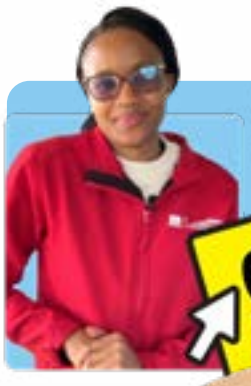
The Botswana
GAZETTE
THURSDAY 23 JULY 2026 | SINCE 1984



KHOEMACAU EXPANSION DRIVES JOBS AND GROWTH

P95M MEDICINE WASTE SPARKS FURY

3.

As patients went without essential medicines, government allowed more than P95 million worth of drugs to expire, triggering outrage before Parliament's Public Accounts Committee.





Death Penalty Process in Limbo?

2.

Botswana's oldest pending clemency petition which has been awaiting a decision from President Duma Boko enters its fourth year.

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DEATH PENALTY PROCESS IN LIMBO?

Botswana oldest pending clemency petition which has been awaiting a decision from President Duma Boko enters its fourth year. The prisons authorities told this publication that there has been no request for further information, no presidential directive and no warrant in relation to all pending applications

GAZETTE REPORTER

For more than three years, a death row inmate has remained in prison awaiting a decision on a petition that could determine whether he lives or dies, according to the Prisons and Correctional Services.

> "the daily routine of inmates under sentence of death includes religious services, the recording of requests and complaints, meals, psychosocial services, healthcare and exercise in the courtyard, among other activities"

The petition, submitted in June 2023, is the oldest pending application for the Prerogative of Mercy currently before President Duma Boko, who has not signed a single death warrant since assuming the presidency.

The Prisons Service says it has not received any requests for additional information regarding the pending applications.

The President, or the relevant clemency process, may request information from the Prison Service about an inmate, including their conduct in prison, disciplinary record, rehabilitation, participation in programmes, health or psychological condition and family circumstances.

"No. We have not received any requests for additional information by the Presidency as the petitions are still subject to consideration," the department said.

It further said: "There have not been any directives or warrants from the President in respect of any pending petitions for the Prerogative of Mercy."

The disclosures place Botswana's death penalty process in a state of uncertainty, with inmates sentenced to death continuing to live under the shadow of execution.

PRISONS SERVICE DECLINES TO JUDGE THE DELAY

The Prison Service declined to comment on how long such petitions have historically taken to be determined under previous administrations.

"We do not have the competency to judge the executive machinery of government. Therefore, we do not have a comment," it said.

The response comes as the administration of President Duma Boko, a human rights lawyer and self-proclaimed abolitionist, faces the difficult question of how to handle the death penalty in a country where the courts continue to impose death sentences and where the ultimate power to grant mercy



rests with the President.

LIFE ON DEATH ROW

According to the Prisons Service, "the daily routine of inmates under sentence of death includes religious services, the recording of requests and complaints, meals, psychosocial services, healthcare and exercise in the courtyard, among other activities".

Pertaining to visits, the department said such prisoners "are also permitted to communicate with and receive visits from legal representatives, family members, spiritual leaders and other authorised persons."

The Prison Service further revealed that it "provides psychosocial support, counselling and mental health assessments to inmates, including those under sentence of death".

NO COMPLAINTS OVER PROLONGED WAIT

Despite the prolonged wait for decisions on clemency petitions, the department said it had not recorded any challenges associated with inmates spending extended periods awaiting the outcome of their cases.

"No. We have not recorded any challenges," it said.

It also said it had not undertaken any review of the management of death row inmates or the administration of the death penalty process.

Asked whether there had been any recent directives, policy guidance or administrative instructions from supervising authorities regarding the management or treatment of inmates under sentence of death, the department said there had been none.

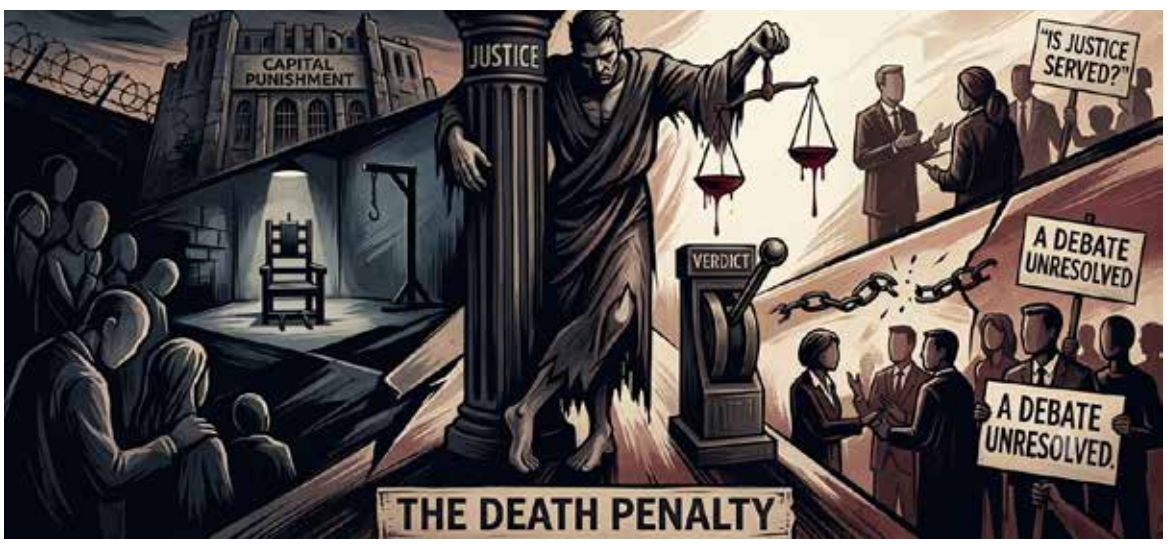
> There are approximately 19 inmates on death row. Six have exhausted their appeals before the Court of Appeal and are now awaiting the President's decision on their petitions for the Prerogative of Mercy.

"No. We have not received any directives or instructions relating to treatment of prisoners under sentence of death as management of prisons and treatment of prisoners is our responsibility," responded the Prisons Service.

A NATION IN SUPPORT OF THE DEATH PENALTY

Botswana remains a country where public opinion has traditionally shown strong support for retaining the death penalty, according to Afrobarometer studies.

There are approximately 19 inmates on death row. Six have exhausted their appeals before the Court of Appeal and are now awaiting the President's decision on their petitions for the Prerogative of Mercy.



MEDICINE CRISIS EXPLODES AT PAC

A fiery Public Accounts Committee hearing further unraveled Botswana's medicine crisis as MPs, health officials and Central Medical Stores traded blame over shortages, expired drugs and a growing public demand for accountability.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's long-running medicine crisis erupted in dramatic fashion before Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Wednesday, with explosive exchanges exposing some of the officials at the centre of the country's troubled pharmaceutical supply chain while offering little clarity on who will ultimately take responsibility for persistent medicine shortages.

The hearing quickly descended into a heated confrontation as Lobatse MP Kamal Jacobs launched a blistering attack on Acting Director of Botswana's Central Medical Stores (CMS), Dr Bene Paramadhas, accusing him of incompetence and threatening to seek his deportation.

Jacobs said patients were paying with their lives, saying every Motswana should be able to access the medicines they need and that people were dying because of medicine shortages. He added that in Lobatse alone he buries five or six people every week whose deaths he believes are linked to the unavailability of essential medicines.

The exchange laid bare the growing political pressure surrounding a crisis that has simmered for years and predates the current administration, but which has become one of government's most damaging public service failures.

> "Why are we experiencing these shortages? Batswana are dying, and it is deeply sad."

P95 MILLION WASTED

The confrontation came after Ministry of Health officials confirmed that medicines worth more than P95 million had expired while under government care despite continuing shortages across the country's health facilities.

Acting Permanent Secretary Dr Tshepo Machacha told the committee that procurement functions remained heavily undercapacitated, forcing repeated emergency procurement, direct appointments and retrospective approvals rather than strategic purchasing.

SHIFTING THE DEBATE

Machacha also argued that Botswana's greatest health challenge was the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, saying the country faced what amounted to a pandemic of lifestyle-related illnesses. He suggested that medication alone would not solve Botswana's healthcare challenges and that improving public health would also require healthier lifestyle choices by citizens.

The remarks shifted part of the discussion away from medicine availability and onto patient behaviour, a position likely to fuel further public debate given the continuing shortages experienced across public health facilities.

NO CLEAR ANSWERS

For many observers, the hearing offered an unprecedented glimpse into the officials responsible for Botswana's medicine supply chain while revealing how fragmented accountability has become. What emerged was a health system struggling not only to keep medicines on pharmacy shelves, but also to convince the public that anyone is ultimately accountable when those medicines fail to arrive.



Deposit and Lending Interest Rates

Quarterly Report

April - June 2026

Type of Deposit	April 2026 Interest Rates (%)	May 2026 Interest Rates (%)	June 2026 Interest Rates (%)	Q2 Range Interest Rates (%)
Current	0.00 - 0.04	0.00 - 0.04	0.00 - 0.04	0.00 - 0.04
Global Account	0.00 - 2.00	0.00 - 2.00	0.00 - 2.00	0.00 - 2.00
Call	0.00 - 3.35	0.00 - 3.35	0.00 - 3.35	0.00 - 3.35
Savings	0.00 - 2.75	0.00 - 3.40	0.00 - 3.40	0.00 - 3.40
1 Month	0.15 - 3.50	0.15 - 5.50	0.15 - 5.00	0.15 - 5.50
3 Months	0.00 - 9.50	0.00 - 4.75	0.00 - 4.00	0.00 - 9.50
6 Months	0.00 - 8.00	0.00 - 7.50	0.00 - 7.50	0.00 - 8.00
12 Months	0.00 - 13.00	0.00 - 10.00	0.00 - 10.50	0.00 - 13.00
24 Months	-	-	-	-
Over 24 Months	-	-	-	-

	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	Average Pricing
Monetary Policy Rate	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	-
Prime Lending Rate	7.01%	7.01%	7.01%	-
Mortgage Facility	3.50% - 10.01%	3.50% - 20.85%	3.50% - 22.13%	4.17%
Overdraft Facility *(Revolving Credit Lines)*	7.01% - 24.51%	7.01% - 22.01%	7.01% - 27.01%	14.67%
Credit Card	22.00% - 25.00%	22.00% - 25.00%	22.00% - 25.00%	20.05%
Lease Loans *(VAF)*	5.51% - 25.76%	5.51% - 27.01%	5.51% - 28.01%	12.12%
Unsecured Personal Loans *(excluding overdrafts, mortgage and credit cards)*	5.00% - 29.01%	5.00% - 29.01%	5.00% - 29.01%	15.53%
Other Term Loans	-	-	-	-

**Scheme related lending is as per the scheme contract*

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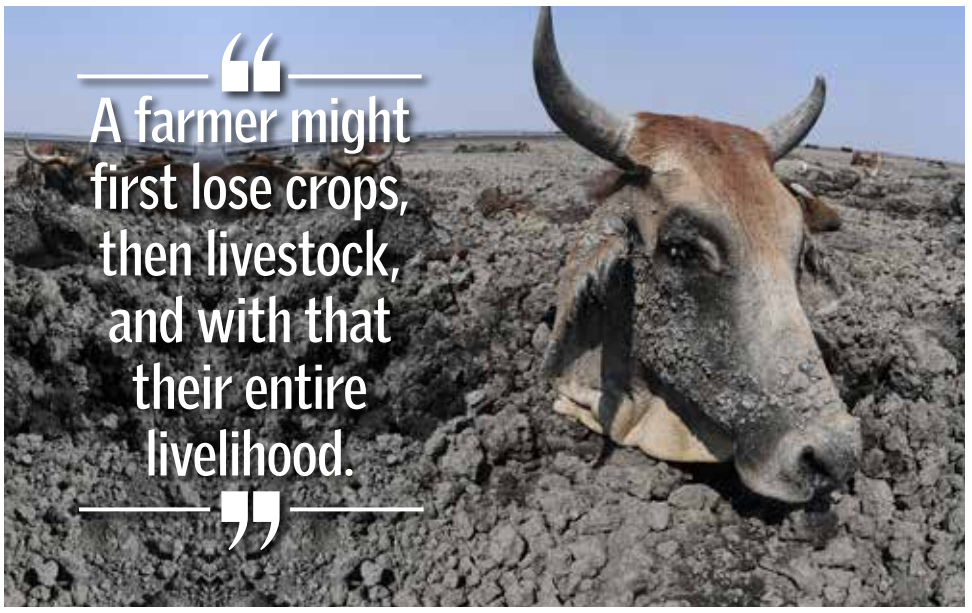
Worst Drought Coming to Botswana

A new FAO analysis warns that Botswana faces a high risk of severe agricultural drought as a strengthening El Niño threatens crops, livestock and food security, raising concerns over the country's preparedness for another climate shock



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GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana is among countries facing a heightened risk of severe agricultural drought as experts warn that a strengthening El Niño weather pattern could trigger crop failures, livestock losses and worsening food insecurity across Southern Africa.

A new analysis by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has identified Botswana as one of the countries where agricultural and pasturelands face more than 50 percent probability of drought in the coming months.

SOUTHERN AFRICA IN THE DANGER ZONE

The assessment, developed using 41 years of historical satellite data from FAO's Agricultural Stress Index System (ASIS), maps areas considered most vulnerable to drought associated with strong El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events.

The findings point to particularly high drought risks across Southern Africa, including Botswana.

FAO experts warn that the threat is being amplified by the convergence of climate extremes, economic pressures, food insecurity and limited capacity among vulnerable communities to recover from repeated shocks.

LESSONS FROM THE LAST DROUGHT

The warning follows the devastating 2023–24 El Niño cycle, which severely affected agricultural production, livestock and water resources across Southern Africa.

For Botswana, where large sections of rural communities depend on rainfed agriculture and livestock farming, the projected drought risk poses a direct threat to household livelihoods and national food security.

FAO said that in communities where livestock serves both as a source of food and a store of household wealth, the loss of grazing land can rapidly translate into the loss of assets and income.

"Risk is rarely about rainfall deficits alone. A moderate drought can be devastating in places already facing conflict and chronic hunger, where crops depend entirely on rainfall, livestock holds much of a household's wealth, and families have little margin for recovery," the organisation said.

A CASCADE OF LOSSES

Alvar-Beltrán warned that drought impacts typically unfold in a chain reaction, beginning with crop losses and later

To Page 5

BCP Ushers in New Leadership for 2029

The BCP has elected a new central committee to steer the party towards the 2029 General Elections, with Dumelang Saleshando retaining the presidency and Dr Unity Dow emerging as his deputy



The Botswana Congress Party (BCP) has ushered in a new central committee to steer the party towards the 2029 General Elections, with Dumelang Saleshando retaining the presidency and Dr Unity Dow emerging as his deputy.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Congress Party (BCP) has ushered in a new central committee to steer the party towards the 2029 General Elections, with Dumelang Saleshando retaining the presidency and Dr Unity Dow emerging as his deputy.

Saleshando was re-elected unopposed at the party's July 2026 elective congress in Mogoditshane this week, while Dow defeated Taolo Lucas by 942 votes to 842 in the contest for the vice presidency.

The new leadership takes charge with the task of repositioning the BCP ahead of the next general elections, following the party's impressive participation in the political realignment that brought the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) to power in 2024.

NEW EXECUTIVE TAKES SHAPE

Sennye Obuseng was elected National Chairperson after securing 682 votes, defeating Caterpillar Hikuama, who polled 634, and Daisy Bathusi, who received 468.

