alone but a value-chain problem beginning with the quality and completeness of historical land records and survey information,” Mr Motsamai said. He explained that the process ran from surveying and data preparation, through verification and conveyancing, to final registration. Challenges at each stage including shortage of human capital and limited budget were contributing to delays in producing and issuing the grants.

Mr Motsamai acknowledged that the country’s two registries, in Gaborone and Francistown, were

not fully resourced to handle the surge in applications following the enactment of the Tribal Land Act in 2018. He noted that while both offices could carry out examination, registration, execution and issuance, only Gaborone could print the actual Deeds of Customary Land Grants.

“Therefore, decentralising the Deeds Registry services in isolation would not achieve the intended improvements to service delivery without the commensurate resources,” he said. Under current land administration

reforms, government is pursuing decentralisation through digital systems and strengthened district operations, the Assistant Minister said. Through the web-based Land Information System, LIS, officers at Land Boards across the country can now process Secure Land Title transactions electronically without everything being done in Gaborone. “Government is therefore focusing on expanding access to these digital services, improving connectivity and strengthening capacity at district level so that more work can be completed closer to where citizens live,” Mr Motsamai said. He added that the approach was expected to increase processing capacity, reduce turnaround times, and improve access in a more affordable and sustainable manner.

Mr Motsamai was responding to Shashe West MP, Mr Jeremiah Frenzel, who asked how long Secure Land Title certificates had been in use and for an update on issuance. Mr Frenzel also asked when Deeds Registry services would be fully decentralised, noting that certificates were still only printed in Gaborone. He further enquired when the Francistown office would be authorised to provide full SLT services, and what was causing delays in delivery to citizens. **BOPA**

Financial capacity limits projects inclusion in NDP 12

GABORONE

Selokolela-Lorolwane and B102-Segwagwa roads have been excluded from the National Development Plan 12 (NDP 12) after failing to make it through a rigorous prioritisation process driven by available financial capacity.

Answering questions in Parliament on Monday, Assistant Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Keoagile Atamelang, said the ministry had not considered any alternative

financing models for the two roads, aside from routine maintenance.

Mr Atamelang told MPs that current interventions focused on making rural roads passable through in-house grading teams, outsourcing, and collaboration with the Kanye District Council.

“These efforts are aimed at facilitating local agricultural trade and other economic activities within the region,” he said.

The minister acknowledged that the ministry has missed its standard quarterly grading schedule in the

Kanye District due to a mechanical breakdown of the lgrader.

As an interim measure, he said the ministry was seeking funds to repair the machinery and was in the process of outsourcing dry grading for both the Selokolela-Lorolwane and B102-Segwagwa roads.

He added that consultations with the Kanye District Council were ongoing to establish a collaborative framework for broader road grading across the district. The response followed a

question from Kanye West MP, Mr Victor Phologolo, who asked what alternative financing and execution models government had for the construction of the two roads following their exclusion from NDP 12.

Mr Phologolo also asked how the ministry intended to support local agricultural trade in the absence of paved roads to farms, and what urgent grading schedules had been put in place to keep unpaved rural routes passable during the upcoming rainy season. **BOPA**

DailyBusiness

Lobatse sets sights on regional trade centre

Calviniah Kgautlhe
LOBATSE

The historic town of Lobatse is poised to chart a new economic path towards becoming a regional investment hub due to its geographic positioning, infrastructure, transportation, institutional presence, and heritage trail.

This was said by Lobatse deputy district commissioner, Dr Malebogo Rathedi, during the inaugural Lobatse Economic Forum 2026 organised by Ba Bandleng Group (BBG). She said government had demonstrated confidence in Lobatse's future by designating the town as Special Economic Zone for the meat and leather value chain which showed the town's enormous potential to become a centre of industrialisation, value addition, exports and employment creation.

Dr Rathedi said it was imperative to build on the strategic advantage through investment attraction into leather processing, agro-processing, logistics, manufacturing and related industries. She highlighted that there were emerging investments that continued to strengthen the town's economic prospects which included dairy farming.

For instance, Milk Valley Farm recently received high-quality cattle from Brazil, an important milestone in strengthening Botswana's dairy industry and expanding opportunities for employment, skills development and agricultural value chains.

Additionally, Dr Rathedi said Lobatse Clay Works, was another thriving long-established brick manufacturing enterprise which continued to demonstrate the importance of local manufacturing in supporting infrastructure development and industrial growth. The investments in such mega projects by government, she noted was a testament that Lobatse already had the foundation upon which a modern economy could be built.

"As we chart the future of Lobatse, we must also recognise the importance of implementing existing development frameworks. The Lobatse Regeneration Plan 2019-2036 provides a comprehensive roadmap for revitalising the town through infrastructure renewal,



Ba Bandleng Group chairperson Ms Loatile Seboni said Lobatse's infrastructure and proximity to neighbouring countries as well as profound heritage sites placed it in a better position to become the SADC region investment hub.

investment promotion, urban development, enterprise growth and improved quality of life. The implementation of this Plan will be critical in reawakening not only Lobatse itself but the greater Lobatse region as an important economic corridor within Botswana," she said. The inaugural economic forum which was held under the theme: Re-imagining Lobatse: From Legacy Town to Regional Investment Hub, had brought together representatives from government, Botswana Investment and Trade Centre, Botswana Economic Transformation Programme, financial institutions, private sector, women and youth entrepreneurs, and development partners amongst others.

