The Botswana
GAZETTE
WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2026 | SINCE 1984



BSB DIGITAL SHIFT
17.

GOVT, PHARMA MAKE PEACE

Govt extends olive branch, but pharma suppliers remain wary of transparency 2.



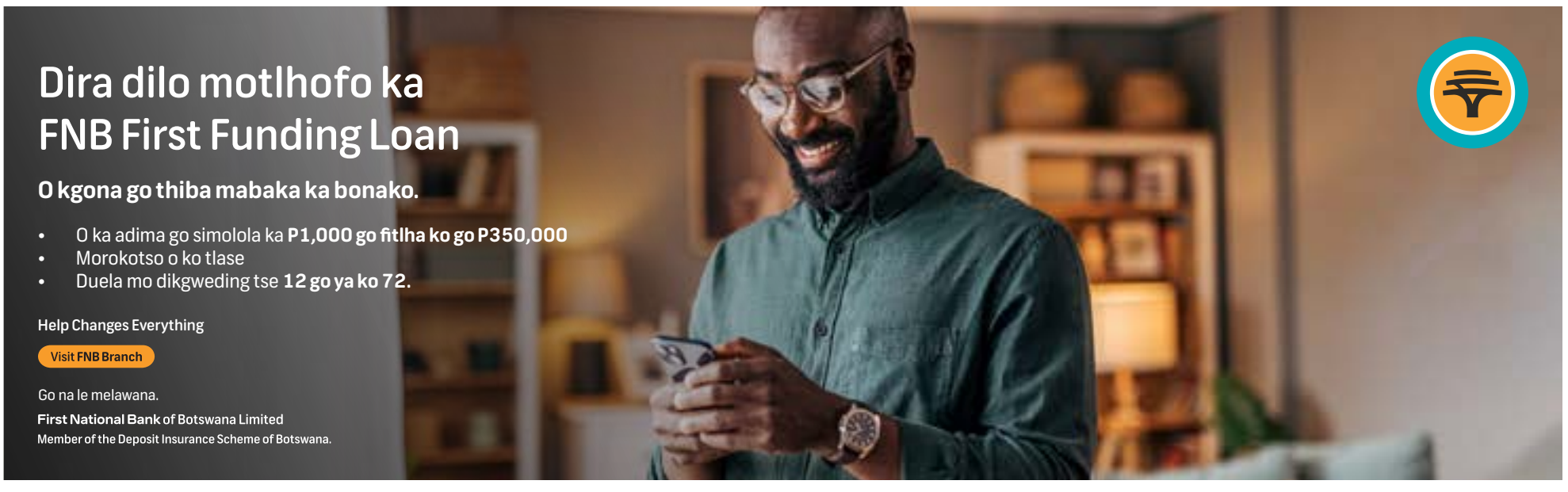
FILE PHOTO: Medicines are delivered at SKMTH on 5 February 2026, as supply remains a challenge for the UDC government. *(Pic: Monirul Bhuiyan/PRESS PHOTO)*



4. De Beers CEO Signals Final Deal?

De Beers CEO Al Cook has indicated that the diamond giant's future ownership structure could evolve

Taxi Operators Threaten to Surrender Permits 6.



GOVT, PHARMA MAKE PEACE?

Government and pharmaceutical suppliers have moved to ease tensions after months of strained relations over medicine pricing and procurement practices, but pricing fights, supply gaps and system risks still linger


(File Photo: Monirul Bhuiyan/PRESS PHOTO)

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Government has moved to engage all registered Central Medical Store suppliers in a bid to stabilise medicine availability in public health facilities, following months of strained relations with pharmaceutical companies and intermediaries over pricing, procurement practices and persistent shortages.

The engagement comes against a backdrop of public concern over empty pharmacy shelves, rising out-of-pocket medical expenditure, and ongoing allegations of inflated mediine prices involving middlemen supplying the state.

Govt Seeks Immediate 30-Day Supply Commitments

During a recent meeting with manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers, government officials indicated that they are seeking to urgently replenish critical medicine stocks.

Authorities presented suppliers with a list of essential medicines and requested them to confirm what stock they can supply immediately, and what quantities they can deliver within 30 days.

Government officials said the responses will be assessed, after which selected suppliers will be contacted for possible inclusion under a Government Procurement Organisation (GPO) arrangement.

The GPO framework is expected to streamline procurement and improve bulk purchasing efficiency, while reducing reliance on fragmented supply chains.

SHIFT TO DIGITAL PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

In a further reform, government also announced that all Requests for Quotations (RFQs) and tender opportunities will, going forward, be issued through an official government procurement website

Suppliers will also receive text message notifications directing them to the platform where they can access procurement opportunities.

Officials said the move is intended to improve transparency, widen participation and reduce delays associated with manual procurement systems.

MINISTRY CONFIRMS DISCUSSIONS

Confirming the engagement, Ministry of Health spokesperson Christopher Nyanga told The Botswana Gazette that suppliers were invited to declare what medicines they could immediately deliver.

"With regard to the meeting between the Central Medical Stores and medicine suppliers, I can confirm that the meeting took place this afternoon as previously announced. During the meeting, suppliers were presented with a list of required medicines and invited to indicate their capacity and willingness to supply the listed items. The engagement forms part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the availability of essential medicines within the health system," Nyanga told this publication.

INDUSTRY RAISES RED FLAGS OVER STOCKHOLDING AND FAIRNESS

However, the pharmaceutical industry has raised concerns over the feasibility and fairness of the new approach.

In an interview with this publication, some stakeholders argue "that most suppliers do not hold large volumes of medicines on standby, as pharmaceutical supply chains typically operate on demand-driven procurement and importation cycles".

Some industry players also warned that "the system could be vulnerable to manipulation, alleging that officials may have selectively informed preferred suppliers to pre-stock certain medicines ahead of formal RFQs".

"There is a risk of distortion if suppliers are expected to hold inventory without formal orders," one industry source said, adding that this could undermine fair competition.

PRICING DISPUTE AND DIRECT PROCUREMENT DEBATE

Pharmaceutical companies have also called for the normalisation of tender pricing structures, arguing that current procurement uncertainty has destabilised the market and discouraged consistent supply.

The government, however, has previously accused intermediaries and suppliers of inflating prices through opaque import arrangements, prompting a shift towards direct procurement in some instances.

This tension has deepened mistrust between the state and suppliers, with each side accusing the other of driving up costs in an already strained health system.

OPPOSITION WARNS OF NEW CORRUPTION RISKS

Opposition parties have cautioned the ruling UDC that while they attribute direct procurement as intended to cut costs and eliminate middlemen, it may introduce new vulnerabilities.

They argue that bypassing competitive tender processes could open the door to "preferred bidders" and politically connected suppliers benefiting from state contracts.

"The risk is not eliminated, it is simply relocated," opposition leader, Dumelang Saleshando has warned, further advising that procurement discretion without strict safeguards could undermine transparency.

Call For Structured Procurement And Local Industry Support

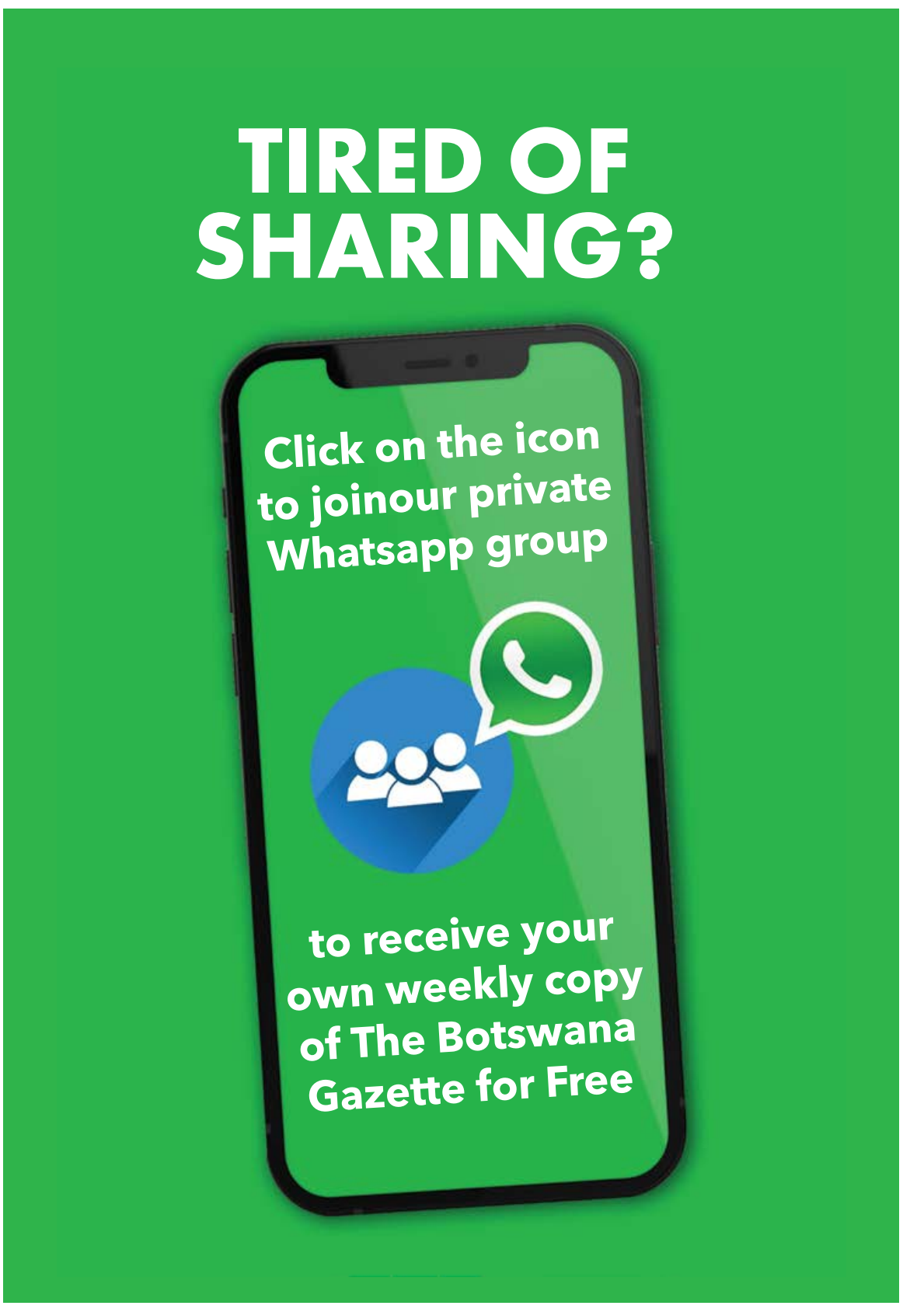
Some industry stakeholders have urged government to separate procurement processes, particularly by issuing dedicated tenders for manufacturers rather than relying heavily on distributors and wholesalers.

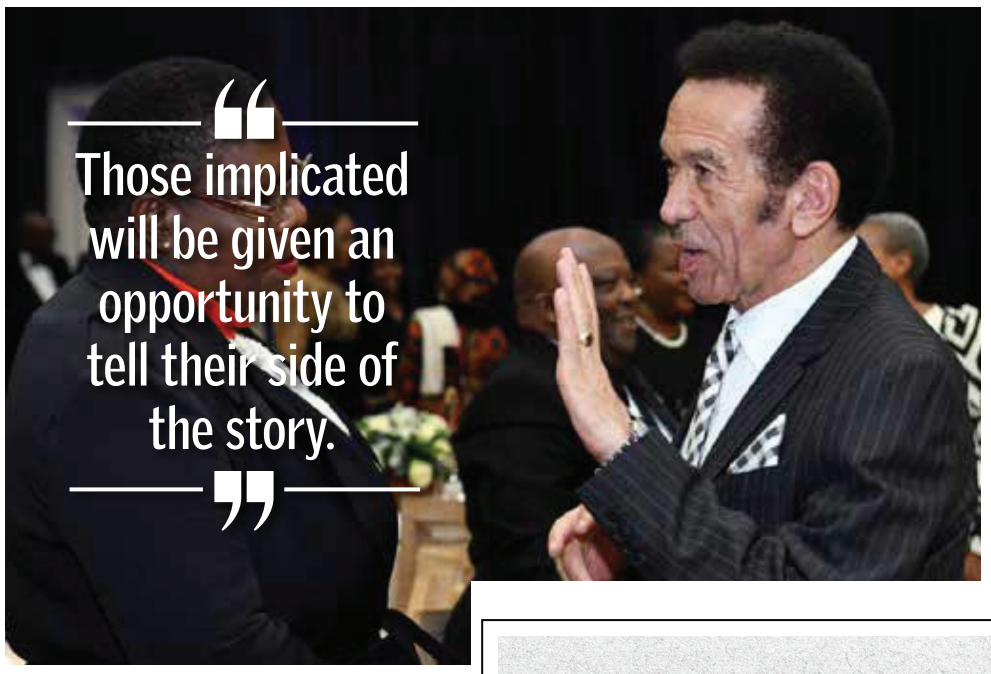
They argue that such a model would strengthen direct manufacturer engagement, improve price stability, and support local industrial development in the pharmaceutical sector.

BALANCING ACCESS, COST AND TRANSPARENCY

As negotiations continue, government faces mounting pressure to resolve medicine shortages while simultaneously addressing allegations of inflated pricing and procurement inefficiencies.

The outcome of the current engagement with suppliers is expected to shape Botswana's pharmaceutical procurement model going forward, particularly as authorities seek to balance urgent public health needs with long-term transparency and cost containment reforms.





Hunt Begins for P100bn Case ‘Fabricators’?

The DPP director’s declaration that there was “no evidence whatsoever” in the P100 billion case is set to trigger a hard test of whether it amounts to deliberate fabrication of evidence or merely professional misjudgment by state agents

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

A major criminal investigation targeting law enforcement agents behind the controversial P100 billion case is expected to get underway after the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) concluded that case was a non-starter.

The development has effectively opened the door to potential perjury and criminal charges against investigators who compiled and swore to affidavits that triggered one of Botswana’s most politically sensitive prosecutions in recent years.

At the centre of the fallout is a damning assessment by DPP director Kgosietsile Ngakayagae, who told the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) this week that the entire case was built on no evidentiary foundation.

“There is no evidence in the P100 billion case. There was no case from the start and there is no single government department that was concerned with the issue. We need to end this case,” Ngakayagae told the committee.

The remarks mark a striking reversal in a matter that had placed Khama, former intelligence chief Isaac Kgosi, and Spy officer Wilheminah Maswabi under intense legal and public scrutiny over allegations linked to an alleged multibillion-pula scandal. With Kgosi dead, Khama and Maswabi are the only ones currently pursuing justice in the matter.

FROM PROSECUTION TO PERJURY PROBE

With the DPP now signalling that the case should be closed, attention is shifting sharply to the conduct of investigators who initiated the charges.

Ngakayagae confirmed that officers alleged to have authored or supported the affidavit that launched the prosecution will now be scrutinised and could be subjected to criminal proceedings if evidence of wrongdoing is established.

“I have taken a decision that this matter should be dealt with and resolved, and a final decision has to be taken. Those implicated will be given an opportunity to tell their side of the story,” he said.

Legal sources say the focus is expected to fall on whether the affidavit contained knowingly false information or was misleadingly constructed to secure prosecutions without a factual basis—raising the possibility of perjury, abuse of office, and defeating the ends of justice charges.

KHAMA’S LONG FIGHT FOR EXONERATION

For years, Khama has maintained that the P100 billion allegations were politically driven and unsupported by evidence. He previously petitioned the DPP to investigate DCEC officers, arguing that fabricated claims had been used to justify his prosecution and damage his reputation.





De Beers CEO Signals Final Deal?

De Beers CEO Al Cook has indicated that the diamond giant's future ownership structure could evolve, signaling a potential shift in the company's long-term corporate model

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's long-standing ambition to deepen its influence over global diamond giant De Beers may have received its strongest endorsement yet after Chief Executive Officer Al Cook signaled that the company's future ownership structure could take the form of a partnership involving diamond-producing governments and strategic investors.

Speaking at the Reuters NEXT Europe Economic Summit in London last week, Cook revealed that the prolonged process to sell De Beers is now entering its final stretch, stating that a transaction is expected to conclude "within weeks rather than months."

His comments have intensified attention in Botswana, where the government has openly expressed interest in increasing the country's stake in the company beyond its current 15 percent shareholding.

WEEKS RATHER THAN MONTHS

"I am hopeful that the sale of De Beers will happen in weeks rather than months going forward. It's been a two-year period, there have been a lot of negotiations, and we have never been closer than we are to a sale," Cook said in an interview with international media outlet Observer Money.

Botswana has been assembling a consortium aimed at strengthening its position in any ownership transition. Reports indicate that the consortium includes support from the Oman Investment Authority and engagement with the United Arab Emirates, alongside participation from fellow diamond-producing nations Angola and Namibia.

According to another report from Bloomberg, the Botswana-backed consortium is among the three most advanced bidders currently under consideration. Competing interests reportedly include a rival group led by former De Beers chief Gareth Penny and another bid fronted by Israeli businessman Nir Livnat.

HYBRID OWNERSHIP

However, Cook's latest comments suggest that the eventual outcome may not produce a traditional private acquisition. Instead, the De Beers CEO pointed toward a hybrid ownership structure that combines sovereign interests with private capital and industry expertise.

"The good thing about us is that we have had countries that understand diamonds, Namibia, Botswana and Angola, want to take equity stakes in De Beers. We have consortiums and companies that know a lot about diamonds," Cook said.