Goretetse Kekgonegile narrowly defeated Emmanuel Maite 891 votes to 877 to become Secretary General, while Tebogo Hildah Molefe was elected Deputy Secretary General with 903 votes against Refiloe Aphiri's 864.

KEY POSITIONS DECIDED

Reuben W. Kaizer emerged as National Treasurer with 770 votes, defeating Manka Ethel Gampone and Obakeng Moumakwa, who polled 511 and 490 votes respectively.

Olebile Machete was elected Information and Publicity Secretary after receiving 907 votes, defeating Gregory G. Kelebonye, who secured 850 votes.

FOCUS SHIFTS TO 2029

The new leadership is expected to focus on strengthening the party's structures, consolidating its support base and defining the BCP's political direction as it prepares for the 2029 electoral contest.

With Saleshando retaining the presidency and a new executive team now in place, the congress has effectively set the BCP on a three-year political journey towards its next major test at the ballot box.

SALESHANDO HAILS INTERNAL DEMOCRACY

Closing the event, Saleshando described the elections as a reflection of the talent within the BCP and a demonstration of the party's vibrant internal democracy.

From Page 4

spreading to livestock and household economies.

"A farmer might first lose crops, then livestock, and with that their entire livelihood," he said. "With cascading impacts of multiple crises already evident, there is an urgent need to act early."

The FAO analysis suggests that the potential impact of the coming drought will depend not only on the severity of rainfall shortages but also on the ability of affected communities to absorb and recover from the shock.

"More than 80 percent of drought impacts on agriculture are projected to hit in low- and middle-income countries," FAO warned.

EARLY ACTION URGED

The organisation said many areas now considered at risk were also severely affected by previous El Niño events, particularly the 2015–16 and 2023–24 cycles.

The 2015–16 El Niño affected more than 60 million people globally and triggered humanitarian appeals worth approximately $5 billion across 23 countries.

FAO said early action was critical, warning that waiting until the full effects of drought become visible often results in higher costs and greater human suffering.







Anti-Corruption Gains in Freefall

Botswana’s anti-corruption record has suffered a decade-long decline, according to the 2026 Ibrahim Index

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana’s reputation as one of Africa’s strongest performers in governance and integrity is facing renewed pressure after preliminary findings from the 2026 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) revealed a significant decade-long deterioration in the country’s anti-corruption performance.

The report, titled Anti-Corruption: From Decline to Recovery – Preliminary 2026 IIAG Findings, places Botswana among six African countries experiencing “increasing deterioration” in anti-corruption outcomes.

Botswana’s score declined by 8.6 points between 2016 and 2025, with the country losing three positions in the continental rankings during the period.

Although Botswana remained among Africa’s top 10 anti-corruption performers in 2025, ranking sixth with a score of 57.8 points, the IIAG identified it as one of the countries where the deterioration has accelerated since 2021.

“Six countries, home to 9.1% of Africa’s population, record increasing deterioration. Their 2025 score is worse, and the decline has also accelerated since 2021,” the report states.

Botswana is listed alongside Comoros, Liberia, South Africa and Niger among the countries recording the sharpest deterioration in anti-corruption performance since 2016.

REPUTATION UNDER PRESSURE

The findings mark a reversal for Botswana, which has historically been regarded as a regional benchmark for good governance and institutional integrity.

The IIAG’s Anti-Corruption subcategory assesses the effectiveness of efforts to combat corruption across government, public administration and the private sector. It examines anti-corruption mechanisms, corruption in state institutions, the public and private sectors, public procurement procedures and public perceptions of anti-corruption efforts.

The latest findings come amid growing scrutiny of public sector accountability, procurement practices and the effectiveness of institutions responsible for combating corruption.

The IIAG said anti-corruption performance had deteriorated in 28 African countries, representing 58.8% of the continent’s population. Only 26 countries, representing 41.2% of Africa’s population, recorded improvements.

SEYCHELLES SURGES

Botswana’s decline contrasts sharply with the performance of countries such as Seychelles, which recorded the continent’s biggest improvement, gaining 26.3 points over the decade.

Rwanda also remained among Africa’s leading performers, scoring 76.6 points in 2025 and improving by 2.6 points since 2016.

The report described Seychelles’ progress as “dramatic catch-up at the top of the Anti-Corruption ranking table.”

PROCUREMENT AND PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

The IIAG identifies public procurement as one of the areas where African countries continue to face significant challenges.

Public Procurement Procedures and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms declined across the continent between 2016 and 2021/22 before showing signs of recovery, although 2025 scores remained below 2016 levels.

Public perception of anti-corruption efforts recorded the sharpest deterioration, falling by four points since 2016.

While public confidence has begun recovering from its lowest point in 2022, the decline reflects growing concerns over whether anti-corruption systems are delivering meaningful results.

For Botswana, the findings suggest that its historical reputation as a clean governance state can no longer be taken for granted.



BW's Bigger De Beers Stake Bid Wins Int'l Backing

International experts say Botswana's participation in the De Beers consortium could strengthen both ownership and long-term growth

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's participation in the preferred consortium seeking to acquire De Beers is gaining support from international diamond industry experts, who believe the arrangement could strengthen the mining giant's long-term prospects while giving Botswana greater strategic influence over the global diamond industry.

The growing endorsement follows revelations by the Minister for State President, Defence and Security Moeti Mohwasa in Parliament last week that Anglo American has identified the Global Diamond Consortium as its preferred bidder for De Beers.

The consortium is led by former De Beers Chief Executive Gareth Penny and backed by Angola and Namibia. Mohwasa said the group remains open to partnering with Botswana and other commercial investors to ensure that the country secures an increased stake that advances its national interests.

> "With so many independent miners falling off in recent years, in addition to Russian sanctions, De Beers is in a very strong position from a supply standpoint."

International diamond analyst Paul Zimnisky believes the proposed arrangement presents an opportunity that extends well beyond Botswana simply acquiring a larger shareholding in De Beers.

He argues that the mining giant represents a potentially valuable long-term investment whose underlying strength has been obscured by the current weakness in the global diamond market.

A DEEP-VALUE OPPORTUNITY

"You could make the argument that De Beers is a deep value investment right now," Zimnisky said.

"It has a long, resilient history and I think with enough capital and proper execution it could flourish again."

According to Zimnisky, De Beers remains strategically well positioned despite the difficult market environment, particularly as the number of independent diamond producers continues to decline and sanctions on Russian diamonds reshape global supply chains.

"With so many independent miners falling off in recent years, in addition to Russian sanctions, De Beers is in a very strong position from a supply standpoint," he said.

'EVERYONE ON THE SAME TEAM'

His assessment is shared by Tobias Kormind, Managing Director and co-founder of 77 Diamonds, Europe's largest online diamond jeweller, who views the current downturn as a potential buying opportunity rather than evidence of a permanent collapse in the diamond industry.

Kormind argues that the sharp decline in rough diamond prices could create significant upside for a consortium able to provide De Beers with the right strategic direction, capital and patience.

"The diamond market is currently weak but this is a cyclical low rather than a permanent structural decline," he said.

He noted that rough diamond prices have fallen significantly from their 2022 highs, while natural diamonds have continued to retain substantially greater value than laboratory-grown stones.

OPPOSITION

However, a local expert warned that Botswana should not mistake De Beers' depressed valuation for a bargain. With the diamond industry facing declining demand, competition from lab-grown stones and uncertain market recovery, any decision to increase the country's stake should be based on a clear assessment of the financial risks, funding requirements and potential returns. Greater ownership, he warned, not automatically guarantee greater influence, and strategic considerations should not override the need for a sound investment case that protects taxpayers.

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Quarterly Financial Disclosures

Public Disclosure on Actual Deposit Interest Rates April 2026 - June 2026				
Type of Deposit Account	April Interest Rates (%)	May Interest Rates (%)	June Interest Rates (%)	Range* Interest Rates (%)
Current	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Call	0.00% - 0.60%	0.00% - 0.60%	0.00% - 0.60%	0.00% - 0.60%
Savings	0.00% - 4.10%	0.00% - 4.10%	0.00% - 4.10%	0.00% - 4.10%
3 months	3.00% - 11.00%	1.23% - 11.00%	1.22% - 11.00%	1.22% - 11.00%
6 months	2.00% - 10.25%	1.50% - 10.50%	2.50% - 4.00%	1.50% - 10.50%
12 months	2.05% - 10.50%	1.75% - 10.25%	2.00% - 10.25%	1.75% - 10.50%
24 months	3.50% - 8.62%	2.00% - 8.23%	5.00% - 7.25%	2.00% - 8.62%
Over 24 months	NA	6.93% - 8.37%	N/A	6.93% - 8.37%

Quarterly Report on Public Disclosure on Actual Lending Interest Rates April 2026 - June 2026				
Type of Lending Product	April Interest Rates (%)	May Interest Rates (%)	June Interest Rates (%)	Range* Interest Rates (%)
Monetary Policy Rate	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Prime Lending Rate	7.16%	7.16%	7.16%	7.16%
Mortgage Facility	4.66% - 11.16%	4.66% - 4.66%	4.66% - 4.66%	4.66% - 11.16%
Overdraft Facility (Revolving Credit Lines)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Credit Card	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lease Loans	20.16% - 20.16%	22.00% - 22.00%	17.16% - 17.16%	17.16% - 22.00%
Unsecured Personal Loans (excluding overdrafts, mortgage and credit cards)	10.00% - 25.00%	10.00% - 25.00%	10.00% - 25.16%	10.00% - 25.16%
Other Long-Term Loans	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Range: Minimum and Maximum Value Limits

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MALEMA TO BOKO: 'OVERHAUL THE SYSTEM'

EFF leader Julius Malema has urged President Duma Boko to pursue sweeping structural reforms, arguing that true political change requires a complete transformation of the system rather than gradual reforms



GAZETTE REPORTER

South African Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) leader Julius Malema has challenged President Duma Boko on what he described as a "complete overhaul of the system", warning that political change without fundamental transformation does not amount to a revolution.

Malema's call for a wholesale transformation of the political system contrasts sharply with Boko's more measured, incremental approach to reform, an apparent divergence that has increasingly unsettled some within the UDC, including party cadres who expected the change in government to usher in more sweeping and immediate transformation.

Addressing delegates at the BNF National Conference in Jwaneng yesterday, Malema warned that governments without resilient political movements are vulnerable to manipulation by those seeking to exploit the country's people and mineral wealth.

"The risk of leading a government while not having a strong and resilient organisation with principles is that those whose sole purpose is to exploit the people and mineral resources of Botswana will manipulate and capture those in government," he said.

INFILTRATION

Malema argued that the weakening of a liberation movement marks the beginning of the reversal of the gains of freedom.

"Once the movement which won political power is infiltrated, weakened and captured, the gains of freedom begin to be reversed," he said.

He stressed that political change alone does not constitute a revolution if the lives of ordinary citizens remain unchanged.

A TRUE REVOLUTION

"Revolution means a complete overhaul of the system. It can be that when you took over power, those who oppressed before lost nothing, and those who were oppressed gained nothing. Once it happens like that, there was never a revolution," Malema said.

> "Once the movement which won political power is infiltrated, weakened and captured, the gains of freedom begin to be reversed."

He further called for Botswana's mineral resources and economy to be owned and managed by Batswana, saying, "We must manage our own economy."

Russian War Recruitment Scam Still Active-Govt

The government says more Batswana are being lured into Russia war despite repeated warnings, as desperate calls from the frontline continue

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's efforts to stop citizens from being lured into the Russia-Ukraine war through fraudulent overseas job offers are proving increasingly difficult, with the government admitting that more Batswana continue to fall victim to sophisticated recruitment scams despite repeated public warnings.

In a fresh advisory issued by the Ministry of International Relations, the government said it is once again warning citizens after receiving reports that the number of Batswana being deceived into travelling abroad under the guise of employment opportunities is rising at an alarming rate.

According to the ministry, victims are promised legitimate jobs but only discover after arriving in Russia that they are expected to join active combat in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

DISTRESSING CALLS

The ministry also revealed that it continues to receive distressing calls from Batswana already deployed on the frontlines, highlighting the worsening nature of the problem and the government's limited ability to intervene once citizens are inside Russia.

"The Ministry continues to receive heartbreaking calls from Batswana already on the front line, describing the perilous conditions they face. While the Government continues to explore all possible avenues to assist and bring them home, citizens must understand that prevention is the most effective safeguard," the ministry said.

The ministry warned that once individuals enter Russia under these deceptive arrangements, Botswana's ability to offer consular assistance becomes "extremely limited", leaving victims exposed to life-threatening conditions.



> "The Ministry continues to receive heartbreaking calls from Batswana already on the front line, describing the perilous conditions they face."

NUMBERS RISING AT AN ALARMING RATE

"Recent reports indicate that the number of Batswana being misled into such arrangements is rising at an alarming rate. These individuals are often promised employment opportunities, only to discover upon arrival that they are being forced into active combat," the statement said.

The government has urged Batswana seeking employment abroad to verify all job offers through official channels before travelling, warning that recruiters often disguise military enlistment as legitimate employment opportunities.

VIGILANCE IS KEY

The ministry advised citizens to be suspicious of offers promising unusually high salaries, contracts written in foreign languages, pressure to travel urgently, unexplained changes to travel arrangements and a lack of transparency regarding accommodation, legal protections or workplace conditions.

Meanwhile, media outlet Al Jazeera published a report last week in which former Russian army officer Sergey Elidonov dismissed allegations that African army recruits are signed up against their will. "It's all false. These stories about Russian Houses or recruitment networks across African countries, they don't exist. Russia offers the pay and the conditions. If people want to come, they find their own way," Elidonov was quoted as saying.



KHOEMACAU EXPANSION DRIVES JOBS AND GROWTH

MMG Khoemacau's 2028 expansion is set to lift its workforce from 2,200 to 5,500, contribute an estimated six percent of Botswana's GDP and create new opportunities for citizen businesses and communities.



NICOLE SENUKU
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD
MMG KHOEMACAU

CLICK WATCH

LEATILE ZACHARIAH

MMG Khoemacau is redefining the future of mining in Botswana by shifting its focus from resource extraction to broader socio-economic impact as the company accelerates expansion plans aimed at boosting employment, enterprise development and national economic growth.

BEYOND COPPER

Speaking in an interview, MMG Khoemacau Communications Lead Nicole Senuku said the company's strategy reflects a wider industry transition towards responsible mining and sustainable development.

"We are looking at a shift that is already happening within the industry, which is basically moving from extraction into impact," she said. "As MMG Khoemacau, we are a member of the International Council on Mining and Metals, which demonstrates our commitment to responsible mining and ensuring that copper production benefits the communities in which we operate."

JOBS SURGE

Senuku revealed that the mine's expansion, expected to be fully commissioned by the second quarter of 2028, will significantly increase employment opportunities.

"We will move from a workforce of about 2,200 currently to 5,500. That's job creation for Botswana," she said.

Beyond employment, the expansion is projected to make a notable contribution to the country's economy.

"We are looking at contributing about six percent of Botswana's GDP," she added, highlighting the mine's growing importance to Botswana's economic landscape.

She also emphasised ongoing engagements between the company and government aimed at positioning Botswana as a leading copper producer in the region.

