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EU boosts Botswana Green Value Chain

Lorato Gaofise
GABORONE

The European Union (EU) has funded Botswana's Green Value Chain Development for job creation programme with approximately P130 million (€8 million). The fund is aimed at accelerating economic diversification, creating sustainable jobs and strengthening the country's competitiveness through green industries.

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Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Joel Ramaphoi giving welcome remarks at the launch of Botswana Green Value Chain Development for job creation programme in Gaborone on Monday. Mr Ramaphoi said the initiative was part of the EU Global Gateway Strategy, representing a major step towards building a more resilient, inclusive and export oriented economy. Photo: Felicity Male

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BDC applies due diligence on politically exposed persons



BDC managing director, Mr Oteng Keabetswe

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

The Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) maintains a strict policy against investing in politically exposed persons (PEPs) to protect its capital and satisfy strict international funding requirements.

Appearing before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Statutory Bodies and State Enterprises on Monday, BDC managing director, Mr Oteng Keabetswe emphasised that the restriction was core to the corporation's operational policy.

"Our international financiers require us to conduct thorough due diligence on any business. If we discover that a business is politically exposed, we do not

finance it," Mr Keabetswe said.

However, he explained that prominent and influential individuals were not automatically disqualified from receiving funding. Instead, he said they faced a much higher threshold of scrutiny.

"Our policy requires that we perform enhanced due diligence on these individuals to ensure that the corporation's funds are not exposed to abuse," he explained, noting that such safeguards were rigorously overseen by the BDC board of directors.

On BDC's mandate to stimulate the national economy, Mr Keabetswe noted that while their investments cut across Botswana, projects were currently concentrated around major cities and towns, driven by two main factors including the required proximity to markets as well as the corporation's minimum investment ticket size of P50 million and above.

However, he added that the

corporation was looking to expand its footprint deeper into rural and secondary markets.

BDC, he said was currently evaluating and managing a pipeline of diverse projects across several districts, looking at automotive, agriculture, manufacturing and construction materials in Lobatse, while advancing pipeline developments in Palapye, Francistown, Ghanzi, Tsabong and the wider Kgalagadi areas.

"If there are projects in the wider geographical spread of the country that meet our investment criteria, we consider them," Mr Keabetswe said, emphasising that all projects were assessed equally based on commercial viability.

To further drive nationwide development, he indicated that BDC had approached several local authorities to explore economic partnerships.

He further noted that the corporation was also receptive

to partnering directly with local communities, particularly those who can contribute land parcels as equity into new ventures.

He said a major focus of such a strategy was taking shape in Kasane, where BDC aimed to shift the paradigm of the tourism sector.

Again, he said while the industry had continued to rely on a 'low-volume, high-return' model, BDC planned to pioneer a 'high-volume, high-return' alternative.

On one hand, he indicated that a major initiative was on the pipeline which would be financed through BDC's internal reserves and global development partners.

"We will be unveiling a new project of that sort in the next two weeks, which we believe will change the face and persona of our tourism industry," he said.

He also told the committee that when assessing applications, BDC was entirely blind to who brought the project forward, focusing

strictly on the objective commercial opportunity presented.

That, he said was because BDC raised its capital independently from local and international capital markets, hence it must strictly balance project returns against its financial obligations to its funders.

Furthermore, he said BDC would, over the next 12 to 24 months, plan to further diversify its revenue streams to ensure that it remained completely self-financing and avoided placing any financial pressure on government.

Ultimately, the managing director said, the true measure of the corporation's success would be its tangible impact on local communities.

Over the coming years, he said BDC would prioritise tracking metrics centered on new jobs created, existing jobs defended, new industries built and the growth of export revenues to accelerate economic diversification. **BOPA**

Pelaelo urges govt to include PWDs in digital agenda

Goitsemodimo Williams
-Madzonga
NATALE

Kgosi Shepard Pelaelo of Natale has called on government to ensure people living with disabilities are not left behind as it expands national network connectivity.

Speaking at the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day commemoration in Natale on Saturday, Kgosi Pelaelo said the blind and those with hearing impairments often lack privacy when using mobile devices because they must rely on others to access information. This, he said, denied them privacy others enjoy in a digital society.

He urged government to factor in disabled persons when rolling out tech initiatives, noting that braille reading and writing systems remained costly and out of reach for many.

In response, Minister of Communications and Innovation, Mr David Tshere said his ministry was mandated to provide reliable, secure networks with inclusive access for every Motswana,

including vulnerable groups.

This year's theme: Digital Lifelines: Strengthening Resilience in a Connected World, aligns with Botswana's push for resilient systems, he said.

The Cybersecurity Act, enacted in November 2025, aims to protect users through secure systems.

Mr Tshere acknowledged that millions worldwide still lacked reliable internet, risking deeper inequality.

"If digital technologies are truly lifelines, then they must reach everyone, everywhere," he said.

He said government was working to bridge the urban-rural digital divide under the Botswana Economic Transformation Plan.

Resilience, he added, required investment in inclusive infrastructure, digital literacy and affordability.

Mr Tshere also condemned theft of copper cables and communication equipment, saying it diverted funds from new projects to replace stolen infrastructure.

He appealed to citizens to help safeguard national infrastructure so services continued to reach communities effectively. **BOPA**

Magagarape road anchors Botswana diamond story

Kehumile Moekejo
JWANENG

Minister of Sport and Arts, Mr Jacob Kelebeng has hailed Debswana Jwaneng Mine for its contribution towards government's commitment to infrastructure development, which is a driving force of economic growth and national transformation.

He said the 40km Magagarape Road, which Jwaneng Mine funded to the tune of P100 million, was testament that Botswana's diamond story went beyond mining resources, but instead premised on sustainable development for communities.

He also said the project was a example to impactful partnerships which aligned with the country's aspirations for long-term development.

"Ours is not simply a story about mining minerals from the ground. It is a story about transformation, resilience, partnership and progress. Botswana's natural diamonds have helped build schools, hospitals, roads, businesses and opportunities for generations of citizens.

