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A photograph of three individuals in professional business attire. On the left, a man in a dark suit and glasses looks down. In the center, a man in a dark suit and red tie is focused on a small object. On the right, a woman in a dark suit is also looking down. They are gathered around a dark display case containing several medals or coins. The background is a blurred blue and white pattern.

THE WORLD'S MOST PRECIOUS RELAY PRIZE

- Government Tackles Dual FMD Challenge
- Great Strides In The Quest For Water Security
- New Technology Helps Farmers Fight Locust Threat
- Botswana Marks Renewable Milestone
- DPP Reform Agenda
- A new Chapter For Chobe Tourism

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Our Vision

Improved Quality Of Life for All.

Our Mission Statement

To promote good governance through effective leadership and coordination of Government policies and programmes for sustainable development and improved quality of life.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter. It is with great enthusiasm that we introduce this platform, created to keep you informed, engaged, and connected with the work taking place across government. In an environment where communication and transparency are essential, this newsletter aims to serve as a reliable source of updates and insights that matter to you and our wider community.

Through this publication, we will bring you timely information on policies, initiatives, and projects that are shaping our nation and impacting everyday lives. Our goal is not only to inform but also to highlight the progress being made across various sectors. You can expect thoughtful coverage of key developments, as well as stories that reflect the dedication and commitment of those in public service.

In addition, we will shine a spotlight on outstanding public

servants whose work continues to make a difference. By sharing these stories, we hope to inspire excellence and celebrate innovation across departments.

We will also feature creative solutions and success stories from the field, demonstrating how challenges are being addressed with resilience and forward thinking approaches.

This newsletter is more than just a source of information, it is your platform. We encourage you to actively participate by sharing your ideas, suggesting topics, and contributing story proposals. Your input is invaluable in helping us shape content that is relevant, meaningful, and representative of our collective efforts.

As we begin this journey, we look forward to building a strong connection with you, our readers. Together, we can foster a culture of communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement in public service.

We look forward to keeping you informed and inspired in every edition.

Yours in Public Service,
Boitumelo Neo Sefhera
Editor



Botswana Marks Renewable Milestone: Maun Solar Plant Groundbreaking

Story by Laone Molelo

In a historic stride towards sustainable development, Botswana has marked a significant milestone in its energy transformation journey with the groundbreaking ceremony and the signing of the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the ambitious 500MW Maun Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Plant and 500MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

This project stands out as one of the most ambitious renewable energy ventures on the African continent.

Officiating at the event in Maun, President Duma Boko described the project as a turning point for Botswana. "This initiative signifies our decisive shift from planning to action," he stated. "As we accelerate our transition towards a secure, sustainable, and affordable energy future, this project exemplifies our commitment to renewable energy development."

The flagship project, a collaboration between the Botswana Government and the Sultanate of Oman through a Government-to-Government partnership, is being implemented by the Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) in partnership with Okavango Solar.

Once completed, it will inject 500MW of clean, reliable energy into the national grid, significantly boosting the country's power capacity.

A vital feature of the project is the 500MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), designed to store excess solar energy generated during the day. This stored energy can then be deployed during peak demand periods in the evening and early morning, greatly enhancing grid stability and energy security.

President Boko highlighted the country's ambitious renewable energy goals, stating, "Botswana is firmly on track to increase the share of renewable energy in our national generation mix to 50 percent by 2030. Currently, we are at about 8 percent, but with projects like this, we are moving swiftly towards that target in line with our revised and accelerated Integrated Resource Plan."

The groundbreaking ceremony underscores Botswana's unwavering commitment to diversifying its energy sources and embracing renewable solutions to power its future sustainably.





The World's Most Precious Relay Prize

Story by Laone Molelo

President Advocate Duma Boko has officially unveiled the winner's medals for the Debswana World Athletics Relays Gaborone 26, marking the first time the prestigious global competition will be hosted on African soil.

During a ceremony held at the National Museum in Gaborone, the President revealed medals that are literally forged from the earth of Botswana. Courtesy of the Ministry of Minerals and Energy and the Okavango Diamond Company (ODC), a total of 120 medals, valued at P10 million, will be awarded at the National Stadium on May 2nd and 3rd 2026.

Crucially, each medal will be embedded with authentic Botswana diamonds, mined, cut, and polished locally.

"This event will bring the world to the diamond city," President Boko stated. "These are not synthetic stones, but authentic diamonds born of our land, carrying Botswana's history and identity onto the global stage. These medals carry not only the pride of athletic excellence, but the story of our land, engraved with Botswana diamonds for the first time in history," he said.

The unveiling formed part of the broader launch of the "60 Years of Diamond Leadership Initiative," a programme designed to unify Botswana's narrative around ethical mining and value addition. President Boko drew a direct parallel between the resilience required to produce both elite athletes and polished gemstones. He remarked: "Like diamonds, these athletes are forged under pressure, shaped by discipline and refined through resilience. They shine because they endure."

Minister of Minerals and Energy, Bogolo Joy Kenewendo, emphasised the strategic shift away from fragmented marketing towards a cohesive "House of Botswana" identity. She noted that the initiative strengthens the country's global position by linking natural resources to tourism, sport, and national branding while championing transparency and traceability.

