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President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi laying a wreath during Fallen Heroes Day commemoration in Gaborone yesterday. Initially known as Lesoma commemoration in remembrance of the 15 Botswana Defence Force soldiers who died in the February 27, 1978 ambush by the Rhodesian regime, it has since been changed to Fallen Heroes Day to recognise all who died in the line of duty. Photo: Pheny Moalosi

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IEC focuses on outreach initiatives

By Goweditse Kome

FRANCISTOWN

Government is committed to ensuring continuous engagement of stakeholders for a more informed and competent electorate as the country drives towards the 2024 General Elections.

Addressing the city's full council meeting recently, Francistown mayor, Mr Godisang Radisigo said the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) had targeted outreach initiatives that included school visits, stakeholder workshops and meetings.

Malaria cases increase in Okavango

By Kedirebofe Pelontle

GUMARE - The Okavango District Health Management Team (DHMT) has recorded higher cases of Malaria this current season as compared to the previous one. Okavango District Council Chairman, Mr Gaopalewe Ronald said this when opening the full council on Monday.

Mr Ronald said Okavango District Health Management Team (DHMT) had registered 174 cases of Malaria and one death as of October 2022 to date compared to 97 cases registered during the previous season.

He therefore cautioned that the public should seek medical attention whenever they experienced signs and symptoms of Malaria such as fever, headache, generalised body pains, nausea and vomiting.

Mr Ronald however noted that the Okavango DHMT continued with its interventions in the fight against Malaria.

He observed that the Indoor Residual Spray (IRS) which aimed not only to curb Malaria transmission but realise elimination of the disease commenced in October 2022.

The IRS which was halted temporarily due to shortage of insecticide, had since resumed as of January 04 this year.

On other matters, Mr Ronald said about 14 081 children aged between zero to seven years had been vaccinated during the round one of the oral polio vaccination campaign.

He said positive outcome was realised because of support from other stakeholders in the district. The second round of the campaign, he said was scheduled for 30 March to April 2.

Mr Ronald therefore encouraged parents and caregivers to ensure that all children got the second oral polio vaccination. **BOPA**

He informed councillors that voter transfers were still on-going and the service was offered to those who, for valid reasons, desired to transfer their 2019 registration to a new place.

"As such you are requested to assist IEC by cascading this information to the public so that they may benefit from this service," said Mr Radisigo.

He said as the country geared towards the 2024 General Elections, councillors had a duty to mobilize the public to register and vote in the upcoming elections.

Mr Radisigo said it was only through working together that citizen participation in the electoral processes would increase.

Regarding environmental health, the mayor said government had introduced circular economy initiative whereby local authorities were to ensure that only waste that could not be recycled was taken to landfills.

He said circular economy was based on three principles which comprised eliminating waste and pollution, circulate products and materials including regenerating nature.

Touching on other matters, Mr Radisigo said council held the informal sector implementation workshop mid-February this year in order to operationalise the strategy by identifying priorities to be implemented in the short term.

"Although capacity was lacking, our council has kick-started implementation with opening of the informal sector unit at the bus rank," he said, adding that the unit was still lacked capacity, but it was necessary to open it so that it could coordinate efforts going forward.

Mr Radisigo said they were mobilising funding and support from stakeholders so that they could carry out capacity building for the informal sector. **BOPA**



Murder accused Atholang Mojangi (left) and Maxala appearing at the Court of Appeal in Gaborone on Tuesday, Mojangi is accused of killing his former girlfriend Bokani Socks in Francistown in January 2014 while Maxala was convicted of killing Mulaladzi in 2015. Photo: Pheny Moalosi

Maxala wants court to overturn death sentence

By Bonang Masolotat

GABORONE - Murder convict Nthoiwa Maxala has pleaded with the Court of Appeal to overturn the death sentence imposed on him by the Francistown High Court.

Maxala was convicted of killing Tutume McConnell physics teacher Thuso Duncan Mulaladzi in 2015 following assault by a group of young men whilst relaxing inside his vehicle with a lady friend on September 13, 2015.

After reporting the matter to the police and seeking medical help, Maxala is said to have later tracked down his assailants and shot Mulaladzi, who was among the assailants.

Maxala was eventually convicted of murder and sentenced to death in 2021.

Appearing before the Court of Appeal panel on Wednesday, his attorney Mr Reneetswe Rabosotho said they were not satisfied by the outcome of the trial court.

"We are appealing against both the conviction and sentence," Mr Rabosotho said.

He said among their grievances was that the trial court erred in admitting the police warn and caution statement, whose recording and administration were done by different officers from those who

presented it.

Further, he said Maxala accidentally fired the bullet which killed Mulaladzi, as such he did not deserve to hang.

Asked by the court to explain why his client tracked the assailants to Somerset with a loaded gun, he said Maxala went there in order to find an amicable solution to their earlier altercation.

He further added that the trial court erred when concluding that no extenuating circumstances existed in the matter as his client was inebriated.

"We conclude that provocation in this case will not be available to reduce the matter to manslaughter, but it should be considered as an extenuating circumstance," he said.

Mr Rabosotho further said the difference between the actual assault and shooting was three hours.

He argued the deceased provoked the Maxala further when he insulted him and his parents during a telephone conversation, after the appellant's lady friend managed to source his number.

He argued the High Court erred in finding the offense premeditated as the convict and the deceased had never met before the assault.

"The event happened in quick succession and there is no evidence

that he planned on killing the deceased," Mr Rabosotho said.

However, the state prosecutor, Ms Keletso Mfosi said the High Court was right in delivering the sentence adding that the made the warn and caution statement voluntarily, and therefore the court was right to admit it.

Ms Mfosi further said the statement could not be admitted as a confession as it lacked some material elements.

Moreover, she said, the bullet which shot the deceased exited from the chest, which showed he was shot from the back, proving he was not charging at the convict.

She further said the interval between the assault and murder incident was enough to allow the convict time to reflect and come back to his senses, adding that he was attended to by a police officer and a nurse.

"Here is a man who was assaulted innocently whilst with a lady friend, he went to the police and they said just go, when you find them call us. Don't you think this was a man with a sense of grief," presiding Judge Justice Isaac Lesetedi asked Ms Mfosi, who considered that the convict could have been smoldering from the assault.

The court will deliver its verdict on April 14. **BOPA**

Palapye region hosts first education pitso

By Kabo Keaketswe

PALAPYE - Poor academic performance has become such a concern for education authorities here that they have had to call the first ever sub region's Education Pitso.

The Tuesday meeting, held under the theme: Stakeholder Participation-Key to Learner Access and Quality Academic Performance provided a platform for the sub region to share with the district leadership, the community and all important stakeholders the academic results, school enrolment and drop out status among others, as well as to get feedback from stakeholders on how to improve learner and schools' performance.

Speaking at the pitso, Palapye Sub region chief education officer, Ms Didimalang Mmemo said lately the region was experiencing declining results, low transition rates from junior to senior school

and high dropout rates.

The sub region, she said, served five constituencies being Palapye, Lerala-Maunatala, Mmadinare, Serowe South and Serowe North, with a consolidated enrolment of 28 080 leaners.

Regarding the transition rate and trend in academic performance, Ms Mmemo said of the 2 182 candidates who set their junior certificate examinations in 2021, only 1 200 were admitted to Form 4, a transition rate of only 55 per cent.

She said the following year, 2 330 candidates sat the examination and only 1 358 proceeded to senior school, representing a transition rate of 58.3 per cent.

As for BGCSE, she said, the region had set itself a 40 per cent target for it candidates who attained 6Cs or better.

From the years 2017 to 2022 respectively, the sub region only managed to attain 23.9 percent. as

its highest score. That was in 2019.

The lowest was last year at 18 percent.

"From the declining academic performance there is something we need to change as the reset agenda advocate, we therefore need feedback from the stakeholders on what to change, what we should continue doing and what we should stop," she said.

She however, noted that even though the region was experiencing a decline in academic performance, there were some schools that were doing well, citing Moeng Primary School and Manaledi Primary School which both performed at 100 per cent ABC pass rate.

For his part, Botswana International University of Science and Technology Vice Chancellor, Professor Otlogetswe Totolo said the Ministry of Education and Skills Development had opened its doors to stakeholders to help drive academic excellence through

Adopt-A-School initiative and other forms of partnerships.

He commended Palapye sub region for staging the Education Pitso. "I can only appreciate that together as we reset, rethink and refocus, we can strengthen our education system and take it to greater heights of excellence," he said. Professor Totolo emphasised that partnership through networking was crucial to attaining quality education that was accessible to all.

Regarding indiscipline in schools, MP for Palapye, Mr Onneetse Ramogapi encouraged schools to revive clubs such as Scripture Union as they had a great impact in moulding children's behaviour.

Still on the issue of discipline, Kgosi Martha Lebang of Palapye encouraged parents to portray good conduct around children at home. She said children had the tendency to emulate parents, citing the use of drugs and alcohol. **BOPA**

BPS gains 100 professionally qualified officers

By Baleseng Batlotleng

OTSE - Twenty per cent of Botswana Police Service's (BPS) 500 new officers hold professional qualifications that are important in law enforcement, it has been revealed.

Speaking during a pass-out parade for the officers in Otse yesterday, President

Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi said the qualifications included law, forensic science, information technology and telecommunications-related disciplines.

The diverse and complementary skill base was expected to significantly improve the effectiveness of policing services in Botswana, he said.

President Masisi stated that given the increasing sophistication of crime, BPS required modernised 21st century policing skills noting that transnational organised crime especially human and drug trafficking, cybercrime as well as fraud were increasingly becoming more common and complex.

It was therefore critical for police officers to command high-end of critical thinking and possess digital literacy to formulate and execute strategies to deal with them, he said.

"Modern policing requires a delicate balance between reinforcement of the law and protection of human rights of individuals deemed to be acting foul of the laws," he emphasised.

Noting that the latest cohort

comprised 259 male and 241 female officers, Dr Masisi commended the BPS leadership for its resolute efforts towards achieving gender balance in recruitment.

The President welcomed BPS leadership's decision to absorb serving special constables which he said was proof of government's firm commitment to public safety.

He said the approval of 1 000 police constable positions was meant to advance public safety and security.

"It is a most welcome and praiseworthy development.

This has created the much coveted permanent employment opportunity for this cadre, thus giving credence to the principle and practice of Recognition of Prior Learning.

Through this action, the Botswana Police Service and my government have demonstrated to the public that we are receptive to constructive criticism and patriotic advice in the efforts to improve the ways we do things in the national interest," he said.

Stating that government was highly committed to resourcing BPS to ensure public safety, Dr Masisi said 28 police stations would be constructed during the two years of the Transitional National Development Plan.

He said in addition to strengthening crime prevention strategies and programmes, BPS had successfully established a Gender and Child Protection Branch and was in the process of rolling out child-friendly centres across the country. **BOPA**

Southern District beef farmers' event opens today

By Keith Ketji

KANYE - President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi is expected to grace the Southern District Beef Farmers' Association field day tomorrow on the second day of the event billed for Naledi Farms.

Minister of Entrepreneurship, Mr Karabo Gare is scheduled to open the two-day event which commences today.

Themed: Increasing the national herd, Unpacking the beef value chain, is considered an opportunity for pastoral farmers to showcase their animals, benchmark and exchange ideas on livestock production best practices.

In an interview on Wednesday, the association's chairperson, Mr Mosimanegape Mophuting said 33 kraals had been constructed at the venue, near Sese junction at Camp View Stables.

He said Ministry of Agriculture's animal production division had constructed a cattle crush in the area for demonstrating artificial breeding and insemination.

The event also includes a public auction.

Mr Mophuting said the association's members contributed significantly to food production and security through cattle sales to BMC which then exported to the European Union, South Africa and Norway.

He disclosed that BMC had been accredited to export beef to the United Arab Emirates with effect from March 19.

Mr Mophuting said the

association sold mostly live weaners to South Africa through feed lotters who then enhanced the animal's grade prior to selling.

He said the association's five year-goal was to significantly increase cattle herd through different avenues such as breeding and artificial insemination, conducting pregnancy tests in ranches and encouraging Batswana to join the association so as to have better access services.

Ngwaketse West animal production officer, Mr James Montshioa said the department would demonstrate breeding and artificial insemination at the event to impart skills to farmers.

It was also a way of encouraging beef producers to conduct the operations at their own ranches and provide the services to other farmers for a fee.

Mr Montshioa said artificial insemination helped to increase cattle herd and quality.

He said the field day would help to advertise farmers.

The official said Ngwaketse West, comprising 48 operational commercial ranches, was doing well in beef production.

He said the area produced more cattle than any other in the Southern District.

Noting that agricultural activities were the mainstay of local economies, he challenged farmers to improve herd management to optimise output.

Farmers were also encouraged to supplement grazing with forage, vaccinate their livestock and undertake dipping.

Mr Montshioa challenged Batswana to explore cattle production value chains so as to improve the economic landscape in their respective areas.

Naledi Farms are also known for high yields in arable farming more especially maize, cowpeas and other cash crops such as pumpkin.

Ngwaketse West crop production officer, Mr Suberee Kapeko said the farms' arable production averaged 20 bags per hectare with the area cultivating between 400 to 500 hectares every cropping season.

He said some horticulturalists in the area had great potential and expressed optimism that the goal of attaining food security in the country was achievable **BOPA**



President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi (left) presenting a certificate to the best trainee in drill, Tumisang Bosigo during a pass-out parade for second intake of 2022 police officers in Otse yesterday. The President said it was critical for police officers to command the high-end of critical thinking and possess digital literacy, such as the capacity and ability to track and evaluate electronic communications and content on the internet and social media, so as to be able to map public safety and security risks and threats. Looking on is Acting Commissioner of Police, Mr Phemelo Ramakorwane. Photo: Yobe Shonga

President, officials commemorate Fallen Heroes Day

By Bonang Masolotatse

GABORONE - President, Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi, yesterday led the country in remembering the 15 Botswana Defence Force (BDF) soldiers who lost their lives at Lesoma during an ambush by the then Rhodesian armed forces on February 27, 1978.

As part of Fallen Heroes Day commemoration, the President laid a wreath at the World War II monument in front of Parliament buildings.

Dr Masisi, who is commander-in-chief of Botswana's armed

forces, was joined by Vice President Slumber Tsogwane who also laid a wreath at the monument.

Minister of Defence and Security, Mr Kagiso Mmusi, Minister of Finance, Ms Peggy Serame as well as other senior government and army officials also laid wreaths.

The ceremony is aimed at ensuring that the sacrifices made by the country's fallen heroes and heroines were never forgotten.

Fallen Heroes Day commemoration began in 2011 to remember the 15 Lesoma ambush victims.

Then known as the Lesoma commemoration, it was held at the Extension 14 Cemetery where the 15 soldiers were buried.

However, a decision has since been taken to recognise other fallen heroes and heroines who died in the line of duty necessitating the change of name to Fallen Heroes Day.