They have contributed to stability, growth and the advancement of communities across our country," he said at the official handover of the Magagarape road recently.

Mr Kelebeng, who is also

the Member of Parliament for Takatokwane, further noted that the road would go a long way in improving accessibility and connectivity for the communities around Jwaneng.

He said it would enhance economic growth and service delivery for the communities around it, in addition to improving accessibility between Jwaneng Mine and Magagarape Wellfields.

He said such developments had a direct impact on the lives of the people and resonated with the country's foundation for development.

Mr Kelebeng also said the collaboration between government and Jwaneng Mine for infrastructure development contributed towards an inclusive ecosystem which uplifted the lives of the people.

"The continued collaboration between government and Debswana demonstrates the importance of partnerships that place people at the centre of development. Such partnerships remain essential in advancing Botswana's national vision of creating an inclusive, diversified and sustainable economy that benefits all citizens," he noted.

Jwaneng Mine General Manager, Mr Goitseone Gadifele said while the road was essentially conceptualised to support

operational efficiency between Jwaneng Mine and Magagarape Wellfields which supply water to the mine, township and other areas, it also resonated with the company's commitment towards sustainable infrastructure for communities in their area of influence.

He said developing the road was also intended to enhance regional connectivity and safer transportation for the surrounding areas as sustainable impact espoused by Debswana's Building Forever Strategy.

"We believe that mining should leave a legacy that extends beyond diamonds. Long after mining activities have ended, communities should continue to benefit from investments that improve lives and create sustainable impact.

This philosophy is embedded within the Debswana's Building Forever Strategy, which focuses on creating lasting positive change through sustainable development, responsible operations and community empowerment and infrastructure that supports future generations," he noted.

While he appreciated the collective efforts from stakeholders such as technical teams, community leaders and contractors, he implored road users to ensure the road was used safely and responsibly for optimal value. **BOPA**

Ministry mulls monitoring bracelets for stock theft offenders

Thuso Kgakatsi
HUKUNTSI

Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Nelson Ramaotwana says government is considering the introduction of electronic monitoring bracelets for repeat offenders as part of efforts to curb escalating crime, particularly stock theft, which continues to threaten the country's livestock industry.

Mr Ramaotwana revealed that the proposed electronic wristbands would assist authorities in monitoring suspects who are granted bail but allegedly continue committing stock theft-related offences while awaiting trial.

The minister made the remarks during the Kang Farmers Association Pitso held under the theme: Projecting Cattle Herd to 5 Million, Advancing Justice, Combating Stock Theft in Botswana.

Farmers at the gathering expressed concern over increasing incidents of stock theft in the district and across the country, arguing that many accused persons were repeatedly granted bail and continued engaging in criminal activities.

Responding to the grievances, Mr Ramaotwana said his ministry would engage counterparts in South Africa to explore how the use of electronic monitoring systems could best be implemented in the country.

He noted that stock theft continued to undermine government's efforts to increase the national cattle herd in line with the President's call for farmers to grow the herd to five million cattle.

Mr Ramaotwana explained that the law already provided room for tougher action against habitual

offenders.

He said provisions under revised legislation empowered magistrates to deny bail to perpetual repeat offenders, adding that the responsibility now rested with prosecutors and magistrates to ensure the law was effectively enforced.

"All that is left is to identify who is not doing their job," he said, noting that in Kang approximately seven repeat offenders were currently out on bail while awaiting trial.

He argued that such suspects should remain in custody until their cases were concluded, stating that repeat offenders were frustrating government's vision of increasing the national herd and strengthening the agricultural sector.

The minister further advised farmers that complainants also had the right to approach the courts and submit affidavits requesting that

certain accused persons be denied bail where circumstances justified such an action.

In another development, Mr Ramaotwana said the revised legislation to allowed both complainants and accused persons to provide DNA samples for livestock in stock theft investigations.

He said the measure was expected to simplify court proceedings and strengthen evidence in such cases.

Mr Ramaotwana admitted that the country was currently experiencing an increase in stock theft cases, a development that had contributed to a growing backlog before the courts.

According to the minister, some magistrates were presently limited in the types of criminal cases they could preside over due to jurisdictional constraints.

To address the challenge, he said

...proposed electronic wristbands would assist authorities in monitoring suspects who are granted bail but allegedly continue committing stock theft-related offences while awaiting trial.



Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Nelson Ramaotwana

government was reviewing the jurisdiction of magistrates to enable more judicial officers to handle serious criminal matters, including stock theft cases.

He also revealed plans to establish specialised courts dedicated to stock theft matters in an effort to speed up trials and reduce case backlog.

At the same time, the minister issued a stern warning to butchery owners allegedly involved in stock theft syndicates.

He cautioned that existing laws allowed for the revocation of licences belonging to businesses found guilty of collaborating with stock thieves.

Mr Ramaotwana said under the current Stock Theft Act, courts could order the forfeiture of business licences and confiscation of vehicles used in the commission of stock theft offences.

The minister further encouraged farmers to establish crime prevention committees and strengthen collaboration with similar structures across the country.

He said such partnerships would help improve information sharing and tracking of stolen livestock across different regions.

Mr Ramaotwana also challenged farmers in the Kang

area to significantly increase their livestock numbers from the current estimated 78 000 cattle to about 780 000.

He assured farmers that government remained committed to closing loopholes and addressing obstacles affecting growth within the livestock sector.

The minister noted that government had identified agriculture as a key sector with the potential to create more jobs across various value chains.

However, he said the recent outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) had negatively affected progress towards that goal. He added that cattle rustling was among the factors contributing to the spread of the disease, further threatening the livestock industry and rural livelihoods.

Responding to growing calls for stock theft cases to be tried in customary courts, Mr Ramaotwana explained that such cases were regarded as serious criminal offences and therefore required formal legal procedures.