Minister of Sports and Arts, Jacob Kelebeg expressed gratitude to all stakeholders, describing the upcoming relays as a "historic first" and a blessing for the nation's sporting development.

The Debswana World Athletics Relays Gaborone 26 will see winners from across the globe carrying home medals that, according to President Boko, ensure "all winners will carry a part of Botswana."





From Podium to Pocket: How Botswana’s P50 Note Is Inspiring A New Generation

Sport, identity and opportunity in everyday life

Story by Olebogeng Binang

At a local athletics track in Gaborone, young runners gather at sunset, chasing times, dreams, and now, a new kind of inspiration.

In their hands, the newly introduced commemorative P50 note carries more than currency. It carries the faces of champions, Letsile Tebogo, Bayapo Ndori, Busang Kebinatshipi and Anthony Pesela, athletes whose achievements have placed Botswana firmly on the global stage. For many young athletes, this is not just recognition. It is motivation.

“When I see Tebogo on the note, I feel like it’s possible, says 17-year-old sprinter Kabelo from Mogoditshane. “It means someone like me can make it too.”

The introduction of the commemorative note by the Bank of Botswana marks a significant moment, not only celebrating sporting excellence, but reinforcing government’s long-term commitment to sport as a driver of national development.

Through this recognition, sport is being positioned beyond competition, as a pathway to opportunity, discipline, and national identity.

Government has increasingly prioritised sport as a tool for youth empowerment, skills development, and economic participation, recognising its potential to create careers, build confidence, and unite communities.

“This is about more than medals,” says an official from the Ministry responsible for sport. “It is about building systems that support athletes from grassroots to international level.”

Across the country, efforts are underway to strengthen these systems, from expanding access to sporting facilities, to improving talent identification and development pathways.

“Training is not easy,” says a local athletics coach. “But when young people see that the country



Botswana’s Olympic heroes—Letsile Tebogo and the 4x400m relay team of Bayapo Ndori, Busang Kebinatshipi and Anthony Pesela—are featured on the commemorative P50 note, symbolising national pride, teamwork and the power of sport to inspire the next generation. Photo Credit: Sunday Standard

recognises and supports its athletes, it pushes them to work harder.”

The decision to feature athletes on national currency also carries deeper meaning. It embeds values

of resilience, discipline, and excellence into everyday life—reminding citizens, with every transaction, of what is possible through dedication and support.

Importantly, this symbolic recognition is backed by real investment. Parliament has approved budget allocations to strengthen sport development under the Ministry, reinforcing government’s commitment to building a competitive and inclusive sporting ecosystem. Sport is not just a moment of glory, it is a national strategy.



And for the next generation lacing up their running shoes across the country, the journey from the track to the world stage no longer feels distant, it feels possible.



DPP Vows No Shield For Privilege In Reform Agenda

Story by Thato Mochipisi

In an unprecedented move towards judicial transparency, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) hosted its first-ever high-level media engagement. The DPP used the platform to outline a robust reform agenda anchored in independence, accountability, and a stern warning to those who believe wealth or status offer protection from the law.

Taking centre stage, Director Kgosietsile Ngakaagae, who described his return to the institution as a milestone in a 25-year legal career, anchored his remarks firmly on the constitutional mandate of the office but stressed that execution must be defined by honour, integrity, and courage.

In a defining statement that set the tone for the new administration's posture, Ngakaagae declared that the office would intensify its focus on cases of national importance, including those involving high-profile individuals. "There will be no fear, no intimidation," the Director of Public Prosecutions told the assembled press corps. "No status, power, money or privilege will shield anyone from prosecution."

The Director further emphasised that the Office would not tolerate undue influence in executing its mandate, underscoring that prosecutorial decisions would remain anchored in law, evidence, and conscience—not public pressure or political expectation.

Ngakaagae did not shy away from the operational realities facing the justice system. He candidly acknowledged that the broader economic climate is exacerbating a growing backlog of cases and contributing to a steady drain of personnel. The office currently oversees more than 200 prosecutors but has faced attrition challenges.

However, the Director confirmed that Government has approved 17 additional prosecutorial posts, a development expected to bolster capacity and significantly improve case turnaround times.

Ngakaagae highlighted a critical legislative gap, noting that Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is not explicitly defined within the Penal Code. He expressed deep concern over the high rate of case withdrawals, often driven by societal pressures on complainants.

To counter this, the Director confirmed that the DPP has established a specialised sexual violence unit to strengthen prosecutions and provide focused support for victims. He issued a direct appeal to the Fourth Estate, calling on them to play a more active role in public education to shift the societal attitudes that undermine justice.

The briefing also revealed significant progress in financial crime recoveries. It was disclosed that Government has successfully recovered over P50 million in proceeds of crime, excluding properties. This includes approximately P17 million linked to the Ecoplexus matter. The DPP issued a stark caution to the public against participating in fraudulent schemes, specifically citing the dangers of pyramid operations.

In his closing remarks, Ngakaagae reiterated his vision of an office defined not just by its power to prosecute, but by the discipline and integrity with which it wields that power.

"This is a return to an institution I left in 2010," the Director reflected. "The mandate is the same, but the resolve

must be renewed. Justice must be carried out with discipline, courage, and integrity."

