

BOTSWANA

Daily News

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Botswana makes first
poultry export



Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti (left) and Ross Breeders managing director, Mr Allen Bradford during the official launch of the first export consignment of hatching eggs to Mozambique yesterday. Ross Breeders company in Artesia will be exporting 90 000 hatchery eggs to Mozambique every week. The achievement marks the beginning of a sustainable weekly export programme aimed at positioning Botswana as a premier hub for high quality poultry. Minister Dikoloti applauded the project saying it had already generated 370 direct jobs, stimulating the local economy and demonstrating the power of private-sector led growth supported by enabling government policy. Additionally, Dr Dikoloti noted that government remained committed to agriculture-led job creation with a target of 250 000 jobs in the sector by 2029. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

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Bereaved families await compensation

Thokozani Matiha
MOLEPOLOLE

Bereaved families of the tragic 2024 Mmamatlakala Bridge bus accident are yet to receive compensation from South Africa’s Road Accident Fund (RAF).

This was said by Chief of Staff in the Office of the President, Dr Oupa Tsheko, last Saturday in Molepolole during the unveiling of tombstones to honour the 45 people who perished in the disaster.

Providing an overview of the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure programme, Dr Tsheko revealed that while working on the tombstones, his office engaged the Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) Fund, as there was concern that the bereaved families were yet to be compensated through the RAF. He said through the office of the MVA CEO, his office was able to engage with the RAF.

“I am happy to indicate that RAF through its communications with MVA Fund, there was confirmation that they will be able to help us. Our hope was that before the unveiling RAF could have engaged with the parents to give them an update on the compensation. MVA Fund was welcomed our plea wholeheartedly and are working hard to assist the bereaved families through my office,” Dr Tsheko said.

He appealed to the South African government and the St Engenas Zion Christian Church to assist his office with the relevant authority to engage in order to accordingly access the RAF compensation.

“There is concern because there are some cases where such compensation is misappropriated by family legal representation, therefore the church as a well-established institution is in a position to engage its attorneys to assist the bereaved families,” he added.

He indicated that the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure programme, spearheaded by the First Lady, Ms Kaone Boko, was aligned with the objectives of President Advocate Duma Boko-led government, which was focused on giving dignity as a human rights-centric government.

Therefore, he said the programme was appealing for dignified service and rendering support where it was required.

He explained that the programme came into being as the First Lady was concerned about the whereabouts of the sole survivor of the Mmamatlakala bridge bus accident, the welfare of the deceased families, as well as the survivors of the truck accident that was ferrying learners from Matsha College.

Dr Tsheko said Ms Boko was also guided by God to initiate such a programme meant to provide healing and the necessary support for the survivors of the Matsha College accident and the bereaved families.

He said the South African government, through the premier of Limpopo, had done what was necessary in assisting the families by doing their all for the remains of the deceased to be repatriated home for dignified burial.

He added that the process of installing tombstones was done through the philanthropic gesture of some state-owned enterprises,

‘There is concern because there are some cases where such compensation is misappropriated by family legal representation’

adding that Bothakga Burrow was the only private company that had heeded the First Lady’s call.

Meanwhile, deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation in South Africa, Ms Thandi Moraka, said the South African government stood in solidarity with the bereaved families.

Ms Moraka also said the historic day, July 18, which coincided with the unveiling of the tombstone as part of the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure programme, had a significant weight in the history of South Africa as it was set to observe Mandela Day, where people are encouraged to dedicate 67 minutes of their time to serve and also honour issues of human rights and social justice.

“The trajectory was not only a road accident, it was human calamity cutting across families, communities, churches and the two sister countries,” Ms Moraka said.

She stated that her government was fully involved through its provincial government of Limpopo, led by Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba, adding that it was important to ensure that the families found closure and recover from the tragic accident.

“We remember the victims with dignity and compassion. We also remember the courage of our medical teams, forensic experts and emergency service officials who worked under painful conditions to recover the deceased and also assist the injured and most importantly helping with the repatriation of the mortal remains,” she said.

She added that the relationship between South Africa and Botswana continued to remain one of the strongest relationships in the SADC region.

“When Botswana grieves, South Africa as well grieves. When Botswana feels pain, the people of South Africa also feel that pain,” she said.

She assured the Chief of Staff that the South African government was operating on an open door policy and would appreciate rendering support where it was necessary to bring closure to the pending issues of compensation from the RAF.

She acknowledged the RAF availability, however expressed concern that funds were always getting abused by the legal representatives processing claims on behalf of the victims.

Therefore, she assured that they would remain in solidarity with the office of the Chief of Staff to make sure that the right beneficiaries of the compensation funds got what was due to them. **BOPA**



President Advocate Duma Boko (left) and First Lady Kaone during the unveiling of Mmamatlakala tombstones at the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure ceremony in Molepolole on Saturday. Ms Boko said healing did not demand that individuals forget the past, but allowed them to remember differently and effectively transform grief into compassion. Photo: Phenyo Ramatu

Tragedies must shape public policy - First Lady

Moshe Galeragwe
MOLEPOLOLE

National tragedies carry profound lessons that must actively shape public policy, First Lady, Ms Kaone Boko has said.

Officiating at the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure event held in Molepolole last Saturday, Ms Boko emphasised that remembrance must leave positive and lasting impact on the country.

The solemn event was organised to unveil the tombstones of 45 Batswana who perished in a devastating road accident, while also continuing the ongoing mission to honour victims and heal survivors of past tragedies, including the Matsha College truck accident.

Ms Boko noted that healing did not demand that individuals forgot the past, but it allowed them to remember differently and effectively transforming grief into compassion.

“On the 28th of March 2024, we remember 45 Batswana travelling on an Easter pilgrimage as members of St. Engenas Zion Christian Church in Molepolole. They lost their lives in the devastating Mmamatlakala bus accident in Limpopo, South Africa.

What began as a journey of faith became one of our darkest memories,” she said.

Despite the heavy aftermath of the tragedy, Ms Boko stated that grieving families and the nation must emerge with deeper understanding that the true measure of a nation was found not only in its economic prosperity, but also in the compassion extended to those who suffered.

She commended the extraordinary bilateral cooperation witnessed between Botswana and South Africa during the crisis,

calling it a powerful reminder that compassion knows no borders. She also praised the resilience of the affected families, noting how remarkable it had been to witness men and women carrying immense pain yet continuing to pull themselves together to guide their families towards a better future.

To the sole survivor of the crash, who was just an eight-year-old girl at the time, Ms Boko said the nation still held her close to its heart as a miraculous symbol of hope.

“To our girl, I say that may God continue to show His miracles through you, may God continue to bless you, may God shine His light upon you and may God give you peace,” she said.

Ms Boko observed that Botswana had historically found its greatest strength not in the absence of hardships, but in how it united during trials.

She noted that when one family suffered, the entire community felt diminished and when one person was lifted, the whole nation grew.

Accordingly, she explained that the unveiling ceremony spoke not only to the memory of the victims but as a directive to those who were still alive.

“This is why we have taken it upon ourselves to also visit and talk to the survivors and their families to make sure that they are okay, to make sure that Matsha College is well equipped, so that it is not only remembered when we speak of the tragedy.

We are going to remember them for the good grades they are going to get,” she added.

Ms Boko revealed that her office was working tirelessly alongside the Office of the Chief of Staff to ensure that the survivors and the families left behind preserved their dignity and received the support

they needed to heal.

She emphasised that the greatest tribute the nation can pay to the departed was to build a safer Botswana where preventable tragedies became fewer, where communities were better equipped to respond with compassion and where every child and family can look to the future with genuine hope.

By doing so, she said remembrance became call to action and healing as well as the foundation for a more caring nation.

“We must thank God even when it is painful, even when we are mourning the loss of our loved ones, even when we do not understand,” Ms Boko said, offering words of spiritual comfort.

“I have learnt to trust in God, I have learnt to believe everything He says, because God is not a man that can lie. God does not say one thing and do another. God in all His power will heal and restore you,” she said.

Conversely, the First Lady likened nations to families, stating that a confident future cannot be built by leaving the deepest wounds unattended.

True healing, she said, required the courage to stand together in the presence of sorrow without looking away.

She noted that the National Healing and Closure programme was born from the important realisation that the responsibility of a government did not cease when emergency responders left the scene, when investigations concluded or when headlines faded from public attention.

“Our duty is not fulfilled merely by responding to disaster. It is fulfilled when those who continue to carry grief know that they have not been abandoned, forgotten, or left to bear the burden alone,” she said. **BOPA**

No child should be left behind in ICT - Boko

Esther Mmolai
SANKOYO

Teaching children information and communication technology (ICT) from an early age is one of the best ways to prepare them for a digital future, First Lady Kaone Boko has said.