Discussions centred on unlocking new investment opportunities, stimulation of enterprise development and contribution to Lobatse's economic transformation in line with Government's agenda of economic transformation and diversification.

"For her part, BBG chairperson, Ms Loatile Seboni, stated that

Lobatse played an important role in Botswana's development trajectory adding that it had key national institutions, a thriving industrial base, and generations of entrepreneurs and workers who helped build Botswana's economy.

The forum, she said was a contribution towards building a resilient, competitive and prosperous Lobatse that could once again become a regional centre for trade, manufacturing, agro-processing and innovation.

Its main objective was to position Lobatse as an investment-ready town by showcasing strategic advantages, including the town's proximity to South Africa, existing industrial infrastructure, institutional strength and access to regional trade corridors.

It also sought to showcase viable investment opportunities across sectors that could stimulate economic growth, create employment and expand local enterprise.

Additionally, the forum sought to attract local and international investors by demonstrating that



Lobatse mayor, Mr Aron Ganakgomo appreciated Ba Bandleng Group for the community initiative to revitalise Lobatse economy through organising the inaugural Lobatse Economic Forum. He highlighted that the town had rich heritage and needed to be moved forward given the foundation that it has laid for the economic boom of the country in the nations nascent years.

Photos: Calviniah Kgautlhe

Lobatse is open for business and ready for partnerships, facilitate meaningful dialogue between government, the private sector and development partners on practical solutions that improve the ease of doing business and remove barriers to investment.

The focus was on sectors that have the potential to transform Lobatse such as agro-processing and food value chains, manufacturing and industrial revitalisation, cross-border trade and logistics, tourism and heritage development, digital economy and innovation, and small business and informal sector growth.

Kgosi Serogola Seretse of Lobatse underscored that the town occupied a unique place in Botswana's history built on resilience, enterprise and service. "For generations it has been recognised as a centre of governance, justice, commerce, and industry. Many of the nation's institutions have deep roots in the town," he said.

He thus urged potential investors to look beyond statistics and see the true potential of the town. **BOPA**

BOBS aligns standards with local manufacturing needs

GABORONE

There are 80 leather industry standards that Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) has developed, which cover blue and processed hides and skins from bovine animals, sheep, goats and buffalo, as well as leather products such as belts and bags.

Answering a question in Parliament on Tuesday, the Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Tiroeane Ntsima revealed that BOBS was in the process of developing a wood saw dust standard specification for the product, following a request from a timber manufacturing and processing company to develop

a standard for poultry bedding, which was primarily composed of wood sawdust.

"The company indicated that it intends to supply customers who require the product to be certified against a recognised standard.

The development of this standard will follow the fast-tracked method and will take approximately three months," he said.

Additionally, he indicated that BOBS was implementing three key strategic initiatives to assist emerging local manufacturers.

To that effect, he said BOBS was implementing the standards development and awareness, which entailed developing demand-

driven standards that were aligned with local manufacturing needs and government priorities. He noted that there were also streamlined certification pathways to complement its product certification scheme, citing that BOBS had established a batch certification scheme. This, he said simplified certification processes, reduced turn-around times and paved a faster route for market entry.

Mr Ntsima further indicated that the Small and Medium Enterprises Support Framework was in place to monitor specialised Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Certification Framework aimed

at accelerating compliance and lowering certification costs was under formulation. "The framework seeks to cultivate an environment that empowers emerging local manufacturers and MSMEs, enabling them to expand their market reach and scale their businesses sustainably," he said.

Minister Ntsima was responding to a question by Tswapong South MP, Dr Kesitegile Gobotswang who had asked the minister if he was aware of the challenges experienced by emerging local manufacturers in respect of the services offered by BOBS and whether there were standards for sawdust and leather products.

BOPA

BUSINESS SERVICES

Namibia to introduce 5-year employment permit

WINDHOEK - Namibia will introduce a new employment permit for qualifying foreign investors and businesspeople from September 1, as part of efforts to streamline investment procedures and attract more foreign direct investment. The Employment Permit to Conduct Business will be valid for up to five years, compared with the current two-year validity period for employment permits, Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security Lucia Iipumbu said in a statement Tuesday. The new permit will also authorise qualifying investors to work in the businesses covered by the permit, she said. According to Iipumbu, applications will be submitted through the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board, which will conduct an economic evaluation and impact assessment of proposed investments before referring the applications to immigration authorities. **Xinhua**

