

BOTSWANA

# Daily News

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## Boko attends SACU Summit



**CAPETOWN** - President Advocate Duma Boko arriving in South Africa yesterday to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). The summit, which will run from Wednesday until Friday, has brought together leaders of the five SACU member states; Botswana, eSwatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa to deliberate on measures aimed at deepening economic integration, enhancing intra-regional trade and strengthening industrial development across the region. Botswana's participation in the summit underscores the country's commitment to advancing regional economic integration, promoting industrial development and strengthening regional value chains as drivers of sustainable economic growth, job creation and shared prosperity. Vice President and Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe and Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Tiroeane Ntsima will also attend the summit. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

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# North East District Council absorbs 19 cleaners

Goweditse Kome  
MASUNGA

Pursuant to government's commitment to ensuring decent jobs and welfare of workers, a decision was made in December last year to reintroduce insourcing in the Public Service, North East District Council (NEDC) chairperson, Mr Mbaakanyi Smart has said.

Addressing a full council meeting on Monday Mr Smart said the decision directed all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to absorb all temporary employees employed such as cleaners, gardeners,

nightwatchmen and gate keepers on permanent and pensionable basis.

In response to this, he said the NEDC absorbed all 19 cleaners who were engaged on temporary basis to the permanent and pensionable cadre but that one declined the offer, stating that she was pursuing further studies.

He indicated that the MDAs were still awaiting direction from government on insourcing of other targeted services like security services and waste management.

In relation to the use of local artisans in government project implementation, Councillor Smart stated that the NEDC continued to promote citizen economic empowerment through the engagement of local artisans in the implementation of government projects.

"Approximately 230 local artisans have been engaged, representing a cumulative expenditure of P6.2 million since the inception of this initiative," he said, noting that the majority of the artisans had demonstrated commendable commitment and capability in delivering quality

work.

Mr Smart indicated that projects successfully implemented through local artisans include maintenance of facilities such as that of six classrooms at Matsiloje Primary School, Themashanga and Mapoka health facilities, 20 staff houses across the district and the construction of Tshesebe kgotla shelter and culverts and drifts across the district.

Briefing the house on the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP) under the National Development Plan, he said it represented a significant shift in Botswana's economic development approach.

He said it strove for the country to move away from dependence on government spending and toward a more sustainable model driven by productivity, value addition, private sector investment and export-led growth.

"With that being said During

the BETP Labs, two projects from the North East District were successfully presented, approved and granted a green light for implementation," he said.

He noted that the NEDC and the Tati Land Board were currently facilitating land acquisition processes for Solar Plant by Fortune Spring Holdings (Pty) Limited.

He said once implemented, the project would create employment opportunities, particularly for the youth, while contributing to economic growth and diversification within the district.

He also indicated that in an endeavour to economically empower and enhance the people's social wellbeing while reducing dependence on social safety nets, the North East District had implemented rehabilitation welfare programmes, which would ultimately reduce poverty amongst communities and promote self-sustenance.

"One of the programmes include Makaleng layers rehabilitation project, funded at the tune of P90,000 where four beneficiaries have been enrolled," he said, adding that with regard to Mulambakwena self-funded peanut butter group, the project was operational and had passed the NARDI tests for safety and nutritional analysis.

Addressing the issue of waste management, he highlighted that the district was currently faced with inconsistent collection of waste due to financial constraints, citing that inadequate budget had limited council to engage private waste collectors.

"In the interim, council will engage waste collectors on short term basis to compliment the two refuse compactors owned by council," he said, adding further that the NEDC had engaged eleven additional donkey carts to increase the total number to 58 to assist in refuse collection. **BOPA**

## Schools expansion welcome development

FRANCISTOWN

Francistown can now realise its long-held goal of turning Goldmine Junior Secondary School into a senior secondary school following the completion of its expansion.

Speaking during a tour of the expansion project by Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Noah Salakae recently, Francistown Deputy Mayor, Mr Uyapo Nyeku said Francistown leadership had long wanted a third senior secondary school and had eyed Goldmine as an option.

He said Mater Spei College and Francistown Senior Secondary School were overwhelmed, and turning Goldmine into another secondary school admitting from Form One to Form Five would ease admission challenges.

Deputy school head, Ms Tsholofelo Mathunya said the expansion project had had a positive impact on the school's academic performance with its pass rate having risen from 49.4 per cent to 57.4 per cent.

The expansion of Goldmine JSS includes a modern 21st century administration block, a counselling centre, a one-storey classroom block, computer and home economics laboratories, additional ablution facilities for staff and learners, and 14 staff houses located at Gerald Estate.

At Mathangwane's Chamabona JSS, the school Mr Mothanka Tadubana said the additional double-storey block of classrooms had come in handy, having resolved a long-standing challenge of shortage of classrooms, which had forced the school to adopt a double-shift arrangement.

Mr Tadubana also commended Okavango Africa Consortium, that although their school was a construction site, the contractor ensured that everything ran smoothly without disruption to teaching and learning.