DE BEERS' NEXT CHAPTER

Cook then appeared to articulate what many observers believe could become the preferred structure for De Beers' next chapter. "We have all the ingredients for a powerful public-private partnership. But as with all deals, we need to get over the line," he stated.

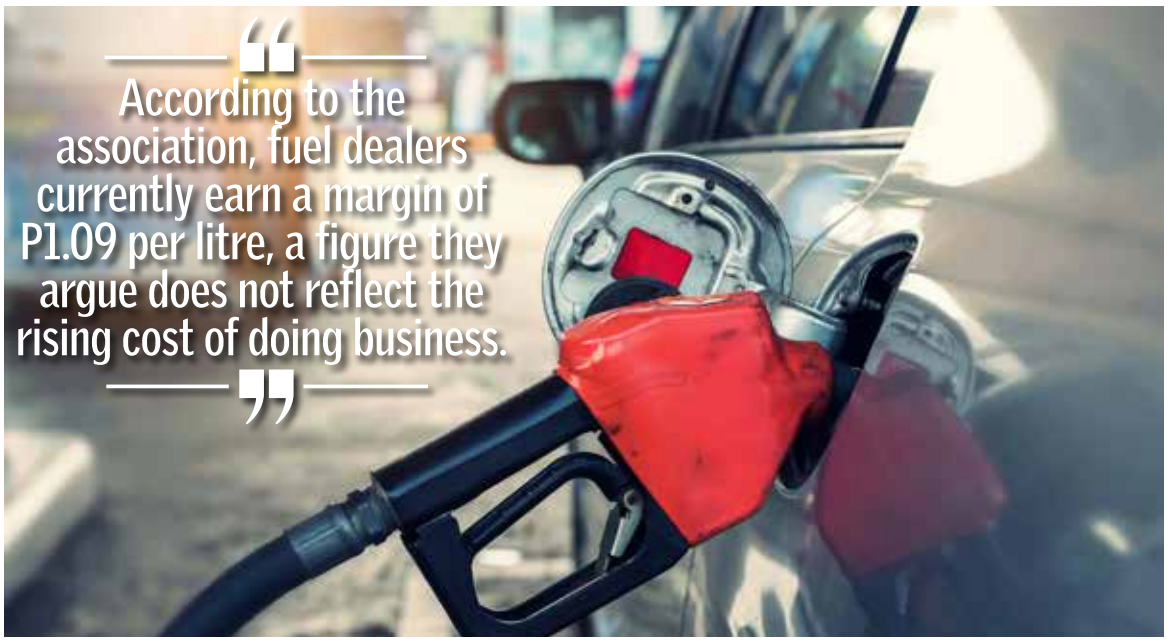
A PPP-style ownership arrangement would represent a significant departure from De Beers' traditional corporate structure and could give Botswana a rare opportunity to convert its status as the world's leading diamond producer by value into greater strategic influence over the global diamond value chain.



NEWS BRIEFS

BONGANI MALUNGA

Fuel Retailers Decry Low Profits



The Botswana Petroleum Retailers Association (BOPRA) says fuel retailers continue to face mounting financial pressure despite successive increases in fuel pump prices, arguing that higher prices at the forecourt have not translated into meaningful gains for dealers. Addressing the media last week, the association said public perception that fuel retailers benefit directly whenever fuel prices increase is misleading.

BOPRA explained that while pump prices have climbed in recent months, partly driven by instability and supply disruptions linked to conflict in the Middle East, the dealer margin has remained largely stagnant and insufficient to sustain operations. According to the association, fuel dealers currently earn a margin of P1.09 per litre, a figure they argue does not reflect the rising cost of doing business. BOPRA noted that although the margin was adjusted upward by 18 thebe over the last six months, it marked the first increase in approximately three years.

The association further highlighted that over the past decade, dealer margins have only increased from P0.66 to P1.09 despite inflationary pressures, rising labour costs, utility expenses and increasing operational demands across the sector. BOPRA warned that unless margins are reviewed more regularly, some retailers may struggle to remain viable, particularly smaller operators outside major urban centres.

The association has appealed to the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA) to urgently intervene and establish a more sustainable pricing framework that balances consumer affordability with the long-term survival of fuel retailers.

P120 Million Plan to Tackle Estates Delays Takes Shape



The Administration of Justice is set to restructure the administration of estates by separating the Office of the Master of the High Court from the Office of the Chief Registrar in a move aimed at accelerating the handling of estate matters and reducing persistent delays.

Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Nelson Ramaotwana, revealed the plan during a session of Ntlo Ya Dikgosi on Monday. According to Ramaotwana, the separation of the two offices will allow the Master’s Office to operate independently with dedicated resources and administrative capacity tailored specifically to estate administration.

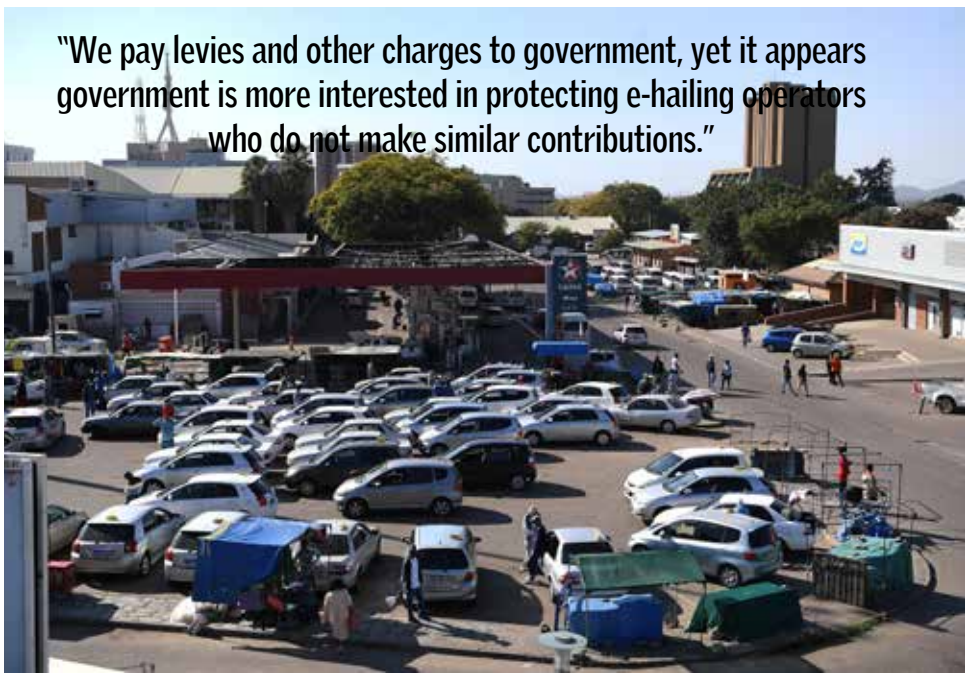
“This will enable the Master’s Office to have its own resources. Following the restructuring, more Master’s Offices will be established across the country,” Ramaotwana confirmed. The minister said government has earmarked P120 million to implement the restructuring exercise. The funding will support institutional changes, including the recruitment of additional specialised legal personnel to serve as assistant Masters.

The intervention comes amid concerns over delays in the processing and finalisation of deceased estates, an issue that has affected beneficiaries awaiting inheritance distribution and closure of estate matters. By expanding capacity and decentralising services through additional offices, the government expects the reforms to improve turnaround times and ease pressure on the existing system.



Taxi Operators Threaten to Surrender Permits

Taxi operators have warned that they may return their operating licences and switch to e-hailing services if government moves ahead with plans to introduce regulations perceived as favouring digital transport platforms



SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

Taxi operators have threatened to surrender their operating permits and migrate to the e-hailing business if government proceeds with plans to protect technology-based transport platforms, arguing that the traditional taxi industry is being sidelined despite its contribution to the economy.

GOV'T STANCE SPARKS BACKLASH

The warning was issued by Botswana Taxi Association chairman Balopi Lekgowe following remarks by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs Pius Mokgware that government has resolved to protect businesses that rely on technology platforms.

Speaking to *The Botswana Gazette*, Lekgowe said the government's position has alarmed taxi operators who believe authorities are prioritizing e-hailing services at the expense of a heavily regulated taxi industry.

"If government proceeds with this proposal, taxi operators will have no choice but to return their permits and join the e-hailing business because it is easier to operate," he said.

Minister Mokgware said e-hailing services are here to stay and cannot be wished away.

FEELING NEGLECTED

Lekgowe accused government of failing to take the taxi industry seriously despite its contribution to public revenue through licensing fees, service levies and other regulatory charges.

"We pay levies and other charges to government, yet it appears government is more interested in protecting e-hailing operators who do not make similar contributions," he said.

He argued that e-hailing operators enjoy competitive advantages while traditional taxi operators continue to shoulder extensive regulatory obligations.

NO CONSULTATION

Lekgowe said taxi operators were surprised by government's position because they were not consulted before the announcement was made.

He said the association has repeatedly sought engagement with government on the growing influence of e-hailing services and the need for a level playing field within the public transport sector.

He added that "the association met the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Noah Salakae last year to discuss challenges facing the taxi industry and regulation of e-hailing services, but is still awaiting feedback."

SALAKAE URGES ADAPTATION

Reached for comment, Salakae said government intends to regulate all sectors of the economy, but regulation of e-hailing services will not be rushed.

"We have to conduct due diligence and ensure that all stakeholders are taken into confidence before any decision is made," he said.

He urged taxi operators to embrace digital platforms, saying global transport systems are increasingly technology-driven.

"The world is moving in that direction and customers have already embraced these platforms," Salakae added.

Taxi operators argue that current regulatory requirements place them at a disadvantage compared to e-hailing operators, setting the stage for further confrontation over the future of Botswana's public transport sector.



Procurement Paralysis Hits Contractors

Government contractors have been left waiting as the prolonged outage of the PPRA's procurement system forces ministries back to slow manual processes, delaying approvals, registrations and contract awards across the public tendering chain.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Government tendering processes across the country have been thrown into sustained disruption following the prolonged unavailability of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority's (PPRA) Integrated Procurement Management System (IPMS), leaving contractors, procuring entities and oversight institutions operating under fragmented manual arrangements.

The digital procurement platform, which underpins government tendering and contract management, has been offline since March 2026 with no full restoration achieved to date. In a series of circulars issued to ministries and government departments, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority confirmed that both the IPMS and its official website remain inaccessible due to what it described as a system-related technical failure affecting responsiveness to user requests.

> "Contractors requiring services through the system are regrettably advised to await restoration of the system."

EFFORT TO RESTORE FUNCTIONALITY

"The Integrated Procurement Management System (IPMS) is currently unavailable," the Authority stated, adding that "the disruption has been identified as a system-related issue affecting responsiveness to user requests."

PPRA said it has engaged external technical experts alongside its internal ICT team in an effort to restore functionality, but acknowledged that the outage has persisted for months, creating operational bottlenecks across the public procurement system.

"The Authority wishes to assure all stakeholders that restoring system functionality remains our top priority, and every effort is being made to resolve the issue as quickly as possible," it said.

INTERIM MEASURES

With the system down, government institutions have been instructed to revert to interim manual processes to keep procurement activity running.

According to the latest circular, "procuring entities are required to ensure verification of bidder registration with the Authority as part of the evaluation process prior to contract award."

It further warned that "no procurement above the P100,000.00 micro procurement threshold shall proceed to contract award without confirmation of bidder registration status from the Authority."

TENDER DELAYS AND BACKLOG CONCERNS

Although tender advertisements and bid submissions are still permitted under limited conditions, key stages of procurement—particularly approvals and contract awards—have effectively slowed or stalled. This has triggered concerns among stakeholders over a growing backlog risk across ministries, departments and state-owned entities dependent on timely procurement processes.

Contractors have been among the hardest hit, reporting uncertainty and delays in project execution timelines. PPRA itself acknowledged the strain on the private sector, advising firms to await restoration of the system for certain services.

"Contractors requiring services through the system are regrettably advised to await restoration of the system," the Authority said.

However, it clarified that where tenders have already been issued and firms possess the required codes and sub-codes, they may proceed with bid preparation and submission, with registration confirmation to be completed once the system is restored.

RESTRICTED EVALUATIONS AND RESTORATION TIMELINE

The circular also allows evaluation processes to continue, but bars final award decisions pending system recovery.

The Authority has indicated that it is targeting early July 2026 for possible full restoration, subject to completion of ongoing technical assessments.



BOTSWANA'S DEMOCRACY WEAK ON CIVIL LIBERTIES

Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2026 report praises Botswana's strong electoral democracy but warns of persistent weaknesses in media freedom, transparency, and the protection of minority rights



(File Photo: Monirul Bhuiyan/PRESS PHOTO)

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's democratic credentials have come under renewed international scrutiny after a leading global freedom watchdog highlighted persistent shortcomings in political rights, civil liberties and government accountability despite the country's recent historic political transition.

In its latest Freedom in the World 2026 report, Freedom House acknowledged Botswana's standing as one of Africa's most stable democracies but cautioned that deep-rooted institutional weaknesses continue to undermine the full enjoyment of democratic freedoms.

The report comes less than two years after the landmark 2024 General Election, which ended decades of uninterrupted rule by a single political party and ushered in a new era of coalition governance.

"While it is considered one of the most stable democracies in Africa, Botswana was dominated by a single party between independence and the 2024 election, and many institutions answer to the office of the president," the report states.

Freedom House found that Botswana performs strongly in electoral processes, awarding the country full marks for the election of the head of government and members of Parliament. The report also gave Botswana maximum scores for freedom of assembly and the ability of opposition parties to organize and compete for power.

However, the watchdog argued that electoral success alone does not guarantee a fully functioning democracy.

MEDIA FREEDOM AND TRANSPARENCY UNDER SPOTLIGHT

One of the report's most significant concerns relates to media freedom. Botswana received only two out of four points for media independence, with Freedom House warning that journalists continue to operate under pressure from hostile litigation and restrictive laws.

"Media freedom is threatened by hostile lawsuits against journalists and restrictive legislative provisions," the report notes.

Government transparency also emerged as a major area of concern. Botswana scored two out of four points on openness and accountability, suggesting that citizens still face obstacles in accessing information and effectively scrutinizing public officials.

The report further noted that corruption safeguards and the overall functioning of government failed to attain full marks.

MARGINALIZED GROUPS CHALLENGED

According to the report, Indigenous San communities, migrants, refugees, LGBT+ persons and people living with disabilities continue to face barriers to equal treatment and full participation in society.

Botswana received only two out of four points for ensuring that different population groups enjoy full political rights and electoral opportunities. Similar scores were recorded for equality before the law and protection against discrimination.

> "Media freedom is threatened by hostile lawsuits against journalists and restrictive legislative provisions."

Labour rights also attracted criticism, with the country scoring two out of four points for the freedom of trade unions and professional organizations, indicating ongoing challenges for workers seeking to exercise collective rights.

Although Botswana's judiciary was credited with maintaining a measure of independence, the report concluded that shortcomings remain in due process protections, equal treatment before the law and access to justice.

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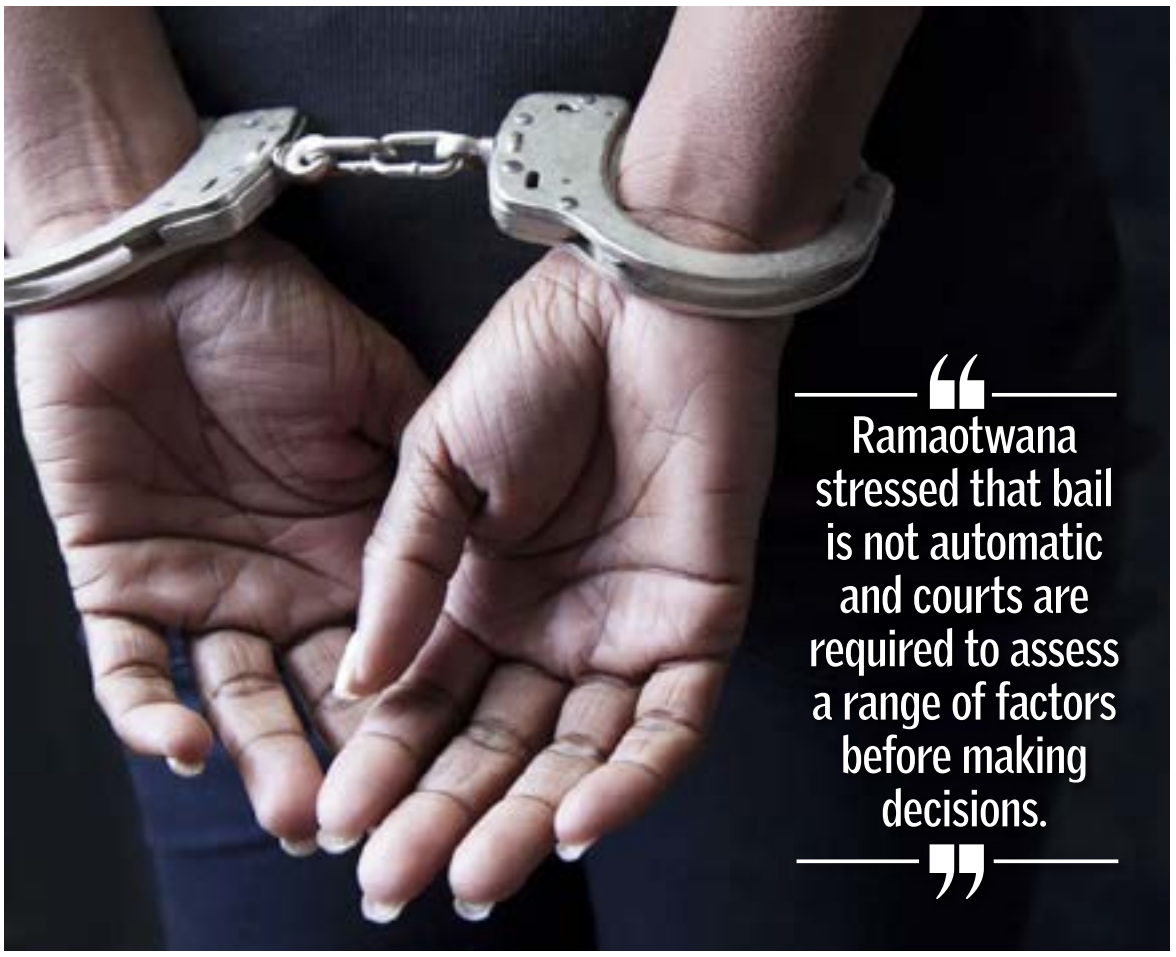
Govt Rejects Calls to Deny Bail to Murder Accused

Government has rejected calls to automatically deny murder suspects bail, insisting existing laws already protect public safety



BONGANI MALUNGA

The Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services has ruled out an immediate review of Botswana's Bail Act to automatically deny bail to people charged with murder, arguing that the current law already provides sufficient safeguards while preserving constitutional rights.

