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GAZETTE REPORTER

A non-profit organisation that advocates for the rights of the queer community, Success Capital, has accused the National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA) of discrimination following cancellation of funds al-

located for "Key Population HIV and AIDS Prevention Activities."

The funds were specifically designated for marginalised and vulnerable men who have sex with men (MSM), as well as lesbian, bisexual and queer women.

Legal action

Success Capital has since engaged legal representation, in-

structing the Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana (LEGABIBO) and NAHPA to ensure that payment is made before Tuesday this week, which was yesterday.

At the heart of the dispute is a directive issued by NAHPA notifying Success Capital of the cancellation of the remaining grant funds despite NAHPA reportedly

having no direct agreement with the NGO for disbursing funds to support its HIV/AIDS prevention activities.

NAHPA has struggled to clarify the rationale behind its directive, which has left Success Capital perturbed that the decision could be rooted in homophobia.

LEGABIBO rather than NAHPA

The organisation holds that since their contract was signed with LEGABIBO, any decisions regarding disbursement of funds should have come from LEGABIBO rather than NAHPA.

Documents obtained by *The Botswana Gazette* confirm that Success Capital entered into an agreement with LEGABIBO for implementation of HIV/AIDS interventions among the LGBTQI+ community.

The Executive Director of Success Capital, Dumi Gatsha, expressed shock at NAHPA's decision to withhold over P200,000 in funding, especially given that the contract was nearing completion.

Homophobic

"There is a level of unprofessionalism and bias," he said. "I have recognised that we are being discriminated against. NAHPA is putting up all sorts of barriers to make it difficult for small NGOs to grow."

Gatsha described NAHPA's actions as homophobic, questioning why the directive to cancel the funds came from NAHPA rather than LEGABIBO with whom Success Capital signed the contract.

"We would understand if that letter was written by LEGABIBO since they have a contract with us," Gatsha added.

LEGABIBO was appointed as a coordinating agency by NAHPA and had entered into an agreement with Success Capital to oversee the implementation of HIV/AIDS programmes.

Trans-diverse communities

Gatsha maintained that NAHPA should have engaged with LEGABIBO directly, as the two organisations had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoA) for the implementation of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment and Care strategies for LG-BTIQ+, female sex workers, and trans-diverse communities.

Success Capital's lawyers, Lerumo Mogobe law firm, have since written a letter of demand to both LEGABIBO and NAHPA, seeking payment of the remaining grant funds.

The legal team alleges a material breach of contract in relation to the disbursement of funds for Key Population HIV/AIDS prevention activities.

Contractual obligations

"Our client submitted its reports and an invoice accompanied by a formal request for the disbursement of the remaining balance of P221,286.29, which was due for payment in October 2024," the law firm stated.

"However, despite our client fulfilling all contractual obligations and notwithstanding your undertaking to release the said funds, you have failed, refused, and neglected to issue payment to date."

The law firm warned LEGABIBO and NAHPA that legal proceedings would be initiated if the funds were not disbursed this week.

Multiple reasons

In response, NAHPA's National Coordinator, Ontiretse Letlhare, defended the agency's decision, citing multiple reasons for the cancellation of the funds.

Letlhare highlighted concerns regarding delayed reporting, insufficient documentation and accounting discrepancies as key factors that contributed to the funding halt.

Twelve Customary Court Presidents Lose Against Govt In Tenure Dispute

A panel of three judges of the Court of Appeal has unanimously agreed that presidents of urban customary courts cannot have the same tenure of office as magosi because the two fall under separate legal regimes

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Court of Appeal has ruled in favour of the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs in a case involving 12 estranged urban customary Court presidents who had previously won a High Court case on their tenure of office.

The ministry had appealed a ruling by Justice Zein Kebonang of the Gaborone High Court who had declared that the urban customary court presidents were entitled to the same tenure of office as their counterparts in tribal areas in accordance with the Bogosi Act.

The 12 initially approached the High Court seeking recognition of their tenure, arguing that they should enjoy the same

employment conditions as traditional leaders (magosi).

Not legally equivalent

In 2023, Justice Kebonang ruled in their favour, ordering the ministry to make the necessary adjustments to ensure that the urban customary court presidents, whether employed permanently or on fixed or short-term contracts, receive tenure protections similar to those of magosi.

However, the government challenged the decision, arguing that the urban court presidents were not entitled to the same security of tenure because their employment falls under the Customary Court Act and not the Bogosi Act.

The ministry's legal representatives contended that the Bogosi Act, promulgated in 2008, gov-

erns only traditional leadership while the urban customary court presidents operate under a separate legal framework.

Distinct

The government further argued that while both magosi and court presidents perform similar judicial functions, their positions are distinct, and court presidents should not expect to be governed by the same legislation as magosi.

Additionally, the ministry emphasised that the term "dikgosi" is used colloquially to show respect for court presidents but does not confer legal equivalency.

In their response, the urban court presidents maintained that despite being governed by different laws, they perform duties



equivalent to those of magosi and should be granted equal rights, including extended retirement age and tenure security.

Discriminatory

They argued that the existing legal framework was discriminatory and sought amendments to include them under the Bogosi Act.

Ultimately, the Court of Appeal dismissed their arguments and took the view of the min-

istry. The panel of three judges - Justices Bess Nkabinde, Johan Froneman, and Reuben Lekorwe - agreed that while court presidents may be referred to as "dikgosi" in social settings, this designation is not recognised by law.

The ruling reaffirmed that the customary court system in urban areas remains distinct from that of tribal leadership.



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Procurement Officers To Declare Assets

Internationally-acclaimed top-notch 'snooper' Timon Katlholo has described procurement officers as particularly susceptible to corruption due to the nature of their work

GAZETTE REPORTER

In a move lauded as a significant step in combating corruption within public service, the government has resolved to add procurement officers to the list of individuals required to declare their assets.

Welcoming the decision, former director general of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), Tymon Katlholo, emphasized that procurement officers are particularly susceptible to corruption due to the nature of their work.

"Their authority in making purchasing decisions exposes them to the temptation of favouring specific suppliers for personal gain," said the internationally-acclaimed top-notch 'snooper.'

"Collusion with suppliers, where officers form relationships with vendors who offer financial incentives in exchange for awarding contracts, is another contributing factor."

Collusion with suppliers

The complexity of procurement procedures also provides opportunities for manipulation.

"Collusion with suppliers, where officers form relationships with vendors who offer financial incentives in exchange for awarding contracts, is another contributing factor," Katlholo noted.

Presenting the budget estimates for the Ethics and Integrity Directorate before Parliament, the Minister of State President, Moeti Mohwasa, affirmed that the inclusion of procurement officers aligns with Section 3(1)(n) of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Act.

Integrity and accountability

This section empowers the Minister for State President to introduce such amendments, and consultations on the matter are said to have commenced.

The Ethics and Integrity Directorate was established under Section 4 of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Act (2019), as amended in 2020, to promote integrity and accountability in public office.

The Act mandates the monitoring of interests, income, assets, and liabilities of designated individuals to detect and prevent corruption, money laundering and illegal asset acquisition.

Independence

Mohwasa stated that Parliament enacted the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Act to ensure that oversight institutions operate independently and are free from external influence.

He added that as a move intended to reinforce the institution's independence to strengthen its autonomy, there is a proposal for the Director General of the Ethics and Integrity Directorate to report directly to Parliament instead of the Minister for State President.



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BPP Seeks Boko's Approval to Recall Expelled Ntsima

The BPP - which is a contracting partner in the Umbrella for Democratic Change - holds that Tiroeaone Ntsima was appointed to the cabinet by a dint of being its member and seems intent on obtaining his ouster because he is considered too recalcitrant for reconciliation



Leaders of the Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) intend to meet with the president of the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), Duma Boko, about the fate of the MP for Francistown East and Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Tiroeaone Ntsima, who was expelled from the BPP recently.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Leaders of the Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) intend to meet with the president of the Umbrella for Demo-

cratic Change (UDC), Duma Boko, about the fate of the MP for Francistown East and Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Tiroeaone Ntsima, who was expelled from the BPP recently.

Meeting with Boko

According to the Secretary General of the BPP, Venta Galetshabiwe, Ntsima's cabinet slot belongs to the BPP and should therefore be decided within the

confines of the UDC.

"We have lost an MP but, most importantly, the cabinet slot that he got because of being a BPP member," Galetshabiwe said in an interview.

"It is worth noting that though it was Boko who appointed Ntsima a cabinet minister, the appointment was proportionally aligned with representation from coalition partners.

"Therefore, Ntsima benefitted because of the BPP. That is why we intend to meet Boko and discuss his expulsion, and by extension the cabinet slot that he currently holds.

"Since Ntsima was a beneficiary of the party that he is no longer a member of, his cabinet post also has to be decided upon. Despite being aggrieved, all the power lies with Boko to decide."

No Reconciliation

Galetshabiwe ruled out reconciliation with Ntsima, saying that he displayed contempt during his time of suspension. "We do not have any obligation to reconcile with him because of his contemptuous behaviour," he said.

"I do not think he himself is interested in reconciliation because the disciplinary hearing that he shunned was meant to extend natural justice to him and he could have used it to apologise.

"Therefore, if there are any chance of reconciliation at this stage, it is for Ntsima to approach us because his behaviour has been contemptuous.

"Besides, he undermined the party when he was supposed to be a unifying factor by virtue of being the secretary general."

Expulsion and Misconduct

Ntsima was expelled from the BPP together with two councillors following a 45-day suspension over allegations of misconduct.

Reached for comment this week, Ntsima declined to speak on the matter.

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WUC Offers Debt Amnesty For Excessive Leakages

Outstanding water bills accrued due to excessive water leakages are to be written off by WUC in a move that is set to end the anguish of people and businesses struggling to clear the massive debts

BONGANI MALUNGA

Individuals and businesses struggling to settle outstanding water bills due to excessive leakages are set to benefit from an amnesty programme introduced by Water Utilities Corporation (WUC).

However, according to an announcement by the Chief Executive Officer of WUC, Gaslemogwe Senai, some users will have to settle their bills by making payment plans.

"Water Utilities Corporation (WUC) informs the public that it has embarked on a robust mass debt collection drive across the country to address the challenge of unpaid bills," Senai said in statement this week.

Payment plans

"The campaign aims to encourage water users to settle their bill arrears or visit the nearest WUC offices to make arrangements for payment plans.

"Customers are further encouraged to visit WUC offices as there will be a debt amnesty applied on past due debt and/or debt accumulated due to excessive water leaks on the customer side."

"Water Utilities Corporation ... has embarked on a robust mass debt collection drive across the country to address the challenge of unpaid bills."

He added that WUC will extend working hours in order to ensure better service accessibility for members of the public.

The statement noted that WUC failure to pay bills will affect sustainable and equitable water supply.

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Govt Probes Outsourcing of DIS Legal Contracts

The Law Society of Botswana recently complained of opacity in contracting private lawyers for government legal work if the system should not continue to benefit a select few

TEFO PHEAGE

The government is reviewing outsourcing of legal work by the Directorate of Intelligence and Security Service (DISS) and other government agencies to ensure greater transparency and fairness in government legal contracts, the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nelson Ramaotwana, has said.

This follows concerns raised by the Law Society of Botswana (LSB) at the Opening of the Legal Year recently over the opaque manner in which DISS awards legal contracts.

Urgent need for reform

LSB went further and called for greater accountability in the allocation of legal work within state institutions, arguing that the current process unfairly benefits a select few.

“We have noted the concerns, and this is a matter that the Attorney General is seized with,” the Minister said. “We will pro-



vide guidance once that process has been completed.”

Lacking transparency

In his speech at the Opening of the Legal Year, the Chairman of LSB, Lesedi Moahi, emphasised the urgent need for reform.

“To redress the lack of transparency, accountability and fairness in the outsourcing of legal work by the Attorney General and other

government departments, especially DISS, we must confront the prevailing practice that disproportionately benefits a few at the expense of the general membership of the LSB,” he said.

He acknowledged that Minister Ramaotwana had engaged with the LSB twice since taking office to discuss these concerns.

Govt expenditure

However, he stressed that dialogue alone was not sufficient and called for meaningful action to address the issues at hand.

The concerns about transparency in legal outsourcing come against the backdrop of significant government expenditure on private legal services.

Last year, then Minister of Justice Machana Shamukuni revealed that over the previous five years, the government had spent more than P27 million in outsourcing legal cases to private law firms.

Shamukuni stated that while he could not disclose the names of the law firms due to client privilege, the outsourcing of cases had gained momentum since April

2020.

He provided a breakdown of the expenditures, indicating that P2.9 million was spent in 2020, P9.9 million in 2021, P4.2 million in 2022, and P10.6 million in 2023.

Complexity of cases

According to Shamukuni, the government turned to private law firms due to the complexity of certain cases that state prosecutors may lack the capacity to handle.

“The procedure is that when it is determined that a case is complex and requires the services of an experienced lawyer, a formal request with justification is made to the Attorney General through the head of division,” he said.

BMWU Demands Inclusion In BCL Commission of Inquiry

Union says supporting the work of the commission merely as providers of evidence will not be enough while involving it would make the commission efficient and robust

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Mine Workers Union (BMWU) is demanding to be included in the recently appointed presidential Commission of Inquiry into the closure of BCL Mine.

The union says it wants President Duma Boko to include it because its participation would be crucial for the efficiency and direction of the commission.

Addressing a press conference in Gaborone early this week, the president of BMWU, Joseph Tsimako, accused the government of sidelining stakeholders in the mining sector.

Unravel

“Boko appointed the Commission of Inquiry without including our union,” he said. “He only encouraged us to support the commission by providing evidence that could help unravel the complexities surrounding the BCL liquidation process.