Farmers at the meeting had appealed for stock theft cases to be tried in customary courts and, where that was not possible, called for legislation to be reviewed to deny bail to repeat stock theft offenders. **BOPA**

EU injects P130 million into Botswana Green Value Chain

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Speaking at the fund launch in Gaborone on Monday, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Mr Joel Ramaphoi said the launch's theme: Transforming the economy, driving sustainable growth and creating new jobs for Batswana, marked the beginning of a broader journey

toward building a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy for Botswana and the wider region.

Mr Ramaphoi said the initiative was part of the EU Global Gateway Strategy, representing a major step toward building a more resilient, inclusive and export-oriented economy.

Mr Ramaphoi said the four-year initiative, which was also implemented in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC), as the implementing partner, was expected to support enterprise development, green industrialisation and employment creation.

It will be focusing primarily on ecotourism and horticulture as strategic sectors capable of driving a sustainable economic growth.

He said the initiative will place particular emphasis on women and youth-led enterprises, rural communities and small-scale farmers.

Additionally, he said the programme was also aligned directly with Botswana's key strategic plans, including; Vision 2036, the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP), the 12th National

Development Plan and broader government efforts aimed at promoting inclusive growth, structural transformation and economic resilience.

"Our ambition remains to transition Botswana from a predominantly resource-driven economy to one that is diversified, export-oriented, innovation-led and capable of creating sustainable opportunities for our people," he said.

Mr Ramaphoi said ecotourism presented significant opportunities for the country to leverage its globally recognised natural heritage and strong conservation credentials to create sustainable livelihoods and expand community participation in economic activity.

On horticulture, Mr Ramaphoi said the programme would support efforts to improve food security, reduce dependence on imports, promote agro-processing and expand access to domestic, regional and international markets.

He said the two sectors held immense potential to unlock opportunities for young people, women and entrepreneurs across value chains, whilst contributing directly to the country's economic

transformation agenda.

Furthermore, he noted that the programme would also work toward strengthening ecosystem support structures for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by improving access to market intelligence, standards support, financing opportunities and institutional coordination.

On policy and regulatory strengthening, he said the programme would support efforts to improve standards compliance, remove bottlenecks and strengthen sustainability through technical assistance and stakeholder engagement.

To improve competitiveness and facilitate greater market access, Mr Ramaphoi said there was also a need to align the country's systems and regulatory environment with evolving international market requirements.

He said the programme was expected to contribute toward climate resilience, while supporting Botswana's transition toward greener and more sustainable economic models.

Additionally, Mr Ramaphoi stressed that the success of the initiative would depend heavily

on strong collaboration among government, development partners, the private sector and other stakeholders.

EU Ambassador to Botswana and to the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Ms Petra Pereyra said the programme was a symbol and a concrete manifestation of the EU's strong and enduring partnership with Botswana.

"The European union remains a reliable and predictable partner of Botswana. Our approach is grounded in international law, cooperation and mutual respect," she said.

Ambassador Pereyra emphasised that the programme put people first, especially women and youth who often faced barriers to opportunities.

Through training, mentorship and dedicated support, she said SMEs would be helped to grow so that they could hire more people, pay better wages and compete on the international market access opportunities created by the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreements and the African Continental Free Trade Area. **BOPA**

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Daily Business

Botswana Oil addresses fuel stock concerns

Ndingililo Gaoswediwe
GABORONE

Botswana Oil Limited (BOL) acting Chief Executive Officer has assured the nation that stock levels will improve, as supply trucks continue to arrive daily despite the current fuel cover standing at just 12.2 days as of last Friday.

Appearing before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Statutory Bodies and State Enterprises on Monday, Ms Latelang Chakalisa, explained that the country's current 41.5 million litres of available fuel included petrol, which would last for 8.4 days while diesel was expected to last for 16.4 days.

She noted that BOL's ongoing infrastructure expansions were ultimately aimed at securing a 60-day fuel stock cover for the nation. Currently, she said the Gaborone depot had a capacity of 24 million litres, while the Francistown depot can hold 38 million litres and the facility was being upgraded to add an extra 60 million litres of storage capacity. She added that the Francistown expansion project was being carried out in phases and was expected to be completed by late this year or early next year. Ms Chakalisa also indicated that

Botswana Oil Limited (BOL) acting CEO, Ms Latelang Chakalisa (left) and acting general manager-Supply, Mr Callaghan Mottaleng appearing before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Statutory Bodies and State Enterprises in Gaborone on Monday. Ms Chakalisa said the ongoing BOL infrastructure expansions were ultimately aimed at securing a 60-day fuel stock cover for the nation. Photo: Pheny Ramatu



the first phase was already fully operational, featuring a new six-bay road loading and offloading gantry. Again, she said while procedural issues and demands for a direct procurement process by some first-phase contractors caused initial setbacks, matters had been resolved and work was progressing to the next stage.

She said storage security would be provided by the upcoming

construction of a 30 million-litre depot in Ghanzi. Meanwhile, she said the Tshele Hills Strategic Petroleum Depot, a joint development between Botswana and Oman, remained in the pipeline as authorities awaited land acquisition.

Addressing fuel logistics, the acting CEO highlighted BOL's mandate to handle 90 per cent of all petroleum product imports consumed in the country.

She emphasised citizen economic empowerment within the supply chain, noting that the vast majority of the contracted logistics firms were citizen-owned, accounting for 28 out of the 30 total companies.

Furthermore, Ms Chakalisa reassured the committee on quality control measures, stating that all fuel products endured rigorous testing before entering the country. **BOPA**

SMEs backbone of thriving economies

Kelebogile Taolo
FRANCISTOWN

First National Bank Botswana (FNBB) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Steven Bogatsu says Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the true backbone of thriving economies and central to Botswana's diversification push under the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP).

Speaking during the FirstPreneur Value Chain Roundtable held in Francistown on Thursday, Mr Bogatsu said SMEs's capacity to innovate, generate employment and drive inclusive growth made them indispensable to the national development agenda.