This engagement signals a broader commitment by Government to open communication and institutional accountability, marking a new chapter for the DPP and the rule of law in Botswana.

The landmark press conference, held at the DPP Headquarters six months into the Director tenure, was described by Deputy Director Kabo Leinaneng as a deliberate institutional shift. "This is not the first engagement of its kind within government, but it is a first for the DPP. It reflects a deliberate recognition that the media is not an observer, but a partner in the dispensation of justice," he stated.





Government Tackles Dual FMD Challenge: Tightens Containment In Goodhope, While Pushing For New Beef Markets

Story by Laone Molelo

Government is pursuing a twin-track strategy in response to the escalating Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) crisis, intensifying containment measures in the south while simultaneously redoubling efforts to diversify beef export markets in Africa to shield farmers from catastrophic revenue losses.

Recently the Acting Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti, expressed grave concern over the rapid spread of the disease in the Goodhope District, but insisted that the Government remains committed to sustaining rural livelihoods through market expansion. Dr Dikoloti provided a detailed update on the outbreak, which he confirmed stemmed from an incursion of affected livestock across the border last month. The disease was first identified at the Ramatlabama Artificial Insemination Centre, where 64 bulls were initially involved, with two presenting clinical signs of FMD.

The economic repercussions are already being felt acutely. The outbreak has forced the suspension of slaughter operations at both the Lobatse BMC plant and the Gaborone Multi-Species Abattoir, facilities that are central to the country's

beef export strategy, particularly concerning the lucrative European Union market.

Strategic pivot to new African markets

Despite the setbacks, Dr Dikoloti was firm in his message that the government will not allow the FMD challenge to completely derail the agricultural sector. He confirmed that the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) has proactively sent beef samples to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ghana with the aim of finalising new trade agreements.

"Our goal is to diversify our export portfolio," Dr Dikoloti emphasised. "While the FMD outbreak has impacted our traditional market prospects, we had targeted P2 billion in revenue from the EU this year. We are exploring alternative opportunities with vigour. We are also considering the Angolan market and have dispatched samples there accordingly."

He further noted that the government is conducting a thorough review of operations at the Francistown BMC Abattoir to enhance processing capacity and market access, indicating that

plans are underway to consider its reopening, especially as operations in Lobatse remain suspended.

Supporting farmers through the crisis

The Minister underscored the government's commitment to protecting farmers' cash flow during this volatile period. Year-to-date figures show that BMC has managed to process 12,291 cattle—over 95 percent of which were originally destined for the EU. Payments to farmers have totalled P156.6 million. At the Maun plant, a further 900 cattle have been processed, translating to P6.5 million paid directly to local producers.

Calls for zonal restructuring

To bolster the long-term response to the recurring FMD threat, Parliament is moving to address structural issues in disease management. Boteti West legislator, Sam Digwa, has tabled a motion advocating for a comprehensive overhaul of the country's FMD zones.

"The current zones, such as 11 and 3B, are sprawling and unwieldy, which severely hampers our ability to effectively manage

outbreaks," Digwa stated. Lawmakers argue that redrawing these boundaries would allow for more targeted vaccination campaigns, swifter isolation of infected areas, and more efficient enforcement of quarantine measures.

As authorities intensify containment efforts in the south and explore new commercial avenues abroad, the government has urged all livestock owners and traders to adhere strictly to quarantine regulations to prevent further spread of the disease.

No.	Zone	Location
1	Zone 1	Bechuanaland District
2	Zone 2	Bechuanaland District
3	Zone 3	Bechuanaland District
4	Zone 4	Bechuanaland District
5	Zone 5	Bechuanaland District
6	Zone 6	Bechuanaland District
7	Zone 7	Bechuanaland District
8	Zone 8	Bechuanaland District
9	Zone 9	Bechuanaland District
10	Zone 10	Bechuanaland District
11	Zone 11	Bechuanaland District
12	Zone 12	Bechuanaland District
13	Zone 13	Bechuanaland District
14	Zone 14	Bechuanaland District
15	Zone 15	Bechuanaland District
16	Zone 16	Bechuanaland District
17	Zone 17	Bechuanaland District
18	Zone 18	Bechuanaland District
19	Zone 19	Bechuanaland District
20	Zone 20	Bechuanaland District
21	Zone 21	Bechuanaland District
22	Zone 22	Bechuanaland District
23	Zone 23	Bechuanaland District
24	Zone 24	Bechuanaland District
25	Zone 25	Bechuanaland District
26	Zone 26	Bechuanaland District
27	Zone 27	Bechuanaland District
28	Zone 28	Bechuanaland District
29	Zone 29	Bechuanaland District
30	Zone 30	Bechuanaland District
31	Zone 31	Bechuanaland District
32	Zone 32	Bechuanaland District
33	Zone 33	Bechuanaland District
34	Zone 34	Bechuanaland District
35	Zone 35	Bechuanaland District
36	Zone 36	Bechuanaland District
37	Zone 37	Bechuanaland District
38	Zone 38	Bechuanaland District
39	Zone 39	Bechuanaland District
40	Zone 40	Bechuanaland District
41	Zone 41	Bechuanaland District
42	Zone 42	Bechuanaland District
43	Zone 43	Bechuanaland District
44	Zone 44	Bechuanaland District
45	Zone 45	Bechuanaland District
46	Zone 46	Bechuanaland District
47	Zone 47	Bechuanaland District
48	Zone 48	Bechuanaland District
49	Zone 49	Bechuanaland District
50	Zone 50	Bechuanaland District



BITC Visits NARDI Hemp Project As Commercial Roll-Out Nears

Story by BITC

Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC) CEO, Keletsositse Olebile, has conducted a courtesy visit to the hemp innovation pilot project at NARDI to assess progress and deepen collaboration with investors in the emerging medicinal cannabis sector.