“The union brings lived experiences of former workers of BCL, including operational nuances that no legal expert can understand about the operations of BCL Mine.

“Therefore, in order to make the Commission of Inquiry efficient, revolutionary, dynamic, progressive, and robust, the union ought to be part of it. Supporting the work of the commission only as evidence providers is not enough. We want to be part of that process.”

Task team

Though he acknowledged the

setting up of a Presidential Commission of Inquiry, Tsimako raised concerns over establishment of two bodies looking into the same issue.

“Recently, after the meeting between the minister responsible for minerals Bogolo Kenewendo and former BCL employees, it was resolved that a task team, comprising the union, the former BCL Senior Staff Pressure Group, and the Office of the President would be established,” he said.

“The task team is set to compile a consolidated report. The minister’s intervention was a welcome development.

“However, the BMWU is not clear what effect, if any, the consolidated report will have in light of the purported mandate of the Commission of Inquiry.

Overlapping

“There is a need to engage with Minister Kenewendo to appreciate how these entities will work together and whether there will be no overlapping mandates between these two structures.

“It is important to note that one is established pursuant to Presidential Powers exercised under the Commission of Inquiry Act while the other has no legal backing.”

BCL Mine was abruptly shut down in October 2016 by the government and put into liquidation amid concerns of non-profitability. The closure of the mine rendered thousands of employees jobless overnight.

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Molefhi Blames BDP Loss On Complacency



Presidential candidate for the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Nonofiso Molefhi, has attributed the party's loss of power in the 2024 general elections to complacency among leaders of the party.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Presidential candidate for the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Nonofiso Molefhi, has attributed the party's loss of power in the 2024 general elections to complacency among leaders of the party.

Launching his presidential candidacy in Gaborone this week, the former cabinet

minister said he warned the party as far back as the Tonota elective congress in 2017 but his concerns were dismissed.

Molefhi said his calls for reforms were misinterpreted as an attempt to create parallel centres of power. "The BDP has been eroding from its values, traditions and core ethos on which the party was built," he said.

Devolution

"When I noticed these shifts, I advocated for the devolution of the president's powers but was accused of creating two centres of power. I was shunned at the Tonota congress for advocating for this. I never changed my position afterwards.

"I kept warning democrats about this complacency but was accused of trying to undermine the leadership. Fast forward to 2024, we lost the general elections because

of what I had warned about."

Despite the loss, Molefhi expressed optimism about the party's future, stating that many candidates and democrats now support the reforms that he has long championed.

Molefhi expressed optimism about the party's future, stating that many candidates and democrats now support the reforms that he has long championed.

Losing touch

"Today I am happy that most democrats, including candidates, believe in what I have been advocating for," he said. "I long warned about this complacency, but most democrats only agreed with me after the party lost the general elections."

Molefhi further accused the party leadership of losing touch with the electorate, emphasising that positions of power should serve the people, not personal agendas.

"As leaders, we should be mindful that whatever decisions we make favour the electorate, not ourselves," he added.

He noted that the loss of elections and power marked a turning point for the BDP, hence his call for introspection, restoration, reforms and rebuilding. "All these factors are what could have revived the BDP's fortunes in the 2029 general elections," he said.

Union Pushes For Mining Bargaining Council

BMWU is championing formation of a mining bargaining council that will ensure that the government finally lives up to an International Labour Organisation convention that it ratified in 1997

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Mine Workers Union (BMWU) has appealed to the government to establish a mining industry bargaining council.

BMWU has emphasised that the government has an obligation to implement a mining bargaining council in order to live up to President Duma Boko's ideals of moving away from institutional fetishism.

It is adamant that of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 144 on Consultation and Tripartism, which the government ratified in 1997, has been overlooked.

Tripartite engagement

The convention provides that governments should consult with trade unions and set up mechanisms for tripartite engagement on economic, social and political policy matters.

During an industry update meeting in

Tlokweng on Monday, BMWU noted that unions have been excluded from the mining sector High-Level Consultative Committee (HLCC) which operates under the Minerals Policy.

The forum exists to formulate laws and policies affecting the mining sector. BMWU stated that only the private and business sectors are included while unions have been sidelined when policies are formulated.

Lobbying

"In the last five years, we have been lobbying the Botswana Chamber of Mines, the Ministry of Minerals and Energy and the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs for the establishment of a mining bargaining council," said the union in a statement.

"We are simply not making any traction as it appears both government and industry are not interested in this structure. Recent events in the industry have

shown the importance of establishing this council.

"The mining industry has no bargaining council where workplace issues irrespective of commodity can be addressed. This will address collective bargaining issues, dispute resolution, policies and regulations, safety and risk

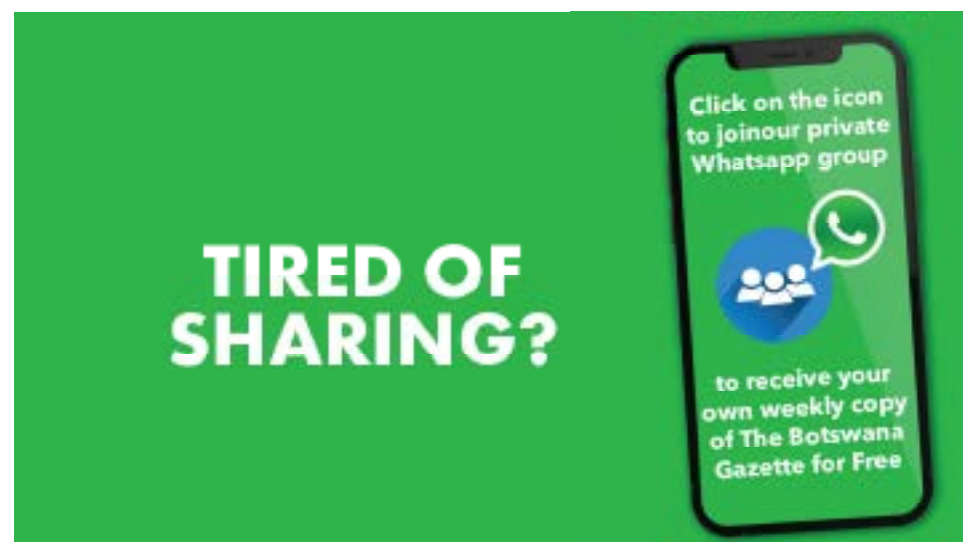
management.

Joint Industrial Council

"Less time would be spent on protracted negotiations due to fragmentation and excessive travelling, which is costly and time consuming."

The statement called for collaboration between BMWU, the Botswana Chamber of Mines, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Minerals and Energy to drive the formulation of the mining bargaining council.

"This can be done under the Trade Disputes Act through the registration of a Joint Industrial Council," said BMWU.



We Are Not Looters – BDP

With social media awash with accusations of looting aimed at the former ruling party, the BDP has issued a statement seeking to distance itself from the allegations and pinning hopes of being vindicated on the ongoing forensic audit

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has distanced itself from allegations of looting during its tenure in power.

This comes in the midst of social media being awash with accusations of looting by influential leaders that are not showing any signs of slowing since the much-anticipated forensic audit got underway recently.

BDP has asserted that the audit will absolve them of any wrongdoing as they have “managed national resources with utmost transparency and accountability, strictly adhering to the rule of law and democratic practices”.

Baseless

In a statement released on Monday this week, the party labelled the accusations as baseless.

“Those who continue to spread unfounded accusations, labelling the BDP and its leaders as ‘looters,’ not only distort the

truth but also attempt to undermine the decades of dedicated service that have lifted Botswana to its current stature,” it said.

“Those who spread these harmful lies must be held responsible for damaging the reputation of a party that has played a key role in Botswana’s transformation.”

Action

The party hinted at possible legal repercussions for those who continue to label it in a derogatory manner.

“We firmly warn that the de-

liberate spreading of untruths and misinformation for political gain is unacceptable,” it said.

“Those who spread these harmful lies must be held responsible for damaging the reputation of a party that has played a key role in Botswana’s transformation.”

Welcoming the audit

The party also stated that it welcomes the government’s forensic audit and views it as a tool to demonstrate that their hands are clean.

“We urge all our leaders and members to openly engage,” said the statement. “We expect that this process will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner, free from any political malice aimed at undermining the BDP or its leadership.”

“As a party, we firmly uphold the principle that every citizen is presumed innocent until proven otherwise and we will not tolerate unwarranted character attacks or baseless allegations.”



Tati Nickel Mine To Re-Open in April

In addition to jobs, the Mayor of Francistown anticipates an economic boom across sectors and improved livelihoods for the people of Francistown

GAZETTE REPORTER

In a move that is set to invigorate the local economy, the long-closed Tati Nickel Mine will reopen next month (April), the Mayor of Francistown, Gaone Majere, told during the ongoing full council meeting on Monday this week.

The Mayor described the reopening of the mine as a significant development for Botswana’s second city and is expected to create jobs for up to 400 people.

Majere highlighted the positive impact that the reopening Tati Nickel Mine will have on the economy of Francistown. He emphasised that the mine will support not only the mining sector but the retail, property and transport sectors as well, “creating a ripple effect throughout Francistown”.

New chapter

“As the city grows, we anticipate an increase in demand for goods and services across various sectors, including retail, transport and real estate,” said Mayor Majere.

He said the reopening of the Tati Nickel Mine represents a new chapter in Francistown, one that could significantly improve living standards and provide new opportunities for the people of the city.

“With the mine set to restart operations, the city is poised for a period of growth and transformation,” the Mayor noted.

German entity

“The local government is committed to working closely with industry stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of the mine’s operation are maximised for the people of Francistown.”

The reopening of the mine was also mentioned by the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Bogolo Kenewendo, when presenting the 2025 committee of supply budget for her ministry later in Parliament.

“I am pleased to announce that we entered into a binding sale agreement on the 28th of June 2024 with NIU Invest SE (NIU), a German-incorporated investment entity, to acquire all assets and undertakings associated with the mine.

USD 15 million

“I am also pleased to announce that the company will create around 500 jobs, ramping up to 1000.”

The minister added that NIU will purchase the mine for USD 15 million, having already paid a deposit of USD 5 million. “We are yet to come to financial close following the granting of mining licenses to NIU’s Tatak Mining Company,” the minister stated.

Tati Nickel Mine, which forms part of the BCL liquidation process, was put up for auction in November 2023 after the liquidator and the government decided to sell it separately from the BCL Mine assets.

The sale was conducted via an online webcast by WH Auctioneers. While the minister did not disclose the names of the bidders, in the last quarter of 2024 the former minerals minister, Lefoko Moagi, said the sale had attracted only four bidders.

16 000 rendered jobless overnight

Tati Nickel Mine, which was part of the liquidated BCL Mine, was abruptly shut down in 2016 due to non-profitability. Since then, the liquidation process has been ongoing, with movable and non-movable assets being put on sale.

Despite its closure, Tati Nickel had reportedly still been performing well in terms of mineral quality, as opposed to its sister mine in Selibe-Phikwe.

The closing of the BCL Group rendered an estimated 16 000 employees jobless overnight.



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Reporting to the Underwriting Supervisor, incumbent will be responsible to analyse and underwrite new and existing policies in order to achieve agreed levels of underwriting performance by providing technical underwriting support and assistance, create awareness of the organization's offerings, provide high quality service and solutions to customers and brokers in order to ensure business retention and growth, and manages the client relationship to maximize customer lifetime value for the organisation.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

1. Align with sales targets to ensure the GWP, loss ratio and profitability targets are met.
2. Review insurance applications for compliance and adherence.
3. Assess clients' background information and financial status.
4. Provide qualitative service levels to internal and external stakeholders.
5. Draw up quotes for competitive insurance premiums.
6. Liaise with reinsurers to gather information, opinions and reinsurance placements.
7. Keep detailed records of policies underwritten and decisions made.
8. Develop and maintain a profitable book of business for the company.
9. Follow applicable insurance laws; Regulatory Frameworks, Insurance Industry Act of Botswana, NBFIRA Act, and compliance to Anti-Money Laundering requirements.
10. Comply with technical and operational underwriting standards, procedures and controls.

EXPERIENCE:

- Minimum of 2 years work experience in an insurance environment.
- Knowledge of insurance policies and ability to relate policy provisions to the loss exposures.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's Degree in Risk Management, Sales and Marketing, Business, Finance.
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The protracted deal between the Botswana Government and Belgian diamond company HB Antwerp has not progressed any, the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Bogolo Kenewendo, has said.

No Movement In HB Antwerp Deal – Kenewendo

In what has morphed into a long drawn out saga, Botswana's proposed acquisition of a 24 percent stake in HB Antwerp has not moved an inch from where the last government left matters. **BONGANI MALUNGA** reports

The protracted deal between the Botswana Government and Belgian diamond company HB Antwerp has not progressed any, the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Bogolo Kenewendo, has said.

Botswana was poised to acquire a 24 percent stake in HB Antwerp after the two parties agreed a deal in principle in 2023.

The government had set aside P890 million to purchase shares in the Belgian company, but despite the two parties having come to a verbal agreement, the deal was not signed.

Distress in the diamond market

Under the deal agreed in principle, Botswana's state-owned diamond trading company, Okavango Diamond Company (ODC), was to supply rough diamonds to HB's Botswana arm for five years.

In August last year, the government considered renegotiating the deal to double its shareholding at no extra cost due to the distress in the diamond market.

Then Minister of Minerals and Energy, Lefoko Moagi, told Parliament: "We will not be injecting more capital but we will get more shares for the same amount proposed in 2023."

No new development

Asked to provide an update on the Botswana-HB Ant-

werp deal, Kenewendo told global mining publication *JCK Online* recently that there has not been any new development under the new government.