Responding to a Ntlo Ya Dikgosi question on Tuesday, the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services Nelson Ramaotwana said the ministry does not believe a blanket prohibition on bail for murder suspects would be appropriate at this stage.

Ramaotwana defended the existing framework, saying the Bail Act, which came into operation in March 2024, was specifically designed to tighten and standardise decisions on whether accused persons should be released pending trial.

CLEAR AND STRUCTURED FRAMEWORK

“The law already gives courts a clear and structured framework to determine when bail should be granted or refused, particularly in serious offences,” Ramaotwana said. He explained that the legislation was introduced against concerns that some accused persons facing serious charges were being released and allegedly committing further offences before their trials concluded.

According to the minister, the Act was deliberately crafted to balance competing interests, protecting public safety while safeguarding constitutional rights such as liberty and the presumption of innocence.

BAIL NOT AUTOMATIC

Ramaotwana stressed that bail is not automatic and courts are required to assess a range of factors before making decisions. “Judicial officers must consider the seriousness of the offence, the safety of victims, the risk of an accused person absconding, protection of witnesses and the broader interests of justice,” he said.

The minister noted that murder cases already attract heightened scrutiny under the current legal framework. He said complainants in such matters are afforded an opportunity to be heard and courts are required to consider their safety, interests and concerns before granting bail.

Rejecting calls for an outright ban, Ramaotwana argued that introducing automatic denial of bail would undermine constitutional principles and remove judicial discretion to consider each case on its merits.

“Our priority is to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the current law while continuing to monitor its impact and considering future reforms only where evidence supports change,” he said. He added that the government remains open to reviewing the law in future but maintained that no immediate amendments are necessary.

NOTICE

CAUTIONARY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2026

Botswana Savings Bank (“BSB”) is required, in accordance with Botswana Stock Exchange (“BSE”) Listing Requirements, to announce any potentially price sensitive information to the BSE and any stakeholders. BSE stipulates that “An Issuer must publish on X-News, a cautionary statement as soon as possible after it is in possession of potentially price sensitive information.”

The BSB Board of Directors hereby informs holders of BSB securities that the Bank’s profit after tax for the period ended 31 March 2026 is likely to be around P400,000 (Four hundred thousand Pula) to P405,000 (Four hundred and five thousand Pula) approximately 98% to 99% lower than the profit after tax of P76.8 million reported for the period ended 31 March 2025.

The actual results are subject to final review and confirmation by our external auditors and Bank of Botswana. Full details will be provided upon publication of the financial results due to be released not later than the 30th June 2026.

Investors are accordingly advised to exercise caution when dealing in the Bank’s securities until the results are formally published.

By Order

Board of Directors
23 June 2026

For more information: 367 0100 | www.bsb.bw

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DIS Faces Public Scrutiny

A proposed complaints mechanism could give citizens a formal channel to report concerns over intelligence officers as Moeti Mohwasa moves to recast the DIS as accountable, apolitical and focused strictly on national security threats.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The government has announced plans to establish a formal public complaints mechanism against the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS), signalling attempts in efforts to build public confidence in the controversial agency.

Addressing Ntlo Ya Dikgosi on Monday, the Minister of State President, Defence and Security Moeti Mohwasa said the government intends to create a channel through which citizens can report concerns about the conduct of intelligence officers without compromising national security operations.

"We intend to establish an appropriate mechanism through which citizens may raise complaints or concerns regarding the conduct of intelligence officers. Such a mechanism will strengthen accountability while preserving the operational integrity necessary for intelligence work," Mohwasa revealed.

DRIFTED BEYOND ITS MANDATE

The announcement comes against the backdrop of years of criticism and allegations that the DIS had drifted beyond its intelligence mandate and into political territory under previous administrations.



(File Photo: Monirul Bhuiyan/PRESS PHOTO)

While many of the allegations were never tested in court or formally proven, they became a recurring feature of Botswana's public discourse and opposition politics.

Mohwasa acknowledged those concerns and emphasised that the current administration intends to redefine the institution's relationship with citizens. "We have made it clear that the DIS must concern itself with genuine threats to national security and not the lawful political activities of citizens," Mohwasa told Ntlo Ya Dikgosi on Monday.

He stated that the DIS is a national security institution and not a political institution. In the past regime there were allegations that government used the security organ to fight political wars and intimidate citizens. Mohwasa maintains that the current government wants the DIS to be feared by criminals, spies and those who threaten national security but trusted by law-abiding citizens.

PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

Over the years, the DIS has repeatedly found itself at the centre of public controversy. Critics accused the agency of surveillance, intimidation and operating with limited oversight, claims the institution consistently rejected. Academic research published in 2025 by Kebapetse Lotshwao (Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Tourism), argued that the agency's broad mandate and limited accountability structures contributed to public perceptions of coercion and political influence.

> Mohwasa maintains that the current government wants the DIS to be feared by criminals, spies and those who threaten national security but trusted by law-abiding citizens.

More recently, internal legal disputes involving suspended intelligence officers alleging unlawful arrest and detention reignited debate around accountability mechanisms within the agency. If implemented, the complaints mechanism could become one of the most significant institutional reforms to the intelligence sector since the DIS was established in 2008.

Secure Tomorrow
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AON | Global Network Correspondent

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Dear Valued Fund Member,

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining accurate member records and complying with regulatory requirements, members of the **Free Standing Additional Voluntary Contributions Retirement Fund** are requested to submit updated **Know Your Customer (KYC)** documents.

Required Documents:
- **Certified copy of Valid National Identity Document (Omang/Passport)**
- **Proof of Residential Address** (not older than 3 months where applicable)

Examples of proof of residential address may include:

- Utility bill
- Letter from employer confirming residential address.
- Affidavit

Kindly ensure that the documents submitted are **clear, valid and certified**.

Members are informed that the submission of these documents is required annually.

Documents may be submitted through:
Email: Sindie.thekiso@minet.co.bw ; goitseone.magetse@minet.co.bw
Offices: Gaborone, Minet House, Gaborone Business Park, Showgrounds
Enquiries: 3617300 and request to speak to a pension Fund consultant.

Your cooperation is appreciated as this process helps ensure that Fund records remain accurate and that member benefits can be administered efficiently.

Issued by:
Free Standing Additional Voluntary Contributions Retirement Fund Board of Trustees

Union Calls Out PS Over Court Paper Crisis

BOPEU rejects PAC testimony on alleged hidden supplies, saying public offices and courts remain crippled by shortages of paper, toner and ink.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU) has strongly rejected claims made before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) suggesting that government offices were deliberately withholding paper and toner supplies, describing the allegations as misleading and damaging to parliamentary oversight processes.

BOPEU REJECTS PAC TESTIMONY CLAIMS

The union’s General Secretary, Ketlhapeleng Karabo, said statements attributed to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, Jimmy Opelo, during a recent PAC hearing did not reflect operational realities on the ground.

“BOPEU is deeply concerned by statements made by the Permanent Secretary… Parliamentary oversight processes are built on the principles of truth, accountability, and transparency,” Karabo said, warning that any deviation risks eroding public trust in state institutions.

“NO HIDDEN SUPPLIES,” UNION INSISTS

BOPEU dismissed suggestions that the Broadhurst Labour Office was stockpiling paper and toner while other offices experienced shortages. Following the PAC hearing, the union conducted what it described as an urgent verification visit to the facility.

“What we found was markedly different from what was presented,” Karabo said. “There were no hidden supplies of paper or toner at the office.”

He added that officers were instead struggling to maintain basic operations and had to borrow toner from another department in order to continue providing services.

SERVICE DELIVERY UNDER STRAIN

According to BOPEU, the Broadhurst Labour Office—responsible for servicing the wider Gaborone area—is operating under severe resource constraints, including limited access to consumables and reliance on a small office printer.

“These shortages have a direct impact on service delivery and place unnecessary strain on officers who are already working under challenging conditions,” the union said.

WIDER PUBLIC SECTOR SHORTAGES

The revelations come amid growing reports of similar shortages in other public institutions, including courts across Botswana, where essential supplies such as paper, toner and ink cartridges are reportedly in short supply. The situation has prompted the Law Society of Botswana to appeal for donations to support court operations.

Some court divisions are said to have scaled back printing and documentation activities, raising concerns about delays in case processing and worsening backlogs.

UNION DENIES CONSULTATION ON MERGER PLAN

BOPEU also rejected claims that it was consulted on the proposed merger between the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) and the Institute of Development Management (IDM), insisting that no formal engagement took place.

“At no stage was the Union formally engaged on the matter, nor were its views sought before the claim was presented to the Public Accounts Committee,” Karabo said.

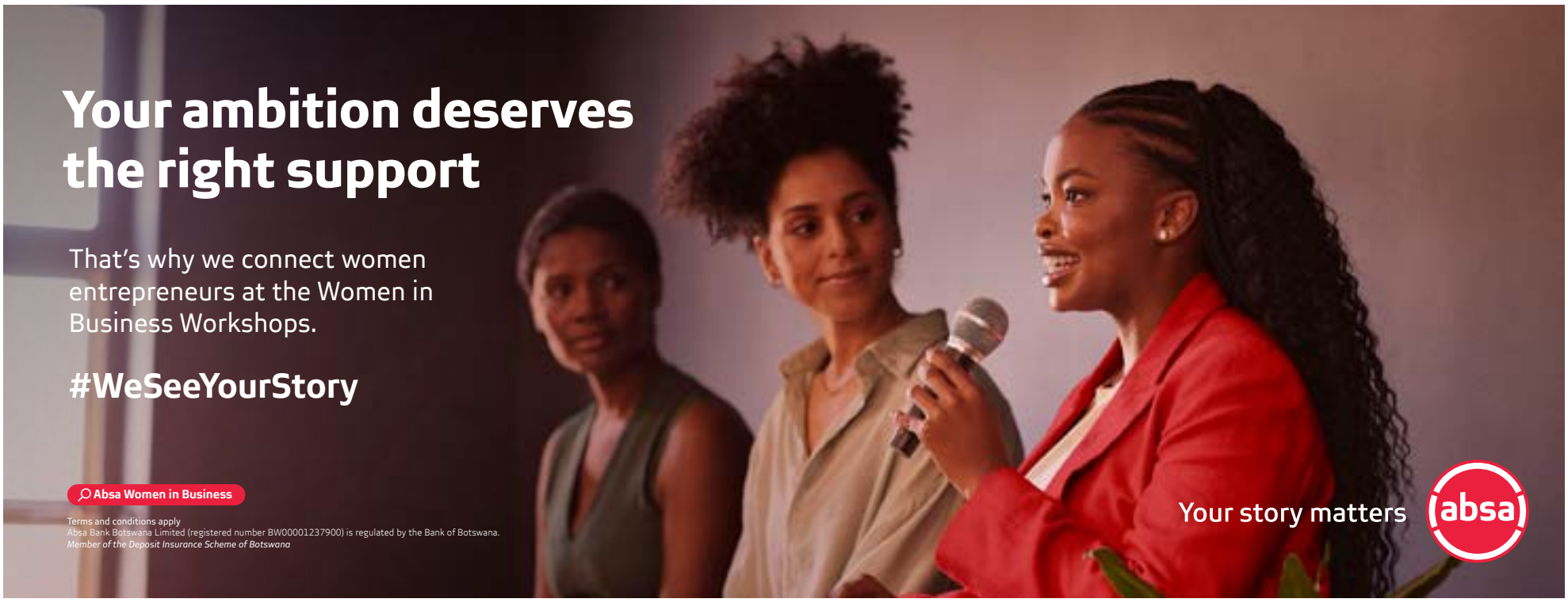
He stressed that consultation is a legal requirement in labour relations, not a discretionary practice extended at will.

“Consultation is not a favour extended to workers and their representatives; it is a fundamental pillar of sound labour relations,” he said.

CALL FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

BOPEU has since urged PAC chairperson Taolo Lucas to require a public apology from Opelo, arguing that corrective action is necessary to restore credibility in the oversight process.





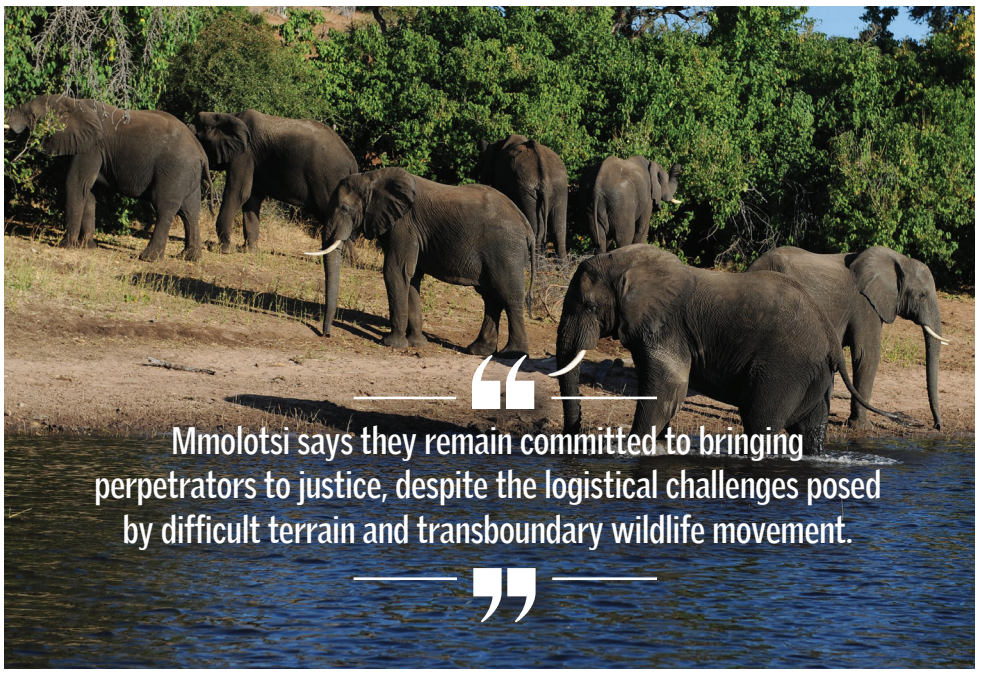
35 Elephants Killed, No Arrests

Authorities say arresting and prosecuting elephant poachers is difficult as suspects often cross borders shortly after the offences

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana have reported a continued escalation in elephant poaching, with official figures confirming that 35 elephants were killed in 2025 alone. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has, however, expressed concern that no arrests or successful prosecutions have yet been recorded in connection with the incidents.

Appearing before Ntlo Ya Dikgosi, the Minister of Environment and Tourism Wynter Mmolotsi acknowledged that no arrests or prosecutions have yet been made in connection with the incidents, citing operational challenges in remote conservation areas.



> "Mmolotsi says they remain committed to bringing perpetrators to justice, despite the logistical challenges posed by difficult terrain and transboundary wildlife movement."

"Investigations are ongoing. Apprehension and prosecution of these criminals is often a challenge as the poaching occured in the wilderness of Chobe and Okavango and is perpetrated by foreign nationals who cross back into their countries as soon as they have completed their deeds or realise that their presence has been detected," Mmolotsi told Ntlo Ya Dikgosi on Monday.

RENEWED CONCERNS

The revelation has renewed concerns over wildlife protection in Botswana's northern conservation corridors, particularly in the Chobe and Okavango areas where vast terrain and porous borders complicate enforcement efforts. Wildlife officers have repeatedly warned that syndicates often exploit remote landscapes, allowing suspects to evade capture by quickly crossing into neighbouring countries after carrying out illegal hunting activities.

Weaknesses in cross-border coordination and limited surveillance capacity in some protected zones have also been cited as contributing factors to the ongoing poaching incidents.

The Ministry has indicated that efforts are being intensified to strengthen patrols, improve intelligence sharing, and enhance collaboration with neighbouring states to curb wildlife crime. Government officials have further highlighted plans to expand community-based natural resource management programmes, deploy additional anti-poaching units and invest in aerial surveillance technologies such as drones and helicopters to improve detection rates, while also seeking increased support from international conservation partners and neighbouring countries in strengthening border monitoring and intelligence sharing efforts ongoing now.

UNDERMINING CONSERVATION GAINS

Tourism stakeholders have expressed concern that continued poaching could undermine conservation gains and negatively affect Botswana's reputation as a leading safari destination. Mmolotsi says they remain committed to bringing perpetrators to justice, despite the logistical challenges posed by difficult terrain and transboundary wildlife movement.