The visit follows Government’s swift action to establish a regulated hemp industry, with legislative and monitoring frameworks now in place to meet international export standards. Two BITC-supported companies have already secured licences and commenced pilot trials in partnership with NARDI and the Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN).

Looking beyond the pilot phase, BITC and the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture have facilitated land allocation in Dibete for large-scale commercial production. De-bushing and preparatory works are underway, concurrent with the NARDI trials, positioning the site for industrial cultivation in the near term.

Hemp Innovations Botswana presented its implementation strategy during the engagement, noting the crop’s three-month growth cycle and readiness for export markets. The wider value chain, which includes cultivation,

processing, packaging, and logistics, promises substantial opportunities for citizen employment and enterprise development, bolstering Botswana’s economic diversification.

Olebile commended the progress made and reaffirmed BITC’s commitment to supporting investors throughout project development. He noted growing investor interest in the sector and indicated that further announcements will follow upon completion of regulatory clearances.





From Vision To Real Lives: How Botswana's Innovation Drive Is Changing The Future

Story by Botho Baputaki



What once felt like distant talk about the future is now being felt in people's daily lives. At the Drones for Africa Tech & Innovation Summit 2025 in Gaborone, Botswana's innovation journey came alive not just through ideas but through impact.

This shift is no longer about preparation; it's about people seeing real change. Farmers are gaining smarter tools to monitor crops, entrepreneurs are finding new ways to reach markets, and young innovators are turning their ideas into income and opportunity.

On the ground, the energy was unmistakable. Young Botswana showcased solutions designed to solve real problems, reducing costs, improving productivity, and opening doors to employment. For many, innovation is no longer abstract; it is a pathway to a better livelihood.

The country's push toward technology is creating more than economic growth, it is building confidence. Confidence that local talent can compete globally. Confidence that ideas born in Botswana can shape industries.

As partnerships grow and innovation spreads, the true story is not just about technology, it is about the people. It is about a young developer building a startup, a farmer increasing yields, and a nation steadily creating opportunities for its citizens.

Botswana's innovation journey is no longer just a vision. It is being lived, one life at a time.



Drones Take Flight To Protect Crops In Okavango: New Technology Helps Farmers Fight Locust Threat

Story by Tshepo Ramaijane

In Tubu village, farmers have been watching their fields closely this ploughing season as unusual locust activity threatened crops and grazing land. For many, the fear was familiar, locust swarms have the potential to wipe out entire fields within days.

“When we started seeing them, we knew it could become serious,” said a local farmer. “If they spread, we could lose our crops.”

Following reports from farmers across the Okavango District, the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture moved quickly to assess the situation. Field surveys confirmed the presence of the African Migratory Locust, a species known to feed on crops such as maize, millet and sorghum, as well as grazing pastures.

Although the situation has not

escalated into a full outbreak, government has taken proactive measures to protect livelihoods and contain the pest population before it spreads further.

A control camp was established at Xurube to coordinate operations, with response teams deployed across affected areas including Mavuasiri, Ngocho, Manxwea, Serubakgetsi and Dibalabasadi.

However, reaching some of these areas proved difficult. Poor terrain and prolonged rainfall made it challenging for vehicles and traditional spraying equipment to access certain fields.

To overcome this, the Ministry introduced drone technology to support locust control operations.

The drones allow agricultural officers to spray affected areas

from the air, reaching locations that are otherwise inaccessible. This has significantly improved both the speed and coverage of the response.

“Some of our fields are hard to reach with normal equipment,” said a farmer who attended a demonstration at Kadangaza Farms in Tubu. “The drones make it easier to protect our crops.”

So far, response teams have treated approximately 80 hectares of crop fields and six hectares of grassland, with additional areas being covered as operations continue. The introduction of drone technology was demonstrated to local farmers, traditional leaders and district officials, highlighting its role in modernising agricultural responses and improving efficiency.

Officials say the approach

combines both ground spraying and aerial support, ensuring that control efforts are effective and responsive to local conditions.

The Ministry continues to monitor locust activity closely and has urged farmers to report sightings early so that interventions can be deployed quickly.

For communities in the Okavango, the use of drones is already making a difference, providing faster response, wider coverage, and renewed confidence that crops and grazing land can be protected.

As climate and environmental conditions continue to shift, such innovations are expected to play an increasingly important role in safeguarding Botswana’s agricultural sector and supporting rural livelihoods.