Ms Boko made the remarks recently during the handover of a fully furnished digital centre worth more than P1.5 million at Sankoyo Primary School.

She said the initiative would help bridge the rural digital divide by providing internet access and digital literacy training to learners and the wider community.

The digital centre, established by the Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA), is equipped with 30 laptops, internet connectivity, an interactive smart board, chairs, tables and a printer. It is intended to enhance the learning experience by equipping students with essential digital skills.

Ms Boko commended BOCRA for the generous donation, saying early exposure to ICT would ensure that children did not fall behind in a knowledge-based economy. She said digital skills were essential for lifelong learning and praised the authority for its continued efforts to promote digital inclusion by transforming education in rural communities.

She said BOCRA had demonstrated its commitment to the welfare of Batswana, particularly children, by exposing them to technology at an early age and ensuring that learners in rural areas were afforded the same opportunities as their urban counterparts.

“The pace at which BOCRA is transforming the country into a knowledge-based digital economy and assisting Batswana access technology is truly unmatched,” she said.

Ms Boko described education and knowledge as great equalisers that provide everyone with a fair chance to succeed in life, adding that digitalisation had become an equally powerful tool for breaking down traditional barriers and ensuring equal access to education and services. She noted that internet connectivity had the potential to create equal

opportunities, saying access to ICT enabled people to communicate globally and participate in the digital economy.

As technology continues to shape every aspect of life, Ms Boko appealed to parents to actively monitor their children’s use of technology and educate them about both its benefits and potential risks.

She also applauded teachers for their dedication, acknowledging that nurturing and educating children was no easy task as they continue to defy the odds by imparting knowledge and developing learners into responsible citizens.

Ms Boko further appealed to women from Shorobe, Sankoyo, Mababe and Khwai to support her Mpepu initiative, which promotes positive parenting and aims to strengthen families while protecting children.

She said the initiative was built on Botswana’s cultural values of care and support and urged women to take a leading role in ensuring its success. Acting North West Regional Education Director, Ms Chidzani Lempadi, also welcomed the donation, saying the digital centre and its equipment would significantly improve teaching and learning at Sankoyo Primary School.

She said the facility would help learners acquire critical 21st-century skills, noting that Sankoyo Primary School was already among the region’s top-performing schools and expressing confidence that the new digital resources would further improve academic performance.

Ms Lempadi added that the centre would also support teachers’ professional development by enabling them to adopt more interactive and innovative teaching methods.

“We expect teachers to make learning more enjoyable and experiential, as learners will now be able to conduct research and connect with the world beyond Gaborone. These gadgets will help close the gaps that many young people face,” she said, while commending BOCRA for its support. **BOPA**



First Lady Kaone Boko (right) appreciating a Sankoyo Primary School pupil's digital skills after launching the Digital Centre at the school recently. She said the over P1.5m fully-fledged centre established by Botswana Communication Regulatory Authority would enhance the modern learning experience for learners by empowering them with digital skills. It consists of 30 computers, smart board, 30 tables and chairs as well as a printer. Photo: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

Minister warns against misuse of artificial intelligence

Esther Mmolai
SANKOYO

Minister of Communications and Innovation, Mr David Tshere, has warned that the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) poses growing risks to children, including exposure to harmful advice and overreliance on AI-powered chatbots.

Speaking during the handover of a digital centre at Sankoyo Primary School recently, Mr Tshere said there was increasing global concern that some AI systems were providing harmful responses, including advising vulnerable children to commit suicide as a solution to personal challenges.

He said many countries had expressed concern that advances in AI were outpacing child protection measures, exposing children to risks that could negatively affect their cognitive development through excessive dependence on chatbots for answers.

Mr Tshere noted that governments around the world were calling for stronger AI governance to balance rapid technological innovation with safeguards for human rights, data privacy and ethical standards.

“There is a growing call to regulate AI because we believe those

who develop these technologies should be held accountable. AI has become harmful in some instances by encouraging children to commit suicide as a way of overcoming their challenges,” he said.

He urged technology users to embrace digital tools productively, responsibly and ethically.

Mr Tshere also commended First Lady Ms Kaone Boko for her leadership in helping bridge the digital divide, particularly in rural communities, as Botswana advances towards becoming a knowledge-based, digital-first economy. He recalled that last year, the First Lady handed over a refurbished science laboratory at Dikgatlo Junior Secondary School in Kudumatse to improve learning and reduce inequalities in access to quality educational facilities.

He said her initiatives continued to inspire the ministry to expand information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and services across the country to ensure that no community was left behind.

“We are driving an ambitious national strategy to transform Botswana into a knowledge-based, digital-first economy, and we appreciate the support of the First Lady, who continues to champion the empowerment and inclusion of

girls in ICT,” he said.

Mr Tshere said government had introduced initiatives aimed at increasing the participation of girls and women in the ICT sector, including reforms designed to encourage more young women to occupy executive positions within the industry.

He observed that women remained underrepresented in senior ICT positions, partly because existing recruitment strategies had not been effective in attracting and retaining ICT professionals.

Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, Ms Lesego Chombo, who also attended the event, welcomed the establishment of the digital centre, describing it as a demonstration of government’s commitment to ensuring equitable access to technology regardless of geographical location.

She said the facility would improve teaching and learning, provide residents with access to government services online, and equip the community with essential digital skills.

“This investment demonstrates that true inclusion means ensuring children in rural communities have the same opportunities to innovate, create and compete as children anywhere else in the world,” she said. **BOPA**

Khan commends leaders for standing with mourners

Keetile Bontsibokae
MOLEPOLOLE

President Advocate Duma Boko’s participation at the unveiling of tombstones for victims of the 2024 Mmamatlakala bus tragedy has been hailed as a powerful demonstration of solidarity and compassion during the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure Programme.

On Saturday, President Boko joined hundreds of mourners at Garanta Graveyard in Molepolole for the unveiling of tombstones of 44 members of the St Engenas Zion Christian Church, who died while travelling to the church’s headquarters in Moria, South Africa, for their annual Easter pilgrimage on March 24, 2024.

The event formed part of the National Healing, Remembrance and Closure Programme,

launched by First Lady Kaone Boko to promote healing among communities affected by national tragedies, including the 2015 Matsha College accident and the 2024 Mmamatlakala bus crash.

Earlier in the day, survivors, bereaved families and friends received messages of comfort and hope, with the First Lady encouraging the nation to honour the memories of those who died while embracing healing and unity.

Delivering closing remarks, Molepolole North Member of Parliament, Mr Arafat Khan, commended the First Lady for creating a platform that enabled the nation to remember and honour those who lost their lives.

He said the deceased remained an important part of society whose memories and contributions continued to inspire their communities.

Mr Khan also praised President Boko for personally attending the ceremony, laying wreaths, paying floral tributes, unveiling the tombstones and visiting every grave.

He said the President’s presence brought comfort to grieving families and underscored the importance of continued psychological, emotional and moral support.

“The presence of national leaders during times of grief unites the nation and gives hope to those who are mourning. It is a gesture that deserves appreciation,” he said.

Mr Khan acknowledged that the pain of losing loved ones would endure for many families and urged the public to continue offering support.

“It is clear that this tragedy will continue to affect many families for years to come. Although they have received support, relatives

and friends are still grieving. We must continue providing them with emotional and moral support,” he added.

Leading the unveiling ceremony, Mr Prince Teka of the St. Engenas ZCC headquarters in Moria shared biblical messages of hope and remembrance, quoting Genesis 35:19-20 to emphasise the importance of honouring departed loved ones.

He described the unveiling of the tombstones as a lasting tribute to those who lost their lives and encouraged families to cherish their memories while finding strength in faith. A separate unveiling ceremony for the bus driver, who also died in the accident, was held in Thamaga last Thursday.

Among those in attendance was the sole survivor of the bus tragedy, a teenage girl from Molepolole. **BOPA**

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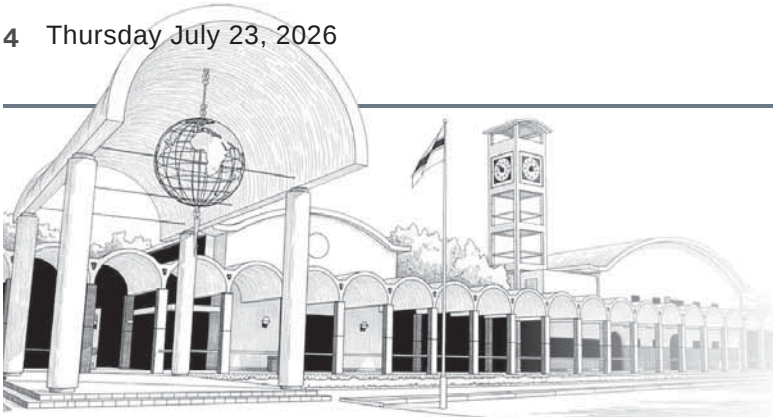
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PARLIAMENT 2026

MPs welcome review of National Library Service Act

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Members of Parliament (MPs) have supported the review of the National Library Service Act to transform the national library services.