Duo reach citrus export deal after decade-long talks

JOHANNESBURG - South African citrus exporters are set to gain improved access to the Indian market after India approved additional treatment options for fresh citrus fruit following nearly a decade of negotiations, the South African Government News Agency said Tuesday. In a statement, the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa and the Department of Agriculture said India had approved additional cold-treatment options for fruit flies, providing greater logistical flexibility and helping improve the quality of South African citrus. The agreement marks a significant step forward as the industry seeks to expand its markets in countries such as India and China while reducing its reliance on Europe. **Xinhua**

Government approves ZESA restructuring

HARARE - The government has approved the restructuring and reorganisation of the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) Group to pave way for the power utility to operate as a single, vertically integrated entity in a major reform aimed at improving efficiency, accountability and energy security. The development was announced by Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Zhemu Soda during Tuesday's post-Cabinet media briefing, where he said the restructuring was part of broader government drive to achieve energy self-sufficiency in line with the Vision 2030 agenda. Soda said the principal workstreams of the restructuring had been substantially completed and had now entered the implementation phase following the transfer of ZESA Group's shareholding to the Mutapa Investment Fund. **"New Ziana"**

Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

Ipapatse Fa Leletsa

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



Modulasetilo wa komiti ya dikgafela, Rre Tshagofatso Mere, o supile fa dikgotla tsotlhe kwa Kanye di tlaa isa mabele kwa kgosing, a rwelwe ke bomme ka ditlatlana. O tthalositse fa mabele a mangwe a tlaa busediwa kwa dikgotleng, go dira momela o o tlaa dirisiwang go bedisa bojalwa jwa Setswana.

Bangwaketse ba isa mabele a dikgafela

Thandy Tebogo
KANYE

E tlaabo e le semphete ke go fete ka Labotlhano kwa Kanye, dikgotla tsa motse di isitse dikgafela kwa kgosing. Tiro e, ke go leboga le go isa kopo kwa go kgosi, go kopa

Ramasedi go bula magodimo gore pula e ne. Modulasetilo wa komiti ya dikgafela, Rre Tshagofatso Mere, o supile fa dikgotla tsotlhe kwa Kanye di tlaa isa mabele kwa kgotleng kgolo, a rwelwe ke bomme ka ditlatlana.

O tthalositse fa mabele a mangwe a tlaa busediwa kwa dikgotleng, go ya go inelwa go dira momela o o tlaa dirisiwang go bedisa bojalwa bone ka 2019. E tla a re Lwetse a le malatsi a masome mabedi le botlhano, bomme ba rwale bojalwa ka

dinkgwana go bo isa kgosing mme e re morago bo ye go nowa kwa dikgotleng ka go farologana, go leboga Ramasedi. Bomme ba tlaabo ba apere kapari ya ngwao ya Sengwaketse, borre ba tshwere dikala tsa setlhare sa moologa, go opelwa dikoma

bo maphotshophotsho kana mogogoga. Maphotshophotsho ke koma e e supang gore pula e e namagadi e tlaa na, fa mogoga e le e e kopang pula kwa go Ramasedi. Dikgafela tsa bofelo go tshwarwa ke ka 2023. BOPA

Kgosi e tlhophiwa ke morafe - Motshegwa

Goitsemodimo
Williams-Madzonga
MAKUTA

Go tlhongwa ga dikgosi ke boikarabelo jwa merafe, ba tlhopha yo o tshwanetwang ke go tshagetsa maemo a bogosi ba lebile ditso tsa merafhe eo. Se se boletswe ke tona wa lephata la dikgaolo le tsa ngwao Rre Ketlhalefile Motshegwa fa a buisa phuthego kwa Makuta kwa kgaolong ya Tutume ka Labotlhano. O tthalositse fa seabe sa lephata la gagwe mo go tlhongwang ga dikgosi e le go thomamisa kgosi e morafe e mo ithlophileng, ka jalo gangwe le gape ba gakolola metse go dira dithulaganyo tsa go kwala ditso tsa metse ya bone gore le boseyong jwa ba ba di itseng, go bo go na le fa di kwadilweng teng go ba kaele tsela e e tshwanetseng ya tsewa. A re seo se tlaa thusa go tla ketsaetsego le go lwelwa ga bogosi mo metseng jaaka go ntse go diragala mo dikgaolong ka go farologana. Rre Motshegwa o ne a tthalosa



Tona wa lephata la dikgaolo le tsa ngwao Rre Ketlhalefile Motshegwa

gore go ya ka mekwalo kwa ofising ya gagwe, go supage fa motse wa Makuta o ne wa tthalosiwa maemo go ikemela ka 2005, ka jalo o sa tlhole o le ka fa tlase ga Nswazwi, mme seo se ba fa tshwanelo ya go ithlophela kgosi. Tona o ne a supa go tla ga gagwe go sala morago potso e mopalamente wa kgaolo ya Nkange Rre Motlhaleemang Moalosi a neng a e botsa kwa