From Correction To Opportunity: Partnership Equips Inmates With Agricultural Skills For Reintegration

Story by Florence Lesotho

At a prison farm outside Gaborone, rows of crops are doing more than feeding correctional facilities, they are helping inmates prepare for life after prison.

For many participants, working the land has become a pathway to learning practical skills, building discipline and regaining a sense of purpose.

“I am learning something I can use when I leave here,” said one inmate involved in the farming programme. “It gives me hope that I can start all over again.”

This transformation is being driven by a new partnership between the Botswana Prisons Service and Seed Co Botswana, aimed at strengthening agricultural training within correctional facilities. The two institutions recently signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) to expand skills development programmes, improve productivity on prison farms and support inmate rehabilitation.

Under the agreement, Seed Co Botswana will provide high-quality seed varieties, technical expertise and agronomic support, helping to introduce modern farming practices and improve crop yields.

Officials say the initiative is designed to go beyond food production and focus on equipping inmates with market-relevant skills that can support their reintegration into society.

Commissioner of Prisons, Anthony Mokento, said partnerships such as this are essential in strengthening rehabilitation efforts.

“While our core mandate is custodial care, we also have a responsibility to prepare inmates for life after incarceration,” he said. “Agriculture offers practical skills that can help individuals build sustainable livelihoods.” The programme is part of broader efforts to reposition correctional facilities as centres of rehabilitation and skills development, where inmates gain experience that can be applied in the real economy.

For many participants, the opportunity to learn modern farming techniques, such as crop management, seed selection and sustainable production, can translate into employment or small-scale farming ventures after release.

Stakeholders note that agriculture remains

one of Botswana’s key economic sectors, making it a practical entry point for skills development and entrepreneurship.

As the programme expands, prison farms are expected to become more productive while also serving as training grounds for future farmers.

For inmates, the impact goes beyond skills. It is about rebuilding confidence, gaining direction and preparing for a second chance, one that is rooted in knowledge, productivity and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

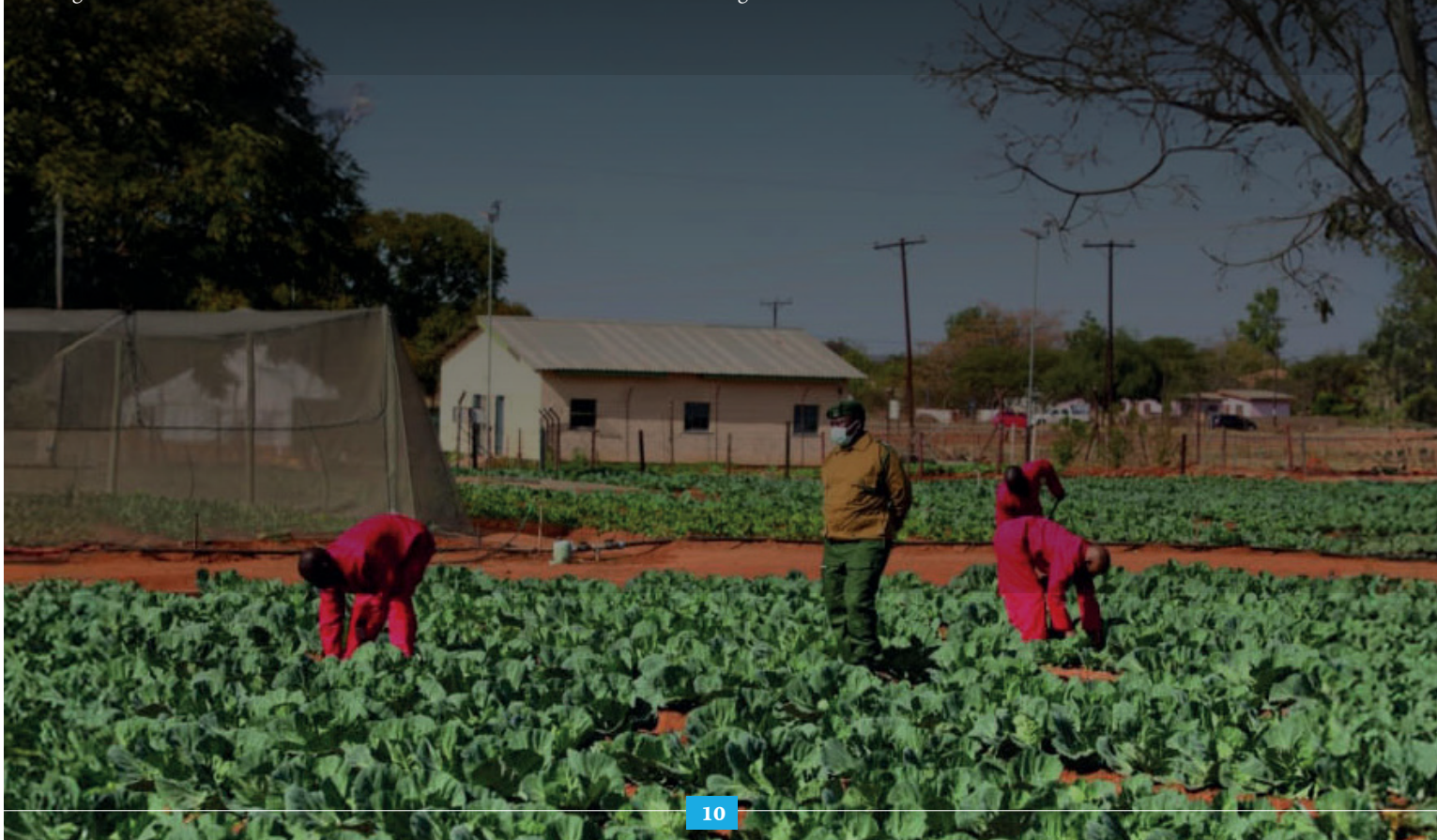




Photo Credit: DailyNews

From Relief To Opportunity: Ikageng Public Works Programme Aims To Build Skills And Sustainable Livelihoods