CITIZEN SUPPLY

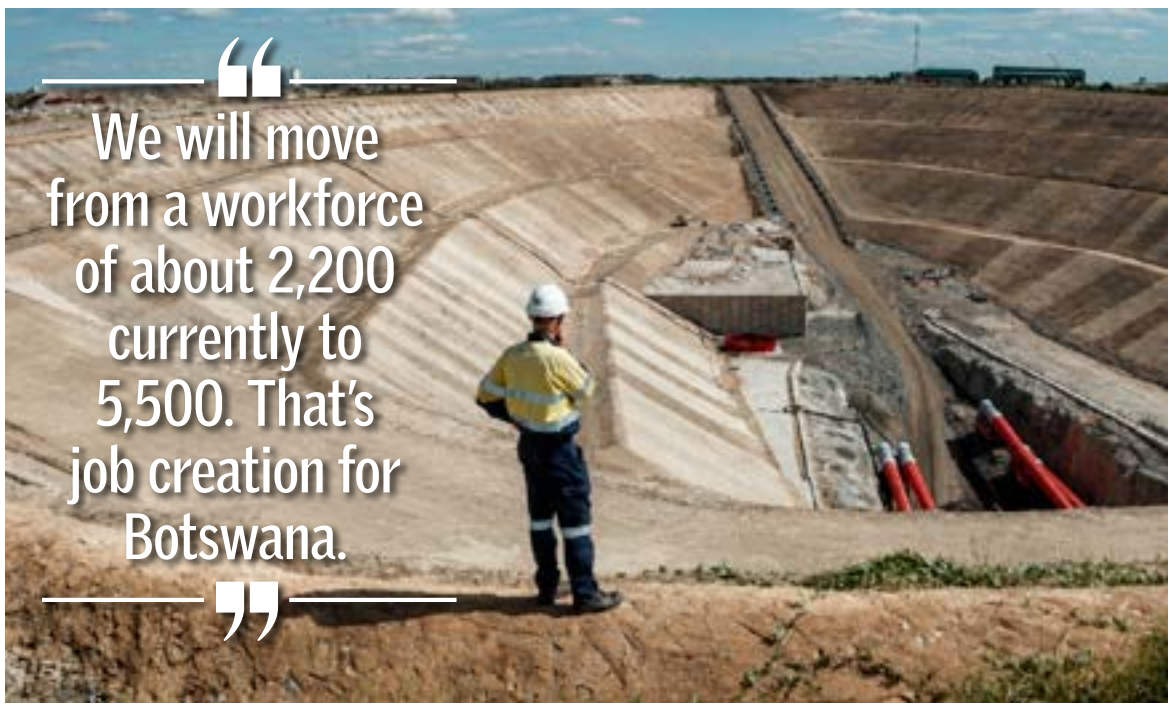
A key pillar of MMG Khoemacau's strategy is integrating citizen-owned businesses into the mining value chain. In January 2026, the company introduced its Citizen Economic Empowerment Programme (CEEP) to facilitate this.

"We have a coordinator to ensure that citizens can actively participate by supplying goods and services needed by the mine," Senuku explained.

The initiative includes skills upgrading and capacity building to ensure local enterprises meet industry standards. She cited the example of a local entrepreneur producing copper concentrate bags in Lobatse, demonstrating how citizen businesses are already benefiting.

"We are also looking into PPE manufacturing locally, which contributes to textile development and manufacturing in Botswana," she said.

Beyond mining-related services, the company is investing in sectors such as agriculture, horticulture and eco-tourism to sustain local economies beyond the life of the mine.



COMMUNITY RETURNS

Senuku noted that MMG Khoemacau committed substantial resources to community development, with $74 million invested in socio-economic programmes in 2025 alone.

Among the initiatives is the adoption of Ngami Junior Secondary School in Sehithwa, where the company is refurbishing water systems, dormitories and ablution facilities.

"We are also creating opportunities for the school to venture into agriculture, so they can generate income," she said.

Additionally, the annual Lake Ngami Cycle Classic has raised over $4 million to support the school's development.

MINING PROGRESS

Senuku stressed that the company's impact extends beyond host communities, contributing to national development through job creation, skills transfer and environmental sustainability.

"We are talking about jobs, skills development, contribution to GDP and reduction of carbon footprint as we support a green economy," she said.

She concluded with a message aligned with the company's vision: "We mine for progress. We do what we say, and we aim to improve livelihoods and build resilient communities. We invite Batswana to be part of building a responsible and sustainable mining industry."



SALESHANDO, SPEAKER CLASH OVER CONSTITUENCY ALLOWANCES

A clash has erupted between Opposition Leader Dumelang Saleshando and Speaker of the National Assembly Dithapelo Keorapetse over a proposed Bill seeking to scrap constituency allowances for the President, Speaker and Specially Elected MPs

BONGANI MALUNGA

A dispute has erupted between the Leader of Opposition and Botswana Congress Party (BCP) president Dumelang Saleshando and Speaker of the National Assembly Dithapelo Keorapetse over Saleshando 's bid to abolish constituency allowances for the President, the Speaker and Specially Elected Members of Parliament (SEMPs).

Speaking during the BCP Congress Saleshando accused the Speaker of repeatedly frustrating the Bill by demanding corrections and amendments, which he claims have delayed its publication and prevented it from reaching Parliament for consideration.

Asked for clarity in an interview with this publication, Saleshando alleged that the Bill had been blocked from publication on two occasions.

"Twice the Speaker blocked the Bill from being published," Saleshando told this publication

However, Keorapetse has rejected the allegations, insisting that the Bill is undergoing the standard parliamentary procedures required for private members' Bills.

The Speaker said the Bill submitted by Saleshando was being processed in accordance with Standing Orders 71.8 and 71.9, adding that the procedures were neither politically motivated nor specifically targeted at the opposition leader.

NOT UNIQUE TO SALESHANDO

Keorapetse said the same procedures applied to all Members of Parliament seeking to introduce similar legislation.

"The appropriate channels are not only being applied to Honourable Saleshando but to all Honourable Members who have brought requests under the same Bill," he said.

He cited the case of Galenawabo Lekau, a non-opposition MP, whose Bill is also undergoing the same process.

NO FORMAL COMPLAINT

The Speaker further said that neither Saleshando nor the BCP had formally raised concerns with his office through the appropriate parliamentary channels before making the allegations publicly.

"Parliament is not aware of any formally raised concerns through the parliamentary channels requiring redress from the Leader of Opposition or any representative of the Botswana Congress Party," Keorapetse said.

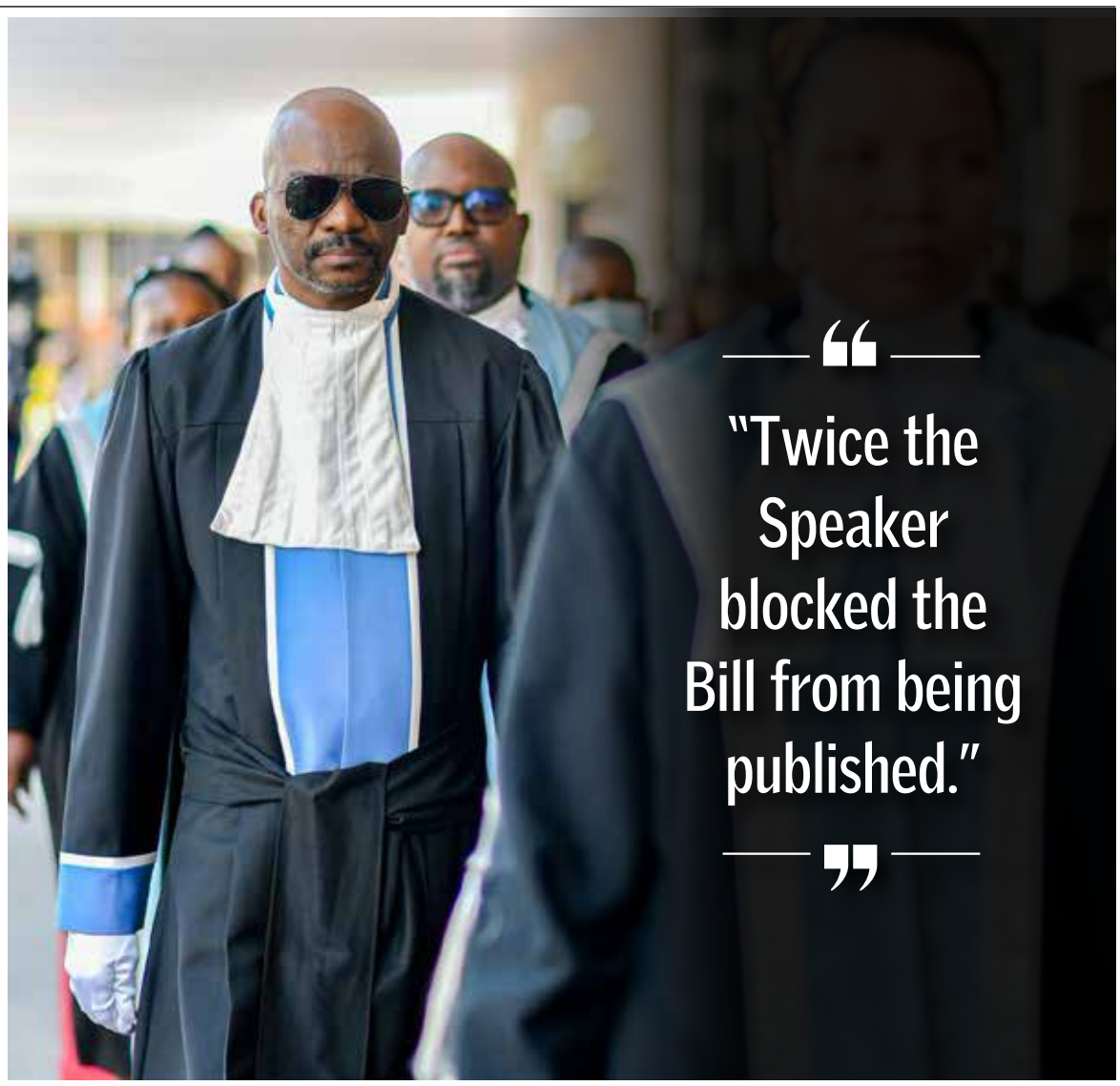
He also assured the public that parliamentary processes would not be administered along political lines under his leadership.

SALESANDO'S LONG-RUNNING CAMPAIGN

Saleshando's opposition to constituency allowances for unelected officials without constituencies dates back to 2023, when the allowances were introduced under the former Botswana Democratic Party administration.

He has consistently argued that the President, Speaker and SEMPs do not represent specific geographical constituencies and should therefore not receive an allowance intended to facilitate constituency-related responsibilities.

For Saleshando, the payments amount to an unjustified drain on public resources. His proposed Bill seeks to end the payments and bring the allowance structure in line with the constitutional and representational roles of the office-holders concerned.



Butale's Gay Rights Case Tests Separation of Powers

Former Cabinet minister Biggie Butale is asking the High Court to decide whether the Attorney General exceeded his constitutional authority by removing provisions criminalising consensual same-sex relations from Botswana's statute books, setting up a legal test of where executive powers end and Parliament's law-making role begins

GAZETTE REPORTER

Former Cabinet minister and Botswana Republican Party (BRP) president Biggie Butale has reignited debate over the separation of powers after challenging the Attorney General's decision to remove provisions criminalising consensual same-sex relations from Botswana's statute books.

In an application before the High Court in Gaborone, Butale is seeking an order declaring Statutory Instrument No. 41 of 2026, issued by the Attorney General in his capacity as Law Revision Commissioner, unlawful and unconstitutional.

Butale's challenge, however, does not seek to overturn the landmark court decisions that decriminalised consensual same-sex relations in Botswana.

Instead, he argues that the central issue is whether the Attorney General had the constitutional authority to formally remove the provisions from the country's laws.

NOT CHALLENGING DECRIMINALISATION

In his founding affidavit, Butale says the case concerns the legal effect of judgments delivered by the High Court and the Court of Appeal, Parliament's response to those judgments and the subsequent decision to issue the statutory instrument.

"The key issues in this application relate to the legal effect of certain judgments delivered by the High Court and the Court of Appeal, Parliament's reaction to those judgments and the decision to promulgate the statutory instrument sought to be impugned," he states.

'AG USURPED PARLIAMENT'S POWER'

The former minister is challenging the deletion of paragraphs (a) and (c) of Section 164 of the Penal Code through Statutory Instrument No. 41 of 2026.

He argues that the Attorney General acted ultra vires—beyond the powers granted under the Revision of Laws Act—and unlawfully assumed a function constitutionally reserved for Parliament.

According to Butale, the statutory instrument "constituted an impermissible usurpation of the power conferred on Parliament by section 86 of the Constitution to make laws."

His argument is that although the court judgments rendered the provisions legally inoperative, they did not formally repeal them from the statute books.

PARLIAMENT'S OWN BILL

Butale points to Parliament's own actions as evidence that the legislature recognised the need for a formal repeal.

The Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2022, was introduced to remove the provisions declared unconstitutional by the courts.

However, debate on the Bill was deferred in August 2023 after legislators raised questions over whether the provisions should be removed by Parliament or through the Law Revision Commissioner.

While the Bill remained pending, the Attorney General issued the statutory instrument in March 2026, deleting the provisions.

"But the Commissioner achieved that which Parliament sought to do whilst the Bill was pending before it," Butale argues.

He contends that the Law Revision Commissioner's powers are limited to removing provisions that have already been repealed by Parliament and do not extend to independently repealing laws.

> "The key issues in this application relate to the legal effect of certain judgments delivered by the High Court and the Court of Appeal,

Butale says his challenge is rooted in the constitutional principle of separation of powers between the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary.

BAN ON-SITE MINE ACCOMMODATION- UNION

The Botswana Mine Workers Union says relocating mine employees into nearby communities would boost local businesses, jobs and regional economic development

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Mine Workers Union (BMWU) has called on the government to prohibit mining companies from building employee accommodation within mine premises, arguing that the practice deprives surrounding communities of much-needed economic activity.

Speaking at the Botswana National Front (BNF) Conference last weekend, BMWU president Joseph Tsimako said housing workers inside mining compounds limits the flow of money into nearby villages and towns.

He argued that when employees live within mine sites, local businesses lose out on opportunities that would otherwise come from workers renting homes, buying groceries, using transport services and spending on other everyday needs.

> "We have observed that some of the investors in the mining sector have adopted the practice of constructing employees' accommodation within their sites rather than in nearby villages or towns where their operations are located."

