

BOTSWANA

Daily News

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President Advocate Duma Boko (right) and outgoing US Ambassador, Mr Howard Van Vranken during a courtesy call at the Office of the President in Gaborone yesterday. Photo: Thompson Keobaletswe

Bonang Masolotate
GABORONE

President Advocate Duma Boko has described the United States of America as an important development partner across Botswana’s economic, political and social spheres.

President Boko said this at a farewell courtesy call on him by the outgoing US Ambassador, Mr Howard Van Vranken yesterday. The President said Mr Van Vranken had contributed significantly to strengthening the long-standing relationship, particularly the deep educational and professional ties between the

two nations. He highlighted that a number of Batswana had trained and continued to train in the USA, creating a solid relationship with intellectual influence across various parts and levels of society. Reflecting on Ambassador Van Vranken’s three-and-a-half years in Botswana, President Boko

emphasised the strength of the partnership. “It is a real and tested relationship,” he said, noting that it was unshakable and built on people-to-people ties rather than sentiment. We are grateful that you came and strengthened that relationship,” he added.

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MOTSHELO CARD

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Botswana, EU unveil Kalahari Transfrontier Park revitalisation project

Naomi Leepile
KAA GATE

Botswana, in partnership with the European Union (EU) and conservation non-profit African

Parks, has officially launched a 30-month project aimed at revitalising the Kalahari Transfrontier Park (KTP). Speaking during the project launch at Kaa Gate on Thursday,

the Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi, highlighted that the initiative aligns with the country's National Tourism Strategy and Master Plan to diversify the economy through sustainable tourism development. Minister Mmolotsi noted that phase one of the project would focus on developing a comprehensive tourism development plan, community development plan, park management plan and critical infrastructure within and around the park. "Already, actual progress is being made regarding firebreaks. The airstrip has been rehabilitated, and works are ongoing on the fence and fixing of park vehicles," Mr Mmolotsi said. He commended African Parks for implementing the EU-funded project on behalf of the ministry. The minister emphasised that while the primary goal was to boost tourism revenue and socio-economic benefits for neighbouring communities, this must be balanced

with maintaining ecosystem integrity. He added that the implementation would be done in close collaboration with South African co-managers to ensure transboundary conservation success. For her part, EU Ambassador to Botswana and SADC, Ms Petra Pereyra, explained that the initiative fell under the EU's Global Gateway NaturAfrica programme. She outlined three core pillars, namely, strengthening the conservation and management of protected areas, creating green economy opportunities for local communities and improving transboundary governance. "Conservation that does not benefit communities is conservation that will not last," Ambassador Pereyra noted. She reiterated that the project sought to restore operational integrity, management capacity and surveillance while ensuring community initiatives were evidence-based and locally

relevant. African Parks Chief Operating Officer, Mr Charles Wells, expressed confidence in the ongoing collaboration, noting that the project represented a shared commitment to building trust, supporting national priorities and enhancing biodiversity. Mr Wells reiterated the importance of long-term collaborative partnerships between governments, conservation organisations and local communities. He noted that African Parks came into Botswana with humility and respect for the nation's established global reputation in conservation leadership. The 30-month initiative, which commenced in March 2026, brings together key stakeholders including the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), South African National Parks (SANParks), IUCN, SADC Secretariat and local community representatives. **BOPA**



Botswana, in partnership with the European Union (EU) and conservation non-profit African Parks, has officially launched a 30-month project aimed at revitalising the Kalahari Transfrontier Park.

Mohwasa calls for diligent use of donations

Chendzimu Manyepedza
SELEBI PHIKWE

Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa has underscored the importance of utilising any donations received for the refurbishment and maintenance of schools responsibly and effectively. Mr Mohwasa said this at Tlhabololo Primary School during the launch of the Adopt a Classroom initiative, which aims to revitalise and uphold the standards of all educational institutions in Selebi Phikwe. The Adopt a Classroom initiative is a collaborative measure between Tebo Ya Bokamoso Trust and Dulux Botswana. Mr Mohwasa expressed his appreciation for the commitment shown by various stakeholders who have responded positively to the call for an improved educational environment. He said that while the support for the initiative was commendable, it was essential for the beneficiaries to not only recognise the kindness of those who contributed but also to ensure that the donated resources were utilised effectively and productively. The approach, he noted, would result in tangible improvements in the learning environment, ultimately benefiting students and enhancing their educational experiences. Mr Mohwasa described the initiative as a commendable effort that complemented government initiatives focused on the upkeep and improvement of educational facilities. "This initiative not only promotes community involvement but also addresses the critical need for

maintaining and refurbishing classrooms, ensuring that students learn in safe and conducive environments," he said. Chief education officer for the Selebi Phikwe region, Mr Hosea Tshwarelo appreciated the initiative, saying it would go a long way in ensuring the safety and well-being of learners. Mr Tshwarelo highlighted the concerning state of dilapidated infrastructure in some local schools, a situation, which presented hazards to students. He therefore said the initiative would be crucial in bridging the existing gaps in the safety of the educational landscape, ultimately fostering a more conducive learning environment for the students in the region. A representative from Botswana Dulux, Mr Moses Moyantwa, emphasised the crucial role that a safe educational environment played in motivating both learners and teachers. He underscored that such an environment fostered a sense of security and enhanced the overall learning experience. Considering this, Mr Moyantwa shared that Dulux Botswana has made a significant commitment to invest in and contribute to the improvement of schools within the region. He elaborated that through a collaborative partnership with Tebo Ya Bokamoso, the aim was to implement initiatives that would lead to meaningful and lasting improvements in educational facilities. "This cooperative effort is designed to meet some of the needs of schools and ensure that both students and educators can thrive in a supportive and inspiring environment," he said. **BOPA**



Phase one of the project will focus on developing a comprehensive tourism development plan, community development plan, park management plan and critical infrastructure within and around the park.

Debt affects Mabutsane Bonno Housing Scheme

Kelesitse Motshwanaesi
MABUTSANE

Severe budgetary shortages continue to hamper the Mabutsane District Council's ability to meet the high demand for affordable housing, a situation compounded by a P5 million unpaid loan balance recorded as of July 31. Speaking during a full council meeting on Monday, council chairperson, Mr Tuelo Zulu revealed that the Bonno National Housing Scheme operated as a revolving fund. He explained that the programme's long-term sustainability depended entirely on beneficiaries making timely repayments to replenish its financial reserves.

Mr Zulu noted that high default rates among past beneficiaries had severely depleted available funds. He thus appealed to debtors to clear their balances, emphasising that repayments were critical to rebuilding the fund and extending housing support to eligible applicants on the waiting list. However, he said despite financial constraints, local sub-landboards were proceeding with land servicing and allocation. He indicated that the Maokane sub-landboard had reserved 34 residential plots and 31.3 hectares of land, specifically for the Bonno housing scheme. Reporting on first-quarter performance, Mr Zulu stated that sub-landboards were making progress towards their targets, with the Mabutsane sub-

landboard having reached 54.9 per cent progress rate by allocating 72 of its targeted 131 plots, which included 18 residential plots in Kutuku and 54 ploughing fields across Mabutsane and Kanaku. Meanwhile, he said the Maokane sub-landboard allocated 324 out of 741 targeted plots, delivering 162 residential plots in Samane, 159 in Maokane and three in Mokhomma. In the agricultural sector, he said the sub-landboards successfully allocated four ploughing fields in each of the villages of Samane and Mokhomma. Again, he said, the layout for the Sese general plan, comprising about 101 plots, was currently awaiting formal registration. Once registered, he said, the plots would be allocated via the Land Information System. **BOPA**

Dibete police station future under review

Mmoniemang Motsamai
DIBETE

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure experts have been tasked with providing a detailed technical report and recommendations on whether the Dibete Police Station can be salvaged or entirely scrapped.

The move comes as government leadership steps up to address the long-standing crisis at the facility to bring the much-needed motion to a station that had sat silent for years.

Government is gathering technical data to draft a path forward, with the aim to turn a costly administrative pain into a restored community asset.

On Monday, Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa and acting Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Mr Letlhogonolo Barongwang toured the facility to evaluate the damage first-hand.

The goal was to collect clear and on-the-ground facts to brief Cabinet so that the leadership can decide the building's future from an informed perspective.

"I am here to appreciate this police station because I have had many complaints about it and the one in Serule that they were

poorly constructed," Mr Mohwasa explained.

He noted that as the minister overseeing the Botswana Police Service, ensuring a functional and safe workplace for officers was top priority, particularly since the current site can no longer serve the public.

For his part, Mr Barongwang confirmed that engineering experts from his ministry were finalising the detailed technical evaluation to dictate the next steps.

"What we just witnessed here is a very painful reality," Mr Barongwang said, emphasising that the situation called for urgent push for stronger project oversight.

"We have learned a crucial lesson that project management is vital in order to account for every single pula that has been spent," he added.