Story by Vicky Ikaneng

In many communities across Botswana, public works programmes have long provided a source of income for households facing limited employment opportunities. For years, initiatives like Ipelegeng helped families meet basic needs, but often offered little in terms of long-term growth.

Now, government is taking a new approach. The Ikageng Public Works Programme (IPWP) has been introduced as a reformed model designed to move beyond temporary relief and focus on skills development, productivity and sustainable livelihoods.

The programme aims to equip participants with practical skills while involving them in community-based projects such as infrastructure development, environmental clean-up and local improvement initiatives. For some community members, the shift is a welcome one.

“This programme can help people gain real skills,” said a resident in Kgatleng. “If it is implemented properly, it can open doors to employment or even starting small businesses.”

Government says the intention is to transform public works into a platform for empowerment, where participants not only earn income, but also gain experience and certification that improves their long-term prospects. Projects under Ikageng are expected to cleaner contribute to environments, improved local infrastructure and stronger community participation. In some areas, residents believe the programme could also support local safety initiatives and strengthen community cohesion.

However, the transition has also raised concerns. Some members of the public

have questioned how the new programme will accommodate those who previously depended on Ipelegeng for income. Others have raised concerns about whether implementation will be consistent over time, particularly in areas such as supervision, monitoring and project delivery.

“We have seen good programmes before, but sometimes implementation becomes a problem,” said a community member in Molepolole. “This one must be managed properly from the start.”

There are also differing views on the proposed monthly allowance, with some arguing that the amount may not attract skilled workers, while others believe it can still provide meaningful support, particularly for those entering the workforce.

Stakeholders have suggested

that the programme could be particularly beneficial for vocational training graduates, offering them an opportunity to apply their skills in real projects while gaining experience.

Despite the concerns, there is broad recognition that the programme represents an important shift in approach.

By focusing on skills, productivity and community development, Ikageng aims to reposition public works as a pathway to opportunity rather than a short-term safety net.

As implementation begins across the country, communities will be watching closely to see whether the programme delivers on its promise, creating not only income, but lasting skills, stronger communities and new pathways into the economy.



Great Strides In The Quest For Water Security: Bringing Water Closer To Every Mbotswana

Story by Moatlhodi C. Rampoka

In the village of Molepolole, where water shortages have long shaped daily life, residents know all too well the frustration of dry taps and rationing schedules. For families, access to water is not just about convenience, it is about dignity, health, and opportunity.

Today, that story is slowly changing. Botswana is making steady progress in its national effort to ensure reliable access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation, even in the face of a harsh semi-arid climate and growing demand. According to Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Water and Human Settlement, Mr Nchidzi Mmolawa, over 98% of the population now

has access to potable water, a milestone achieved through sustained investment and long-term planning.

“This progress did not happen in a vacuum,” Mr Mmolawa explains. “It is the result of deliberate efforts to expand infrastructure and improve water management across the country.”

At the heart of this progress are major national projects such as the North-South Water Carrier Pipeline, which transports bulk water from the northern regions to the south, helping to balance supply across the country. Additional projects, including the Kasane Water Treatment Works, Maun Water Projects, Lobatse Master

Plan, Sowa Water Project, and Ncojane Water Project, are extending access even to remote communities.

For many Botswana, these developments are beginning to translate into real change. “We used to plan our days around when water would come,” says a resident of Kanye. “Now, things are improving, we are seeing more consistent supply, and it makes life easier.”

Despite this progress, challenges remain. Botswana’s current water demand stands at 275 million cubic metres per year, while supply is approximately 225 million cubic metres, creating pressure in some areas and leading to periodic shortages. One of the biggest challenges lies not in sourcing water, but in delivering it to households. Much of the country’s distribution infrastructure is aging and requires significant upgrades.

“This is where the real difficulty lies,” says Mr Mmolawa. “Some of the infrastructure has outlived its lifespan, and while we need to replace it, financial constraints slow down the process,” he adds.

Through National Development Plan 12 (NDP12), Government is prioritising the expansion and modernisation of water distribution networks, particularly in high-demand areas such as Molepolole, Kanye, and other growing settlements.

Additional pressures include climate change, increasing water salinity in regions like Kgalagadi, vandalism of infrastructure, and delays in project completion. Advanced solutions such as reverse osmosis are being explored, though they come at a high cost.

Yet, despite these challenges, momentum continues. Botswana’s water strategy remains firmly anchored in Vision 2036 and sustainable Development Goal 6, ensuring that every citizen has access to safe drinking water.