Commenting on the Bill presented to Parliament by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware on Thursday, Okavango West legislator, Mr Kenny Kapinga proposed for migration policy to transition from analogue to digital where there would be audio books and digital pictures.

Mr Kapinga said the young generation was tech-savvy and the transformation of national libraries should provide for them.

Speaking on presidential library, Mr Kapinga said establishing such a library was an expensive task, especially that the convention was to establish it at respective home villages of such former Presidents.

Mr Kapinga also said funding of the presidential library should not solely be from government, urging that most funds should be from donors and the private sector.

Additionally, Mr Kapinga said a presidential library should extend to a monument or museum.

“It should be a recreational or amusement facility where people would be allowed to spend a day

relaxing,” he said.

Kgatleng East MP, Mr Mabuse Pule said it would be ideal to have a centre, which catered for all former Presidents to curb costs.

Mr Pule suggested that the presidential library should be based at an identified place, preferably Gaborone.

He said libraries should be modernised and called for incorporation of indigenous languages libraries, which would help people with pronunciation of indigenous words, particularly foreigners who visited community libraries.

MP for Shashe West, Mr Jeremiah Frenzel said libraries should take into recognition, People Living With Disabilities to enable them to access information with ease. He also appealed to government to consider establishing public libraries outside schools for easy access.

Tlokwen MP, Mr Pheny Segokgo urged the minister to tie the review of the Act to creation of jobs and Botswana’s economic transformation programmes.

He said digitalisation of libraries would create opportunities for software developers while authors and publishers would also have more job opportunities.

MP for Kgatleng West, Dr Unity Dow said while she welcomed the review of the Act, the good ideas could not be fulfilled with the current financial situation the country faced. **BOPA**



Members of Parliament have supported the review of the National Library Service Act to transform national library services by aligning them with modern standards. Photo: Pheny Ramatu

National Library Service Bill passes to committee stage

Esther Mmolai
and Ketshepile More
GABORONE

The National Library Service Bill No16 of 2026, which aims to re-enact and update the National Library Service Act is ready for committee stage.

The Bill, seeking to transform the country’s information infrastructure to meet modern technology standard was presented by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware in Parliament on Thursday.

In their contributions, Members Parliament agreed that modernising libraries would keep them relevant in the digital age.

Mogoditshane East MP, Mr Letlhogonolo Barongwang said a library was part of every man’s journey in terms of personal development offering access to shared knowledge and diverse perspective.

He said although libraries continued to serve communities, their role in the modern society was limited due to technological advancement.

“This is testament that we are pushing for transformation, shifting from analogue to digital and this will also align our education system to match the international standard,” he said.

Furthermore, he said modern libraries were essential in supporting development and human capital growth, noting that some areas such as Mogoditshane were fast growing and needed developments that could improve the quality of life of the people.

Gabane-Mmankgodi MP, Mr Kagiso Mmusi thanked the Rothschild Family Foundation, through which Mmankgodi residents had benefited from their generous donation of books to the community library.

The family equipped the library with Internet and providing access to critical books which, Mr Mmusi said championed life long learning and was in line with the transformation that the Bill sought to achieve.

He, however wanted to know if there was any strategy in place to ensure continuity, acknowledging the importance of a library as a community hub that provided free and equal access to knowledge.

He welcomed the Presidential Library, saying government should consider expanding it into a big well-resourced centre that would encompass Parliament and among others, military sections.

MP for Selebi-Phikwe East, Mr Kgoberego Nkawana also supported the Bill saying the transformation was long overdue.

He wished the Act once in place, could have a clause that would attract authors to bring

their books to libraries and be compensated for their hard work.

Minister Mokgware appreciated the comments and suggestions made by MPs, noting that they would be taken into consideration.

With regard to the Presidential Library, he said the intention was to have one centre, which would have sections under one roof, citing that the model was doing wonders in other countries.

The envisaged library, he said, was to be built in Gaborone as part of the city tourism initiative.

Earlier on when presenting the Bill, Minister Mokgware said government had found the need to review the National Library Service Act of 1967 in a bid to revive national libraries. He said this would assist in aligning national libraries to latest developments in the library and information landscape across the world.

He said the National Library Service Bill No 16 of 2026 sought to address emerging issues in the information sector since the existing legislation was not adequate to operationalise its implementation.

Maj. Gen. Mokgware said some factors, which called for review of the Act were digital transformation, inclusion of People with Special needs, inclusion of legal deposit collections through diverse languages, recognition of libraries as central points to provide windows for access to public services and knowledge centres offered by government ministries and departments, establishment of a Presidential Library as well as enforcement of compliance by introducing new penalties.

The National Library Service Act of 1967 was revised in 1978. The Department of National Library Services managed 105 service points including 45 public libraries and 59 village reading rooms across the country.

It is also responsible for the management and coordination of 58 educational libraries and 57special libraries. **BOPA**

Mohwasa clarifies acquisition of De-Beers stake

GABORONE

The Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa has told Parliament that the government is a 15 per cent shareholder in De Beers and related group companies and also a 50 per cent shareholder in Debswana.

Responding to a question in Parliament on Friday, Mr Mohwasa said in terms of existing agreements and also under Botswana law, the government has the rights in relation to a n y

change of control relating to its shareholding and also pre-emptive rights in respect of any disposal by Anglo-American of its 85 per cent stake in De Beers.

Mr Mohwasa highlighted that Anglo-American has commenced a sale process in relation to its 85 per cent stake, adding that has triggered Botswana’s legal entitlements.

In pursuit of those entitlements, which included the possibility of the acquisition of a controlling stake, subject to regulatory, antitrust and financial considerations, he said the government has decided to participate in the sale and acquisition process.

He said the government was aware that there were other commercial bidders and that both the Republic of Angola and Namibia were interested in acquiring a stake.

“The government is engaging with all of these potential bidders with a view to ensuring that Botswana’s ultimate increased

stake is at an optimal level in the best interest of the country and its people,” he said.

In order to ensure the best possible transactional outcome, Mr Mohwasa stated that the government has commenced a detailed legal and financial due diligence exercise, working with Batswana and international advisors, noting that the government has also entered into detailed negotiations with Anglo-American.

He said it is expected that the outcome of this due diligence would determine the value of De Beers and the attendant pricing considerations, which in turn would inform and determine final negotiations with Anglo-American and engagements with potential sovereign and private sector partners.

The minister revealed that the transaction was ongoing and the government would naturally continue to inform all stakeholders as it progressed to conclusion.

He was responding to a question from the MP for Maun North Mr Dumelang Saleshando, who had wanted an update on government acquisition of a controlling stake in De Beers. **BOPA**



Minister for State President, Defence and Security
Mr Moeti Mohwasa

Parliament adopts motion on special guns permit quota

Esther Mmolai
GABORONE

Parliament has adopted a motion presented by MP for Maun East, Mr Goretetse Kekgonengile, which requested the government to introduce a special guns permit quota for farmers residing in dangerous wildlife infested farming areas as a matter of facilitating them to protect their livestock, crops and properties.

Presenting the motion before Parliament adopted it on Friday, Mr Kekgonengile argued that Botswana had a high wildlife population, which contributed to tourism growth and national economy.

He stated that the issue of human-wildlife conflict was a concern especially in areas adjacent to wildlife management areas such as game reserves and national parks citing Okavango, North West, Tutume, Chobe, Bobirwa and Kgalagadi as the most affected districts.

Mr Kekgonengile said residents were actively striving to improve food security but their efforts were undermined by issues of human-wildlife conflict.

By introducing special guns permit quota, he said farmers in wildlife-infested areas could be able to protect themselves and property from animals, which continued to raid their farms and prey on their livestock.

While he appreciated that agriculture and tourism were all critical sectors of the economy, Mr Kekgonengile underscored the need to strike a balance between the two so that they equally

benefitted the communities.

“Human-wildlife conflict is growing, especially in areas along the wildlife management areas as everyday residents were terrorised by animals such as lions, elephants, wild dogs and hyenas among others and such incidents do occur regularly,” he noted.

Mr Kekgonengile said most affected were subsistence farmers or semi-commercial, whose agriculture remained their source of livelihood.

“We believe that by introducing civilian firearms can be one of the best solutions to protect themselves from these dangerous animals,” he added.

Furthermore, he appreciated that there was compensation scheme in place, which he said, was inadequate, citing undervalued pay-outs and delayed imbursement among others.