Nonetheless, while appreciating the newly-built hostels and ablution block for learners, the school head appealed to government to consider a further expansion as the school enrolled learners from almost all of the 13 villages in Shashe West, the majority of whom he said needed to be accommodated in the school's boarding facility.

Okavango Africa Consortium team leader, Mr Moemedi Gabana said the expansion projects had delivered modern facilities that would serve as a source of civic pride for a long time.

Mr Gabana appreciated the catalyst team from the ministry, saying it had been instrumental in the completion of the projects within the stipulated timeframes.

Mr Gabana said despite being a small team, they worked tirelessly by responding swiftly to challenges as and when they arose.

Regarding both projects, Minister Salakae praised the project team for delivering modern and quality infrastructure that reflected positively on the staff and students of the two schools.

He said the projects were government's way of acknowledging the importance of education as well as that of the need to develop the education sector.

Mr Salakae commended the contractor, Okavango Africa Consortium for delivering the projects on time and within budget. **BOPA**



North East District Council chairperson Mr Mbaakanyi Smart (left) and council secretary Mr Israel Legodile during a full council meeting in Masunga recently. Photo: Goweditse Kome

## Child negligence sparks concern

Chenzimu Manyepedza  
MOGAPINYANA

Kgosi Winnier Sebedi II of Mogapinyana has expressed concern regarding the alarming issues of child neglect coupled with widespread alcohol abuse among some young mothers in the village. She highlighted the concern during a kgotla meeting addressed by the Assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditions, Mr Ignatius Moswaane, noting that the situation was distressing as many children in the village were left vulnerable due to their mothers' behaviour.

Some children, she said were not receiving proper care, adequate nutrition and a safe environment. Kgosi Sebedi II stated that negligence had not only jeopardised the immediate welfare of the affected children, but also posed long-term risks to their growth,

health, development and well-being.

Furthermore, the village chief said there was a troubling pattern where young mothers frequently spent extended periods at local drinking establishments and social events, often leaving their young children unattended, and in many cases, those mothers depend on elderly relatives or neighbours without adequate support.

"This is a pressing social challenge," Kgosi Sebedi II remarked highlighting that collaborative intervention from various stakeholders, including social workers, law enforcement, parents, and community members was key.

Kgosi Sebedi II also expressed a serious concern about the high rate of alcohol abuse within the village saying it did not only impact the well-being of young mothers and their ability to provide adequate care for their children

but also contributed to other societal problems such as domestic disputes, prevalence of poverty and repeated pregnancies creating a cycle of hardship that affects not only the individuals involved but the community at large.

She further raised a concern regarding some of the recurring internal disputes related to issues that continuously impacted the village chieftaincy matters. She explained that these conflicts had a detrimental effect on the smooth transition of leadership within the chieftaincy.

"The fallout from these disputes extends beyond the families directly involved but they also affect the broader community by damaging the village's reputation," she said, highlighting the importance of resolving these issues to ensure that the integrity of the chieftaincy was upheld and that the village could maintain its dignity and stability during leadership changes. **BOPA**

# National transformation agenda priority

Thato Mosinyi

GABORONE

Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa has reaffirmed government's commitment to the national transformation agenda, anchored by the implementation of National Development Plan (NDP) 12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme.

Officiating during the African

Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) sensitisation and capacity-building workshop on Tuesday, Mr Mohwasa said government was pursuing a vision of a high-income, digitally enabled, export-driven and economically diversified Botswana, where every citizen was employed, empowered and fulfilled.

He said the vision was anchored not only on economic growth, but also on accountable governance,

capable institutions and an effective public service.

Mr Mohwasa, therefore said the APRM process complemented Botswana's national development efforts by providing a structured framework through, which government could assess its performance in key areas, including democracy and political governance, economic governance, and socio-economic development.

Through the process, he said, government was able to identify both its strengths and areas requiring further attention as it worked toward building a more prosperous, inclusive and responsive nation.

"The purpose of the sensitisation mission is therefore both clear and

important. It is intended to deepen understanding of the APRM process, strengthen national ownership of the country's self-assessment exercise and formally inaugurate the institutional structures that will guide Botswana through this important undertaking," he said.

As Botswana advances governance reforms and its broader development agenda, Mr Mohwasa said the APRM would serve as an important instrument for strengthening accountability, improving institutional effectiveness and deepening public trust.

He said the success of the Local Governing Council and the National APRM Secretariat would be critical in ensuring that

the process remained credible, inclusive and reflective of the diverse perspectives that make up the nation.

"The Local Governing Council and the National APRM Secretariat that we inaugurate today will not be measured by the reports we produce, but by the actions we take and the improvements we achieve in the lives of our people through a shared commitment to the national interest," he said.

Mr Mohwasa added that strengthening oversight institutions such as the National APRM Secretariat would enrich Botswana's democracy and contribute meaningfully to the country's long-term development aspirations. **BOPA**

## Mohwasa acting President

GABORONE

Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa has assumed the role of Acting President.

According to a press release from the Office of the President, President Advocate Duma Boko left Gaborone yesterday to attend the 9th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), scheduled to take place in Cape Town, South Africa from Wednesday to Sunday.

Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe will accompany President Boko to the Summit.

"The Summit will bring together Heads of State and Government from the five SACU member states, namely Botswana, eSwatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa, where leaders will

deliberate on measures to deepen economic integration," the release says.

The release notes that Botswana's participation in the SACU Summit underscored the country's commitment to advancing regional economic integration, promoting industrial development and strengthening regional value chains as drivers of sustainable economic growth, job creation and shared prosperity.

It further says the summit will review progress made by member states in areas such as investment promotion, customs modernisation, regional value chains and industrialisation.

President Boko, who is also accompanied by Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Tiroeane Ntsima and other senior government officials, is expected back home on Sunday. **BOPA**



Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa officiating at the African Peer Review Mechanism sensitisation and capacity-building workshop in Gaborone on Tuesday. He said government was pursuing a vision of a high-income, digitally enabled, export-driven and economically diversified Botswana, where every citizen was employed, empowered and fulfilled. Photo: Washa Bofelwang

## BDF to phase out asbestos camps

Bonang Masolotatse

GABORONE

The Botswana Defence Force (BDF) has committed to phasing out asbestos accommodation and offices at its camps, and relocating personnel to safer facilities.

BDF Commander, General Mpho Mophuting, committed before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Tuesday, acknowledging that the army was still using asbestos structures at Paje and Pandamatenga Base Camps.

"Priority is to have people move out of the asbestos structures by

next year and accommodate them elsewhere," he said, adding that the army was considering moving

its staff and offices to temporary accommodations.

However, he said the full

dismantling and disposal of the structures was targeted for completion within three years.

Gen. Mophuting noted the project was not budgeted for this financial year due to current fiscal challenges but expressed hope it would be funded in the next financial year.

He said dismantling and disposing of asbestos at the two camps would cost the army around P41 million, stating that the high costs were due to the complex methodology required for safe asbestos disposal.

A foreign company will be engaged for the project, as no local company has the capacity to handle asbestos, he said.

He further noted that the Pandamatenga Base Camp was currently used on a temporary basis by army personnel during trips.

When asked by committee members about specific health monitoring arrangements for employees who used the asbestos structures, Gen. Mophuting said no such programme existed, except for the established health and wellness processes for all army staff.

However, he noted that improving health and wellness monitoring for officers was something the army would consider.

On the progress of the renovation of SSKB Stadium and construction of a Data Centre, which the committee had requested an update

on, Gen. Mophuting noted that the two projects had encountered delays and cost overruns.

This, he said were due to the delay in handing over the stadium to the contractor, as well as contractual disagreement on the Data Centre project.

He also told the committee that the country's engagement in SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) regional peacekeeping came at a cost of about P674 million to the government.

He said that, unlike previous engagements where the African Union and United Nations were responsible for expenses, the Mozambique case was different as countries provided for their contingents while SADC assistance was minimal.

Also, he noted the exercise proved to be more complex than initially thought, as dealing with terrorists was not easy, adding that there were currently no BDF soldiers in Mozambique.

The Commander also said claims that Thebepatswa Air Base belonged to the United States of America were baseless, adding that it was built by the government of Botswana and records showing how it was financed exist.

He said the BDF had in the past held joint military training with different countries, including those from SADC, at the same camp, adding that there was nothing to suggest it belonged to a foreign power. **BOPA**



Botswana Defence Force Commander General Mpho Mophuting

DailyNews

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

Printed by: Government Printing and Publishing Services

Online Edition: <https://dailynews.gov.bw>  
email: [bopa@gov.bw](mailto:bopa@gov.bw) email: [dailynews@gov.bw](mailto:dailynews@gov.bw)

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

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# Daily Business

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Fair highlights Algeria economic momentum

**ALGIERS** - The 57th Algiers International Fair, held at the Palais des Expositions in Algiers, drew a record number of domestic and international exhibitors, spotlighting Algeria's growing economic dynamism. Launched Monday, this year's edition brings together 781 exhibitors, including 579 domestic companies highlighting local industrial and technological progress, alongside 202 international participants from 36 countries spanning Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Spain is this year's guest of honor, reflecting deepening bilateral ties and unlocking fresh partnership opportunities across strategic sectors including manufacturing, agribusiness and heavy industry. **Xinhua**

### Tanzania links industrial ambitions to agricultural transformation

**DAR ES SALAAM** - Tanzania government has said that its industrialisation ambitions cannot be achieved without a parallel transformation in the agriculture sector, outlining key priorities under the country's Development Vision 2050. Minister of State in the President's Office responsible for Planning and Investment Kitila Mkumbo told parliament on Tuesday that agriculture remained the backbone of the economy and a critical source of raw materials and food security. He identified five strategic areas. Mkumbo said that modernisation and technology adoption would gradually reduce agricultural employment without diminishing the sector's importance. The minister noted that continued investment in education and skills development will be key to achieving transformation. **Xinhua**

## Mining costs high amid challenges in diamond market

Orapa Mine

Kabo Keaketswe  
**ORAPA**

Debswana Diamond Company chief operations officer, Mr Koolatotse Koolatotse has underscored the need to manage the cost of production at mines amid challenges in the global diamond market.