CONTRIBUTING DIRECTLY

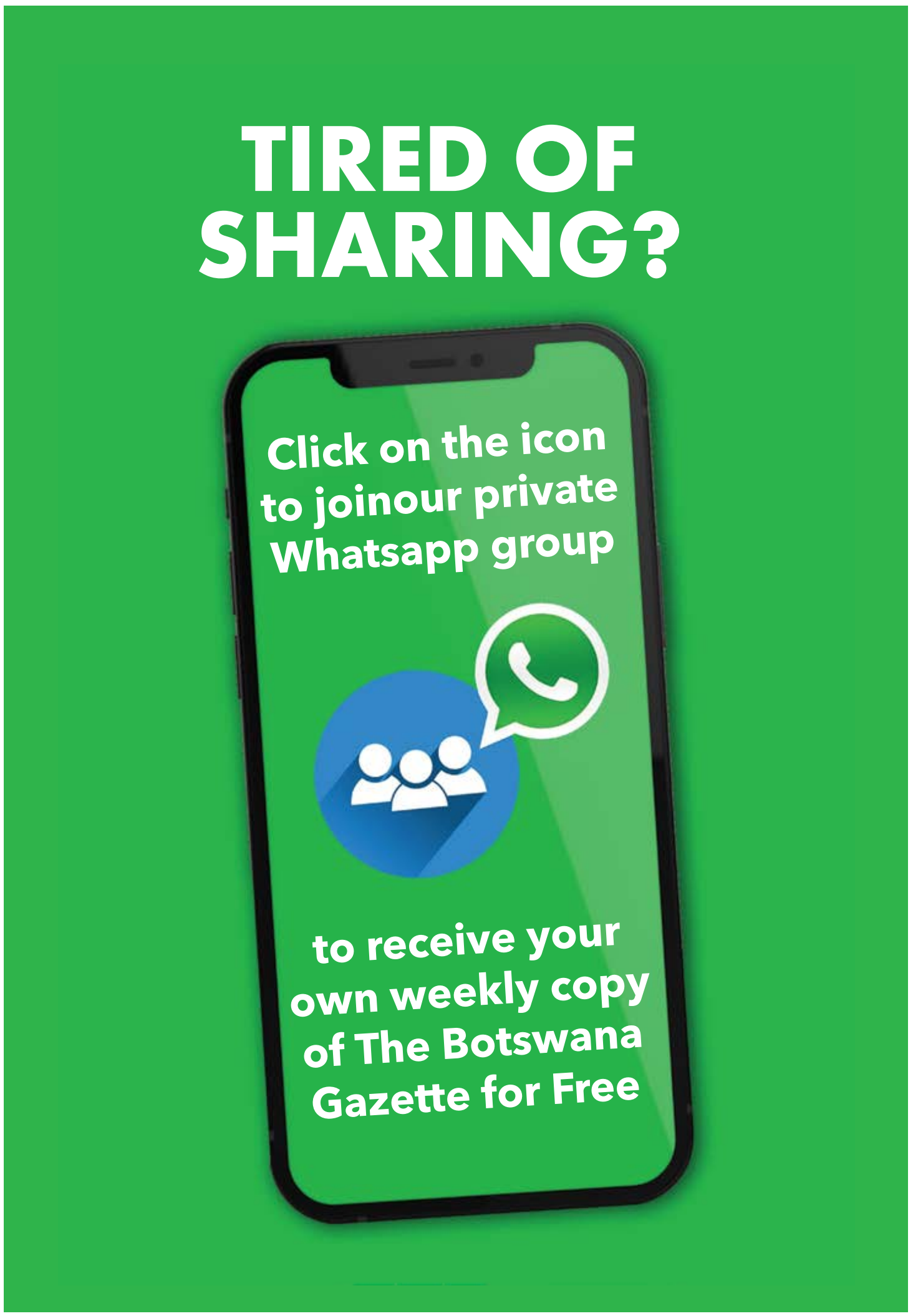
Tsimako said mining operations should contribute more directly to the development of host communities by encouraging employees to live in neighbouring areas. According to the union, this would stimulate local economies, create business opportunities for small enterprises and improve livelihoods in communities located around mining projects.

"We have observed that some of the investors in the mining sector have adopted the practice of constructing employees' accommodation within their sites rather than in nearby villages or towns where their operations are located. While such arrangements may offer operational convenience for the mining companies, they significantly reduce economic benefits that should benefit surrounding communities," Tsimako argued.

REVIEWING ACCOMODATION POLICIES

Last year the Botswana government vowed to introduce reforms and policies that ensure that the mining industry can deliver broader economic benefits beyond employment, taxes and royalties. If adopted, the recommendation could require mining companies to review their accommodation policies and increase their integration with surrounding communities as part of efforts to ensure mining wealth has a greater local economic impact.





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BHC Bets on Housing Recovery

The housing authority is pinning its recovery on a new five-year strategy and the Bonno programme after posting a P102 million pre-tax loss.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) will prioritise implementation of its 2025–2030 strategy as it seeks to rebuild its finances and expand housing delivery under its mandate as the country's Single Housing Authority (SiHA).

RECOVERY PLAN

In the BHC 2025 Annual Report, Board Chairperson Boitsheko Vanessa Ntshingane said the Corporation's immediate focus would be execution of the new five-year strategy and support for the Government's housing agenda through the Bonno National Housing Programme.

Ntshingane said BHC expected conditions to improve during the latter half of the coming financial year, supported by renewed activity in the non-mining sector.

FINANCIAL STRAIN

Ntshingane said the Corporation's unaudited results reflected a difficult financial year.

BHC recorded a loss before tax of about P102 million for the year ended 31 March 2025. This represented a deterioration of about P144 million, or 343 percent, compared with the previous year.

According to the report, the weaker performance was driven by increased impairments on rental receivables, rising operational and capital costs, margin erosion in some housing-for-sale segments, slower sales volumes and delayed project deliveries.

Despite the loss, BHC retained a substantial asset base. The report states that total assets stood at P2.85 billion as at 31 March 2024, up 3 percent year-on-year. Investment properties were valued at P1.3 billion, accounting for about 45 percent of total assets, while housing inventories increased by 17 percent.

HOUSING DELIVERY

The Corporation completed 1,420 housing units during its Two-Year Transitional Performance Plan for 2023–2025, exceeding its target of 1,400 units.

However, the report says project implementation continued to face shortages of serviced land in high-demand areas and delays in connecting water and electricity services.

Ntshingane said BHC had strengthened engagement with utility providers and planning authorities while making significant progress in planning and the initial implementation of the Bonno National Housing Programme.

SYSTEMS UPGRADE

The Corporation also strengthened its Project Management Office framework, expanded facilities management services to diversify revenue and invested in digital systems to improve tenant management, internal controls and customer service.

Inflation Stays at 10.7 Percent

Transport continued to dominate Botswana's inflation picture as rural households faced the highest annual rate at 12.1 percent.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's annual inflation rate remained unchanged at 10.7 percent in June 2026, matching the rate recorded in May, according to the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) report.

TRANSPORT PRESSURE

Transport remained the largest contributor to annual inflation, accounting for 7.3 percentage points. Miscellaneous Goods and Services followed at 1.2 percentage points, while Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages contributed 0.9 percentage point.

REGIONAL GAP

Inflation trends across the country's regions were largely unchanged, although rural households continued to face the highest rate.

Inflation in Urban Villages eased slightly to 10.4 percent in June from 10.5 percent in May. The annual rate in Cities and Towns remained at 10.2 percent, while Rural Villages recorded 12.1 percent, unchanged from the previous month.

The national CPI increased by 0.2 percent, rising from 151.3 in May to 151.6 in June.

The CPI for Cities and Towns rose from 150.2 to 150.4, while Urban Villages increased from 151.3 to 151.5. The Rural Villages index also rose by 0.2 percent, moving from 153.6 to 153.9.

The report noted that all group indices recorded changes of less than 1.0 percent between May and June.

PRICE MOVEMENTS

Clothing and Footwear recorded the largest monthly increase among expenditure groups, rising by 0.6 percent from 132.5 in May to 133.3 in June. The increase was driven by Clothing, which rose 0.9 percent, and Footwear, which increased 0.5 percent.

The Restaurants and Hotels index increased by 0.5 percent, from 134.7 to 135.4, reflecting higher prices for restaurant, café and accommodation services.

> "The annual inflation rate remained unchanged at 10.7 percent in June 2026, matching the rate recorded in May."

Miscellaneous Goods and Services rose by 0.4 percent to 173.7, supported by increases in Insurance at 0.8 percent, Personal Effects at 0.3 percent and Financial Services at 0.2 percent.

The Health index also increased by 0.4 percent, while Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco recorded a similar 0.4 percent rise.

TRADEABLES MIXED

The All-Tradeables index increased by 0.1 percent, while Domestic Tradeables rose by 0.4 percent. Non-Tradeables increased by 0.2 percent and Imported Tradeables edged up by 0.1 percent.

Annual All-Tradeables inflation eased slightly from 15.3 percent in May to 15.2 percent in June. Domestic Tradeables inflation increased from 7.6 percent to 7.9 percent, while Imported Tradeables inflation fell from 18.1 percent to 17.9 percent. Non-Tradeables inflation remained unchanged at 3.9 percent.



Botswana Faces Economic Crossroads

A diamond-led rebound may restore modest growth, but the World Bank warns that only structural reform can meaningfully reduce poverty and unemployment.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's economy is expected to stage a modest recovery over the next two to three years, largely on the back of a rebound in diamond production from historically low levels, according to the World Bank Group.

Its report, Seizing the Moment: How Botswana Can Turn Crisis Into Opportunity, projects economic growth of about 3.2 percent in 2026, supported by a significant recovery in diamond production. However, production is expected to remain below levels recorded over the past decade.

LIMITED REBOUND

The World Bank cautions that "momentum in the non-mining economy is likely to remain subdued," citing fiscal adjustment, weak private investment and a challenging business environment.

Over the medium term, growth is projected to average around 3 percent, reflecting gradual policy improvements and investment in renewable energy and base-metal mining.

FISCAL PRESSURE

The report warns that inflation risks remain tilted to the upside because of higher fuel and transport costs, before easing back towards the target range in 2027.

Botswana's fiscal position also remains under pressure.

It adds that financing constraints are becoming increasingly important and warns that "budget execution will increasingly depend on access to affordable external financing."

Without such financing, the World Bank says liquidity constraints could lead to the under-execution of government spending, "an outcome already observed in the recent past."

TWO PATHS

According to the report, Botswana now faces two distinct economic paths.

The first is to maintain the current model, make only marginal adjustments and continue relying on diamonds as the country's main export. The World Bank warns that this approach "carries significant risks," leaving the economy exposed to commodity shocks while producing limited gains in productivity, employment and poverty reduction.

The alternative is to transform the economy by reducing the state's footprint and promoting private sector-led growth through diversification.

REFORM AGENDA

The report says this approach is at the centre of the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme adopted in 2025.

It identifies four priorities: restoring fiscal stability through a more efficient state, promoting a dynamic private sector, investing in people, and harnessing natural capital through renewable energy, improved water security and climate-smart rural livelihoods.

The World Bank concludes that these measures could place Botswana on "a more prosperous, inclusive, and resilient development trajectory."

BSE Holds Trillion-Pula Mark

Foreign-listed companies kept the Exchange above P1 trillion in value, even as six-month turnover fell by 65.2 percent.



GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE) maintained total market capitalisation above P1 trillion during the first six months of 2026, even as trading activity slowed sharply from the exceptionally high levels recorded in 2025.

TRILLION MARK

According to the Market Performance Report covering 1 January to 30 June 2026, the Exchange closed the period with total market capitalisation of P1.06 trillion.

Equities accounted for 92.3 percent of market value, while bonds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) contributed the remaining 7.7 percent.

The report said the period demonstrated the resilience of the Exchange despite the slowdown in trading. It also coincided with early signs of economic recovery, with real gross domestic product expanding by 3.5 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2026 after a prolonged contraction, supported in part by improving conditions in the diamond sector.

FOREIGN LIFT

Total equity market capitalisation increased from P619.5 billion in 2025 to P974.6 billion in 2026, representing growth of about 57.3 percent year-on-year.

Foreign-domiciled companies accounted for most of the increase, with their market capitalisation rising by 62.2 percent from P563.6 billion to P914.2 billion.

The domestic market remained broadly unchanged at P60.4 billion, although it rose by P66.8 million, or 0.1 percent, during June.

Month-on-month movement in June was limited. Foreign market capitalisation increased by only P29.8 million, consistent with Anglo American's unchanged share price during the month.

TRADING SLUMPS

Equity turnover for the six months to 30 June totalled P1.64 billion, compared with P4.73 billion during the same period in 2025, a decline of 65.2 percent.

Average daily turnover fell to P13.5 million from P38.7 million, while trading volumes declined by 70.9 percent to 328.7 million shares from 1.13 billion shares.

Despite the weaker six-month comparison, June produced a sharp rebound in activity and included the Exchange's highest single-day turnover on record.

On 16 June 2026, the market recorded approximately P1.45 billion in trades, comprising P1.35 billion in equities and P103.2 million in ETFs.

The report said turnover remained above levels recorded in 2022 and 2023 and was broadly aligned with historical norms.

TOP COUNTERS

Trading remained concentrated in a small group of companies. The top three counters accounted for 43.4 percent of total market turnover.

FNBB recorded turnover of P285.7 million, representing 17.4 percent of the market total. Sechaba followed with 14.1 percent, while Sefalana accounted for 11.9 percent.

GROWTH PIPELINE

The report said the Exchange's product development pipeline remains robust, with strategic initiatives expected to broaden investment opportunities, enhance liquidity and strengthen the competitiveness of Botswana's capital markets through 2030.



Special Economic Zones Authority (SEZA) Acting Chief Executive Officer Tapiwa Masie

Citizen Investors Drive SEZA Surge

SEZA doubled its licensed investors to 18 in 2025/26, with citizen-owned businesses taking a leading role in the investment increase.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Special Economic Zones Authority (SEZA) Botswana licensed 18 investors during the 2025/26 financial period, double the nine recorded in the previous year, as citizen-owned businesses took a prominent role in the increase.

INVESTOR JUMP

Speaking on the Authority's performance over the past 15 months, Acting Chief Executive Officer Tapiwa Masie said the increase reflected growing confidence in Botswana's investment environment and efforts to attract businesses into the country's designated economic zones.

The improved performance comes as SEZA continues to market Botswana as an investment destination, offering incentives intended to support manufacturing, value addition, exports, logistics, technology and other priority sectors expected to create jobs and stimulate economic activity.

LOCAL LEAD

Masie said the latest figures also showed encouraging participation by local entrepreneurs and a growing role for Batswana in industrialisation within the country's Special Economic Zones.

Half of the newly licensed investors are wholly citizen-owned enterprises, while two others are partnerships between local and foreign investors.

He said citizen participation was becoming an increasingly important feature of Botswana's SEZ strategy, complementing the Authority's objective of attracting foreign direct investment while ensuring that local businesses benefit from new economic opportunities.

DELIVERY TEST

The increase in investor licensing is expected to support industrial development, skills transfer and greater private sector participation in sectors targeted for long-term economic transformation.

SEZA's next test will be converting licensed projects into operating businesses capable of generating employment, expanding exports and supporting Botswana's ambition for a more diversified, private sector-led economy.

Poverty Persists Despite Income Status

Botswana's upper-middle-income status masks stubborn poverty, deep inequality and a labour market failing to create enough stable jobs, the World Bank says.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's upper-middle-income status continues to contrast sharply with the living conditions of many citizens, according to a new World Bank Group report that warns of slow poverty reduction, persistent inequality and rising unemployment.

The report, Seizing the Moment: How Botswana Can Turn Crisis Into Opportunity, says poverty reduction has slowed considerably as economic growth weakened.

SLOW PROGRESS

Between 2009 and 2016, the share of people living below the national poverty line declined only from 19 percent to 16 percent, a much slower improvement than in the years before 2009.

Using international poverty measures, the report says about one in five people live on very low incomes by global standards, while nearly two-thirds of the population live on incomes considered vulnerable for an upper-middle-income country.

Even with expected improvements, poverty levels remain higher than in most comparable countries.

SERVICE GAPS

The report says poverty extends beyond income, with many households still lacking reliable access to essential services.

Access to electricity improved to about 76 percent of the population in 2025 from 62.1 percent in 2015, but progress in sanitation and education remained slow.

Botswana also continues to rank among the world's most unequal countries. The latest available Gini coefficient, recorded in 2015, stood at 53.3, highlighting wide income disparities.

JOBS MISSING

Persistent unemployment remains a key driver of poverty, according to the report.

Preliminary findings from the 2024/25 Multi-Topic Household Survey show unemployment increased to 21 percent from 17.6 percent in the 2015/16 survey, while labour force participation stood at 65 percent.

The report notes that many people remain in unstable, low-paying informal jobs, while the formal economy has failed to generate sufficient employment opportunities.