The annual event is characterised by flags flying at half-mast at all BDF installations, observation of a moment of silence in remembrance of the dead as well as a three-gun volley salute and sounding of the reveille. **BOPA**

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'Look beyond border for employment opportunities'

By Idah Basimane

GABORONE - Minister of Finance Ms Peggy Serame says the recorded 33.5 per cent of youth unemployment by Statistics Botswana is a worrisome trend that challenges graduates to look beyond the country's borders for employment opportunities.

Ms Serame said the percentage recorded through the 2022 Quarter 4 Multi-Topic Survey was the highest despite the 25.4 per cent overall unemployment rate, which indicated a slight decline from the preceding year.

The minister was speaking at the opening of the one day Job Fair hosted by her ministry in partnership with the African Development Bank (AfDB) in Gaborone, Wednesday.

Further outlining the unemployment percentages in the country, Ms Serame said in 2015, joblessness rate stood at 17.5 per cent of the labour force, increased to 22.2 per cent in 2019 and further to 26.0 per cent in 2021.

She reaffirmed that government would actively facilitate Botswana to explore opportunities outside Botswana. However, she said, individuals must also take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

Ms Serame, who serves on the board of governors of the bank as a governor representing Botswana, said government would continue to strengthen partnership with the bank which dated from 1972.

She highlighted that the bank had supported a number of projects ranging from energy, transport, water, sanitation and agriculture.

"This includes mega projects such as the Trans Kalahari Highway, Morupule B Power Station Transmission Network, Pandamatenga Agricultural Infrastructure Development," she said.

Ms Serame explained that the job fair followed her engagement with Ms Yacine Fal, vice president of Regional Operations of the Bank during the 2022 African Development Bank Annual Meetings in Accra, Ghana.

She said the job fair would also give Botswana the opportunity to learn about the Bank and other institutions.

"For tertiary and research institutions here present, this is an opportunity for you to engage with the bank on how you can best deliver programmes that meet the bank's expectations, Ms Serame told participants.

She urged Botswana to learn from the testimonials of Ms Mosetsana Mabe-Koofhethile and Ms Laone Kesupile who were part

of the 11 Botswana working for the bank.

"Let us learn from the testimonials that they will share with and appreciate how they made it in terms of exporting their skills beyond our borders," she said.

Ms Serame also said the job fair came at the right time and resonated well with the country's national priority of advancing human capital development as espoused in the country's Vision 2036 Pillar 1 of Sustainable Economic Development.

Deputy Director General, Southern African Region and Country Manager for Botswana, African Development Bank Dr Kennedy Mbekeani said AFDB was the hub of collections of various professionals in the continent including civil and power engineers, and economists.

He noted that since its establishment in 1964, the bank's mandate had been to promote economic development in the continent and to reduce poverty.

He said meeting with Botswana was to expose and encourage them to join the AfDB and be part of the African agenda to reduce inequalities and promote employment and economic development. **BOPA**



Dr Mbekeani (left), and Minister Serame at the African Development Bank Job Fair in Gaborone on Wednesday. Ms Serame said the fair demonstrated government's efforts to address youth unemployment, which was at the highest at 33.5 per cent as of quarter four, 2022. Photo: Ogopoleng Kgomoethata

District registers rise of suicide incidents

By Thato Modiakgotla

KANYE - Southern district has experienced a rise in the number of suicide and suicide attempts incidents in recent years, which is a cause for concern.

Speaking during suicide prevention and awareness event in Kanye on Wednesday, Kgosi Malope II's wife Masetsibi Gaseitsiwe said there was need for concerted effort to combat suicide and suicide attempts.

She said the theme for the event: Creating Hope Through Action, was a reminder that there was an alternative to suicide and it also aimed to inspire confidence and light in people.

She said creating hope through action could signal to people experiencing suicidal thoughts that there was hope and that the community cared and wanted to support them.

Ms Gaseitsiwe said the theme suggested that actions, no matter how big, provided hope to those who were struggling and also highlighted the importance of setting suicide prevention as a priority public health agenda.

"By raising awareness, reducing the stigma around suicide and

encouraging well-informed action, instances of suicide could be reduced," she said.

She indicated that Kanye Adventist Hospital registered increased suicide attempts every year, noting that 32 young women and 16 young men aged 15 to 25 attempted suicide in the years 2021/22, while in 2022/23, 48 young women and 31 young men aged 15-35 attempted suicide.

She further highlighted that statistics from Kanye police indicated that in the year 2018, seven people committed suicide, in 2019 four people committed suicide, in the year 2020 eight died as a result of suicide As for the year 2021, five were lost to suicide while in 2022 fifteen people committed suicide.

Ms Gaseitsiwe said strategies to prevent suicide included, strengthening economic support, creating protective environments, improving access and delivery of suicide care, promoting healthy connections, teaching coping and problem-solving skills, identifying and supporting people at risk.

She urged people to reduce their vulnerability and risk of suicide by effectively availing themselves to be assisted.

Senior Chief Representative, Kgosi Kwelagobe Mookodi said suicide was a great concern, which usually happened when people were faced with life challenges.

He urged the police and other relevant authorities to act immediately when Botswana came to them for assistance as that could avoid suicides.

Kanye Adventist Hospital chief executive officer, Dr Brandon Tombs said since he joined the hospital in 2018, he realised that there was a challenge of suicide attempts, adding that in a week they registered one to two cases of suicide attempts.

"We therefore decided to host this event to try and arrest the situation," he said.

He said the event had four objectives, being to raise awareness of suicide and mental health, to bring different institutions together to relay information about suicide, to pave way for people to fight suicide, while the last one was to encourage those who had suicide thoughts to seek for help.

"We are here as communities to stand with victims and support them," said Dr Tombs.

Mental Health professional at Keitsholofetse Psycho-Social

Support Centre for pregnant women, Ms Pontsho Kodisa said suicide and suicide attempts were directly linked to mental health.

She said life challenges pushed people to the limit adding that accepting that life was full of challenges could be one of the coping mechanisms.

"You should always tell yourself that you will defeat all life challenges you are faced with, if you tell yourself something it usually come to pass," she said.

Ms Kodisa said it was vital for one to share challenges faced with someone as that would make them feel better.

"If you feel like crying, just do, this goes to everyone especially men, as that would bring your emotions down," she said.

Another coping mechanism, she said was exercising with purpose, adding that when one exercised the body produced hormones that positively change the mood.

Ms Kodisa said it was also very important for people to love themselves as individuals, probably more than they love others.

People, she said should be well aware of signs of suicide, noting that action should be taken immediately when signs were noticed. **BOPA**



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Convict wants audio confession expunged

By Bonang Masolotate

GABORONE - Former police officer, Atholang Mujangi has asked the Court of Appeal to purge an audio confession statement he made before a pastor regarding the murder of Bakani Socks in 2014.

The appellant according to court records confessed before a pastor that he killed Socks who was his ex-girlfriend hence the pastor reported the matter to the police.

However, when appearing before the panel recently to appeal the Francistown High Court decision to sentence him to death, his attorney Mr Kgololesego Segabo said the audio confession contained in a CD format was not procedurally tendered. He said the CD was reproduced from a computer and another gadgets, which were not tendered before the court.

"The CD we objected to its production because it was a copy and not properly certified, the contents therein were not in the language of the court," he said.

He said a confession statement should satisfy the provisions of the law and be made without any undue influence for it to be admitted in court. Furthermore, Mr Segabo said there was no evidence that Mujangi made the said confession.

"The appellant is saying the person on the recording is not him, but he does not deny having met the pastor on that day," he stated.

He said Mujangi went to the pastor for spiritual counselling as he was seeing dead people at night and could not sleep, adding that the pastor was not a credible witness as he was related to the deceased.

Further, Mr Segabo said his client did not deny meeting the deceased on the fateful day. However, he said his client blacked out after the deceased told him he was impregnated by another man known to the appellant, adding that the two were still lovers.

"If the court finds him guilty, the court must find there was extenuating circumstance," he said.

However, the state attorney, Mr Moagi Ndlovu said there was nothing to discredit the pastor as he categorically denied any relationship with the deceased.

He said the appellant came voluntarily for counselling which led to the confession of sins. **BOPA**




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Administrators Botswana

WE HAVE MOVED

NMG Administrators Botswana would like to inform the BPOPF members and public that the Gaborone Regional Offices have moved to new premises effective from 12 December 2022.

The following is the new Gaborone Regional Office address:
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Maun airport engine for economic growth

By Portia Ikgopoleng

MAUN - The newly refurbished Maun International Airport is expected to contribute to Botswana's economic growth.

The refurbishment entailed expansion of the terminal building from 649 to 2 209 square metres.

In an interview, Chobe Holdings Limited Group managing director and also HATAB vice chairperson, Mr Lempheditse Odumetse said air transport was an important enabler to achieving economic growth and development for any country hence the refurbishment of the Maun airport was one of the best decisions taken by government.

"Aviation globally shows that it can be an engine of growth for many economies. With the right policy frameworks from government, air connectivity can even grow stronger, driving even greater social and economic progress," he said.

He said HATAB, as an association representing majority of sub-sectors within the hospitality and tourism industry, relied heavily on aviation for connecting people, culture and businesses across continents.

He indicated that since the refurbishment of the airport, they had witnessed comfortable flow from check-ins to boarding as well as improvement in efficiencies around daily operations.

However, with air travel demand growing significantly in recent years, Mr Odumetse highlighted the need to position Botswana better to constantly enhance passenger experience at the airports by improving on security, customer service and digital connectivity.

"With the world bouncing back from the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry is still in recovery phase and this requires improved

services and reforms that would reassure the world that Botswana is still a destination of choice," he added.

He pointed out that Maun airport was a key gateway for foreign visitors hence it was imperative to ensure efficient service delivery from all airport staff in the public and private sector to ensure visitors who contributed substantially to the economy received value for their money.

Furthermore, he said it was imperative for any country to have proper transport infrastructure that would attract the international travel industry, be it airlines, tour operators, travel agents or even individual travellers.

"This is the busiest airport in the country, statistics can prove that the flights generated at this facility far exceed that of any other airport in the country hence I believe that the expansion was needed and has been done to meet current needs," he said.

Maun International Airport is one of the busiest in Southern Africa given its status as a gateway to the majestic Okavango Delta.

In 2021, the airport experienced a record 116 345 passengers and the number increased to 200 929 between January and October last year.

Renovations offer an increased number of check-in counters and expanded public concourse with meet and greet areas, enlarged departure halls, separation of domestic and international passengers for security screening, provision of new paved parking space and re-arrangement of the airside or landside security boundary.

Part of the new renovations are installation of a new public address system as well as improved flight information displays. **BOPA**



Bona Life board chairperson, Mr Legomela Molodi (left) and Ms Mathipa at Bona Life 10th Anniversary and Brand Refresh in Gaborone on Tuesday. Photo: Felicity Male

BONA Life contribution commendable - official

By Aubrey Maswabi

GABORONE - Deputy secretary for financial policy in the Ministry of Finance, Ms Boikanyo Mathipa has commended BONA Life for its role in the development and growth of Botswana's economy by providing relatively top-notch insurance products and services over the past 10 years.

Speaking at BONA Life 10th anniversary celebrations in Gaborone on Tuesday, Ms Mathipa said BONA Life had helped to protect individuals and businesses from financial risks, adding that by investing in the community, the company had in turn created jobs, supported local businesses and contributed to the overall economic growth of the nation.

"As I was driving over here today, I was reminded of the incredible

spirit and resilience of the people of Botswana," she said.

She said the company's commitment to progress, surmount incredible challenges, innovate as well as stay competitive in a highly competitive industry and still build a better future for all, was an inspiration to all Batswana.

"Over the past 10 years, we have seen BONA Life grow and evolve, starting from the bustling cities of Gaborone and Francistown to being felt in rural villages including Kumakwane and Gabane. I am informed that over the past year, BONA Life has built a team of talented and dedicated young professionals who share the commitment to excellence, and who are proud to serve this country," she said.

Ms Mathipa highlighted the importance of insurance as a critical component of any economy, saying it provided protection and security for individuals, businesses and communities.

"Insurance helps to stabilise the economy, protecting against unforeseen events that can lead to financial difficulties and also enables individuals and businesses to also take risks and pursue their dreams, knowing that they had a safety net in case things go wrong," she said.

Ms Mathipa implored BONA Life to change the status quo of the insurance sector and come up with new products and services that would meet the needs of families and businesses.

"These families and businesses will need that help, security and the peace of mind that BONA Life insurance has capacity to provide," she said.

She added that the ministry

would continue to provide policies and frameworks that aided and assisted companies like BONA Life to grow, innovate and evolve in order to stay ahead of the curve and offer their clients the best insurance products and services in the country.

For her part, BONA Life chief executive officer, Ms Phatsimo Keakabetse said they were thrilled to take the company to the next level.

Ms Keakabetse thus thanked their shareholder, Botswana Public Officers Pensions Fund (BPOPF), for investing in their company.

She said as a young and Botswana-based business, they understood, firsthand the power of unity and that collaboration would help the company to achieve greatness.

"When we looked ahead to the future, we realised that we needed a refreshed, modern approach to our brand. A brand that would encapsulate the national pride, the values and importantly a home we love so much and the brand continues to see ahead of time," she said.

She explained that the brand was inspired by rich Botswana colours, patterns and traditions, adding that the choice of colours paid homage to their history and future of being studious.

"Our brand intentionally instills pride in an era where nationality is often marred with doubt, this refreshed brand represents our commitment to Batswana with integrity, compassion, excellence and the spirit of BOTHO. This is the purpose of BONA Life and we are delighted to inspire these values in every decision that we make," she added. **BOPA**

UNECA launches modern statistical data programme

ADDIS ABABA - The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on Wednesday launched a programme to support African countries in modernising administrative data for statistical purposes.

The programme followed the Roadmap for Transformation and Modernisation of Official Statistics in Africa for 2023 to 2030, which was approved by the UNECA's Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economic Planning that was held last week, the UNECA said in a statement.

The UNECA said administrative data sources offer high-frequency disaggregated data, which is critical in the sustainable development goals context of leaving no one behind; reducing production costs as data is collected routinely for administrative activities; and decreasing respondent burden.

Two workshops are currently underway in Cameroon and Uganda to kickstart the process as part of the new programme, the UNECA said.

Adama Coulibaly, chief of the Sub Regional Initiatives Section

at UNECA's Office for Central Africa, emphasised the need for national statistical systems to 'transform and modernise to be more agile and resilient to crises' while addressing the three-day workshop in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon.