He said across the world, SMEs had proven their transformative power, pointing out to the likes of Kenya where SMEs fuel GDP growth, and employment while pioneering agriculture and ICT, South Korea's globally competitive industries as well as Rwanda's community-driven growth through SME reform as well.

These examples, he said served as a reminder that, when SMEs were given the right structures and support, they did more than survive, they thrived and reshaped nations.

"In Botswana, SMEs already provide the majority of private sector jobs and are central to our diversification" Mr Bogatsu noted.

Additionally, he mentioned that Francistown played a vital role as a key economic centre with strong entrepreneurial spirit in



FNBB CEO, Mr Steven Bogatsu (centre), Francistown mayor, Mr Gaone Majere (right) and the delegates touring stalls during the Firstpreneur Chain Roundtable in Francistown recently. Mr Bogatsu said SMEs's capacity to innovate, generate employment and drive inclusive growth made them indispensable to the national development agenda. Photo: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

the country.

"The entrepreneurial spirit here is strong, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that local businesses are not only supported but positioned to scale and succeed."

He highlighted that FNBB in partnership with Project124 Africa had launched the FirstPreneurs Programme which was a commitment to advance SME development.

The initiative, he said, was designed to accelerate entrepreneurs in building sustainable businesses, focusing 100 per cent exclusively on citizen owned enterprises that have been operating for two years "ensuring that resilient entrepreneurs receive the extra push needed to elevate their growth journey".

Botswana, he stated, did not lack enterprise or ambition but what must be done was to strengthen the alignment between entrepreneurs, markets and finance.

He highlighted that through the philosophy, FNBB had projects such as the Mmadinare Solar Complex Project and Pandamatenga where the bank had partnered with developers, government, farming groups and communities to share risk and align delivery.

"Finance responds to structure, predictability and delivery. When businesses are coordinated within clusters, risk is reduced, and when risk reduces, capital follows." Said Mr Bogatsu.

For his part, Francistown City Mayor, Mr Gaone Majere, commended FNBB and Project 124 Africa for bringing important

engagements to the city and the duo's continued commitment to support Botswana enterprise development and bolster economic participation.

Mr Majere said since the closure of mines, the city of Francistown had relied heavily on SMEs and initiatives by FNBB and partners served as motivation and encouragement to scale small businesses.

He said SMEs remained hope for community development as they created jobs, provide pathways for innovation and self-sufficiency and had the potential to drive inclusive growth by ensuring that economic opportunities reached all people and communities.

However, the City Mayor pointed out some challenges that many SMEs continued to face, including restricted access to financial resources, limited market reach, complex procurement frameworks and lack of high-level professional networks.

He emphasised that SMEs could not grow in isolation and must be connected to functioning economic systems, to markets, buyers, financiers and opportunities that allowed them to scale and participate meaningfully in the economy.

The Francistown Entrepreneur Value Chain Roundtable follows a successful Gaborone edition and it brings together entrepreneurs from 18 sectors alongside investors, corporate buyers, sector experts, and institutional partners and was held under the theme: Unlocking SME potential through stronger value chain linkages. **BOPA**

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Ghana rules out blanket mining nationalisation

ACCRA - The government of Ghana on Monday ruled out a blanket nationalisation of the mining assets of multinational mining companies operating in the West African country. After a meeting with the Ghana Chamber of Mines, Lands and Natural Resources Minister Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah confirmed that the country did not have a policy or plan to take over the mining assets of multinational companies in a blanket manner. Buah said the government would continue to deal with each case on its own merit as dictated by the legal and regulatory framework while pursuing the primary objective of protecting the national interest. Buah assured the stakeholders in the mining industry that Ghana remained open to investors based on "win-win" cooperation to ensure that both the investors and the local economy reap the intended benefits. **Xinhua**

Border trade between Russia and China deepens

MOSCOW - Russia-China border cooperation is highly active, and the two sides are expected to unlock the potential for cooperation in this area, Governor Alexandr Osipov of the Zabaykalsky region has said. Located in Russia's Far East and bordering both China and Mongolia, the Zabaykalsky region lies along the Tea Road, a historic international trade route primarily used for tea shipments connecting China to Europe, and serves as an important hub of the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor. In a recent interview with Xinhua, Osipov said mining and mineral processing are one of the region's priority industries and a major area of cooperation with China. Dozens of joint projects are currently underway, covering various mineral resources. He noted that bilateral cooperation is shifting from basic extraction and primary processing toward deeper processing. **Xinhua**

Smart ventures drives youth entrepreneurship

TIANJIN - In recent years, youth entrepreneurship in China has taken on new characteristics of "light asset and high intelligence." Represented by One-Person Company (OPCs), the lightweight entrepreneurship model has emerged in large numbers, becoming a key window into China's innovation vitality. Since the end of 2025, more than 20 new (OPCs) have been registered in the Huayuan science park in Tianjin Binhai High-tech Industrial Development Area, covering fields including cross-border e-commerce, software development, and AI content production. Though run by individual founders, these companies form a collaborative network in the shared space, where individuals from different backgrounds can exchange technologies and creative ideas in real time to complement each other's resources. **Xinhua**

Dikgang

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Khama o rotloetsa batabogi go ipaakanyetsa mabelo



Kgosi Khama are madi a a tlaa fenngwang a botoka, mme seo se tlaa ngoka batabogi go tswa kwa mafatsheng a sele.
Dinepe: Portia Rapitsenyane

Portia Rapitsenyane

PALAPYE

Batabogi ba ba tlaa tsayang karolo mo mabelong a Sir Seretse Khama Marathon a a tlaa tshwarwang Seetebosigo a tlhola malatsi a le masome mabedi, ba rotloeditse go ikatisa nako e sa le teng.

Kgosi Khama IV wa Bangwato, a re Batswana ba tsenelele mabelo a a tshwarwang ngwaga le ngwaga, ka dipalo go itsa go phalwa ke batswakwa.

O buile se kwa Palapye jaaka fa go ne go simolodisiwa mabelo semmuso.