The report adds that the Government's National Development Plan 12 and Botswana Economic Transformation Programme recognise these challenges and outline reforms aimed at achieving more inclusive growth.

> "Without stronger job creation, especially stable, well-paid jobs in the formal economy, poverty will remain difficult to reduce, regardless of other policies."

INFLATION SHOCK

The report also highlights renewed inflationary pressure.

Headline inflation accelerated to 10.3 percent in April 2026, exceeding the Bank of Botswana's medium-term objective range of 3 to 6 percent. This followed inflation of 4.2 percent in March 2026 and an average of 2.7 percent during 2025.

According to the report, the increase was driven mainly by higher global oil prices, which pushed up fuel and transport costs, rather than stronger domestic demand.

Prices for non-traded goods and services, including housing, communication, recreation and cultural services, continued to rise slowly, suggesting the economy was still operating below its potential.



FNBB Foundation Funds School Refurbishments

A P950,000 investment will support the refurbishment of 20 public schools as part of a nationwide community service initiative involving FNB Botswana employees.



FNB Botswana's Foundation has committed P950,000 towards refurbishing 20 public schools across Botswana through Thuso e aga bokamoso (Help Builds the Future), a national Community Service Day initiative launched in partnership with the Education Infrastructure Management Company (EIMC). The project forms part of the bank's 35th anniversary celebrations and focuses on improving learning environments in public schools.

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

According to the Foundation, the funding will cover refurbishment work at selected schools and the logistics required to implement the project nationwide. EIMC, a government entity responsible for managing and improving education infrastructure, is overseeing the initiative through its Ke Abela Sekolo programme, which encourages partnerships between government, businesses and communities.

On 16 July, FNB Botswana employees from branches across the country joined EIMC representatives, local artisans and school communities to repair and install classroom doors and windows at selected schools.

FOCUS ON LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

FNB Botswana Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Dr Mbako Mbo, said the initiative reflects the bank's commitment to investing in communities.

"As FNB Botswana celebrates 35 years of serving this country, we continue to reflect on the legacy we wish to leave behind," said Mbo.

He added: "Meaningful change happens when organisations work alongside communities. By partnering with EIMC, engaging local artisans and mobilising our own employees, we are combining resources, skills and time to make a tangible difference where it is needed most."

LOCAL ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

The initiative also includes the participation of local artisans and suppliers in the communities where refurbishment work is taking place, alongside the Foundation's annual Community Service Day programme.

Article edited for length

Botswana Initiative Makes Conservation Final

A Botswana initiative tackling human-wildlife conflict is among three finalists in a conservation competition focused on community-led economic solutions across Africa



Three organisations from Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have been named finalists in the 2026 Wilderness Impact Challenge, an initiative that recognises projects designed to strengthen Africa's conservation economy through community-driven solutions. More than 80 applications were submitted from around the world, with the finalists selected for approaches that combine environmental conservation with local economic opportunities.

FINALISTS SELECTED

The finalists are CLAWS (Communities Living Among Wildlife Sustainably) from Botswana, Ele-Collection from Zimbabwe and Wild Survivors from Tanzania. According to organisers, the projects address conservation challenges through enterprise-based models that aim to improve livelihoods while supporting wildlife protection.

"The calibre of entries this year was truly exceptional," said Charles Douglas, Chairman of the Wilderness Trust. "Selecting just three finalists was no easy task for the judges."

BOTSWANA PROJECT

In Botswana's Okavango Delta, CLAWS is working with cattle farmers to improve traditional herding practices while developing what organisers describe as Africa's first Certified Wildlife Friendly™ beef supply chain. The initiative seeks to reduce conflict between farmers and lions while creating access to premium markets for participating farmers.

NEXT STAGE

Douglas said the three projects shared a common approach despite addressing different challenges.

"What stood out about these finalists is that, although they address different conservation challenges, they all arrive at the same conclusion: conservation efforts can be enhanced where they create meaningful economic opportunity in surrounding communities," he said.

The winner will be announced at the end of August and will receive financial support valued at USD100,000, along with strategic guidance from the Wilderness Trust.

Article edited for length





Charity Tee-Off Supports Diabetes

A charity golf tournament brought together Botswana's business and golfing communities, raising P100,000 to support diabetes awareness and education initiatives.

The inaugural Baker Tilly Charity Golf Day has raised P100,000 for the Diabetes Association of Botswana to support diabetes awareness, education and advocacy programmes. Hosted by Baker Tilly Botswana in partnership with the Botswana Institute of Chartered Accountants (BICA), the event took place on 17 July at Stanbic Bank Gaborone Golf Club and attracted members of the business community, golfers and community partners. The tournament has also been added to the annual BICA Games calendar.

PERSONAL CONNECTION

Baker Tilly Managing Partner Samuel Njanji said the initiative was inspired by both community need and personal experience after losing his mother to diabetes-related complications.

"This was never just about golf, although it is my favourite sport," said Njanji. "It was about bringing people together behind a cause that touches countless individuals and families across Botswana."

SUPPORT FOR AWARENESS

Njanji said he hoped the initiative would encourage healthier lifestyles, promote early screening and increase public understanding of diabetes.

"Having experienced the impact of diabetes in my own family, I hope this initiative encourages healthier lifestyles, promotes early screening and reinforces the importance of diabetes prevention through education," he said.

> "It was about bringing people together behind a cause that touches countless individuals and families across Botswana."

Baker Tilly also acknowledged BICA, premium sponsors RIC Development and Crowe & Associates, as well as other sponsors, players and volunteers who contributed to the fundraising effort. According to the organisers, the donation will support community outreach programmes focused on diabetes education, healthy living and early detection.

Orange Money Launches Pay Competition

Orange Money Botswana has launched a 24-week competition worth P1.11 million to mark its 15th anniversary, rewarding customers and digital payment partners.

Orange Money Botswana has launched the DuelaEasy Pay and Win promotion, a 24-week competition offering prizes worth more than P1.11 million as the company celebrates 15 years of Orange Money. The campaign rewards customers, merchants, cashiers and transport operators who use the DuelaEasy payment platform.

PRIZES ON OFFER

Customers who make eligible payments using DuelaEasy will be automatically entered into the competition. The promotion includes weekly, monthly and grand prizes. Every week, 12 customers will each receive P1,500 food vouchers, while two customers will win an iPhone 17 Pro Max each month. Monthly incentive draws will also award P10,000 each to six cashiers and two transport operators. At the end of the campaign, one customer and one informal merchant will each receive P150,000.



Orange Money Botswana Chief Executive Officer Seabelo Pilane said the promotion recognises customers who have supported the platform since its launch.

ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

Orange Money Botswana Chief Executive Officer Seabelo Pilane said the promotion recognises customers who have supported the platform since its launch.

"For 15 years, Batswana have trusted Orange Money to help them send, receive and manage their money. DuelaEasy Pay and Win is our way of saying thank you," said Pilane.

He added: "We have worked to democratise the Pula by making financial services more accessible, more inclusive and more convenient for everyone, regardless of where they live or how they earn a living."

DIGITAL PAYMENTS

According to the company, the campaign also recognises the contribution of merchants, cashiers and transport operators to the growth of digital payments in Botswana through dedicated monthly incentive prizes.

The competition will run for 24 weeks, with winners announced weekly before the two grand prize winners are selected at the end of the campaign.

Article edited for length

LOOK OVER THERE

The distraction paradox reveals how powerful business models make customers look one way while value moves another, yet trust collapses when the hidden exchange becomes exploitative.



MANUEL VEIRUAPI RUHAPO

THE REAL PRODUCT

There is a question worth asking about every brand you admire.

What are they actually selling?

Not what they say they are selling. Not what the packaging suggests. Not what the advertising shows. What is the real product, and who is the real customer?

The answer is almost never what you think.

THE BURGER BUSINESS

In 1954, Ray Kroc was a 52-year-old milkshake machine salesman when he walked into a McDonald's in San Bernardino, California. He saw a system. He bought the franchise rights, and within a decade he had built one of the most valuable companies in the world.

McDonald's is not a fast food company. It is a real estate company.

Harry Sonneborn, Kroc's financial adviser, explained the model in a meeting that changed everything: "We are not technically in the food business. We are in the real estate business. The only reason we sell fifteen-cent hamburgers is because they are the best producer of revenue from which our tenants can pay us our rent."

McDonald's owns the land. It leases the land to franchisees. The franchisees sell the burgers. McDonald's collects the rent. The burger is the mechanism. The land is the asset. Today, McDonald's property portfolio is valued at over $40 billion. The hamburger is the world's most successful distraction.

ATTENTION ASSET

When a product is free, you are not the customer. You are the product.

Google gives you search for free. Facebook gives you connection for free. TikTok gives you entertainment for free. The actual customers are the advertisers who pay to reach you. In 2023, Google's parent company, Alphabet, generated $237.9 billion in revenue. Approximately 77% of that came from advertising. The search engine is the mechanism. Your attention is the asset.

Meta reported approximately $50 per year in advertiser revenue per user in the United States. You are not using Facebook. Facebook is using you. The data is the business.

This is not a criticism. It is a structural observation. The most effective business models in history give something away to capture something more valuable in return. Gillette sells razors cheaply and makes its money on the blades. The visible product is the mechanism. The recurring purchase is the business.

THE PARADOX

Here is the counterargument that holds equally true.

A brand built on misdirection is only as strong as the gap between what customers see and what they eventually discover.

> "The visible product is the mechanism. The recurring purchase is the business."

When customers understand the model, the relationship changes. Facebook has spent the last decade managing the fallout from users realising they were the product. The trust deficit is real. Meta's brand perception scores in Western markets declined consistently after 2018, when the Cambridge Analytica scandal made the hidden model visible.

McDonald's real estate model is not a secret. It is a business school case study. The transparency has not damaged the brand because the burger is still good and the franchisees still benefit. The distraction became the foundation.

The difference is simple: misdirection that serves the customer survives discovery. Misdirection that exploits the customer does not.

BOTSWANA BRANDS

Most brands in Botswana are selling exactly what they appear to be selling. There is nothing wrong with that. But the question worth asking is whether there is a more valuable asset underneath the visible product that is being left on the table.

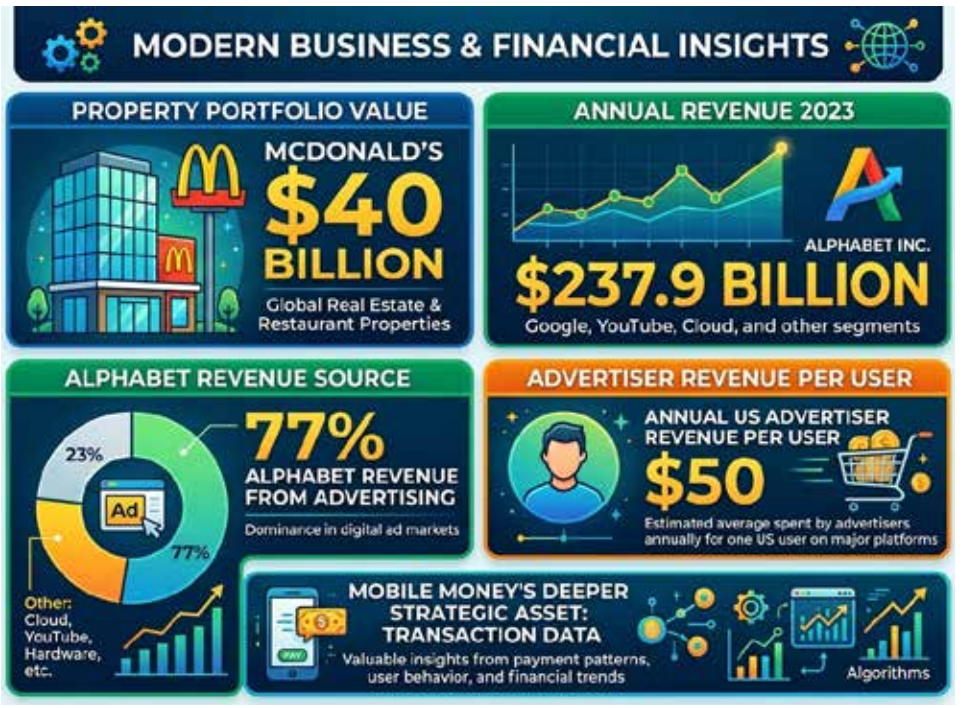
Consider the mobile money sector. The visible product is convenience: send money, pay bills, buy airtime. The real asset is transaction data. Every payment is a data point about spending behaviour, income patterns and financial need. The brand that figures out how to turn that data into financial products tailored to the actual behaviour of Batswana, not the behaviour of customers in markets where the products were designed, will not be competing on transaction fees. It will be competing on insight.

Consider the funeral industry. The visible product is the service: the coffin, the venue, the logistics. The real asset is the relationship with the family at the most emotionally significant moment of their lives. The brand that uses that relationship to build a long-term financial services offering, funeral cover, estate planning

To Page 18

From Page 17





and grief support, will not be a funeral parlour. It will be a family institution.

Consider the retail sector. The visible product is the goods on the shelf. The real asset is foot traffic data, purchasing patterns and the physical location itself. Choppies understood this before most. The stores were not just stores. They were data collection points in communities that larger retailers had decided were not worth serving.

WHAT IT MEANS

If you are a business owner or executive, ask the question that Ray Kroc's adviser asked. What business are you actually in? Strip away the visible product and look at what you are accumulating: data, relationships, location and trust. One of those is worth more than the product you are selling. Find it.

If you are a marketing professional, remember that the most powerful brand stories are not about the product. They are about what the product enables. McDonald's does not advertise real estate. It advertises family moments, convenience and consistency. The story is the distraction. The asset is underneath. Make sure your brand story is pointing at the right thing.

If you are a brand manager, remember that the brands that last are the ones that know what they are really building, not the ones that know what they are currently selling. Those are different questions. The answer to the second one changes every few years. The answer to the first one should not.

The most effective business models in history made you look one way while the value moved another. The question is not whether your brand is doing this. The question is whether it is doing it deliberately, and whether what is underneath is worth building on.

ABOUT THE COLUMN

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 that helps businesses solve their most complex brand challenges.

Contact me on: manuel.ruhapo@blacmarc.co.bw / ruhapo@gmail.com





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Botswana's Hidden Transport Bill

Botswana may be measuring an economy-wide burden approaching 17% of GDP as though it were merely another industry.



DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Transport is arguably the most commonly experienced but least understood of all economic activities. Ask how large Botswana's transport sector is and official statistics provide a reassuring answer. Transport and storage account for only about 2.2% of GDP. Except that transport may be nothing of the sort.



National accounts measure the output of the transport industry. They count services produced by trucking companies, buses, taxis, airlines and railways. That is correct for calculating GDP, but it answers the wrong policy question. The economic question is not simply how much the industry produces or the scale of its infrastructure. It is how effectively transport enables the economy to grow.