He also stated that the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) faced a lot of challenges, citing that currently, it was overwhelmed because of shortage of staff and stretched limited resources resulting in late response to assist farmers well on time.

Mr Kekgonengile also acknowledged the interventions in place such as building predator-proof kraals and chilli deterrents for crop raiding animals among others but noted that they were ineffective

MP for Maun East
Mr Goretetse
Kekgonengile



Lions preying on smallstock. Parliament on Friday adopted a motion by Maun East MP, Mr Goretetse Kekgonengile, which requested government to introduce a special guns permit quota for farmers residing in dangerous wildlife infested areas as a matter of facilitating them to protect their livestock, crops and properties.

while some farmers could not afford to implement some.

“This motion does not refer to all districts but to those experiencing issues of human-wildlife conflict, particularly areas within the affected districts are the one deserving to have such guns. They will be issued to those who can safely handle them,” he added.

Responding to the motion, Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa said introducing special guns permit quota for farmers would not be fair as other sections such as the business owners and even MPs just to mention a few, would also want to own guns for their safety and protection.

Mr Mohwasa stated that the government through its commitment to the African Union and the SADC Protocol dealing with the curbing of proliferation of firearms and indeed as a signatory to the international Arms Trade Treaty had adopted a position, which sought to limit the arms and ammunitions in the hands of the citizens in Botswana.

The commitment, he said was a bullet in the arms and ammunition Act, adding that the government also has policies that encouraged co-existence of the people with wild animals, which had worked well so far.

“This proposal will run counter the government commitment to curb proliferation of firearms and the policy of co-existence of people with the animals. I know human-wildlife conflict is a challenge but issuing more guns

will create waves of violence,” he added.

Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General Pius Mokgware noted that challenges advanced by the mover of the motion were valid but issuance of guns was not the solution, but rather a big mistake.

He called for a permanent solution that was non-lethal, arguing that a weapon was a legal equipment and before issuing it to someone, training and practical drilling were essential for safety and legality.

Instead of gun issuance, he proposed that the government come up with a well-developed compensation programme that ensured farmers were paid according to the market value so that they could be restored to the initial position.

Maj. Gen Mokgware also suggested that people with farms should be allowed to venture into game farming and called for more strategies that would mitigate human-wildlife conflict. **BOPA**

Motsamai calls for shift in perspective

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Communities in wildlife hotspots should pursue economic gains presented by game farming rather than viewing wild animals as a problem, Member of Parliament for Charleshill, Mr Motsamai has said.

Contributing to the motion tabled by Maun East MP, Mr Goretetse Kekgonengile in Parliament on Friday, Mr Motsamai, who is also the assistant Minister of Lands and Agriculture said farmers should be encouraged to shift perspective for them to realise that co-existing with wildlife could yield financial gains.

In his motion, Mr Kekgonengile was requesting government to introduce a “special guns” permit quota for farmers residing in dangerous wildlife infested farming areas, as a matter of facilitating them to protect their livestock, crops and properties.

However, Mr Motsamai said by learning to live with wild animals, farmers could generate steady revenue through sustainable harvesting and eco-tourism while protecting their livestock and crops.

Supporting the motion, MP for Boteti West, Mr Sam Digwa

said areas most affected like the Okavango, Chobe and Ngamiland should be considered with a 70 per cent quota allocated for them.

Mr Digwa said every year government, issued a quota of acquisition permits for firearms and therefore should consider a more reasonable quota to the areas most in danger of wildlife for their own protection.

He said improving compensation schemes for farmers would be a challenge with the current economic constraints faced by government.

Mr Digwa said through this motion, government should prioritise on saving lives as resource constraints continuously delayed the immediate deployment of wildlife officials

for on-call assistance.

Also in support of the motion was MP for Tonota, Mr Gaefele Sedombo who argued that wildlife damage was a contributing factor to poverty. He said whenever wild animals attacked farmers, they lost their primary source of income and food. Mr Sedombo said repeated losses eventually destroyed investment capital,

indebted farmers and even threatened food security.

For his part, Serowe West MP, Mr Onalepelo Kedikilwe said human-wildlife conflict impacted vulnerable, remote farming communities and therefore farmers should be empowered with guns to protect their investments as well as their lives. **BOPA**



Member of Parliament for Charleshill, Mr Motsamai Motsamai has urged communities in wildlife hotspots to pursue economic gains presented by game farming saying a shift in perspective was ideal for human-wildlife co-existence.



DailyBusiness

Farmers reel from bitter winter blow

Marvin Motlhabane
KANYE

At least six farmers in the Kanye District have lost approximately P1.5 million worth of field crops after a severe three-day frost hit the area between July 8 and 10. The heavy losses affected 1.5 hectares of cabbage and 0.25 hectares of tomatoes, along with significant damage to chillies, spinach, rape, and other vegetables on farms in Lorolwane, Nneneke and Diphatana.

In an interview, Mr Oaitse Keikitse, Kanye District Irrigation Officer, described the widespread destruction as a blow. He noted that the frost damaged not only cold-sensitive crops like tomatoes but virtually every crop in the fields.

He highlighted the potential income lost, explaining that a single hectare of cabbage could yield between 30 000 and 40 000 heads while tomatoes, a high-value crop, could generate close to P100,000 on less than one hectare.

Although frost events are not uncommon in the region, Mr Keikitse said his department continued to urge farmers to adopt protective measures.

He noted that the Ministry of and Lands and Agriculture has recently offered subsidy packages to help farmers install tunnels.

Fortunately, the situation could have been worse. According to Mr Keikitse, the majority of farmers under his watch had already protected their crops with secure tunnels, which shielded much of their produce from the worst of the frost.

He encouraged farmers to monitor weather forecasts closely and take early action to minimise damage.

He also recommended a traditional method of burning tyres and firewood between 3am and 4am to create protective smoke that traps warmth around the plants.

“This technique is effective and has been successfully adopted even on big commercial farms in

areas like Tuli Block,” Mr Keikitse added.

Mr Aubrey Rowland, chairperson of Kanye Farmers Association and owner of Motlhatso Farms in the Masoke extension area, said the district experienced extremely low temperatures that dropped to -5°C during the cold snap, making it difficult for farmers to protect their crops.

Mr Rowland reported that he had planted the first batch of 2 000 cabbages, out of a planned 10 000, in an open land.

After more than four weeks, including fertilisation, the entire crop was wiped out by the cold front.

In response, he has decided to delay the next planting, as forecasts predict another cold spell during the week of July 25.

While acknowledging the

value of protected environments, he emphasised the importance of farmers understanding the difference between tunnels and greenhouses when dealing with cold weather.

“Tunnels (often called high tunnels or polytunnels) consist of curved metal hoops driven into the soil and covered in specialised plastic sheeting. They rely on the sun for heat and manual roll-up sides for cooling. Because they are not sealed or heated, they cannot fully protect plants from deep winter freezes without supplemental heaters.

However, they are highly effective against wind, rain, and hail, and are favoured by farmers for their affordability and flexibility.”

Despite their higher cost, greenhouses he said were good

in protecting crops from harsh weather conditions.

“They are robust structures equipped with electrical, plumbing, and heating systems to maintain precise temperatures, making them ideal for year-round production,” he said.

Mr Rowland welcomed government efforts through the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), which has installed greenhouse technologies at the Glen Valley Incubator, where farmers nationwide can receive training.

As winter continues to challenge Botswana’s farmers, the overall message is clear; better preparation, improved infrastructure, and informed choices between different protective technologies are essential to building resilience against unpredictable weather.

BOPA



A severe three-day frost that struck Kanye District between July 8 and 10 has left at least six farmers counting losses of approximately P1.5 million after their field crops were destroyed. Kanye District Irrigation Officer, Mr Oaitse Keikitse described the widespread field crop destruction as a blow saying the frost damaged not only cold-sensitive crops such as tomatoes, but virtually every crop in the fields.

BSE maintains market capitalisation

Lorato Gaofise
GABORONE

The Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE) maintained total market capitalisation above the P1 trillion mark during the first half of 2026, closing the period at P1.06 trillion, with equities continuing to dominate the market.

According to the BSE Market Performance Report for the period January 1 to June 30, 2026, equities accounted for 92.3 per cent of total market capitalisation, while bonds and Exchange Traded

Funds (ETFs) contributed the remaining 7.7 per cent, reflecting gradual progress towards a more diversified capital market.

The report states that total equity market capitalisation rose 57.3 per cent year-on-year to P974.6 billion, up from P619.5 billion. The increase was driven mainly by foreign-domiciled companies, whose market value grew 62.2 per cent to P914.2 billion, while domestic companies recorded a comparatively modest 8.2 per cent increase.

Index performance also varied significantly by domicile.

The Foreign Companies Index advanced 40.1 per cent, compared to a 1.2 per cent gain in the Domestic Companies Index, while the Domestic Companies Total Return Index posted a 4.06 per cent return.