A re mo nakong e e fetileng, mabelo a ne a fenngwa ke batswakwa mme Batswana ba

tshwanetse ba ititeye ka thupana gore e nne bone ba fenyang.

Kgosi Khama a re madi a a tlaa fenngwang ke madi a a botoka, mme seo se tlaa ngoka batabogi go tswa kwa mafatsheng a sele ka mabelo a sa tlhale gore motho ke wa lefatshe lefe.

Lebelo la 42.2km le tlaa simolola kwaa Morupule Coal Mine go bapa le Palapye le bo le wela kwa

lebaleng le legolo la metshameko kwa Serowe fa mabelo a mangwe a tlaa bo a tabogelwa kwa Serowe.

Mofenyi wa lone o tlaa ikgapela P40,000, fa yo o tlaa tsayang maemo a bobedi a tlaa fenyha P30,000, maemo a boraro P20,000.

Yo o tlaa gaisang mo lebelong la 21km o tlaa ikgapela P10,000, maemo a bobedi P7,000 fa a

boraro e tlaa nna P5,000.

Mo lebelong la 10km, mofenyi o tlaa atswiwa ke P6,000, maemo a bobedi P4,000 mme a boraro e nne P2,000.

Kgosi Khama a re bafenyi ba tlaa newa dimpho tsa bone ka letsatsi la Sir Seretse Khama, Phukwi a rogwa kwa Gaborone.

E tlaare ngwageng o o latelang, mabelo a tshwarelwe kwa Letlhakane.

Kgosi Khama o supile fa go tlaa nna le dikgaisanyo tsa borankana le kgwele ya dinao mme le tsone di bidiwa Sir Seretse Khama Competitions.

Dikgaisanyo tse, di tlaa tshwarelwa kwa kgaolong ya Tswapong borwa mme tshwetso ya gore di tshwarelwe kae e tserwe ke barotloetsi ba dikgaisanyo ba ngwaga ono.

E tlaare Phukwi a tlhola gane kwa Sefhare, go tshwarwe dikgaisanyo tsa borankana mme ka Lwetsi go tshwarwe dikgaisanyo tsa kgwele ya dinao kwa motse Ramokgonami.

Ba ba tlaa tsayang maemo a ntlha mo dikgaisanyong tsa borankana le kgwele ya dinao ba tlaa atswiwa ka P25,000, maemo a bobedi P15,000 fa a boraro e tlaa nna P10,000, fa setlhopa sengwe le sengwe se se sa fenyang se tla atswiwa ka P2,500.. **BOPA**



Banni ba Palapye ba tshlogetse phuthego ya kgotla ya go simolodisa mabelo a Sir Seretse Khama.

St. John Gospel Church e abela ba le 120 dimpho

Tebogo Masuruke

TUTUME

Kereke ya St John Gospel Church kwa Tutume e abetse bana ba le 120 dimpho ka thotloetso ya ba Operation Christmas Child kwa Dukwi.

Dimpho tseo, tse e leng mephuthelwana e e nang le didirisiwa tsa sekole, tse di tshamekang le dibuka tsa Baebele, di abetswe bana ba ba dingwaga tse pedi go ya kwa go tse di lesome le bone kwa kerekeng eo ka Tshipi e le tsela nngwe ya

go ngokela bana mo Modimong.

Morutabana wa sekole sa Tshipi, Mme Mada Bakgethisi o lebeogetse ba lekalana la Operation Christmas Child kwa Dukwi ka dimpho tseo tse a reng ba boletse fa le bone ba di amogetse go tswa mo Mosamarea yo Molemo go tswa kwa America.

O boletse fa ba ne ba ikgolaganya le lekalana leo gore ba akole meamuso eo gore ba kgone go ngokela bana mo kerekeng gore ba golelele mo Modimong.

A re go botlhokwa gore bana ba itse poifo Modimo ba sa le

babotlana ka jaana seo se ba betla gore ba gole ba na le boikarabelo mo setshabeng.

Mme Bakgethisi a re dimpho rtseo di botlhokwa ka jaana di neela bana sebaka sa go ithuta ka tsa sekole le gone go itse lefoko la Modimo mme a gwetlha bao ba ba di amogetseng go di somarela.

Moruti wa kereke eo, Rre Elias Modise le ene o ne a iteela dimpho tseo legofi a supa fa kereke e le lefelo le le agang bana, ka jalo a kopa batsadi go rotloetsa bana go tsena kereke.

O lebogetse le lone lekgotla le

le ba fileng dimpho a re le dira tiro e ntle go dirisa dikereke go ralala lefatshe leno go gasa lefoko la modimo le gone go betla bana gore e nne batho setshabeng fa ba gola.

“Moono mogolo ke go aga le go betla ngwana go re a gole a na le boikarabelo mo setshabeng le go fedisa botlhokatsebe jo bo dirwang ke banana ba gompiano,” a tlatsa jalo Rre Modise.

O tswelsetse a re go ngokela bana mo kerekeng go botlhokwa ka jaana e le bone babusi b aka moso.

E re dikgang di eme jalo, moruti a re o tshwenyegile thata ka batsadi bangwe ba ba rekisetsang bana dinotagi, e bile bangwe ba neela bana ba bone go ya go rekisetsa baithuti ba bangwe kwa sekoleng.

A re go dira jalo ke go tlhoka boikarabelo ga batsadi mme a kgala a sa kwe mathe mokgwa oo a re ke go senyetsa bana bokamoso. Rre Modise o kopile bao ba ba amegang go emisa mokgwa oo ka ponyo ya leitlho ka ba bolaya lefatshe le bokamoso jwa bana. **BOPA**

Sithole trial-within-a-trial resumes June

Bonang Masolotatse
GABORONE

The trial of Zimbabwean national Lovemore Sithole started in Gaborone with a dispute over whether the confession he gave to police was voluntary or forced.

Before the court could weigh the evidence in the killing of his girlfriend's 7-year-old son, Justice Matlhogonolo Phuthego had to hear a separate trial-within-a-trial which has been scheduled to continue in June.