Cross-border intelligence gaps continue to hamper rapid response operations, making coordinated regional enforcement essential for reducing elephant poaching incidents across protected ecosystems in southern Africa.

Botswana Savings Bank | TENDERING PROCEDURES | TENDER NOTICE

A THREE-YEAR SERVICE CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICES TO THE BOTSWANA SAVINGS BANK AT VARIOUS SITES

TENDER REF NO: BSB/PU/HC/013/2026/29

Tender offers are invited from local (100% citizen owned) contractors for the provision of refuse collection services to the Botswana Savings Bank at various sites

The procuring department is Botswana Savings Bank Human Capital Department, Facilities & Admin Section
Bidding method: Open Domestic Bidding

Bidders who are to be considered for award of the contract should be appropriately licensed to trade and or supply the services tendered for, and in possession of requisite documentation to trade and or supply such services according to the laws of Botswana.

All applicable citizen economic empowerment schemes such as Local Procurement Scheme (LPS), Citizen Economic Empowerment Programme (CEEP) and Economic Diversification Drive (EDD) shall be considered for evaluation and awarding purposes.

Documents shall be accessed from the below link: https://www.bsb.bw/tenders/ with effect from 24th June 2026. Tender documents shall be available in soft copies only. Bidders must share proof of payment upon payment of the tender fee to procurementunit@bsb.bw and attach to the bid submitted.

A non-refundable fee of 250.00 Botswana Pula (BWP) shall be paid by interested bidders to be eligible to tender. Youth-owned companies shall purchase the tender at half price (citizens only).

Payment shall be made at any of the following Botswana Savings Bank branches: BSB Headquarters, Rail Park, Palapye, Mahalapye, Molepolole, Serowe, Hukuntsi, Francistown, Maun, Kanye and Gumare at the following:

Account Name: Other Income
Account No: 1415-1-03-35-24-00-0000
Reference No: Bidder's Company Name

Or EFT

Account Name: Botswana Savings Bank
Account Number: 9060005770217
Account: BWP Current
Bank: Stanbic Bank
Branch Name: Fairgrounds
Branch/Sort Code: 064967
Swift Code: SBICBWGX

There will be a COMPULSORY SITE VISIT scheduled as follows:

1. Location: Gaborone BSB Headquarters
   Date: 29 June 2026
   Time: 1100 hrs
   Physical address: BSB Tshomarelo House front entrance, Plot 53796 Kagiso Mall.
2. Location: Gaborone warehouse
   Date: 29 June 2026
   Time: 1150hrs
   Physical address: Block 3, Unit 1, Western Industrial Estate, Plot 69365
3. Location: Molepolole branch
   Date: 30 June 2026
   Time: 0930hrs
   Physical Address: Lot no. 619 Molepolole
4. Location: Kanye branch
   Date: 30 June 2026
   Time: 1330hrs
   Physical address: Lot 320, Shop no.1 Kanye
5. Location: Gumare Branch
   Date: 03 July 2026
   Time: 1200 hrs
   Physical address: Lot No. 6017, shop 3, Gumare
6. Location: Maun Branch
   Date: 04 July 2026
   Time:0900hrs
   Physical address: Old Mall, Lot 739,Riverside ward, Maun

A one-envelope procedure will be followed. Bids must be submitted as follows;
Parts of each tender offer communicated on paper shall be submitted as one (1) original marked original plus two (2) copies

Queries relating to the issue of these documents may be addressed to Procurement Unit at Tel +267 3670237/ 3670239 tthoje@bsb.bw at least 5 days before tender closing date copied to bmkhutshwa@bsb.bw

The closing time for receipt of tender documents is 10:00am on 13 July 2026

Tender offers received after closing date, telegraphic, faxed or emailed submissions will not be accepted. Late tenders will be rejected and returned unopened to bidders. Names and addresses of bidders should be reflected on the envelopes.

The physical address for tender submission is:
Botswana Savings Bank
Plot 53796, Tshomarelo House
4th Floor Tender Box, Kagiso Mall,
P O Box 1150, Gaborone Botswana.

Tender opening shall be available strictly online at 1015hrs same day as closing date. A link shall be provided to bidders who share their emails with Botswana Savings Bank.

Tender documents not correctly packaged and labelled as indicated above will not be accepted.

The Botswana Savings Bank's Standardised Conditions of Tender apply to this procurement, for which all the applicable Tender Data is contained in the tender documents.

Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing, the Botswana Savings Bank is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender offer, nor incur expenses in the preparation thereof.

Contact Us on 367 0100 or Visit a BSB branch near you for more information.

www.bsb.bw
Member Of The Deposit Insurance Scheme Of Botswana.

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Inflation Ravages Pension Savings

The BPOPF warns that Botswana's rising cost of living is no longer just a household budget crisis, but a direct threat to the real value of workers' retirement savings.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's escalating cost of living crisis is not only tightening household budgets but is also posing a silent threat to the long-term value of retirement savings, the Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund (BPOPF) has warned.

> "If your savings grow at 4% but inflation is running at 8%, you are effectively losing purchasing power."

In a briefing note on recent inflation trends, the BPOPF said many Batswana are already feeling the pressure as fuel, transport and food prices continue to rise sharply, eroding purchasing power across income groups.

"Over the past few months, many Batswana have noticed the same uncomfortable reality: money simply does not stretch as far as it used to," the Fund noted.

The warning comes after Botswana's inflation rate climbed to 10.3 percent in April 2026, significantly above the Bank of Botswana's target range of 3 to 6 percent, signalling mounting price instability in the economy.

FUEL HIKES IDENTIFIED AS KEY DRIVER

According to BPOPF, the primary trigger behind the inflation surge has been successive fuel price increases, which have cascaded across the economy and driven up transport and goods prices.

The Fund said the first increase was implemented in September 2025 when the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority raised pump prices, immediately increasing transport and logistics costs. A second and sharper adjustment followed in March 2026, when petrol rose by P5.05 per litre, diesel by P8.77 per litre and illuminating paraffin by P10.55 per litre.

"Because fuel touches almost everything moving goods to shops, powering businesses and getting people to work, each adjustment fans out quickly across the broader economy," the briefing note said.

COST-PUSH INFLATION DOMINATES ECONOMY

BPOPF described the current inflationary environment as "cost-push inflation", where rising production and transport costs—rather than increased consumer demand—are driving price increases.

"This type of inflation, driven by rising costs of production rather than people spending more freely, is called cost-push inflation. It is harder to manage because it does not originate from within the economy," the Fund explained.

MONETARY POLICY RESPONSE UNDER PRESSURE

The briefing note highlighted the Bank of Botswana's response, noting that it has aggressively tightened monetary policy.

However, in an unusual policy approach, the central bank reportedly instructed commercial banks not to fully transmit the rate increases to consumers through higher lending rates, aiming to balance inflation control with financial stability and economic support.

PENSION SAVINGS FACE VALUE EROSION

Despite these interventions, BPOPF warned that persistent inflation poses a serious risk to long-term savings and pension investments, as rising prices reduce real returns over time.

It explained that even positive nominal returns may translate into real losses if inflation outpaces investment growth.

"If your savings grow at 4% but inflation is running at 8%, you are effectively losing purchasing power," the Fund said.

BPOPF added that future inflation trends will depend heavily on fuel prices, utility tariffs, global commodity movements and administered pricing decisions, all of which remain highly volatile and difficult to predict.



Tender Advertisement

Minerals Development Company Botswana Proprietary Limited (MDCB) is an investment company, established under the Companies Act of Botswana by the government of the Republic of Botswana to grow and optimise the Government's mining and minerals investment portfolio.

MDCB wishes to invite tender offers from 100% citizen-owned companies to bid for the tender as per details below. Vendors must be registered with the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority under the codes and sub-code stated below to be eligible to participate in this tendering process.

Tender Number	Tender Name	PPRA Code	Procurement Method	Closing Date & Time	Bid Opening Date & Time
MDCB 5/3/32 I (2)	CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR CONDUCTING A STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT OF A TWO-YEAR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	Code: 317 Other Consultancy Services Sub code: 05: Media and Public Relations Consultancy	Open Domestic Procurement Method	6th July 2026 @ 10:00hrs	6th July 2026 @ 10:15hrs.

Preference margins will be applied to qualifying bidders in line with the prescribed Preference Scheme:
Economic Diversification Drive Initiative (EDD) CAB 11 (A) of 2041
Local Procurement Scheme (LPS) Presidential Directive CAB 19 (B) 2043

The physical address for collection of tender documents is

Reception
Minerals Development Company Botswana (Proprietary) Limited
Plot 74358, 1st Floor, Acacia House, Prime Plaza, New CBD, Gaborone

A non-refundable deposit of P500.00 is required for the issuance of the Invitation to Tender Document. 100% of youth-owned companies are eligible for a reduced tender fee of P250.00 and must provide proof thereof. Payment should be made into the following MDCB account:

Minerals Development Company Botswana (Pty) Ltd
First National Bank
Account No.62452018122
Branch Code.281467
Branch Name. First Place Gaborone

Proof of payment should be presented during the collection of the tender

Tender documents will be available for collection effective 24th June 2026.

Queries or clarifications relating to the issuance of these documents may be emailed no later than five (5) days before the tender closing date to Galeboe Dikgang,
*E-Mail galeboe@mdcb.co.bw.

Plot 74358, 1st Floor, Acacia House,
Prime Plaza, New CBD
Private Bag B055, Bontleng
Gaborone, Botswana

Minerals Development Company Botswana

Prisons Under Fire Over Hangmen Allowance

The PAC has suggested a further probe amid suspicions that some junior prison officers are being excluded from hangman allowances despite allegedly participating in execution-related duties

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has proposed the establishment of a probe into the allegations that junior prison officers continue to participate in executions despite being excluded from hangman allowances paid to their senior counterparts.

The proposal emerged during a PAC engagement with Botswana Prison Service Commissioner Anthony Mokento, who dismissed claims that junior officers are still involved in carrying out executions.

POLICY CHANGE QUESTIONED

Mokento told the committee that while junior officers were previously part of execution teams, a policy change introduced in 2019 removed them from the process following concerns over the non-payment of execution allowances.

According to the Commissioner, only officers holding the rank of Superintendent and above are authorized to participate in executions and therefore qualify for the allowance.

"Only officers from the rank of Superintendent upwards are allowed to conduct the execution process and are therefore entitled to the allowance," Mokento said.



CONFLICTING CLAIMS EMERGE

PAC members challenged the Commissioner's account, saying they had received reports from junior prison officers who claim they continue to participate in executions without receiving any allowance.

The conflicting accounts prompted committee members to question whether the policy is being implemented fairly and in accordance with prison service regulations.

Speaking to *The Botswana Gazette* on condition of anonymity, one junior prison officer disputed Mokento's assertion that junior officers stopped participating in executions after the 2019 policy change.

OFFICERS TELL DIFFERENT STORY

The officer alleged that junior officers were among a special parade assembled from various prisons across the country to participate in the 2021 execution of convicted murderer Phemelo Botogeleng.

According to the officer, despite their involvement in the process, junior officers did not receive any hangman allowance.

"We participated in the execution but were never paid the allowance," the officer claimed.

CALLS FOR INDEPENDENT PROBE

The allegations have strengthened calls within the PAC for an independent inquiry to establish the truth regarding the role of junior officers in executions and whether they are being unfairly excluded from benefits linked to the process.

PAC member Bonniface Mabeo said junior officers should be summoned before the proposed commission of inquiry to provide their accounts and help establish the facts.

> "We participated in the execution but were never paid the allowance."

Mabeo argued that hearing directly from officers who allegedly participated in executions would enable investigators to determine whether prison authorities are accurately representing the situation.



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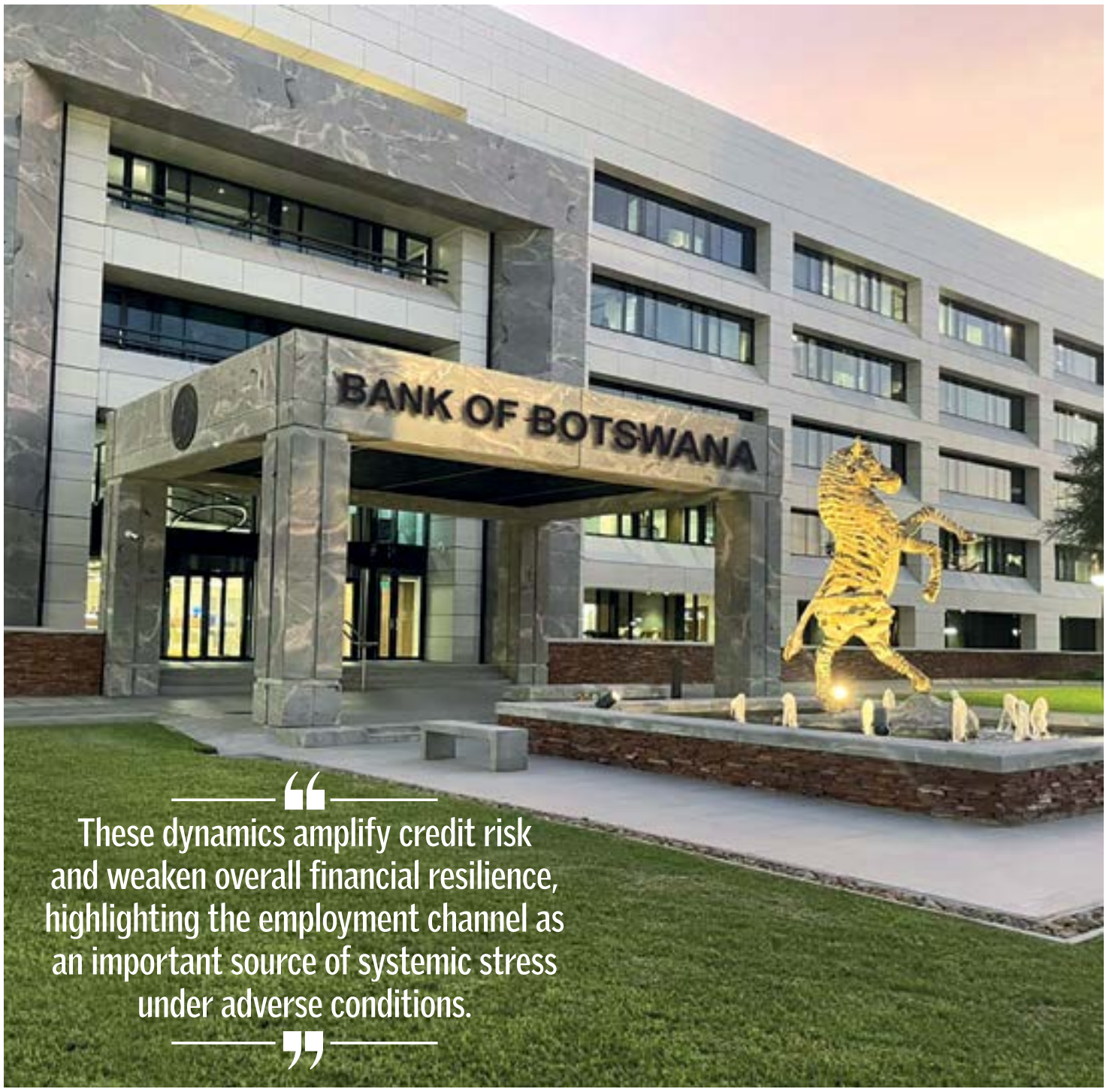
BoB Warns of Job Losses

Financial Stability Report warns that job losses, climate shocks and contagion risks could test the resilience of Botswana's financial system, even as banks remain relatively strong against short-term liquidity pressures



"These dynamics amplify credit risk and weaken overall financial resilience, highlighting the employment channel as an important source of systemic stress under adverse conditions."

TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO

Botswana's banking sector faces growing risks from weak domestic economic conditions, climate-related shocks and financial system interconnectedness, according to the Bank of Botswana's Financial Stability Report released in May 2026.

EMPLOYMENT RISKS

The central bank said current economic conditions indicate a heightened risk that employment losses could materialise or intensify in the near term.

"The stress test therefore incorporates a severe but plausible scenario in which rising unemployment and stagnating real household incomes arise from existing economic pressures," the report states.

According to the report, widespread job losses would sharply reduce household incomes and weaken debt-servicing capacity. This would result in higher default rates and a significant increase in non-performing loans.

The BoB report said the resulting deterioration in asset quality would erode bank profitability and place additional pressure on funding and liquidity conditions in an already constrained financial system.

"These dynamics amplify credit risk and weaken overall financial resilience, highlighting the employment channel as an important source of systemic stress under adverse conditions," the report says.

CLIMATE THREATS

The report also identifies climate-related risks as a potential source of instability for the financial system.

The stress scenario assumes severe but plausible climate shocks, including widespread flooding and outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease.

"The scenario captures impact of widespread floods, together with outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease," the report states.

According to the central bank, such events would disrupt agricultural production through crop failures, livestock losses and damage to transport and logistics infrastructure, resulting in lower rural incomes and weaker economic activity.

The report notes that reduced agricultural output and income would weaken borrowers' repayment capacity, leading to increased loan defaults and deterioration in asset quality, particularly among agriculture-related exposures. It also assumes weaker collateral values and limited government capacity to provide economic support due to constrained fiscal space.

CONTAGION CONCERNS

The Bank of Botswana further warned that the high degree of interconnectedness within the domestic financial system could allow shocks to spread beyond individual institutions.