Among listed companies, Anglo American emerged as the top performer, with its share price appreciating 42.2 per cent during the period. Primetime Property Holdings followed with a 15.2 per cent gain, while BTCL rose nine per cent.

On the downside, Choppies recorded the steepest decline,

falling 13.4 per cent, followed by Lucara, which dropped 10.1 per cent. Despite a notable slowdown in trading activity, the BSE said the market remained resilient, sustaining total market capitalisation above the P1 trillion milestone first achieved in May 2026.

The report further notes that ETF turnover increased significantly during the review period, while the fixed-income market recorded improved liquidity and higher market capitalisation, indicating continued investor confidence and participation. BOPA

BUSINESS SERVICES

e-Commerce shoppers hit 140 million

BEIJING - A total of 140 million people in China made purchases through cross-border e-commerce platforms in the first half of 2026, with exports via overseas warehouses surging 3.3-fold, the country’s top customs official said recently. Highlighting the robust growth of new business models and formats in the cross-border e-commerce sector, Sun Meijun, head of the General Administration of Customs, unveiled the figures at a press conference. In 2025, China’s total cross-border e-commerce imports and exports reached 2.84 trillion yuan up 4.8 per cent year on year, customs data showed. Market procurement exports, meanwhile, exceeded 800 billion yuan during the same period. Xinhua

Over six million new jobs in China

BEIJING - China’s job market remained generally stable in the first half of 2026, with a total of 6.95 million new urban jobs created. In the first half the country’s surveyed urban unemployment rate stood at 5.2 per cent, Cui Pengcheng, spokesperson of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, told a press conference. China has set an unemployment rate target of around 5.5 per cent for 2026 and aims to create over 12 million new urban jobs this year. The ministry, notably, is stepping up support for key employment groups, with a particular focus on college graduates. The ministry is reinforcing regulatory oversight of the labour market, and actively combating discrimination and fraudulent practices to protect the rights of jobseekers, Huang added. Xinhua

China fiscal revenue up by 4.7 per cent

BEIJING - China’s fiscal revenue expanded 4.7 per cent year on year to 12.1 US\$ 1.78 trillion in the first half of 2026, data from the Ministry of Finance showed on recently. The pace of growth continued to pick up from four per cent in the first five months, indicating steady improvement in fiscal revenue performance. In the January-June period, the country’s tax revenue totaled 9.79 trillion yuan, an increase of 5.3 per cent year on year. The country’s fiscal expenditure climbed 1.5 per cent year on year to 14.33 trillion yuan during this period. China will implement a more proactive fiscal policy in 2026, with the deficit-to-GDP ratio set at around 4 per cent, according to this year’s government work report. Expenditure in the general public budget is projected to reach 30 trillion yuan for the first time, an increase of roughly 1.27 trillion yuan compared with 2025. Xinhua

Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

Ipapatse Fa Leletsa

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

Kgosi Kgari le morafe ba leboga puso

Moshe Galeragwe
MOLEPOLOLE

Kgosi Kgari Sechele III wa Bakwena a re setshaba se kile sa garoga dipelo ka ngwaga wa 2024, morago ga kotsi e e neng ya gapa matshelo a batho ka bontsi jo bo neng bo sa tlwaelesega.

Mo mafokong a gagwe a kamogelo, o boletse fa go ne go le botlhoko thata mo morafeng wa Bakwena ka gore ba ba tlhokafetseng ba ne ba tswa mo motseng wa Molepolole.

Le fa go ntse jalo, Kgosi Kgari a re le fa morafe wa gagwe o ne o le mo kutlobotlhokong, o ne wa bona kemonokeng ya maemo a a kwa godimo go tswa mo pusong, ka nako eo ka fa tlase phathi ya Domkrag.

O ne a tlatsa ka gore Bakwena ba tswelletse ka go akola kemonokeng le mo pusong e ntsha ya Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC).

“Re leboga thata gore diphetogo tse, ga di fetole ka fa le re emang nokeng ka teng, lona ba le filweng marapo a go tsamaisa lefatshe. Re itumelela ka fa re emiwang nokeng ka teng ke botsamaisi le bogogi jwa lefatshe le,” ga tlhalosa Kgosi Kgari.

O tlhalositse fa maikaelelo a kokoano e le go apola matlapa a ba ba robetseng, mme a leboga mohumagadi wa ga Tautona, Mme Kaone Boko gore a ne a bona go tshwanela go phutha botlhe ba ba nang le bokgoni le dithata gore ba thuse mo tirong ya go etleetsa setshaba le go thusa ba malwapa a a tlhokafaletsweng.

A re Mme Boko o dira se go gopola bana ba sekole sa Matsha College le baphuthegi ba kereke ya St Engenas ZCC ba ba nang ba tlhokafala mo dikotsing tsa tsela tse di farologanyeng le go sidila

maikutlo ba malwapa.

Kgosi Kgari a re keletso ke gore, setshaba se seka sa iphitlhela se na le seemo sa go tshwana seo gape mo isagong. A re keletso ke gore ba ba amegileng mo dikotsing tse ba sidilege.

Moemedi wa malwapa a ba ba tlhokafetseng mo kotsing ya Mmamatlakala, Kgosi Kruger Kareng a re go latlhegelwa ke ba o tshelang le bone, ba go tlhokometse kgotsa o ba rata, go tlhakatlhakanya dikakanyo.

Le fa go ntse jalo, a re le fa ba ne ba le mo maibing a kutlobotlhoko ya masetlapelo a a neng a ba wela, go botlhokwa go leboga puso ka gore e ne ya ema ka dinao ka gotlhe mo e neng e ka go kgona, go akarediwa dithuso tsa madi, dipalamo, dijo le tshidilo maikutlo gore manokonoko a bohutsana jo bo neng bo apere malwapa a fetoge kagiso le tsholofelo ya gore bohutsana bo apoge.

A re sengwe sa dilo tse di botlhokwa go nankolwa ke gore malwapa a a tlhokafaletsweng a ne a kgona go boloka ka tsela e e nang le seriti, a tlatsa ka gore le mo nakong ya gompiano seriti seo se santse se supagala.

Le fa go na le dikgwetlho, le gore yo o tlhokafetseng ga go sepe se se ka mo emisetsang, Rre Kareng a re go botlhokwa go lemoga gore tsotlhe tse di dirilweng ke puso di ne tsa tlisa kagiso le thitibalo mo malwapeng.

O tlhalositse fa go le bothlokwa go tswelela ka go lekola le go sidila maikutlo ba malwapa a a tlhokafaletsweng go fokotsa manokonoko a kutlobotlhoko.

“Re thuseng ka tse tlhokafalang ka gore bangwe mo malwapeng a rona re ne re tshela ka ba ga rona ba ba sa tlholeng ba le mo botshelong,” ga tlhalosa Rre

Kareng.

A re go botlhokwa go lemoga le go leboga ba ba thusitseng le go tlisa kgomotso ka metlhale e e farologanyeng le gore Modimo o tswelele ka go segofatsa lefatshe, boeteledipele le setshaba ka kakaretso.

Rre Kareng a re o eletsa gore Modimo a thuse ba sidilege, ba fole ebile ba kgone go tswelela le botshelo.

Moemedi wa batsadi ba ba tlhokafaletsweng ke bana mo kotsing ya teraka ya baithuti ba Matsha College, Rre Gothusamang Ramolelo a re se setona ke go neela dipelo le maikutlo mo Modimong gore o ba thatafatse.

Rre Ramolelo a re tatlhegelo ga se ya malwapa a a tlhokafaletsweng

fela, mme e le ya setshaba ka kakaretso.

“Re leboga thotloetso le lorato le le supilweng ke puso. Maloba jaana ne re le kwa Dutlwe, mohumagadi wa ga Tautona a bipolola sefikantswe sa bana ba rona ba ba tlhokafetseng. Seo ke sekao sa gore puso ga e a re lebala, e ntse e na le rona,” ga tlhalosa Rre Ramolelo.

Mongwe wa baithuti ba pele ba Matsha College yo neng a falola kotsi, Mme Segomotso Karayatshipi a re kotsi e diragetse kgwedi wa Ngwanatsele e le malatsi a le lesome le boraro ka ngwaga wa 2015.

Mme Karayatshipi a re ba ba neng ba tsere mosepele e ne e le baithuti ba mophato wa botlhano ba boela kwa magaeng a bone

morago ga go wetsa ditlhatlhobo.

A re kotsi eo e amile matshelo le botsogo jwa bone ka jalo a leboga mohumagadi wa ga Tautona, gore morago ga dingwaga tse di lesome le motso a bona go tshwanetse go ba lemoga.