On one side, the state is adamant that Sithole confessed voluntarily, while on the other, he claims he was beaten and told what to say.

Before a full courtroom, Sithole remained focused stating that he was not the last person with Tlotso Karema.

At the time of Tlotso's disappearance, the mother was expecting Sithole's child.

During a trial-within-a-trial to determine the admissibility of a confession, Detective Assistant Superintendent Tiroyaone Gosibotsile told the court that Sithole voluntarily told police he killed the boy using a traditional healer's needle known as machonyonyo.

Gosibotsile said the needle was believed to have special powers that caused it to disappear immediately after the incident, which is why it was never recovered.

The officer testified that Sithole led police to the location of the boy's remains.

He also showed them where he bathed in water mixed with the boy's blood, where he destroyed the bucket used for the bath and where put on his clothes while still wet from the bathing.

Sithole volunteered to direct officers to the boys remains site and to Kanye, where the clothes he wore after bathing were recovered and sent for DNA analysis and no linkage was established from the analysis.

Before leading police to these locations, Sithole was taken to a magistrate to record a confession statement.

Detective Assistant Superintendent Gosibotsile said the statement was given voluntarily, without force or coercion.

The magistrate who recorded the confession, Mr Gofaone Morweng, testified that Sithole appeared in his office on 6 July 2022, accompanied by a female police officer.

He said Sithole chose to give his confession in Setswana and spoke fluently, adding that he appeared calm, asked for a facemask, and showed no signs of injury or distress.

"He was conversant in Setswana and I had no doubt that he understood the language," the magistrate said, adding that Setswana was Sithole's choice of language, noting that a translator would have been solicited had he asked for one.

He said Sithole did not allege that he had been assaulted or induced to confess when asked.

The confession was taken in the presence of a court bench clerk, who translated from Setswana to

English, and the magistrate wrote the English version while the clerk wrote the Setswana version.

Both statements were read back to Sithole, who confirmed they matched and accepted them as accurate.

Both versions were admitted into evidence without objection.

Testifying in chief, Sithole said he had made a statement at Sejelo Police Station in which he did not incriminate himself and was later transported to Lobatse Police at night.

He was beaten, stripped naked, made to wear refuse plastic bags as a trouser, top and another covered his head and forced to confess.

The police, he said, told him what to say and recorded that version in a statement, adding that he was then taken to the magistrate to repeat it.

"Why did you not tell him (Magistrate), if your claim is true?" State prosecutor Mr Ambrose Mubika asked, to which Sithole said the police told him the magistrate was a good man well known to them, and he knew that after the recording he was going back to the police who assaulted him.

Sithole also said on one occasion, Kesegofetse Karema and Kesaobaka Karema were called to the police station and he was forced to confess to the crime in front of them.

He said on August 30 and 31, he was taken to the Directorate of Intelligence and Security Services (DISS), where he made another statement that did not implicate him.

At DISS, he told the court he called for Kesegofetse, and in front of them, identified the person he said was last seen with Tlotso and maintained his innocence.

"Now, the million-dollar question, did you kill Tlotso Karema?" his attorney, Mr Keoraopetse Sambere, asked in a packed courtroom.

"No, my hands are clean," Sithole replied, without stating who, to the best of his knowledge, killed the seven-year-old.

He later told the court that Tlotso's aunt, Kesaobaka, was the last person seen with Tlotso, as they boarded a Toyota Allex motor vehicle to a place he did not disclose to the court.

He further told the court that he was the one who sent a message indicating where the child's remains were, after a prolonged confrontation with Kesaobaka over the child's whereabouts.

"Yes, I sent the message after being told where the child was, but it was after a struggle," he said during evidence-in-chief.

Sithole said he pressed Kesaobaka for the child's whereabouts because he wanted to know whether the child had reached his destination.

Sithole denied killing Tlotso and also denied being the last person seen with the child and said he never confessed voluntarily.

The police investigating officer, the magistrate and the bench clerk maintained that the confession was given freely.

The magistrate said Sithole did not appear to have been assaulted and had no visible bruises or wounds.

Police also denied that Sithole was taken to DISS on August 30 and 31, or that he named another person as the last person with the child during that period of his disappearance.

No statement from that alleged DISS encounter was presented in court.



Lovemore Sithole who is the accused in the murder of Tlotso Karema in March 2022 during a court session in Gaborone recently. At the centre of his trial is the dispute over whether the confession he gave to police was voluntary or forced, leading Justice Matlhogonolo Phuthego to hear a separate trial-within-a-trial. Photo: Pheny Ramatu

The only non-incriminating statement produced was the one made at Sejelo Police Station.

The investigating officer further told the court that police did not work with DISS on the matter

and that no other person had been investigated or arrested in the matter. **BOPA**

'Mojadigo must answer four defilement charges'

Bonang Masolotatse
MOCHUDI

Magistrate Queen Moanga-Leburu of Mochudi Magistrate Court on Friday ruled that the jailed pastor, Goitseikgosi Mojadigo, has a case to answer.

Mojadigo, who is facing four counts of defilement before the Mochudi Magistrate Court, had applied through his attorney, Mr Olehile Manchwe, for a no-case-to-answer verdict at the close of the state's case. He is accused of having had sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 18.

However, Magistrate Moanga-Leburu ruled otherwise, stating that the accused had something to explain to the court.

"The evidence thus far leaves this court with a few questions that require the accused to answer. The submission fails, the accused is put to his defence," she said.

Mojadigo, who is already serving a rape sentence, is alleged to have had sexual intercourse with an

underage girl between January and May 2024 at a guest house in Francistown, where his church was holding its end-of-year crossover service and at his place in Morwa.

The defence team had challenged the credibility of the complainant, who, after making a statement about the intercourse, later deposed an affidavit withdrawing it, before deposing another affidavit reinstating the initial statement.

However, the court noted that the prosecution only had to establish that sexual activity occurred and that the complainant was underage.