"We do not have any contracts or agreement with HB," she stated briefly at the Jewellers Vigilance Committee's annual luncheon in New York, USA.

Pressed further, Kenewendo stated that she does not anticipate any progress on the matter as things stand. "I don't expect to have one," she said. "There are no ongoing negotiations."

Due diligence

Significantly, the Ministry of Minerals and Energy made no mention of plans to revisit the HB Antwerp deal in its Committee of Supply (budget proposal) speech for the 2025/2026 financial year presented last Friday.

Due diligence

President Duma Boko told a press conference last month that the HB Antwerp deal had not progressed because it was still at the due diligence stage under the previous government.

"What HB was proposing was expertise in diamond cutting, polishing and marketing, which was touted to have the potential to bring more value and revenue," he said. "The government was in talks with them and conducting due diligence."

Tiffany & Co. Subsidiary Accused of Union Bashing

The employer says an employee's suspension does not constitute disciplinary action but the union holds that there is a crackdown on unionising employees

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Diamond Workers Union (BDWU) is protesting the suspension of its Chairperson, Dominic Mapoka, by Laurelton Botswana, a subsidiary of US-based Tiffany & Co.

The union sees this as part of a broader crackdown on labour rights in the diamond cutting and polishing industry.

According to BDWU, Mapoka's suspension follows an alleged 18 March incident with Section Team Leader Deepak Butani.

Laurelton Botswana's Human Resources Officer, Re-file Mugano, stated in the suspension letter that Mapoka remains on full pay and that the move does not constitute disciplinary action or imply guilt.

BDWU says Mapoka's suspension is part of an industry-wide effort to silence union leaders and has vowed continued advocacy for workers' rights.

Legal action

However, the Secretary General of BDWU, Keolebogile Kolojane, sees it differently. "The suspension lacks justification," he said, and accused the company of coercing employees into providing statements against Mapoka.

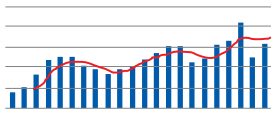
BDWU has threatened legal action if the company does not respond to its request for a lucid explanation while Industry All Global Union, a multinational labour rights group, is also demanding an explanation.

A 2023 labour report found diamond companies resistant to union engagement, viewing them as disruptive. BDWU has repeatedly sought intervention from the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs.

No comment

Laurelton Botswana's Director, George Gwabane, declined to comment, directing inquiries to the company's US headquarters.

BDWU says Mapoka's suspension is part of an industry-wide effort to silence union leaders and has vowed continued advocacy for workers' rights.



Business Botswana Unveils Ambitious Private Sector Development Strategy

The president of Business Botswana, Neo Nwako, has described the PSDS as a blueprint for sustainable growth and a key pillar in the organisation's broader vision

GAZETTE REPORTER

Business Botswana has launched an ambitious roadmap designed to transform Botswana's private sector into a globally competitive force.

Unveiled at the Royal Aria in Tlokweng recently, the Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS) 2025-2029 aims to drive economic diversification, job creation and global competitiveness.

The president of Business Botswana, Neo Nwako, has described it as a blueprint for sustainable growth and a key pillar in the organisation's broader vision.

Thrive, innovate and compete

"This strategy is not just about economic growth," Nwako said at the launch. "It's about fostering an environment where businesses can thrive, innovate and compete on a global scale."

The new PSDS builds upon past efforts, including an initial strategy implemented from 2009 to 2013 and its associated Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP), which ran from 2013 to 2017.

Since then, shifting economic conditions and emerging opportunities have necessitated a fresh approach.

Optimising local resources

The strategy will be implemented over four years, with a review after the first two. Its objectives are closely aligned with Botswana's National Development Plan 12 (NDP12) and the second Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP).

At its core, PSDS seeks to stimulate private sector growth by optimising local resources, strengthening value chains, and addressing critical gaps in the business ecosystem.

Delivering the keynote address, the Managing Director of Bank Gaborone, Olebile Makhube, emphasised the criti-



The president of Business Botswana, Neo Nwako, has described it as a blueprint for sustainable growth and a key pillar in the organisation's broader vision.

cal role of the private sector in Botswana's economic future.

Economic stability

"The PSDS is a testament to our shared vision of a private sector-led, export-driven economy," she said. "It fosters innovation, expands industries, and em-

braces new market opportunities."

She highlighted Botswana's long-standing economic stability and institutional strength, but stressed that achieving sustainable growth requires a more dynamic, diversified and resilient private sector.

"A thriving private sector does not emerge by chance," Makhube said. "It is cultivated through deliberate action, investment and collaboration."

SMMEs

A key focus of PSDS is empowering Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) and the informal sector, which Makhube described as "vital components of the economy" due to their role in job creation, entrepreneurship and innovation.

"The Private Sector Development Strategy is not just a government initiative - it belongs to every entrepreneur, business leader, corporate entity, investor, and stakeholder who envisions a prosperous future for our nation," she said.

"A thriving private sector does not emerge by chance - it is cultivated through deliberate action, investment and collaboration."

"I urge all of us to actively engage, collaborate, and commit to aligning our strategies with the PSDS."

Poverty reduction

The strategy's goals include strengthening industry-specific private sector associations, promoting sector-specific skills development, mainstreaming support for micro and small enterprises, and enhancing the private sector's role in national economic development.

Business Botswana hopes that by creating a more enabling environment, the private sector can drive growth while reducing poverty and increasing economic resilience.

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Liquorama Sales Climb 14.8% Despite Stockouts and Rising Competition

This is the year during which the liquor retail division of Choppies saw gross profit rate decrease from 14.0 percent last year to 12.3 percent due to increased competition from both liquor retailers and liquor wholesalers



"The gross profit rate reduced from 14.0 percent last year to 12.3 percent this year as we faced increased competition from both liquor retailers and liquor wholesalers," said Choppies CEO, Ramachandran Ottapathu, in the Group's abridged unaudited financial results.

TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO

Driven by nine new store openings and rising customer demand, Liquorama recorded a 14.8 percent increase in sales for the six months ending 31 December 2024.

Like-for-like sales also showed strong growth, increasing by 13.1 percent. However, the liquor retail arm of Choppies under the Kamoso division, faced profitability challenges due to intensifying competition and supply chain constraints.

"The gross profit rate reduced from 14.0 percent last year to 12.3 percent this year as we faced increased competition from both

liquor retailers and liquor wholesalers," said Choppies CEO, Ramachandran Ottapathu, in the Group's abridged unaudited financial results.

Promotions

The company also struggled with supply shortages during the peak festive season. "In December 2024, we experienced stockouts in beer due to supplier constraints," Ottapathu said. "We invested in promotions to improve footfall and reduce slow-moving inventory."

Operational inefficiencies compounded these challenges. "The current antiquated systems hamper effective inventory management and promotional activities, and

these are in the process of being upgraded," Ottapathu noted.

These difficulties took a toll on Liquorama's profitability, with EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation) plunging by 43.3 percent and EBIT (earnings before interest and taxes) dropping by 86.7 percent.

Optimistic

But despite these setbacks, Ottapathu remained optimistic. "We anticipate stronger results in the second half of the financial year as we are more precise in our promotional activity and inventory availability, and new stores will be closer to full potential," he said.

Beyond Liquorama, the broader Kamoso segment - which includes milling, manufacturing, and hardware - saw varied results.

While the milling and manufacturing businesses remained profitable, the hardware division continued to struggle, recording a P4 million (\$292,000) loss before tax. However, this was an improvement from the P8 million loss in the previous year.

Poor inventory

"The hardware business experienced poor inventory availability and loss of customers in the three years leading to the acquisition," Ottapathu noted. "Lack of cash flow and credit lines hampered procurement of the right inventory during these three years."

Choppies is working to turn the business around. "It will take another six to 12 months to fully recover, including opening new stores and expanding into the other countries in which Choppies currently operates," he said.

Despite the hardware sector's struggles, the overall Rest of Kamoso segment improved significantly, with EBIT rising from P1 million to P14 million.

26 new stores

Across the Choppies Group, retail sales surged by 19.3 percent to P4.68 billion (\$342 million), bolstered by the addition of 26 new stores, inflationary pricing, and volume growth. The Group's volume increased by 14.5 percent while price growth stood at 3.7 percent.

Like-for-like store sales rose by 15.1 percent, though gross profit margins slipped slightly from 20.7 percent to 20.6 percent due to discounting pressures in Choppies Botswana and Liquorama.

However, stronger margins in Namibia, Zambia, and the Rest of Kamoso segment helped balance the impact.

Despite an 18.7 percent rise in gross profit to P965 million (\$70.6 million), expenses climbed 22.9 percent, primarily due to inflation, new store openings, and the loss on the sale of Choppies' Zimbabwe segment.

Even after adjusting for foreign exchange losses and impairments, costs were still up by 21.8 percent.

Ottapathu acknowledged the challenges but remained confident in the company's direction. "We continue to refine our strategies and improve efficiency to ensure sustained growth," he said.

BDC Reports Decline In Income

Report: "The Group recorded a slight decline in income from trade due to a drop in sales experienced in one of its subsidiaries invested in the automotive sector"

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) has reported a decline in total income for the six months ending 31 December 2024.

The Group's income stood at P233 million, down from P271.7 million during the same period in the previous year, marking a notable decrease.

In its Abridged Unaudited Interim Financial Statements released recently, BDC attributed the decline to reduced sales from a subsidiary involved in the automotive industry.

Cost-cutting initiatives

"The Group recorded a slight decline in income from trade due to a drop in sales experienced in one of its subsidiaries invested in the automotive sector," it said.

Despite this, BDC implemented strategic

measures to ensure operational efficiency, including cost-cutting initiatives to eliminate non-essential expenditures, which helped the corporation maintain operating expenses within targeted limits.

At the Group level, operating expenses increased compared to the same period last year. This was due to start-up costs and marketing expenditures related to the revitalisation of several businesses.

Heightened credit losses

"Operational expenses at Group level increased from the 6-month comparative period due to start-up costs and related marketing expenditure of revamped and reopened businesses," the report said.

Additionally, BDC reported heightened expected credit losses, mainly attributed to ongoing efforts to recover a defaulted investment. The process of recovering this investment remains in progress, adding

pressure on the corporation's financial results.

As at 31 December 2024, BDC's total asset base stood at P5.7 billion for the Group and P4.9 billion for the company.

Reduced cash balances

The decline in the Group's asset value was mainly due to reduced cash balances resulting from the repayment of loans and a haircut on non-performing investments.

Despite these challenges, BDC remains optimistic about its future prospects. "As we move forward, we acknowledge the achievements and challenges of the past financial year and look to our future with courage and conviction," it stated.

"To achieve our ambition of being a premier investment partner of choice in the transformation of Botswana's economy, we remain committed to creating sustainable value in various sectors and pioneer-

ing new industries."

AfCFTA

BDC outlined its plans to focus on investment in high-value manufacturing projects, particularly in sectors such as agro-processing, automotive, construction materials, and bio and industrial gas manufacturing.

These initiatives are intended to support the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and contribute to the growth of Botswana's industrial base.

In addition, BDC is in the process of establishing an Asset Management Company to facilitate access to third-party funds for off-balance sheet financing.

Greenfield investments

The corporation is also creating special funds to support greenfield investments in high-value manufacturing, renewable power generation, and other renewable energy sources.

Looking ahead, BDC plans to invest approximately P2 billion across various sectors, including manufacturing, ICT, renewable energy, financial services and real estate.



Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, BOTEPACO Registrar Dr Raphael Dingalo underscored the importance of ethics in shaping the teaching profession.

BERA, BOTEPACO Forge Strategic Partnership

The agreement establishes a framework for the two organisations to work together in finding the best courses of action for teacher development and improvement of education

GAZETTE REPORTER

In a landmark development to enhance teacher development and education standards in Botswana, the Botswana Educational Research Association (BERA) and the Botswana Teaching Professionals Council (BOTEPACO) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at fostering collaboration in key areas of professional growth and research-driven policy formulation.

The agreement, signed recently in Gaborone, establishes a framework for the two organisations to work together in providing recommendations on the best courses of action for teacher development and education improvement.

Ethics

The partnership will also see both entities publicly supporting specific policies and initiatives geared towards enhancing the country's education system.

BOTEPACO, as part of its mandate to professionalise teaching, will develop a Code of Ethics, Teaching Standards, and a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Framework.

Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, BOTEPACO Registrar Dr Raphael Dingalo underscored the importance of ethics in shaping the teaching profession.

Trust, integrity and excellence

"Ethics is the study of what is right or wrong, good or bad, and how individuals and societies should conduct themselves," he said. "It is a wide framework that evaluates and guides human expectations."

Dr Dingalo noted that the development of these standards is crucial to setting the right professional culture, fostering an environment of trust, integrity and excellence among teachers.

He added that the framework is expected to build BOTEPACO's reputation and attract outstanding educators to the profession. However, he emphasised that these expected outcomes remain a hypothesis at this stage and will be subjected to rigorous testing.

Professionalism

"A hypothesis is a supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation," he said.

BOTEPACO and BERA will apply the philosophical approach of causality - testing the "cause and effect" relationship of the Code of Ethics, Teaching Standards, and CPD Framework on education outcomes.

"Causality is a genetic or inherent connection of phenomena through which one thing (the cause), in this case BOTEPACO's pursuit of its mandate, under certain conditions gives rise to something else (the effect), which in this case would be improved teacher professionalism and educational outcomes," Dr. Dingalo said.

Across all levels

The Chairman of BERA, Professor Kenneth Dipholo, echoed these sentiments, highlighting the necessity of research in education policy planning.

He noted that BERA's core mandate includes providing training in educational research to empower teachers across all levels of Botswana's education system.

"It is imperative to note that both BERA and BOTEPACO recognise the role of research in enhancing learning and teaching, hence the need for collaboration," Prof. Dipholo said.