THE HIDDEN ECONOMY

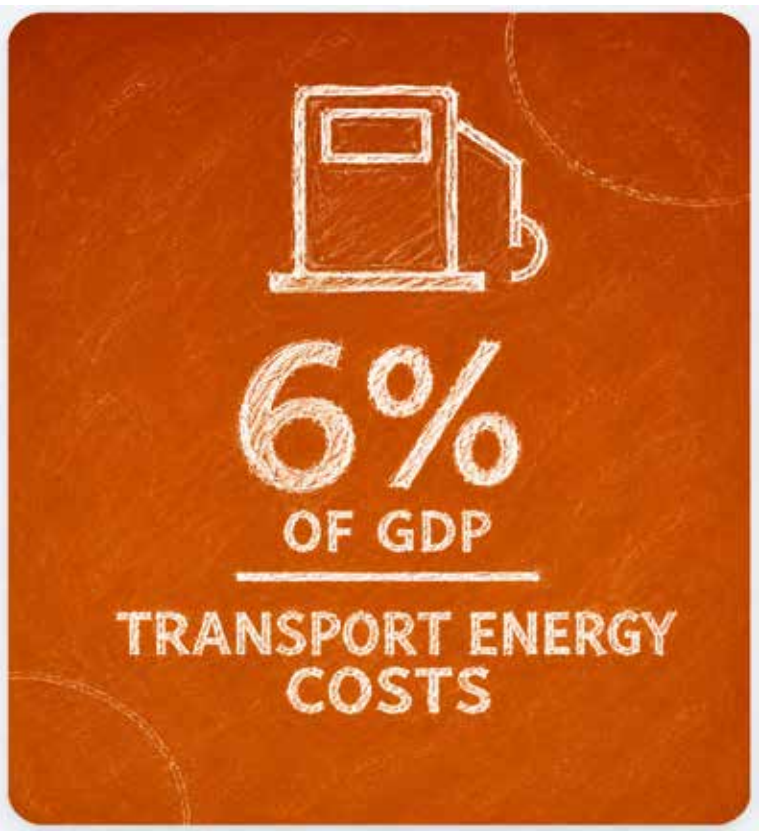
Every litre of fuel imported into Botswana carries a transport cost. Every road crash imposes medical, emergency, policing, insurance and productivity costs. Every hour spent in congestion is lost time. Businesses holding additional stock because deliveries are unreliable carry an inventory cost. Then there are air pollution, carbon emissions, road maintenance and the cost imposed by distance itself.

The Second Republic Policy Think Tank estimates that, when these wider costs are considered, Botswana's total transport cost structure may approach 17% of GDP. Roughly 6% is associated with transport energy, 4% with road crashes, 3% with congestion and delay, and about 2.2% with measured transport sector output, alongside further environmental and carbon costs. But the conclusion is important. Transport is not a 2.2% sector. It is an economy-wide cost structure.

> "Transport is not a 2.2% sector. It is an economy-wide cost structure."

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

Who is actually responsible for transport? Roads sit within one institutional structure, public transport within another. Road safety crosses transport, police and health. Fuel pricing involves energy regulators and fiscal policy. Urban congestion is affected by land boards, councils and planning authorities. Rail, aviation and climate policy add further layers.



Yet the economy experiences them as one transport system. A worker in Mogoditshane does not experience separate land use, road, bus and fuel policies. She experiences the cost and time required to get to work. A farmer in Ghanzi does not care which ministry is responsible for roads, fuel or logistics. He experiences the cost of getting beef to market. A manufacturer experiences electricity costs, inputs, inventory delays and freight charges as part of the cost of producing in Botswana.

So who is accountable for reducing Botswana's total transport cost per unit of economic output? At present, arguably, nobody. Ostensibly, the transport minister is chief executive of the sector. But does he appreciate the accounts? Is he aware of the total transport costs to the nation? More importantly, is it his job to reduce them? Institutions are accountable for assets, budgets and mandates. Roads authorities build roads. Regulators regulate. Police enforce traffic laws. Ministries administer programmes. But who owns the national outcome? That outcome should be simple: better access at lower economic and social cost.

INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES

This is not an argument against infrastructure. For a landlocked country located between 700 and 1,800 kilometres from major seaports, efficient transport is fundamental to competitiveness. Botswana cannot diversify into manufacturing, agro-processing or regional distribution while ignoring the cost of moving goods. Roads, railways, border infrastructure, logistics hubs and reliable public transport remain critically important.

But infrastructure is a means, not an end. A road is valuable if it reduces travel time, vehicle operating costs, crashes and logistics costs, or unlocks productive investment. A railway is valuable if it moves freight more efficiently than the alternatives. A bypass is valuable if the benefits of reduced congestion exceed its lifecycle cost.

The mistake is to measure success in kilometres constructed and pula spent. The correct measure is cost removed from the economy. Yet performance indicators remain skewed towards outputs such as paved road kilometres, vehicle registrations and traffic flows, rather than GDP generated, jobs created and well-being improved.

To Page 20

From Page 19

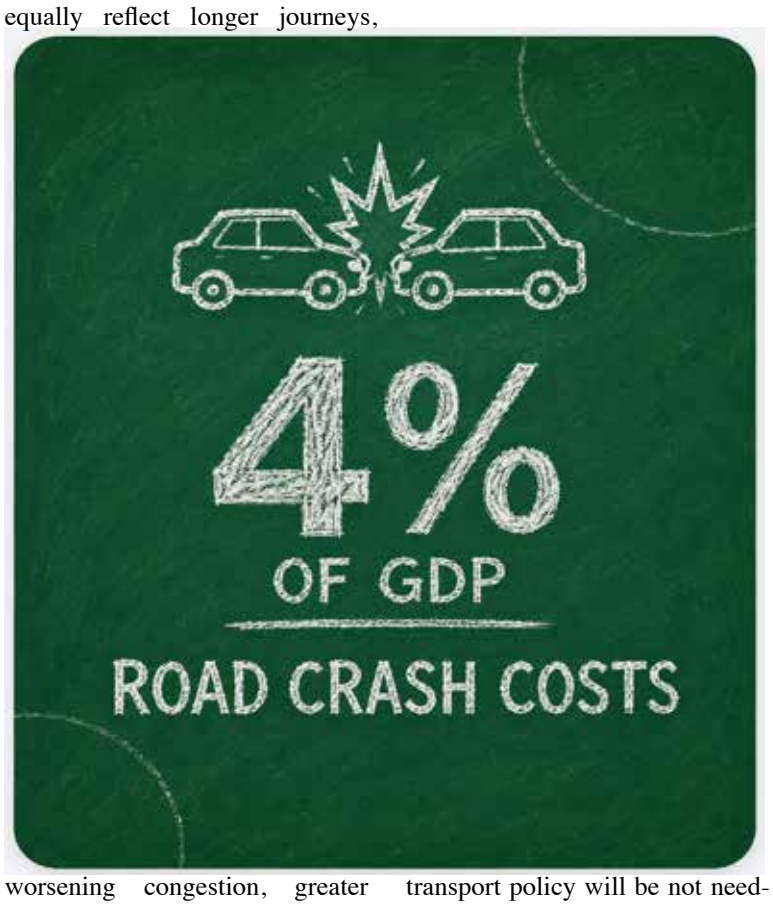


TRANSPORT INTENSITY

Economists measure energy, carbon and water intensity. Why not transport intensity? It asks how much movement, energy, time and infrastructure an economy requires to generate a unit of economic value. A spatially dispersed economy with low density settlements, long commuting distances and weak domestic production will naturally be transport intensive. Botswana has these characteristics. Gaborone has expanded outwards into neighbouring settlements.

Botswana is naturally transport intensive. Settlements are dispersed, housing and employment are often far apart, public transport remains fragmented and freight is overwhelmingly road dependent. We also import much of what we consume.

The result is that we may be using too much transport to produce too little economic value. A growing transport sector may reflect economic dynamism, but it may equally reflect longer journeys, worsening congestion, greater import dependence and rising logistics costs. More transport is not automatically more prosperity.



THE GREAT DECOUPLING

Botswana should seek to grow its economy faster than its transport costs. GDP should rise while transport energy per pula of GDP falls. Economic activity should expand while road deaths decline. Household incomes should rise without commuting distances rising at the same rate. Freight volumes can increase while fuel consumption per tonne-kilometre falls. Access to employment, education and healthcare can improve without requiring everybody to travel further.

That is transport decoupling. It requires compact spatial planning, better public transport, efficient freight corridors, cleaner vehicles, improved road safety, digital services, better logistics and intelligent use of pricing and technology. Sometimes the solution will be new infrastructure. Sometimes it will be better use of existing infrastructure. Sometimes the best transport policy will be not needing the journey in the first place.

Perhaps we have been asking the wrong question. Instead of asking how Botswana can move more people and goods, the Second Republic should ask: how can Botswana provide greater access, economic opportunity and connectivity at the lowest total cost to society?

If transport imposes an economy-wide burden approaching 17% of GDP, the implications are enormous. A one percentage point reduction in total transport costs would release resources equivalent to approximately 1% of national economic output. That is money available for households, investment, jobs and human development.

POLICY VACUUM

Botswana has never had a comprehensive national transport policy. That is an extraordinary omission for a landlocked country whose prosperity is shaped by distance, accessibility and the cost of movement. Billions of pula have nevertheless been spent on transport infrastructure and services without fully appreciating what the system is intended to achieve. Investment has too often been driven by individual projects, institutional mandates and available budgets rather than by a coherent understanding of transport's wider economic and social role.

> "Transport policy should not seek to optimise the transport sector. It should seek to optimise the economy."





A national transport policy must begin with a different objective. The goal is not simply to move more vehicles, passengers or tonnes of freight. Nor should success be measured by kilometres of road constructed or infrastructure budgets. The objective should be to maximise access to economic and social opportunity while minimising the total cost of mobility to the economy, households and the environment.

This means measuring transport intensity, logistics costs, travel time, road trauma, energy consumption and emissions alongside conventional transport sector output. It means subjecting major investments to lifecycle costing and economic appraisal. Above all, it means assigning clear institutional accountability for reducing Botswana's total transport cost burden.

Transport policy should not seek to optimise the transport sector. It should seek to optimise the economy.

The Botswana Gazette
TIME OUT
THE BOTSWANA GAZETTE
THURSDAY 23 JULY 2026

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

IZAURA TO LIGHT UP UKHWI

Before iZaura's online store goes live, fashion designer Mothusi Lesolle is giving the Kgalagadi the first look. At Ukhwi O Qhuqhayo cultural event, fashion won't just hit the runway, it will step into the pan with culture stitched into every seam

The runway is heading somewhere it has never been before, a pan in the heart of the Kgalagadi. But while Ukhwi O Qhuqhayo is introducing fashion to its cultural festival for the first time, iZaura is quietly teasing something much bigger: the future of its brand.

When designer Mothusi Lesolle unveils his collection at the purpose-driven festival from August 28-30, it won't be a retrospective. It will be a preview. Think of it as the trailer before the feature presentation, an exclusive glimpse into the ready-to-wear pieces that will soon fill iZaura's long-awaited online store.

CULTURE YOU CAN WEAR

Rather than unveiling an oversized collection, Lesolle is focusing on signature looks that turn everyday wardrobe staples into conversation pieces.

> "The Ukhwi O Qhuqhayo showcase is a glimpse into what to expect in the upcoming online store."

"The Ukhwi O Qhuqhayo showcase is a glimpse into what to expect in the upcoming online store," he told Time Out. "We're creating what we call signature looks, taking your usual T-shirt and creating it to become a fashion piece."

The collection leans into African materials and artisan craftsmanship, including collaborations with a Kgalagadi-based beadwork artisan who incorporates ostrich shells into the garments. It's fashion that carries a sense of place without feeling trapped in tradition.

WHERE CULTURE MEETS COMMERCE

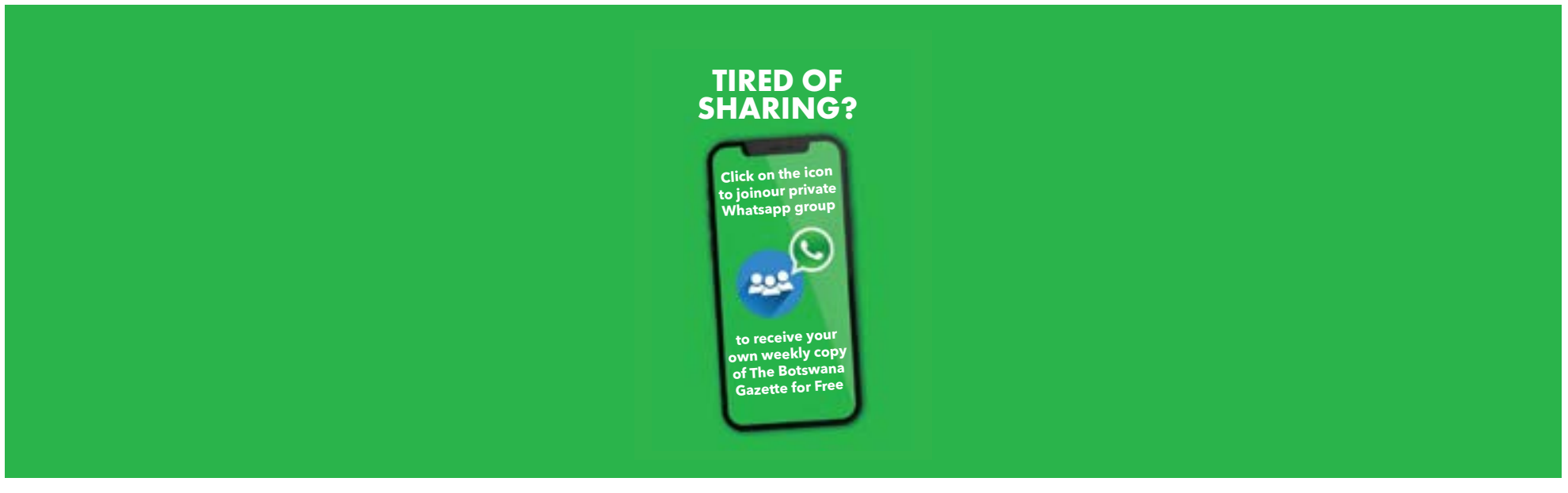
For Lesolle, Ukhwi O Qhuqhayo is more than another runway booking. Its mission of sustainable tourism, community development and celebrating indigenous culture mirrors iZaura's own philosophy of commercialising culture through ethical fashion and storytelling.

"One of the things that we push for as iZaura is commercialising culture, ethical fashion, and storytelling of Botswana and working with the indigenous community," he explained.

As the festival's only featured fashion designer, Lesolle is also helping shape the production of its inaugural fashion showcase, drawing on experience staging major runway productions.

While music, poetry and traditional performances celebrate the spirit of Ukhwi, iZaura's collection offers something equally exciting: a wearable postcard from Botswana's future, where culture doesn't just survive, it becomes part of everyday style, one signature piece at a time.







TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF SPEARS

They survived lineup changes, industry shifts and changing music habits. Twenty-one years later, Culture Spears are proving that tradition never goes out of style and the reunion fans have long dreamed about may finally be within reach

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Twenty-one years in music is enough time for trends to disappear, formats to die and audiences to move on. Yet, Culture Spears are still here, still filling dance floors, still flying Botswana's traditional sound beyond its borders and still giving fans reasons to believe the story isn't over.

FROM KASANE TO THE WORLD

Long before streaming playlists and TikTok snippets, Culture Spears were selling cassettes and DVDs. Their breakthrough came in 2005 with Korone, launching a career packed with timeless anthems including Kulenyane, Khudu, Lorato, Kueletsana and Sibi.

"Achieving 21 years was not easy. We were able to achieve a lot of things in a short period of time and we also had our fair share of turbulent times that shaped us into who we are today," frontman Kabelo Mogwe told Time Out.

The group is planning anniversary celebrations this year, hoping to bring together current and former members around Botswana's Diamond Jubilee festivities or in December if schedules prove difficult.

SURVIVING THE MUSIC REVOLUTION

The music business has changed beyond recognition, but Culture Spears have adapted instead of resisting.