The report says financial linkages between banks, non-bank financial institutions and other sectors could transmit stress through balance-sheet exposures, funding relationships and confidence effects.

It notes that domestically systemic banks, because of their size, interconnectedness and market significance, could amplify stress if they experience financial distress.

The stress-testing framework therefore assumes that disruption at a systemically important institution could have broader implications for financial stability, even where direct exposures are limited.

LIQUIDITY STRENGTH

Despite these risks, the report found that banks remain resilient to liquidity shocks.

Under a moderate stress scenario, all banks would be able to withstand liability drawdowns for 14 days. Under severe stress conditions, banks would withstand drawdowns for three days.

The report notes that wholesale deposits account for between 25 percent and 62 percent of total customer deposits, highlighting the need for greater funding diversification.

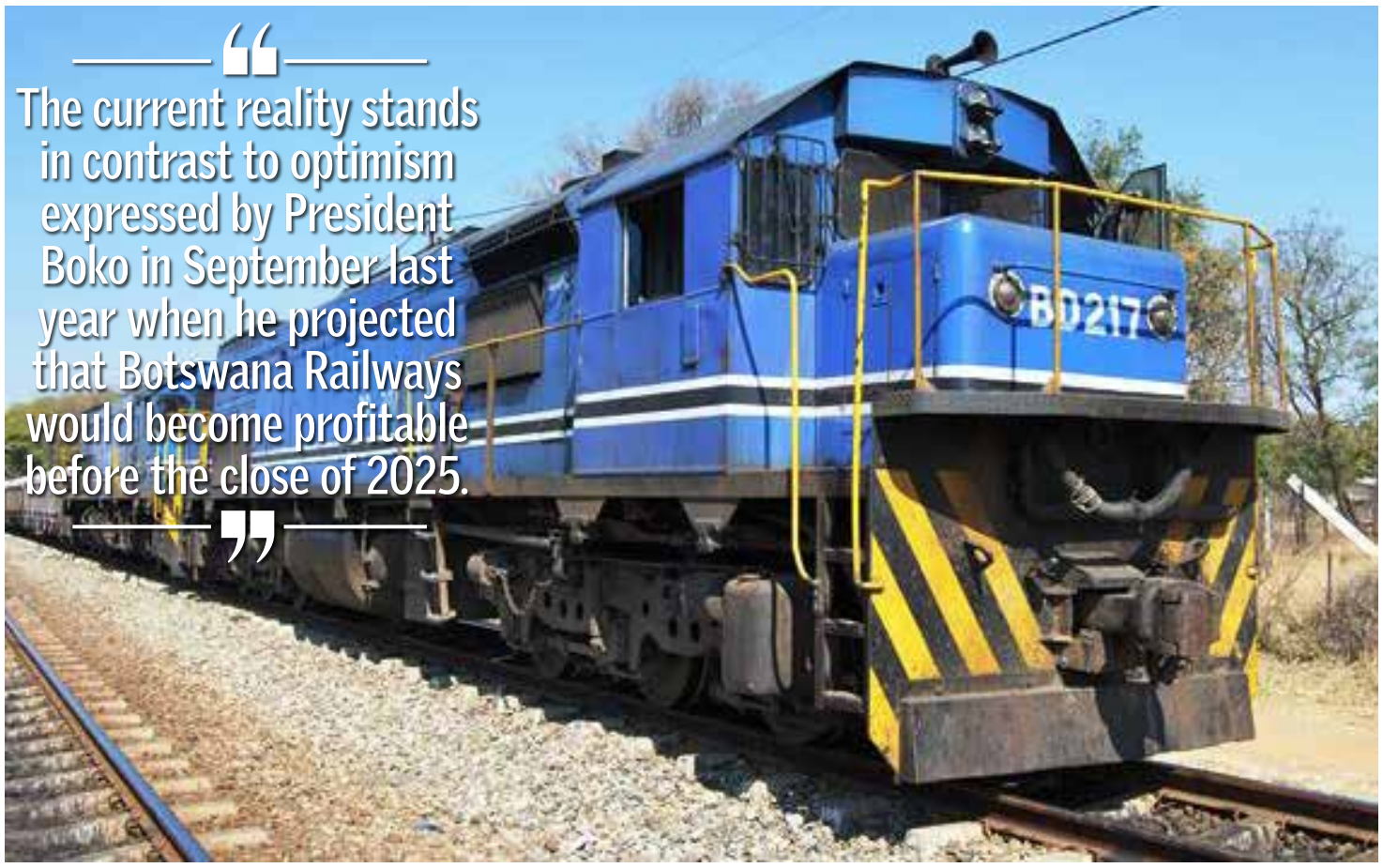
However, the central bank said the stress tests do not factor in liquidity support available through its Credit Facility or support from related companies and holding banks.

"Accordingly, stress test results should not be interpreted to mean that banks would default under these conditions."



BR's Profitability Vision Tested as Financial Crisis Deepens

Despite promises of profitability, Botswana Railways remains under pressure as cash shortages and operational failures deepen



> "The current reality stands in contrast to optimism expressed by President Boko in September last year when he projected that Botswana Railways would become profitable before the close of 2025."

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana Railways (BR) remains trapped in deep financial and operational distress despite earlier assurances from President Duma Boko that the state-owned enterprise would return to profitability by the end of 2025. The government has now conceded that the rail operator is battling severe structural and liquidity challenges that continue to weaken its competitiveness and disrupt service delivery.

Addressing members of the Ntlo Ya Dikgosi on Monday, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Noah Salakae acknowledged that Botswana Railways is operating under mounting pressure caused by shortages of rolling stock, years of deferred maintenance and acute financial constraints.

REDUCED FREIGHT CAPACITY

Salakae said the combination of these challenges has significantly reduced freight capacity and undermined the reliability of rail transport at a time when Botswana is seeking to strengthen logistics efficiency and regional trade integration.

"These constraints have materially limited freight volumes, undermined reliability and reduced Botswana Railways' ability to compete effectively with road transport despite its strategic importance to national logistics and regional trade," Salakae told the traditional leaders.

LABOUR UNREST

The minister's remarks come after last week's labour unrest at the parastatal after employees, supported by the Botswana Transport and General Workers Union, embarked on industrial action over allegations that deductions made from workers' salaries for employee benefits had not been remitted to the relevant institutions.

The labour dispute exposed the extent of the financial difficulties facing the rail operator and raised questions about its ability to meet operational obligations while sustaining day-to-day business. The current reality stands in contrast to optimism expressed by President Boko in September last year when he projected that Botswana Railways would become profitable before the close of 2025.

At the time, Boko argued that the rail operator possessed untapped commercial potential and was sitting on contracts it had been unable to execute due to operational limitations. He maintained that rail remained the most cost-effective mode for transporting bulk commodities and that demand for freight services existed if the entity could unlock capacity.

RESTORING CONFIDENCE

However, with profitability yet to materialise and operational problems persisting, attention is increasingly turning to whether reforms can restore confidence in the state owned entity.

Salakae then assured Ntlo Ya Dikgosi that Botswana Railways has initiated immediate corrective interventions aimed at stabilising operations. These include prioritising high-impact freight commodities, entering wagon maintenance partnerships and tightening expenditure controls.

The measures, Salakae believes, are intended to improve fleet availability, restore service reliability and place Botswana Railways on a path toward long-term financial sustainability.

Batswana Slam Brakes on Borrowing

Bank lending to households and businesses weakened sharply as tighter financing conditions and economic pressures reduced demand for credit, according to the latest Financial Stability Report

TLOTLO KEBINAKGABO



Household credit growth slowed dramatically in 2025, reflecting weaker economic conditions and tighter lending standards by commercial banks, according to the Bank of Botswana's Financial Stability Report released in May 2026.

The report shows that household credit growth reached 7.7 percent in June 2025 before falling sharply to just 0.02 percent in December 2025.

Borrowing by households, which remains the largest contributor to total credit, has been on a downward trend since 2022. Annual growth in household credit has ranged between 2 percent and 6 percent in recent years, compared to highs of 30 percent before the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Household credit growth reached 7.7 percent in June 2025, before drastically declining to 0.02 percent in December 2025," the report states.

More expensive unsecured loans continued to dominate household borrowing, accounting for 69.4 percent of household credit. Overall, household credit represented 62.6 percent of total credit, compared to 36.1 percent for business credit.

LENDING SLOWS

Commercial bank credit growth also weakened.

Annual growth in commercial bank credit declined to 2.6 percent in February 2026, down from 5.8 percent during the same period in 2025. The report attributes the slowdown to subdued economic conditions and tighter financing requirements as banks sought to maintain credit quality amid heightened uncertainty.

The lower uptake of credit was linked to reduced use of overdraft and revolving credit facilities by businesses, particularly parastatals, as well as limited demand for mortgage and motor vehicle loans by households.

Despite the slowdown, the ratio of non-performing loans remained unchanged at 3.4 percent in December 2024 and December 2025.

MORTGAGE DEMAND

Demand for mortgage and residential property financing remained weak as higher borrowing costs and affordability challenges weighed on households.

The report says household demand for mortgage facilities was constrained by "higher pricing costs and reduced affordability," while banks also became more cautious because of repayment risks associated with government schemes.

Residential real estate loans increased only marginally from P15.4 billion in February 2025 to P15.6 billion in February 2026.

Mortgages accounted for 25.7 percent of total household credit and 16.4 percent of total credit. The report notes that these levels remain significantly lower than in Namibia, where mortgages constituted 66.42 percent of total household loans.

At the same time, the report points to a possible mismatch between income growth and rising residential property prices, alongside housing supply and affordability challenges.

The report concludes that current credit developments pose limited risks to financial stability, with the credit-to-GDP gap widening from negative 2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2024 to negative 3.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2025, indicating the absence of rapid and excessive credit growth.

BSB Accelerates Digital Shift

Botswana Savings Bank deepens its push toward becoming the country's primary everyday bank through expanded digital services, infrastructure investment and a focus on accessibility





GAZETTE REPORTER

BSB is deepening its transformation journey as it advances its ambition of becoming Botswana's Primary Bank, the institution customers rely on most for everyday financial needs.

As banking evolves and customer expectations shift towards greater convenience, accessibility and digital engagement, the bank is investing in capabilities, infrastructure and customer experience designed to deliver banking that is simple, secure and accessible across channels.

DIGITAL PUSH

The bank has strengthened its digital banking ecosystem through the BSB Mobile App, Internet Banking, USSD (232#), Agency Banking, Wallet Services and Merchant Solutions, enabling secure access to services at any time.

Customers can now check balances, access mini-statements, transfer funds, purchase airtime, pay utility bills and make subscription payments without visiting a branch, as digital adoption increases across the customer base.

EXPANSION PLANS

Looking ahead, BSB plans to roll out 20 additional Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) across strategic locations nationwide and introduce digitally enabled branch formats designed to complement its existing network and improve service flexibility.

The bank is also pursuing expansion of merchant acquiring and card acceptance capabilities to support businesses, encourage electronic payments and contribute to a more connected financial ecosystem.

LEADERSHIP VIEW

Commenting on the transformation, Acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Wabo Moswate reflected on shifting customer expectations and the bank's strategic direction.

"The future of banking will be defined by accessibility, simplicity and relevance," he said in a recent statement. "Customers increasingly expect banking services to be available wherever they are and whenever they need them. Our responsibility is therefore not simply to digitise banking, but to reimagine how banking is delivered to better serve the evolving needs of individuals, businesses and communities across Botswana.Our investment in digital capabilities reflects a deliberate strategic choice to place customers at the centre of everything we do. We are building a modern institution that combines innovation, accessibility and trust to ensure that every Motswana can access dependable financial services regardless of location, circumstance or channel preference."

INCLUSION DRIVE

The bank says its growing digital ecosystem is supporting increased adoption of self-service banking while reducing reliance on branch transactions. Through agency banking, it is extending access into communities and advancing financial inclusion objectives.

BSB, a wholly Government-owned financial institution established under the Botswana Savings Bank Act of 1992, says it remains focused on mobilising savings and providing inclusive financial services that support national development.

As it continues its transformation, the bank says digital innovation will remain central to growth, customer experience and inclusion, reinforcing its position in Botswana's evolving financial services landscape.





Future Of Mining Summit Next Week

Senior government leaders, diplomats and mining industry stakeholders are expected to gather in Gaborone next week as Botswana seeks to strengthen its position as a leading mining and investment destination

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Future of Mining Summit 2026 will take place from June 29 to 30 at Boipuso Hall in Fairgrounds, Gaborone, under the theme, "Mining for Transformation: Economic Diversification and Shared Prosperity."

Organisers say the event is positioned to reinforce its standing as Botswana's leading mining and investment platform, bringing together senior government leaders, diplomats, industry executives and local authorities for discussions on the sector's future.

Speaking during a recent media briefing in Gaborone, Future of Mining Summit organiser and Editor of The Projects Magazine, Alfred Masokola, said this year's edition has attracted unprecedented support from government and international stakeholders.

According to Masokola, the level of support reflects growing confidence in Botswana's mining sector and its role in driving economic transformation.

KEY PARTICIPANTS

Among the senior officials expected to participate are Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe, who is scheduled to deliver the keynote address, and Minister of Minerals and Energy Bogolo Kenewendo, who is expected to provide an outlook on the future of Botswana's mining industry.

Other government officials expected to contribute to discussions include Minister of Lands and Agriculture Dr Edwin Dikoloti and Assistant Minister for Entrepreneurship Baratiwa Mathoothe.

Their participation aligns with the summit's emphasis on economic diversification, entrepreneurship and shared prosperity.



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Masokola said the summit's stakeholder base extends beyond central government, with local authorities from major mining districts expected to take part.

Representatives from Jwaneng, Selebi-Phikwe, Palapye, Boteti, the North West District and Kgalagadi are expected to participate in discussions focused on ensuring that mining benefits contribute to sustainable socio-economic development in host communities.

"We believe the value created by mining should be reflected in the communities where mining operations take place. Shared prosperity requires meaningful participation from local leadership and communities," Masokola said.

INTERNATIONAL REACH

The summit has also attracted participation from members of the diplomatic corps representing South Africa, Angola, Namibia, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Germany, Japan and the European Union.

Masokola said international participation forms part of a broader effort to position the summit as a globally recognised platform for investment promotion, policy dialogue and cross-border collaboration.

"Our ambition is to build a truly international conference that showcases Botswana's mining opportunities while strengthening partnerships that can unlock investment, technology transfer and economic growth," he said.

The two-day gathering is expected to bring together policymakers, investors, mining companies, development institutions and entrepreneurs to examine opportunities shaping both the future of the mining industry and Botswana's broader economy.

BoB Rejects Claims Linking Pula Devaluation to Inflation Spike

Botswana's central bank rejects claims linking Pula devaluation to inflation, citing fuel-driven CPI pressures and broader structural price factors

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Bank of Botswana (BoB) has moved to distance the recent rise in inflation from the government's decision to weaken the Pula, arguing that imported cost pressures, particularly fuel, remain the dominant force behind price movements.

Speaking during the Bank's Monetary Policy briefing last week, Deputy Governor Dr Kealeboga Masalila dismissed growing public perceptions that the adjustment to the exchange rate policy is the principal cause of current inflationary pressures.

According to Masalila, Botswana's inflation profile is shaped more by the composition of household expenditure than by exchange rate movements alone.

Consumer Price Index

"Botswana generates a big impact of fuel prices on inflation because of the composition of the consumer price index. The determination of the CPI is based on consumption patterns. It may be that our consumption involves more fuel compared to South Africa," Masalila said.

His remarks come against the backdrop of the government's July 2025 decision to accelerate the depreciation of the Pula under the crawling peg exchange rate mechanism. The government increased the annual rate of crawl from minus 1.51 percent to minus 2.76 percent and widened the foreign exchange trading margins. The government maintained that the move was not a crisis response but a controlled adjustment aimed at preserving macroeconomic stability and external competitiveness.

At the time, Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe told Parliament that the decision followed a joint assessment by the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Botswana which found that the Pula had become moderately overvalued, estimated at between five and 10 percent above its sustainable level. He argued that an artificially strong currency was eroding competitiveness, making imports cheaper while placing pressure on foreign exchange reserves.

Botswana's foreign currency inflows decreased

Gaolathe further linked the decision to the prolonged downturn in the global diamond market, which has reduced Botswana's foreign currency inflows and exposed vulnerabilities previously cushioned by strong mineral earnings. The minister maintained that allowing a measured depreciation would help protect reserves, support domestic production and improve export competitiveness.

However, the exchange rate adjustment immediately triggered concerns among consumers and businesses that imported inflation would accelerate. Masalila acknowledged that exchange rate movements can influence prices but argued that inflation outcomes are determined by a wider basket of factors, particularly energy costs and domestic consumption behaviour.

The central bank has repeatedly maintained that inflation remains manageable and within policy expectations despite concerns over imported price pressures.



One Million Tonnes Is Just the Beginning

Botswana's new fodder strategy will not close the country's feed deficit overnight, but it could mark the first serious step towards drought resilience, beef sector competitiveness and a stronger rural economy.

DOUGLAS WASBASH

Botswana has embarked on what could become one of the most important agricultural transformations of the next decade. A newly launched National Fodder Production Strategy aims to add one million tonnes of fodder annually by 2030, laying the foundation for a more resilient livestock industry and a stronger rural economy.

The target is ambitious, but perhaps more importantly, it is realistic.

FEED GAP

Botswana's livestock sector contributes more than 80 percent of agricultural GDP, yet domestic feed production currently meets only 10 to 12 percent of national requirements. Annual demand for feed is estimated at nearly 6.9 million tonnes and is expected to rise sharply in coming years. Against that backdrop, an additional one million tonnes represents a very good start.