Speaking during the launch of Debswana's 2025-2029 Transformation Strategy in Orapa on Tuesday, Mr Koolatotse said the price of diamond continued to decline while the cost of mining continued to soar, hence the need to employ more efficient ways of production.

The new strategy, the COO said aimed at keeping Debswana

in business, stabilise the company and survive the current market conditions.

"The way it is now, the reality says we should be closing in the next three years if we do not do something," he said.

With the transformational strategy, Mr Koolatotse said Debswana aimed to cut operational costs from P9 billion to P6 billion by 2028.

The strategy also talks about diversification of businesses within the mines in future, something that the COO said would depend on the revenue that was generated by the company now.

Furthermore, Mr Koolatotse emphasised the need for a robust marketing strategy of the country's natural diamonds so that

they remained more attractive.

He highlighted that the envisaged cost saving measures would not in any manner affect employee's welfare and there would be no cutting of salaries, but things such as Christmas parties and traveling among others.

Orapa, Letlhakane and Damtshaa Mines general manager, Mr Mogakolodi Maoketsa said with the current challenges in the global diamond market, change or a different approach in the way the company did things was inevitable.

He said the strategy was a long term investment that would see future generations continue benefiting from the economic value of diamonds. **BOPA**

"The way it is now, the reality says we should be closing in the next three years if we do not do something"



Debswana Diamond Company chief operations officer Mr Koolatotse Koolatotse

## Rural industrialisation key to development

Chenzimu Manyepedza  
**MOGAPINYANA**

The Assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ignatius Moswaane has underscored the potential role of rural industrialisation towards driving sustainable development in villages and inclusive economic growth.



Assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs Mr Ignatius Moswaane

Addressing residents of Mogapinyana on the government's intention to drive development in rural areas, he said empowering communities through industrial initiatives and proactive economic activities is essential for closing the development gaps that often existed between urban centres and rural areas.

He highlighted that such efforts would not only create employment opportunities but also foster a sense of community involvement and ownership.

"Industrialisation represents some of the most effective strategies for accelerating development in villages, ensuring that local communities actively participate in the process of economic diversification and growth," he stated.

Mr Moswaane also elaborated that many rural areas are rich in untapped resources and possess economic

potential, noting that exploiting such potential required targeted investment, innovative solutions and a strong entrepreneurial will.

He pointed out that establishing industries and value-chain added enterprises within villages would not only strengthen local economies but could also help mitigate the trend of migration to urban areas, where many seek employment opportunities.

Mr Moswaane further reiterated the government's commitment to fostering inclusive economic development, saying this aims to empower communities to play a significant role in the nation's transformative journey.

He encouraged both the youth and the elderly in the village to embrace entrepreneurship, fostering a culture of self-reliance and innovation and to take full advantage of government programmes designed to support business development, growth and skill acquisition.

Such initiatives, he said, could lead to meaningful economic empowerment.

Mr Moswaane urged relevant stakeholders involved in land allocation and the provision of startup capital to reassess and reform existing policies that may hinder access to these essential resources.

He said the reforms would better equip individuals to achieve their entrepreneurial aspirations and contribute to the growth of their communities.

Chairperson of the Mogapinyana Village Development Committee, Mr Thomamo Keleme reiterated the need to expand the village clinic.

Also, he requested that the government consider appointing additional headmen to ensure community issues are addressed promptly and fairly, thereby enhancing the overall cohesion and harmony within the village. **BOPA**

### Cote d'Ivoire discovers high-quality oil deposit

**ABIDJAN** - Cote d'Ivoire confirmed on Tuesday the discovery of a hydrocarbon deposit containing high-quality light oil in its sedimentary basin, moving closer toward its ambition of becoming one of Africa's leading hydrocarbon producers by 2035. The discovery, conducted by US company Murphy Oil in partnership with Cote d'Ivoire's National Petroleum Operations Company, revealed around 30 meters of net oil column spread across two separate reservoirs, the Ministry of Mines, Petroleum and Energy said in a statement. According to government objectives, the country plans to strengthen the mining and energy sector to increase its contribution to GDP to 14 per cent by 2040 from 7 per cent in 2022. **Xinhua**

# Dikgang

PAMPIRI YA THUTO LE DIKITSISO

## IPAPATSE FA



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## Go tshameka mataese ke molato - Khumalo

Puseletso Kenyaditswe  
**TAKATOKWANE**

Mogolwane wa mapodisi Takatokwane Superintendent Douglass Khumalo, a re go tshameka mataese ke molato ka jaana motshameko oo ga o na ditsetlana tse di o tsamaisang.

A re go le gantsi di-tlamorago tsa mataese ke dintwa tse di felelang di sa begelwe ba sepodisi. Ka jalo Supt. Khumalo o kopile banni go emisa go tshameka mataese.

Tlhagiso e e tla morago ga gore rre mongwe wa dingwaga tse di masome a mabedi le bobedi kwa Takatokwane a tlahilwe ka sengwe se se bogale ngogola ka

Sedimonthole.