palamenteng mabapi le ngongora ya morafe wa Makuta ya go tlhoka go fiwa phetolo ya lekoko le le neng la rongwa ke tona wa pele wa lephata go tla go rerisana le bone ka kgang ya bogosi jwa motse wa bone ka 2019. A re go ya ka ditshekatsheko tsa lekoko, go ne ga supafala gore bogosi jwa motse wa bone bo lebanye Kgosi Alakanani Thabiwe, yo e leng ene kgosi ka nako eno, mme bo ne bo sa lebana Rre Waniwa Macheka jaaka bangwe ba ne ba supa. Ka jalo tona o ne a tsaya tshwetso ya go rurifatsa Kgosi Thabiwe go ya ka molao wa bogosi go nna ene kgosi jaaka morafe o supile. Fa ba tswa la bone banni ba Makuta ba ne ba supa fa ba sa itse fa go na le dikgang dipe tse di amang go nna mo setilong ga ga Kgosi Thabiwe tse di saletseng kwa morago. Rre Lawrence Mabikwa, yo a leng modulasetilo wa pele wa komiti ya ditlhabololo tsa motse o supile fa motse wa bone o sena ngongora epe e e amang bogosi e bile ba ne ba sa kopa tona go tla go ba buisa ka sepe sa bogosi. BOPA

Baithuti ba malala a laotswe

Portia Rapitsenyane
MOREMI

Baithuti ba lekwalo la bosupa kwa sekolong se se botlana sa Mapulane kwa Moremi ba sidilwa maikutlo jaaka ba itlhokoletsa ditlathobong tsa makgaolagang tsa lekwalo la bosupa. Mogokgo wa sekole, Rre Ernest Seane o gateletse botlhokwa jwa go dira tsotlhe go baakanya baithuti, gore ba kgone go kwala ditlathobong ba wetse maikutlo. O buile jalo ka Labotlhano, jaaka moitlhaopi, Rre Kgotso Tshenyego a ne a tswelletse ka tiro ya go baakanyetsa baithuti go kwala ditlathobong. Rre Tshenyego, ke sealogane sa unibesithi ya Botswana, a ithutetse go sidila maikutlo le bogakolodi, mme a kile a direla mo sekolong se ka nakwana e le morutabana. Rre Seane a re o dumela gore se baithuti ba se anywileng mo go Rre Tshenyego se tla a ba thusa go tsena mo ditlathobong ba tsepame, ba sa boife sepe. A re baithuti fela jaaka motho

mongwe le mongwe, ba ralala dikgwetlho tse di farologanyeng tse di ka amang maikutlo a bone. A re go sidilwa maikutlo go thusa motho gore a lwantshe sepe se se ka mo emang pele, ka jalo a kgone go diragatsa maikaelelo a gagwe. O kopile baithuti go tsaya se ba se rutiwang ka tlhoafalo, a tlatsa ka gore go ya ka tebo ya gagwe, baithuti ba rutilwe boitshwaro jo bo lolameng. A re sekole se tla a tsenya leitlho mo baithuting gore ba seka ba latlha tse ba di tlathleletsweng. Morutuntshi wa baithuti, Rre Tshenyego a re baithuti ba le bantsi ga ba dire sentle mo ditlathobong tsa bone tsa makgaolagang mme e se gore ga ba abelwa, ba dirwa ke letshogo la gore ke la ntlha ba kwala ditlathobong mo seemong se se sisibetseng jalo, ka jalo bangwe ba felelwe ke tshepo. Morutabana wa lekwalo la bosupa, Mme Bafentse Oitsile a re o solofela fa baithuti ba tla a dira ka natla go fenyisa dithuto tsa makgaolagang ka maemo a a kwa godimo. BOPA

Council chairperson calls for shift in service delivery

Portia Rapitsenyane
PALAPYE

Palapye District leadership has been challenged to shift from merely reporting challenges to actively engineering creative solutions to improve service delivery and local economic growth.

Officially opening a full council session on Monday, Council Chairperson, Mr Kabo Ketshogile said the next level of leadership must be measured by the speed and creativity in converting operational constraints into public solutions.

He urged heads of departments to strengthen performance management by attaching specific responsible officers, clear action plans, and strict deadlines to every significant service-delivery challenge.

Mr Ketshogile also advised councillors to enhance their oversight role by heeding to communities calls and scrutinise service delivery without interfering in administrative roles.

However, he cautioned them that while serving the community and analysing service delivery, they must avoid the temptation of becoming operational arms of government and council departments.

He further appealed to public officers to return to the core values of public service, ensuring agility, courtesy and ownership.

Mr Ketshogile urged community members to accept responsibility by paying bills, taking care of the available infrastructure, reporting vandalism, and supporting local producers and other efforts aimed and improving service delivery, livelihoods and local economy.

On the fiscal position for the first quarter, Mr Ketshogile said council registered an approved quarterly allocation of over P56.2 million, comprising a Revenue Support Grant of more than P54.8 million and a projected own-source revenue of P1.4 million.

He said expenditure reached over P59.4 million, exceeding the quarterly allocation by approximately six per cent,

further noting that the Relief of Destitute budget alone exceeded its annual allocation by P2.78 million.