Developed by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the strategy calls for approximately P1.25 billion in investment and seeks to expand fodder cultivation by 120,000 hectares while promoting improved rangeland management and greater use of crop residues and agro-industrial by-products.

FODDER PILLAR

The significance of the strategy was underscored this week at the Global Private Sector Forum on Sustainable Rangelands and Livestock Systems held in Gaborone under the GEF-7 Dryland Sustainable Landscapes Impact Programme.

Welcoming delegates from SADC and beyond, Minister of Lands and Agriculture Dr Edwin Gorataone Dikoloti reaffirmed Botswana's ambition to transform agriculture and increase its contribution to the economy from the current two percent to at least six percent.

"We have set ourselves an ambitious target. We want agriculture to contribute at least six percent of GDP and we aspire to grow our national herd to five million cattle. Achieving that vision will require sustainable rangeland management, climate-resilient livestock systems and stronger partnerships with farmers, the private sector and the international community," Dr Dikoloti said.

He described the recently launched National Fodder Production Strategy as a key pillar of that transformation.

"The National Fodder Production Strategy will strengthen our resilience to drought and provide the reliable feed base required for sustainable livestock production and growth," he said.

REGIONAL PUSH

Speaking on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Subregional Coordinator Patrice Talla praised Botswana for hosting the landmark forum and called for greater regional collaboration, stronger knowledge sharing and increased private sector investment to restore dryland ecosystems and build resilient livestock systems across Southern Africa.

Officially opening the forum, Minister of Environment and Tourism Wynter Boipuso Mmolotsi said Botswana's rangelands, which cover approximately 57 percent of the country's landmass, are fundamental to food security, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and rural livelihoods.

"Sustainable rangelands are not only an environmental issue. They are central to food security, economic growth, biodiversity conservation and the livelihoods of our people," Minister Mmolotsi said.

He warned that climate change, recurrent droughts and land degradation posed growing threats to these ecosystems and highlighted ongoing restoration initiatives in Ngamiland, Kgalagadi, Bobirwa, Habu, Tutume-Mosetse and Chobe.

"Addressing land degradation requires strong partnerships among governments, communities, the private sector and development partners. Through evidence-based decision making, innovative financing and strategic partnerships, Botswana remains committed to advancing sustainable land management and contributing meaningfully to global efforts ahead of UNCCD COP17," he said.

RESTORATION TOOLS

Botswana's efforts are guided by Land Degradation Neutrality targets, the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification and the National Land Restoration Strategy 2024-2030. Investment in science and technology, including a Land Degradation Monitoring System and Geographic Information System laboratory developed with support from FAO and the UNCCD Global Mechanism, is helping provide the tools needed for evidence-based land management.

These interventions are timely. About 15.5 percent of Botswana's land is already degraded, imposing annual economic losses estimated at P3.5 billion. Feed accounts for more than 70 percent of livestock production costs, making reliable fodder supplies fundamental to the competitiveness of the country's beef industry.

FIRST BALE

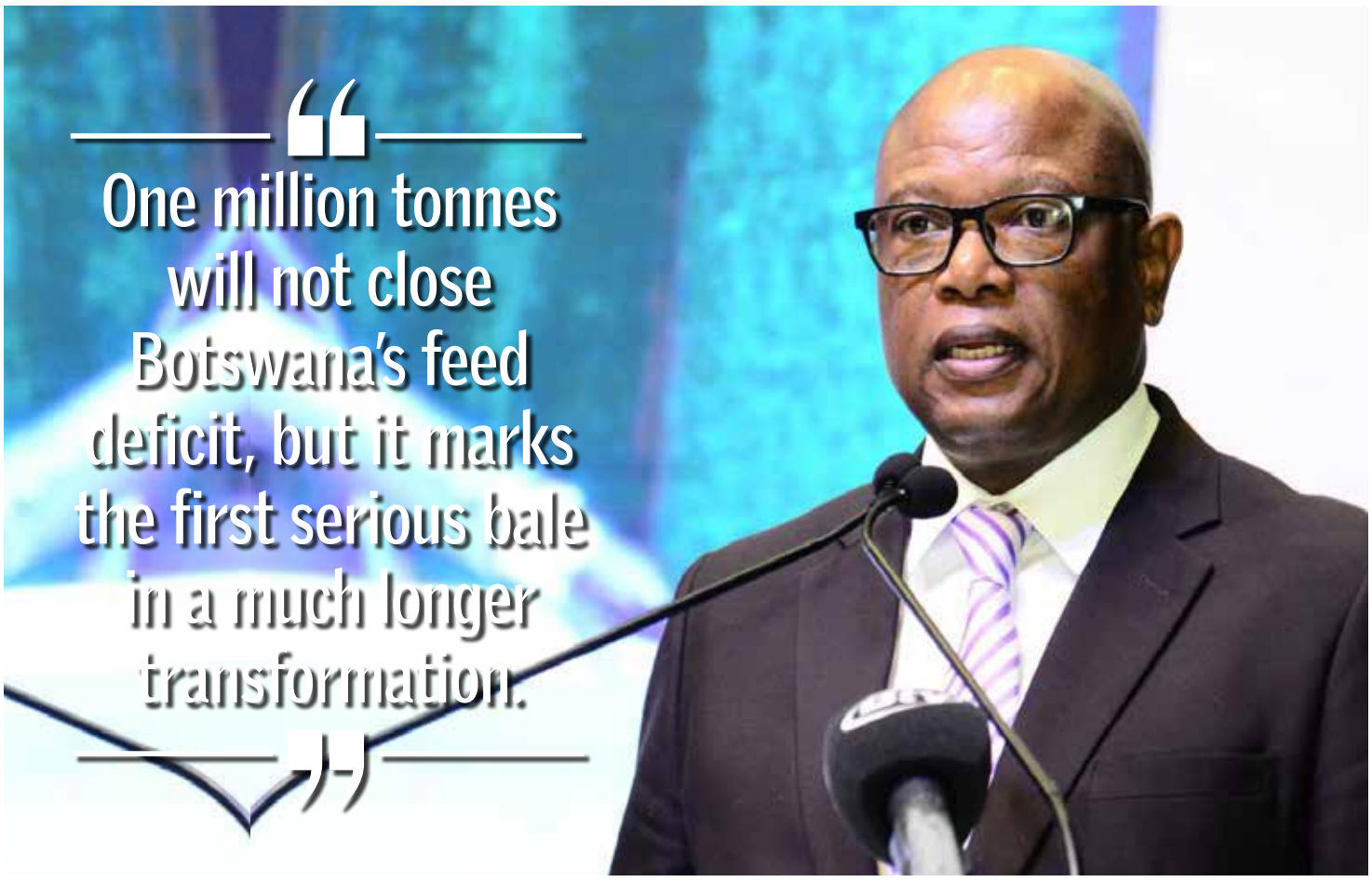
No one should imagine that one million tonnes will solve Botswana's feed deficit. It will not.

But every transformation starts somewhere.

For decades, fodder was regarded largely as a response to drought emergencies. Today, Botswana is beginning to recognise it as a strategic industry and the foundation upon which future livestock growth will depend.

One million tonnes is not the destination.

It is the first bale on a much longer journey.





The Commercial Paradox: Why the 2026 World Cup Will Be the Most Profitable Tournament in History and the Worst Experience in a Generation

MANUEL VEIRUAPI RUHAPO

On June 11, 2026, during a group stage match at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Fox Sports cut to a full-screen commercial break. This was not unusual. What was unusual was the timing. Fox had cut away during one of FIFA's newly introduced hydration breaks, a pause in play designed, according to FIFA, to protect player welfare in the summer heat of North American stadiums. The commercial ran. The match resumed. Fox missed the goal.

That sequence of events, a welfare measure for players converted into an advertising slot, a goal missed because a broadcaster was running a commercial, is the most precise summary of the 2026 FIFA World Cup that anyone has produced. It is a tournament in which every structural decision, from the expanded format to the hydration breaks to the Super Bowl-style halftime show at the final, has been made in service of commercial optimisation. And it will work. The numbers will be extraordinary. The experience will not.

This is the Commercial Paradox: the most profitable version of a product is not always the best version of the product. And the counter-argument that holds equally true: commercial success is not inherently opposed to great experience. The brands that have achieved both understand that the experience is the commercial asset. Destroy the experience and you are spending the asset, not investing in it.

THE NUMBERS ARE UNPRECEDENTED

The 2026 FIFA World Cup will generate more than $11 billion in revenue, making it the richest sporting event in history. The corporate sponsorship ecosystem is valued at $2.7 billion. The final ticket was priced at $32,970. Broadcasting rights have been sold at record values across every major market. FIFA's updated commercial partnership structure, introduced specifically for this tournament, provides greater revenue certainty and deeper brand integration than any previous edition.

These are not projections. They are the product of deliberate structural decisions made years in advance: expanding to 48 teams to increase the number of matches and therefore the number of broadcasting slots; hosting in the United States, the world's largest advertising market, to maximise broadcaster revenue; introducing hydration breaks that create additional commercial inventory within matches that previously had none; and modelling the final on the Super Bowl to attract American television audiences who have never watched a World Cup.

THE HYDRATION BREAK: A WELFARE MEASURE THAT BECAME AN ADVERTISING PRODUCT

FIFA introduced mandatory hydration breaks for matches played in high-temperature conditions. The stated rationale was player welfare. The actual function, as demonstrated by Fox Sports on June 11, is the creation of additional in-match advertising inventory.

> The 2026 FIFA World Cup will generate more than $11 billion in revenue, making it the richest sporting event in history. The corporate sponsorship ecosystem is valued at $2.7 billion.

Football, unlike American sports, has historically been resistant to commercial interruption during play. The ninety-minute match runs continuously, with no timeouts, no television timeouts, no natural breaks for advertising. This is one of the reasons football is the world's most watched sport. It is also one of the reasons American broadcasters have historically struggled to monetise it at the same rate as the NFL or NBA, where commercial breaks are built into the structure of the game.

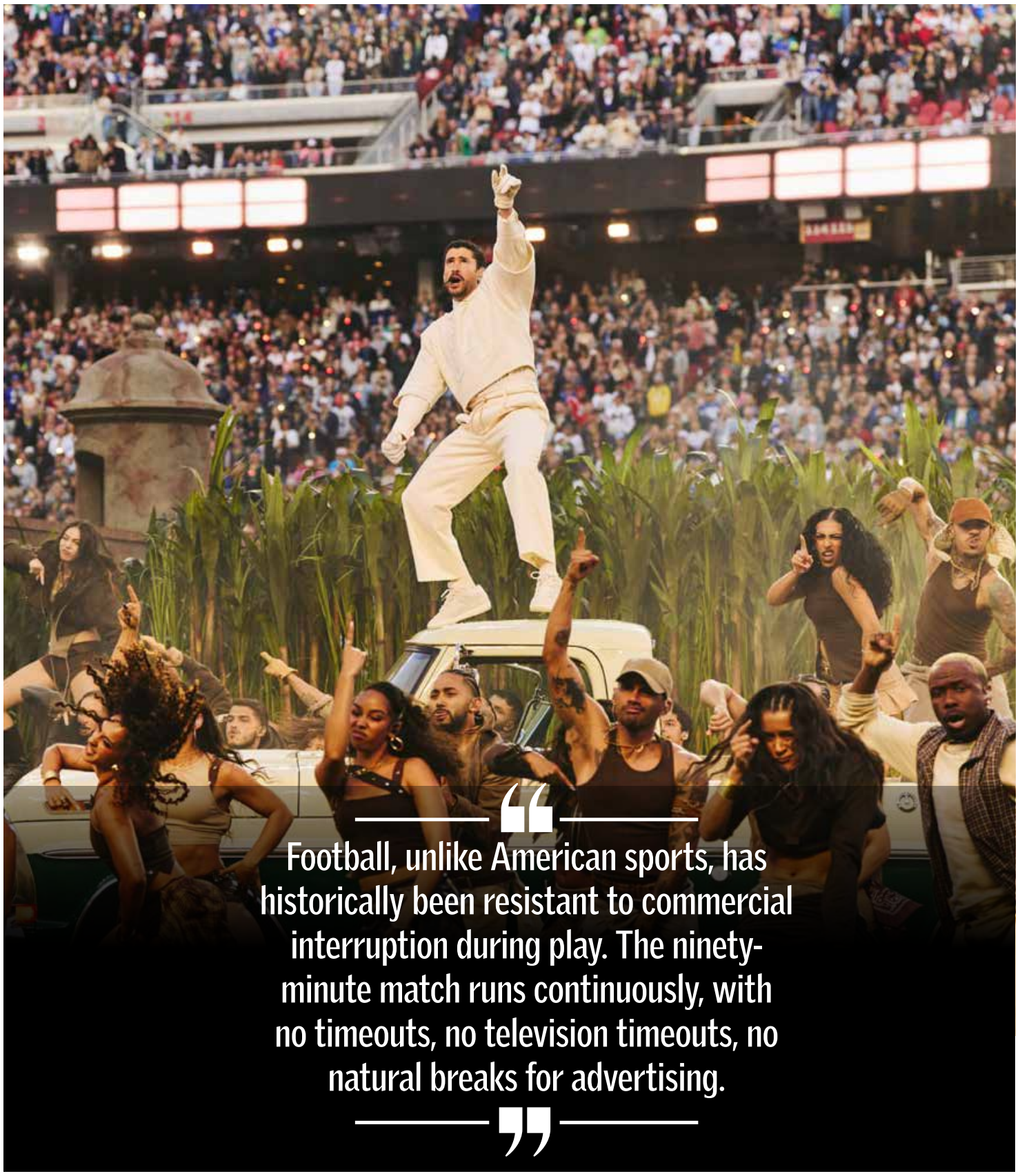
FIFA's Gianni Infantino told fans to "chill" about ticket prices. He did not address the hydration break advertising question directly. He did not need to. The commercial logic is self-evident, and the revenue it generates is not going to be abandoned because football purists are unhappy about it.

THE SUPER BOWL FINAL

The 2026 World Cup final will feature an extended halftime entertainment show, multiple commercial breaks, and deeper sponsorship integration than any previous tournament. The model is explicitly the Super Bowl. The Super Bowl halftime show generates more viewership than the game itself in some demographic segments. It is one of the most commercially valuable thirty minutes in American television. FIFA wants that value applied to the World Cup final.

The counter-argument: the Super Bowl halftime show works because it is the Super Bowl. The cultural weight of the event, built over sixty years of American sporting culture, is what makes the halftime show viable. The World Cup final's cultural weight was built on the purity of the sporting contest, ninety minutes of football between the two best teams on earth, with no interruption. Adding a halftime show does not add the Super Bowl's

To Page 21



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From Page 22

cultural weight to the World Cup. It removes the World Cup's own.

This is the Brand Dilution Paradox: adding elements from a stronger brand does not strengthen your brand. It weakens it by suggesting yours was insufficient on its own terms.

The 48-Team Format and the Dilution of Stakes

The expansion from 32 to 48 teams increases the number of matches from 64 to 104. Each additional match is an additional broadcasting slot, an additional sponsorship activation, an additional commercial opportunity. The revenue logic is direct and correct.

The sporting logic is the opposite. The World Cup's emotional power has always been concentrated in scarcity. Qualification was an achievement that defined careers and national identities. Every group stage match carried existential weight because the margin for error was minimal. The expansion distributes that weight across more matches and more teams, and in doing so, dilutes it. A tournament with 104 matches has more football. It has less meaning per match.

The commercial paradox here is that FIFA is spending the asset that generates the revenue. The emotional intensity of the World Cup is what makes it worth $11 billion to broadcasters and sponsors. That emotional intensity is a product of scarcity, stakes, and the sense that every match matters. The expansion reduces all three. The revenue this tournament generates will be the highest in history. The revenue the next tournament generates will depend on whether the emotional intensity has been sufficiently preserved to justify the same investment.

WHAT THIS TEACHES BOTSWANA'S BRANDS

The 2026 World Cup is a masterclass in the difference between extracting value from a brand and building value in one. FIFA is extracting. The hydration breaks, the expanded format, the Super Bowl final, the $32,970 ticket: these are all mechanisms for converting the accumulated emotional capital of the World Cup into immediate revenue. They work in the short term. They are spending the asset in the long term.

For Botswana's brands, the equivalent decisions are made at a smaller scale but with the same structural logic. The bank that reduces its branch hours to cut costs is extracting from its service reputation. The retailer that increases prices without improving the experience is extracting from its value proposition. The telecoms company that runs a loyalty programme that is genuinely difficult to redeem is extracting from the goodwill that the programme was designed to build.

Commercial success and great brand experience are not inherently opposed. The

> The most profitable version of a product is not always the best version of the product. And the counter-argument that holds equally true: commercial success is not inherently opposed to great experience.

brands that achieve both understand that the experience is the commercial asset, not the product being sold. Destroy the experience and you are spending the asset. Invest in the experience and you are compounding it.

FIFA will report record revenue from the 2026 World Cup. It will also report, in the years that follow, whether the emotional capital it spent to generate that revenue was sufficient to sustain the next cycle of investment. The answer will depend on whether the fans who felt the experience was diminished choose to invest their attention again in 2030.

The most commercially successful version of a product is not always the best version. But the best version, sustained over time, is always the most commercially successful in the end.