Meanwhile, the root of the issue stretches back to 2017, when the P18 million facility, which opened in 2008, had to be hastily evacuated due to severe structural failure, continuous wall cracking and shifting floors.

Deputy permanent secretary for buildings, Ms Gorata Moleboge shed light on the technical breakdown, noting that the structure suffered from differential settlement early on, meaning that

different parts of the foundation sank at uneven depths into unstable ground.

"Some fundamental construction requisites were not followed to the letter, particularly regarding the collapsible soil below ground

level," Ms Moleboge said.

As the building continued to give way, authorities made the safety call to evacuate officers before anyone was hurt.

While the story of Dibete's police station had been a frustrating

chapter, the involvement of top officials demonstrated government's determination to clean up past mistakes, protect public funds and restore proper law enforcement infrastructure to the community. **BOPA**



Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa (centre) being taken on tour of Dibete Police Station by Botswana Police Service deputy commissioner - support services, Stephen Tsheko (right) on Monday. The tour was to appreciate the defects that led to the evacuation of the facility. The Botswana Police Service Facilities Manager, Mr Alphonse Jayachandran said the structural faults and improper technical installations were attributed to the contractor. Photo: Washa Bofelwang.

Govt positions TVET at centre of economic transformation

Gontle Merafhe
GABORONE

Government has deliberately positioned Technical Education and Training (TVET) as a cornerstone of economic transformation, placing them as a first choice to innovation, industrial growth, entrepreneurship, productivity and national competitiveness.

This emanates from the belief that skilled hands build strong economies and skilled minds build prosperous nations therefore, actions should match that belief.

"To demonstrate the importance the government attaches to the TVET transformation agenda,

only last week, the ministry tabled and successfully defended the National Technical and Vocational Education Policy in Parliament," said Minister of Higher Education, Mr Prince Maele.

He was speaking on Monday in Gaborone, during the signing

ceremony of the Memorandum of Agreement by the Ministry of Higher Education and MMG Khoemacau, to establish a Centre of Mining Excellence in Botswana that would address critical skills gap in the mining sector.

Minister Maele explained that the policy provided a national blueprint for repositioning TVET as a strategic driver of Botswana's socio-economic transformation and transition towards a knowledge based economy.

together, the possibilities are extraordinary," he said.

The partnership with MMG Khoemacau sends a powerful message to young people that their talent, skills and future matter because the country believes in them.

US-Botswana relations real and tested

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The President also pointed to historical contributions such as US Peace Corps volunteers, who had aided Botswana's socio-economic development trajectory.

He further noted defense training collaboration, highlighting that the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) commander was among those trained in the USA.

Again, he said his interactions with the outgoing envoy had started even before he assumed office and that together they had navigated systemic challenges.

He said as a human rights and rule-of-law-oriented government, his administration had to contend with challenges such as corruption that were entrenched in the system.

"We had to tackle these challenges without focusing on winning elections, as doing so could deter the service I ought to give. The country must be served without fear or favour," he said.

On economic issues, President Boko noted that the US had stood firm in supporting Botswana, while identifying emerging areas like trade that must be confronted to

enable growth.

He added that Botswana possessed critical minerals and remained open to working with the US for mutual benefit.

The President further briefed the ambassador on the imminent appointment of Botswana's ambassador to the USA, noting that he had chosen someone mature and invested in multilateralism.

For his part, Ambassador Van Vranken expressed gratitude for serving in the country, affirming that the bedrock of the broad US-Botswana relationship remained a shared commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

He noted that the US continued to be a primary market for Botswana's exports, taking in about 70 per cent and that US consumers made up the bulk of tourists who found value in the sector.

On critical minerals, he said the US recognised Botswana as a development partner, adding that the US had the most dynamic economy in the world and wanted Botswana to benefit from its innovation and entrepreneurship. **BOPA**

He said the mining industry remained one of Botswana's key economic pillars yet, the future of mining would not be measured solely by the minerals extracted from the soil but increasingly by knowledge created, the technologies mastered, the innovations generated and the skills cultivated around the industry.

"We may count tonnes of ore, revenues, exports and production figures and, rightly so. But history will judge us by another measure, a measure that cannot be captured in a balance sheet: how many young people discovered a talent they did not know they possessed? How many students walked into a classroom and saw for the first time, a future they could imagine for themselves? That is the deeper meaning of this partnership. That is return on our investment," he said.

Furthermore, Minister Maele said government was creating a place where talent met opportunity through the Mining Centre of Excellence, where learning met industry and ambition met possibility. He said the mining sector possessed expertise, resources, technology and practical experience whereas the education sector possessed the mandate and responsibility to cultivate human potential.

"When these strengths come

MMG Khoemacau chairperson, Mr Chen Dexin, said delivering real benefits for people, securing long term interest for communities and laying a foundation for future regional economic growth was a worthwhile initiative.

Mr Chen said through the centre, they would bring together strength from all sectors of the society so that more people could share the benefits brought by mining development.

"We will work closely with all partners in sincere cooperation, fully support Botswana's economic and social progress and make the bond of China, Botswana friendship stronger, passing it on from one generation to another," he said.

For her part, Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Bogolo Kenewendo, underscored that skills sharing and transfer were top priorities for the development and expansion of Khoemacau.

She highlighted that community development around the mine, support for the industrialisation agenda, corporate social responsibility and labour management were equally critical.

She emphasised that MMG Khoemacau remained fully aligned with national priorities as a corporate citizen of Botswana and a joint custodian of the country's mineral reserves.

The signing of the agreement, she noted, embodied the expectations and ongoing collaboration between government and key industry players. **BOPA**

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 email: dailynews@gov.bw

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

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PARLIAMENT 2026

Dinokeng Fish Festival community-led initiative

GABORONE

The Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs is aware that the Dinokeng Fish Festival is a community-led initiative implemented in collaboration with the Kgatleng District Council, district leadership structures and other partners.

Answering a question in Parliament, the assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ignatius Moswaane noted that the ministry provided support and guidance to promote its sustainability, strengthen community participation and maximise socio-economic benefits. The support, he said, was anchored on the Sustainable Livelihoods approach aimed at empowering communities to build resilient and sustainable livelihoods through initiatives such as the festival.

He said this also supported the transformation of the event from an annually government supported event to a community-owned commercially viable and environmentally sustainable platform for fisheries, tourism and rural enterprise development, capable of generating revenue, sustaining its operations and creating livelihoods.

“I would like to state that the festival is planned for Oliphant’s Drift and scheduled for the 7th November and continued stakeholder engagement on the initiative focuses on strengthening coordination, community participation and overall preparedness to ensure the successful hosting of the event,” he added.

Mr Moswaane said P50,000 had been allocated as a budget for the event, highlighting that the ministry had commenced resource mobilisation and fundraising initiatives to secure sponsorship and other forms of support from stakeholders, especially development partners and the private sector.

He stated that recognising the potential of the area to support sustainable fisheries, strengthen

value chains and promote rural enterprise development, the government has invested P7.5 million through the Ikageng Programme to support a community fish-farming initiative.

The assistant minister said the investment covered infrastructure and equipment, project operationalisation, capacity building and skills development as well as market facilitation to support value addition and access to markets.

He also revealed that a total of 36 fishermen have been identified as beneficiaries of the fish farming projects comprising eight women from Ramotlabaki and 28 men from Oliphant’s Drift.

Mr Motsamai was answering a question from Kgatleng East MP, Mr Mabuse Pule, who had asked the minister if they were aware that residents, fishers and cooperative societies in his area were still waiting for the implementation of the annual Dinokeng Fish Festival, which they were used to hosting in March every year, which operated as a core socio-economic marker for the region.

The MP also wanted to know where and when it was scheduled to take place, how much had been set aside for the event and the clear budgetary allocation that have been authorised under the Local Economic Development finances to secure its continuity.

Mr Pule also wanted to know the number of fishermen and women expected to participate based on the registered data of local small scale fishers, poverty eradication and destitute beneficiaries, the long term strategy the ministry had in place to ensure the festival becomes self-sustaining and less reliant on annual ministry level approvals.

He also asked whether there were immediate plans to establish a permanent fishery market centre and cold storage infrastructure within Kgatleng East to ensure that local fishers could safely preserve, process and distribute their catch to national markets beyond festival days. **BOPA**

BoB forecasts P89 million for stock replenishment

GABORONE

Bank of Botswana (BoB) has incurred a total of P69.1 million in 2025 for ordering 10 million pieces of P50 commemorative bank notes, 30 million pieces of circulating P50 bank notes and 40 million pieces of circulating P20 bank notes.

The Minister of Finance, Mr Ndaba Gaolathe told Parliament that the bank anticipates spending P89.03 million in replenishment orders for the P200, P100 and P10 bank notes expected to be delivered this year.

He said the bank had budgeted P114.6 million for the procurement of coins this year, noting that the allocation followed the approval in December 2025 of the award of a coin minting tender to the mint company.

He said the award of the new contract was necessary following the expiry of the previous coin minting agreements with the mint company, which lapsed in December 2022.