In Molepolole, access to water has long shaped daily life for many households.. Photo Credit: Sunday Standard



Photo Credit: Botswana DailyNews

Skills For The Future: TVET Drives Youth Opportunity Under The Presidential Youth Empowerment Programme

Story by Ivy Kebaswetse

In Francistown, 23-year-old Kabelo had struggled to find work after completing school. Despite his determination, opportunities remained limited. Today, he is training in electrical installation through a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme, gaining practical skills that are already opening doors to employment.

“I wanted to work, but I didn’t have the right skills,” he says. “Now I am learning something I can use to build a future.”

Kabelo’s experience reflects a broader shift taking place across Botswana, where government is strengthening skills development through the Presidential Youth Empowerment Programme (PYEP), with TVET at its core.

The initiative is designed to address one of the country’s most pressing challenges, youth unemployment, by equipping young people with practical, industry-relevant skills that match the needs of the labour market.



Skills development programmes aim to improve employment opportunities.

Many young Batswana leave school with ambition but face difficulties entering the workforce due to a mismatch between academic training and available job opportunities. Through TVET, government is bridging this gap by providing hands-on training in areas aligned with national development priorities.

These include sectors such as construction, engineering, agriculture, and technical services—fields that are critical to Botswana’s economic diversification and industrial growth.

Officials say the focus is not only

on training, but on ensuring that skills translate into real opportunities. Under PYEP, young people who complete TVET programmes are linked to apprenticeships, internships, industrial attachments, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurship support. “This approach ensures that training does not end in the classroom,” said an official involved in the programme. “It must lead to jobs, businesses, and sustainable livelihoods.”

Partnerships with industry are also strengthening the programme’s impact. Debswana

has joined as a strategic partner, providing technical expertise and project management support to enhance implementation and ensure quality outcomes.

For participants, the programme is already making a difference. “We are not just learning theory,” Kabelo explains. “We are gaining real skills that can help us find work or start something of our own.”

As Botswana continues to pursue economic transformation, a skilled and adaptable workforce remains essential. By investing in TVET under PYEP, government is positioning young people not only as job seekers, but as creators of opportunity and drivers of national development.

For many, the pathway is now clearer: skills, opportunity, and the ability to build a future with confidence.



A New Chapter For Kasane And Kazungula Tourism

Story by Tebogo Kgathileng

For many residents of Kasane and Kazungula, tourism has always been close to home, woven into daily life by the steady flow of visitors drawn to the Chobe River, the wildlife of the Chobe National Park, and the nearby Victoria Falls. Yet, for years, locals have watched as their towns served more as a brief stopover than a destination in their own right. Now, a new chapter is unfolding, one that promises to bring tourism closer to the people.

The recent opening of the Institutional Office Building and the Government Fleet Management Workshop and Fuel Station, which was officiated by Minister of Environment and Tourism, Mr Wynter Mmolotsi, and many other government dignitaries in Kasane, marks more than just the completion of infrastructure. For ordinary residents, it signals the beginning of a transformation that could reshape livelihoods and opportunities.

By relocating government offices away from the prized riverfront, space is being freed for citizen-driven tourism investments. This shift is particularly significant for local entrepreneurs, small lodge owners, craft sellers, tour guides,

and cultural performers who have long sought better access to prime tourism areas. With more land now available for development, Botswana in the region can participate more directly in the tourism economy rather than watching it from the sidelines.

For residents like boat operators along the Chobe River or families selling handmade crafts, the redevelopment offers hope of longer visitor stays. Instead of tourists spending just a night or two, new attractions and improved infrastructure could encourage them to linger, exploring local culture, cuisine, and community experiences. This translates into more income opportunities and more stable livelihoods.

The improved infrastructure also enhances daily life. Better facilities, organised spaces, and a more attractive town environment make Kasane and Kazungula not only appealing to visitors, but more comfortable for those who live and work there.

Importantly, the project reflects a broader vision, to diversify tourism beyond wildlife.



For local communities, this opens doors to showcase heritage, storytelling, and cultural identity as part of the visitor experience.

It is no longer just about game drives, it is about people.

These new developments are not just buildings, they are stepping stones towards a future where

tourism works for the community, creating opportunities that are owned, shaped, and sustained by the people themselves. Indeed, a new story of tourism is being written and this time, the local voice is at its heart.



Unlocking Opportunities: How ICT Is Empowering Youth in Botswana

Story by Kealeboga Kgosisejo

Huawei Botswana, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and Innovation (MCI), recently hosted the ICT Awards to recognise outstanding students who participated in the Huawei ICT Competition. The competition, open to university and tertiary students across Africa and beyond, saw 12 finalists awarded, following rigorous assessments in Information and Communication Technology.

One of the finalists, Ms. Phemo Somolekae, a fourth-year Bachelor of Arts in Electrical Engineering student at the University of Botswana, stood out for her achievement. She discovered the competition through a WhatsApp group link and chose to specialise in Cloud Computing, opting out of tracks such as Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, and Advanced Networking.

Reflecting on her experience, Ms. Somolekae highlighted key challenges affecting system efficiency, noting that system failures in government are often caused by high traffic or the use of low-capacity models. She emphasised that these challenges can be addressed through upgraded and optimised systems.