Magistrate Moanga-Leburu said the complainant gave detailed accounts of the sexual activities and the defence had not disputed her age.

Although the complainant later disputed the sexual intercourse, the court found that evidence placed the complainant and the accused at the same locations in Francistown and Morwa and witnesses testified to the interactions between the two, as they were alleged to have slept in

the same room.

"Now the complainant says that during the times she was at these places with the accused, they were having sexual activities," she said, adding that, together with witness statements, suggested the likelihood of an offence being committed.

Therefore, Magistrate Moanga-Leburu said Mojadigo should defend himself against the charges, as the complainant had also alluded to sexual intercourse on four occasions.

On withdrawing the statement and later reinstating it, the Magistrate said the complainant told the court she was coerced to withdraw the charges by the accused, who called her with different numbers from within prison and had promised her P10 000 once the matter was buried.

Ms Seetsi Ookeditse represents the state, while Mojadigo is represented by Mr Manchwe.

The trial will continue on July 27 for the defence case. **BOPA**



Magistrate Queen Moanga-Leburu of Mochudi Magistrate Court recently ruled that the jailed pastor, Goitseikgosi Mojadigo, who is facing four counts of defilement has a case to answer. This came after Mojadigo applied through his attorney, Mr Olehile Manchwe, for a no-case-to-answer verdict at the close of the state's case.

Arts & Culture

Festival highlights beauty of culture

Gaolethoo Kgatitswe

MAUN

The rich cultural heritage of Ngamiland came alive in a colourful display of traditional food, music, dance and community spirit as the 13th edition of the Ngamiland Cultural Festival got underway at Cresta Riley's Hotel in Maun on Saturday.

The festival, which attracts cultural groups, artists, community members and visitors from across the region, serves as a platform to celebrate and preserve the unique traditions that have shaped Ngamiland's identity over generations.

From the aroma of traditional delicacies to the rhythmic sounds of cultural performances, the event offered participants an opportunity to reconnect with their roots while sharing experiences and strengthening social bonds.

In an interview with BOPA, Guest Relations Officer at Cresta Rileys, Ketlanae Segapio, said the primary objective of the event was to showcase Botswana's diverse cultural heritage and allow people to experience it through food, music and traditional practices.

She said visitors were treated to a variety of local dishes including seswaa, tswii, tlhapi and bogobe jwa lerotse, while cultural performances and music provided entertainment throughout the day.

"The festival is about celebrating who we are as Batswana and it gives people an opportunity to appreciate our traditional foods, music and customs while creating memorable experiences for families and visitors," she said.

One of the attendees, Joyce Sepepe, said the festival provided more than entertainment, describing it as a valuable space for learning and interaction among people from different backgrounds.

She said she particularly enjoyed sampling traditional foods such as tswii and thako, adding that engaging with other participants enabled her to exchange ideas and gain new perspectives on culture and community life.

"The food is wonderful, but what I enjoyed most is meeting different people and learning from their experiences, it is through such interactions that we continue to preserve and pass on our cultural knowledge," she said.

Another participant, Ditiro

"Cultural festivals unite friends and families hence they help us appreciate the different cultures and remind all about values that bind communities together."



Machesa Traditional Group performing at the 13th edition of the Ngamiland Cultural Festival in Maun on Saturday. They performed alongside Ezra Neethings, Koolkat Motyiko, Stiga Sola, Coster FX and several disc jockeys. Photos: Gaolethoo Kgatitswe

Mathula, said the festival demonstrated the power of culture in bringing people together. She noted that gatherings of this nature strengthened family and community ties while creating opportunities for younger generations to learn about traditions and customs that defined their identity.

"Cultural festivals unite friends and families hence they help us appreciate the different cultures and remind all about values that bind communities together," she said.

The festival continued into the evening with performances from renowned local artists including Ezra Neethings, Koolkat Motyiko,

Stiga Sola, Machesa Traditional Group, Coster FX and several disc jockeys.

Beyond the festivities, the annual event continues to play an important role in promoting cultural preservation, fostering social cohesion and showcasing the rich heritage that makes Ngamiland one of Botswana's most vibrant cultural destinations. **BOPA**

Arts centre to empower marginalised groups

Kehumile Moekejo

JWANENG

The realisation of an arts and crafts centre for Small Median and Medium Enterprises (SMMES) in the 17 villages within Debswana Jwaneng Mine area of influence looks promising following a ground breaking ceremony that happened recently.

The development seeks to position the creative industry as a driver in economic diversification and is strategically located along the A2 road. It also aims to promote cultural and eco-tourism as well as economically empower the local communities, particularly the marginalised groups such as youth, women and people living with disabilities.

Jwaneng mine senior technical support services manager, Segolame Ntwayagae noted that the project would try to diversify the local economy beyond diamond mining while at the same time creating employment opportunities within the creative

industry.

"It aims to strengthen alternative livelihood opportunities so that communities become less reliant on mining related industries, while also addressing unemployment challenges within our area of influence," he noted.

He said beyond economic value, the centre would also contribute towards preserving cultural heritage and the identity of the local communities and build robust partnerships with institutions that share the same vision.

To this end, Ntwayagae said some SMMES had been trained through partnership with the Thapong Visual Arts Centre, capacitating them to participate in various competitions and financing opportunities.

He said plans were also underway to harness the opportunities created by the value chains in the creative sector and improve their access to wider markets.

"Arts and crafts are more than products. They carry our stories,

our traditions, our identity and our heritage. A handcrafted basket reflects generations of knowledge. Beadwork carries cultural pride. Pottery reflects tradition and resilience. Through this centre, culture will not only be preserved, but empowered to create income, employment and opportunity," he said.

Jwaneng/Mabutsane Member of Parliament, Omphemetse Kwapa, said the development was a unifying factor for communities in the region that would stimulate local economic activity and uplift the livelihoods of the people, including those in the informal sector. He hailed Jwaneng mine leadership for their impactful vision centred on sustainable development.