"COVID-19 has shown that our statistical systems need to move away from current traditional ways of operating to be able to effectively support countries' sustainable development and transformation agendas," the UNECA statement quoted Coulibaly as saying. **Xinhua**

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Parliament 2023

Question & Answer

Ministry intensifies programmes

The Ministry of Transport and Public Works will intensify the roll-out programmes for skills development of technical staff and professionals to instill a culture of high performance. Responding to a question in Parliament recently, transport and public works minister, Mr Eric Molale said he was not satisfied with the current level of 55 per cent on registration of engineers in the ministry. Mr Molale noted that all engineers employed in the country and the public service were obliged to comply with the law and none of them were exempted from registering with Engineering Registration Botswana (ERB). “The total number of engineers currently employed under my ministry is 489. Out of these, 268 are registered with ERB, while 66 of them hold practicing certificates,” he said. He concurred that registration of engineers in the public service could help improve the culture of unethical conduct and reduce corruption perception in the development projects in the country. “Section 19 of the Engineers Registration Act criminalises carrying out of engineering work without a valid practicing certificated issued by ERB. The Act further provides for striking off of engineering professional who have not renewed their practicing certificated,” he added. Further, the minister said in the committee of supply speech he presented recently, he had indicated that the ongoing review of legislation of regulatory bodies would allow for registration of all professional and quasi-professional and such review would tighten the requirement in the act of law. Member of Parliament for Thamaga/Kumakwane, Mr Palelo Motaosane had asked the minister to state the number of engineers currently employed under the ministry and how many had registered with ERB as practicing professionals. Mr Motaosane also wanted to establish if the minister was pleased with the uptake of ERB registration by engineers and whether those employed in the public service were exempted from registering.

Maintenance of Kuke fence priority

Ministry of Agriculture has engaged a total of 428 casual labourers to assist in the repair of the Kuke veterinary cordon fence at a cost of over P647 000 this financial year. The Minister of Transport and Public Works, Mr Eric Molale said in response to a parliamentary question on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Fidelis Molao on Tuesday. Mr Molale said the Ministry of Agriculture had prioritized maintenance of Kuke fence over other internal fence due to its importance in protecting not only Zone 12, which is Ghanzi District, but the rest of the country’s free zones to south (zones 4a, 4b, 8, 10, 11). He said a total of 195km out of 230km of veterinary cordon fence was maintained during this financial year. “There are six fence erectors plus three drivers responsible for routine fence maintenance. However, the ministry has also engaged casual labourers to augment permanent staff who are also involved in the repair of the fence,” he said. The minister said he was aware of complaints raised by farmers in Ghanzi that the veterinary cordon fence between Ghanzi and Ngamiland districts was repeatedly destroyed by elephants thus exposing Ghanzi District to the risk of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). He pointed out that in order to minimise the damage of fence by elephants, the ministry had embarked on an initiative to construct ‘flexi fence’ in hot spot areas. Mr Molale indicated that so far, flexi fence had been erected at two hot spot areas and the ministry was also considering installation of a buffalo cable in the Kuke fence in order to strengthen it. He said there were no immediate plans to electrify Kuke fence due to resource constraints, adding that, however, such option would be considered when the resource situation had improved. Member of Parliament for Ghanzi North, Mr John Thiite had asked the minister if he was aware of complaints raised by the farmers in Ghanzi that the veterinary cordon fence between Ghanzi and Ngamiland districts was repeatedly destroyed by elephants thus exposing Ghanzi district to the risk of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). The minister was also asked to appraise Parliament on the maintenance status of the 230 kilometres veterinary cordon fence and how many workers were engaged for routine maintenance of the fence. MP Thiite further wanted to know the measures put in place to address the risks and challenges posed by elephants destroying the fence and also establish whether as a matter of urgency the ministry would consider constructing an electric fence to mitigate possible threats of transmission of FMD into Ghanzi district as a matter of urgency.

Live cattle export excludes breeding animals

GABORONE - Parliament has been informed that the dispensation of live cattle export does not allow export of breeding cattle.

Minister of Transport and Public Works, Mr Eric Molale said this when responding to a parliamentary question on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture this week. Mr Molale said the general cattle population according to statistics Botswana’s Annual Agricultural Survey of 2015 was 1 742 999, of which 1 160 816 were females.

The minister said the plan was already in place since female cattle were not exported, adding that government and the Ministry of Agriculture acknowledged the declining cattle herd hence

a number of initiatives were in place to increase the number of cattle in the country.

“Revised Artificial Insemination programme is yet to include breeding technologies such as embryo transfer and female synchronization and outsourcing of some Artificial Insemination farms to private sector to improve efficiency,” he said.

Mr Molale also noted that intensifying extension outreach would help promote livestock production. “Implementation of beef strategy, capacity building through Land Based Training as a result of collaboration between the governments of Botswana and New Zealand and production of fodder coupled with active

surveillance of reproductive livestock diseases shall increase availability of livestock feed,” he said.

Nata/Gweta Member of Parliament, Mr Polson Majaga had asked the minister to brief Parliament on how the export of female cattle had affected the number of breeding stock in the country.

He also wanted to know the current number of female cattle in the country and to understand if there were any plans to prohibit exporting and killing MP Majaga also asked whether the ministry was intending to undertake some research to find ways of increasing the number of female cattle and to come up with livestock production technologies. **BOPA**



Mr Molale said a number of initiatives were in place to increase the number of cattle in the country to mitigate the declining herd.

Home based care functional

GABORONE - The Community Home Based Care (CHBC) programme is still functional and has continued to produce the expected results as per its mandate.

This was said by the Assistant Minister of Health Mr Sethomo Lelatisitswe in response to a question in Parliament on Tuesday.

“The programme is still effective with an extended mandate, initially it was designed for HIV/AIDS patients.

Following its success, in 2003 the mandate was expanded to accommodate other patients who need home based care such as patients with non-communicable diseases e.g stroke patients, heart failure, kidney failure, victims of road accidents and an increasing number of terminal cancer patients,” he said. Mr Lelatisitswe said other services accessed from the ministry included food basket, transport and rent allowances.

He highlighted that at national level the programme has three permanent staff and one temporary officer for coordination, adding that each health district has a community home-based care coordinator,

with 27 permanent staff, while each facility has a focal person who links with the coordinator.

“The programme also works with 2 812 (2022/23) community lay volunteers country wide, with the number fluctuating depending on the increase or decline of clients/patients.

Mr Lelatisitswe said the 2022/23 annual budget for the programme stood at P25 516 050 with P11million as volunteers’ allowances, with each one of them being paid P302,80 as transport allowance monthly for working three days in a week for 3 hours per day.

“At times there are delays with payments as per contract because of shortages of paying officers and the proposed long term solution being explored is the use of pula card which was introduced by the Ministry of Finance,” said Mr Lelatisitswe. He told the House that the programme was last reviewed in May 2019, and major findings were the existence of multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary coordinating structures at district level, community involvement and participation amongst others while the challenges were the

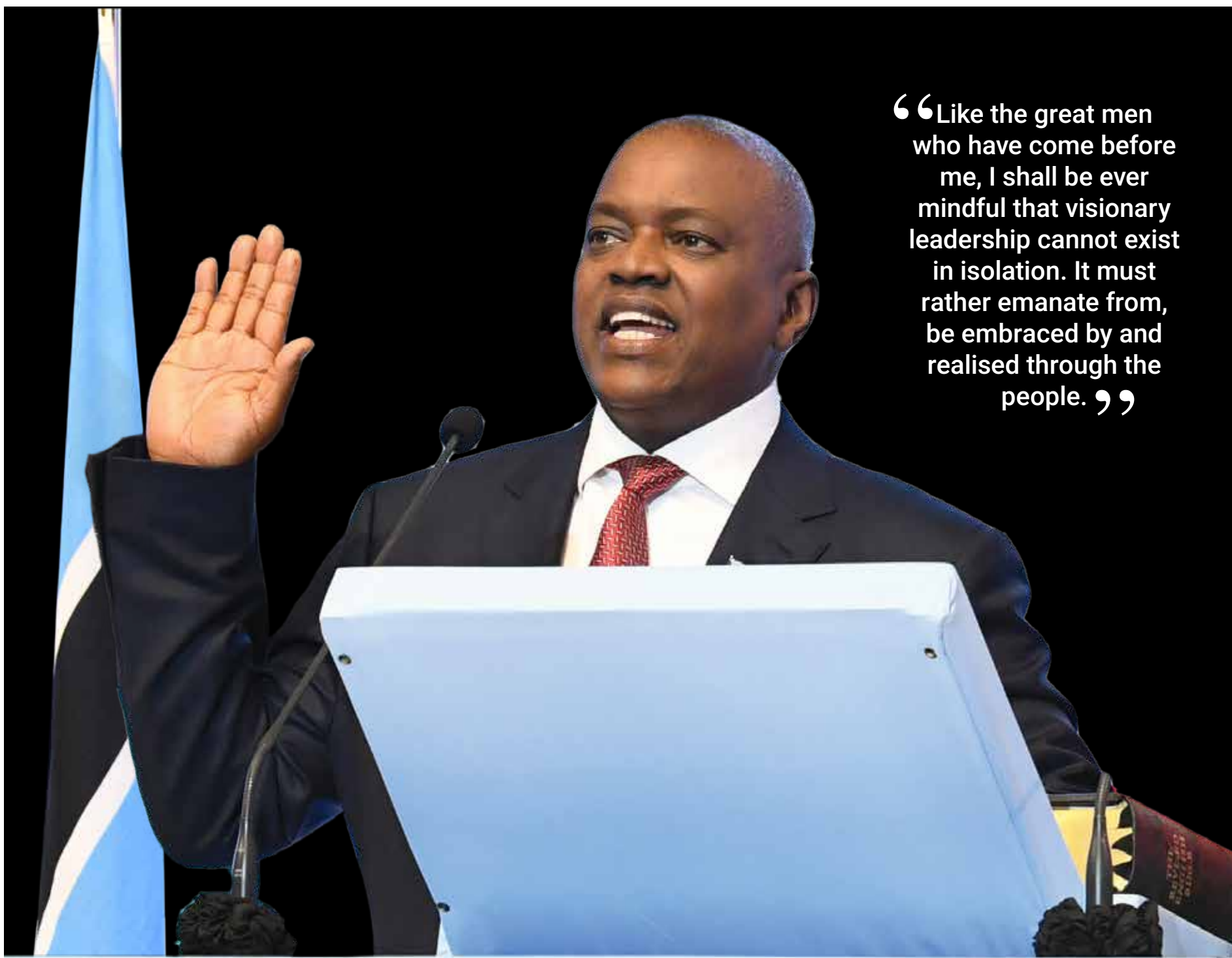
inconsistency in the provision of supplies due to supply chain issues.

Furthermore, he said some challenges included the inadequate supervision and mentoring of volunteers due to shortage of staff.

In addition, he said recycling and over representation of individuals in multiple structures like Ipelegeng and VDC (double dipping) were some of the challenges. The Maun East legislator, Mr Goretsetse Kekgonegile had asked the minister to brief Parliament on the functioning of the Home Based Care programme and to state if the program was effective and still within its original mandate.

Mr Kekgonegile also wanted to know the number of staff manning the programme country wide, the num Ministry to intensify programmes roll-out ber of permanent, temporary and volunteers within the programme, its total budget and if volunteers were paid as per contract.

Furthermore, he enquired as to when the CHBC was last reviewed and what the major findings were. **BOPA**



“Like the great men who have come before me, I shall be ever mindful that visionary leadership cannot exist in isolation. It must rather emanate from, be embraced by and realised through the people.”

PRESIDENT MASISI: 5 years of visionary leadership

ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE

- Saving Batswana from COVID-19 pandemic
- Improving Botswana's international standing
 - Digitalization: Bridging the digital gap
- 98% of Batswana have access to potable water

President Masisi: 5 years of visionary leadership

By Pako Lebanna

GABORONE - “Where there is no vision, the people perish,” a verse from the Biblical book of Proverbs, reputedly written by the wise King Solomon, underscores the significance of visionary leadership.

First taking oath of office on a rain soaked Resurrection Sunday, April 1st 2018, Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi noted that “Like the great men who have come before me, I shall be ever mindful that visionary leadership cannot exist in isolation.

It must rather emanate from, be embraced by and realised through the people.”

The fifth President of the Republic this Saturday, April 1 2023 marks five years in political office. Were he to be re-elected in the 2024 polls, students of history would in future look back at this moment as the midway point of a ten year, two term tenure.

Such a milestone period would cause for reflection on the leader’s legacy and place in history.

In his maiden speech to the National Assembly after being first sworn in, President Masisi outlined the vision of building “a Botswana in which sustained development is underpinned by economic diversification.” Of eradicating poverty and social exclusion in order to build a society that provides opportunity and dignity to all.

This was buttressed months later, in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) of November 2018, as the President announced a National Transformation Strategy “to unlock the potential of our human and financial resources, and broaden the participation of citizens in all sectors of the economy.”

Having led the governing Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) to triumph in the October 2019 general election, President Masisi accentuated digitisation and a move into the fourth industrial revolution as part to the National Transformation Agenda.

But then the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 set in soon after.

In Botswana, approximately 330 000 confirmed cases and 2795 deaths were recorded from early 2020 to March 2023, as the COVID-19 pandemic affected all facets of life in the country and the globe, with preventative health measures also grinding economic activity to a halt.

In response, President Dr Masisi enacted through Parliament an unprecedented 18 month State of Public Emergency, between April 2020 and September 2021 that introduced legal means to temporarily curtail civil liberty in order to deal with the health crisis.

Lockdowns, curfews, travel restrictions, ban on alcohol commodity sale, social distancing, wearing of masks and other measures came into effect, while food parcel assistance, wage subsidies, and other means to cushion citizens were also introduced.

A successful vaccination programme meant the country could open up its economy gradually, and an Economic Transformation and Recovery

National transformation strategy

“to unlock the potential of our human and financial resources, and broaden the participation of citizens in all sectors of the economy”

Plan (ETRP) was enacted along with the midterm review of the eleventh National Development Plan (NDP 11).

The President then officially announced the RESET Agenda, with five priorities for government; to save Botswana’s population from COVID-19; align Botswana’s government machinery to the presidential agenda; digitalisation; value chain development and mindset change.

A major cabinet reshuffle was announced in April 2022, with a Ministry of Entrepreneurship introduced and some other ministries being renamed as government machinery was restructured.

As NDP 11 (2017-2023) concluded, a Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP) was

KEY FACTS

In Botswana, approximately 330 000 confirmed cases and 2795 deaths were recorded from early 2020 to March 2023

... announced of the RESET Agenda, with five priorities for government; to save Botswana’s population from COVID-19; align Botswana’s government machinery to the presidential agenda; digitalisation; value chain development and mindset change.

...NPC was enacted to coordinate development planning, as the Ministry of Finance was rationalised to focus on overseeing budgeting and funding, the planning function now at the NPC under the auspices of the Ministry of State President.

A ban on horticultural products imports underscored a move towards being self-sufficient in domestic food output. increasing the country’s livestock and small stock herd as well as finding an international market for Botswana meat products.



then announced for the period 2023-25, to ensure that the national plan is realigned with electoral cycles.

The twelfth plan, NDP 12 is due to start in 2025 with the first financial year after the 2024 polls, which takes the country back to five year plans that commenced in the year after the general election.

A National Planning Commission (NPC) was enacted to coordinate development planning, as the Ministry of Finance was rationalised to focus on overseeing budgeting and funding, the planning function now at the NPC under the auspices of the Ministry of State President.