Mr Gaolathe explained that the new arrangement ensured the continued and reliable supply of coins required to meet domestic demands and to support efficient circulations of currency within the economy.

He said the stock levels maintained by the bank at any given point in time primarily determined the production frequency of bank notes and coins. Mr Gaolathe said to support the

process, bank applied a currency demand forecasting model, which incorporated the current stock level held in the vaults together with average withdrawal rate recorded over preceding six-month period.

“This approach enables the bank to project future currency demand and ensures the timely replenishment of bank notes and coin stocks. The production of bank notes and coin is a core activity of the bank aligned to protecting and safeguarding integrity value of the national currency,” he said.

Mr Gaolathe further stated that under the current framework, the re-ordering of currency was triggered when the stock level of a particular denomination held in the vaults fell below 18 months of stock cover. He also highlighted that the threshold served as an early warning mechanism to ensure that sufficient time was available for preparation, production and delivery by the banknote printer.

Mr Gaolathe said Protective Services department was mandated with the safeguarding of the assets of the bank including banknotes, coins and other valuables.

In executing that role, he said the department relied on the law enforcement agencies that included the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and Botswana Police Service. He said in instances whereby the bank received cash from the printers/minters or transport cash within Gaborone or to the Francistown branch, Mr

Gaolathe noted that costs would be as follows; meals for the crew being breakfast at P11,210, lunch P12, 349 and supper at P10,490 depending on the duration of the assignment.

In total, Francistown trip costs P66,914 per assignment while Gaborone costs P34,049 per assignment.

Regarding distribution costs, Mr Gaolathe noted that the bank distributed currency to the public through commercial banks and does not incur direct distribution costs in the process.

Commercial banks, he said obtained currency from the bank to meet the cash requirements of their customers and subsequently issued the currency through their distribution channels, citing the Automated Teller Machines as well as over the counter withdrawals at bank branches.

He said the distribution framework enabled the bank to efficiently circulate currency within the economy while leveraging the existing infrastructure of commercial banks to ensure widespread and convenient public access to cash.

The minister was responding to a question from MP for Kgatleng Central, Mr Mpho Morolong, who had wanted to know the cost incurred by government on the production of printing the Pula currency notes and minting coins and to further state production frequency, security expenses and distribution costs. **BOPA**



Bank of Botswana anticipates spending P89.03 million in replenishment orders for the P200, P100 and P10 bank notes expected to be delivered this year.

MPs reject motion to establish GBV special fund

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Parliament on Friday rejected a motion requesting government to strengthen Botswana’s commitment to gender equality and the protection of its citizens by establishing a Special Fund for Gender Based Violence.

Presenting the motion to Parliament, MP for Tati East, Mr Tlhabologo Furniture said GBV was a pressing human rights and public health issue in Botswana.

Rejecting the motion, Specially Elected MP and also Minister

of Youth and Gender Affairs Ms Lesego Chombo said establishing a Special GBV Fund would be duplicative, given the integrated efforts and the government’s provision of financial resources for prevention, survivor support and legal redress.

She said most current and planned GBV interventions stemmed from NDP12 passed by Parliament. Ms Chombo said government was addressing governance, legislative, policy institutional and financing aspects of Botswana’s response to GBV.

She said the ministry supported

legislation, policy and survivor services, noting that the Ministry of Health offered medical and mental health services, the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services provided legal aid and rehabilitation programmes, while the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs delivered social welfare and community prevention initiatives.

Ms Chombo also said the Botswana Police Service, funded through the Ministry for State President, Defence and Security, investigated GBV cases and protected victims.

Furthermore, she said government was drafting GBV legislation aimed at prevention and support for victims, set for presentation in November.

This legislation, she said sought to close systemic gaps and establish funding for psychosocial, health and legal services. These coordinated efforts, Minister Chombo said, ensured comprehensive prevention, protection, prosecution and survivor recovery.

Gaborone South MP and also the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services Mr Nelson

Ramaotwana also rejected the motion. Meanwhile, the MP for Mogoditshane West, Mr Galenawabo Lekau supported the motion, saying there should be political will for the policy to work. He said other countries in the region had such a fund, which allowed them to efficiently address cases.

Responding to the legislators’ comments, Mr Furniture said GBV had no boundaries, and anyone could be a victim, urging that GBV needed resources if the fight against it was to be won. **BOPA**

Minister cautions about dangers of enlisting in foreign conflicts

Esther Mmolai
PARLIAMENT

Government is troubled by the rise in reports of Batswana being recruited or targeted to participate in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Making a statement in Parliament, the Minister for International Relations, Dr Phenyo Butale said there was increasing involvement of Batswana in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and the conduct of some of the nationals abroad, particularly in relation to immigration laws, visa conditions, overstaying and the misuse of immigration and asylum processes. He said though the matters occurred beyond the borders of Botswana, their consequences reverberated at home, affecting individuals, families, government and ultimately the reputation and opportunities of Batswana as a whole.

“We continue to receive troubling reports of our people being lured by offers disguised as employment, training or security work, only to be thrust onto the front lines of a foreign war, ensnared in active hostility they never sought,” he added.

To date, Dr Butale stated that nearly 22 Batswana have been drawn into these deceptive recruitment schemes.

Dr Butale noted that through vigilance and close collaboration with sister countries, the government managed to stop and return eight of them, intercepted at the very threshold of departure at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport, OR Tambo International Airport, and Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, and rescued just moments before they were carried into the machinery of war.

Some, he said argued that their journeys were a personal choice but expressed concern that many were lured and only upon reaching the front lines, did they realised they had placed themselves in the jaws of danger.

Furthermore, the minister highlighted that the government remained deeply troubled by the

reactions of a small number of citizens to public advisories about the dangers of enlisting in foreign conflicts.

“Some of these reactions suggest that the pursuit of livelihood is seen as outweighing the safety and security of our people, a sentiment as heart breaking as it is perilous,” he said.

Dr Butale said government position was equivocal as Botswana laws governed the enlistment of citizens and passport holders in the military service of foreign states.

He reiterated that no individual could evade the reach of the law by disguising foreign military engagement as employment or training, citing that the substance remained the same and the law saw it clearly.

The minister therefore appealed to young people to exercise the utmost caution before accepting any foreign military employment or training offer, noting that such invitations might glitter with promises



Minister for International Relations Dr Phenyo Butale told Parliament that there was rise in reports of Batswana being recruited to participate in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

of high salaries, travel and other opportunities. Dr Butale also warned that once the person stepped into a conflict zone or fell under foreign military authority, government’s ability to rescue them became gravely limited.

“I am encouraged that some of our citizens have heeded our call reaching out to my ministry before acting on offers originating from war torn regions and I plead with legislators to carry this message into every constituency.

Families and communities must remain vigilant, sharing information and strengthening awareness so that fewer Batswana are drawn into deception,” he stated.

Dr Butale also noted that government would continue to assist citizens who were genuinely deceived, trafficked or coerced abroad but cautioned that citizens must also honour the law and refrain from knowingly placing themselves in harm’s way.

The government, he said was also concerned with Batswana who travel, study, work or

reside abroad, citing that they were witnessing a trend, countries that once welcomed holders of Botswana passports without visas were steadily tightening their entry requirements.

He said that was deeply concerning as his ministry had long pursued a deliberate strategy to strengthen the Botswana passport by expanding visa-free agreements through trust, cooperation and international goodwill.

Despite citizens benefiting from that goodwill for decades, he said they were now seeing a sharp and unsettling escalation in the number of Batswana seeking asylum beyond the borders, noting that government recognised asylum as a legitimate legal process when genuine grounds existed.

“Our concern is not with lawful

claims but with deliberate abuse, false declarations, overstaying, working in breach of visitor conditions or using an immigration status for purposes wholly different from those permitted,” he added.

He said in October 2025, the United Kingdom imposed a visitor visa requirement on Botswana nationals, citing misuse of visitor rules and persistently high asylum claims of 1 332 between 2022 and June 2025 including 642 lodged at ports of entry.

Dr Butale appealed to all Batswana to recognise that the country’s international reputation was a national asset, noting that the confidence other nations placed in Botswana opened doors for citizens to travel, study, work and trade, hence they must safeguard that trust by doing the right thing. **BOPA**

Efforts to curb illegal sand mining require joint action

GABORONE

The administration of rights to exploit minerals including sand is governed primarily by the Mines and Minerals Act Cap 66:01.

Responding to a question in Parliament, the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Bogolo Kenewendo said the Act gave powers to the authorised officers to take action against any person who contravened or otherwise does not mine in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

She said the recent coming into force of the Mines and Minerals (Amendment) Act, 2024, which was enacted in October 2025, had brought revised punitive measures and fees to deter those who were tempted to undertake illegal mining.

Ms Kenewendo said the effort of curbing illegal sand mining was a multi-stakeholder endeavour,



Minister of Minerals and Energy
Ms Bogolo Kenewendo

therefore the Ministry of Minerals and Energy alongside other stakeholders critical to this excise continued to conduct random adhoc inspections and joint inspections to deter illegal sand mining.