To counteract the financial strain, he said council was directed to prioritise own-source revenue enhancement by strengthening collections, improving billing systems, maintaining accurate valuation information and pursuing lawful recovery of arrears.

On agriculture, Mr Ketshogile said under Temo Letlotlo, 258 farmers have completed fencing of 2 241.02 hectares, while P9.78 million has been disbursed under Lemang Diyo to support 3 062 farmers.

“A further 6,963 hectares have been ploughed during the 2025/26 season,” he said.

He said commercial and horticultural farming in the Tuli Block continues to thrive, with 624.90 hectares harvested to produce 2 001.66 tonnes, including potatoes, onions, and citrus, while the Lotsane Irrigation Scheme at Tsarona recorded a

maize harvest of 1 215 tonnes.

“In livestock development, the Makoro Artificial Insemination camp received 171 cows, resulting in 144 inseminated and a 79 per cent conception rate.

“On veterinary safety, no clinical cases of Foot and Mouth Disease were observed, with active surveillance scheduled to commence in September 2026,” said Mr Ketshogile.

In land management, Mr Ketshogile said major residential expansions were underway, with Palapye phase II boasting a completed design of 7 391 plots.

“Approved layouts in Lesenepole, Mogapinyana, Kgagodi, Mokgware, Malaka,

and Lerala provide an additional 4 700 plots, while Topisi and Lecheng maintain approved general plans for 1 500 and 2 000 plots respectively,” he said.

Addressing health services, Mr Ketshogile expressed concern over deteriorating public facilities and drug availability.

“Overall drug availability at Palapye Primary Hospital stands at 57 per cent, falling below the national target of 75 per cent.

Vital drugs stand at 63 per cent, essential drugs at 55 per cent, necessary drugs at 47 per cent, and non-drugs at 77 per cent, demanding strict supply-chain discipline and timely ordering,” he said. **BOPA**

Kelebeng appeals for calm and responsible action

Mothusi Galekhutle
TAKATOKWANE

Member of Parliament for Takatokwane, Mr Jacob Kelebeng has called for the rule of law to be upheld despite the distress and local unrest following the unsuccessful search for missing child, Collen Loba.

Speaking at a kgotla meeting on Monday, Mr Kelebeng highlighted the importance of maintaining order to protect the village, thus urged stakeholders to unite in harmony and keep the child in their prayers.

Mr Kelebeng also encouraged the police to remain focused on the search and welcome independent investigators.

The child disappeared on the chilly morning of June 6 and despite a P50, 000 cash reward offered by the police last month, search efforts were yet to yield any leads.

For his part, Southern division commander, Senior Assistant Commissioner Israel Tuelo, urged the community to share any details that could assist law enforcement.

Mr Tuelo told the meeting that extensive operations, including deploying helicopters and drones, leveraging the police’s Facebook page and utilising trackers from Leopard Ecology Conservation, had so far been unsuccessful, noting that Loba’s last known footprints were spotted about 30 metres before the game reserve at Kweta cattle post.

Addressing the aftermath of the search efforts, Lethakeng deputy council secretary, Mr Johane Gaosafelwe, expressed concern over the recent arrest of some search crew members during local uprisings.

Mr Gaosafelwe appealed to the police to engage diplomatically with the community when tempers erupted rather than resorting to force. He also encouraged residents to let law enforcement conduct their investigations and respect the rights of suspects.

Community representatives, including the Ministers Fraternal chairperson, Mr Gakeresepe Moepele and Ms Galenkutlwele Tsietsi, stated that the recent

unrest was triggered by a strained relationship between the police and the Moeladilothoko Newsboiler crew.

Several residents echoed the same sentiments and alleged that excessive force was used and that some arrests were wrongful.

BOPA

Accused mother undergoes assessment

Calviniah Kgautlhe
LOBATSE

Otse resident, Galaletsang Ntwaagae, 39, is currently undergoing in-depth social welfare diagnostic assessment alongside her newborn child following an attempted murder charge.

Ntwaagae, who was released on bail last month, faces a single count of attempted murder contrary to Section 217 of the Penal Code of Botswana. The offence allegedly occurred on April 25 at Lesethlana Ward in Otse.

Ntwaagae appeared before Senior Magistrate Vinga Kedikilwe-Johnson at the Lobatse Magistrate’s Court for a status hearing on Tuesday.

Prosecutor Tamela Mbulawa informed the court that the state was awaiting results from the forensic laboratory as well as the complete social welfare report regarding the mother and child.

Representatives from the social welfare office reported that they had conducted three supervised visits between the accused and her child.

However, officials requested for time extension to conduct further evaluations and compile a formal diagnostic report.

The accused is scheduled to return to court on October 29. **BOPA**



SOS Children’s Village Care Giver, Ms Joyce Makoti (left) Board chairperson, Ms Esther Kanaimba-Senai (centre) and National Director, Mr Francis Kebalepile during a press briefing recently in Tlokweng. Mr Kebalepile said Batswana supported SOS throughout the years as they believed that every child deserves a sense of belonging specifically to a family. Photo: Baleseng Batlotleng

SOS Children’s Village celebrates 40 years of impactful care

Baleseng Batlotleng
TLOKWENG

The SOS Children’s Village is set to host an anniversary gala dinner on the November 28 as a build up to celebrating the organisation’s 40 years of existence.