President Masisi became passionate about increasing the country’s livestock and small stock herd as well as finding an international market for Botswana meat products. A ban on horticultural products imports underscored a move towards being self-sufficient in domestic food output.

The provision of water also became emphasised, with the North South Water Carrier, Masama-Mmamashia and Gamononyane-Molepolole transmission pipelines as well as the Lobatse Water Masterplan among key projects prioritised.

On the international front, President Masisi traversed the world, “*Ke a le tsamaela*,” (I am travelling on your behalf) being a catchphrase associated with his global travels. As the country’s chief diplomat, Dr Masisi saw to it that Botswana’s international standing was raised.

Botswana got to preside over the Economic and Social Council, one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, and through campaigns spearheaded by President Masisi, Botswana was nominated to host the secretariat of the Kimberley Process, which unites governments, industry and civil society groupings in promoting fair diamond trade and curbing the flow of the illicit diamond trade.

Also, Botswana was positioned as a host of international gatherings such as the Forbes 30 under 30 to be held in the country for two successive years from 2022, and the 2023 United States (US) Africa Business Summit to be hosted in Gaborone in July. A state visit by Alain Berset, the President of the Swiss Confederation in February 2023, underlined Botswana’s continued recognition in the globe.

A constitutional review exercise took place, the first since the 1960s when the constitution was first debated by the Legislative Council at Lobatse before the Malborough House talks of February 1966 in London concluded the country’s national blueprint. This time, Botswana discussed the constitution in kgotla meetings, perhaps accentuating the consultative nature of leadership President Masisi had promised from the onset.

As is the case with any democracy, the Masisi presidency has had its critics. Opponents have lamented the frequency of external trips, the transparency

of state procurement processes, the extent of independence of parliament and the judiciary, and the pace with which unemployment and underdevelopment is being addressed.

In his maiden SONA speech of November 2018, Dr Masisi had candidly told the public that differences had emerged with predecessor, Lt. Gen Dr Seretse Khama Ian Khama.

It would also come into the public discourse how mediation efforts by some elders had not borne fruit, and Dr Masisi would endure his first five years as President with his predecessor as one of his biggest critics.

It will be up to students of history to gauge Dr Masisi’s tenure and his place in history.

Effort to save Botswana from a pandemic, for citizens to have a mindset change, to be more efficient, more enterprising, to have an efficient government and a private sector engaged in the value chain addition of natural resources within a digitised world, could underline those first five years in office. **BOPA**



The visit by President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr Alain Berset underlined Botswana’s continued global recognition.

Improving national health system

By BOPA Reporters

In the quest to deliver health services to Botswana and in line with UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Three, which aspires for good health and wellbeing of all people by 2030, President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi notes that Botswana acknowledges changing global trends.

Thus, there is an ever-growing need to strengthen the country's health systems to achieve universal health coverage.

Government has recognised the interplay between health and developments and affirmed its commitment and accordingly aligned its development strategies to "Health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," which is included in the country's National Development Plans (NDPs) and Vision 2036.

In October 2022, government introduced Botswana Public Health Institute (BPHI) in line with the world's best practices in preparing for effective response to public health emergencies.

Government learned hard lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic and the experience emphasised the need for countries to have Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and the establishment of the BPHI brings Botswana a step closer to achieving this.

Under the stewardship of President Masisi, the country has been applauded for its great success in the COVID-19 vaccination drive. The pandemic has had severe health and economic impact, disproportionately affecting countries with least capacity to respond, protect lives and livelihoods.

Government considers BPHI as instrumental in strengthening laboratory and diagnostic capacities to detect new and emerging threats, and the infant institute has been officially accepted as a full national member of the International Association of the National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI).

The milestone would see Botswana as a recognised member of the Global Health Community in prevention, detection and response to public health emergencies.

BPHI will also position Botswana to participate locally, regionally and internationally through contributions to growing scientific knowledge and evidence.

At the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, government did not have effective diagnostic capacities, which resulted in the country sending some samples across the border.

In line with President Masisi's pledge of bringing services close to people, government spent a fortune in bringing health services closer to people through the development of health infrastructure.

This was witnessed through among others, the partial opening of the newly built state of the art Joseph Polaano (J.P) Kavindama Hospital in Shakawe, which is expected to be fully operational in the first quarter of the 2023/24 financial year.

Recently the facility transitioned into the second phase by the opening of some specified services that include



J.P Kavindama Hospital in Shakawe

outpatient services, social work, counselling, pharmaceutical, maternity services (labour and delivery services) and laboratory services.

Other remaining services such as the accident and emergency would be part of the third phase opening this year.

The hospital was named after the late Member of Parliament (MP) for Okavango Mr Joseph Polaano Kavindama and is a 70 beds capacity hospital.

Besides provision of health services, the facility provides employment opportunities for locals and eases the burden of travel by patients from Shakawe to Gumare.

Furthermore, government has shown commitment to improving access to health care services by constructing and upgrading existing health facilities such as the Scottish Livingstone Hospital in Molepolole and Maun and Kasane Primary Hospitals. A 70 bed hospital is at 75 percent completion level in Moshupa village.

On the HIV and AIDS front, government has lately been applauded for exceeding the UNAIDS targets 95-95-95. HIV response achievements were drawn from the recent Botswana

AIDS Impact Survey (BAIS V), which indicated that the country had exceeded the set targets.

Measurement of progress towards the UNAIDS target reveal that 95.1 per cent people with HIV were aware of their status, 98 per cent of those aware were on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) and 97.9 per cent of those on ART to achieve viral load suppression.

Overall, government has made tremendous progress in the past two decades and looks well positioned to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

COVID-19 Relief and Economic Recovery

When World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic in March 2020, one of Botswana's first pre-emptive response strategies was to close borders for controlled movements and screening.

Following the country's first confirmed case on March 30, President Mokgweetsi Masisi declared a State of Public Emergency and ordered a 28-day lockdown effective April 2.

The urgent response was to contain COVID-19 transmission through adopting an effective disease preventive strategy. A

Presidential COVID-19 Task Force and District Response Teams we put in place to provide a multi-sectorial approach.

As the national cases continued to increase, the government made a deliberate decision to defer developmental projects and instead purchase COVID-19 vaccines to save lives.

Even though initially the vaccination exercise was undertaken in phases, giving preference to the most vulnerable age groups, it was gradually rolled down to the younger population as vaccines continued to be availed.

As of March 18, 2023, WHO reported that a total of 3 171 667 vaccine doses had been administered in Botswana.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness statistics indicate that a total of 1 948 922 of the eligible population had taken their first dose, while 1 653 954 were fully vaccinated as of March 18, 2023.

In addition, 506 196 had taken the booster dose. Moreover, the country has recorded a recovery rate of 99.2 per cent, with no new deaths recorded during the March 12-18 reporting period.

Nonetheless, the government continues to put emphasis on the importance of vaccination since COVID-19 remains a global public health scare.

Subsequently, the Pula Corbevax Vaccine manufacturing plant was established in Botswana in March 2022.

"The project is important to me personally, to be able to deliver on the promises that Government pledged to Botswana, particularly to drive the transformational development agenda of Botswana from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based one as espoused in our National Vision 2036," President Masisi had said.

In addition to addressing COVID-19 challenges, the facility is also expected to produce other pharmaceuticals such as cancer treatment drugs.

From a continental perspective, the plant would go a long way in closing drug distribution disparities across African countries, which contributed to low vaccination rates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As expected, a pandemic the magnitude of COVID-19 adversely affected households, businesses and ultimately the national economy.

In response, a COVID-19 Relief

Fund was set towards stimulating economic recovery for various sectors.

Government contributed P2 billion towards the fund, and a call was made to the private sector and individuals to make contributions through the Office of the District Commissioners across the country with the objective of mitigating against the effects of COVID-19 on households and businesses.

To prevent loss of employment in some sectors and provide relief to businesses, government implemented wage subsidies, loan repayment waivers and tax concessions were some of the interventions.

Additionally, over 400 000 households benefitted from the Food Relief Programme across the country.

Social protection programmes were expanded to cater for other groups of the population who experienced the negative impact of the pandemic, either due to movement restrictions or loss of income.

The Economic and Recovery Transformation Plan (ERTP) was also a response mechanism intended to stimulate the economy towards recovery.

It supported and transformed various sectors such as Agriculture and Industrialization, while at the same time enhancing economic and social inclusion, among others.

Sectors appreciate COVID-19 interventions

Despite COVID-19 challenges, government's support towards funding strategies intended to enhance the quality of life for people living with HIV and AIDS continues to be availed.

This much, is appreciated by Botswana Network of People living with HIV and AIDS (BONEPWA) Executive Director Ms Kgoreletso Molosiwa.

In an interview, she said President Masisi's administration was admirable particularly during the onset of COVID-19.

"Financial aid from the government through NAPHA still continued and we were even able to integrate educating people with HIV about COVID-19 in our budget and we also received

cont... page 12



Residents of Tsholofelo ward in Gaborone receiving food rations during COVID-19 in 2020.

Masisi prioritises women empowerment

By Kgotsotalang Botsang

SELEBI PHIKWE

Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision making processes has been a challenge for many nations, Botswana included.

United Nations Sustainable Goal number five, speaks about Gender Equality; a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Although progress has been made in some quarters, a lot remains to be achieved.

When President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi took over the Presidency in 2018, he made it his mission to prop participation of women in decision making processes.

Under President Masisi six of the seven women who form the 12th Parliament were made part of Cabinet: three full ministers and three assistant ministers.

By the powers vested upon him, President Masisi appointed four women, Ms Beauty Manake, Ms Peggy Serame, Ms Philda Kereng and Dr Unity Dow as specially elected Members of Parliament and in turn elevated all to Cabinet albeit Dr Dow relinquishing the post in 2020. Initially, Ms Serame was appointed Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry but went on to replace Dr Thapelo Matsheka at the Ministry of Finance. This earned Ms Serame the title of first female finance minister.

Another first for women under President Masisi's leadership was that of the University of Botswana chancellor, that he bestowed



Improving national health system

...from page 11

medical supplies such as sanitisers, cleaning agents and surgical gloves, which also helped curb the COVID-19 virus," she said.

Ms Molosiwa said Ministry of Health partnered with the organisation to ensure that people living with HIV in most districts received Antiretroviral (ARV) treatment, especially during lockdown.

"We were able to collect and deliver ARV treatment for those individuals who could not go to clinics due to the movement restrictions that were imposed for our safety," she said.

As a result, efforts strengthened linkages between prevention, care and support services to people living with HIV.

She further stated that during the height of COVID-19 pandemic, the President was awarded the Certificate on Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV. "The silver tier certification is given to countries that have lowered

mother-to-child HIV transmission rate to under five percent and we highly commend the President for this great accomplishment despite the crippling challenges of COVID-19," she said.

Ms Mmolotsi said COVID-19 had forced the country to put in place measures to respond to the challenges presented by the pandemic, which proved to be successful. "As a COVID-19 survivor myself, I can confidently say, President Masisi's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic saved my life," she said.

She said the food packages popularly known as 'Mma Boi' that individuals received really helped, including her family as both her and her husband were financially constrained due to loss of employment.

"I would like to thank our President and his team for their swift response to the COVID-19 pandemic and urge Botswana to continue following the health protocols set out so that we continue winning against this deadly virus" she said. **BOPA**

KEY FACTS

According to the World Economic forum's (2022) Global Gender Index Botswana ranks 14th among 46 countries in Sub Saharan countries.

on former Bank of Botswana governor, the late Ms Linah Mohohlo in 2018.

Sadly, Ms Mohohlo passed on in 2021 and yet another female in Ms Tebelelo Seretse, ascended the post.

Botswana Open University also gained a female chancellor, Professor Sheila Tlou. A former Cabinet minister, her appointment is from 2021 to 2026.

In 2021, Ms Jeanette Makgolo was appointed Botswana Unified Revenue Service – commissioner general for a period of five, elevating the number of women in positions of power.

Again in 2021 the nation witnessed the swearing in of Judge Tebogo Tau as the country's first woman president of the Court of Appeal (CoA).

In addition to that the country also observed an increase in the number of women justices at the CoA as the appointment of the first female inaugural Registrar of the Competition and Consumer Tribunal.

Former Deputy Commissioner of the Botswana Police Service, Ms Dinah Marathe assumed the position of Commissioner of Botswana Prisons Service, becoming the first woman at the helm of the organization.

Having served in the BPS for many years, Ms Marathe brought a wealth of experience in her new responsibility to provide guidance and mentorship as well as ensuring safe custodial care, rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners.

She is yet to introduce an internal police unit within the BPS in an effort to improve security at the prison facilities.

Furthermore, President Masisi appointed Ms Emmah Peloetsetse as Permanent Secretary to the President, a position previously held by Mr Elias Magosi.

Since independence the position of PSP has been dominated by men, making Ms Peloetsetse the first woman to hold the position.

"This is commendable and a step in the right direction," said the founder of Ntsabane Gender Based Violence Association, Ms Keabonye Ntsabane.

She said the civil society had long been advocating for more women participation in decision making but the government had been slow to heed their call,

commending government of the day for having women's best interests at heart.

Not only does the country recognise gender equality as central to socio-economic, political and cultural development, Botswana also made major strides in addressing issues of Gender Based Violence (GBV) under the guidance of President Dr Masisi, and the include the introduction of Child Friendly Service Centres, establishment of a Gender and Child Protection Branch, establishment of the Gender and Child Protection Unit and establishment of specialised courts to speed up hearing of GBV cases as well as establishment of inter-ministerial committee on GBV.

Due to growing concerns over GBV cases countrywide, the

judiciary and law enforcement agencies also adopted a policy discouraging withdrawal of reported GBV related cases.

Furthermore the country introduced Gender Based Violence Perpetrators Programme to assist offenders who committed GBV offences by facilitating a positive life free of crime upon release from prison.

In addition to addressing GBV issues, the country went on to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the public sector with Ministry of Agriculture becoming the first ministry to develop the sector gender mainstreaming in agriculture.

As a gender activist, Ms Ntsabane acknowledged that the government had made positive strides to address GBV. **BOPA**

100 000 plots allocation on course

• Over half allocated

By BOPA Reporter

GABORONE - Botswana will forever admire President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi for his concerted efforts concerning land issues, doing all he could to ensure Botswana own residential plots and also be able to use their land for financial benefits. One of the highlights was setting a target of 100 000 residential plots to be allocated to Botswana between during the 2022/23 financial year.

The Ministry of Lands and Water Affairs announced to have allocated 54 100 residential plots to Botswana in tribal areas between April last year and March 17 this year.

This has seen some land boards such as Borolong

exceeding their set targets while also absence of waiting lists in some areas has been recorded.

Under President Masisi, Botswana witnessed the amendment of Tribal Land Act of 2018 and Botswana migrating from using old land certificates to the Secure land Title, hailed for its significant secure features.

Another first under his leadership, was the country introducing policy on the change of land use to enable Botswana to utilise their land for economic benefits, a move that witnessed a number of them venturing into Agro-tourism ventures and hosting events. This became possible following the review of Botswana land Policy of 2019. **BOPA**



President Masisi launching secure land title certificate

Equipping 21st century learner

By Chendzimu Manyepedza

The adage “a man is caught by his words” has never been more relevant than in the context of closing the digitalization gap between Botswana and the rest of the world.