"The real work lies ahead"

He described the MoU as a clear expression of shared intent and strategic alignment between the two organisations, pointing out that the agreement includes built-in mechanisms for monitoring and regular reviews, ensuring its effective implementation.

"This is what sets our MoU apart from many other similar initiatives," he said, noting that while the signing of the agreement marks a significant achievement, the real work lies ahead.

"Nothing comes without hard work, discipline and commitment," he stated. "It is only through dedication that we will be rewarded for initiating this noble collaboration."

SBHL Forecasts 10-15% Profit Growth for 2024

Ranging from P30 million to P45 million, the anticipated boost in profits follows strong performance by SBHL's associate companies

GAZETTE REPORTER

Key player in Botswana's beverages sector Sechaba Brewery Holdings Limited (SBHL) is projecting a significant rise in profits for the 2024 fiscal year.

The company - which produces a variety of popular alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, including St Louis Beer and Sunrise Energy Drink - expects its profit before tax to increase by 10-15 percent compared to the previous year.

"This is a positive reflection of the company's ongoing growth and the strategic decisions made in the past year."

Associate companies

Ranging from P30 million to P45 million, the anticipated boost in profits follows strong performance by SBHL's associate companies.


In a recent statement, the Board of SBHL revealed that the company's profit before tax for the year ending 31 December 2023 was P303 million.

Ongoing growth

"This is a positive reflection of the company's ongoing growth and the strategic decisions made in the past year," it noted. "The enhanced performance of our associate companies has been instrumental in driving these results."

Sechaba Brewery has been operating since 1970 and is listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange. With a broad portfolio, including Cheetah Lager and St Louis Beer, SBHL continues to dominate the Botswana market.

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Botswana's reliance on imported food because the country does not produce enough staple crops to meet domestic demand remains a pressing concern.

Botswana's Soaring Food Import Bill Highlights Agric Shortcomings

Experts say this heavy reliance on imported food will persist unless Botswana makes significant investments in food production

TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO

Botswana's reliance on imported food because the country does not produce enough staple crops to meet domestic demand remains a pressing concern.

A recent report by Statistics Botswana titled Botswana Food & Beverages Imports

– December 2024, shows that imports of Food and Beverages for the month amounted to P1.3 billion, accounting for 16.7 percent of total imports.

The leading categories included Cereals, which made up 17.6 percent of food imports, followed closely by Beverages, Spirits, and Vinegar at 17.3 percent. Preparations of Vegetables, Fruit, and Nuts con-

tributed 10.9 percent.

Not doing enough

Cereals dominated Botswana's food import bill, with Maize (corn) leading the way at 38.2 percent of total cereal imports. Rice followed at 24.7 percent, while Wheat and Muslin - excluding Durum Wheat - accounted for 23.9 percent.

Agricultural experts say this heavy reli-

ance on imported food will persist unless Botswana makes significant investments in food production.

According to Lillian Scheepers, CEO of Pandamatenga Commercial Farmers Association and a representative of the Botswana Grain Producers Association, the country is not doing enough to feed itself.

"Our (food) import bill is too high"

"Our import bill is too high," she said in a telephone interview. "We do not produce wheat and do not produce any rice. The only grain we try to grow is sorghum, and even that is done inconsistently."

"If we want to transform our economy quickly, agriculture is the sector to focus on ... We need to look at agriculture with intention and make real changes."

She raised concerns about the state of Botswana's National Grain Reserve, saying the country is not adequately prepared for potential food shortages. She called for addressing the agricultural sector's challenges as a national priority.

"If we want to transform our economy quickly, agriculture is the sector to focus on," said Scheepers. "But we have a whole list of homework to do."

Complete overhaul

She emphasised that Botswana's agricultural industry requires a complete overhaul, with deliberate policies to support both small scale and commercial farmers. The current system, she added, fails to create an enabling environment for farmers to produce enough food to sustain the country.

"There are a series of challenges limiting small scale farmers while also restricting commercial producers," she said. "We need to look at agriculture with intention and make real changes."

Bomaid Opens Maun Office for Expansion

Bomaid strengthens its presence in the North-West region with a new office to enhance healthcare access and community partnerships

GAZETTE REPORTER

Bomaid has officially opened its Maun office, reinforcing its commitment to expanding healthcare accessibility and strengthening relationships in the North-West region. Located at Plot 1196, New Mall Engen Centre, the office will serve as a central hub for customer support, medical aid assistance, and collaboration with local healthcare providers.

Enhancing Customer Support

The Maun office will provide personalized services, assisting customers with medical aid plans, claims, and inquiries. It will also facilitate stronger partnerships with healthcare providers to ensure quality healthcare remains accessible. This initiative aligns with Bomaid's goal of delivering innovative healthcare solutions to communities across Botswana.



The expansion follows a series of stakeholder engagements in Maun led by Bomaid CEO Moraki Mokgosana in October 2024.

Strengthening Community Engagement

The expansion follows a series of stakeholder engagements in Maun led by Bomaid CEO Moraki Mokgosana in October 2024. These engagements aimed to address key healthcare concerns and reinforce partnerships with both public and private entities, including the District Health Management Team (DHMT). Bomaid's leadership also toured healthcare facilities in the region, emphasizing the organization's commitment to supporting existing infrastructure.

Official Opening

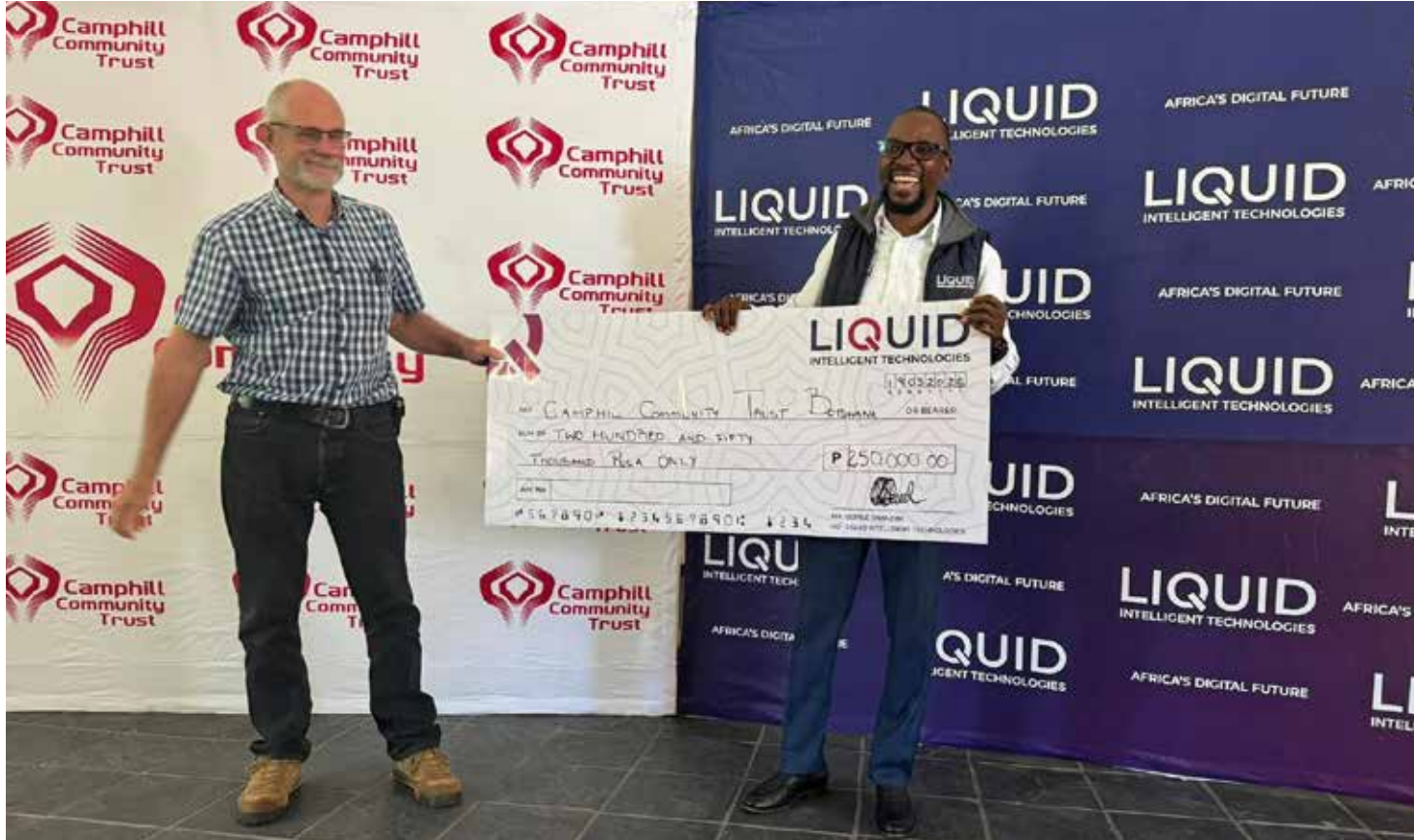
The official opening ceremony was scheduled for Friday, March 21, 2025, at the New Mall Engen Centre. The event was attended by CEO Moraki Mokgosana, along with key executives including Chief Customer Experience Officer Sego Macheng, Chief Clinical Services Officer Dr. Malebogo Kebabonye, Chief Human Resources Officer Gothatamang Tina Kootlole, and Chief Finance Officer Peo Pillar. North Regional Manager Tarisai Nikki Chigodora was also present to emphasize Bomaid's dedication to local engagement.

"Our goal is to build a well-rounded customer experience that enhances the value derived from our medical aid services," said Sego Macheng, Chief Customer Experience Officer.

Bomaid's expansion into Maun underscores its commitment to improving healthcare accessibility and working alongside key stakeholders to deliver effective healthcare solutions.

Liquid Intelligent Technologies Donates P250K to Camphill

The tech firm is supporting digital access for learners with disabilities through high-speed internet, devices, and cybersecurity tools



Liquid Intelligent Technologies Botswana has donated a P250,000 connectivity package to Camphill Community Trust as part of a two-year initiative to enhance digital inclusion for people with disabilities.

GAZETTE REPORTER

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to Camphill Community Trust as part of a two-year initiative to enhance digital inclusion for people with disabilities.

Support for education and livelihoods

The donation includes high-speed fibre internet, laptops, and cybersecurity upgrades. It also covers the Tea Garden Centre, a revenue-generating hub that supports Camphill School in Otse, Ra-

motswa District.

Camphill Community Trust supports individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities through two key institutions: Rankoromane School, which educates 60 children aged 5 to 14, and Motse Wa Badiri Training, which offers a four-year post-primary programme preparing youth aged 14 and above for employment or sustainable living.

Company backs inclusive transformation

At the donation handover, Liquid Intelligent Technologies Botswana Managing Director Odirile Tamajobe said the gesture aligns with the company's broader goal of promoting equitable digital access.

"Our pledge to Camphill Community Trust represents our commitment to ensuring no Motswana is left behind in the journey to digital transformation," he said.

Trust welcomes timely support

Camphill Community Trust Director Andreas Groth said the assistance came at a critical time for the organisation.

"Liquid Intelligent Technologies has stepped in at a critical moment for our school. This donation will have a profound impact on the most important members of our community," he said.

The initiative aims to strengthen Camphill's digital capacity and support inclusive learning environments for differently-abled individuals in underserved communities.

Frank Dalo Appointed BIHL Group CFO

Dalo brings 19 years of actuarial expertise to BIHL Group, strengthening its financial leadership and strategic planning

GAZETTE REPORTER

Frank Dalo has been appointed Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the BIHL Group, effective March 21, 2025, subject to regulatory approval.

Extensive Industry Experience

Dalo has 19 years of experience in the actuarial field and is a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries (UK). He holds a Master of Science in Actuarial Science and a Bachelor's degree in Physics and Mathematics. Over the years, he has held senior positions in the insurance and financial services sectors, specializing in risk management, financial forecasting, and strategic planning.

Strengthening Financial Strategy

With a strong background in data analysis and financial forecasting, Dalo is expected to enhance BIHL Group's ability to project financial performance



Frank Dalo

and make informed strategic decisions. His expertise in financial risk assessment and mitigation will be instrumental in maintaining the company's financial health.

"Dalo's actuarial background provides him with a deep understanding of financial risks and mitigation strategies, essential for overseeing the company's financial health."

Focus on Growth and Compliance

Dalo's experience in financial modeling, budget preparation, and strategic planning aligns with BIHL Group's long-term growth objectives. His understanding of industry regulations and financial standards will ensure the company remains compliant with evolving financial laws.

The Board of Directors expressed confidence in Dalo's leadership and actuarial expertise, emphasizing his potential contribution to the company's continued success.



The opening ceremony was attended by Member of Parliament for Molepolole North Arafat Khan, Puma Energy Africa CEO Ben Outtara, Puma Energy Botswana CEO Tendai Mwewa, Kgosing Keineetse Sebele, and Hon. Shima Monageng.

Puma Energy Opens Molepolole Station

Puma Energy Botswana has opened its 45th service station in Molepolole North, creating jobs, supporting local enterprises, and donating to a centre for children with disabilities as part of its community empowerment strategy

GAZETTE REPORTER

Puma Energy Botswana has opened its 45th service station in Molepolole North, marking another milestone in its strategy to expand access to fuel while promoting economic empowerment and job creation across the country.

Strategic location and community focus

The opening ceremony was attended

by Member of Parliament for Molepolole North Arafat Khan, Puma Energy Africa CEO Ben Outtara, Puma Energy Botswana CEO Tendai Mwewa, Kgosing Keineetse Sebele, and Hon. Shima Monageng. Mwewa said the company selected Molepolole a fast-growing village with a rich cultural heritage for its strategic potential. “We are committed to contributing to the local economy by creating job opportunities and participating in community initiatives,” she said.