She said other efforts undertaken included promotion of sourcing river sand from licensed sources and encouraging the use of alternatives to river sand as substitutes for construction material. Minister Kenewendo said together with all relevant stakeholders, the ministry remained committed to implementation of the amended Mines and Minerals Act, including the forfeiture of the equipment found to have been used in the illegal mining.

She said the forfeited equipment would be disposed through the government’s setout legal disposal route for the full benefit to the nation, including the immediate affected communities.

Mmopane/Metsimotlhabe legislator, Ms Helen Manyeneng had asked the minister to state measures put in place to curb illegal sand mining.

She also wanted to know whether such measures included confiscation of vehicles upon conviction of offenders, and if so, would there be consideration to auction such vehicles with a portion of the proceeds being channelled towards environmental rehabilitation and development of affected communities. **BOPA**

Consultations to upgrade Maun ongoing

GABORONE

The Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs has commenced the process of upgrading Maun into a Green City/Town through engagements with district leadership and consultations with the community.

Answering a question in Parliament, the Assistant Minister of Local Government and Traditional Affairs, Mr Ignatius Moswaane said the process was currently at an advanced stage with consultations having been completed with all ministries and independent government departments.

He said this was work in progress and required extensive consultation with stakeholders to ensure that the transition was properly coordinated and resulted in a practical and workable framework.

Mr Moswaane said the proposal to declare Maun a Green Town would be tabled before Cabinet for consideration and decision before the end of September.

The minister said once approved, the declaration would facilitate the definition of township boundary

and urban edge as well as the preparation of a Green Town Spatial Development Plan.

He said the plan would provide a framework for managing the town’s urbanisation and industrialisation, while creating opportunities for investment and development by both local and external investors.

Mr Moswaane said it was important to emphasise that without approval of the proposal, the matter could not be addressed holistically as the development of the requisite planning framework was dependent on the formal recognition of Maun Green Town status.

“Once the township planning framework is in place, various planning and development related aspects in the question asked by the Hon Member of Parliament will be addressed accordingly,” he noted.

Mr Moswaane said the Smart City Project was launched in North West District in December 2025, however, on April 14, the initiative was withdrawn, with focus subsequently redirected to the Bonno Housing Programme. He said it was important to note

the project would no longer depend on land being directly allocated by the Land Board. The minister said the investor had identified suitable land in Polokabatho area and was currently in the process of acquiring the land from various private landowners.

He said the investor had also submitted an application to the Tawana Land Board for the consolidation of the identified plot and the transfer of land ownership.

Mr Moswaane said it was envisaged that once the land acquisition process had been resolved, the investor would continue to engage the district structures and leadership on employment opportunities, community engagement and progress of the project throughout its implementation.

He said the ongoing exercise would also provide recommendations on the appropriate model for upgrading Maun, including consideration of the recommendations of National Spatial Plan 2036 and adopt Green City development principles, taking into account the town’s unique ecological attributes.

The minister said this approach

was intended to provide a coordinated framework that would guide the sustainable development of Maun, support orderly urbanisation and industrialisation and ultimately create an enabling environment for investment and broader economic opportunities for the people of Maun and Botswana as a whole.

Maun East MP, Mr Goretetse Kekgonengile had asked the minister to brief Parliament on the progress made in Maun Green City project with emphasis on the model of investment and reasons thereof, commencement and completion date of the project. Mr Kekgonengile also wanted to know total area to be utilised, number of ploughing fields to be acquired and progress made on the acquisition.

He also wanted to know the compensation rates and whether the ploughing fields, which would be acquired would be compensated at uniform rates, if not why.

The MP also wanted to know the total number of jobs to be created in the medium and long terms and the percentage of non-skilled and semi-skilled jobs to be allocated to district locals and if none, why. **BOPA**

DailyBusiness

BUSINESS SERVICES

Regulated gambling key to economic growth

FRANCISTOWN - Botswana can tap into a lucrative gambling market to drive economic growth, but only if the sector is properly regulated and brought into the mainstream. This was said by Gambling Authority chief executive officer, Mr Moruntshi Kemorwale, at the 5th edition of the Francistown Business Expo recently. Mr Kemorwale highlighted that the biggest challenge facing the industry was unlicensed and underground gambling operating outside the tax net. He explained that before gambling was formally licensed in 2025, an estimated 510 000 people were gambling illegally, while since licensing began, roughly 1 500 gamblers had moved into the registered space. “That is a welcome development, but it is just the beginning,” he said. Addressing calls to outright ban gambling, Mr Kemorwale warned that prohibition would not solve the problem. **BOPA**

Kenya intensifies subsidies to cushion farmers from drought

NAIROBI - The Kenyan government on Monday announced deeper subsidies on fertilizer and certified maize seed to help farmers recover from severe, climate-driven drought losses. Mutahi Kagwe, Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock Development, announced in Nairobi that a 50-kg bag of subsidised fertilizer will now cost US\$15.46, down from US\$19.35. Additionally, the price of a 2-kg packet of certified maize seed has been cut to US\$1.15 from US\$2.35. “At the heart of this intervention is a simple principle; a farmer who has lost a crop to drought should not lose the ability to plant the next crop because fertiliser and seeds are out of reach,” he said in a statement issued in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital. **Xinhua**

Fragmented trade rules hinder cross border commerce

MOMBASA - The Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) on Monday called on African nations to harmonise trade regulations to boost intra-African commerce, which currently stands at just 16 per cent. Speaking during the 32nd General Assembly of the African Organization for Standardisation (ARSO) Mombasa, KEBS Managing Director Esther Ngari noted that fragmented regulatory frameworks continued to hinder cross-border trade. Ngari argued that conflicting national standards created unnecessary friction, frustrating the free movement of goods across the continent. The 32nd African Organisation for Standardization (ARSO) General Assembly brought together delegates from 44 African nations. **Xinhua**

SPEDU, caretaker chief executive officer, Mr Ronnie Phuthego (left) and Ticano chief executive officer, Mr Opelo Motswagae signing a Memorandum of Understanding in Selebi Phikwe recently. The P250 million partnership between SPEDU and Ticano Group formalised a collaborative measure strategically designed to address critical challenges businesses face in securing access to working capital and supply chain financing. Photo: Chendzimu Manyepedza



Partnership to unlock business financing opportunities

**Chendzimu Manyepedza
SELEBI PHIKWE**

A P250 million partnership between the Selebi Phikwe Economic Diversification Unit (SPEDU) and Ticano Group (Pty) Ltd is expected to improve access to working capital and supply chain financing for businesses in the SPEDU region. The partnership was formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Friday and is aimed at addressing some of the critical

challenges businesses face in accessing finance. Ticano Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Opelo Motswagae, said the partnership would improve access to working capital and supply chain finance while strengthening supplier development, investment readiness and market access. He said eligible businesses would undergo an assessment to determine their suitability for various financing solutions, including purchase order finance, invoice discounting, contract finance, asset finance and other

working capital facilities. Mr Motswagae said the initiative would place particular emphasis on supporting citizen-owned, women-owned and disability-owned businesses. He said opportunities would target sectors such as manufacturing, agribusiness, tourism, mining services and the broader green economy, among others. “This partnership represents a strategic collaboration aimed at fostering sustainable growth within the community. It will not only serve as a crucial initiative to encourage economic

diversification, allowing for a broader range of industries and opportunities, but it will also play a vital role in enhancing business resilience in the region,” he said. Mr Motswagae said collaborative initiatives such as the partnership could effectively address business challenges and create a more conducive environment for all stakeholders. For his part, SPEDU Caretaker Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ronnie Phuthego, highlighted challenges facing the manufacturing sector in the SPEDU region, which is home to more than 150 manufacturing companies. He said many businesses struggled with inadequate funding during the COVID-19 pandemic, severely affecting their daily operations and threatening their survival. Mr Phuthego said the effects continued to negatively impact businesses as they navigated the post-pandemic environment. He said the partnership with Ticano would therefore provide much-needed resources and support to help local manufacturers recover, strengthen their operations and thrive in the market.