Supt. Khumalo a re go belaesega rre yoo a ne a kile a tlhoka kutlwisisano fa a ne a tshameka mataese le basimane ba babedi, ba dingwaga tsa 22 le 25, mme ba mo tlhaba ka sengwe se se bogale

O tthalositse fa ditlhotlhomiso di supa fa mosimane yoo a ne a kgona go ya ngakeng ka nako eo, mme a sa dira pego kwa mapodising, a supa fa mosi o dule ka sekhurumelo beke e e fetileng ka Labone a sena go tlhokafala.

Supt. Khumalo o tthalositse gore mo go tse dingwe Supt. Khumalo o tthalositse fa ba ise ba bone ngwana yo o timetseng kgwedi eno e tlhola garataro, kwa morakeng wa Nyatsane kwa kgaolong ya Takatokwane. **BOPA**



Mapodisi a Ghanzi a tlhotlhomisa tiragalo e mo go yone bapalami ba le masone a mararo le boraro go balelwa le bakgweetsi ka bobedi ba falotseng mo kotsing ya koloi ka bobi jwa segokgo beke e fetileng mo tseleng ya Bere-Kacgae. Mookamela mapodisi a lekana la tsa tsela go tswa kwa Ghanzi, Superintendent Space Dalaza o tthalositse fa ditlhotlhomiso tsa mapodisi di santse di tswetse go latedisa se se ka tswang se bakile kotsi eo, mme a supa fa bapalami mo dibeseng tseo ka bobedi ba falotse ka dikgobalo tse di potlana ka jaana, bontsi bo ne ba alafelwa dikgobalo tseo. O gwethhile bakgweetsi ba dipalamo tsa setshaba go obamela matshwao a tsela ka dinako tsotlhe, go babalela matshelo a setshaba. Senepe Malebogo Lekula

## Basarwa ba ngongoregela ditirelo tse ba di fiwang

Goitsemodimo Williams-  
Madzonga  
**TUTUME**

Basarwa ba ba nnang kwa dikgaolwaneng tsa Tutume ba supile fa ba sa itumelele ka fa ba fiwang ditirelo tsa puso ka teng.

Ba ntshitse dingongorego ka Mosupologo kwa phuthegong ya go abelana megopolo le lekoko le le seka sekang matshelo, ngwao le ditshwanelo tsa Basarwa le le romilweng ke Ofisi ya ga Tautona.

Kgosi Lesheke Chipuno wa kgotla ya Sabasi a re e re le ntswa ba hudusitswe kwa ba neng ba nna teng gotwe ke mahudiso a

leruo, ka tsela e nngwe gape ba atumediwa ditlamelo, matshelo a bone ga a ise a fetoge.

Kgosi o supile fa morafe wa gagwe otlhe fela mo Sabasi ba sa bewa ditsha tsa bonno, e bile ba sena matlo a boiteketo mo malwapeng a bone a maipaafela.

A re kgaolwana ya bone ba agetswe ntlo ya boiteketo e le nngwe mme e dirisiwa ke morafe otlhe fela a re se, se baya matshelo a bone mo diphatseng, a tlatsa ka gore seemo seo gape se borai mo botsogong jwa bana ba bannye.

O tswetse ka go tthalosa gore bontsi jwa morafe wa gagwe ga ba na bo Omang ka jalo ga ba kgone go ya go thusiwa kwa ba kopang ditirelo teng.

A re bontsi ga bo bereke, a re le fa baya go ikwadisa kwa di ofising tsa pereko (Labour offices) ga ba nke ba bona tiro ka gore ga ba itse go bala le go kwala.

Fa a tlatsa mafoko a ga Kgosi, Mme Tebogo Rebagamang o kopile gore ba tsisediwe ofisi ya thuto-ga-e goelwe gore le bone ba kgone go ithuta go bala le go kwala.

A re bontsi jwa bana ba bone ga ba a tsena sekole ka gore batsadi ba bone e ne e le badisa kwa merakeng, mme ka ba ne ba ne ba nna le bana, ba palelwa ke go ba isa sekoleng ka go ne go sena kwa ba ka nnang teng kwa Tutume.

A re ba ba kgonneng go isiwa sekoleng ke puso ba kgaogangwa

le batsadi ba bone ba santse ba le bannye ba isiwa kwa Nata kwa go nang le matlo a bonno a bana. Mme Rebagamang o ne a supa gore go kgaogangwa ga bone le bana ba bone ba santse ba le bannye ga go a siama, ka go ba farologanya le merafe e mengwe ba ba nnang le bana ba bone fa ba simolola sekole go fithelela ba fetsa.

O kopile puso go fetola ditsamaiso tse, ka dikgokgontsha bana ba bone mo ba felelang ba tlogela sekole ba ise ba fetse.

Kgosi o ne a kopa gape gore puso e tsibogelo go aga matlo a bonno a bana kwa kgaolong ya Nkange ka go ka ba thusa gore ba nne gaufi le bana ba bone gore

ba ba tlhole segautshwane e bile kgapetsakgapetsa go na le fa bale ko Nata kwa ba palamang gararo gore baye go goroga.