"When we started our musical genre was dominating, we sold cassettes and DVDs but today we are now selling our music on online platforms," Mogwe said. "Music is our bread and butter… The support from other countries including South Africa is overwhelming."

The group has kept its catalogue alive through a steady stream of singles, while a newly released music video for Mogatse KB has breathed fresh life into a song first released during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mogwe credits late Zimbabwean legend Oliver Mtukudzi for the idea. "He advised that sometimes I should go back to my old music and bring it back to the people. And the advice worked."

THE REUNION EVERYONE WANTS

For years, fans have dreamed of seeing the original lineup—Kabelo Mogwe, Charma Gal, Thembeni Ramosetheng and Jelina Mokgwatlhe—share one stage again.

Mogwe said the original members remain in touch, and while solo careers and other commitments make reunions difficult, he hints the 21st anniversary could deliver something special.

"Old members keep checking in and don't be surprised to see all of us together for the 21st anniversary celebrations."

After two decades of triumphs, heartbreaks and reinvention, one thing is certain: Botswana's cultural soundtrack is still playing and Culture Spears aren't ready to lower the volume.

BIG BROTHER NAIJA LEVELS UP

More money, higher stakes and a fresh batch of housemates. Big Brother Naija is back, and Season 11 isn't just promising drama, it's dangling the biggest prize in the show's history

GAZETTE REPORTER

The countdown is over. Africa's biggest reality TV obsession is unlocking its famous doors once again, and this time the game comes with its richest reward yet. When Big Brother Naija Season 11 premieres on July 26, viewers won't just be tuning in for romance, rivalries and viral moments they'll be watching contestants battle for a record-breaking ₦160 million prize package.

From surprise alliances to explosive confrontations, BBNaija has built a reputation for turning ordinary people into continental celebrities. Now, with a brand-new SUV and ₦100 million in cash making up the grand prize, the competition has never looked more intense.

BIGGER MONEY, BIGGER DRAMA

Season 11 isn't playing it safe. The record-setting prize immediately raises the pressure inside the house, where every nomination, strategy and friendship could mean the difference between walking away a millionaire or walking out empty-handed.

"Season 11 builds on that legacy with even bigger stakes, fresh twists and an exciting mix of housemates that will keep audiences engaged from premiere night through to the finale," said Atinuke Babatunde, Executive Head of Content and Channels, West Africa at MultiChoice.

A CULTURAL GIANT RETURNS

Since its revival in 2017, BBNaija has evolved into far more than appointment television. It has launched careers, dominated social media timelines, influenced fashion and slang, and become one of Africa's biggest pop culture exports.



Host Ebuka Obi-Uchendu returns to steer the show, while a new lineup of contestants promises the unpredictable chemistry that keeps millions glued to their screens night after night.

> "Season 11 builds on that legacy with even bigger stakes, fresh twists and an exciting mix of housemates."

READY FOR ANOTHER OBSESSION?

Season 11 also welcomes betPawa as headline sponsor, with Guinness returning as Gold Sponsor and Minimie joining as Associate Sponsor another sign of the show's enormous commercial pull.

OFFSITE SESSIONS ENTERS THE CHAT

Botswana's entertainment scene has a new main character. Offsite Sessions isn't chasing bigger crowds or louder stages, it's turning the country's most unexpected places into its hottest cultural conversations, one secret location at a time

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

If Botswana's lifestyle calendar were a group chat, someone just typed "Offsite Sessions has entered the chat." And suddenly, everyone's paying attention.

Launched by Native Events, Offsite Sessions made its debut as the kind of event people are still talking about days later, not because of flashy production or oversized crowds, but because it dares to ask a simple question: what if the venue was the star too?

> "The location isn't simply where the event happens; it becomes an essential part of the story."

The timing made the launch even more significant. Edition 001 marked three milestones at once — the birth of the series itself, a brand refresh for Native Events, and the 36th birthday of the company's founder.

WHERE THE VIBE LIVES

Forget predictable concert grounds. Offsite Sessions is built around uncovering Botswana's overlooked gems and transforming them into intimate music, culture and lifestyle experiences.

"We wanted to reintroduce those places through music, curated storytelling and thoughtful event design," Brand and Communications Officer Gauta Eyman told Time Out.

Each destination is chosen with one guiding principle: can this place tell a story? Whether it's a dam, a heritage site or an unexpected outdoor setting, the landscape doesn't compete with the music but rather it amplifies it.

"The location isn't simply where the event happens. It becomes an essential part of the story."

For its debut edition, that location was the banks behind Gaborone Dam. Facing the Gaborone skyline through open water with a perfectly fitted jetty, it revealed a version of the capital that few had ever seen.





MORE THAN A GIG

The experience begins before the first note is played. Guests board dedicated shuttles, meet fellow attendees and share conversation before arriving at the site, setting the tone for an event designed around connection rather than chaos.

With intentionally limited numbers, the atmosphere feels less like a festival and more like an invitation into an exclusive cultural moment. Artists are closer, conversations flow more easily and every edition unfolds with its own distinct creative identity.

"Every session is designed to feel collectible, with each location becoming part of the story rather than simply the venue," Eyman explained.



Edition 001 featured five local artists, Basho Vision, Thuli-Tools, BeeTee 4701, Jembesoul and I Am Akeem Using, performing across a six-hour afternoon session that moved from midday into golden hour. Each set was recorded in full and will be released on the Offsite Sessions YouTube channel across the coming weeks.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Offsite Sessions isn't interested in becoming Botswana's biggest music festival. It's chasing something far more memorable.

Future editions will travel across the country, revealing new landscapes while creating opportunities for artists, creatives and local businesses. Sustainability is woven into the blueprint from the beginning.

> "We wanted to reintroduce those places through music, curated storytelling and thoughtful event design,"

"Following the successful launch of Offsite Sessions 001, we're already planning the next edition. Details of the location, artist line-up and event date will be announced soon through our dedicated event marketing platform," Eyman said.

WHAT'S HOT & WHAT'S NOT BOTSWANA?

The question marks that hijacked profile pictures and sparked street-side curiosity have finally found their answer. With a bold exclamation mark, Botswana's newest cultural guide is inviting everyone to discover the country's hottest places, freshest experiences and best-kept secrets straight from the people living them



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

For weeks, Botswana played detective. Question marks appeared on influencer profile pictures, stickers popped up across town and whispers spread online. Everyone wanted to know one thing: what was coming? Now the mystery has been solved with an emphatic exclamation mark. Meet WH&WN! (What's Hot & What's Not), a new digital guide that swaps algorithms for authentic local recommendations, turning Botswana's cultural pulse into a living map.

FROM MYSTERY TO MOVEMENT

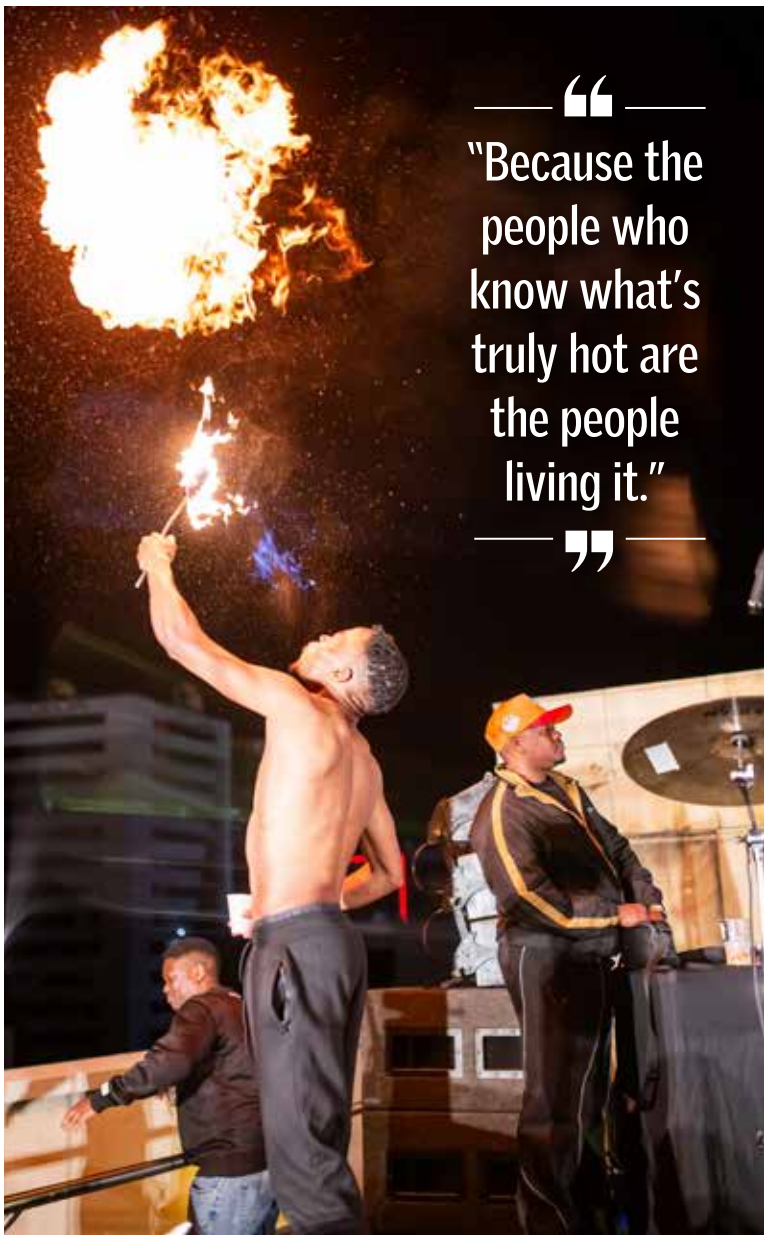
Built within the TSW (Tswana) travel app but with its own bold identity, WH&WN! is designed to help users discover the country's buzzing nightlife, hidden cafés, fashion, live music, restaurants, cultural attractions and unique experiences through recommendations from local tastemakers.

The concept is simple: the people who know Botswana best should be the ones telling its story.

"Because the people who know what's truly hot are the people living it," said Oliver Russell, Chief Marketing Officer and Brand Director at Temtum Group, the company behind the app.

Russell said the platform was created to make Botswana easier to explore for both international visitors and locals looking to rediscover their own country.

"Botswana has an incredibly vibrant culture, creative scene and community, yet there was no single place where people could easily discover what was genuinely happening through the voices of the people living it every day. That insight became What's Hot & What's Not," he said.



REAL RECOMMENDATIONS, NOT PAID HYPE

Unlike social media platforms driven by trends and sponsored content, WH&WN! focuses on genuine recommendations rather than paid promotions.

The platform is also designed to grow with its community. As more users contribute their favourite spots and experiences, the guide will evolve into a constantly updated snapshot of what's happening across Botswana.

MORE THAN A TRAVEL APP

While TSW serves as a practical travel companion with features such as local guides, emergency contacts and future marketplace services, WH&WN! adds a lifestyle layer by helping users discover where to eat, explore, shop and experience Botswana's cultural scene.

WH&WN! is available through the TSW app on both the App Store and Google Play.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT FRANCISTOWN

CASE NO. CVHFT 000522-21

In the matter between:
STANBIC BANK BOTSWANA LIMITED — **PLAINTIFF**
and
CECILIA WABO RAPELANG — **DEFENDANT**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION – IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to a writ of execution issued out of the above Honourable Court in the above matter, the following property of the Defendant will be sold by public auction to the highest bidder by **Deputy Sheriff URGENT CHILISA** or an Auctioneer duly appointed by the Deputy Sheriff.

DATE OF SALE : 21st August 2026
VENUE : Lot 10754, Block 7, Francistown;
TIME OF SALE : 1030 hrs;

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : A certain piece of land being Lot 10754, situated in Francistown Extension 17, measuring 420 m² (Four Hundred and Twenty Square Metres) which property is held under Deed of Transfer No. FT 539/2012 dated 20th July 2012 made in favour of **CECILIA WABO RAPELANG** with some developments thereon being a three (3) bedroomed house with sitting room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom with toilet, garage and screen wall with electric fence.

TERMS OF SALE : Cash or bank Guaranteed Cheques only.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS 15TH JUNE 2026.

COLLINS CHILISA CONSULTANTS
Attorneys • Notaries • Conveyancers

COLLINS CHILISA CONSULTANTS
Plaintiff's Attorneys, Plot 400
Cnr of Baines Avenue & Moffat Street
Central Residential Area
P.O. Box 484
Tel. 2412761/72357763
FRANCISTOWN.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT LOBATSE

CASE NO. CVHGB – 001552- 23

In the matter between
BBS BANK LIMITED — **Plaintiff**
and
ANTHONY MOMPATI MOKOBI — **1st Defendant**
KGAREBE DIANA MOKOBI — **2nd Defendant**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT pursuant to a Judgment granted by the above Honourable Court on the 02nd April 2024 the following immovable property of the abovementioned Defendant will be sold by means of public auction to the highest bidder by **DEPUTY SHERIFF OPELO MOTHIBI** as follows:

DATE OF SALE : Friday 28th August 2026
VENUE : Tribal Lot 1957, Mogoditshane
TIME OF SALE : 1030 hours
TERMS OF SALE : All participating bidders are required to make an **UPFRONT** payment of BWP 10 000.00 directly to the undersigned Attorneys, refundable only to those who did not succeed in the sale. Only cash or bank guaranteed cheques will be accepted. The detailed conditions of sale are available for inspection at the undersigned Attorneys' offices.

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD: The Defendant's title rights and interest in a certain piece of land being Tribal Lot **1957, Mogoditshane** in the Bakwena Tribal Territory; measuring **1042 m²** held under memorandum of agreement of lease no. TL 822/2010 dated 17th day of June 2010 made in favour of Kgarebe Diana Mokobi specially executable. The developments therein are a fitted two bedroomed house, bathroom combined with toilet, sitting room, dinning room, fitted kitchen, fenced with screen wall and a poultry house.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS 13TH DAY OF JULY 2026.

COLLINS CHILISA CONSULTANTS
Attorneys • Notaries • Conveyancers

COLLINS CHILISA CONSULTANTS
Plot 4858, Lecha Road
Off Marakanelo Way
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GABORONE
Deputy Sheriff Opelo Mothibi
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TIMEOUT BRIEFS

AFROHOUSE MEETS FINE WINE

A new lifestyle experience is uncorking in Gaborone, where premium wine and Afrohouse promise the city's coolest Saturday escape.

Gaborone's social calendar is getting a sophisticated remix. Winehouse, the boutique lifestyle concept blending premium wine tastings with deep and Afrohouse music, makes its Botswana debut at Santorini Restaurant in The Village on July 25.

Created by Untamed Authority and DJ Tashinga Mutakwa, Winehouse swaps overcrowded parties for intimate vibes where music lovers, creatives and professionals can sip, network and dance under one stylish roof. Running from 4pm to 11pm, the event hopes to tap into Botswana's growing appetite for premium lifestyle experiences.

Forget choosing between a wine tasting and a house session. At Winehouse, every glass comes with a soundtrack, proving that the best pairings aren't always found on a menu.

HAN-C SAYS "I DO"

Botswana's favourite love story just dropped its biggest update yet and fans are already waiting for the next chapter.



Award-winning musician Han-C is officially off the market. The hitmaker and partner Sherifa Lisa sealed their love in a traditional wedding ceremony in Lorwana, celebrating the union of their families after completing Setswana marriage customs.

The wedding has dominated social media feeds, with fellow artists and fans applauding the couple for making marriage one of the hottest conversations in entertainment this season.

Now, attention has shifted to the white wedding expected later this year, with supporters eager to witness the next celebration. Until then, Han-C's biggest chart-topper might just be the love story everyone can't stop talking about.