The 40th anniversary will be held under the theme: Celebrating 40 Years of Impactful Care in Botswana.

Briefing the media recently, SOS national director, Mr Francis Kebalepile reflected on the organisation’s remarkable journey throughout the years.

He said the children’s village had over the years seen different cadres of people who were involved and guided its growth

and continuity to serve its purpose in the past 40 years.

Mr Kebalepile said Batswana supported SOS throughout the years as they believed that every child deserved a sense of belonging specifically to a family.

SOS Board chairperson, Ms Esther Kanaimba-Senai said the organisation could face financial burdens as the funding from the international community was coming to an end next year.

Ms Kanaimba-Senai appealed to the business community to amplify the urgent need to assist the organisation reach its full potential of assisting those in need. She said some of the projects put in place were for fund raising purposes such as the dinner night to augment the financial

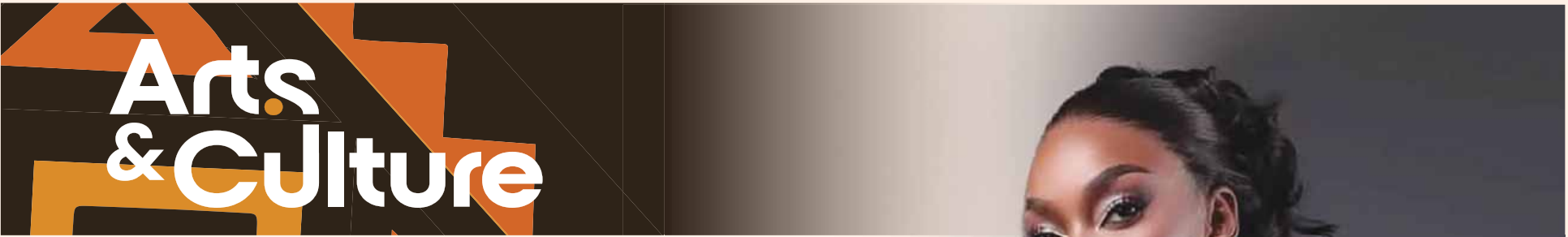
support from government and international funders.

One of the care givers at SOS, Ms Joyce Makoti, who had been with the organisation since 1998, said the centre has shaped her into a responsible woman she was today.

Ms Makoti said those who provided care and support gave love, stability and much needed opportunities.

Along the way, she met people who believed in her abilities even though the journey was altogether not an easy task.

Ms Makoti said her involvement with SOS was a journey, full of valuable and life fulfilling lessons, adding that the passage has proved that the beginning must not determine the end. **BOPA**



Thomas makes winning start at Miss World

Ndingililo Gaoswediwe
GABORONE

Miss World Botswana, Ruth Thomas has made a strong start to her Miss World journey in Vietnam after winning the opening round of the Miss World Head Chef Beauty Challenge alongside her Team 9 teammates.

Thomas joined queens from Curaçao, Venezuela, Guinea-

Bissau, the Czech Republic, Greece, Serbia, Spain, China PR, Lebanon and Pakistan in the culinary challenge, where teams were tasked with preparing three dishes for the judges.

The challenge put contestants' creativity, teamwork and culinary skills to the test, with Team 9 emerging victorious in the opening round.

The early success comes as Thomas continues to make her mark on the festival, with the 24-year-old taking to the runway for the Top Model/Vietnam Beauty Fashion Fest (VBFF) 'The Green World' event on August 18.

At the event, Thomas was among contestants who showcased their elegance, confidence, poise and stage presence as they competed for a place among the leading contenders.

Thomas, from Masunga is representing Botswana at the 73rd Miss World Festival, which is being held in Vietnam from August 9 to September 5.

Her passion for fashion is also

personal, revealing in an interview that her love for the craft was inspired by her grandmother, who was a designer.

She has also demonstrated her creativity by making clothing pieces by hand without using a sewing machine.

With her Head Chef Challenge victory providing an early boost to her campaign, Thomas now turns her attention to a packed schedule of fast-track events.

Thomas secured a place in Miss World Top 24 sports challenge following a 1.25km race against contestants from across the globe yesterday.

The festival will culminate in the grand final and crowning ceremony on September 5, when Thomas will hope to make history by becoming Botswana's next Miss World finalist. **BOPA**

Ruth Thomas
Photo: Courtesy of Miss World-Botswana

Maake kaNcube headlines inaugural Creators Assembly Summit

Loago Thomas
GABORONE

South African acting royalty, Sello Maake kaNcube is topping the bill at the inaugural Creators Assembly Summit, taking place today and tomorrow at the Maitisong Theatre in Maru-a-Pula.

Held under the theme: Creativity, the New Currency, in partnership with BBS Bank, the summit was founded by local singer-songwriter Han-C.