Deputy Mayor of Selebi Phikwe, Mr Roller Lesedi, described the collaboration between SPEDU and Ticano as a timely development that would help revitalise businesses in the region. He said local businesses continued to face various challenges that hindered their growth and sustainability. Mr Lesedi said a considerable number of businesses were experiencing financial difficulties, which had affected their operations and compromised essential activities. He expressed hope that the partnership would help businesses overcome these challenges and contribute to a stronger and more resilient regional economy. **BOPA**

Consumer fair opens with focus on trade

**Mpho Mosojane
GABORONE**

Fairgrounds Holdings in Gaborone has since Monday transformed into a vibrant marketplace of ideas, innovation and networking opportunities, marking the official opening of the week-long Botswana Consumer Fair themed: Showcasing Botswana in Full Colour. The 19th edition of the annual event promises to drive business to business networking, generate business leads and facilitate brand promotion and market research. “This exhibition creates visibility for emerging SMEs especially, to make significant connections within their specific industries, linking them with new clients, vendors and influential people within their sectors. The consumer fair will provide a platform for businesses to have direct access to customers, meeting them face to face and build brand awareness without a massive upfront budget.” Said Sefalana Holdings Company Limited group managing director. Officially opening the event,

Mr Chandra Chauhan explained that the platform created a unique opportunity for businesses to showcase their products and services, promoting economic trade and creating meaningful, decent jobs in the process. He also reiterated how the environment could foster the development of partnerships, joint ventures and mutually beneficial agreement, resulting in a network that could play an essential part in the growth and success of respective companies. Fairgrounds Holdings chief executive officer, Ms Gorata Gabaraane, stated that their vision was to reflect the diversity, creativity, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit, speaking to the richness of the country’s culture, the vibrancy of the people and the overall warmth for which Botswana was known. “The theme reminds us that our economy is built not only through large investments but also through the persevering entrepreneur, artisan, farmer, creator and business whose collective efforts paint the colorful picture of the nation,” said Ms Gabaraane,

In pursuit of diversity, this year’s edition promises to enrich the visitor’s experience through the ‘Taste and Sip Village’ where visitors can experience Botswana’s culinary talent alongside a variety of international flavours in a relaxed environment that fosters networking while complimenting B2B engagements that the fair has always been synonymous with. “To demonstrate how we continuously evolve, we aim to immerse the consumer into a food, entertainment and social lifestyle experience,” hinted Ms Gabaraane. The country’s premier consumer exhibition has, over the years, attracted over 550 exhibitors, comprising small, medium and large enterprises locally as well and regionally from Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland. “Over the past 18 editions, the Botswana Consumer Fair has continued to evolve, bringing together businesses, entrepreneurs innovators and consumers on a platform that celebrates enterprise, creates market opportunities and stimulate economic activity,” said Ms Gabaraane. **BOPA**

Dikgang

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Salakae o ipolelela morafe wa Ghanzi

Malebogo Lekula
Ghanzi

Morago ga go ithola marapo mo khuduthamageng ya ga Tautona beke e fetileng, Tona wa pele wa lephata la dipalamo le mafaratlhatlha a dikago Rre Noah Salakae, o ne a ipha sebaka go etela morafe wa Ghanzi, go tla go buisana le bone matlho a phage a lebane gore ba tlhloganyane gore gare go tsene eng.

Fa a buisa matshwititshwiti a a neng a tshlogetse kwa kgotleng kgolo ya Ghanzi ka Mosupologo, Rre Salakae, yo gape e leng mopalamente wa kgaolo eo, o ne a tlhalosetsa morafe fa a sa robalelwa ke ditlhokwa mo tirong ya gagwe ya sepolotiki.

Se se tla morago ga kitsiso e e ntshitsweng ke ba lekalana la twantsho tshenyetso setshaba lekgopelo itsholelo beke e fetileng, e supa fa Rre Salakae le bangwe ba le barataro ba lebisitswe melato ya tshenyetso setshaba, tiriso botlhaswa jwa ofisi ya puso, go dirisa modirelapuso go senyetsa setshaba le go tlhatswa madi.

A re ka ntata ya dikgang tse, o

ne a bona go le matshwanedi gore a bofe ditlhako a ikgate motlhala go tla go ipega mo banning ba kgaolo ka tshwetso ya gagwe, go fema ketsaetsego e a reng e tuketswa ke dikgang tse di sa rurifadiwang go tswa mo metsweding ya dikgang le mo mebileng.

A re tse tsotlhe ke tsela nngwe ya go mmopela kgomo ya mmopa.

Rre Salakae o ne a itsise morafe fa a sale a tsogelwa ke mekubukubu le go maramariwa ka dikgang tsa tshenyetso setshaba selekanyo sa ngwaga le sephatlo.

“Ke ntse ke didimetse, ke reeditse ke lebeletse jaaka leina lame le gogagogiwa mo seretseng, mme nako e gorogile gore ke ikarabele mme gape ke lo itsise,” ga bua Mopalamente Rre Salakae.

O ne a tlhalosa fa tshoso e rweleng mo madubadubeng a, e le mongwe wa babereki go tswa kwa lekalaneng la twantsho tshenyetso setshaba le kgopelo itsholelo, a tshwaragane le bangwe banni ba motse. Le fa go le jalo, Rre Salakae o ne a supa fa a sa jesiwe diwelang ke ditsamaiso dingwe tsa makalana a itshireletso ao, a tlhalosa fa makalana ao a filwe boikarabelo

jwa go sireletsa motswana mongwe le mongwe mme ka maswabi, a re bangwe ba dira tse di kgatlanong le maikaelelo a makalana a.

A re go dira jalo, go ka nna le ditlamorago tse di sa itumediseng mo setshabeng jaaka, go tlisa tlhobalelo le go latlhegwa ke tshepo mo tsamaisong ya molao.

E re dikgang di eme jalo, o ne a itsise morafe gore o tsere tshwetso ya gore a itlhatswe leina a sa kgopakgopetsane le ditsamaiso tsa khuduthamaga ya ga Tautona.

A re o ne a rolela Tautona Advocate Duma Boko ka maikaelelo a go itsheka a sa tshwara marapo a khuduthamaga e le tsela ya go dibela serodumo sa ofisi ya ga Motlotlegi Tautona. Mo dikgannyeng tse dingwe, o ne a tlatsa ka gore, e re ka jaana a le mo

motlhaleng wa go itlhatswa leina, o ne a supa fa a na le dikgetsi tse pedi fa pele ga makgotla a ditsheko. A re kgetsi ya ntlha, ke e e tswang kwa lekalaneng la twantsho tshenyetso setshaba, e a reng e tla bitswa kgwedi eno, e le masome mabedi le boferabobedi kwa Gaborone. Kgetsi ya bobedi yone, a re e tla bo e itebagantse le tshenyiso leina ke pampiri ya motswedi wa dikgang e e ikemetseng ya Tuesday Grill. A re tsheko eo, e tlaa reediwa ke lekgotla la Maun kgwedi ya Lwetse e le masome a mabedi le motso, a tlatsa ka gore o tlaa bo a emetswe ke babueledi go tswa kwa lefatsheng la South Africa mo dikgetsing tsotlhe.

Ka jalo, o ne a kopa morafe go mo ema nokeng le go nna ka thitibalo ba ntse ba letile ditshwetso tsa makgotla a ditsheko go diragatsa

molao ka fa go tshwanetseng ka teng. Mo mafokong a gagwe a malebo, Modulasetilo wa khansela ya Ghanzi, Rre Thabiso Keadile, o ne a phophotha Rre Salakae legetla gore e re le ntswa a tsogetswe ke dikgang, o supile bopelokgale go ithola marapo mo khuduthamageng ya ga Tautona a bo a boa a tla go ipega mo morafeng o a o eteletse pele. A re go dira jalo, go supa boeteledipele jo bo nonofileng le yone kekelele ya dikeletso tsa batlhophi gore ba tshwanetse go itse ka dikgang go sa kgathalesege gore seemo ke sa sebopego sefe. Ka jalo, Rre Keadile o ne a iteela kobo moroko ka go kopa banni ba kgaolo, gore dipelo tsa bone di se fuduege mme ba nne le tshepo le tumelo gore tlhabano e e ba lebaneng e tlaa bepa. **BOPA**

Mokgatlho o tlaa tshwara phuthego ya boeteledipele

Grace Sebape
LOBATSE

Mothusa motsamaisi wa mokgatlho o o ikemetseng, wa Independent Order of True Templars Mme Lesedi Ikgopoleng a re ba tlaa tshwara bokopano jo bogolo jwa go simolodisa kgaolo ya botlhano e e akaretsang Botswana, Mafhikeng, Vryburg, le Namibia O tswelletse ka go re mokgatlho wa bone o ema kgatlanong le tiriso ya bojalwa, le metsoko kgotsa diritibatsi tse di borai mo matshelong a batho.

O tladitse ka go re diritibatsi di tlhakatlhakantse matshelo a batho, le gore boitshwara jwa baithuti kwa dikoleng bo fetogile e bile bokamoso jwa bone bo a senyega, malwapa le one a a thubega.

Mme Ikgopoleng o boletse gore maikaelelo magolo ke go nna le tshaba e e sa nweg bojalwa e bile e sa dirise diritibatsi kgotsa ditagi tse mo nakong eno di apesitseng lefatsheng kobo ka letshoba di akaretsa tiriso ya motokwane, katse le tse dingwe tse di borai. O tswelletse a bolela gore ba eletsa go busetsa motho mo setshwanong sa Modimo, a tlatsa ka gore ga ba eletse go bona motho ope a itshenyetsa botshelo le botsogo.