“Re a go leboga. Ke dumela gore re tlaa tswelela re itumela jaaka o re solofeditse. Re lemogeng batsadi ba rona, le re thuse go ya pele. Ke dumela gore thulaganyo e, e tlaa re fodisa, maikutlo a rona a tlaa amogela re tlaa fola,” ga tlhalosa Mme Karayatshipi.

O tlhalositse fa bangwe ba bone ba tshela ka dikgobalo tse di masisi, ka jalo ba tlhoka thuso e e tseneletseng, ba akaretsang mongwe yo o kgaogileng letsogo, fa ba bangwe ba amegile thata mo ditlhaloganyong. **BOPA**



Dihikantswe tsa Batswana ba ba ba neng ba bona kotsi kwa Mmamatlakala, South Africa ka 2024, jaaka di ne di apolwa kwa Molepolole ka Matlhatso. Kgosi Kgari Sechele III wa Bakwena o lebogetse puso kemonokeng e ba e fileng morafe wa Bakwena mo nakong ya kutlobotlhoko. Senepe: Phenyo Ramatu

Banni ba gwetlha puso go tsenya leitlho tsamaiso ya mananeo

Malebogo Lekula
GROOTLAAGTE/EAST HANAHAI

Banni ba Grootlaagte le East Hanahai kwa kgaolong ya Ghanzi, ba gwetlhile puso go tsenya leitlho tsamaiso ya mananeo a tshwana le la nyeletso lehuma segolo bogolo mo metsaneng e e kgakala le ditlamelo.

Ba buile se, kwa diphuthegong tsa kgotla bosheng jaaka komiti ya lekoko le le thomilweng ke Tautona go dikologa lefatshe leno, go buisana le batho ba letso la Basarwa mabapi le dikgang tse di amang ditshwanelo tsa bone tsa setho mo mohameng wa tsa thuto, botsogo, bonno le tse dingwe tsa ditlhabololo.

Mokhanselara wa pele wa Grootlaagte, Rre Pedros Moretlwa o ne a supa fa puso e ne ya fudusetsa banni ba letso la Basarwa kwa metsaneng e e mo tikologong ya Ghanzi.

A re ka nako ya phudugo eo, puso e ne ya ntsha mananeo a le mmalwa go thusa go tlamela banni ba metsana eo, gore ba kgone go tshela matshelo a a botoka.

O ne a supa fa mangwe a maiteko a mananeo ao, a akaretsa la nyeletso lehuma le mo go lone a reng batho ba ne ba neelwa dihutshane le dikgomo go leka go ba tsamaisa tshipidi tonto go ithablolola mo magaeng.

A re ba lebogela maiteko a puso, mme ka maswabi, bontsi jwa banni ba ba neng ba filwe diruiwa le dithoto tse dingwe tsa itshetso ba setse ba iphotlhere ba fetogile batlhoki ba nta ya tlhogo.

Ka jalo, Rre Moretlwa o ne a kopa puso gore fa go dirwa mananeo go netefadiwe gore go nna le ditsetlana tse ka tsone, di tlamang moikopedi go tlhokomela dithoto tseo, gongwe fa go na le botlhaswa bongwe a lefisiwe.

A re go dira jalo, gongwe go ka ba nonotsha go tlhokomela dithoto tseo, mme ba nne tlhaga go ema puso nokeng ka go tlhablolola matshelo a bone go nna a a itumedisang.

A re molao wa tlhokomelo dithoto le bodiredi jo bo etelang baikopedi kgapetsakgapetsa go ka thusa go boloka madi a puso le gone go thusa puso go lemoga dintlenyane le dikgwetlho tsa lenaneo motlhofo.

Kwa East Hanahai, Rre Keithabile Seleka o ne a a supa fa kwa metsaneng wa bone ba itemogela go sa tlhokomelesegeng ga dithoto tsa puso. Ka jalo, o ne a gwetlha puso go gatelela go tsaya boikarabelo ka dithoto dipe fela tsa yone, go netefatsa gore madi a setshaba ga a thelwe ka motlhabodika.

Mo go tsa thuto, Rre Mankgane Kaashe wa Grootlaagte o ne a supa fa bana ba letso la Sesarwa ba tshabelelwa ke go tshaba sekole, a supa fa le dikgetsi tsa boimana jwa banana di le kwa godimo.

O tlhalositse fa ba itemogetse gore, masula ao, a bakiwa ke gore bontsi jwa bana ba bone, ba tsena dikolo kgakala le batsadi ba bone.

Ka jalo, o ne a kopa gore puso e

sekaseke go ba atumeletsa dikole tse di kgolwane, gore ba kgone go aloga sentle mo dithutong tsa bone gammogo le go bona tlhokomelo e e netameng go tswa kwa batsading segautshwane.

Rre Seleka wa East Hanahai o ne a kopa le gore puso e atolose thuto ka ditime tsa mo magaeng gore baithuti ba kgone go tlhaloganya dithuto ka botlalo. Mo go tsa lefatshe Kgosi Tsaxlae Xao wa Grootlaagte o ne a bua a sa kgale mathe ka fa ba sa jesiweng diwelang ke kabo ya lefatshe.

A re go le gantsi Basarwa ba bewa ka fa mosing fa go abiwa ditsha tsa bonno kwa mafelonga a a tlhabologileng jaaka Ghanzi le ntswa e le lone lefelo la bone la tlhologo.

O ne a supa fa bontsi jwa banni ba metsana e e mo tikologong ya Ghanzi, ba fudugela kwa Ghanzi ka mmetela ka ntata ya letlhoko la ditiro le bonno mme ba ba felele e nna bomaipaafela.

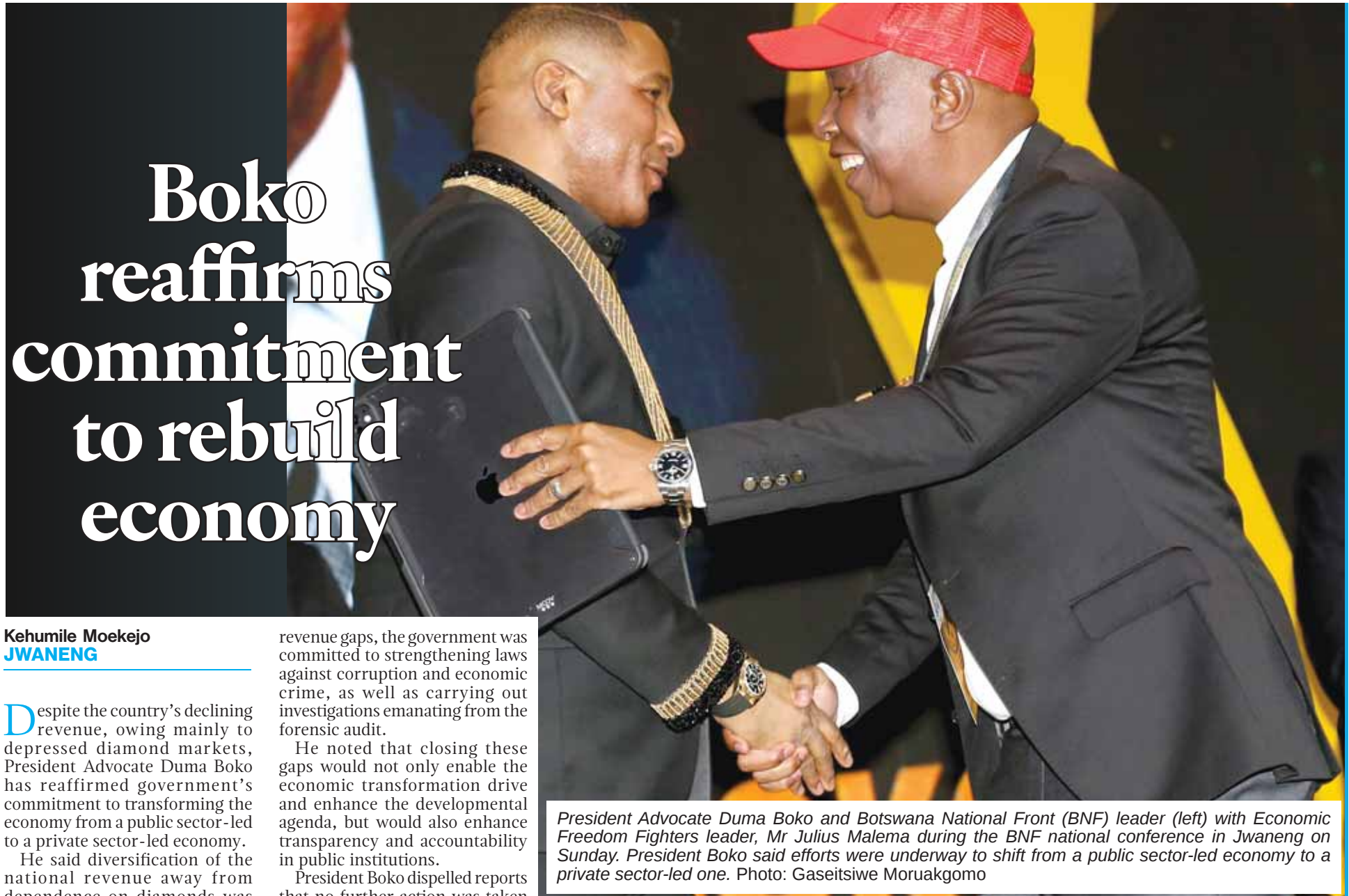
Ka jalo, Kgosi Xao o ne a kopa puso go sekasekela morafe wa Basarwa go nna le tshiamelo e e faphegileng go ka abelwa

ditsha tsa bonno mo mafelong a tshwana le Ghanzi le amangwe a a tlhabologileng gore ba kgone go dira dikgwebo la tlhokolole.