The idea emerged from discussions among Botswana music industry peers on driving collaboration and creating a sustainable future for local creatives.

What began as a focused initiative has expanded into a comprehensive programme featuring over 20 speakers, facilitators and panellists across music, film, dance, fashion, beauty and the visual arts, alongside corporate brands, financial institutions and policymakers.

Maake kaNcube leads a distinguished panel, including filmmaker Samuel Ngwenya, co-creator of the acclaimed drama series, COLOURS and musician-broadcaster, Thato

'Scar' Matlabaphiri.

Together, they will anchor sessions on storytelling, intellectual property, branding and commercialising creative work.

BBS Bank head of business relations and marketing, Sipho Showa, described the summit as a curated platform designed to merge learning, collaboration and networking to help artists professionalise their craft.

Maake kaNcube's participation brings significant star power following a last-minute schedule adjustment.

Organisers, in consultation with BBS Bank, removed South African choreographer, Limpopo Boy from the line-up following circulation of a private video.

While Maake kaNcube does not replace the dance slot directly, his presence provides substantial industry authority to the maiden event.

The summit ends tomorrow, shifting from panel discussions to hands-on workshops, collaborative sessions and the Creators Night Market.

Organisers intend for the summit to transition into a year-round platform offering sustained mentorship and networking for Botswana's creative economy. **BOPA**

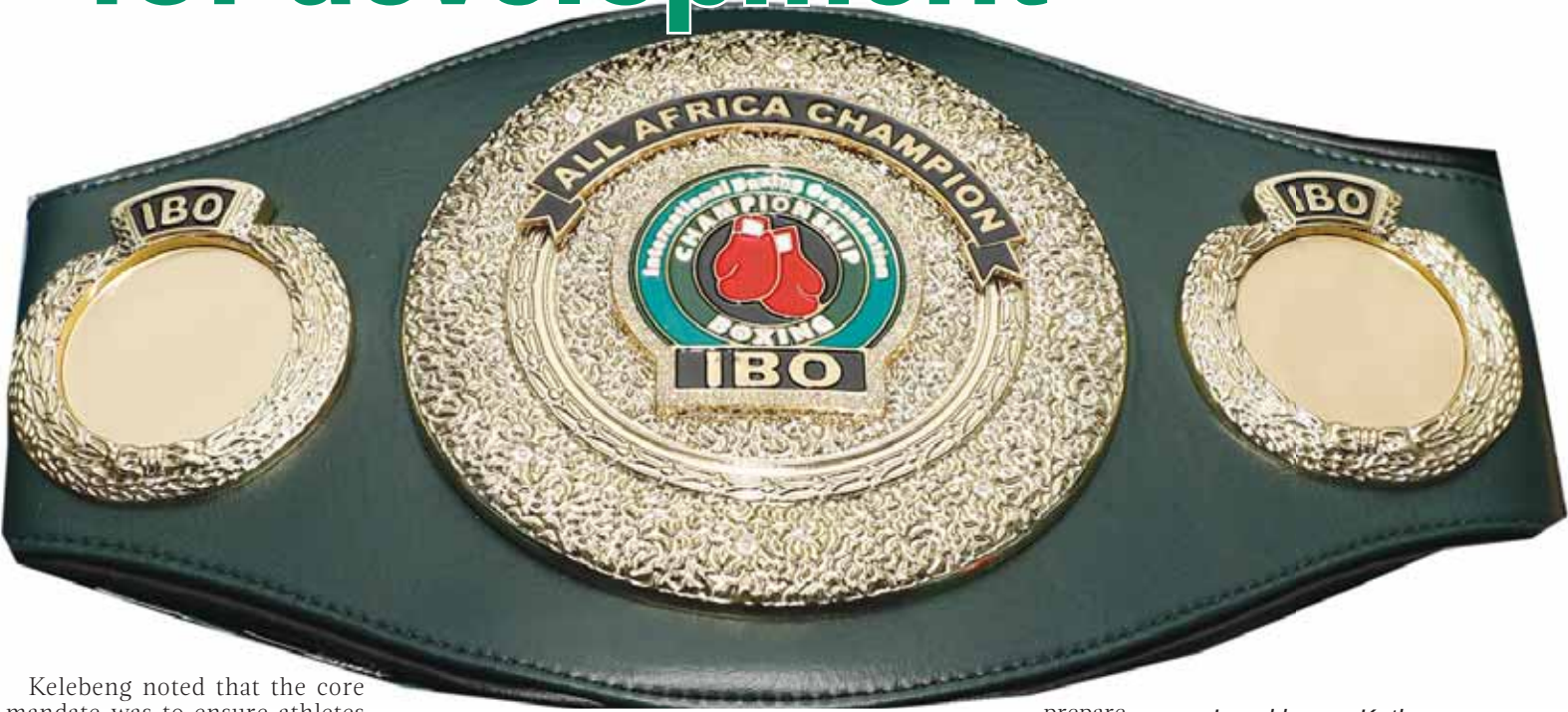


Govt backs boxing as catalyst for development

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

Government continues to recognise sport as a vital vehicle for youth development, social cohesion, economic participation and national pride.