A re Modimo o fa batho ditiro gore ba bereke ba itshetse le ba malwapa a bone, e seng go ipolaya. Mme Ikgopoleng o boletse gore mo bokopanong joo ba Region 5 ba tlaa

fiwa maele a go tsamaisa mokgatlho, ba buisana ba bo ba ithulaganya gore kwa pele baya jang morago ga go tlhlongwa.

A re le fa gontse jalo ba akareditse ba botsogo bogolo jang ba botsogo jwa tlhloganyo go bafa melaetsa ka tsa botsogo, le bogakolodi gore motho o ka bona thuso e fe, kae. Mo go tse dingwe o boletse gore motho mongwe le mongwe o gololesegile go tsena mokgatlho o, a tlatsa ka gore mokgatlho wa Independent Order of True Templars ga o ntshe batho mo dikerekeng tsa bone mme o rotloetsa batho go ikgolaganya le Modimo. A re mokgatlho o gape o rotloetsa boitekanelo jwa maloko kwa dikerekeng tsa bone. Mme Ikgopleng o boletse gape gore mokgatlho o tsenwa ke batho ba dingwaga tsotlhe.

O boletse gore go nna lelolo motho o duela masome a mararo a dipula ka ngwaga mme go ikwadisetsa lefoko le ba tsamayang ka lone, gone go duelwa masome a ferang bobedi a dipula.

Mme Ikgopoleng o boletse gore morago ga bokopano ba tlaa ikgolaganya le ba lephata la thuto gotswa kwa moding, mme ba kope go etela dikolo ka go farologana ga tsone ka maikaelelo a go bontsha baithuti tsela ya botshelo, ba santse bale mo dingwageng tse di kwa tlase a gatelela fa “lore lo ojwa lo sale metsi”.

Mme Ikgopoleng a re maikaelelo a mokgatlho ke go aga le go dira bokopano jwa borre le bomme ba thapelo go wa kgathalesege gore motho ke wa letso lefe, kana maemo a fe. O tswelletse a tlhalosa gape gore maloko a tshwanetse go di goga kwa pele ba nne sekao mo ntweng kgatlanong le tiriso ya bojalwa le ditagi. **BOPA**



Mopalamente wa Ghanzi, Rre Noah Salakae (molemeng) a sena go buisa morafe morago ga go ithola marapo a maemo a tona wa lephata la dipalamo le mafaratlhatlha a dikago bosheng. A re o bone go le bothokwa go tla go ba tlhalosetsa seemo se a leng mo go sone, le go ba tlhomamisetse gore ga a a robalelwa ke ditlhokwa mo tirong ya gagwe ya sepolotiki, a gatelela gore o tlaa tswelela go itlhatswa leina fa a ntse a letile gore makgotla a ditsheko a tseye tshwetso. Senepe: Malebogo Lekula

Maduo a Hereford ga a jese diwelang

Cathrine Simane
BRAY

Mogokgo wa sekole se se botlana sa Hereford Mme Keatametse Mokgatitshwane o gwethlile batsadi go tshwaragana le barutabana, boeteledipele le ba-na-le seabe botlhe go tokafatsa maduo aa tswang kgakala a sa jese diwelang a sekole seo.

O buile se mo potsolosong le BOPA bosheng a tlhalosa fa maduo a ngwaga oo fetileng a ne a le kwa tlase ka 34.1% mme mo ngwageng ono ba itomile molomo wa tlase go dira ka gotlhe mo ba ka go kgonang go tokafatsa maduo ao.

Mme Mokgatitshwane are mangwe a mabaka aa rotloetsang kwelo tlase ya maduo ke batsadi bangwe ba ba senang boikarabelo ka go tlhoka go tsenya letsogo mo dithutong tsa bana ba bone.

Are mabaka a mangwe ke go tlhoka go tsena diphuthego tsa batsadi le barutabana (PTA), go tlhoka go tlhokomela bana kwa malwapeng ka bangwe ba bone ba felela ba phuaganya bana ba le nosi go ya go bereka kwa dipolasing mme se se swabisang go sena tlhokomelo ee eletsegang.

O boletse fa sekole seo se butswa ka ngwaga wa 1984 mme bana botlhe go simolola ka Reception class go ema ka lokwalo lwa bosupa ba le makgolo a mararo lemasome

a le boferabobedi le bosupa mo ngwageng ono.

Mogokgo o ne a supa fa go fitlha mo nakong ya gompiano ba ise ba itemogele dikgang tsa kgokgontsho kana bothloka tsebe mo sekoleng seo fa e se bana ba ba tlhokang go tla sekoleng ka lebaka la go latela batsadi kwa dipolasing.

Are ngwaga oo fetileng e le sekole ba ne ba ipeetse seelo sa 55%, mo maduong a lokwalo lwa bosupa mme dingwaga tse dingwe ba ne ba sa kgone go goroga fa ba lephata la thuto go tswa kwa moding bone ba ipeetse sa 70% e le kgaolo fa lefatsheng ka bophara e le 80%.

Mme Mokgatitshwane o ne a supa fa go ya pele gammogo le barutabana le batsaya karolo botlhe ba dumalane go tshwara study camp, bootcamp le ithutintsho ya mafelo a beke go leka go tokafatsa maduo a lokwalo lwa bosupa tse go tla kwalwang ditlathobho tsa makgaola kgang ka kgwedi ya Phalane.

Are gape maikaelelo a bone e le barutabana ke go bitsa phuthego ya kgotla gammogo le boeteledipele jaaka dikgosi, ba boipelelo, komiti ya batsadi le barutabana le komiti ya ditlhabololo tsa motse go tla go buisana le batsadi go itharabolgelwa ka seo se ka thusa mo tokafatsong ya maduo.

Kgosi Olopeng Ramasesane wa motse wa Bray fa a bua mabapi le

tse borukutlhi o ne a supa fa go le pele ba ne ba tshwenngwa ke melato ya go tlodisa loruo le go tlola tereta ya molelwane e seng ka fa molaong go ya kwa South Africa mme mo ngwageng ono morago ga thuso ya mapodisi a Special Support Group (SSG) ka sefofane sa Drone seemo seo se ne sa kokobela. Kgosi Ramasesane o boletse fa motse wa gagwe o dikanyeditse ke dipolasi tsa batho basweu ka jalo go sena lefatsheng le baka fa ba ka lemanang mo go lone go itshetsa ka jalo bontsi jwa batho ba gagwe ba itshetsa ka diatla go bereka mo dipolasing.

Are mo nakong ya gompiano ka lebaka la bolwetsi jwa tlhako le molomo bangwe ba setse ba kgaotswe mo ditirong mme seo sa gakatsa lehuma le letlhoko la ditiro le le leng magoletsa mo motseng oo mo ebileng matlho otlhe a lebile fela kwa ikgageng/ ipelegeng e le yone e thapang dipalo tse di tsenang fela mo seatleng. Lefa go ntse jalo o ne a supa fa ba setse ba le malala a laotswe go ipaakanyetsa boipuso jwa monongwaga ka go shafatsa komiti ee tsamaisang mme tsholofelo e le gore bo atlege le go ketekwa ka kagiso. Kgosi Ramamesane o ne a tlatsa ka go supa fa tsholofelo e le gore gongwe bolwetsi jwa tlhako le molomo bo tla a bo setse bo laolesega gore ba kgone go letlelelwe go tlhaba go ipelela letsatsi la leo. **BOPA**

Gamalete council hopeful amidst economic strains

Baleseng Batlotleng
RAMOTSWA

Despite the current economic strain and funding constraints, Gamalete District Council is hopeful that the economy will recover and create room for implementation of major projects in the district.

Addressing a full council session on Monday district council chairperson, Mr Matlhomola Motsage, said for the 2026/2027 financial year had no provision for new projects under the District Development Plan 9 as available funding would only cater for ongoing projects.

However, he said they remained optimistic that the economy would recover and cater for major projects such as the upgrading of Ramotswa Border Post which

required significant funding to transform it into a modern and commercially viable port of entry capable of facilitating increased cross border trade.

He said that the council had submitted eight project memorandums comprising projects and programmes.

“To this end, only partial disbursement of funds is for four programmes that include Ikageng, orphan care, Community Home Based Care and School Feeding Programmes, while the remaining four project memorandums for projects are not yet approved,” he said.

Mr Motsage said the four project memorandums included P10 million for Constituency Community Projects (CCP) proposed for improving the water supply network in the district, the P110, 000 for destitute housing, P8

million for roads maintenance and P663,000 for school maintenance of Mokgosi Primary School.

He said council continued to operate under significant financial pressure following the reduction of P53.42 million on the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) during this 2026/27 financial year.

Mr Motsage said the financial status had required council to reprioritise expenditure with significant pressure expected on utilities, refuse collection, security services, support to vulnerable groups and other essential operations.

“As at July 13, 2026, expenditure stood at P62.54 million representing 33 per cent of the budget while collections on our own source of Revenue stood at P972, 000 constituting 12 per cent of the P7.91 million of the budget. This is a call for us to maintain

strict financial discipline, improve revenue collection, and ensure expenditure remains aligned with approved priorities,” he added.