A re ka ntsha ya letlhoko la ditiro, go nna thata mo go bone go bona madi a go palama.

Fa a tswa la gagwe Rre Victor Molodi, mogolwane wa lekoko go tswa kwa ofising ya ga Tautona, o supile fa puso e le mo maikaelelong a go baakanya di tsamaiso tsotlhe gore di sologele Motswana mongwe le mongwe molemo go sena ope yo o bewang ka fa mosing. A re ba tsile go tsaya dingongorego tsa bone tsotlhe mme kwa bofelong ba di ise kwa bagolwaneng go di tsibogela. **BOPA**

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Gaokgakala Toteng (left) and Rosinah Banoge, who are jointly charged for the murder of Kagiso Lesetedi, appearing before Molepolole Magistrate Court for continuation of their bail application recently. Photo: Lindi Morwaeng

## Accused persons admit role in Lesetedi death

A state witness in a bail hearing application, Ms Keolebogile Ketshogile says one of the accused persons has confessed to having a hand in killing the deceased and pleaded for forgiveness.

Lindi Morwaeng  
MOLEPOLOLE

A state witness in a bail hearing application, Ms Keolebogile Ketshogile says one of the accused persons has confessed to having a hand in killing the deceased and pleaded for forgiveness.

Giving evidence before Molepolole Chief Magistrate, Mr Thebeetsile Molalu, recently, the state witness identified herself as

the deceased's (Kagiso Lesetedi) cousin.

Ms Ketshogile told the court that Banoge, allegedly confessed her involvement in Lesetedi's death.

An employee of MNK Funeral Parlour in Molepolole, Ms Ketshogile told the court that she knew Banoge through their line of work, while Toteng was the deceased's former girlfriend.

She testified that after Lesetedi's death, Banoge approached her and

asked for forgiveness.

According to Ketshogile, Banoge told her that Toteng had sent her to purchase poison used to kill jackals.

She further told the court that on January 23, a day after her cousin's death, she went to Smart Funeral Parlour where the deceased was working, to inquire about what had happened to him and to view his body. Following her testimony, Ms Ketshogile was

asked by the prosecution whether she supported granting of bail to the accused persons and she strongly opposed the idea.

She told the court that the accused persons allegedly planned the murder of her cousin and feared that if released, they could target her.

Meanwhile, Banoge's attorney, Mr Rambe Celsius, has labelled Ms Ketshogile visit to the accused person's workplace and making inquiries as an attempt to interfere with investigations.

In an emotional moment before stepping down from the witness stand, Ms Ketshogile said: "Ke batla ntsalake ha, ha e le gore lekgotla le ba fa bail," drawing attention from those packed inside the courtroom.

The second witness, Ms Mercy Teko, an Administration Officer at Smart Funeral Parlour and a work colleague of the deceased and Banoge, told the court that Toteng was Lesetedi's girlfriend, while Banoge was a colleague and worked as a Sales Consultant.

Ms Teko said on January 19, 2026 while at work with Banoge and other colleagues, Banoge allegedly made a chilling statement regarding Lesetedi's fate.

According to Ms Teko, Banoge said: "Kagiso ga a kitla a fetsa beke a tshela." She further testified that after Lesetedi died on January 22 and his body was brought to Smart Funeral Parlour, Banoge allegedly suggested that he had died from food poisoning, as foam was oozing from his mouth.

According to Ms Teko, Banoge stated that she regretted Lesetedi's death and allegedly disclosed that Toteng had informed her she had managed to obtain the poison they had been looking for in Kanye.

Ms Teko said her colleague,

Banoge before the matter was reported to the police, uttered the above statements.

Another prosecution witness, the Investigating Officer (IO), Detective Lerentshitse Otimile opposed bail, urging the court to remand both accused persons in custody until the matter was committed to the High Court.

Ms Otimile told the court that investigations have revealed that the murder was allegedly planned and premeditated.

According to Ms Otimile, Banoge allegedly obtained a substance identified as formalin from the mortuary and provided it to Toteng, who allegedly administered it to the deceased through food poisoning.

Ms Otimile further testified that Banoge had accompanied investigators to the mortuary and pointed out a substance contained in a 20 litre bucket, which she allegedly identified as the substance used in the poisoning.

The IO said investigations were still ongoing and that police were awaiting both laboratory analysis results and the pathological report.

She argued that if granted bail, the accused persons could interfere with potential state witnesses, particularly because some witnesses were colleagues of Banoge.

However, the defence maintained that circumstances have changed, arguing that emotions within the family and community had subsided and that the original concerns regarding their safety were no longer justifiable. After hearing submissions from both parties, Chief Magistrate Molalu reserved judgment and announced that bail ruling will be delivered on July 13. **BOPA**

## Kanye councillors call for improvements to healthcare facilities

Marvin Motlhabane  
KANYE

Kanye District councillors are calling for urgent improvements to healthcare services across the district.

Debating the Council Chairperson's speech on Wednesday, Councillor for Gasita, Ms Neo Tumelo, expressed concern over the high number of patients defaulting on the Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) in Gasita.