The Brand Paradox is a weekly column by Manuel Veiruapi Ruhapo that explores the counterintuitive truths behind building great brands in Botswana and beyond. Manuel Ruhapo is the founder of Blacmarc Group, a brand strategy consultancy Agencies that helps businesses solve their most complex brand challenges. Contact me on : manuel.ruhapo@blacmarc.co.bw/ruhapo@gmail.comContact me on: manuel.ruhapo@blacmarc.co.bw/ruhapo@gmail.com



WHEN AI LEARNS FROM HUMAN ART

Botswana's artists are confronting a new creative paradox: the world's smartest machines may be learning emotion, rhythm and storytelling from human music, but the humans behind the sound say nobody asked

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Before artificial intelligence (AI) learned to write hooks, mimic vocals or generate melodies, it had to sit somewhere and listen.

And what if one of the voices teaching it belonged to Botswana?

A new global investigation by The Atlantic has reignited debate after millions of songs — including works reportedly linked to Botswana artists — were allegedly absorbed into giant datasets used to train AI systems. Among those reportedly identified are Vee Mampeezy, Tomeletso Sereetsi, Mpho Sebina, Matsieng, Dramaboi and many more.

The list of songwriters, composers and artists appears indiscriminate, spanning contemporary, popular and traditional cultural works. Artists and audiences can search names through The Atlantic's AI Watchdog tool to see whether works appear in the reported datasets at: https://www.theatlantic.com/category/ai-watchdog/

THE HUMAN INSIDE THE MACHINE

Songbird, Mpho Sebina sees the complexity. "I'm not surprised to find my music there because art is often inspired by other art and I'm glad that in this day and age we can now verify that information, that indeed our works are being used to train AI."

But she draws the line at consent. "The fact that this is being done without our consent is disheartening."

Artists have long fought for fair compensation in traditional music spaces. When asked whether AI has created a new form of invisible labour where creatives contribute value without credit or payment, Sebina said:

"Yes, with AI it's been harder to track how far our music influences these AI music platforms, but platforms are popping up where we can track our influence and I hope they become more sophisticated in future."

She added: "In the past we've seen multiple cases of copyright infringement come to light in the music entertainment industry. The good thing is that copyright is protected by law, whereas we don't yet have AI-specific laws, more so in Botswana. The hard truth is that once your music is public, you can't pull it back from datasets already made. But you can opt out of future models and make it harder for voice cloning."

> "The fact that this is being done without our consent is disheartening."

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

If local artists are not included in decisions about how their work powers future technologies, Sebina warns that creators risk being excluded from the value chain."Our works stand to be exploited by these AI companies for other people to monetise, leaving out the original producers, instrumentalists and vocalists."

"There are ways to protect our works going forward and it's up to us as art practitioners to educate and protect ourselves," she said.





> "Our concern as artists is that when you copy copyrighted works, you need consent, but these big corporations are throwing their weight around, it's blatant theft,"

HUMAN AFTER ALL

For lead vocalist Tomeletso Sereetsi of Sereetsi and the Natives, the issue goes beyond technology. "Our concern as artists is that when you copy copyrighted works, you need consent, but these big corporations are throwing their weight around, it's blatant theft," he said. "Maybe we need to be organised as the music community all over the world. Eventually they want to de-skill us."

CAN A MACHINE LEARN SOUL?

Still, he doesn't sound defeated. "I am currently working on new music and my tribe will find me. I derive joy from creating music, the whole creative process. They are my songs and that is why AI would never make sense to me."

Yet his outlook isn't apocalyptic. He believes human creativity still wins because repetition eventually reveals itself.

"In the long run those AI songs end up sounding the same. I also think this could be the very thing that saves live music because it separates hardworking artists from those who don't want to put in the work." Maybe that becomes the ultimate test of this era. Machines may learn patterns. But people still make meaning.

Women in Music Gain Recognition

A jazz singer turning pain into protest, a DJ shaping nightlife one set at a time, and a traditional collaboration proving unity still sells, Botswana's women artists are arriving at the Basadi in Music Awards with more than talent. They are arriving with intent

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Awards season often tells us who is popular, but this one feels like it is revealing who is shaping culture. At this year's Basadi in Music Awards, a trio of Batswana women artists has landed nominations that feel bigger than trophies.

They come from different genres and different audiences, but the message is shared: women from Botswana are not waiting to be discovered, they are creating work impossible to ignore. Their nominations place Botswana's women artists inside a broader African music conversation with confidence, range and intent.

MUSIC WITH SOMETHING TO SAY

Afro-Jazz vocalist Kearoma Rantao enters the Jazz Artist of the Year race carrying a song that refuses to sit quietly in the background. Her nominated single, Keledi Marameng, confronts Gender-Based Violence with tenderness and urgency, turning music into witness, healing and conversation.

After 27 years in music, Rantao's recognition reads less like a comeback and more like confirmation. She said she is deeply honoured by the nomination, adding that Keledi Marameng was created to amplify the voices of those affected by Gender-Based Violence and to inspire conversations that lead to change.

THE WOMEN MOVING THE ROOM

Elsewhere, Kele Megano's nomination for DJ of the Year celebrates a different kind of artistry, one measured in timing, instinct and the ability to move a room. Commanding dancefloors and curating moments from behind the decks, Megano remains unapologetically audience-first.

Her reaction captured that energy directly. Calling the nomination a blessing, she asked those she has ever made dance, smile or feel anything through music to support her with a vote.



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COLLABORATION AS POWER

Traditional artist Mmaausi, alongside Mamakie Motlogelwa, earns recognition in Collaboration of the Year for Chuku, a category honouring partnerships that remind audiences that creativity multiplies when women build together.

> "Women from Botswana are not waiting to be discovered, they are creating work impossible to ignore."

The Basadi nominations are doing something important by placing Batswana women at the centre of the African music conversation, not as guests, but as authors of it. To vote for the artists, SMS voting is available in South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho by sending Jazz Kearoma Rantao, DJ Kele Megano or Collab Mamakie Motlogelwa & Mmaausi to 33329.

Global online voting is also available at a cost of R1.50 per vote through the Basadi in Music Awards voting platform. Voting closes on 18 July 2026 at 23:59 CAT.

The Climate Story We Keep Cropping Out

The Okavango Delta has long been photographed as paradise. But through Kefilwe 'Fifi' Monosi's lens, another picture emerges, women navigating changing waters, carrying inherited wisdom and refusing to become climate change's invisible casualties

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Most people know Botswana's Okavango Delta through postcards: endless channels, grazing elephants and sunsets soaked in gold. Few ask who wakes before sunrise, reads the water, remembers the seasons and notices first when something no longer feels right, but documentary photographer and film producer Kefilwe 'Fifi' Monosi did.

Her photographic project, She Bears the Heat, turns the camera away from spectacle and toward the women whose lives move with the Delta's rhythms and whose futures are increasingly shaped by climate change. The project did not begin with a grand climate agenda; it started quietly in a mokoro.

During her time with National Geographic Photo Camp, Monosi was guided through the Delta by a female poler, and the encounter stayed with her. She said she was struck by the woman's resilience, presence and the beauty reflected in the patterns of the dresses she wore.

More than anything, Monosi said, she felt honoured to come face to face with the custodians of the land. That experience inspired her to look beyond the landscapes and tell stories about people, particularly women, who are often overlooked in conversations about climate change despite being among those most affected by its impacts.

NOT SUBJECTS. STORYTELLERS

From Habu to Mohembo, Xakao to Seronga, Boro, Daunara and Shakawe, Monosi travelled listening before photographing. Her method rejects the old documentary habit of extraction, be-









cause instead of arriving with answers, she arrived with questions.

She did not want the women to simply become subjects of observation, but active participants in how their stories were told. Consent became more than paperwork; it became collaboration, and what emerged was not a catalogue of suffering.

These women appear as leaders, caregivers, water readers and memory keepers. Monosi said the women are not simply enduring climate change, but responding to it, adapting to it and carrying generations of wisdom.

WHAT A CAMERA SEES THAT DATA DOESN'T

Climate conversations usually arrive wrapped in graphs, policy language and future tense, but photography interrupts that distance. Monosi's images insist that climate change already has a face: it cooks over fires, poles mokoros, watches river levels and notices missing patterns before satellites do.

The women she met, Monosi said, have a deep understanding of seasonal changes, water patterns, biodiversity and sustainable ways of using natural resources. Some of the photographs are available on her website and social media platforms, and once the project is complete, Monosi will have an exhibition.

What she hopes is that audiences walk away with a deeper understanding that climate change is not distant or abstract. Through She Bears the Heat, the Delta is still beautiful, but it is no longer allowed to be viewed without the women who carry its memory, labour and warning signs.

INSIDE THREADED IN CULTURE

At a moment when identity feels increasingly negotiable, two local artists turn thread, memory, and everyday life into a challenge: what do we preserve, and what are we quietly letting disappear?







> "Culture is something we inherit, but it is also something we actively shape every day."



Picture credits: Tsaone Lawrence Bahiti

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Walk into Threaded In Culture and you quickly realise this is not an exhibition about nostalgia. Opened recently at Alliance Francaise de Gaborone, the contemporary showcase places the works of Boemo Lunga and Goemeone Modisane in conversation, not to agree with each other, but to pull at the same knot from different ends. One works with material disruption while the other works with cultural memory, and together they ask an uncomfortable question: if culture is alive, who gets to decide what survives?

NOT A MUSEUM PIECE

Boemo Lunga's practice has long flirted with experimentation through charcoal, fabric, newspapers and mixed media, but this time thread enters the frame. His new body of work uses stitched surfaces and layered textures to create pieces that feel unfinished in the most intentional way, as if identity itself is still under construction.

Across the room, Goemeone Modisane grounds the exhibition in visual storytelling shaped by Setswana culture and the rhythms of everyday Botswana life. His works do not romanticise heritage; they place it under light and ask viewers to sit with it, which is why curator Thabo Kgatlwane said in an interview that the pairing was deliberate.

Culture, Kgatlwane said, is not a fixed thing. It can be preserved, questioned, interpreted and reimagined. That tension becomes the exhibition's strongest move, because it treats culture as something inherited, but also something actively shaped every day.

THE THREAD IS THE MESSAGE

The exhibition arrives at a time when globalisation, technology and changing social realities are influencing how people understand themselves and their cultural identities. In Botswana, there is growing interest in preserving heritage while also redefining what it means to be Motswana in a contemporary world, and Kgatlwane believes artists should be part of that conversation.

What felt urgent about the exhibition, he said, was the need to create space for artists to contribute to that conversation. Art has a unique ability to bridge generations, challenge assumptions and encourage reflection, and the title itself carries a quiet warning by asking whether the threads of culture are tightening or loosening.

> Visitors leave with more than images, because the exhibition asks them to reflect on what parts of culture are being preserved, what parts are being allowed to fade, and how personal experiences contribute to the collective story of Botswana

On the surface, Threaded In Culture references Boemo's threaded canvases and Goemeone's cultural themes, but underneath it asks deeper questions about what is being held together and what is beginning to fray. Visitors leave with more than images, because the exhibition asks them to reflect on what parts of culture are being preserved, what parts are being allowed to fade, and how personal experiences contribute to the collective story of Botswana.

Most importantly, Kgatlwane hopes the exhibition sparks conversations about identity, creativity and cultural pride that do not end when people leave the gallery. Threaded In Culture opened on 17 June 2026 and will remain on view until 3 July 2026.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT MAGDALENE'S HOMECOMING

Expect celebration, yes. But also reflection, village pride and a reminder that global dreams often begin in local places. The reigning Miss Botswana's biggest homecoming may also be its loudest statement yet

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

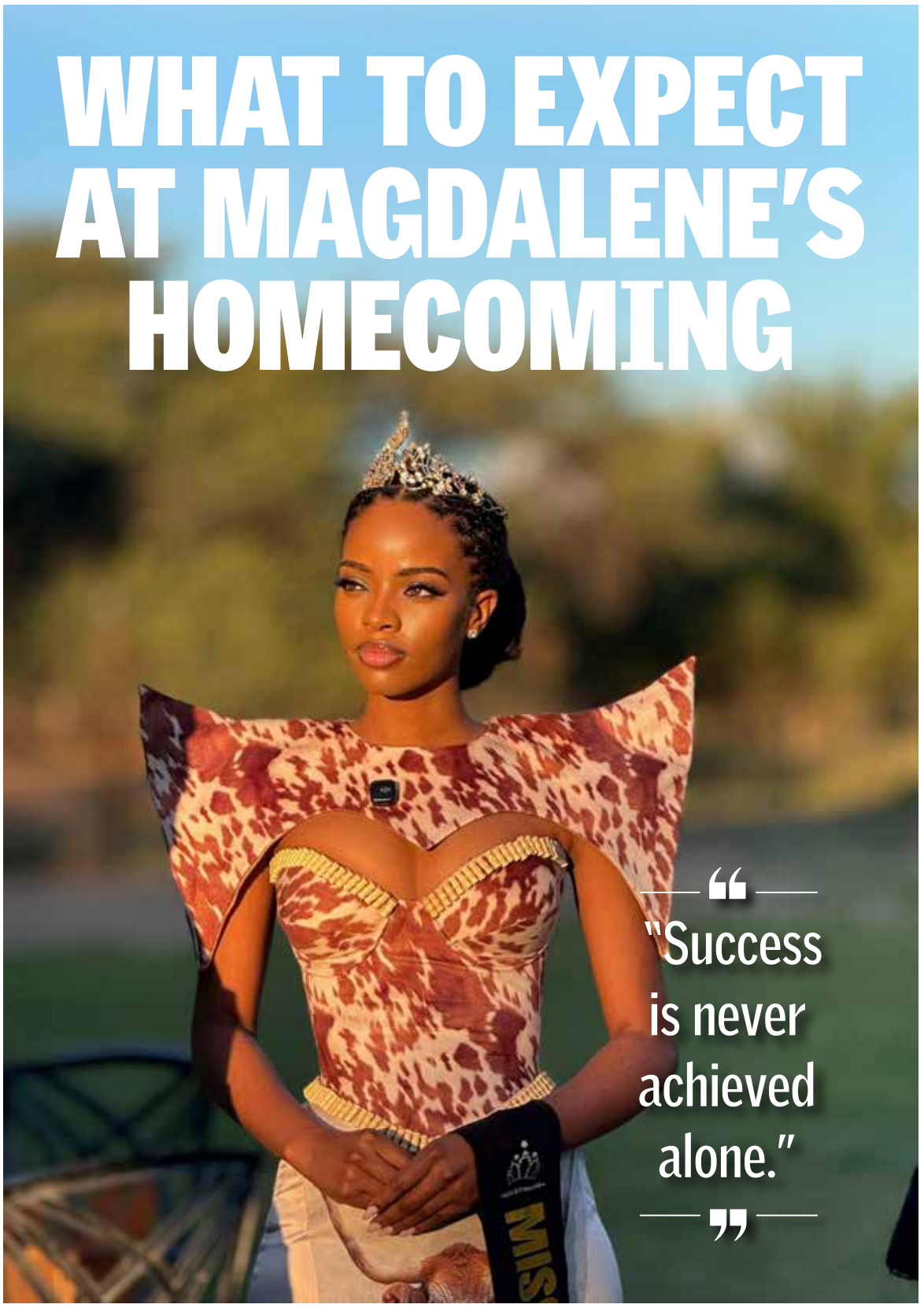
There is something cinematic about a queen returning home, not because of the crown, but because everyone suddenly remembers they helped build the person wearing it. On June 26, Tonota Main Kgotla transforms into more than a celebration venue for reigning Miss Botswana 2026, Magdalene Modipane, with ceremony, community and something harder to schedule: emotion.

This is not designed as a victory lap. It feels closer to a reunion between ambition and the place that first taught it how to walk, giving Tonota a chance to celebrate one of its own while also seeing how far local dreams can travel.

EXPECT A CELEBRATION WITH ROOTS

Forget distant royalty energy. Modipane wants the day to feel personal because, as she told Time Out, homecomings are deeply symbolic moments. They are not only celebrations of achievement, but also a return to the roots that shaped the Queen's identity, values and purpose.

Expect speeches and symbolic moments, but also something quieter: recognition. The village gets to see itself reflected back through a national title, and according to Modipane, the goal is for people to leave with renewed belief that greatness can emerge from their own homes, schools and everyday spaces.



For the reigning queen, the homecoming is also a reminder that success is never achieved alone. It belongs partly to the family, teachers, neighbours and community members who make achievement possible long before the stage lights arrive.

EXPECT YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE

The queen says the moment she anticipates most is simple: connection. This celebration is special, she said, because it brings together the people who have supported her throughout her journey, and she is especially excited about connecting with the community and young people.

That may become the emotional core of the day, less about waving and more about witnessing. For young people in Tonota, the homecoming offers a close-up view of possibility, showing that global platforms do not always begin in distant places.

EXPECT THE CROWN TO FEEL HEAVIER

Behind the celebration sits another reality: preparation for the 74th Miss World Festival. Magdalene said she is enjoying the moment while remaining focused on growth and representation, because after Tonota applauds, the world starts watching.

Winning Miss Botswana, she said, is an incredible honour, and while she is enjoying the celebrations, she is also focused on preparing for Miss World. She is taking it one day at a time and using every opportunity to grow, learn and represent Botswana to the best of her ability.

Why Race For Rhinos Is Taking Off

Planes will race across Botswana's ancient salt pans this June, but the real finish line isn't speed. It's survival. Race for Rhinos wants to turn conservation into currency, communities into custodians and the Makgadikgadi into the country's next great frontier

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana has never struggled to attract attention for its wilderness, but this June the country is asking a more interesting question: what if conservation stopped being something people watched and became something they built? From 26 to 29 June, pilots from Botswana, Southern Africa and as far as Tokyo will descend on Mosu Airfield for Race for Rhinos, a four-day aviation spectacle across the cinematic emptiness of the Makgadikgadi Pans.