Mr Motsage said market stalls and property rating projects remained revenue initiatives to improve council’s financial status hence council advertised an expression of interest for both projects in May.

He noted that the expression of interest for market stalls was advertised to attract the highest and best use of the designated area to develop activities that were commercial and vibrant, including a mix of retail, office and other commercial uses.

The other critical project for economic revenue is the 72 hectare recreational plot which continues to attract high lease rentals from Malete Land Board but without any capital gains, Mr Matsage said.

He explained that in order to balance out the capital losses and convert the park into a profitable asset council had rezoned the plot into mixed use commercial with emphasis on sustainable development through provision of green spaces.

Mr Motsage said the other potential source of revenue was the Ramotswa Central Business District Mall development, which was under the oversight committee for final recommendation of the submitted proposal from the unsolicited bid and was anticipated to be completed by the end of August this year.

For progress on the Boatle–Ramotswa road 10-kilometre asphalt overlaying and road-marking project he said it had been challenged by unavailability of good gravel material and shortages of aggregates and bitumen, leaving the project at 67 per cent progress against the planned 80 per cent.

BOPA



Gamalete District Council has earmarked Ramotswa Border Post for upgrading. The project requires significant funding to transform it into a modern and commercially viable port of entry capable of facilitating increased cross border trade. Photo: Baleseng Batlotleng

De Beers commits to partnerships

Omphile Ntakhwana
MAUNATLALA

De Beers Group is committed to partnering with institutions and communities for education excellence in Botswana. Speaking at a donation handover ceremony presented by De Beers Group in partnership with Konica Minolta at Maunatlala Junior Secondary School, De Beers Group representative Ms Gosego Phirinyane said meaningful collaborations were what would move society forward. She said access to the right tools by students and teachers could make a significant impact in education.

“This is why we saw it fit to partner with Konica Minolta to donate two heavy duty printers, maintenance of these machines for 12 months and duplicating paper for 12 months,” said Ms Phirinyane. She further added that the donation would assist in printing materials for learning, revision and testing for Maunatlala students.

“I want to encourage you students to recognise that your circumstances will not stop you from positively contributing to your country and also, your circumstances will not be like this forever,” she added. Ms Phirinyane further said with the downturn of diamond sales, the country’s hopes of diversification were squarely rooted in students of today.

“Re beile mo go lona go re isa pele and please learn boldly,” she said as she encouraged students to study hard and be ready to take over the economic reigns in future. Konica Minolta representative Ms Refilwe Maribeng said the value of the entire donation was a little under P200 000. Mr Kebame Montwedi, Maunatlala CJSS School Head said the school has a total of 450 kids and 15 classes. “We admit students from Maunatlala, Seolwane, Mokokwana, Maunatlala and Mosweu amongst other villages,” he said. Speaking on their academic performance since 2021, Mr Montwedi said they attained pass rates of 26.4 per cent, 28.8 per cent, 33.8 per cent, 39.4 per cent and 20.8 per cent respectively.

“This year we aim to do better than all our previous years,” he said, adding that they were grateful for the donation by De Beers Group in partnership with Konica Minolta. Highlighting some of the challenges they faced, Mr Montwedi said dilapidated infrastructure was a huge concern. “Most classes don’t have windows, ceilings and doors,” he said.

Other challenges he mentioned lack of electricity in most classrooms which affected revision and cancellation of evening study time, no internet, no resources in science labs, no furniture for students and teachers, and no air-conditioners in the computer lab. “Our library books are as old as the school which was established in 1984,” he said, adding that teachers have laptops and students have access to a computer laboratory, but there was no Internet. **BOPA**

Itlhaganele profits from passion

Thuso Kgakatsi
TSHANE

What began as a simple love for plants has blossomed into a source of income for 53-year-old Kelapile Itlhaganele of Tshane, demonstrating how passion, determination and creativity can be turned into a sustainable livelihood.

Ms Itlhaganele has been nurturing and selling a variety of shade, ornamental, fruit and indigenous plants since 2019, but her journey into horticulture dates back to 2012 when she lived in Odi. It was during her stay in Odi that she began collecting plant species that were difficult to find in the Kgalagadi region, gradually developing an interest that would later grow into a business.

“That is where I realised I had the love for plants. I learnt all the skills in planting and realised this is a craft in which we can make a living,” she said.

Today, her nursery boasts a diverse selection of plants, ranging from shade trees such as Benjamin fig and other evergreen varieties to ornamental plants including croton, schefflera and butterfly plants. For those interested in fruit production, she supplies seedlings of peach, grape, guava, Chinese apple, pawpaw, avocado and

mango, while indigenous species such as morolwane also form part of her stock.

However, turning her passion into a viable enterprise has not been without challenges. Ms Itlhaganele said demand for plants remained relatively low in Tshane, with some residents still failing to appreciate their value and often expecting them to be given away for free.

As a result, she has had to look beyond her immediate community, with Hukuntsi, approximately 12 kilometres away, becoming her main market. Although travelling to Hukuntsi adds to her operating costs, she said the market there provides more consistent sales.

The income generated from the nursery has become an important contribution to her household, particularly as her husband is retired. She uses proceeds from the business to meet everyday household needs such as groceries and fuel, while some of the income has also been invested back into the property, including re-fencing their yard. Ms Itlhaganele, however, the greatest investment has been passion.

She said horticulture required dedication and patience, noting that she often spent entire days tending to her plants. “When taking care of this business you can

clothe and maintain your family with ease. What is most needed is the love, passion and zeal to care for the plants,” she said. Her enterprise is also vulnerable to the harsh conditions of the Kgalagadi, particularly during winter when frost can destroy plants and result in financial losses. To protect her stock, she introduced temporary shade this year.

However, because the business does not have permanent shade-net infrastructure, she is often forced to move plants around to protect them from extreme weather conditions.

Despite these challenges, she remained determined to grow the enterprise. She said she had not received financial assistance from funding agencies, although the Department of Forestry had committed to assist with shade netting once funds were available. Meanwhile, the increasing number of plants around her property has brought an unexpected opportunity.

Ms Itlhaganele said she had noticed more bees in the area and was now considering diversifying into beekeeping.

She plans to engage the Department of Agriculture to assess the feasibility of the venture and determine how best to integrate it with her existing

horticultural activities.

Beyond her own business, Ms Itlhaganele believes horticulture has the potential to create opportunities for other rural residents, particularly those willing to start small and grow gradually. She encouraged aspiring horticultural entrepreneurs not to be discouraged by the initial challenges, saying the sector could provide both income and food for households.

“There is opportunity for business in keeping plants. They are useful as one can make a living out of them,” she said. Her experience illustrates the potential of small-scale horticulture to contribute to rural livelihoods while promoting greener communities and food production.

With improved access to markets, infrastructure, inputs and technical support, enterprises such as Ms Itlhaganele’s could expand beyond household income generation and contribute to broader local economic development. For now, her nursery remains a modest enterprise in Tshane, but each seedling she nurtures represents more than a plant.

It is a symbol of a livelihood-taking root through patience, hard work and an enduring passion for nature. **BOPA**

Arts & Culture

Masalila enjoys pottery work



Goweditswe Kome
KGARI

Making pottery at home has for long been a fun activity that every person in the family involved enjoyed and

can start it as a hobby or just as a profession and a source of income.

It has been practiced by both men and women for thousands of years and has played an imperative role in human history, culture and society development.

From ancient of years, pottery has played a significant role in the culture and traditions of many societies throughout to express some cultural identities, religious beliefs and status of the community.

In an interview, 68 year-old Ms Gloria Masalila of Kgari said the desire to start working with pottery developed at a tender age in the early 70s when she always observed her grandmother at work.

Ms Masalila said her grandmother used to mould clay pots of different types, sizes, decorations and colours that were appealing to the eyes.

Her interest on pottery, she said was further cultivated at school during a class called Home Craft or Manual Work where she started working with soil from ant mount to mould clay pots, calabash, cups and the ambition was further developed.

She indicated that around 1976, it was then that the Non-Formal Education introduced her to clay pots produced using newspapers and after selling them, they boosted her financially as she managed to sell.

"The first thing you would need to do to start making pottery at home is to get the right material and equipment for the project," she said to start her project, she collects soil from the neighbouring village of Moroka.

She said when digging, the soil comes as clumps and at home she pounds those clumps with pestle to break them into finer particles.

"For better results and to attain fine course soil, I then use a weaning basket to remove larger particles of soil and attain smooth and thinner soil particles," she said.

Ms Masalila said in starting her work, she mixes the soil with water to a desired and required level of moisture content and mould it round to form a ball like shape and then start molding her clay pot from inside at the same time making sure that the outside does not lose shape, smoothness or collapse while working on it.

She indicated that she works on it starting from the bottom until reaching its mouth then leaves it to dry up slowly for robustness in the morning, she turns it upside down to close the bottom part.

After completing the pot, it is left for a day to strengthen up and then a fire made from dry cow dung and Morula tree fibre is used to burn the pot to toughen it.