Project Matlafatso drives job creation

The station launch is part of Puma Energy’s Project Matlafatso, which supports citizen-owned businesses and promotes inclusive employment. So far, it has created 25 jobs, half of which are held by women. “By providing jobs and empowering local youth and women, we hope to sustain livelihoods and foster a sense of community pride,” Mwewa said.

Talent development success story

Among the highlights of the launch was the story of Lamont, a graduate trainee who rose through the ranks to become a territory manager. His journey is an example of the company’s efforts to train and promote local talent.

“We are committed to contributing to the local economy by creating job opportunities and participating in community initiatives.”

Support for vulnerable communities
Puma Energy also donated P25,000 to Sekolo Sa Anne-Stine, a centre for children with disabilities. The donation will fund the purchase of physiotherapy equipment, including a bed, trampoline, and physiotherapy bike. “We hope this donation will support the great work being done to improve the lives of these children,” said Mwewa.

Beyond fuel: road safety and development

The company also promotes road safety through its Be Road Safe Programme and continues to support community development projects and disaster relief efforts. Puma Energy Africa CEO Outtara said the company’s role extends beyond fuel provision. “It’s not just about selling fuel; it’s about bringing value to the communities where we operate,” he said.

Expansion plans continue

The Molepolole station is expected to expand further, including the introduction of a quick-service restaurant. Puma Energy operates over 700 stations across Africa, with Botswana playing a key role in its regional operations.

Standard Bank Tops Africa Brand List

Standard Bank Group, parent to Stanbic Bank Botswana, has been named Africa’s Most Valuable Banking Brand for the fourth year in a row by Brand Finance

GAZETTE REPORTER

Standard Bank Group, the parent company of Stanbic Bank Botswana, has been recognised as Africa’s Most Valuable Banking Brand for the fourth consecutive year. The accolade was awarded by Brand Finance as part of its annual ranking of the Global Top 500 Banking Brands.

Brand strength reflected in trust
Brand Finance, a global leader in brand valuation, assesses thousands of brands worldwide each year to identify the most



“A strong brand is built on trust, consistency, and the ability to deliver meaningful value. We celebrate this as Stanbic Bank Botswana, an achievement for us as part of the wider Standard Bank Group,” said Stephanie Sandridge, Head of Branding & Marketing at Stanbic Bank Botswana.

valuable and strongest names across various industries. Standard Bank’s consistent recognition highlights its continued excellence, innovation, and relevance in the financial services sector.

“A strong brand is built on trust, consistency, and the ability to deliver meaningful value. We celebrate this as Stanbic Bank Botswana, an achievement for us as part of the wider Standard Bank Group,” said Stephanie Sandridge, Head of Branding & Marketing at Stanbic Bank Botswana.

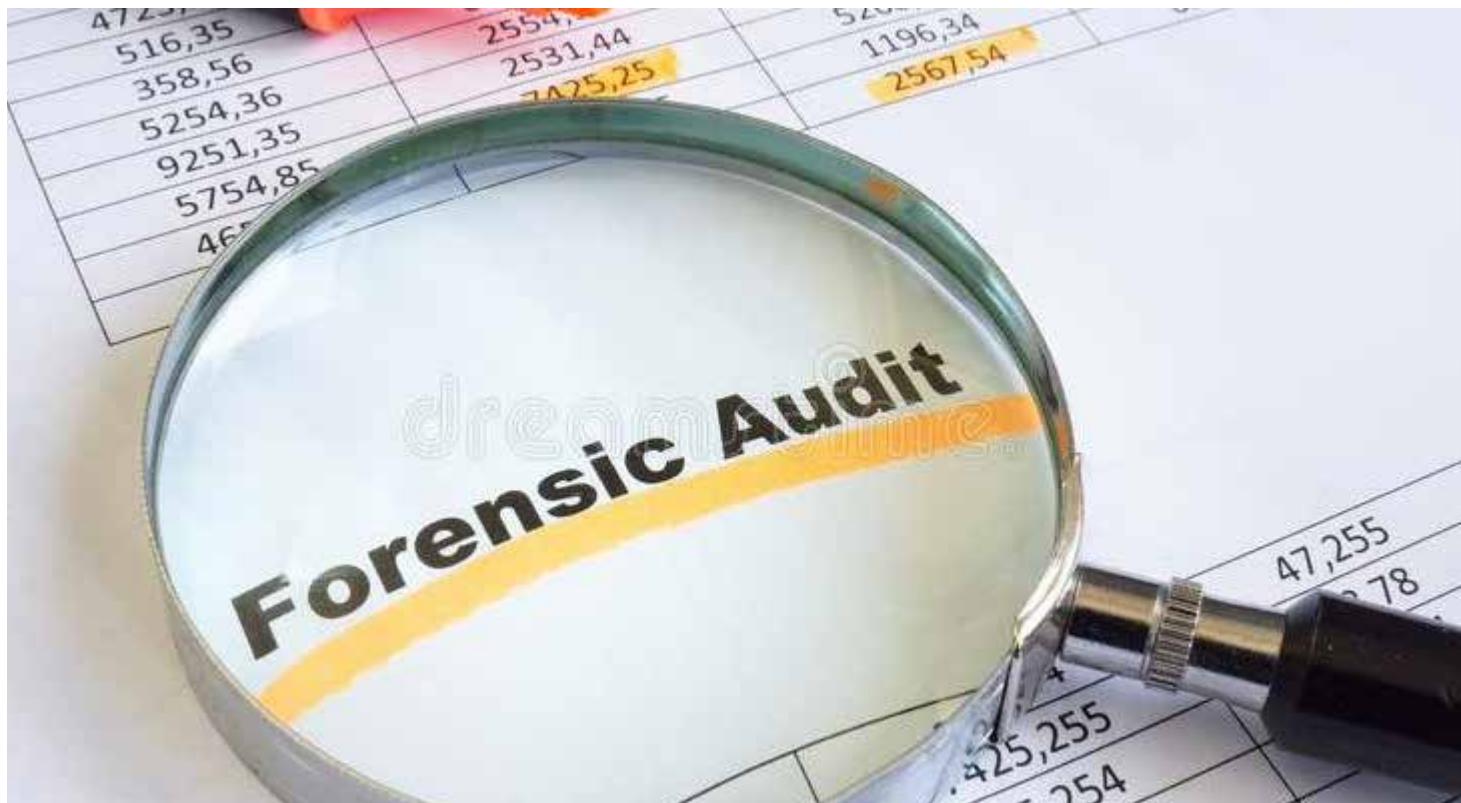
Focus on local impact

Sandridge added that the recognition affirms the bank’s ongoing efforts to provide financial solutions tailored to the needs of Botswana, contributing to both personal empowerment and broader national economic growth.

Stanbic Bank Botswana has positioned itself as a customer-centric and purpose-driven institution, earning both local and regional acclaim for its innovative approach and community impact.

Driving national growth

“The strength of the Stanbic Bank Botswana brand is underpinned by our purpose: Botswana is our home; we drive her growth,” said Sandridge. “We continue strengthening our identity and impact as a business and a partner that is invested in Botswana’s growth and prosperity.”



Forensic Audit or Political Circus: Botswana's Misplaced Priorities In A Time of Crisis

Instead of leading a frank national conversation about the economic crisis and how to tackle problems like divestment, decentralisation, economic restructuring, digitisation and immigration reform, the government has turned its attention to corruption - a problem that exists but does not rank as the country's most pressing concern

DOUGLAS RASBASH
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In a country that enjoys a consistently high ranking on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), one might expect that a forensic audit of public finances would be a routine exercise rather than the subject of national headlines. Yet, Botswana's government has embarked on a highly publicised effort to root out corruption and malpractice in public accounts - an initiative that, on the surface, seems commendable.

But as the country grapples with an economic downturn and declining diamond revenues, one cannot help but wonder whether this sudden zeal for financial transparency is a genuine act of good governance or a convenient distraction from a far deeper crisis. **A Solution in Search of a Problem?**

Botswana is widely regarded as one of the least corrupt countries in Africa, second only to Mauritius. In 2023, it ranked 35th globally in the CPI, far ahead of its regional peers. Of course, no country is free from corruption, but Botswana's institutions - its judiciary, the Auditor General's Chambers, and other oversight bodies - have generally been seen as effective in keeping public finances in check.

If Botswana were a nation riddled with

graft, this forensic audit would be a justified and urgent intervention. But the government's dramatic approach - replete with press conferences, strong rhetoric, and sweeping investigations - suggests that this is more about political optics than substantive reform. It is an exercise in reinforcing the image of a government "fighting corruption" rather than tackling the structural economic challenges that threaten Botswana's future.

Economic Reality: The Elephant in the Room

Botswana is in a recession, and the numbers paint a troubling picture. The economy shrank in 2023, and with global diamond prices in decline and demand from key markets like China weakening, the country's primary revenue source is under severe strain. For decades, diamonds have accounted for more than 80% of Botswana's export earnings and a significant portion of government revenue. That model is now faltering, yet there is little evidence that the government has a coherent strategy for diversification beyond rhetorical commitments to mega investments that it cannot afford.

There appears to be a lack of real commitments to tackle problems like divestment, decentralisation, economic restructuring, modernisation, digitisation and immigration reform. Instead, the forensic audit theatre is more likely

designed to capture the attention of the public and time and energy of the leadership. Instead of leading a frank national conversation about the economic crisis, the government has turned its attention to corruption - a problem that exists but does not rank as the country's most pressing concern.

The forensic audit is an easy narrative: it allows the government to claim action, name and shame individuals, and create a media spectacle - all without having to answer the difficult questions about unemployment, public sector inefficiencies, and revenue sustainability. **A Convenient Political Tool?**

History has shown that anti-corruption drives, particularly when they are aggressively publicised, often serve political ends. In many countries, such initiatives become tools to weaken opponents, control narratives, and reinforce ruling party dominance. Given Botswana's recent elections, it is not unreasonable to suspect that this audit may be used selectively - to expose wrongdoing where it is politically convenient while ignoring systemic governance failures that cut across party lines.

If the government were serious about long-term financial prudence, it would focus on strengthening existing oversight institutions, reforming procurement laws, and improving fiscal transparency - all of which could be done without

the theatrics of a grand forensic audit.

Benchmarking

Many high-profile anti-corruption campaigns have been politically motivated, often serving as tools to eliminate rivals, consolidate power, or reshape political landscapes. Here are some notable examples:

1. China - Xi Jinping's Anti-Corruption Campaign (2012-Present)

Xi Jinping's sweeping anti-corruption campaign targeted tens of thousands of officials, including powerful figures like Bo Xilai, Zhou Yongkang, and Sun Zhengcai - all of whom were seen as political threats. While the campaign cracked down on corruption, critics argue that it disproportionately targeted Xi's rivals while sparing his allies.

2. Russia - Putin's Crackdown on "Corrupt" Oligarchs (2000s-Present)

After coming to power, Vladimir Putin used corruption charges to weaken oligarchs who opposed him, most famously Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the head of Yukos Oil who was jailed for a decade. More recently, Alexei Navalny, a vocal critic of Putin, was targeted under corruption-related charges, leading to his imprisonment and eventual death.

Given Botswana's recent elections, it is not unreasonable to suspect that this audit may be used selectively - to expose wrongdoing where it is politically convenient while ignoring systemic governance failures that cut across party lines.

3. Saudi Arabia - Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's (MbS) Purge (2017)

Under the guise of anti-corruption, MbS detained hundreds of royal family members, ministers, and businessmen at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Riyadh. While framed as a crackdown on corruption, the move was widely seen as a power grab, eliminating potential rivals and consolidating control over Saudi Arabia's wealth.

4. Turkey - Erdogan's Anti-Gülenist Purge (2016-2017)

After the failed coup attempt in 2016, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan launched a massive purge, arresting or dismissing tens of thousands of judges, academics, military officials, and journalists. While some had genuine ties to corruption or the Gülenist movement, many were political opponents or individuals critical of Erdoğan.

5. Brazil - Operation Car Wash (2014-2019)

The Lava Jato (Operation Car Wash) corruption investigation led to the im-



President Advocate Duma Gideon Boko

Forensic Audit or Political Circus: Botswana's Misplaced Priorities In A Time of Crisis

From Page 18

prisonment of major figures, including Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the former president. Lula's conviction prevented him from running in the 2018 election, paving the way for Jair Bolsonaro's victory - though the conviction was later overturned due to judicial bias.

6. Nigeria – Buhari's Anti-Corruption Drive (2015–2023)

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari launched an anti-corruption campaign, but it disproportionately targeted opposition figures while sparing allies. Critics argue that the campaign was a tool to weaken political rivals rather than genuinely reform governance.

7. Zimbabwe – Mnangagwa's Purge of Mugabe Loyalists (2017–2018)

After Robert Mugabe was deposed, his successor Emmerson Mnangagwa led an anti-corruption purge that targeted Mugabe loyalists, including former vice president Phelekezela Mphoko and members of the G40 faction. The purge secured Mnangagwa's hold on power while presenting the illusion of reform.

These cases highlight how anti-corruption drives can be selectively enforced, weaponised against political adversaries, and used to strengthen the ruling elite.

Centralisation of Power

In contrast to its manifesto, the first acts of the new government were to consolidate and centralise power moving all national security apparatus under the Office of the President. Though seemingly logical to rationalise under its

Commander-in-Chief, the move does not follow the pre-election promises to reduce the power of the presidency. When viewed in isolation, it may seem to be an ambiguity, but when coupled with the high profile national forensic audit, one can only hope that the anti-corruption drive does not follow the same pathways as those of authoritarian governments.