She appealed for the deployment of healthcare education assistants at Gasita Clinic to conduct home visits, promote treatment adherence and reduce deaths associated with treatment defaults.

Ms Tumelo also called for the installation of air conditioning in the maternity wing of Gasita Clinic, warning that the absence

of cooling systems poses serious risks to the lives of newborn babies.

In the same debate, Councillor for Lorolwane, Mr Kgomotso Jacobs, highlighted the shortage of consultation rooms at Lorolwane Clinic.

He recommended the provision of portable cabins to ease congestion and improve service delivery.

Mr Jacobs further lamented that during visits by specialist doctors, general staff were forced to vacate the consultation room, causing inconvenience to service delivery.

Selokolela Ward Councillor, Mr Alfred Tsie, commended the chairperson's speech for honouring the late former President Dr Festus Mogae, praising his significant contributions to the fight against HIV/AIDS during the early years of the pandemic.

He noted that Dr Mogae's efforts helped save Botswana's population from the worst effects of the virus.

However, Mr Tsie raised concern over the recent insufficient supply of condoms in clinics and government offices, warning that this could reverse gains made in HIV prevention if not urgently addressed.

He also highlighted cases of negligence by some health workers in his ward that he said often delay service delivery, adding that specific incidents had already been reported to health management for action.

Councillor for Lotlhakane East, Mr Mike Mohutsiwa called for Lotlhakane Clinic to be adequately capacitated to serve the large population in the settlement and suggested that, given its high patient volume, the facility be upgraded to operate 24 hours a day. **BOPA**

# Arts & Culture



## Government revives choral music in schools

“The programme will keep learners engaged after classes and provide them with productive activities.”

Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Justin Hunyepa

Benita Magopane  
**GABORONE**

Government has reinstated choral music competitions for state owned and private owned primary and secondary schools starting this academic year.

Speaking at the vocal music programme launch held at Northside Primary School in Gaborone on Tuesday, Assistant Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education, Justin Hunyepa, said the initiative comes as part of government’s broader initiatives to promote arts and culture among learners.

Highlighting the benefits of the initiative, Hunyepa noted that the development supported Botswana’s transition toward a STEAM-based education system, with emphasis on the Arts category.

The creative and cultural industries have significant economic potential and stand as a path way to future employment and sustainable livelihoods. Reviving choral music stands to be among government interventions that would address learners’ indiscipline in schools.

“The programme will keep learners engaged after classes and provide them with productive activities,” said Hunyepa, adding



Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeg

that it was also intended to restore excellence in schools, strengthen discipline, preserve national identity, and contribute to the country’s social and economic development.

He referenced music, sports and the revival of the scout movement, and other learner development programmes as part of government’s comprehensive strategy to provide learners with lifelong skills and leadership qualities.

Hunyepa stated that a National Choral Music Technical Team had been established to oversee competitions from cluster to national level, while an invitation had been extended to teachers’ unions, development partners, corporate sector and the public to support and sustain the initiative.



Northside Primary School Choir conducted by Lynn Warburton (right) during the launch of the 2026 Botswana choral music competitions in Gaborone on Tuesday. Photo: Gaseitsiwe Moruakgomo

Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeg, commended the initiative, describing music as a pathway to discipline with immense power to help young people discover and develop their talents, build confidence and express themselves creatively.

He also said the platform would help provide a pathway into the creative industry for many young

learners. Kelebeg extended his gratitude to the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education, for restoring such an initiative and for recognising the value of arts education in the lives of our young people.

He pledged the support and collaboration of the Ministry of Sport and Arts in ensuring the continued growth and success of

music education in schools.

The minister shared that government was making progress in its engagements with teachers’ unions on the revival of school sports.

He said the discussions were nearing completion and therefore, optimistic that the outcome would turn out positive. **BOPA**

## BOTSTop5 returns to Channel O

Ketshepile More  
**GABORONE**

The BotsTop5, a high energy music video reaction and countdown show of Botswana music returns to DStv’s Channel O, with a launch today at New Capitol Cinemas.

With 20 episodes, BotsTop5 is back following a successful 10-episode Season One that featured five selected local music videos each week.

Industry players have to react and rank each music video out of the five, to determine BotsTop5 chart.

“This is an opportunity for Botswana to celebrate one another in the creative

space. We are showcasing the full music ecosystem while pushing for stronger collaboration and higher standards across the industry,” said the show host, Mduduzi ‘Mdu Tha Party’ Madzwamuse in an interview.

Mdu Tha Party further said the music videos for Season Two were of high-quality standard compared to season one.

“Technology develops fast, we now have more access to high quality cameras that offer crispier pictures as well as the introduction of AI that allows us to learn more and do more with what we have,” he said.

This means that Botswana musicians can now be content with the globe when

it comes to the music visuals.

“Botswana have the same equipment that is of the same level with the world, they have exceptional beautiful concepts and we can only get better,” he said.

The show is sponsored by Companies Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA) under the Levy on Technical Devices, which is mandated with promoting the growth and development of the creative industries in Botswana.