On paper, Race for Rhinos is speed, precision and aerial theatre. In reality, it is a launchpad for a bigger conservation and tourism ambition, using spectacle to draw attention to a project whose real finish line is survival.

THE RHINO IS THE REAL HEADLINER

Behind the race sits an ambitious mission: to support the relocation of 13 rhinos and establish a thriving rhino habitat in the Makgadikgadi. That goal explains why Race for Rhinos is generating lift, because organisers are selling something bigger than wildlife conservation; they are selling possibility.

The rhinos represent tourism growth, enterprise, jobs and a future where local communities are not spectators to conservation but stakeholders in it. If successful, the Makgadikgadi could evolve from one of Botswana's most extraordinary landscapes into its next great tourism frontier.

CONSERVATION WITH A BUSINESS PLAN

Race for Rhinos Patron, Dr. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, said the initiative reflects Botswana's enduring commitment to conservation as a tool for national development. Every rhino protected, he said, is a promise to future generations, and the relocation of the 13 rhinos presents Botswana with a rare opportunity not only to safeguard a species under threat, but to create meaningful opportunities for people.

Khama added that conservation succeeds when communities are part of the journey and share in the benefits. His vision is to see the Makgadikgadi become a place where wildlife thrives, communities prosper and future generations inherit something greater than what was found.

A WEEKEND THAT WANTS TO OUTLIVE ITSELF

Yes, there will be scenic flights, tandem paragliding, motorsport and cultural showcases, but the weekend is designed to outlive itself. The event will feature a two-day precision air race, with competitors navigating a challenging route through Nata, Gweta, Orapa and Kubu Island before returning to Mosu.

Under the banner The Earth Is What We All Have In Common, Botswana is not simply hosting an event. It is test-flying a future in which conservation, tourism and community opportunity can move in the same direction.



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Uncorking Flavour: The How and Why of Decanting

There are few things in life more quietly intimidating than a bottle of wine that comes with instructions you didn't ask for.

Somewhere between "best served chilled" and "notes of blackcurrant and existential confidence," you're suddenly expected to know whether to decant, swirl, breathe, or simply pretend you understand what's going on and hope nobody notices. Let's fix that.

Decanting, at its core, is not an elite ritual reserved for people who own crystal glassware and say things like "this needs time to open up" with a straight face. It's simply the practice of letting wine meet oxygen before it meets your glass. Think of it as giving the wine a moment to stretch after a long flight. Like most things in life, it's useful — but not always essential.

> But here's the honest truth: not every wine needs decanting. Some just need a glass and a decision.

SO… WHY BOTHER?

Wine changes when it meets air. Some wines are shy when they arrive — tight, closed, a bit like they're still in meeting mode. A bit of oxygen helps them relax, soften tannins, and reveal flavour that was previously hiding like a guest who arrived early and sat in the corner.

Older wines benefit differently. They may carry sediment — harmless, but not exactly part of the intended drinking experience unless you're particularly committed to texture exploration.

Then there are young, bold reds — the ones that come in loud. Decanting them can smooth the edges, like taking a conversation from "debate panel" to "dinner table."



"Maybe you need some time to open up a little."

But here's the honest truth: not every wine needs decanting. Some just need a glass and a decision.

NO DECANTER? NO PROBLEM.

Let's remove the performance anxiety. If you don't own a decanter, you are not disqualified from enjoying wine properly. You are simply operating in "adaptive tasting mode."

A clean jug works. A water carafe works. In fact, even pouring the wine into a large bowl briefly (yes, really) and returning it to the bottle can achieve the same effect. It may not look like a magazine shoot, but neither does most real life.

And if none of that appeals, there's always the most underrated tool in wine appreciation: time in the glass.

Pour it. Let it sit for 10–15 minutes. Walk away. Come back. The wine will have evolved without any ceremony at all.

SWIRL VS DECANT: NOT THE SAME JOB

A swirl is the quick introduction — like a handshake at a networking event. It increases oxygen exposure instantly and helps release aromas. You don't need equipment, just a glass and a bit of confidence that it won't end up on your shirt.

Decanting, on the other hand, is more like giving the wine its own waiting lounge. It's slower, more deliberate, and better suited to structured reds or older vintages.

If you only remember one distinction, let it be this: Swirl = immediate effect. Decant = planned transformation.

THE SIMPLE TASTING SEQUENCE

If you want to get more out of your glass without turning it into a chemistry experiment, this is all you need:

Step 1. Choose your glass (or close enough)

A proper wine glass helps, yes. But don't let perfection block participation. A clean glass with enough room to swirl is the real requirement. If it feels slightly generous in size, even better.

Step 2. Give it air (your chosen method)

Swirl gently if you're working glass-only. If you've decanted, pour and pause. Let the wine settle into itself. No rush — it's not going anywhere.

Step 3. Smell before you sip

This is where the wine starts telling its story. Don't overthink it. First impressions count: fruit, spice, wood, or simply "this smells like I made a good decision."

Step 4. Taste with attention, not performance

Take a sip. Let it sit for a moment. Notice what changes from first contact to finish. Wine has phases — opening, middle, and exit. You don't need to name them like a sommelier, just notice them like a human.

WHAT ACTUALLY CHANGES IN THE GLASS

Once wine breathes, a few things tend to happen:

Tannins soften (less grip, more glide)

Aromas become more expressive

Hidden fruit or spice notes appear

Harsh edges round off

It's not magic. It's chemistry doing what chemistry does when given enough surface area and patience.

But the key insight is this: wine is not static. It is conversational. Air simply helps it speak more clearly.

THE MYTH OF "DOING IT CORRECTLY"

There is a persistent idea that wine has a correct way to be enjoyed. This is, frankly, how enjoyment becomes administration.

The better approach is utility over ritual. If decanting improves your experience, do it. If it doesn't, don't. If you're unsure, experiment — wine is remarkably forgiving of curiosity. The real mistake is not drinking it "wrong." The real mistake is not noticing it at all.

Decanting is not about sophistication. It's about access — unlocking what is already inside the bottle without needing to upgrade your entire kitchen inventory.

So whether you're working with a crystal decanter, a repurposed jug, or nothing more than a glass and a few minutes of patience, the goal remains the same: give the wine space to become itself.

And then, of course, give yourself permission to enjoy it without overthinking the process. Because at some point, the wine stops being a subject and becomes what it was always meant to be: a very good reason to pause the day.





Phenyo Motlhagodi — formally trained wine enthusiast (trained at the Cape Wine Academy); Chartered PR Practitioner (Chart.PR) with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations; and founder of a pan-African boutique PR, Influence & Reputation Management consultancy. Instagram: @phenyomotlhagodi.

SSKB SWEEPS KARATE OPEN

Elite Botswana Defence Force-linked club SSKB Karate Club delivered a commanding performance at the BDF Karate Open Championships, sweeping multiple titles at the UB Indoor Sports Arena in a showcase marked by high-level competition, discipline and national participation



GAZETTE REPORTER

SSKB Karate Club, which falls under the Botswana Defence Force (BDF), emerged as the standout performer of the BDF Karate Open Championships held on Saturday at the state-of-the-art UB Indoor Sports Arena.

The club secured the team kumite accolade and produced several individual champions across different divisions.

Lethabo Sekano led the charge in the ladies' individual kumite category, while Kgotla Maranyane claimed victory in the 84kg kumite class.

In the veterans and masters' divisions, Ofentse Bakwadi and David Hubona, both representing SSKB, also emerged victorious.

In the younger categories, Barona Cleo won gold in the 16–17 years' female individual kata, while Tshegofatso Chepete was crowned senior female under-55kg champion.

OTHER WINNERS

The Thebephatswa Air Base (TAB) Karate Academy, another BDF -affiliated club, also delivered strong performances.

Reigning national champion Centy Kgosikoma retained her dominance in the ladies' individual kata category and helped her club secure the team kata title.

From Bakwadi Karate Academy, Africa WKF champion Chris Junior Kgosi won gold in the 12–13 years boys' individual kata division.

LEADERSHIP REMARKS

Opening the championship, Botswana Defence Force Commander General Mpho Mophuting, who is also a karate instructor, praised the participation of diverse clubs and styles.

"Unity is imperative irrespective of the karate styles we have, we might differ in federations and styles but what we teach and offer to our students is the art of karate in the general sense," he said.

He added that cooperation among stakeholders was essential to elevate the sport.

"This calls for us to join forces and elevate the art to new and greater heights," said General Mophuting, who also urged karate leadership to revisit traditional approaches to development.

He further stated his willingness to collaborate in strengthening the sport.

TOURNAMENT PURPOSE

According to Colonel Nlisi Hobona, the championships are designed to promote karate development and create structured competitive opportunities for athletes.

"The main objective of the Botswana Defence Force Karate Open Championships is to promote the development and growth of karate in Botswana by providing a structured national platform for athletes to compete at a high level," he said.

Col Hobona added that the tournament also strengthens discipline, sportsmanship, and talent identification, while preparing athletes for regional and international competitions.

BROAD PARTICIPATION

The event attracted a wide range of competitors, including karate clubs, school teams, tertiary institutions, and disciplined forces from across the country.

Athletes across various age groups and experience levels took part, reinforcing the inclusive nature of the championships.

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KEBINATSHIPI STORMS PARIS SHOWDOWN

Botswana's 400m record holder enters Paris Wanda Diamond League as the fastest on season's form, facing a stacked world-class field this Sunday

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's sprint sensation, Busang Collen Kebinatshipi, the men's 400m national record holder, and World Champion heads into the Paris Wanda Diamond League this Sunday (28 June 2026) as one of the fastest athletes this season. He has shown a steady upward trajectory across 2026, improving across both individual sprints and relay events.

He began his season on 08 March with a 100m time of 10.53, before delivering 44.55 in the 400m on 21 March. His form sharpened further in April, where he ran 9.89 in the 100m on 03 April, a time he matched later the same day, and recorded a 4x100m relay split of 39.18.

ELITE FIELD

The men's 400m entry list in Paris features a strong international lineup, including Chris Bailey (44.35 season's best), Quincy Hall (45.52), Matthew Hudson-Smith (44.25), Muzala Samukonga (44.05), Zakithi Nene (44.40), Muhammad Abdallah Kounta (44.86) and Jereem Richards (44.87).

Kebinatshipi enters with a season's best of 43.92 seconds, listed as the fastest among the competitors, underlining his growing status in the event ahead of a tightly contested race.

RELAY PROGRESS

His consistency extended into relay competition, helping Botswana to 2:57.52 in the 4x400m on 02 May, before improving to 2:54.47 the following day. He then capped the month with his strongest 400m performance of the season, clocking 43.92 on 23 May 2026.

The progression sets the stage for a high-level contest in Paris, scheduled for 18:03hrs in the men's 400m.

WOMEN'S 800M

Oratile Nowe will also compete in the women's 800m, currently ranked 4th in the Wanda Diamond League standings with 9 points. She will be aiming to add more points and strengthen her position in the standings.

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

Master`s Reference: ESHGB-000737/23

IN THE ESTATE of Late Matshwenyego Tshimo who died at Gerald Mophane plot23757, Francistown in the North East, Botswana on the 30th of June 23026.

Notice is hereby given that debtors and creditors in the above estate are hereby required to come forth of whatever nature with the undersigned within 30 days after publication here of

DATED 24 JUNE 2026

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BFA DROPS FOOTBALL BOMBSHELL

A new Botswana Football Association (BFA) Impact Programme promises to reshape regional football through structured funding, grassroots expansion, youth development, women's football growth and stronger governance, while tying financial support to measurable performance and accountability

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Football Association (BFA) has launched a comprehensive national framework aimed at transforming football development across the country, introducing a performance-based funding model designed to strengthen Regional Football Associations (RFAs) and improve accountability.

Under the BFA Impact Programme, regional football bodies will no longer receive funding automatically. Instead, they will be required to submit annual development plans, budgets and implementation schedules for approval.

"The purpose of the BFA Impact Programme is not merely to transfer funds to regions," of regulations seen by this publication state. "Its purpose is to build active and accountable Regional Football Associations; to increase football participation in communities; to strengthen grassroots football, youth football, women's football and community-based transition pathways."

The programme divides funding into four categories: a 35% Base Grant for administration and governance, a 50% Development Fund for football activities, a 10% Performance Incentive Fund and a 5% Strategic Intervention Fund.

GRASSROOTS FOCUS

At the heart of the initiative is a significant push to expand participation at community level.

The programme mandates dedicated investment in grassroots football, youth competitions, women's football and a newly established U21 Community Football Programme designed to bridge the gap between school football and the senior game.

Forty per cent of all development funding must be directed towards grassroots football, while youth football for Under-13, Under-15 and Under-17 age groups will receive 20%.

The BFA says the U21 programme will provide structured opportunities for young people who remain active in football after leaving school but are not yet part of formal club structures.

PERFORMANCE REWARDS

A key feature of the programme is the introduction of a Regional Performance Index (RPI), which will assess regions on participation growth, youth structures, women's football, talent identification, governance and competition delivery.

Regions scoring between 80 and 100 points will qualify for incentive funding of up to P100,000, while those scoring below 40 points will receive no performance reward.

"Only verified outputs shall be scored," the regulations state, warning that false reporting, inflated participation figures and misrepresentation will not be tolerated.

FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE

The programme also sets a long-term goal of establishing Regional Technical Centres across Botswana to serve as football training hubs, administrative bases and player development centres.

Funding will be released in phases, with regions required to demonstrate compliance, programme delivery and sound financial management before receiving subsequent tranches.

The BFA believes the framework will deepen participation, strengthen governance and create sustainable pathways for player development, positioning regional football as the foundation of the country's future football success.



TIRED OF SHARING?



Taekwondo Selection Fight Begins

Botswana Taekwondo Federation outlines a high-level six-month championship shaping national selection and regional competition pathways



GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Taekwondo Federation says more than 30 athletes have already confirmed participation in the upcoming 6 Series Championship, with additional entries expected before competition day.

"So far we have over 30 athletes and more to follow…" said the federation spokesperson Boleng Sedimo in a telephone interview ahead of the event scheduled for June 27 at Sir Seretse Khama Memorial School.

Sedimo noted that the championship is expected to feature strong participation from multiple clubs, setting the stage for a competitive field.

SELECTION PATHWAY

The 6 Series Championship is structured as a six-month-long competition held every last Saturday of the month, designed to contextualise rankings and strengthen the national selection process.

"The 6 Series Championship is most vital and plays a role in National Selection. Podium finish qualifies athletes to the upcoming regional youth games in Mozambique. Ultimately the top ranked athletes will qualify for national selection," Sedimo said.

He added that one of the core objectives is to identify key athletes for national selection while also promoting Taekwondo development and supporting fundraising activities for federation programmes.

"The main objectives for the 6 Series is to identify key athletes for national selection and as well promote fund-raising activities for our federation activities and promote Taekwondo as a whole."

REGIONAL EXPANSION

The federation has also extended invitations to several countries within the region, as part of efforts to elevate the competitive standard and broaden participation.

"Since the event is high level we also extended an invitation to several countries in our region and the President cup which will take place on October 25th, which will be our regional Event," Sedimo said.

He further described the championship as a platform where high-level competition between clubs will be evident, with athletes competing for ranking points and selection consideration.

"The competition will be high level from various clubs will be clinching," he said.

OTIMILE MAKES HER MOVE



Botswana's Maya Otimile sits second in the women's standings at the Africa Individual Chess Championship after five rounds, according to a morning update issued on Tuesday, with play continuing and positions potentially shifting before publication

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Africa Individual Chess Championship in Jwaneng has reached its halfway stage, with competitors still in action in the nine-round continental contest.

The tournament, held at Cresta Jwaneng from June 18 to 27, has drawn 103 players — 59 in the Open section and 44 in the Women's section.

According to Botswana Chess Federation spokesperson Goitsemodimo Makgatle, five rounds had been completed as of Tuesday morning, with the statement reflecting standings at that point in the event.

OPEN LEADERS

In the Open section, Grandmaster Bellahcene Bilel of Algeria and Grandmaster Amin Bassem of Egypt shared the lead on 4.5 points after five rounds. International Master George David was third on four points.

Botswana's top performer was Sebetlela Gaasite in 14th position. He was followed by International Master Providence Oatlhotse in 25th, Candidate Master Thuso Mosutha in 40th, Candidate Master Notha Moakofi in 44th, Candidate Master Thuto Mpene in 46th, Arnold Mothudi in 50th and Candidate Master Barileng Gaealafshwe in 53rd.

WOMEN'S SECTION

The women's section was led by Egypt's Woman Grandmaster Shahenda Wafa, who had a perfect five points from five games.

Botswana's Woman Candidate Master Maya Otimile occupied second place overall on four points, with Egypt's Woman Grandmaster Shrook Wafa in third.

"A special congratulations goes to Maya Otimile, the youngest player in the women's section, who continues her impressive run and currently sits in second position overall," Makgatle said.

BOTSWANA CONTINGENT

Botswana's women were spread across the standings, with Woman FIDE Master Natalie Banda in 13th, Woman Candidate Master Mosweu Atlang in 19th, Woman Candidate Master Refilwe Pitso in 21st, Woman Candidate Master Laone Moshoboro in 32nd, Woman International Master Onkemetse Francis in 34th and Woman FIDE Master Thapelo Francis in 36th.

"A special congratulations goes to Maya Otimile, the youngest player in the women's section, who continues her impressive run and currently sits in second position overall," Makgatle said.

With four rounds still to be played at the time of the morning update, the championship remains finely balanced as players continue their campaigns in Jwaneng.

TIRED OF SHARING?



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