"This is a testament that diamonds shine forever, the impact would be felt for a long time.

We therefore thank the general manager and his team for contributing towards improving the lives of the people in their area of influence," he noted. **BOPA**

DailySport

BDF V start league campaign on high

Thato Mosinyi
GABORONE

BDF V have enjoyed a stellar start to the Botswana Basketball League (BBL) season following a hard-fought 64-53 victory over fierce rivals Police V on Saturday at the Ba Isago courts.

With this dominant yet resilient performance, the army side immediately secured a spot in the upper echelons of the BBL standings, making their intentions clear as genuine title contenders right from their opening game. The victory is a huge boost for BDF V, who are deeply entrenched in a high-stakes push for Southern Block supremacy against heavyweights like defending champions, Dolphins and last season's runners-up, Police V.

BDF V started the game on a high note, executing clinical fast breaks to open up an impressive lead in the first half.

However, they nearly architected their own downfall in the third quarter. In a game marred by turnovers on both sides, poor shooting and flaring tempers, Police V mounted a furious comeback.

Led by veteran Thuto Shai, the police side dominated the third period, capitalising on BDF V's errors to wipe out the deficit and take a six-point lead heading into the final frame.

Faced with adversity, BDF V's strength and resilience came to the fore. Spearheaded by the offensive discipline of Mpho Pule and One Ramshoto, the army side clawed their way back, dominating both ends of the floor in the fourth quarter.

Police V ultimately became their own worst enemy in the crunch period, hitting just six-of-14 from the field, including a dismal two-of-eight from three-point range. BDF V locked down defensively and reclaimed the lead and holding tight until the final buzzer.

Meanwhile, the opening weekend produced plenty of action across other courts, starting with Men's Division One, where Aspire ran rampant over Botho Saints, securing a comfortable 61-37 victory. Meanwhile, Diamond Bullets had to dig deep in Jwaneng to edge past Lions Basketball Club 56-48. The competitive energy carried heavily into Men's Division Two, where Lobatse Kings secured a narrow 57-51 win against the Sabres and the Glen Valley Tigers registered a convincing 70-58 victory over Elite Men.

In the Women's League, Police V bounced back from the men's disappointment, utterly dominating the Platinum Warriors in a 75-23 blowout. **BOPA**



Police V player, Thuto Shai (left) tussling for the ball with Mogomotsi Maswabi of BDF V during a Basketball league at Ba Isago University Courts in Gaborone on Saturday. BDF V won 64-53 against the fierce rivals Police V. Photo: Felicity Male

GU shift focus to CAF Champions League

Pako Lebanna
GABORONE

Gaborone United's 2-1 victory over BDF XI on Saturday marked the end of their domestic duties, but the real work for the Reds begins now.

Having consolidated their status as the undisputed kings of local football with historic and back-to-back league titles, the club's manager, Sean Connor must quickly pivot his focus toward the continent.

Domestic dominance is sweet, but the Moyagolele board knows that true giant status is earned in the CAF Champions League.

After getting knocked out in the preliminary rounds by Tanzanian heavyweights Simba SC earlier this season, GU's tactical evolution will be put to the test.

Armed with a P1.4 million cash injection from FNB and a lethal forward in Thatayaone 'Messi' Kgamanyane, the off-season priority must be squad depth.

If the Reds want to translate their domestic masterclass into

continental respect, their historic Saturday celebration must quickly turn into a blueprint for African success.

While The Reds spent Saturday night celebrating their historic league defense, the final match day provided high drama across the board and revealed who came out on top and who fell flat on the final weekend.

The Reds hoisted the trophy after concluding their season formalities on Saturday afternoon at the GU Stadium in Gaborone. BDF XI threatened to play party poopers early on when Thapelo Babedi broke the deadlock, briefly silencing the expectant home crowd. However, GU's prolific forward, Kgamanyane, levelled the score just three minutes later, making it 1-1 by the 16th minute.

The match remained a tense and evenly matched affair until the 88th minute, when Kgamanyane struck again. His late winner sent the Moyagolele faithful into a frenzy, sealing his brace for the afternoon and sparking a true carnival atmosphere.

On one hand, while Kgamanyane's double took his impressive season tally to 18 goals, it was not quite enough to secure the top individual honour due to Thabang Sesinyi's spectacular Golden Boot raid.

Entering the final weekend locked at 16 goals apiece with Kgamanyane, Jwaneng Galaxy's star man pulled off a stunning final-hour heist.

Sesinyi produced a ruthless four-goal haul in Galaxy's 4-1 demolition of Township Rollers at the National Stadium, propelling his total to 20 goals and snatching the Golden Boot right out of Kgamanyane's hands.

With GU already assured of the title before kick-off, the high-stakes drama on Saturday actually unfolded down in the relegation trenches. Extension Gunners pulled off a great escape, sparking absolute jubilation in Lobatse as the traditional giants gave their fans exactly what they prayed for, securing a vital 2-0 win over Mochudi Centre Chiefs to guarantee top-flight survival.

That result brought immense heartbreak for the Black Lions. Despite fighting hard for a brave 2-1 final-day win over Santa Green, the Lions' fate was mathematically sealed by the Gunners' victory. Alongside Santa Green and Calendar Stars, the Lions are officially bound for the First Division South next season.

When the final whistle blew back in Gaborone, the champagne was finally taken off the ice as the Reds received their medals and hoisted the golden FNB Premiership trophy alongside their P1.4 million championship cheque.

The triumph marks a monumental milestone for The Reds, representing their first back-to-back titles since the league's restructuring in 1978.

While GU won successive titles in the late 1960s, this is the first time they have successfully defended a league crown since the establishment of a unified national league in 1978, spanning the National First Division, Super League and Premier League eras. **BOPA**



Gaborone United celebrating after being crowned the 2025/26 FNB Premiership champions in Gaborone on Saturday. GU also booked a berth in the CAF Champions League. Photo: Phenyio Ramatu