Mo go tse dingwe, Rre Kaashe wa Grootlaagte o ne a supa fa Basarwa ba na le kitso ya tlhologo mo go tsa bongaka le go latedisa motlhalo wa diphologolo le batho ka jalo, a kopa gore ba sekasekelwe go thapiwa mo lekananeng la itshireletso go thusa ka nako ya fa batho ba timetse.

Mo mafokong a gagwe a tekodiso, Mogolwane go tswa kwa lephateng la thuto kwa Ghanzi, Rre Balemogeng Moteti o ne a tlhalosa fa dipuisano tse, e le go leka go atamalana le batho ba letso la Basarwa go buisana ka fa phudugo ya bone kwa mafelong a bone a tlhologo e ba amileng ka teng.

Ka jalo, a re dipuisano tse ke go leka go thusa puso go dira ditshekatsheko tse di tseneletseng go tla ka ditharabololo tsa sennela ruri tse a reng di ka thusa go fetola matshelo a bone go tsamalaana le diphetogo tsa segompiano go sa gothagothlanwe le ngwao ya bone e bile go sa gatakwetse ditshwaneleo tsa bone. **BOPA**



Boko reaffirms commitment to rebuild economy

Kehumile Moekejo
JWANENG

Despite the country’s declining revenue, owing mainly to depressed diamond markets, President Advocate Duma Boko has reaffirmed government’s commitment to transforming the economy from a public sector-led to a private sector-led economy. He said diversification of the national revenue away from dependence on diamonds was nigh.

Addressing the Botswana National Front (BNF) 61st National Conference in Jwaneng on Sunday, he said to this end, the Umbrella for Democratic Change-led government had improved the national savings from P300 million in 2024, when they assumed office, to the current P6.1 billion.

He said revamping the Botswana Unified Revenue Services to make its processes more efficient has resulted in a 5.4 per cent increase in collections which translated to P15.36 billion in the first quarter of the 2026/2027 financial year, while the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenue also increased by 7.9 per cent to make P480 million in the same period.

For the month of May alone, remittances increased by 12.9 per cent, he said. He further noted that even though they were unpleasant, the cost containment measures put in place had resulted in a cumulative savings sum of P2.73 billion since August 2025.

He said the government continued to deploy modernised debt management strategies while also working on growing the manufacturing sector to reduce the export bill. He said the target was to increase the sector’s contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the estimated six per cent to 15 per cent by 2030. Additionally, President Boko noted that plans were underway to enhance the agricultural sector through various initiatives in an endeavour to improve food security.

“We are expanding agriculture and agro-processing, because a nation must feed itself before it can call itself secure. The first of 200 dairy cattle that will revitalise the Lobatse Milk Valley have arrived while Letsema Horticulture market will go live in August 2026,” he noted.

He said in an effort to close

revenue gaps, the government was committed to strengthening laws against corruption and economic crime, as well as carrying out investigations emanating from the forensic audit.

He noted that closing these gaps would not only enable the economic transformation drive and enhance the developmental agenda, but would also enhance transparency and accountability in public institutions.

President Boko dispelled reports that no further action was taken following the forensic audit.

“Many people conflate the forensic audit with a criminal investigation, but the forensic audit identifies, near accurately, where the problems are, what the problems are and who the problems may be. Now we must follow criminal investigations that follow the trail, that get into bank accounts, that trace assets, that invoke the proceeds of instruments of crime, to freeze and cease assets so that they are returned to the people,” he explained.

On health care, he said while piloting of the National Health Insurance was expected to commence in the last quarter of this financial year, the recent approval to employ 300 more nurses would go along in enhancing service delivery in the health sector.

He also noted an improvement of medicine supply, with a seven-months supply of critical medicines received this month and more expected.

He said the theme of the conference: The Torch We Carried, The Nation We Must Build, was a call for the BNF as a member of the UDC coalition to reflect on the current state of the country, which was a turning point and a test on the country’s resilience amidst the ailing economy.

He underscored the need for all stakeholders, including the private sector to play a role in this economic revival, with confidence that the status quo was temporal.

He urged the youth to be innovative and tap on the opportunities that they could use to contribute toward the economic transformation.

“Do not wait for government to hand you a future, continue believing and reaching for it. We will meet you with policy, with capital and with opportunity, but the reaching must be proudly yours,” he said. **BOPA**

Dow wins BCP vice presidency

Lindi Morwaeng
MOLEPOLOLE

Following a closely contested election at Mogoditshane Senior Secondary School on Monday, Kgatleng West legislator, Dr Unity Dow won the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) vice presidency, becoming the party’s first woman

to hold the position.

Dr Dow defeated the incumbent and Bobonong MP, Mr Taolo Lucas in a closely watched leadership contest.

She secured 942 votes against Mr Lucas’ 842.

Mr Dumelang Saleshando retained the presidency unopposed.

The secretary general contest was won by the incumbent, Mr Goretetse Kekgonengile, who polled 891 votes, narrowly defeating Mr Emmanuel Maite, who received 877 votes.

Ms Tebogo Molefe emerged victorious in the deputy secretary general race with 903 votes, beating Ms Refilwe Aphiri, who polled 864 votes.

The chairperson position was won by Mr Sennye Obuseng, who secured 682 votes, followed by independent candidate Mr Caterpillar Hikuama with 634 votes, while Ms Daisy Bathusi received 468 votes.

The treasurer general race was won by Mr Reuben Kaizer, who polled 770 votes. He was followed by Ms Manka Gampone with 511 votes and Mr Obakeng Moumakwa with 490 votes.

Mr Olebile Machete won the secretary for information and publicity position with 907 votes, defeating Mr Gregory Kelebonye, who received 850 votes.

Meanwhile, addressing delegates on Sunday, Mr Saleshando said the party’s elective congress came at a time when the average Motswana’s purchasing power had been significantly eroded, making it imperative for the party to offer practical solutions to the country’s socio-economic challenges.

He said many Batswana were grappling with the rising cost of living, unemployment and declining household incomes, adding that the party remained committed to advancing policies aimed at improving citizens’ livelihoods.

The congress brought together members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of sister political parties from across Africa. **BOPA**



Kgatlung West MP, Dr Unity Dow is the newly elected Botswana Congress Party vice president after defeating incumbent vice president, Mr Taolo Lucas during the party’s elective congress over the weekend. Dr Dow garnered 942 votes against Mr Lucas’ 842 to become the party’s first woman elected to the position. Photo: Tshoganetso Mokowe



Lokgwabe guitarist, Ohalotse Kgaje, affectionately known as Thaks, continues to captivate audiences with heartfelt melodies. Among the songs he holds closest to his heart are Motsetsi oa Tsena and Modimo O Re File Sebakanyana Se, compositions that have become audience favourites wherever he performs. Photo: Thuso Kgakatsi

Guitarist chases musical dream

Thuso Kgakatsi
HUKUNTSI

As the gentle sound of a guitar echoes through the streets of Hukuntsi, passersby reduced their pace, some humming along, while others pause to listen.

For a few moments, the worries of everyday life seem to disappear as music fills the air. It is a scene that has become familiar in the village and beyond, where local guitarist, 51-year-old Lokgwabe native, Ohalotse Kgaje, affectionately known as Thaks, continues to captivate audiences with heartfelt melodies born of passion, perseverance and lived experience.

Like many grassroots musicians across Botswana, Kgaje performs wherever opportunities arise.

From shopping complexes and community celebrations to private homes and social gatherings, he uses his music to entertain, inspire and bring smiles to people from all walks of life. Yet, behind every performance lies a reality shared by many local artistes: a life of uncertainty, where exceptional talent often goes unrewarded and financial stability remains elusive.