Learning Beyond the Classroom

The competition provided her with an opportunity to explore concepts beyond the classroom, sharpening her problem-solving skills and broadening her perspective. It also enabled her to network with students from various institutions, as well as industry leaders and government officials.

She encouraged fellow students to remain open-minded and take advantage of opportunities such as the Huawei ICT Competition, typically held around November.

The Transformative Power of ICT

Ms. Somolekae noted that ICT plays a crucial role in improving efficiency by enabling information to be stored and accessed digitally without the need for physical travel. She highlighted how young people can leverage programming languages such as Python and Java to develop websites and explore digital entrepreneurship, including marketing.

She further explained that ICT solutions can help reduce congestion in government departments, supporting

Botswana's digital transformation agenda. Services such as ID and driver's license access can be streamlined through digital platforms, improving accessibility and turnaround times.

Additionally, she gained practical skills in cloud computing, including system creation, VPN setup, coding, and file compression techniques—skills that significantly enhance workplace efficiency.

Applying ICT in Engineering

As an Electrical Engineer, Mrs. Somolekae sees opportunities to apply her ICT knowledge in strengthening Botswana's national grid, particularly in control centres such as the one in Palapye.

Encouraging Women in ICT

She concluded by encouraging women to confidently pursue careers in ICT, despite it being a male-dominated field. She emphasised that women are equally capable of innovation and should actively participate in initiatives like the Huawei ICT Competition to gain exposure, build skills, and unlock future opportunities.



“As an Electrical Engineer, Ms. Somolekae sees opportunities to apply her ICT knowledge in strengthening Botswana's national grid, particularly in control centres such as the one in Palapye.”



Taking Development To The People: Rural Development Council (RDC) Focuses On Jobs, Services And Real Impact In Rural Botswana

Story by Kebonye Rodger

In Letlhakeng, residents have long relied on public services that are often stretched, from access to healthcare to opportunities for local employment. For many communities like this, development is not an abstract concept, it is about clinics that work, roads that connect, and jobs that sustain families.

These are the priorities now taking centre stage as the Rural Development Council (RDC) convened for its 169th meeting in Gaborone, with a renewed focus on ensuring that national

development translates into visible impact at community level.

The meeting follows the recent Budget Speech delivered by Vice President and RDC Chairperson, Ndaba Gaolathe, which placed strong emphasis on rural transformation as a key pillar of Botswana's development agenda.

Local Government and Traditional Affairs, responsible for overseeing rural development, received the second-largest share of the

recurrent budget, underscoring government's commitment to improving services and livelihoods across districts. Key areas of focus include strengthening primary healthcare, upgrading public infrastructure, and enhancing the Single Social Registry to ensure that support reaches the right beneficiaries while reducing inefficiencies.

For communities, these priorities are expected to bring practical improvements. "What matters to us is seeing services improve where we live," said a resident of Kweneng. "If clinics, roads and support programmes work properly, it changes everyday life."

Vice President Gaolathe emphasised that funding must deliver value for money, with projects that create jobs, support local businesses and build lasting assets within rural economies.

"Development must be felt on the ground,"

he said, urging council members to ensure that programmes are implemented effectively and deliver measurable outcomes.

Central to this effort is the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP), which is expected to drive inclusive growth by linking national strategy with district-level implementation.

The RDC has been tasked with ensuring that projects identified under the programme are not only well planned, but also executed in a way that directly benefits communities.

For rural Botswana, the message from the meeting is clear, development must move beyond planning rooms and into villages, settlements and households.

As implementation gathers pace, communities across the country will be looking for tangible results, better services, more opportunities, and a stronger foundation for local economies.



Government aims to improve access to healthcare services in rural areas. Photo Credit: Jhpiego

www.gov.bw



18/03/2026

New Road Traffic camera law in Botswana

Effected from February 27, 2026
Under the Road Traffic (Detecting Devices) Regulations, 2026
(issued under the Road Traffic Act)



You may receive a fine without being stopped by an officer.



18/03/2026

Land Services Just Got Easier!

The Ministry of Lands and Agriculture recently rolled out the TESTING of the land application **know your customer** online platform.

Tobetsa:
<https://lakyc.gov.bw>

For more information visit Ministry of Lands and Agriculture or your nearest Land Board office.

Customer Service Relations Offices: **3682245/2216**
Public Relations Office: **3689151**



10/03/2026

Traffic cameras are now enforcing:

- Speed limits
- Red lights
- Seatbelt compliance
- Mobile phone use while driving
- Road signs & markings
- Unauthorised lane use
- Unregistered vehicles

You may receive a fine without being stopped by an officer.



GOVERNMENT ABSORBS SPECIAL CONSTABLES

The final batch of 875 Special Constables will begin training on 30 March 2026 at the Botswana Police College. The recruits will undergo a 6-month training programme.

Since November 2024, a total of 873 Special Constables have been trained and successfully absorbed into the police service.



The logo consists of a white speech bubble shape filled with a blue dot-matrix pattern. Inside the bubble, the text "GOV@WORK" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with "GOV@" on the top line and "WORK" on the bottom line.

**GOV@
WORK**

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