During his inauguration speech in November 2019, President Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Masisi promised to embrace the global digital revolution to transform people and the economy.

Since then, through the government, he joined the bandwagon in order to live up to his promise of facilitating digital transformation.

One of the massive successful projects to embrace digitalization at the grassroots level was through distribution of ICT gadgets that included laptops and tablets, and also to connect the Internet at all local public schools.

The project hinged on the implementation of the Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) under the Outcome-Based Education program from the Ministry of Education and Skills Development.

Its objective is to encourage learner-centric strategies that will intensify the use of ICT gadgets in teaching and learning purposes.

The acting Director of the Department of Information Communication Technology (ICT) from the Ministry of Education, Mr Taolo Tsimanyane said the development was intended to encourage and be in consistent

with the National Transformation Plan for Digitalization.

A total of 758 local schools that include primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary will all benefit from the initiative.

“The distribution process was rolled out in three phases. The first targeted all 34 senior secondary schools and was a success story; all current form fives received fully operational gadgets that have become the primary tool of all subjects,” said Mr Tsimanyane.

In addition, all junior secondary schools and current form 4s are in phase 2 and will receive their devices in the next fiscal year, while primary schools will be served in the final phase.

Mr Tsimanyane says the government considered connecting solar panels to generate electricity to power the gadgets in order to alleviate the challenges of electricity shortages in some schools.

“Students and teachers were given laptops on loan and are expected to return them in good condition when they leave the school. Since these laptops serve as notebooks, students are permitted to take them home after school to continue with group projects and other assignments,” he said.

Although Mr Tsimanyane could not disclose the total money used for the project since its inception because some of the schools are yet to benefit, he, however, noted that it was a worthy project that local entrepreneurs benefited from.



One of the massive successful projects to embrace digitalization at the grassroots level was through distribution of ICT gadgets that included laptops and tablets, and also to connect the Internet at all local public schools.

Government is at an advanced stage to connect more than 504 villages with fast and reliable Internet through the SmartBots Village Connectivity Project.

In an interview, the deputy permanent secretary-Information Communication Technology (ICT) at the Ministry of Transport and Communications Mr Cecil Masiga indicated that the decision was conceptualized as part of the SmartBots infrastructure for all with the aim to accelerate digital

connectivity across the country, and the project followed a phase approach.

“The decision is to enable citizens to access services digitally in order to be globally competitive. Hotspots and WI-FI in public places will act as incentives for young people to put forward their ideas and possibly scout for fruitful opportunities,” he said.

Mr Masiga said Phase 1 focused on internet connectivity in 1

138 government facilities in 142 villages and was expected to be delivered last year in February, however some of the challenges that cropped up led to 10 months delay.

He said the other two phases were scheduled to commence in the next fiscal year and will focus on connecting the remaining villages and 1 077-government facilities that included hospitals, clinics, and health posts among others. **BOPA**

Congratulation



GUC management and staff wish to congratulate the President of the Republic of Botswana Dr MEK Masisi for his 5th anniversary in office.



His Excellency, Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, MP
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



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Infrastructure development delivered

By Portia Ikgopoleng

GABORONE - On April 1, 2018 in his inauguration speech, President Mokgweetsi Masisi said government would continue to invest in infrastructural development projects across various sectors.

These include Information and Communication Technology (ICT), water energy, transport and road networks to create an environment for commerce and industry as well as stimulate the economy.

He said in implementing these projects, government's guiding documents would be the National Vision 2036, which sought to achieve Prosperity for all.

Fast forward to 2023, the President had delivered on his promises. For instance, the country's capital was face lifted as a result of numeral infrastructure that include Gaborone Interchanges and Gaborone-Boatle dual carriage way.

The construction of three intersections at KT Motsete-Wellie Seboni (BTV Circle), Kudumatse Drive (Rainbow Circle) and Lobatse Road (Game City Circle) has improved the road infrastructure and outlook of Gaborone. Other parts of the intersections have been opened for traffic with the rest expected to be open during the course of the year.

These intersections are part of the greater Gaborone multi-modal transport, which include installation of new traffic signalling system and a centralised traffic control.

Upgrading of Gaborone-Boatle road is part of infrastructure development to enhance transport system efficiency. Such upgrading eased traffic congestion and reduced delays and travel times in Greater Gaborone.

The road was built through Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) and promoted Citizen Diversification Drive hiring 12 Botswana companies as sub-contractors at the value of P255 million.

Furthermore, the President also assured to improve the country's road infrastructure. As promised, tenders for shoulder reinstatement and Asphalt overlay of Gumare-Sepopa road (70km) has been awarded as well as the Sepopa-Mohembo 70km road sections. The Minister of Transport and Public Works Mr Eric Molale conducted the ground-breaking on January 18, 2023.

Tshesebe-Masunga road project is ongoing standing at a progression of 62 percent against the planned 75 percent. The delays have been attributed to deferrals in manufacturing and transportation of bridge bearings, rainfall disruptions on processing of pavement layers and culverts installations.

On other development government has managed to construct a 155 metre long Platjaan Bridge, which was completed in 2020 at a cost of P105 million.

The bridge was as a result of bilateral agreement between Botswana and South Africa where Botswana committed to the construction of a bridge across Limpopo River while South Africa agreed to construct one across Notwane River.

This project underscores Botswana's commitment with neighboring countries in regional integration and development of strategic infrastructure for improved trade, job creation and economic diversification.

The construction of this bridge has upgraded the Platjaan border post to a fully commercial border post and further boosted the Selebi Phikwe Economic Diversification Unit (SPEDU) region economically.

As far as rail transport is concerned, Botswana and South Africa on March 3 signed a joint Development Agreement for the construction of the Mmamabula-Lephalale railway project.

The 130 kilometres railway will run from Mmamabula coalfields to Lephalale in South Africa with the project funded by both governments. It is expected to open up a higher capacity heavy-duty coal line and other commodities export to South Africa and other Sea Ports.

Also, the government has undertaken to improve and increase revenue offices across the country with the Shakawe Revenue office project completed in December 2020 at a cost of P44 million while in Hukuntsi, a revenue office comprising staff houses was opened in November 2022 valued at P43 million.

The offices have created a conducive working environment and comfortable residences, which would allow officers to perform their roles satisfactorily. These facilities show government's commitment to improving service delivery in economically challenged constituencies.

The new buildings also enable customers and staff to interact in more spacious facilities.

Another notable project is the electrification of schools that are outside the power grid (Solar Power Project), which has been completed.

The last phase of the project was planned under NDP 11 with 12 Primary schools electrified under the final batch being Sankoyo, Khwee, Lepashe, Mababe, Losilagokong, Khekenye, Sorilatholo, Mokgenene and Makakung. Works are ongoing for Khwai, Tshwaane, and Poloka schools.



Kazungula bridge

Ministry of Transport and Public Works was granted P3.1 billion to cater for ongoing major projects; output and performance road based contract of Mmankgodi-Jwaneng and Rakhuna-Mabule; Tshesebe-Masunga and completion of upgrading of three Intersections of KT Motsete Drive, Rainbow and Game city circles as well as final payments for Gaborone-Boatle dual road.

The proposed budget will also cater for the construction of Mmandunyane-Shashemooke-Borolong-Chadibe-Mathangwane; Mogoditshane-Gabane-Mmankgodi; Boatle-Lobatse; Palapye-Martins Drift; Nata-Kasane; Makalamabedi-Motopi; Nata-Maun reconstruction; Francistown-Nata reconstruction and Mmathete-Bray-Werda.

...And the water projects Monumental Kazungula bridge

The tolling system at Kazungula following completion and the eventual commissioning of the Kazungula Bridge in May 2021 is proving to be a cash cow for both Botswana and Zambia.

Last year on International Customs Day Commemoration, Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) revealed that since opening, the Kazungula Bridge had raked in over P18 million in tollgate revenue, with P2 million collected on a monthly basis.

The magnificent Kazungula Bridge is a joint venture between Botswana and Zambia, stretching 923 metres across the enormous Zambezi River. It lies at the quadro point where four countries uniquely meet along the North-South Corridor (NSC), a critical trade route for SADC countries.

It comprises a road and rail bridge over the Zambezi River directly linking Botswana and Zambia

with one-stop border post facilities on both sides, which enhances operational efficiency at entry point.

Speaking during the opening of the bridge in 2021, President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi said the bridge was testimony to the ever-growing scope and scale of cooperation, which Botswana and Zambia had enjoyed since the colonial era.

He said the Kazungula Bridge opened avenues for improved trade, job creation and economic diversification in the two countries and would significantly accelerate SADC's regional integration agenda.

"Goods from Lesotho, eSwatini, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Angola and Kenya and other countries in the North will use the Bridge in true spirit of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement," observed the President.

Mohembo Bridge

The commissioning of the monumental Mohembo Bridge has accorded people of the Okavango a new meaning to life having been for time immemorial geographically divided by the mighty Okavango River.

In the past, these residents used an unreliable pontoon to visit and attend family events such as funerals and weddings in Okavango East popularly known as overseas, a mission that was at times unattainable when the ferry was out of service.

However the official opening of this bridge by President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi on January 2 was a remarkable and life transforming development that has eased movement of people and goods in the Okavango area.

Kgosi Mutemo Mbambo of Shakawe said the newly constructed

bridge had improved socio-economic status of the people of Okavango in that people were now able to conduct businesses freely without movements restricted by operations time of the ferry.

He highlighted that previously, people were reluctant to buy goods in Shakawe or any Western side of the Bridge to avoid incurring damage costs caused by mode of transport and waiting long hours for transportation by the ferry.

"Kana maloba jale go ne go le bothoko tota fa le tlhokafaletswe ke losika ka kwano kana ka kwa. Batho ba tla nne ba sale batsile malatsi pele ga phitlho go itsa gore ba seka ba siiwa ke nako ya pantone. Mme mo malatsi a re bona masika a rona re gololesegile, mme e bile phetogo e e re itumedisa letsatsi le letsatsi," said Kgosi Mbambo in his explanation that the ferry made it difficult for the people of Okavango West and East to attend each other's events.

He said this treasure of a Bridge had even motivated the youth to venture into transportation businesses of people and goods between Okavango East/West villages.

The construction of the bridge project was fully funded by the Government of Botswana under Domestic Development Fund (DDF) at a cost of P1 billion.

This project entailed construction of about 1.2 kilometres of bridge and about three kilometres of approach roads to the bridge as well as associated drainage, electrical installation and reticulation to the bridge.

In his remarks at the official opening of the bridge, President Masisi said the bridge had significant positive impact on socio-economic outlook of the villages of the Okavango such as Mohembo, Kauxwi, Xakao, Sekondomboro, Ngarange, Mogotlho, Seronga, Gunotsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha and Gudigwa.

"The time interval for transportation of goods across the Okavango River has significantly improved and this will reduce the costs of doing business, or of implementing government projects, which were brought about by the delays in the ferrying of supplies of materials to construction sites on the Eastern side of the river." President Masisi said.

He pointed out that the newly constructed bridge cancelled the restriction of movement for residents of Okavango that was in the past imposed by the schedule of time the pontoon operated with.



BR train transporting coal to South Africa

BOPA

98 per cent of the population has access to potable water

By Tebagano Ntshole

MOLEPOLOLE - President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi has made the provision of quality potable water his priority. To date, the completion of key water projects in the country has not only reignited hope among Batswana, the projects which have ensured the provision of access to potable clean water has given many new meaning to life.

Recently, during his address at the UN Water Conference in New York, the President said Botswana prioritized the development of water resources and infrastructure as demonstrated by government's decision to increase the budget for water and sanitary projects.

He said the budget was increased from an average of 16 per cent prior to the 2020/21 financial year to 32 per cent for the past two years.

President Masisi said 98 per cent of the population had access to potable water, 80 per cent has access to at least basic sanitation services and another 10 per cent has access to shared or unimproved sanitation facilities.

Determined to achieve his goal, during the 2019 election campaign, the President said he was frustrated by the 11th Parliament reluctance to secure water for Batswana, and vowed that after re-election, he would re-table the motion.

Parliament back then, just before the elections, rejected the motion to secure funding for various water projects in the country based on allegations of improper awarding of the tender which was awarded to Khato Civils.

It was in his inaugural State of the Nation address on November 2018, that President Masisi explained that through the Botswana Emergency Water Security and Efficiency Project (BEWSE) the intention was to urgently address immediate water challenges through infrastructure development and upgrade, institutional strengthening and sector reforms.

He said 400 000 people stood



Masama - Mmamashia 100-kilometre pipeline complete.

to benefit and a further 170 000 would benefit from improved wastewater treatment and sludge management systems.

A year later the Masama – Mmamashia 100-kilometre pipeline started and it was commissioned by the President in October 2021, where he reiterated his government's commitment to delivering water to parts of the country.

The pipeline has added 64 million litres per day and would augment the water supply to Kanye and the Gamononyane – Molepolole pipeline.

In November 2021, the

President further performed a ground breaking ceremony of yet another mega project, the Gamononyane – Molepolole water pipeline.

The pipeline, constructed at a cost would serve 15 villages amongst them Molepolole, Lentsweletau, Kopong and Thebephatshwa which currently experience shortages as demand outstrips supply.

Recently, the Chairperson of Kweneng District Council Mr Alan Jacob said the project was going well and expected to be completed in April and on budget.

Still in 2021, the President

launched the Lobatse Water Masterplan to the tune of P1 billion.

"Indeed my government is determined to ensure that every Motswana has access to clean water," he said at the time of the launch. Bobonong, Motlhabaneng, Mathathane, Tsetsebjwe, Mabolwe, Semolale, Gobojango, Lepokole and Molalatau have also been connected to Thune Dam and the project was completed in 2018.

A number of people have welcomed the projects although their main concern was the delay in completion of public projects.

Ms Kerileng Ramuruwana, a street vendor in Molepolole, was optimistic, saying at the moment she relied on purchasing water from private bowsers which was expensive.

Her major concern was that her plot was out of the water map and hoped the envisaged water network expansion would include her home.

As for Mr Koketso Tshenyamotse, he was sceptical saying he would rather be the Biblical Thomas saying although the laying of pipelines was visible, it would take time for the project to be completed. **BOPA**





Residents of Ukhwi during a kgotla meeting on the Presidential Commission of Enquiry into the Review of the Constitution.

Government delivers on promises

By Mooketsi Mojalemotho

FRANCISTOWN - April 1, 2023 marks President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi's fifth year in office. It is therefore fitting that his achievements or lack thereof be put under scrutiny.

This will be done on the background of the promises he made during his 2019 campaign trail.

Peradventure, the constitutional review is a good place to start as President Masisi and the BDP ardently promised it to Batswana during the 2019 general election campaign. The promise was that a comprehensive review of the constitution would be top of the government agenda.