To imagine purges and mass arrests of those implicated in corruption is a complete anathema and one that observers can pray never happens in Botswana. Corruption is real enough, of course, but the international perceptions of corruption in Botswana are currently low and not generally cited as a deterrent to foreign investment. This may change for

the worse as the auditing process gains traction.

The grand auditing inquisition

The term 'forensic audit' has already joined the lexicon of clichés, and no audit will ever again be carried out without the 'forensic' prefix. The process will undoubtedly disrupt everything that government is doing. Imagine a team of faceless auditors demanding the attention of public servants, demanding information, reports and data that is hard to find. Just think of the chaos and inevitable excuses for failing to progress day to day objectives.

The workshop excuse for unavailability and lack of progress will be readily replaced by having to comply with the

overarching forensic audit. While Botswana is desperate for new ideas, its government machinery will be grinding to halt to support the grand auditing inquisition.

What Botswana Actually Needs

Rather than deterring investors and chasing headlines with corruption crackdowns, the government should be focusing on economic restructuring and realignment. It needs to ratchet up all efforts to reduce dependency on diamonds by actively fostering industrialisation, manufacturing and service industries. It should be streamlining government operations to improve efficiency, reduce spending and ensure successful outcomes. The dominant and diamond-funded public sector needs dismantling before it crumbles through lack of income.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari launched an anti-corruption campaign, but it disproportionately targeted opposition figures while sparing allies. Critics argue that the campaign was a tool to weaken political rivals rather than genuinely reform governance.

Critically, a prerequisite is to create new revenue streams such as carbon credits, taxing social media and digital nomad and golden visas, to compensate for declining diamond income. Until these and other fundamental issues are addressed, no amount of forensic auditing will fix Botswana's economic reality.

The current exercise may uncover financial mismanagement but it will not rescue the country from recession. At best, it will result in a few high-profile prosecutions. At worst, it will be remembered as a well-timed distraction from a crisis that needed urgent, strategic leadership.

An advertisement for The Botswana Gazette. It features a green background with a white smartphone icon. The text on the phone screen says: "Click on the icon to join our private Whatsapp group" (with a WhatsApp icon), "TIRED OF SHARING?" (in large white letters), and "to receive your own weekly copy of The Botswana Gazette for Free" (with a group of people icon).

DOUGLAS RASBASH AND KAMOGILO BERGHAUSER

Motswana Science Grad is Promoting Her Food Processing Start-Up in 'Deutschland'

The Science Behind Zaron's Climate-Resilient Food Revolution

In the heart of Berlin's sustainable food scene, Kamo, a BIUST science graduate from Botswana, is racing against time to bring an innovative, climate-smart product to market. Her start-up, Zaron (formerly Bio Wild), is developing a plant-based milk made from tiger nuts (*Cyperus esculentus*) and Bambara nuts (*Vigna subterranea*) - two underutilised, yet nutritionally powerful crops.

Harnessing Nature's Climate Warriors

Both tiger nuts and Bambara nuts are more than just ingredients - they are science-backed solutions to climate adaptation. In a world grappling with soil degradation, water scarcity and food insecurity, these crops stand out for their resilience and nutritional value.

Bambara Nuts (*Vigna subterranea*)

Grown underground like peanuts, Bambara nuts thrive in semi-arid climates with minimal water and fertiliser, making them a sustainable alternative to water-intensive crops like almonds and soy.

Nutritionally, they are a plant-based protein powerhouse, comparable to soybeans and rich in iron, calcium and potassium, essential for energy and bone health.

Their high fibre content supports digestion while their slow-releasing carbohydrates provide sustained energy - ideal for a balanced, plant-based diet.

Tiger Nuts (*Cyperus esculentus*)

Despite their name, tiger nuts are not nuts but tubers, meaning that they are naturally allergen-free and suitable for people with nut allergies.

They are rich in monounsaturated fats, similar to olive oil, and packed with prebiotic fibre, which promotes gut health and digestion.

These hardy tubers require minimal water to grow, making them an ideal drought-resistant crop for food security.

From Lab to Market: The Fast-Track Journey

Kamo and her expanding team of four have been busy refining their nut-based milk formulation, ensuring that science meets taste. Last week's consumer testing event provided promising feedback, validating the product's market potential.

But time is of the essence. By 23 June, Zaron must have its product fully branded, packaged and market-ready for its biggest pitch yet - a chance to impress retail giants Rewe and Bio Company at the Food Innovation Campus.

Taking the Science to the Global Stage

Kamo's efforts have not gone unnoticed. She has been invited by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to present on advancing climate adaptation in the food sector. Her talk will highlight the role of climate-resilient crops like Bambara nuts and tiger nuts in creating a sustainable food system, a topic that is not just academic but urgent in the face of climate change.

A Vision Beyond Berlin: Bringing Production Back to Botswana

While Berlin is the launchpad, Botswana is the destination. Kamo's long-term goal is to refine raw materials and manufacture Zaron's products in her



homeland, ensuring that the economic benefits of sustainable food innovation are felt in Africa. By processing tiger nuts and Bambara nuts locally, Zaron aims to create jobs, empower farmers, and build a sustainable food ecosystem in Botswana.

The government policy in the agriculture and food Sector is to add value to what we grow, such as converting citrus fruit to juice. This new project started by this young Motswana entrepreneur not only encapsulates this policy but embrac-

es the spirit of innovation that our country intends to cultivate.

The Acting Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Dr Edwin Dikoloti, has this to say: "This is a highly welcome development that mirrors the vision we have as a ministry. We exist to add value not just to land but also to that which is produced from our lands.

"As we move from agriculture to agri-food systems, Botswana must and its people must play big in the space. Our NARDI also has so many of these ideas and/or researches which need to be commercialised.

"Our food and nutrition security needs all hands on the deck and they can count on us to help take this to greater heights. Our UDC government has committed to creation of mega companies and the food systems creates a good platform for such."

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Challenges and Breakthroughs

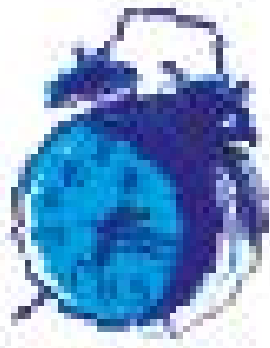
But despite all these milestones, Zaron has yet to make its first sale. This is how Kamo sees it: "I don't think I have anything under control, but I'm still going with it anyway."

With science, sustainability and an unstoppable drive, Zaron is proving that African innovation has a place on the global stage, and the future of food may just come from the ground beneath our feet. Watch this space. Zaron is just getting started.

More information <https://www.f6s.com/company/bio-wild#jobs>

Kamogilo Berghauser is the founder of Bio Wild





"Outer beauty is good for greetings but inner beauty is good for sustainability. Women who are beautiful with substance bring impact."

Meet Ruth, Miss Botswana 2025

Her resilience and determination have earned the stunningly beautiful lass the responsibility of representing Botswana at the 73rd Miss World Competition

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Twen-
t y -
three-year-old Ruth Thomas of Masunga is the newly crowned Miss Botswana, winning the prestigious title in a grand African regal-themed ceremony at the Gaborone International Convention Centre (GICC) over the weekend.

She triumphed over first runner-up Selwana Motsemeng and second runner-up Girly Kookilwe in a night filled with elegance, poise and purpose.

With her strikingly beautiful features and graceful stage presence, Ruth captivated the audience that had burst into chants of "Ruth! Ruth!" just before the final announcement of Miss Botswana 2025.

More than looks

The defining moment of the night came when she was asked: "As Miss Botswana, you will be expected to use your platform to drive positive change.

"What specific, measurable and achievable goals would you set for your reign, and how would you hold yourself accountable to achieving them?"

Responding with confidence, she seemed to be echoing the qualities of the biblical Ruth when she eloquently declared: "I want women to understand that we are more than what we look like.

Beauty with substance

"We are our intellect, our abilities, confidence, values, and principles. Outer beauty is good for greetings but inner beauty is good for sustainability. Women who are beautiful with substance bring impact."

A beauty adviser by profession and a clothing and textiles graduate, Ruth has always been fascinated by what truly defines beauty. Her Miss Botswana journey was one of intention, practice and faith.

"Miss Botswana helped me find a sense of self-belief that I didn't have before," she said. "Through this competition, I have learned to own my story and witness that I am more than the challenges I have faced."

Beyond the crown

During the Miss Botswana competition, Ruth made her mark as Top Model 2nd Runner-Up, but for her the greatest achievement was knowing that she was worthy of a chance to try.

Her resilience and determination have now earned her the responsibility of representing Botswana at the 73rd Miss World Competition.

Woman of impact

As she embarks on this new chapter, Ruth's predecessor, Anicia Gaothusi, offered words of wisdom: "The road is going to be challenging but beautiful, and you need to show your resilience."

With purpose in her heart and mind and the nation's support behind her, Ruth is ready to take on the world not just as a beauty queen but as a woman of impact.

TIRED OF SHARING?



Stanbic Music And Lifestyle Fest Unveils Lineup

With a thrilling mix of international and local acts, innovative festival elements, and a strong cultural vision, the Stanbic Bank Music and Lifestyle Festival 2025 is set to be the highlight of Botswana's entertainment calendar

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

The most anticipated music and lifestyle event is back with an electrifying lineup that is set to deliver an unforgettable experience.

The Stanbic Bank Music and Lifestyle Festival, happening on 26 April 2025 at Royal Aria Grounds in Tlokweng, has officially unveiled its lineup that features a thrilling mix of international and local stars.

This year's festival promises an explosion of talent with South African legends TKZee (Live

Band), soulful sensation Mthunzi and the acclaimed Sun-El Musician as the international headliners.

A powerful local touch

Adding a powerful local touch, Han C & KTM Choir featuring Charma Gal & Banjo Mosele (Ensemble), Mpho Sebina, Lioness Ratang, Jembesoul and The Grow to Black Collective will take the stage alongside an electrifying DJ lineup that includes Mr O, Frostbite, Casper The DJ, Boogie Sid, Tefo Foxx, Ms Daisy, Teddy Is Not A DJ, Shaft People, Shawn Lee, and Soulman.



According to Stanbic Bank's PR & Communication Manager, Ratang Motladiile, the lineup was meticulously crafted to strike a balance between international and local talent while offering a diverse and engaging experience.

"Our selection process considered several factors, including artist popularity, musical diversity, and the ability to create an unforgettable experience for revellers," she said in an interview. "We also wanted to showcase a mix of established names and emerging artists to keep the festival fresh and exciting."

Interactive zones

As the event draws near, prepara-

tions are in full swing, with new additions set to enhance the overall experience.

"We have introduced interactive zones, upgraded VIP experiences, and additional entertainment elements beyond the music," Motladiile noted. "More details will be announced soon, and we encourage festivalgoers to stay tuned for updates."

Beyond being a music festival, the Stanbic Bank Music and Lifestyle Festival is a milestone in Botswana's cultural evolution.

Festival like no other

"As a bank invested in empowering communities and fostering innovation, we are proud to lead

the way in creating an event that blends music, lifestyle and art," Motladiile said previously. "This isn't just a festival - it's a platform for inspiration, connection and celebration."

Attendees can look forward to a multi-sensory experience that goes beyond the beats, featuring art installations, culinary delights, and immersive cultural expressions.

This year's edition promises to capture the vibrant essence of Botswana, making it a festival experience like no other.

Sesame Earns Prestigious Gospel Award Nomination

The Motswana gospel artist has been nominated for Vocalist of the Year at the Gospel Choice Music Awards in Atlanta, USA

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana's gospel music scene has a new reason to celebrate in the nomination of Sesame Baingapi-Khofi for Vocalist of the Year at the Gospel Choice Music Awards in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

The awards ceremony is set for 9 June 2025, marking a significant milestone in Sesame's career and a proud moment for Botswana's gospel industry.

Well known as Sesame, the nomination of the dedicated worshipper and gospel artist is more than personal recognition but a major step for Botswana's gospel music on the international stage.

Voting

"This nomination means a lot



to me because it affirms my hard work and dedication," she said in an interview. "It also gives me an opportunity to network and collaborate with gospel artists from

various countries."

With voting already open, fans and supporters can help Sesame bring the award home by visiting the Gospel Choice Music

Awards website, selecting the Best Female Vocalist of the Year category and choosing Sesame (Botswana).

Over the years, Sesame's music has not only uplifted souls but has also expanded her influence beyond Botswana, earning her recognition across South Africa and the United States.

The voting lines close on 30 March 2025 after which the final stage will be determined at the awards ceremony.

Born in Thamaga on 14 October 1991, Sesame's musical jour-

ney began with dikhwaere during her childhood. She first gained national recognition as a Top 18 finalist in Botswana's popular talent show, My Star, in 2013. In 2014, Sesame dedicated her life to Jesus Christ, marking her transition into gospel music.

Rooted in faith

She released her debut album, Mohau, which resonated deeply with gospel audiences, in 2018. Two years later, she released her hit single "Merafe," recorded live at Grand Aria in October 2020. Over the years, her music has not only uplifted souls but has also expanded her influence beyond Botswana, earning her recognition across South Africa and the United States.

With her nomination at the Gospel Choice Music Awards, Sesame is proving that Botswana's gospel music has the potential to reach global audiences. As she prepares for the awards ceremony, she remains focused on her mission to spread the message of faith through music.

Ngoni's "Magotsetso" Series Rekindles the Lost Magic of the Fireplace

Wilson Ngoni's "Magotsetso" series is a deeply evocative collection that pays homage to the traditional fireplace as a sacred space of storytelling, bonding and knowledge-sharing

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Renowned son of the brush and artist Wilson Ngoni has once again mesmerised the art world with his latest exhibition, "Rare," currently on display at Thapong Visual Arts Centre in Gaborone until 7 April 2025.