BotsTop5 Season Two will premier on DsTv Channel O on Friday, with the reaction show at 7pm, followed by the countdown show at 7:30pm. The weekly repeats of the show will air on Saturdays and Wednesdays. **BOPA**



Mduduzi ‘Mdu Tha Party’ Madzwamuse

# DailySport

## Thrill of high speed racing returns to Gaborone

Keetile Bontsibokae  
**KOPONG**

Although preparations are at infancy stage, the second edition of the Sarona 1000 Desert Race is expected to deliver an experience comparable to international off-road rallies.

The popular local motorsport racing event is scheduled for July 3-5.

The Sarona 1000 Desert Race event continues the legacy of the famed Kalahari 1000 Desert Race, popularly known as Mantshwabisi.

Vice president of Botswana Motorsport under the Fédération

Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), Tefo Dithapo, said the inaugural Sarona race was held in Jwaneng last year, a town regarded as the traditional home of the Mantshwabisi race.

He explained that after the South African founders of the Kalahari 1000 Desert Race suspended the event, Batswana decided to establish their own race, hence the name Sarona, which translates to 'It is ours'.

About 30 racing cars and 30 motorbikes are expected to thrill motorsport enthusiasts in and around Gaborone.

The race route is expected to navigate through Kweneng District, passing through villages such as Mmatseta, Gakuto, Gakgatla, Gamodube, Mmanoko, Kopong, Tlhape and Kgaphamadi.

Both the starting and finishing points will be at the Agricultural Showgrounds at Sebele Farms along the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport Road.

Despite the race being in its second edition, he said the organisers possessed extensive experience in staging major motorsport events.

"We have been organising races for a very long time and have

the expertise to host events of this magnitude," he said.

He noted that the organisers wanted to create a fully local 1 000-kilometre race, taking advantage of Botswana's vast off-road terrain and the country's wealth of motorsport expertise.

The race will be contested over two days, featuring two separate routes.

"There will be two routes with two laps each day. The first route will be used on Saturday, while the second route will be used on Sunday," he explained.

Dithapo promised an exciting spectacle, noting that this year's event would be the first local off-road race where both the start and finish were located at the same venue.

"We will camp within the showgrounds, allowing race fans to enjoy the action throughout the day as competitors come in and out, performing spectacular manoeuvres," he said.

Although entries were still open, Dithapo said they expected local competitors to make up around 40 per cent of the four-wheel category and about 90 per cent of the motorbike category.

Several prominent teams are expected to

participate, including South African outfit Sanctuary Racing, Global Esport Racing and teams from Namibia.

Locally, the Motor Centre Toyota Racing Team is expected to compete with its modified Toyota Gazoo Hilux, a vehicle commonly used in South African off-road competitions.

"Many Batswana do not know that we have this vehicle locally, but it is here and has been modified by the Motor Centre Toyota Racing Team," he said.

Other local teams, including Daytona Motorsport have also appeared on the provisional entry list.

Dithapo said the Sarona 1000 Desert Race is striving for international recognition, largely because of Botswana's unique and challenging terrain.

"Unlike South Africa, where off-road racing is often confined to farms, Botswana offers vast open spaces and exciting obstacles, making it an attractive destination for competitors," he said.

He said the long-term vision was to grow local races and attract more international participants because Botswana's terrain resembled those used in major global events.

"If you look at the Kalahari terrain, it is similar to that used in the Dakar Rally. Last

*The Sarona 1000 Desert Race is scheduled to take place from July 3 to 5, with 30 racing cars and 30 motorbikes expected to navigate some areas in Kweneng District. The race will start and finish at the National Agricultural showground in Gaborone.*

year, we hosted Century Racing before they went to Dakar because they wanted to practise on similar terrain. They performed very well and are returning this year to compete in the Sarona race," he said.

Dithapo revealed that Botswana had already received FIA recognition for off-road racing and that discussions were underway to host more international events.

"The South Africans already host the W2RC, a round of the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship. We also aspire to host such championships in Botswana. Recognition is already there, and discussions have already begun," he said.

He added that as local races continued to grow, international recognition would inevitably follow.

According to Dithapo, international events brought significant benefits, attracting competitors and visitors from Europe, America, Asia and other parts of the world.

He also applauded the Botswana Tourism Organisation authorities for their continued support of off-road racing, just as they did during the Mantshwabisi era.

Meanwhile, the Sarona organising team is consulting communities in localities where the race route will pass through.

Addressing residents of Kopong recently, Botswana Motorsport president Tumisang Modibedi urged community members to remain vigilant and protect themselves, their children, livestock and property from potential accidents involving racing vehicles.

However, he said any damages caused by competitors should be reported immediately to race marshals or the police.

Modibedi also encouraged small business operators to obtain temporary trading permits from their local councils to take advantage of business opportunities during the event.

He commended residents for maintaining a clean environment and encouraged them to accommodate visitors by renting out space for tents or offering accommodation, thereby allowing communities to benefit economically from the race.

He assured both residents and competitors that security would be tight, with about 200 police officers and numerous race marshals deployed along the route. **BOPA**