So great was the need that a whole section - Chapter 4 of the BDP Elections manifesto for 2019 to 2024 on Governance, Rule of Law and Society was a commitment to a comprehensive review of the Botswana constitution.

President Masisi and the BDP vowed that should Batswana bestow upon them yet another five-year mandate to reign over the affairs of Botswana, the constitutional review will be top of the government's agenda.

It is however, worth noting that there have been instances in the past where parts of the supreme law of the land had been amended. A case in point being the review of Sections 77, 78 and 79 of the constitution of Botswana, but nothing as comprehensive.

Just two-years into his reign, 17 December 2021 to be precise, President Masisi appointed the Presidential Commission of Enquiry into the review of the Constitution of Botswana.

Thus the strong contingent of 23 Commissioners were, for the first time in the history of Botswana, given the latitude to overhaul the constitution in its entirety.

From the 2nd February 2022 to July 12 of 2022, the commission embarked on an extensive tour of Botswana, soliciting ideas and viewpoints from Batswana

of different walks of life. Opinions from non-governmental organisations were also been incorporated.

The commissioners traversed over 27 686 kilometres by road and 30 hours by air to execute their mandate.

September 2022, saw the commissioners knocking on President Masisi's door to present a detailed report containing the findings and recommendations for his consideration.

The President commended the commissioners for playing a role in exhibiting the country's democracy and the rule of law; their patriotism in executing their mandate within the stipulated time frame and within the context of the country's values and ethos.

"It is a great honour to applaud the entire commission on behalf of Batswana, for delicately carrying out the commission of inquiry on the constitutional review in a democratic and transparent manner," President Masisi said.

Just two-years into his reign, 17 December 2021 to be precise, President Masisi appointed the Presidential Commission of Enquiry into the review of the Constitution of Botswana.

He said the entire exercise epitomised the pillars of democracy, transparency and the rule of law that Botswana was renowned for.

New Districts

President Masisi's administration is also overseeing the establishment

of 22 new districts. Yet another milestone that has been a top priority for him. Contrary to those opposed to the development, the current administration has always maintained that the restructuring of councils was for administrative expediency and would not in any way affect the jurisdiction and established practices of Bogosi, Local Government and Rural Development.

Portfolio Minister, Kgotla Autlwetse reiterated that the move was borne out of Batswana's desire for a devolved system of governance where the power to make decisions and avail resources were fully given to the local government. Something he concurred would help address key national challenges among them; public sector efficiency, coordination of government initiatives at the district level, accountability, citizen participation and many others.

The sentiments were given the thumbs up by the Botswana Democratic Party national council, in mid-2022, by endorsing the decision to upgrade all sub-districts into fully fledged districts.

The BDP strongly argued that decentralisation would improve access to social services and other community activities and contribute immensely to the economic development, health and quality of life of rural communities as residents will access services effortlessly.

"Through decentralisation, Batswana will continue to be empowered to fully participate in planning, implementing and managing own development processes," the chairperson of the BDP's Communications and International relations sub-committee, Mr Kagelelo Kentse said at the party national council.

President Masisi reminded all and sundry during the national council that the BDP-led government had resolved to assist Batswana to have a meaningful share in the economy of their

country through multiple paths such as policy and land reforms, digitisation, as well as economic inclusion.

The exercise, which will be done in two phases, will cost the government a whopping P63 million.

Public Sector Reforms

Public sector reforms, with a view to promote efficiency and effectiveness, have also been at the heart of Dr Masisi's administration.

Meanwhile, in September 2020, the government developed an Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (ERTP) whose intention was to reboot the economy and cushion it from the unprecedented shock brought about by COVID-19 pandemic.

A total of P14.5 billion was allocated for the implementation of this economic reform, with President Masisi saying then that the plan was primarily a vehicle through which government could deliver the promises made to the electorate in 2019.

The government also set up an Industry Support Fund to the tune of P1.3 billion to support local businesses.

Reset Agenda

The Reset Agenda is yet another reform that was established to spur growth.

Its priorities were among others; to save Botswana's population from COVID-19, through the implementation of life-saving programmes that included a successful and timely vaccination programme, to align Botswana government machinery to the Presidential Agenda, digitization to unlock and enable high productivity, value chain development as well as a mind-set change.

Numerous other reforms have been developed within the public sector in arrears such as Education, Health, Water, E-Government, Ease of doing business and many others. **BOPA**



President Masisi (left) receiving a report of the Presidential Commission of Enquiry into Review of the Constitution from former Chief Justice Maruping Dibotelo.

MPs endorse VAT Amendment Bill

By Olekantse Sennamose

GABORONE - The proposed Value Added Tax (VAT) Amendment Bill of 2023 has received overwhelming support across the political divide in Parliament.

Debating the Bill tabled by the Finance Minister, Ms Peggy Serame on Monday, legislators hailed the amendments as a necessary tool to help Botswana overcome the consequences of the current economic challenges.

They said the bill would as well help Botswana afford medical services as the VAT exemption would be extended to private medical health services.

In his contribution, the Minister for State President, and also the Member of Parliament for Molepolole South, Mr Kabo Morwaeng said that the amendment shows that 'we are a listening and understanding government, alive to the challenges faced by ordinary people'. These amendments he said would also help boost the

household economy," he said.

Mr Morwaeng said the move was an indication that government did not want to leave any Motswana behind in terms of poverty emancipation.

Also contributing to the debate, the MP for Selebi Phikwe West, Mr Dithapelo Keorapetse, who is also the Leader of Opposition applauded the amendments, but said that government should improve its tax collection in order to reduce tax on ordinary people.

"Botswana can have one of the lowest VAT rates if she could intensify her revenue collection to finance developments. Billions of Pula are lost in uncollected revenue," he said.

MP Keorapetse advised government to look into collecting royalties from mining companies and guard against repatriation of profits by foreign companies operating in the country.

The Kanye North legislator, Mr Thapelo Letsholo also appreciated the proposed amendments and called for the extension of coverage to private medical service providers to reduce congestion at public health facilities.

"We have seen even people with medical aid going to public facilities because they could still not afford the costs.

The extension will prevent double dipping where those covered by medical aid through government subsidies still enjoyed

assistance at government facilities almost free of charge," he said.

Supporting the Bill, MP for Maun West, Mr Dumelang Saleshando said it was what the opposition had long called for.

He said that VAT exemption was one way of cushioning ordinary people against poverty and urged government to consider extending the list of exempted items to school stationery, which he said was hardly available in government schools, thereby forcing parents to pay from their pockets.

The Goodhope/Mabule legislator, who is also the Minister of Transport and Public Works, Mr Eric Molale equally applauded the proposed amendments, especially on its extension to small agricultural implements like forage machines.

"Agriculture is the backbone of most people, so this will help improve the agricultural sector, especially the communal farmers who could not afford to buy large machinery," he said.

Although he supported the Bill, the MP for Ngami, Mr Cartepillar Hikuama urged government to ensure that such amendment went even beyond the coming general elections so that it would not be viewed just as a campaign strategy.

"I would also plead with government to extent the exemption to animal vaccines and feeds," he said.

Responding to the

parliamentarians' contributions, Minister Serame assured them that thorough monitoring would be done to ensure that VAT was not added on exempted and zero rated items by traders and suppliers.

"Punitive measures will be taken against those suppliers and traders who are found to add VAT unnecessarily," she said.

Ms Serame said, "The fact that I have not mentioned other items like water and electricity is because they were already covered.

This is just an amendment to cover other necessary items that were not covered in the Act."

She also allayed fears raised by MPs that VAT exemption on medical services might disadvantage private practitioners who buy supplies outside the country, where VAT exemption laws did not apply, yet they were not allowed to charge VAT to their clients.

"After the publishing of the Bill on the government gazette, they approached me with those fears, but I assure you as I assured them that their concerns will be looked into," she said.

Ms Serame also assured the House that the list of items zero rated and tax exempted would continue to be reviewed and revised when necessary.

The Bill has passed the second reading and will now go to the committee stage. **BOPA**

Morwaeng tables Electoral Act Amendment Bill 2023

By Moshe Galeragwe

GABORONE - The proposed amendments to the Electoral Act will help improve the electoral process by ensuring the impartiality and neutrality of registration and election officers under Section 4 (3) as proposed in clause 2 of the Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2023.

Tabling the Electoral (Amendment) Bill 2023 (Bill No. 6 of 2023) before Parliament on Wednesday, the Minister of State President, Mr Kabo Morwaeng said the amendments would enable accurate and

secure registration of voters by electronic means under section 7 in clause 3.

The amendment Bill proposes to introduce publication of an existing voters roll on electronic media including the Independent Electoral Commission website, he said.

He said the Electoral Act consolidated certain laws in relation to the elections of the National Assembly and Councils. The act further prescribed qualifications and registration of voters as well as the conduct of such elections and for other purposes in relation to elections.

In the past, Mr Morwaeng said the IEC Secretary received proposals from various quarters through consultative workshops after general elections on how to improve the electoral processes hence the amendment to improve the electoral process to enhance the credibility of future elections.

Minister Morwaeng said the Bill would further amend section 48 (2) to remove the need for ballot papers to be embargoed as it had proved to be difficult to do such with printing machines.

The proposed provision, he said would allow for ballot papers to be marked with an official mark which shall be in the form to be determined by the IEC.

"Clause 8 of the Bill amends Section 54 of the Act by introducing a prohibition against entry into polling booths by voters, with any electronic devices such as cell phones," he said.

In order to improve cost recovery in election processes and management, Mr Morwaeng said the amounts in Section 36 (1) had increased from P500 to P1 000 and from P100 to P200 respectively. The amendments, he added were made to various sections of the Electoral Act to introduce severe and higher penalties on different election offences as a deterrent

against committal of such offences.

He said, "Clause 9 amends Sections 66, 113 and 114 of the Electoral Act by adjusting the P2 000 fines for specific offences under the Electoral Act to P7 500. The fine is for the offences of disturbing or disrupting the counting of votes, for committing election day offences and for disorderliness at political meetings held in any constituency after the publication of notices of nomination of candidates."

Mr Morwaeng said the adjusted fines would cover offences committed during Election Day such as disrupting the counting of votes, disorderliness at political meetings held in any constituency after the publication of notices of nomination of candidates.

Furthermore, he said 'Clause 10 amends Sections 87, 88, 95, 99, 103 and 126 of the Electoral Act by adjusting the P400 fines appearing therein to P7 500. This is also done to align with the 2-year imprisonment term provided as an alternative to the fine.'

The bill also sought to amend Section 115 of the Act by increasing the P200 fine to P7 500 for the offence of failure to provide the name and address of the printer and publisher of a billboard, placard, poster and pamphlet, circular or other printed material having reference to an election.

He said section 142 would also be amended by adjusting the P200 fine to P500 to align it with the one month imprisonment term provided for as an alternative to the fine for defacing any notice issued under the Act. "The bill also seeks to amend Section 146 of the Act by adjusting the P1 000 fine to P5 000 in line with the gravity of offences in relation to voter registration cards," he said.

The bill, he said was also seeking to amend section 147 by adjusting the P400 fine to P1 000 in line with the two-year prison term provided as an alternative to a fine for offences relating to nomination papers, ballot papers and ballot boxes.

He said section 148 of the Act will also be amended by adjusting the P1 000 to P2 000 to increase penalties for offences related to dereliction of duty by election officers, while Section 149 fine adjustment would be from P100 fine to P5 000.

Mr Morwaeng said the proposed amendment was meant to deter committal of offences relating to violation of the secrecy of the ballots. **BOPA**



Minister of Health Dr Edwin Dikoloti (left) and Ms Serame during a debate at Parliament on the exemption of goods such as sanitary pads from VAT to cushion Botswana from hiked prices of daily commodities.

Photo: Baldwin Nyamande

KRDA enrolls 156 students

GABORONE - Kweneng Rural Development Association (KRDA) currently has 156 students against a carrying capacity of 208.

Responding to a question in Parliament recently, Assistant Minister of Education and Skills Development, Mr Aubrey Lesaso said that represented a slight increase of seven per cent from last year's enrolment due to this year's intake in January.

On other issues, Mr Lesaso acknowledged shortage of lecturers for mathematics and explained that substantive lecturers were on maternity leave.

"However, the institution uses available lecturers to teach. There is no shortage of lecturers in bookkeeping and accounting and the available lecturers have two classes rendering the teaching

load adequate," he said. He added that the ministry had already delivered workshop equipment for bricklaying and plastering and auto mechanics while carpentry and joinery equipment had not yet been delivered due to procurement query.

Further, he said KRDA had converted one of its classrooms into a library and was in the process of equipping it with the necessary resources to accommodate the newly developed curricula for research purposes.

He also told Parliament that cyclical major maintenance had not been done at the institution however, minor maintenance was carried out using the recurrent budget while major maintenance was catered for in the financial year 2022/2023. Meanwhile, Mr

Lesaso indicated that the institution offered four programmes, out of which three were offered at Trade Test C and B level with 60 learners enrolled in auto mechanics, 19 in carpentry and joinery, 30 in panel beating and 47 in bricklaying and plastering and was being offered across all levels at Trade C and B and National Craft Certificate (NCC).

Member of Parliament for Molepolole North, Mr Oabile Regoeng had asked the minister to state the institution's carrying capacity against the current enrolment, programmes offered and at what level.

Mr Regoeng also asked if the minister was aware that last year some classes sat for their final examinations without teachers. **BOPA**



Labotlhano Mopitlo 31, 2023 Kgatiso 055

Twantsho borukutlhi e batla tshwaragano

Ka Keagetswe Motsumi

MOLEPOLOLE - Go botlhokwa go tshwaragana le mapodisi mo go lwantsheng borukutlhi.

Mopalamente wa Molepolole Bokone, Rre Oabile Regoeng o boletse jaana fa a simolodisa lenaneo la ntebele ke go lebele le go tlhophala maloko a komiti a lone kwa kgaolong ya Magokotswane mo Molepolole bosheng.

Ka jalo o ne a rotloetsa banni ba Magokotswane go tshwaragana le mapodisi ka jaana e le maikarabelo a Motswana mongwe le mongwe go hema le go lwantsha borukutlhi.

O ne gape a gwetlha batsadi go ela tlhoko ka fa ba godisang bana ka teng ka jaana seo se le botlhokwa mo go ageng boitsholo jwa bone go ya pele.

O ne a rotloetsa banana go ikgolaganya le ba diofisi tse di

thusang ka mananeo a puso le go a dirisa, a re go dira jalo go ka thusa go ba ntsha mo mebileng.

Fa a tswa la gagwe, modulasetilo wa ntebele ke go lebele wa kgaolo ya Kwena Sereto, Rre Sebilo Motlhaping a re ba itlamile go tshwaragana ka jaana borukutlhi bo tswelotse ka go gola mo kgaolong, selo se a boletseng fa se ne se dira gore batho ba itaane ka noga e utlwa ka jaana dirukutlhi tseo e le bana ba kgaolo.

O tthalositse fa ba tlaa dirisana le komiti ya Magokotswane go fokotsa borukutlhi jo bo apesitseng dikgalo tseo kobo ka letshoba.