At the heart of the exhibition is his "Magotsetso" series, a deeply evocative collection that pays homage to the traditional African fireplace that is a sacred space of storytelling, bonding and knowledge-sharing.

Ngoni is on a mission to paint 200 fireplaces, and with 20 completed so far, his work is a reflection of the nostalgic and social significance of magotsetso.

First kindergarten

The inspiration for this series comes from his visits to hundreds of homesteads where he observed families gathered around the fireplace and realising that these

spaces were, in many ways, the first kindergartens for most people.

"Modern methods of heating are slowly eclipsing the traditional ones," Ngoni told *Time Out*. "But will they ever replace the true joy and sentimental value that a wood fireplace holds for families?"

For generations, African families have used the fireplace not just for warmth but also as a space for storytelling, cultural impartation and connection.

Therapeutic

Ngoni's paintings do not only capture the essence of these gatherings but also document the entire process of making a fireplace - from the therapeutic walk to collect firewood to the distinct scents that define different fires.

"These days people are preoccupied with their cellphones," he mused. "This series serves as a reminder of where we come from. I am not against moderni-

sation, but I feel we are losing our identity."

Abstract art

Though Ngoni is widely celebrated for his realism, the exhibition also marks his transition to abstract art. "In my realism, I capture light but I now wish to capture this light on a different dimension," he said.

"These days people are preoccupied with their cellphones. This series serves as a reminder of where we come from. I am not against modernisation, but I feel we are losing our identity."

"Switching styles allows me to spark new motivation each time I feel monotonous. A new style creeps in to keep me going."



Ngoni's exhibition also features Florence Kebopetswe, an emerging artist under his mentorship. Fascinated by realism and cultural themes, Kebopetswe is currently working on a series titled "Life of a Girl-Child", which aims to educate young girls about culture and tradition.

Girl-child

"Culture is essential in groom-

ing a girl-child," she said. "Through my work, I hope to bring awareness to its importance in shaping identity."

With "Rare," Ngoni continues to ignite conversations about tradition, identity and artistic evolution, proving that some flames, especially those rooted in culture, can never be extinguished.

Teboho Moloi Botswana Invasion Returns With Purpose

Beyond the music, this year's concert carries a powerful message of a prayer and call for solidarity against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

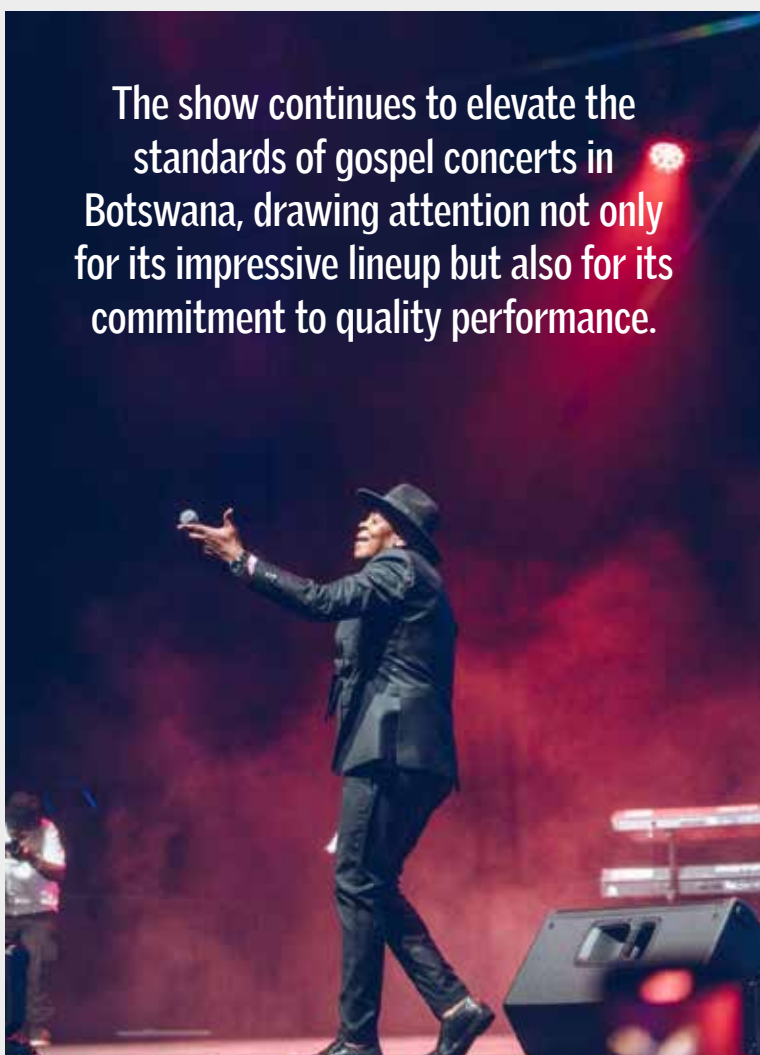
Gospel music lovers are due for a spiritually uplifting experience on 5 April 2025 at Molapo Crossing Piazza where the third annual Teboho Moloi Botswana Invasion concert will unfold.

The highly-anticipated event boasts a stellar lineup of both seasoned and emerging gospel artists, promising a night of worship, celebration and purpose.

With Teboho Moloi, Dumi Mkokstad, Mmatema, Sbu Noah, Omega Khunou, Lebo Sekgobela, Sello Maletle, Phemphethe, Johnson Pheto, Ounah, Sesame, and Obakeng Sengwaketse set to grace the stage, this year's edition is expected to be bigger and more impactful than ever.

"We have expanded ..."

According to event organiser Gosego Lekoko, the concert has grown significantly since its inception. "We have expanded, seeing by the number of artists participating," she shared in an interview. "We have also



enhanced the technical production of the event."

With each passing year, the show continues to elevate the standards of gospel concerts in Botswana, drawing attention not only for its impressive lineup but also for its commitment to quality performance.

One of the defining elements of the Teboho Moloi Botswana Invasion is its dedication to uplifting local talent. Lekoko emphasised that, they make it a point to introduce upcoming artists to the stage each year.

Emerging artists in the mix

"The idea is to allow them to share the platform and network with experienced and well-established gospel artists," she said. "We also ensure that our lineup includes musicians who sing gospel hymns (difela) that Batswana grew up singing in their churches."

This approach not only preserves the country's rich gospel heritage but also nurtures the next generation of gospel musicians.

Beyond the music, this year's concert carries a powerful message of a prayer and call for solidarity against Gender-Based Violence (GBV). "We don't see this as just a festival but rather a

prayer against this monster that our country is battling with," Lekoko stated.

Solidarity against GBV

By using gospel music as a tool for advocacy, the event aims to rally people to confront one of the most pressing social issues in Botswana.

But organising a gospel concert of this magnitude comes with its challenges, sponsorship being the biggest hurdle. "Putting up an event in Botswana is costly, and we hope to attract sponsors in the future," said Lekoko.

"Despite the financial struggles, the team remains steadfast in their mission. Their perseverance has already yielded success, with local artists benefiting from the platform.

Cross-border collaboration

In an exciting development, one of Botswana's gospel artists is currently in the studio working on a project with Teboho Moloi, showcasing the concert's role in fostering cross-border collaboration.

For those eager to be part of this divine experience, tickets are available at P250 for standard access and P500 for VIP.

PODCASTS AND CONTENT CREATORS TAKING OVER TV SCREENS

Eight of South Africa's influential and disruptive podcasts and content creators are about to break the mould by bringing in the real, raw and energetic conversations straight to your TV screens



GAZETTE REPORTER

From April, the digital pioneers who have taken over streaming platforms and broken the internet will join forces with Mzansi Magic and Mzansi Wethu for an extraordinary collaboration.

"This is a revolution; a bold step into the future where linear television meets the gutsy, **"These creators have redefined entertainment and now we're welcoming them to shake up the traditional TV space and are excited to be at the forefront of this transformation."**

unfiltered world of digital storytelling," said Shirley Adonisi, Director for M-Net's local en-



ertainment channels in a statement.

"These creators have redefined entertainment and now we're welcoming them to shake up the traditional TV space and are excited to be at the forefront of this transformation."



Fresh wave of energy

This groundbreaking shift brings a fresh wave of energy, giving the youth a platform that resonates with their interests. With this addition, the youth segment on these channels will be enhanced, offering program-

ming that speaks directly to young viewers in their own language and addressing the topics that are of interest to them.

The podcasts will delve into a variety of topics such as celebrity gossip, awkward dating confessions, amapiano culture deep dives, raw prison stories and more. The weekly line-up



has something for every viewer: **Mzansi Wethu (DStv Chan-**



nel 163)

Piano Pulse. Hosted by Muna, Thakgi and Sfiso, it explores various aspects of amapi-



ano, including artist interviews, industry trends and cultural discussions. From Monday 7 April at 5.30pm.



PNC (People Need Comedy) with Mpho Poppo. Hosted by Mpho Poppo, Tsitsi Chiumya and Farieda Metsileng, PNC offers hilarious takes on life, culture and personal stories with comedy at the heart of every discussion. From Tuesday 8 April at 5.30pm.

Podcast and Chill with MacG. Hosted by Macgyver "MacG" Mukwevho, Sol Phenduka, and the "Ghost Lady." The show offers candid conversations on entertainment, pop culture and current events, often featuring celebrity interviews. From Wednes-

youth culture and current events, delivering engaging and humorous content for listeners. From Saturday 12 April at 8.30pm.

Mzansi Magic (DStv Chan-



nel 161)

Awkward Dates with Lasizwe. It offers a fresh and entertaining look at the awkward moments that arise during celebrity dates. Created and hosted by Lasizwe, the show blends humour with candid conversations. From Saturday 12 April at 9pm.



Joseph Dary: Exchanging Phones. Is best known for his "Switching Phones for 60 Seconds" segment where couples exchange and check each other's phones, exploring relationships, loyalty and transparency in the digital age. From Saturday 12 April at 9.30pm.

day 9 April at 5.30pm.

Against the Wall with Skeem GP. It's all about unfiltered prison stories, resilience and survival, a journey towards rehabilitation, reintegration back into society, leadership and active citizenship. From Thursday 10 April at 5.30pm.

Open Chats. Hosted by Mthokozisi Methula and Sino, it features engaging discussions with guest speakers, offering diverse perspectives on contemporary topics like relationships, personal growth and societal issues. From Friday 11 April at 5.30m.

Spreading Humours. Hosted

by Seemah, Yanda and Zille, the show offers candid discussions on social media trends,

BUAN Hosts Cultural Day Showcase

Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN) celebrated its Cultural Day with vibrant performances, food exhibitions, and traditional attire that highlighted the institution's diverse community



SIMON MMILE

Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN) came alive with traditional music, dance, and colorful attire during its annual Cultural Day celebration, which brought together students and staff from various backgrounds.

"Although we come from different backgrounds, we should acknowledge, appreciate, and celebrate one another."

A celebration of unity in diversity

Director of Academic and Student Services, Isabella Magetsi, said the event reflected BUAN's commitment to inclusivity and appreciation of cultural heritage. "We believe that although we come from different backgrounds, we should acknowledge, appreciate, and celebrate one another," Magetsi said.

Performances included Botswana's traditional dances, Lesotho's cultural routines, and a polka dance from the Kalahari region. Both students and staff participated in choral performances.

Cultural exhibitions and cuisine

The event also featured an exhibition of traditional foods and attire from across the continent. Students showcased dishes from Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Liberia, with Liberia's famous Jollof rice proving especially popular.

Traditional clothing from various regions added visual flair to the event, underlining the broad cultural representation at BUAN.

Vice-Chancellor calls for cultural preservation

Delivering the keynote address, BUAN Vice-Chancellor Professor Ketlhatlogile Mosepele emphasized the role of culture in building resilient societies. "Culture is the foundation of human societies. It fosters resilience, enterprise, and growth," he said.

He also linked cultural awareness to BUAN's broader vision of becoming one of

Africa's top ten impactful universities by 2036, stating that embracing diversity is central to that goal.

International partnerships foster exchange

Mosepele further highlighted BUAN's international collaborations with institutions in countries including the USA, Finland, Turkey, Germany, Israel, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Tunisia, and Brazil.

He said such partnerships offer students and faculty opportunities to share knowl-



edge and cultural experiences, strengthening the university's global engagement.

Community and leadership support

Among those in attendance were the Councillor for Sebele Airport, Kgosi of Block 8 Customary Court, Lieutenant-Colonel Lekoko, and representatives from the Botswana Police and the broader community.

JUDGE RADIJENG
IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT GABORONE

In the matter between:
PHILEMON SEBAKO
 And
NONOFO PETSO

CASE NO: CVHGB-002602-23
PLAINTIFF
DEFENDANT

ABRIDGED SUMMONS FOR SUBSTITUTED SERVICE
(in terms of order 8 rule 3(1), Rules of the High Court)

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT the Plaintiff has caused a Writ of Summons to be issued against the within-named Defendant for judgment in the following terms:
 a. Payment of the sum of P 200 000.00;
 b. Interest thereon at 10% a tempore morae;
 c. Costs of suit;
 d. Further and alternative relief.