Speaking at the launch and unveiling of the International Boxing Organisation (IBO) All Africa Championship title belt in Gaborone on Tuesday, Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeng emphasised the ministry’s commitment to building an enabling environment for local talent.



Kelebeng noted that the core mandate was to ensure athletes were identified, nurtured, and

provided with seamless pathways from grassroots participation to elite professional competition.

He highlighted that strong partnership between government, sporting associations, promoters, broadcasters, sponsors and the private sector served as vital pillars of success.

He cited the upcoming championship as a prime example of effective multi-stakeholder collaboration.

The blockbuster event, set for September 18 in Gaborone, will see local boxing star, Kutlwano Ogaketse, lock horns with South Africa’s Aphiwe Mboyiya for the coveted IBO All Africa Championship title belt.

He described the bout as a major milestone for both the boxer and the nation, adding that when Ogaketse stepped into the ring, he would carry the hopes, aspirations and pride of all Batswana.

He urged the local pugilist to

prepare diligently, maintain strict discipline and capitalise on the massive platform to unlock further continental and international opportunities.

The card would also feature a Professional Boxing Association Botswana (PBAB) National Championship bout between Tebogo Rennie and Brian Malabola.

Kelebeng praised the inclusion of both an international IBO title fight and a national PBAB championship on the same night, stating that it demonstrated a clear strategic link between developing local talent and offering them global exposure.

He added that boxing remained a powerful tool for youth engagement, instilling essential life skills such as discipline, resilience, commitment, respect and responsibility.

PBAB president, Seroa Binda urged stakeholders and the public to rethink how they viewed professional boxing, stressing that

Local boxer, Kutlwano Ogaketse is set to exchange hot blows with South Africa’s Aphiwe Mboyiya at the blockbuster event scheduled for September 18.
Photos: Phenyo Ramatu

the sport extended far beyond the two athletes in the ring.

“Every professional tournament drives an entire economic industry,” Binda noted, explaining that such events generate employment and income for trainers, managers, promoters, officials, event staff, broadcasters, journalists and security personnel.

Binda also underscored the value to Botswana’s hospitality and tourism sectors, saying hosting international events directly stimulated the local economy through hotel accommodations, transport services and restaurant catering for visiting delegations.
BOPA



Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeng (left) and Thuso Khubamang of Scud Missile Promotions, officially unveiling the International Boxing Organization All Africa Championship Title Belt.

Over 350 karatekas to battle for national team slots

Thamani Shabani
FRANCISTOWN

More than 350 karatekas from across the country will converge at BDF Donga hall on Saturday for the Botswana Kofukan Open Championship, hoping to make the national team cut for the 2027 Kofukan World Cup in France.

The tournament, organised by the Botswana Kofukan Federation, will feature contests in Kata, Kumite and Team events.

BKF chairperson, Veronica Chube said the championship was not about medals but focused on national team selection.

“It is a platform for athletes to display their skills, secure national rankings, and feed

into the federation’s grassroots development plan aimed at getting more youth into the sport,” she said.

Chube said Kofukan remained one of the most outstanding styles in the country with a membership of more than 2 000.

The event will therefore also serve as a regional qualifier and a key part of team selection for upcoming international assignments.

Chube explained that more than 10 clubs were expected to take part, including Police, City Active, Orapa, Serowe, Palapye, Glen Valley, SSKB, Maun, Tutume, Thebe and Kagiso Karate Clubs, as well as karatekas from other styles such as Shukokai Shito-ryu

and Shotokan.

She said athletes from tertiary institutions clubs were also expected to feature in large numbers.

Of the 350 athletes registered so far under BKF, about 300 are Cadets and Juniors with 20 in Senior and Veteran categories.

Even though the event was meant for national athletes, she said Zimbabwe and Zambia had shown interest.

Chube said BKF boasts of more than 30 qualified coaches and referees, with international accredited officials such as Webster Linchwe and Boston Rakgampu set to officiate.

She said the use of an electronic scoring system through Sports

Data would also be introduced to align with international standards.

All eyes will be on national team members, defending champions and rising stars, with names to be confirmed ahead of the tournament.

Chube said some athletes were also expected to make their debut in senior categories or return to action after nursing injuries.

Chube said the day would open with a ceremony that would be addressed by Brigadier David Nkete, who is also the BDF Karate chairperson. There will also be special demonstrations and self-defense displays.

Winners in each category will receive medals for position one to three, while overall best

performers will walk away with trophies. The event is open to the public at an entrance fee of P20.

Chube acknowledged that the organising committee faced challenges with sponsorship and securing the venue, but said preparations were on track.

She urged the public, former athletes and karate fans to come in large numbers to support the athletes.

“The purpose is to grow the sport, identify talent, and give our athletes an opportunity to represent Botswana at the Kofukan World Cup in France in 2027. We want to see more youth in clubs and Botswana flag being raised many times internationally,” Chube said. **BOPA**