Rre Motlhaping a re ba itemogetse koketsego ya borukutlhi bo tshwana le go thujwa ga matlo le go utswiwa ga malatlha a dikoloi mme seo se bakwa ke go dirisa botlhaswa ga nnotagi ga banana.

“Komiti e ya rona ya ntebele ke

go lebele e ka thusa go menagane go lwantsha borukutlhi,” ga tlhalosa Rre Motlhaping. Mo go la gagwe, Detective Sergeant Adam

Abofilwe go tswa kwa lekalane la botlhotlhomise le le lwantshwang tirisano ya ditagi, a re ba itemogetse fa go na le tirisano e e kwa godimo ya

se gantsi ba se bitsang katse (CAT).

Le fa go ntse jalo, a re ba tswelotse ka go ruta ka borai jwa tirisano ya nnotagi le diritibatsi lefatshe ka bophara, a supa fa diritibatsi le nnotagi di na le ditlamorago di akaretsa go koafala ga botsogo jwa motho ka jaana di ama makgwafu le tlhaloganyo.

Rre Seabe Ramorutwana yo e leng legolegwa la pele a re o ikemiseditse go tsibosa bana le batsadi ka bodiphatsa jwa borukutlhi. A re o itemogetse fa botlhoka tsebe jwa bana bo bakwa ke go tlhoka tirisano mmogo ya batsadi le bana mo malwapeng.

Ka jalo o ne a kopa batsadi go tshwaragana mo kgodisong ya bana le go ba kgalemela fa ba tswa mo tseleng. Mme Rachel Sebinyane yo e leng mmega dikgang wa tsa borukutlhi a re go botlhokwa gore setshaba se amogele batho ba ba kileng ba ya kgolegong ka jaana go ka ba thusa go itemoga boleng mme ba seke ba raelesego go boela mekgwa ya pele.

A re tiro e tona ya dikgolegelo ke go aga magolegwa sesha mme ba busediwe mo setshabeng e le banni ba ba nang le boikarabelo.

O boletse fa ba na le boitseanape le botlhale jo bo ka thusang mo go ageng setshaba, ka jalo banni ba seka ba ba leba ka leitlho la kilo le go belaela gore ga ba ise ba fetoge. **BOPA**



Rre Regoeng a re go botlhokwa go tshwaragana le mapodisi mo go lwantsheng borukutlhi.

Mokwatla wa Bomme o rotloetsa bonatla

Ka Calviniah Kgautlhe

TSABONG - Bomme ba rotloeditswe go ema ka dinao go tsosolosa bokgoni jo ba nang le jone go itshetsa, go itsa go ikaega ka borre mo malwapeng.

Go ikaega ka borre mo, go supilwe fa go na le seabe mo go itshokeleng kgokgontsho e e tswelotse ka go gapa matshelo a bomme.

Moeteledipele wa mokgatlho wa Mokwatla wa Bomme, Mme Gosego Mmolawa o buile kwa Tsabong ka Laboraro gore Mokwatla wa Bomme o tlamilwe ka 2020 morago ga go itemogela kgokgontsho e e mashetla ka nako ya COVID-19 ka dipalo di ne di supa fa dititeo di ne di ile magoletsa mo malwapeng mme bontsi jwa tsone di ama bomme.

Mme Mmolawa a re o tswa kgakala a kgothatsa bomme mo seromamoweng mme jaanong o tseire kgato ya go etela bomme ba ba mo metseng e e kgakala le ditlamelo go simolodisa ditiro tsa diatla gore bomme ba itirele ka seo se ka fokotsa dikiteo mo malwapeng.

A re tiro ya gagwe e atililwe ke ba Lucara Botswana, khamphani e e neng ya mo thusa go tsena mo metseng a rutuntsha bomme. Mme o tswelotse ka go kopa dikhamphani tse dingwe go mo rotloetsa go tsena mo metseng e e farologanyeng go thusa bomme.

Mme Mmolawa a re kgokgontsho ya bong e ka fokotsega fa bomme ba ka ikemela ka dinao ba itirela, ba nna le sengwe se ba se dirang go na le go emela borre gore ba ba fepe.

A re tiro ya gagwe ke go tsosolosa bomme gore ba ntshe bokgoni jwa bone mme ba itshetse ka diatla tsa bone.

O ba rotloetsa gore ba ipope digongwana ba dire tse di farolonyeng tse di tlhokwang mo metseng ya bone.

Moeteledipele wa mokgatlho o tthalositse fa gape ba na le mokgatlho wa bomme wa Mpululu Majotia wa bomme ba ba letsang mogolokwane ba bo ba atswiwa.

O lebogetse bomme ba Tsabong gore ba bo ba ne ba ipopa ba simolola go dira tshingwana ya merogo, jeme ya lerotse, kofi ya motlopi le go dirisa dikhakha go dira dibeke.

Fa a tswa la gagwe, Kgosi David Toto II wa Tsabong a re bomme ke thari ya sechaba, ka jalo go botlhokwa gore ba ikemele ka dinao ba itirele. A tlhalosa jalo gore motse o thata ka bomme ka ba dira ditiro tse di faphegileng.

Bomme ba tlhodilwe ke Mmopi ba le pharologanyo, ka jalo ba tshwanetse ba ema ka dinao go dira bomolemo go boloka setshaba.

Ka jalo o ne a lebogela bomme go ema ka dinao go dirisa diatla tsa bone go ntsha dithoto go tokafatsa matshelo a bone.

Moeteledipele wa mokgatlho oo mo Tsabong Mme Lizzie Dekorker a re Mokwatla wa Bomme o aname mo Tsabong mme go ne ga kopiwa gore bomme ba le batlhano go tswa mo dikgotlaneng tsoitlhe tsa Tsabong ba o tsenelele.

A re ba gatetse pele ba itebagantse le go lwantsha kgokgontsho ya bong le go ikemela ka dinao go itirela go na le go leba mo go borre.

Mo nakong eno ba tswelotse ka go dira tse di ka ba thusang gore ba itshetse mme ba ikaelela go lema merogo.

O supa gore moonoo wa bone ke gore ba nne teng nako le nako fa kgosi a epa pitso go isa serodumo sa motse kwa godimo. **BOPA**

Madori o itshetsa ka go boka

Ka Booster Mogapi

LETLHAKENG - Poko ke nngwe ya dikarolo tsa puo ya Setswana tse di tswang goo-Lowe di dirisiwa go natetsha mediro, manyalo le gone go reta motho kana sengwe se morafe o se ratang.

Mo godimo ga moo, poko ke nngwe ya ditale tse bontsi jwa Batswana ba di abetsweng mme e bile ba di dirisa go itshetsa ka tsone.

Mongwe wa Batswana bao ke Rre Boikotlhao Madori wa Ditshegwane mo kgaolong ya Takatokwane.

Rre Madori a re o dumela gore ene o tshotswe e ntse e le mmoki mme o itemogetse jalo ka 1986 fa ba ne ba golega dikgomo mme fa ba bangwe ba di betsa ka seme ene o ne a di boka mme di mo reetse.

A re selo seo se ne se kgatlha basimane ba a neng a gola le bone mme ba mo kgothatsa go dira jalo kgapetsakgapetsa. O ne a supa fa go ne go na le mmoki mongwe mo Ditshegwane a tumile ka poko mme ya re ka 1989 a tlhokafala mme ga rena bodutu mo motseng.

Rre Madori a re ka 1991 fa a dira mophato wa bobedi kwa sekoloeng sa Mahupu kwa Takatokwane, o ne a tsenelela dikgaisano tsa go kwala leboke mme a tswa ka maemo a nthla ka leboke la gagwe le ne le kwenne ka diane le manatetshapuo.

A re e sale nako eo a lemoga talente ya gagwe mme a simolola go e nonotsha ka go ithuta puo ya Setswana le go se anywa mo bagolong.

O ne a tlatsa ka go re poko ke selo

se se batlang motho yo o kelelelo e bile a kgona go tshameka ka puo.

Rre Madori a re go goleng ga gagwe o ne rata go boka dilo ka bontsi mme ga nna motlhofo gore e re a boka a bo a tutetse ka Setswana se se nonneng.

A re buka ya ga Kgomotso Mogapi ya *Thutapuo ya Setswana* e mo rutile go le gontsi mme a kgona go dirisa mafoko ka bonokopila le bokgabane.

A re mongwe wa diopedi tse di mo fang Setswana sa motia e bile se rokotsa mathe ke Ditiro Leero ka Setswana a se amule.

O ne a supa fa dikgaisano tsa malatsi a ga Tautona di ne tsa mo fa tsholofelo ka jaanong a ne a dirisa talente ya gagwe go dira letseno.

A re o ne a nona pelo ka mathe ka jaanong a ne a segetse mo lefureng mme a kgona go phadisana le ba bangwe ka mashetla mme seo se sega motlhalo wa poko ya gagwe.

Rre Madori a re mo phadisanong ga gagwe o ne a tsaya maemo a a botoka mme a supa fa e rile ka 2016 a kgona go ya go phadisana le ba bangwe lefatshe ka bophara.

“Ga ke tsee talente ya me lolea, ka e le jone botshelo jwa me le bongwanake. Ke rutile bongwanake gore poko e tshwanetse ya duelelwa ka ke se Modimo a se ba fileng gore ba tshela ka sone.”

Mmoki yoo, yo o itsegeng thata mo kgaolong ya Letlhakeng, o tumile ka go dira ka bokgabane mo medirong ka go farologana mme bontsi ga bo ke bo tlhoka go anapa dipata go lebogela tiro ya gagwe.

A re o leboga go menagane

Rre Lazarus Monnatsie yo a mo alositseng go tswa bonyenyaneng ka gompieno o godile ke mmoki yo e bileng a itsege lefatshe ka bophara.

Rre Madori a re o dumela gore talente e a nang le yone ke ka tlhotlhetso ya mowa wa Modimo ka gore o kgona go makala a ipona a boka ka tsela e e kgethegileng.

A re o lebogela dikgaisano tsa malatsi a ga Tautona ka di ne tsa mo fa sebaka sa go itsege.

Rre Madori a re poko mo go ene e tshwana le motho a anwa metsi, ka ene a kgona go tomoga fela a bo a boka go sena tsapa le mo fisang pelo jaaka bangwe ba batla go fiwa nako ya go ipaakanya.

“Ke atlegile fela thata, setshaba se a nkitse e bile ke lalediwa go boka mo manyalong le mediro ka go farologana mme seo se nthusa go dira letseno”. O ne a tlatsa ka go re o setse a tsamaile lefatshe la Botswana a lalediwa go boka mo manyalong mme batho ba itumelela tiro ya gagwe.

A re o setse a kile a ya mafelong a a neng a sa a itse jaaka Metlobo, Moseitse, Charleshill, Sebina le Nshakashokgwe mme o tsamaya le mosadi wa gagwe ka e le ene a mo leletsang mogolokwane.

Rre Madori a re mo nakong ya gompieno o kwala buka ya maboko ya bana ba ba kwa tlase mme morago o ya go dira maboko a bagolo. A re o leboga Modimo gore bana ba gagwe ba anywile go le gontsi mo go ene mme e bile ba setse ba simolotse go dirisa talente ya bone. **BOPA**



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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FARM WORKERS

HEADBOY WANTED at Phitshane Molepolo. Contact 77895077

3 FARM WORKERS needed at Nkowe Farms Mmathubudukwane, Kgatleng District. Apply P O Box 50207 Gaborone

FARM WORKER WANTED at Malepe/ Mahalapye. Apply to Boitumelo Saone Chabadiile, P O Box 601254 Gaborone

FARM WORKER NEEDED, contact Boiki Israel Phokoje, Box 508 Molepolole.

FARM WORKER WANTED at Gamokgweleo Lands. Call 75254010.

LOOKING FOR A seasonal farm worker with 3-4 years of experience. Apply Box 601834 Gaborone

HAVEN FARMS IS looking for a farm worker. Minimum 5 years' experience in Horticulture crops & fodder production. Remuneration will depend on experience. CV and other requirements to: The Manager Haven farms Box 26087 Gaborone Tel:+26771307213 fax:+2673182441 Deadline:7th April 2023

VACANCIES

GREEN LAND ENVIRONMENTAL holdings (Pty)Ltd looking for machine operator with certificate of technical diploma in non-woven bag machine operations. 5yrs of experience -Managing Director P/Bag BO 203 Bontleng. Deadline submission 18.4.2023

URGENTLY REQUIRED SENIOR surveyor with Degree in Geomatics with 15 years experience registered with CLS Botswana, reply Box 459 Maun Northern Surveys (Pty) Ltd

LOOKING FOR FASHION Designer in Dress To Kill, Kasane. 71649001 / 6252587

NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION

OWNER OF PLOT 15076 wishes to change land use from parking lot to mixed use at Government Camp- Francistown. Any objections should be forwarded to City Of Francistown Council 2411700

THE OWNER OF PLOT 1271 Plateau Kasane would like regularize his boundary wall with the council. Owners of plot 1270 and 1282 contact him for any objection: 77194955

OWNER OF PLOT Keneilwe Motsumi, Thomadithotse at Palapye wishes to erect a boundary wall. Any concerned party can contact Letlhakane District Council Physical Planning or contact 4925169.

OWNER OF PLOT Dikitso Gaboalafwe at Kgarapa Letlhakane wishes to change use from intergrated farming use to mix (50% light industrial and 50% commercial intergrated farming). Any concerned party can contact Letlhakane District Council Physical or contact 4925169.

OWNER OF PLOT MAITSEGO Ntswang at Letlhakane wishes to change plot land use from single residential to multi family residential use. Any concerned party can contact Boteti Council physical planning or contact 4925169.

NEIGHBOURS OF PLOT 6990 Mogoditshane block 7, contact 71968766 regarding change of land from single to multi residential.

NOTICE OF CHANGE of land use from single to multi-family residential use, Plot 15215 Palapye Extension II, owner Sebolao Ramoleko. Please forward any objections to Palapye Physical Planning office.

OWNER OF PLOT 16124 Tlokweg, Lenganeng notifies plot no's 16123, 524, and 526 about boundary wall construction. Contact Tlokweg council, building control office for objections.

OWNER OF PLOT 33439 in Molepolole Magokotswane Ward, wishes to change land use from guest house to hotel and develop a double storey building. Neighbours can contact Kweneng District Council Physical Planning office at Molepolole RAC or call 73811000 to raise objections within 14 days.

NEIGHBOURS OF PLOT 5094 Gaborone extension 10, contact 71414947 regarding change of land use from single to residential (student apartments)

THE OWNER OF Plots 17528 and 36568 in Maun, would like to construct multiresidential units and change land use from single to multires. Forward any objection to 73278489.

OWNER OF PLOT No. 799, Gamodubu would like to inform owners of plots no. 798, 800 and 817 about the construction of boundary wall. For objections contact 71576824/ 71546933 or 5920200 Kweneng district council

CHANGE OF LAND USE OF PLOT 213, GABORONE FROM RESIDENTIAL TO MIXED USE - COMMERCIAL BY BUILDMARQUE (PTY) LTD.