Then decorations follows using a fork to engrave shapes and colours from a certain soft black stone and alkaline stone. She noted that in a day, she can produce two clay pots in fear that making many at the same time may lead to them drying up while working on other pots.

On the other hand, she highlighted that there are some taboos to be followed when working with pottery as some days before going for digging the soil one should go on camp and avoid being in contact with their partners.

She said after digging, they were required to throw some little soil by a hand, cup or a dish as part of rituals to safeguard the hole from bad spirits that could make the clay pots to crack.

"The clay pots can be used for storing and cooling water, cooking vegetables, meat, chimoni, pounded nuts, lentils including a mixture of samp and beans," she said.

Ms Masalila stated that knowledge transfer seems futile as youth appears to have no interest in pottery and at the moment she intends to expand working with two elderly women who have shown interest. **BOPA**

Creators call for robust music industry

Loago Thomas
GABORONE

The opening session of the Creators Assembly Summit at Maitisong Theatre in Maru-a-Pula set the tone early: music is a career and an industry long before it becomes a performance.

Centred on 'music production and business', the session brought together producers, artists and repertoire (A&R) specialists and artists from Botswana and South Africa to speak about the work behind the songs and the gaps still holding the industry back.

South African DJ, producer and label manager Mduduzi Memela, better known as DJ Mdoovar, admitted that the business side of music came late for him, as it does for many musicians.

Early mistakes, he said, often taught artists that they must become marketers, strategists and business owners alongside being performers.

Vusi Leeuw, a self described 'music business architect' who has worked behind South African careers including TKZee and DJ Kent, spoke about the flip side: invisibility.

Despite years of A&R work with international names such as Busta Rhymes and Usher, Leeuw said he was often unrecognised in public and has even been turned away from spaces where artists he helped build were welcomed.

"There's no 'him' without 'you'," he argued, making the case for valuing the people working behind the scenes as much as those on stage. A&R is the arm of a record label or an independent role responsible for scouting and developing talent, connecting artists with songwriters and producers, guiding song selection and helping shape an artist's sound and direction. Botswana rapper, turned producer

Bangu Matege shared his own journey, describing the struggle to simply be heard early in his career. His breakthrough, he said, came not from chasing an international sound, but from rapping in his own language.

The panellists also pointed to limited corporate and government investment in the creative sector, citing funding mismatches and policy gaps.

They highlighted Botswana's inability to monetise YouTube and called for more structured engagement between government, corporates and platforms such as Creators Assembly.

The discussion then turned to who should take responsibility for these structural gaps. Panelists argued that Botswana's cultural policy framework was, in one speaker's words, built from the beginning by the wrong people.

However, they acknowledged government's attempts to support

the sector and expressed hope that current officials would be more willing to listen. One artist recalled the old CD-submission process required to enter new markets as an example of the kind of bureaucratic friction that needed to be removed.

DJ Mdoovar added another perspective, drawing from his decision to leave software development after becoming frustrated by pay disparities and pursue music instead. He argued that DJs resisting the shift from turntables to cloud storage were repeating the same mistake artists made when they clung to outdated formats.

That view sparked disagreement, with another panelist pointing to the global resurgence of vinyl and arguing that streaming's fractions of a cent pay out hit jazz, gospel and Afro-pop particularly hard because many of their audiences remain loyal to radio and physical formats. Zahara and Brenda Fassie were

cited as examples of artists whose huge physical sales do not translate into equivalent streaming value. The panellists also noted that AI-generated music was putting further pressure on songwriter income.

Representing government, Marang Selolwane of Botswana's National Arts Council outlined an ongoing artist registration drive aimed at creating a national database to support data backed policymaking. She also detailed monetisation discussions involving Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC), government ministries and Google, while acknowledging that Botswana's small population and advertising market remain major obstacles.

The session ended on a practical note, with a banking representative taking creators through the importance of separating personal and business accounts, developing saving habits and building credit over time. **BOPA**



South Africa producer, Godfrey Pilane (left), Han-C (second left), Vee Mampeezy (second right) and Bangu during the Creators Assembly Summit in Gaborone recently. Bangu said his breakthrough came not from chasing an international sound, but from rapping in his own language. Photo: Phenyio Ramatu



Athletes build bridges for sporting future

Anastacia Sibanda
GABORONE

For some athletes, success is measured by medals and international appearances. For others, the true measure of achievement is what they do with their experience to create opportunities for those coming behind them.

This was the message at the Future Champions Summit where local sporting stars, among them tennis player, Malak Macheng and swimmer Melodi Saleshando, shared their journeys and encouraged young Batswana to see sport as a pathway to discipline, confidence, education and opportunity.

Held in Gaborone on Saturday under the Malak Gives Back initiative, the summit sought to inspire the next generation of athletes by demonstrating how individual sporting journeys can contribute to broader national development.

For Malak, the journey to competitive tennis began modestly when friends invited her to try the sport. What started as casual weekend rallies developed into a passion and eventually led her to represent Botswana on international courts.

Her recent qualification for the African Regional Training Centre (ARTC) in Tunisia marked another significant milestone in her career and placed her among athletes gaining international exposure.

However, Malk said personal achievements should not be the end goal.

Through Malak Gives Back, she is using her experience to help create opportunities for other young athletes.

She encouraged aspiring athletes to start with what was available to them, embrace opportunities and remain committed even when the journey became difficult.

Having benefited from opportunities created through sport, Malak is now focused on helping others follow a similar path.

For Melodi, her journey began for a very different reason. She initially learned to swim as a basic life skill but soon developed into a passion for competitive sport.

She said the sport had exposed her to international competition while helping shape her character and resilience.

Melodi encouraged young people particularly girls, to confront fear and self-doubt and to believe in their ability to achieve their aspirations.

Through initiatives such as Malak Gives Back, Malak and Melodi are using their experiences to create pathways for the next generation and helping to build a stronger foundation for the country's sporting future. **BOPA**

Tennis star Malak Macheng said she is using her experience to help create opportunities for other young athletes.

Swimmer Melodi Saleshando

Moshupa stadium to produce champions

Thandy Tebogo
KANYE

Decades-long vision for district-level sport development became a reality recently with the official opening of the Moshupa stadium to give hundreds of local athletes access to first-class facilities built to launch the next generation of stars.

By bridging the gap between national strategy and local access, the new stadium turns policy vision into tangible reality and will equip athletes with the high-quality resources they need to thrive and compete.

Speaking at the official opening of the facility in Moshupa, Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeng said the stadium would ensure that talent was nurtured right where it belonged, within the heart of the community and beyond.

Kelebeng emphasised that its completion marked a significant milestone and closed the gap in district-level grassroots development programmes.

He explained that the community stadium development programme represented the ministry's targeted framework for delivering quality sport and recreation infrastructure to broaden public access to first-class sporting grounds nationwide.

"It is a sanctuary where children can play safely, grow strong and learn the lifelong values of sport and teamwork," he said.

He underscored government's strategic intent to provide safe,



Minister of Sport and Arts, Jacob Kelebeng (right) and Kgosi Oscar Mosielele during the official opening of Moshupa community stadium recently.

competitive and conducive playing fields across the country.

The minister indicated that the initiative traced its roots back to the Seepapitso Government White Paper No. 4 of 2002, specifically recommendation 3.25(b), which championed community-based sporting facilities to boost participation at the school and local level.

He added that it was further anchored in Priority Area Three of the 2001 National Sport and Recreation Policy, which called for the nationwide development and improvement of facilities.

Meanwhile, the strong demand the venue had already drawn from local clubs and residents highlighted just how vital the development was, setting a powerful foundation for its full

utilisation. However, the minister coupled the celebration with a call for long-term stewardship.

"It is important to note that building a facility of this quality is a great achievement, but the true test of our leadership is how well we will preserve it. Too often, public infrastructure falls victim to a 'build and neglect' culture, where lack of care or a lapse in upkeep leads to rapid decline of facilities, cutting off access and undermining government's efforts to support talent development," he added.

Thus, he urged every stakeholder to prioritise ongoing maintenance and avoid negligence.

The newly minted facility boasts a FIFA-standard artificial football pitch fit for elite league matches, multi-sport playing courts, a gravel athletics track, team dressing



Karatekas demonstrating a Kata during the official opening of Moshupa community stadium.



The newly opened Moshupa community stadium. Photos: Thandy Tebogo

rooms, kiosks, public ablution blocks and a covered steel-structure mini-grandstand with a seating capacity of 306.

Providing a breakdown of the project details, deputy council secretary, Douglas Sesimanyana stated that the stadium was developed at a cost of P17, 935, 485.60.

Located in Sedudu ward, the

facility sits on 20 hectares of land.

For her part, Abaleng Lesego of the Botswana Basketball Association (BBA), representing National Sport Affiliates, pledged that four key sporting bodies would work together to leverage the new facility, promote grassroots initiatives and significantly advance youth sport development across the region. **BOPA**