Although music has become his primary source of income, the proceeds are rarely enough to

sustain him or provide the financial security needed to support his family. Most performances earn only modest payments, leaving him to rely largely on the goodwill of community members who appreciate his artistry.

Despite these challenges, Kgaje has never allowed hardship to diminish his love for music. Instead, it has strengthened his determination to continue doing what he loves most and to use music to uplift others.

“Music is part of who I am. Even when there is little money, I cannot stop playing because I know there are people whose day becomes brighter after listening to my songs,” he said.

His journey began long before he ever held a modern guitar.

Growing up and spending much of his childhood herding cattle at cattle posts, access to musical instruments was almost impossible.

Rather than allowing his circumstances to define him, he improvised. Using a five-litre tin, pieces of wood and strings, he fashioned a traditional homemade guitar known as lekapananya.

It was with this simple instrument that he learnt the basics of playing and nurtured the dream that would later define his life. “I always admired people who could play the

guitar. I told myself that one day I would also learn, even if I did not have a real instrument.”

His determination eventually paid off when friends introduced him to a modern guitar, opening a new chapter in his musical journey.

As his skills improved, so did his confidence. He credits legendary Botswana guitarists, Johnny Kobedi, Stampore, Bonjo Keipidile and Ras Logic among the artistes who inspired him to persevere.

Listening to their music on Radio Botswana convinced him that, with dedication and patience, he too could carve a place for himself in the country’s music industry.

Today, Kgaje has developed a distinctive style rooted in originality.

Rather than relying on popular cover songs, he prefers performing his own compositions, believing they allow him to express his experiences, emotions and observations about everyday life.

Among the songs he holds closest to his heart are Motsetsi oa Tsena and Modimo O Re File Sebakanyana Se, compositions that have become audience favourites wherever he

Despite the challenges, Kgaje has never allowed hardship to diminish his love for music.

performs.

“I enjoy singing my own songs because they tell my story. People connect with them because they speak about life as we know it,” he said. Although he has written numerous songs over the years, recording them remains beyond his financial reach. “My dream is to release an album so that more people across Botswana can hear my music. The songs are there, but recording requires money for studio time, production and distribution. That is the biggest challenge.”

Even without a recorded album, his reputation continues to grow through live performances.

Residents frequently invite him to perform at their homes during family celebrations or simply to entertain guests.

Others seek him out after hearing him perform in public, offering small payments in appreciation of his music.

While the income is modest, Kgaje said the appreciation shown by his audiences meant more to him than the money itself.

“There is no greater reward than seeing people smiling, singing along or forgetting their problems for a while because of my music.

That is what motivates me to keep going.” He believed Botswana was blessed with many talented musicians whose potential remained untapped because of limited financial support and inadequate opportunities to develop their careers.

Kgaje therefore appealed to stakeholders, private sector and the public to invest more in local artistes by supporting live performances, purchasing locally produced music and creating programmes that could help musicians access recording facilities and professional development.

He said nurturing local talent would not only improve artistes’ livelihoods but also preserved Botswana’s rich musical heritage for future generations.

For Kgaje, every note played on his guitar represented more than music, it is a story of hope, resilience and unwavering determination.

As long as there are ears willing to listen and hearts willing to be touched, Thaks will continue doing what he loves most: turning life’s ordinary moments into melodies that bring comfort, joy and inspiration. **BOPA**



Mokgosi books ticket to Oregon

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

Standing at the edge of his athletic career, Warona Mokgosi needed to outrun the clock by the narrowest margin imaginable and on Saturday, he did just that.

With a fierce burst down the home stretch at the National Stadium, Mokgosi stopped the timer at 47.39 seconds in the 400m sprint, dipping just 0.01 seconds under the 47.40 entry standard to punch his ticket to the World Athletics U20 Championships in Eugene, Oregon, USA, scheduled to take place from August 5-9.

It was into that exact slice of time that the 19-year-old sprint prospect threw himself at the Botswana Athletics Association (BAA) track and field meet, turning what could have been a crushing near-miss into an explosive breakthrough.

While track statistics record times, they rarely capture the human labour required to shave down those decimals.

Behind Mokgosi's 47.39 seconds are hundreds of hours spent in early morning darkness, the burning lactic acid in the final 80 metres of practice, strict diets, constant mental battle against fatigue and the quiet pressure of knowing the qualification window was closing.

"Making the cut means

everything to me," Mokgosi admitted in an interview after catching his breath, the mixture of exhaustion and relief obvious in his voice.

"I prepared so hard for this single race. I just wanted to make it count, to go out there and make the country proud," he added.

Mokgosi joins established teammates like gold medallist, Same Mhutsiwa, Jack Newman, Wazha Matakule, Junior Phatsima and Tsaone Dintwa and that means stepping onto a global stage where small-town runners can challenge global powerhouses from Jamaica, Kenya and the United States.

The Saturday's meet perfectly illustrated the emotional contrast that defines elite athletics.

On one end of the spectrum was Mokgosi, running with the desperate energy of someone fighting for survival where every stride was about staying alive in the race.

On the other end was Mhutsiwa, who had already secured her plane ticket to Oregon weeks ago.

Mhutsiwa won the women's 100m dash in 11.92 seconds, but her mindset was entirely different.

Clinical and controlled, her race was an analytical study in execution, using

the home crowd's energy to practice her starting block clearance and acceleration phases without the terror of the clock hanging over her.

Such a dynamic shows the emotional maturity required of young runners.

Some must learn to perform under existential pressure, while others must learn how to treat a high-pressure race as a calm and calculated test.

For the national team coach, Nico Manyapedza, Mokgosi's last-gasp qualification was more than just a victory for one athlete, but an emotional spark for the entire squad.

Meanwhile, when the national team boards the flight for Oregon, it will not be just the individual sprinters but also a unified men's 4x100m relay team comprising Kopano Mpitsang, Lucky Chivero and Tshepo Nyaladzi.

For other athletes, watching a teammate squeeze through the narrowest window imaginable builds belief and also proves that preparation works, sacrifices are valid and that when the moment arrives, fractions of a second can swing in their favour.

Meanwhile, Mokgosi's journey from Gaborone to Oregon began years ago, but it was decided in 0.01 seconds.

Now, the clock resets to zero and the world is waiting to see how this young lad will perform as he takes the track at the Hayward Field next month. **BOPA**



Warona Mokgosi (right) leading the 400m men race during the Botswana Athletic Association Track and Field Meet in Gaborone on Saturday. Mokgosi and Tsaone Dintwa, who came second, both qualified for the World Athletics U20 Championship to be held in Oregon, USA. The meet was also used to prepare for the upcoming AUSC Region games and the youth Olympic Games. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo



King of Satim claims top honours

Naomi Leepile
KOKOTSHA

Spectators at the Resting Place Grounds were treated to high-octane action over the weekend as King of Satima stormed to victory in the flagship 2400-metre grand race at the annual Kokotsha July Derby.

Hailing from Khawa and owned by Titus Manyoro, King of Satima delivered a thrilling performance to claim top honors in the event's most anticipated category.

It was a tightly contested battle down the homestretch, with Red Summit, owned by Mujee Phineas from Maun, securing a strong second-place finish.

Rounding out the top three was fan-favourite Dups Dups, owned by Kokotsha's Kabo Medupi, who brought the local crowd to their feet with a solid third-place podium spot.

Meanwhile, speaking at the event on Monday, Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nelson Ramaotwana, commended the Kokotsha Village Development Committee (VDC) and the Kokotsha Horse Racing Association for transforming the derby into one of the Kgalagadi District's most anticipated annual events.

Since its inception in 2023, the derby had grown rapidly through strong collaboration between the community and key stakeholders.

Ramaotwana said the event demonstrated what could be achieved when communities united behind a shared vision, unlocking tourism and commercial opportunities in rural areas.

He said what began as a local initiative had evolved into a platform that attracted visitors from across Botswana, creating opportunities for accommodation providers, food vendors, transport operators, artistes and other local entrepreneurs.

Ramaotwana noted that this year's edition had expanded beyond horse racing to celebrate Botswana's cultural heritage through traditional performances, exhibitions promoting local businesses and the introduction of the Miss July Derby pageant, which combined entertainment with economic empowerment and community participation.

The minister thanked sponsors, volunteers and medical personnel for their contribution before officially declaring the event open.

Kokotsha Horse Racing Association chairperson, Kabo Medupi, said the derby had grown into a significant platform with the potential to drive sport tourism and rural economic development.

He appealed to corporate organisations, private companies and individuals to increase sponsorship, saying greater financial and material support would enable organisers to expand the event and attract international competitors and spectators.

Medupi said with sustained investment, the Kokotsha July Derby could evolve into a cross-border sporting spectacle, positioning Kokotsha as a recognised sport tourism destination while creating more economic opportunities for the local community. **BOPA**