NEIGHBOURS ARE HEREBY notified of a proposal for **Change of Land Use of Plot 213, Gaborone** from "Single Family Residential" to "Mixed Use-Commercial". Neighbours are hereby consulted and invited to submit their comments, if any, regarding the proposed change of land use. Comments should be made in writing and submitted within fourteen (14) days from the date of publication of this notice to:

Gaborone City Council
Physical Planning Division
Private Bag T05, Gaborone
Tel: 577 7411 Fax: 577 7216

Consultants:



Cell: (+267) 7667 1313
Email: jayson@pinnacleplacemaking.co.bw
or eugene@pinnacleplacemaking.co.bw

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

Master's Reference: ESHGB 000346/21

IN THE ESTATE of the Late **MARY CAMERON FORREST** who died at The Health Bridge PVT Hospital Victoria Falls Hwange, Zimbabwe on 12th August 2020

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Debtors and Creditors in the above Estate are hereby required to pay their debts and file claims of whatever nature with the undersigned within thirty (30) days after the publication hereof.

DATED at Gaborone on this 21st Day of March 2023.

CHIKONDI F. BANDA, *The Executor*, c/o Desai Law Group, DLG House, Plot 2566, Extension 9, Off Nyerere Drive, Gaborone, Botswana P.O. Box 640, Gaborone
Email: chikondi@desailawgroup.co.bw
TEL: 3162727/74877624

WE ARE HIRING JOIN OUR TEAM



The Department of Information Services is looking for two (2) **Temporary Information Officers (Graphics)**. The potential candidate needs to meet the following:

Main Purpose of the job: To provide graphics and other design elements for print and online editions. **Qualifications:** Diploma or Degree in Multimedia and Graphic Design or similar. Must have knowledge in Photoshop, Indesign Illustrator. **Experience:** A minimum of 1 year experience in a magazine/newspaper design layout will be an added advantage.

Requirements: Submit two (2) recently published works, certified copy of Omang, academic certificates, two recent references with contacts of referees.

Key Competencies

- Communication skills
- Customer Focus
- Teamwork
- Attention to detail
- Computer skills

Duties:

1. Creates designs and draft layouts of advertisements.
2. Interprets the design needs of the Department of Information Services.
3. Consults with clients to ascertain their needs on advertisements and publications.
4. Designs flyers and posters for Department of Information Services and other events.

NB:

- Contract: One year
- Faxed or email applications will not accepted.
- Communication will be limited to short-listed candidates
- Only applications that reach the department on or before the closing date will be considered.

APPLY TO:

Director of Information Services
Private Bag BR 139, Gaborone,
Tel: +267 365 3500
OR hand deliver your application to:
Mass Media Complex
Department of Information Services
Administration Block
First Floor Records Management Unit
Office number: 116
Closing date: 14th April 2023



Ministry for State President
Department of Information Services



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- Bachelor of Business Admin in Marketing
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- Bachelor of Commerce in Purchasing & Supply Chain Management
- Bachelor of Commerce in Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- Bachelor of Commerce in Entrepreneurship
- Bachelor of Commerce in Retail Management
- Bachelor of Business Tourism Management
- Advanced Diploma in Motor Vehicle Body Repair & Refinishing
- Advanced Diploma in Diesel Plant Engineering

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Promotional Price **P118⁹⁵** per pack
 Get an extra **P20 off**
 Rewards Customers Pay **P98⁹⁵**

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Promotional Price **P16⁹⁵** each
 Get an extra **P2 off**
 Rewards Customers Pay **P14⁹⁵**

Nescafe Classic Instant Coffee 200g

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Chombo promotes positive parenting

By Esther Mmolai

SOMELO - Miss Botswana Lesego Chombo has urged parents to embrace positive parenting, which focuses on teaching good behaviour by using kind and firm ways to discipline.

Speaking during an engagement session with parents at Somelo on Tuesday, Chombo said by embracing positive parenting, guardians were ultimately supporting their children to excel in their studies despite living in remote areas.

She also emphasised the importance of motivating children to take their studies seriously to help them achieve their career dreams.

The reigning queen is on a mission to implement her project, The Genesis, which aims to create a conducive environment for economically challenged children through a development programme that empowers parents with skills development.

The project also aims to bridge the upbringing gap between the environment of children in remote and urban areas.

As such, she was accompanied by experts in different fields such as social work, psychology, teaching and medical doctors to impart knowledge and empower parents.

“Through my project, I want to make a positive impact on children who grow up in rural areas as they are far from services.

I saw it fit to first engage parents and encourage them to give their children a good start in life. That is why I brought different experts to empower them on parenting techniques so that they raise their children in a loving manner and teach them to face life courageously,” she said.

Ms Chombo said a child who grew up in a healthy family did better at school despite the location of their homestead.

Her team noted that positive parenting techniques worked well in raising disciplined children with good moral values.

They agreed that parents played a crucial role in their children’s development, adding that having supportive parents was also important to children’s academic success.

A Guidance and Counselling teacher, Mr Tebogo Mogaetsho noted that parents had a key role in setting a good example for their children and guiding them towards positive, healthy habits and routines.

He said the way parents treated their children contributed a lot to how they felt about themselves.

Mr Mogaetsho also urged parents to learn to understand the needs of their children, engage them in dialogues and listen to their concerns and work together towards a solution.

A psychologist, Ms Grace Thakadu advised parents to create a good relationship with their children.

Every child, she said, was unique and had a talent that needed to be supported.

She urged parents to stop using vulgar language when reprimanding children or talking to them in a disrespectful manner, saying the wrong words could influence them to be rebellious.

After a session with parents, Chombo engaged with pupils at Somelo Primary School through art activities ranging from painting, playing a guitar, singing and drawing to improve their confidence.

The Standard Six and Seven learners were drilled on careers and skills needed in the economy now and beyond.

Chombo revealed in an interview that the arts could have a big impact on children’s

development as they helped them develop valuable skills.

She said the idea was to prove to youngsters that despite growing from low socio-economic status or far from services, they could use their talents to pursue the arts.

She said making use of children’s free time with constructive and positive activities could also help decrease risky behaviour.

Pupils were sensitised on how different subjects such as Design and Technology, Artwork and Literature could shape their careers in the creative sector.

They were also taught about unhealthy behaviours, which comprised physical health, psychological and emotional stability as well as social engagement. **BOPA**



Chombo during a session where she taught Somelo Primary School pupils artistic skills. Photo: Esther Mmolai

Clap and Tap choirs to raise funds for needy students

By Bakang Wren

GABORONE - In a quest to raise funds to sponsor young people’s tertiary education and help the underprivileged, the Mabaila Foundation will on April 1, hold a Clap and Tap Music show.

The charitable event scheduled for Limkokwing University of Creative Technology has roped in South Africa’s finest Clap and Tap choir, Universal Kathisma, which boasts of over five million followers.

In an interview, the founder of the foundation, Tshepang Mabaila said the show, which is a genre of music that combines elements of folk, blues and Jazz and the use of hand clapping and tapping rhythms would attract Clap and Tap choirs from Botswana and neighbouring countries.

Elaborating more about this quest, he said his foundation was relevant to the economy of Botswana and believed that education should be focused on developing people from within.

“This is to say the proceeds that will be

raised from this occasion will be solely used to help sponsor young people with tertiary tuition fees and to buy school uniform for young ones who are disadvantaged,” he said.

He also said they would direct some of the proceeds raised towards rehabilitating young people from drug addiction.

“Our aim is to raise funds for the youth who have indulged in substance abuse, also known as drug addicts.

We started the campaign last year and so far 30 young people have been enrolled in the programme outside Botswana.”

Mabaila said they had seen some drug addicts recovering with some of the liberated studying in the United Kingdom,

He said famous Motsweding FM Preacher Mookamedi Tube and his colleague, a recording gospel artiste, Brian Mosiapoa will be part of the event.

Locally Angels of God church choir, Dineo tsa Tumelo gospel choir and Ditsala Moreneng gospel choirs will complete the line-up.

The show, he said, would start from 6am and end at 6pm. **BOPA**

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First division south league heats up

By Baleseng Batlotleng

RAMOTSWA - With five games remaining until the curtain falls, the battle for honours and survival gains exciting traction with every passing weekend in the Debswana First Division South League campaign.

Daggers are once again drawn as teams prepare for week 17 of the exciting and closely contested campaign.

All the top four teams are playing a chasing game and any single point dropped is one too many.

Log leaders, Matebele, sitting on 34 points travel to the Holy Ghost Park on Saturday for a tricky encounter against Matebejana.

Tigerkloof, as Matebejana are fondly called, face a stern test as they try to move away from the dreaded relegation zone.

Their fixture against the red hot Kuka Ntsu might prove to be the latest test to the latter's title credentials.

Matebejana are also looking for all the maximum points as they are well placed for a respectable finish in mid table.

High octane action is expected at the Black Forest arena in Mmankgodi when the hosts URI Black Forest welcome VTM.

The homeside has been

struggling in form, but will look to build on the solid performance at the weekend after collecting maximum points against Gabane Santos.

In VTM, Magoleng face a team of impressive mentality with a new coach who has instilled a sense of pride and humility.

Without doubt, VTM's gaffer, Leutlwetse Tshireletso, has done a good job at the VTM arena keeping a clean sheet and

collecting all the six points in his first two assignments.

Bafana Ba Dijabane have inched into the top four bracket after a shocking 3-0 victory over Notwane this past weekend and have more tests lined up before harbouring any ambitions of promotion to top flight football.

Notwane, also known as MaCat, can close the gap on log leaders as they head to the SSG ground to face Young Stars.

The youthful Stars will be encouraged by their past performance against Tlokwen United and this might prove an acid test for Thaloba Nthaga boys.

Third placed Crackit City Polar have an easy task at the UB stadium against struggling Broadhurst United.

They will try to get back to winning ways after being halted by their arch rivals Mochudi Centre Chiefs over the past

weekend.

Magosi who are yet to lose a match under the watchful eye of new coach Patrick Molefe travel to Tlokwen for a date against Tlokwen United.

At the bottom of the league log Black Rangers are still searching for a single point since gaining promotion to the first division campaign. They welcome wounded Santos in Tsabong. **BOPA**

Gunners' long winless run continues

By Jeremiah Sejabosigo

LOBATSE - Extension Gunners' dumbfounding winless run has now increased to 17 matches after they threw away a first half dominance and one goal lead to draw 2-2 with Prisons XI in a relegation dogfight played in Lobatse on Wednesday night.

The beleaguered Lobatse side remains rooted at the bottom of the Botswana Premier League log standings following the draw.

They have collected 11 points from 20 matches, making relegation a serious probability for them.

Both teams played disjointed football in the first half, but Gunners controlled much of the possession and were the more

offensive side.

They subsequently took the lead in the 24th minute after a good exchange of passes by several players resulted with striker Vincent Lekorwe collecting the ball inside the penalty area and slotting into the bottom corner.

Prisons threatened to hit back almost immediately, but Mokuye Shakambayo's well taken goal was flagged offside.

The hosts continued being in the pedestal and had further chances to increase their lead towards the end of the first half, however, the visitors' goalkeeper Tshepo Mooketsi pulled off good saves to deny Lekorwe and Omphile Vissagie.

Lekorwe also ballooned a great opportunity over the posts after

dumpling a defender.

The match became an end to end affair after the Warders' threw caution to the wind and became more attacking in the second half.

Coach Sepheko Motlhogodi's team cleverly used the craftiness of Kelello Kgosimore, Karabo Setoutwe and Shakambayo to put pressure on the Gunners defence, which was increasingly panicking and committing mistakes.

They equalised in the 70th minute when Kgosimore scored into an unguarded net, after the ball was rolled into the path following a defensive error by Phomolo Moahi.

Things then tuned from bad to worse for Mapantsula as Setoutwe beat goalkeeper Keegile

Kgosipula with a well taken free-kick in the 80th minute after Desire Bafana had committed a foul on Kgosimore on the edge of the penalty area.

However, Gunners were awarded a penalty in the 87th minute after Tumo Lebanna pushed Lekorwe, and the striker calmly slotted the spot-kick to salvage a draw for coach Thabo Motang's team.

Gunners will attempt to finally get a win when they host defending champions Gaborone United on Sunday afternoon at Lobatse Sports Complex.

Prisons, who are on position 13 after collecting 16 points from 20 matches, will on the other hand, take on Police XI on Saturday. **BOPA**



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NB: Botswana Defence Force has established Mobile Recruitment Centres in the following areas: Tsabong, Ghanzi, Maun, Kasane, Francistown, Palapye and Gaborone as the Main Centre. It is therefore compulsory that candidates indicate their place of preference (Mobile

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Successful candidates shall undergo a 6 months Basic Military Training. On completion of training, Privates must be ready to serve in various

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The Commander
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Only successful candidates will be shortlisted for selection.

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GU, Prisons clash tomorrow

By Anastacia Sibanda

GABORONE - A DTCB Women Division One League fixture slated for Lekidi Centre tomorrow will see Gaborone United and Prisons square up.

GU are still seething with anger after a recent 2-4 loss to log leaders, Double Action.

Therefore, GU would take the

field with the aim to redeem their pride and win against Prisons who on one hand would also want to bag the three valuable points following a two-all draw against FC Ambassadors.

GU are currently occupying the second spot on the log table with 18 points from eight games, out of which they won six and lost two.

Prisons are at the third spot, just four points behind GU, having won four games, drawn two and lost two.

A win for Prisons would place them a point short from GU while the latter on the other hand would also be hoping to win and reduce the six-point gap between them and top flight Double Action.

That means both the benches are wary of what is at stake and would enter the field with only thing in mind, victory.

In an interview, Prisons coach, Quelch Moroke said they had prepared well for GU and all their players were available for selection, expect goalkeeper Refiloe Tshambani who was nursing an injury and Lesego Keleboge would also miss the game.

Moroke said their preparations for the Saturday encounter included working more on the defence line given that they had been scoring and conceding goals at the same time.

"We have to win the game in order to put pressure on GU. All is not lost even when there is a four-point gap between us. We have a plan that will see us through after 90 minutes," he said.

GU coach, Innocent Morapedi, said the fact that Prisons were on the third spot was not by fluke hence they deserved all the respect.

As such, Morapedi said this would require his players to be merciless as they go into the field and go for nothing else but a win.

"Losing against Double Action was a set-back for us more so that they beat us 1-0 in the first round," he said.

Morapedi said they had also been preparing well for encounter considering that

Prisons would also be looking to avenge their loss in the first round.

"So we expect them to fight and possibly more than what Double Action did. That means we have to fight really hard and win this game and redeem our pride," he said.

He lamented the injuries in his camp, but was adamant that

it would not discourage them to fight to the bitter end.

Meanwhile, other games to be played on Saturday will feature Double Action versus UB Kicks at Lekidi West at 9am, Wonder Girls would play Township Rollers at Lekidi East at 4pm while FC Ambassadors and Security Systems would square off at Lekidi West. **BOPA**



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