And that an order has been made that the publication of notice of such summons shall be deemed to be good and sufficient service of the summons on you. You are required to enter an appearance to the summons on or before 25 MAY 2025, and if you do not do so, judgment may be given against you in your absence

DATED AT GABORONE THIS DAY OF MARCH 2024

JONAS ATTORNEYS
 (Plaintiff's Attorneys)
 Plot 184, Tale House, Unit 2,
 Matsitama Road, Off Queens Road
 Main Mall, Gaborone
 P.O. Box 26060
GABORONE

TO: THE REGISTRAR
 Gaborone High Court
 Private bag 001
GABORONE

AND TO: NONOFO PETSO
 P O Box 601288
GABORONE

APPLICATION FOR LOST TITLE DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that the undermentioned intends applying for a certified copy of **DEED OF TRANSFER NO. FT 402/2012** dated the **28TH** day of **JUNE 2012** passed in favour of **ZAMBEZI SAFARIS (PROPRIETARY) LIMITED** in respect of the following property, that is:

CERTAIN : Piece of Land being Lot 721, Kasane
SITUATE : In the Chobe Administrative District;
MEASURING: 1475 m² (One Thousand Four Hundred and Seventy Five Square Metres)

All persons having objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the **Registrar of Deeds** at **FRANCISTOWN** within **twenty one (21) days** from the second publication of this notice.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS THE 10TH DAY OF MARCH 2025

VAN NIEKERK ATTORNEYS, PLOT 4660, DITAU STREET, AREA G
P. O. BOX 37, FRANCISTOWN

Maintenance Continues As FNB Grand Prix Nears

It is a race against time that is not helping growing anxiety about whether the running track at the National Stadium will meet the rigorous standards required for World Athletics certification



GAZETTE REPORTER

With only a few weeks to 12 April when Botswana is scheduled to host the prestigious FNB Botswana Golden Grand Prix and the National Stadium still undergoing major maintenance work that includes the running

track, concerns are rising about completing in time and meeting the standards required for World Athletics certification.

This is the state of affairs as the Botswana National Sports Commission (BNSC) and the Ministry of Sports and Arts explore means of protecting the National Stadium from damage during national

events and celebrations.

Concerns have long been raised about the deterioration of the track, largely due to heavy machinery used during ceremonies like Independence Day and Botswana Defence Force (BDF) Day.

Damage to the track

Speaking at a press conference

Particularly psychologically

“As you all know, Botswana is faced with a huge monster called GBV that continues to destroy lives and families,” he said. “Reports indicate that there is sexual violence, harassment, and cyber abuse in sports, and this affects and destroys greatly, particularly psychologically.”

This year’s edition of the awards was themed Towards a Safer Playing Field, underscoring the role of sports in combating GBV.

Kelebeg commended the initiative, calling it “important, appropriate, and relevant” as it keeps stakeholders focused on prioritising conversations and action to stop GBV in sports and society at large.

Outstanding female athletes

The Vunani Annual Botswana Women Sports Awards recognise outstanding female athletes and sports stakeholders across various disciplines.

This year, 800-metre runner Oratile Nowe was named Sportswoman of the Year, prevailing over tennis star Ekua Youri and chess player Natalie Banda.

Rising track athlete Sethunya Majama won Young Promising Athlete of the Year, beating Mal-

tswana Women Sports Awards in Gaborone over the weekend.

Minister Kelebeg emphasised that sports can also play a vital role in addressing societal challenges, particularly gender-based violence (GBV), which remains a pressing issue in Botswana and beyond.

VUNANI AWARDS SPOTLIGHT ROLE OF SPORTS IN FIGHTING GBV

This was the night during which 800-metre runner Oratile Nowe became Sportswoman of the Year, rising track athlete Sethunya Majama became Young Promising Athlete of the Year, while track and field Paralympian Gloria Majaga and golfer Maru Chokwe both received the CEO’s Special Award before Sensei Ofentse Bakwadi rounded off the awards as the HeForShe Champion

GAZETTE REPORTER

Sports and the arts are no longer just pastimes but essential drivers of the economy.

This was said by the Minister of Sports and Arts, Jacob Kelebeg, at the Vunani Annual Bo-

this week, Chief Executive Officer of BNSC, Tuelo Serufho, acknowledged the impact of these events on the condition of the track and said efforts are underway to mitigate the damage.

“The items usually used during some national events cause damage to the track but we are currently exploring ways to ensure that the facility, especially the track, is protected.”

The timing of the maintenance work is particularly sensitive in view of the prestigious FNB Botswana Golden Grand Prix that Botswana is due to host at the National Stadium on 12 April.

The event, a key stop on the World Athletics Continental Tour, is expected to attract elite sprinters from across the globe.

“We cannot rule out the possibility that the track may fail certification. However, given what we have put in place, we do not believe it will fail.”

Experts

Concerns have emerged that the track may not be ready in time; or worse, that it could fail World Athletics certification, which is required for it to be used

for international competition.

“We cannot rule out the possibility that the track may fail certification,” Serufho admitted. “However, given what we have put in place, we do not believe it will fail.”

He added that experts have been engaged to oversee the maintenance process and ensure the track meets the required standards.

Only six days

The stadium is set to be officially handed over to organisers of the Golden Grand Prix on 6 April, leaving just six days for final preparations.

Beyond the immediate concerns, BNSC is also looking into long-term solutions, including the development of a warm-up track to align with World Athletics regulations.

Botswana does not have a dedicated warm-up facility, which is a requirement for hosting top-tier events such as the 2026 World Relays that the country is bidding for.

“It’s a discussion we are having ...”

Serufho outlined two possible approaches: refurbishing the track at the University of Botswana Stadium or constructing a new facility on land allocated to Botswana Athletics Association (BAA).

“It’s a discussion we are having with the government,” he said. “Funds permitting, we could build a facility as a warm-up track for the World Relays.”

With the Grand Prix fast approaching, all eyes are on whether Botswana can deliver a world-class venue on schedule without compromising the stadium’s longevity.



ak Macheng of tennis and Maya Otimile of chess.

HeForShe

The event also honoured male allies who contribute to women’s sports. Karateka Ofentse Bakwadi was recognised as the HeForShe Champion, an award that celebrates men who support women’s participation in sports.

In other categories, basketball official Dorothy Okatch was named Umpire of the Year while the Team of the Year award went to Botswana’s kata team.

Table tennis administrator Tshogfatso Malepa became the

Administrator of the Year while Boago Gabontshiwe became the Volunteer of the Year.

Platform for change

Two athletes received special recognition from the organisers: track and field athlete Paralympian Gloria Majaga and golfer Maru Chokwe both received the CEO’s Special Award.

Minister Kelebeg closed his remarks by stressing the need for continued efforts to use sports as a platform for change. “It is imperative that we utilise sports to spread the message and fight GBV,” he said.

BAKWADI APPOINTED 2ND VICE PRESIDENT OF CKAF

The veteran karate administrator and Botswana Karate Association (BOKA) president was officially appointed to the continental body for a tenure commencing on 1st February 2025

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's karate community has received a significant boost in the appointment of Mpho Bakwadi as 2nd Vice President of the Commonwealth Karate Africa Federation (CKAF).

The veteran karate administrator and Botswana Karate Association (BOKA) president was officially appointed to the continental body for a tenure commencing on 1st February 2025.

Confirmed in a letter from CKAF, the appointment mandates Bakwadi to coordinate the

activities of Commonwealth karate federations in the Southern African region, supporting the CKAF president in furthering the sport's development.

Pivotal role

Bakwadi, who has played a pivotal role in the growth of karate in Botswana, expressed immense gratitude for the appointment, highlighting the opportunities it presents for the country's karate landscape.

"I am deeply honoured to be entrusted with this role," he said in an interview. "It is a testament to the work we have been doing in Botswana to develop karate at



all levels.

"This appointment is not just about me; it is a recognition of Botswana's potential in the sport. It means our athletes, coaches and administrators are being noticed at a higher level."

Increased visibility

The appointment is expected to bring increased visibility and development opportunities for Botswana's karate scene.

With Bakwadi in a leader-

ship role at CKAF, Botswana is well-positioned to benefit from regional and international collaborations, including training programmes, competitions and athlete development initiatives.

"This role gives Botswana a seat at the table in key decision-making processes concerning karate in Africa," he said. "It allows us to advocate for more resources, better training facilities and opportunities for our athletes

to compete at an elite level."

Strengthening relationships

Beyond advancing Botswana's karate, Bakwadi emphasised the broader impact of his appointment on the Southern African region.

"We have incredible talent in this region, and my goal is to work closely with federations to ensure that we create pathways for our athletes to reach the highest levels of competition," he noted.

"Strengthening relationships between Commonwealth karate federations will help improve the standards of the sport in our region."

Bakwadi's appointment comes at a crucial time when Botswana karate is making strides on the international stage.

The country has produced outstanding karatekas who have competed at the highest levels, and having a top administrator in CKAF further strengthens Botswana's credibility in the sport.

Upward trajectory

Bakwadi's experience as BOKA president and his extensive knowledge of the sport's administration make him a key asset in CKAF's vision of expanding the reach and impact of karate across the continent.

As part of his immediate responsibilities, he is expected to help shape policies that will drive the growth of karate within Africa's member-states of the Commonwealth.

With Botswana karate continuing its upward trajectory, Bakwadi's appointment represents a major milestone, reaffirming the country's place as a rising force in the martial arts world.

Bowling Youth Team For International Debut

Botswana Bowling Association's Under 25 and Under 18 teams will compete in the 2025 Bowls South Africa U-25 & U-18 Championships from 29 March to 1st April

TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO

For the first time in history, Botswana will send youth teams to an international bowling tournament, marking a significant milestone for the sport in the country.

The Botswana Bowling Association (BBA) has confirmed that both Under 25 and Under 18 teams will compete in the 2025 Bowls South Africa U-25 & U-18 Championships, set to take place from 29 March to 1st April 2025.

The teams will arrive in Gaborone from different parts of the country today (Wednesday). Many of the players have been preparing individually with their clubs, while some have also participated in various tournaments throughout the year.

The Under 25 squad consists of Thabo Makopa, Kaone Maroku, Edwin Jr. Nyoka, Tshepo Maphane, and Mighty Morwaagole.

The Under-18 team, primarily composed of schoolchildren who have progressed through the Re Ba Bona Ha grassroots development programme, features Gabriel Maphane, Jordan Davids, Thabile Keorotse, Chantell Momele, and Gideon Lereka.

According to BBA vice president, Marea Modutlwa, the tournament is not about setting performance targets but rather about giving young bowlers exposure to international competition.

"We want them to compete against players their age at the international level," she said in a telephone interview.

"This will allow them to earn experience and make decisions for themselves. It is an opportunity for both players and coaches to gauge how they handle such an environment and pressure."

BBA believes that this experience will be invaluable as it will not only help the players develop



their skills but also provide insight into the level of competition in international bowling.

Modutlwa emphasised that the focus will be on the athletes following their coaches' instructions and doing their best on the greens.

The inclusion of school-going players through the Re Ba Bona

Ha initiative is a testament to BBA's commitment to youth development.

The grassroots programme has been instrumental in introducing bowling to younger players, helping to expand the sport's reach beyond traditional demographics.

Botswana's participation in the 2025 Bowls South Africa U-25 &

U-18 Championships represents a crucial step in the growth of lawn bowling in the country.

While results will be secondary to experience, the tournament will undoubtedly be a learning curve for the young bowlers as they take on their international counterparts.



It is only a matter of weeks before the world's most astral athletes descend on Gaborone where each will aim to make history by setting a new record. StaffWriter **TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO** reports

A stellar cast of track and field athletes, among them Olympic and world champions, has been confirmed for the 2025 Botswana Golden Grand Prix that will get underway in Gaborone on 12 April.

Among the headliners is Botswana's own Letsile Tebogo, the reigning Olympic 200m champion who will face fierce competition from Canada's Andre de Grasse and South Africa's Wayde van Niekerk.

Also set to compete is Kenyan sprint sensation Ferdinand Omanyala, one of the fastest men in the history of the 100m dash.

"We have invited some of the world's best and are working on increasing the number."

More names

According to the spokesman of the event, Calistus Kolantsho, the organisers are still in negotiations to add more

top-tier athletes. "We have invited some of the world's best and are working on increasing the number," he said in an interview. "Pretty soon, we will share more names."

The men's 100m race is expected to be one of the most hotly contested events, featuring Omanyala, de Grasse and South Africa's Akani Simbine, each of whom boasts personal bests of 9.80s or faster.

The 200m race will

showcase Tebogo, de

Grasse, van Niekerk, and Canada's Jerome Blake.

Home soil

For the 400m, Botswana's Bayapo Ndori and Leungo Scotch will compete on home soil while the men's 800m will see Tshepiso Masalela take on Kenya's Ferguson Rotich, Nicholas Kiplagat and Justice Kipkoech.

American athletes will also make their mark in the hurdles and field events.

World relay champion Trevor Bassitt will feature in the men's 400m hurdles

while world indoor champion Marquis Dendy will compete in the long jump. Italy's Leonardo Fabbri, the European shot put champion and world silver medalist, will also be in action.

The women's lineup is equally star-studded. Marie-Josée Ta Lou of the Ivory Coast will headline the 100m race alongside two-time world indoor champion Nia Ali and former world champion Quanera Hayes of the United States.

The 800m race will feature Bahrain's Nelly Jepkosgei, Kenya's Sara Moraa and Ethiopia's Nigist Getachew. Olympic silver medalist Jane van Dyk of South Africa will compete in the javelin while Dalilah Muhammad, the Olympic and two-time world champion in the 400-meter hurdles, will add further star power.

Kolantsho expressed confidence in the organisation of the event, noting that preparations are proceeding seamlessly.

Much agog

"The BNSC has been updating us on the track renovations and we are happy with the progress," he said. "They have promised to hand over the track to us on the 6th of April, so we are looking forward to that."

With ticket sales already underway, excitement is building among fans. "We have ongoing activations, and we've seen more people coming to buy tickets," said Kolantsho. It is encouraging and shows that Botswana are much agog."



STAR-STUDDDED LINEUP FOR GOLDEN GRAND PRIX CONFIRMED

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