A SCREEN ICON REMEMBERED

The stage has lost one of its finest storytellers, but his unforgettable characters will continue taking their final bow for generations.



Southern Africa is mourning veteran actor Seputla Sebogodi, who passed away on July 15 following complications related to diabetes, according to his family.

Botswana audiences first embraced him through Bophelo Ke Semphekgo before he became a household name as Kenneth Mashaba in Generations. He also appeared in Botswana's Botshelo Jo and continued building a remarkable career through productions including Scandal!, Redemption and Suburban Bliss.

Whether commanding the theatre stage or television screen, Sebogodi mastered the art of unforgettable storytelling. Though the cameras have stopped rolling, the performances that defined a generation remain timeless.



KGATLENG CROWNS RETURN

Beauty, culture and Botswana at 60 come together for one glamorous night where tradition shares the spotlight with tomorrow's leaders.

African Home & Restaurant in Gaborone will once again roll out the red carpet for the Mr & Miss Kgatleng Festival Grand Finale on September 12, marking the second consecutive year the venue hosts the cultural showcase.

Celebrating its sixth edition, the pageant honours Bakgatla traditions while giving young contestants aged 10 to 29 a platform to build confidence, leadership skills and cultural pride. This year's programme introduces its first-ever pre-teen category alongside competitions for teens and adults.

According to Mr & Miss Kgatleng Festival Director, Olefile "O'Neal" Seame, the inspiration behind the pageant is the desire to preserve culture in a rapidly changing modern world.

"The objective of the pageant is to ensure that the younger generation does not lose its identity in today's contemporary and cosmopolitan world, but instead understands and embraces the roots, traditions, and values of the Bakgatla and Batswana as a whole," he said.

With fashion, entertainment and cultural celebration sharing one stage, the festival continues proving that heritage never goes out of style especially during Botswana's 60th Independence celebrations.

INTENTION TO CHANGE MARRIAGE PROPERTY REGIME

(In terms of Section 8 (1) Of The Married Persons Property Act, 2014)

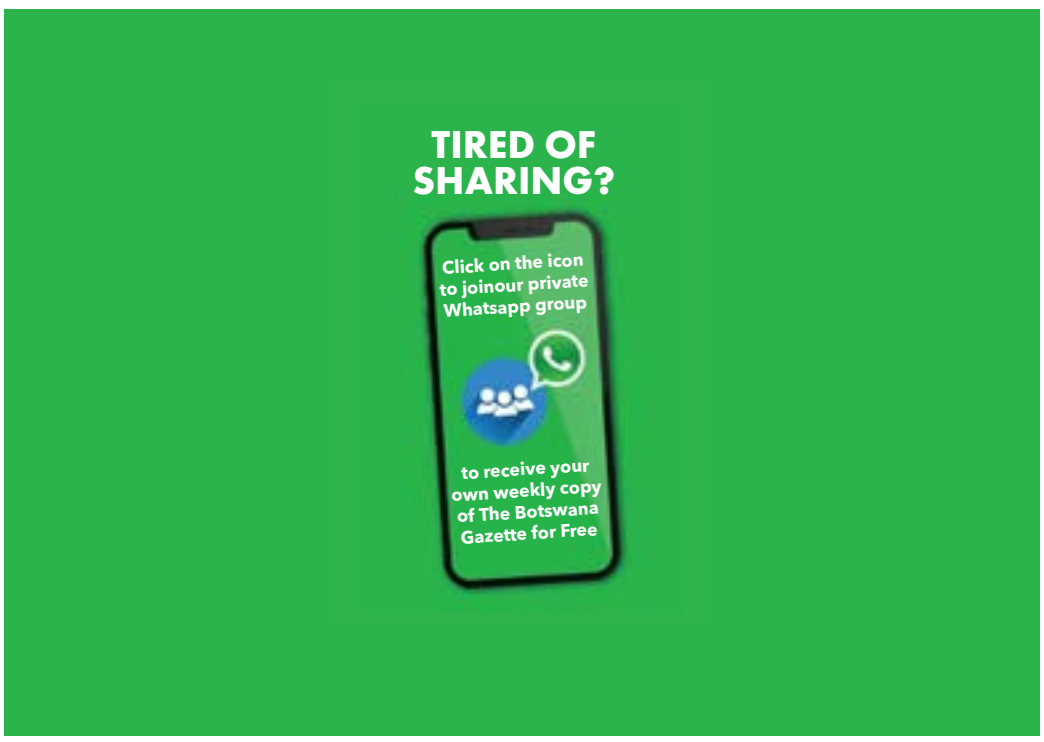
1. **DEBORAH MOTSEBE** who is married to **GABANKIMELE MOTSEBE**, in community of property on the 7th day of December 1996 at Lentsweletau in the Kweneng District, intends to make an application to the High Court of Botswana for leave to change their property regime to out of community.

2. **DEBORAH MOTSEBE** and **GABANKIMELE MOTSEBE** intends to apply to the High Court of Botswana after the expiration of the three (3) weeks statutory notice from the date of first publication hereof.

3. Any person, creditor or debtor, who may have an interest in the assets and/or liabilities of **DEBORAH MOTSEBE** and **GABANKIMELE MOTSEBE**'s estate, should they have objections to the proposed change of matrimonial property regime, should inform the Applicant's Attorneys, **WAME'S LEGAL CHAMBERS in GABORONE**, before the expiration of three (3) weeks period, or make representations before the High Court of Botswana once the contemplated application is lodged.

DATED IN GABORONE ON THIS 6th DAY OF JULY 2026.

WAME'S LEGAL CHAMBERS
Applicant's Attorneys
205 Independence Avenue, 1st Floor
GABORONE



CORK OR SCREW CAP?

A two-decade-old screw-cap wine forces a rethink of one of wine's most stubborn assumptions about tradition, ageing and quality.



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.

PHENYO MOTHAGODI

There are few questions in wine that refuse to die. Red or white? Sweet or dry? Does expensive automatically mean better? And then there is the one that pops up with almost clockwork regularity: "Is a screw cap a sign of a cheap wine?"

The question surfaced again this week on the Gaborone Wine Club WhatsApp group after a member shared an Instagram reel explaining the difference between corks and screw caps. Within minutes, opinions were pouring in. One person argued that a cork shows the winemaker's pride. Another called screw caps a cost-cutting exercise. Someone else pointed out that some of the world's best wines are now bottled under screw cap.

Somewhere in the middle of it all, I found myself admitting I am not entirely sure anymore. For years, many of us were taught a simple rule: cork equals quality; screw cap equals everyday drinking. Except wine rarely likes simple.

THE CORK

There is something undeniably romantic about removing a cork. The gentle twist. The satisfying pop. That tiny moment of anticipation before the first pour. It feels ceremonial.

Natural cork has been sealing wine bottles for centuries. Harvested from the bark of cork oak trees, particularly in Portugal and Spain, it is renewable, biodegradable and steeped in tradition. Cork allows tiny amounts of oxygen to enter the bottle over many years, which was long believed to help wines age gracefully.

For generations, cork became synonymous with prestige. A special bottle seemed to demand a corkscrew before the first sip.

WHEN CORK FAILS

But cork has always had a dirty little secret: sometimes it fails. Most wine lovers have either experienced, or at least heard about, a "corked" wine. Contrary to popular belief, that does not mean little bits of cork floating in your glass. A corked wine has been contaminated by a naturally occurring compound called TCA, leaving it smelling like damp cardboard, wet newspaper or a forgotten cupboard after the rainy season.

> "That bottle did not prove screw caps are better. It simply proved that wine has a habit of making confident people look wonderfully uncertain."

The fruit disappears, the wine tastes dull, and the experience is thoroughly disappointing. For decades, cork taint quietly ruined millions of bottles. Not exactly the marketing brochure cork producers had in mind.

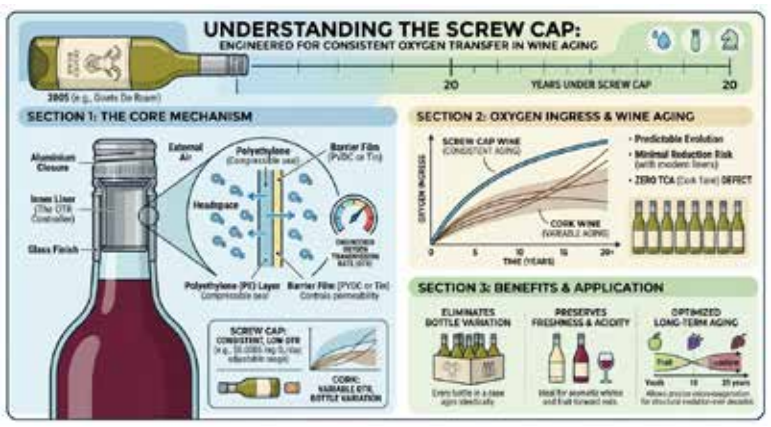


THE SCREW CAP

Then along came the screw cap. Initially, it was treated with the kind of suspicion usually reserved for instant coffee, powdered milk and someone putting ice in a single malt. People assumed it was cheaper because the wine itself was cheaper. After all, if the producer truly believed in the wine, would they not "give it a proper cork"?

Wine snobbery sounds remarkably logical, right up until the facts arrive.

Modern screw caps have evolved enormously. Today's liners are carefully engineered to manage oxygen transfer far more consistently than natural cork. Wines do not age well simply because oxygen gets in. They age well because the right amount gets in. Sometimes that is very little.



THE BOTTLE

I had my own assumptions challenged last year when I opened a 2005 Goats do Roam, Fairview's wonderfully irreverent blend created by Charles Back, one of South Africa's great wine personalities.

The bottle had spent nearly two decades under screw cap. If closure myths were true, that wine should have been tired, lifeless or somehow lacking the graceful maturity we associate with cork-aged wines. Instead, it was absolutely magnificent.

There was dried sediment near the neck from years of lying on its side, but a careful decant solved that without fuss. After the first pour, I left it to breathe for about an hour. Rich dark fruit had evolved into leather, spice and dried herbs. The tannins had softened beautifully, yet the wine still held its structure.

If you had handed me that glass blind, the closure would have been the last thing on my mind. That bottle did not prove screw caps are better. It simply proved that wine has a habit of making confident people look wonderfully uncertain.

THE PUNT

While questioning wine traditions, let's visit another one: the indentation on the bottom of the bottle, known as the punt.

We have all heard the story that the deeper the punt, the better the wine. It sounds wonderfully convincing. Unfortunately, it is mostly nonsense.

Historically, punts strengthened hand-blown bottles and made them more stable. They also helped collect sediment during decanting. Today, punt depth is largely a matter of design, branding and tradition. A deep punt can make a bottle look premium. It cannot make mediocre wine taste extraordinary.

WHICH IS BETTER?

Here is the wonderfully frustrating answer: neither. Which, in wine, usually means both.

If you are buying a crisp Sauvignon Blanc for this weekend, a screw cap is arguably ideal. It keeps the wine fresh and vibrant. If you are opening a mature Bordeaux that has been ageing for thirty years, there is a good chance it will still wear a cork.

Neither closure guarantees quality or disappointment. They are simply different tools for different jobs. Many prestigious wineries now use different closures depending on the style they are trying to preserve. The closure serves the wine, not the other way around.

CURIOSITY WINS

Perhaps that is the lesson. Wine exposes the danger of absolute opinions. The moment we declare, "Only cork," someone pours an extraordinary screw-cap wine. The moment we insist screw caps have won, someone opens a beautifully aged cork-sealed bottle that leaves the room speechless.

> "The closure serves the wine, not the other way around."

That is why I find myself becoming less interested in taking sides and more interested in tasting what is in the bottle. The closure starts the conversation. The wine gets the last word.

So the next time someone tells you screw caps are only for cheap wines, or that cork is the only closure worthy of serious wine, smile politely. Then hand them a glass and let the wine do the arguing.

In wine, as in life, certainty is often overrated. Curiosity almost always tastes better.

Until next time, keep your mind open. The best bottle you will ever drink almost certainly will not care what sealed it.





THE MOST UNPREDICTABLE WORLD CUP IN HISTORY

The 48-team World Cup was expected to dilute football's greatest tournament, but it widened opportunity, challenged old hierarchies and gave more nations reason to believe.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

A DIFFERENT ANSWER

By the time the final whistle blew on the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Spain had become world champions after defeating Argentina in the final. France, one of the leading contenders, finished fourth. Yet there was another winner at this World Cup: the tournament itself.

For years, the expansion of the FIFA World Cup from 32 to 48 teams was criticised as a triumph of politics and money over sporting quality. The argument seemed straightforward. More teams would mean weaker teams. Weaker teams would mean more mismatches. More mismatches would mean a bloated tournament, predictable results and a diminished spectacle.

The 2026 World Cup provided a different answer. Across 104 matches, the expanded field produced new contests, unfamiliar opponents and repeated challenges to football's established order. That was not what expansion was supposed to produce.

HIERARCHY DISRUPTED

The traditional criticism of an expanded World Cup assumed that international football remained divided into two distinct groups: the established football powers and everyone else. That assumption increasingly looks outdated.

The expansion to 48 teams brought more countries, more football cultures and more tactical approaches onto the world's biggest sporting stage. Far from simply providing cannon fodder for the traditional giants, many of the new and less fancied participants arrived organised, disciplined and unimpressed by reputation.

The result was not the dilution of competition. It was the disruption of hierarchy.

The great football nations still possessed the deepest squads, the most expensive players and the greatest historical pedigree. But none of those advantages guaranteed victory. Smaller nations defended intelligently, pressed selectively and counter-attacked with speed. Goalkeepers became match-winners. Coaches found ways of reducing the technical advantages of stronger opponents.

Players who may never command the transfer fees or global profiles of their opponents repeatedly demonstrated that, for 90 minutes, reputation counts for remarkably little. The World Cup became a tournament in which almost everyone could trouble almost anyone.

AFRICA ARRIVES

Nowhere was the effect of expansion more significant than in Africa. Nine African countries progressed to the round of 32. That statistic alone deserves attention.

For decades, discussions about African football have been framed around potential. Africa was always the continent that would one day arrive. It possessed the talent, passion and athletes, but its teams were too often eliminated before the latter stages of the tournament.

The expanded World Cup provided more African countries with the opportunity to compete. What happened next mattered even more: they competed successfully. Nine African nations reaching the first knockout round was not charity. It was qualification earned on the football field.

The significance extends beyond a single tournament. More World Cup places mean more countries investing in qualification, coaching, academies, facilities and national teams. More African players gain experience on the world's largest stage. More supporters see their countries represented. More children grow up believing that the World Cup belongs to them as well.

Expansion does not simply change the number of teams at a tournament. Over time, it can change the geography of football itself.

> The result was not the dilution of competition. It was the disruption of hierarch

KNOWLEDGE TRAVELS

The competitive distance between nations is narrowing because football knowledge travels. Tactical systems travel. Coaching expertise travels. Players from supposedly smaller football nations now compete in professional leagues across the world.

Video analysis means opponents can be studied in extraordinary detail. Fitness science has become global. Defensive organisation can be taught. The richest football countries still have enormous advantages, but knowledge is much harder to monopolise than money.

That does not mean every match is equal or every country has the same chance of lifting the trophy. Traditional powers remain powerful. Europe and South America remain central to the game. The difference is that their reputation alone no longer settles the contest.

THE PARADOX

This is the great paradox of the 2026 World Cup. More teams were supposed to create more mismatches. Instead, more teams created more possibilities.

The 48-team format introduced countries and football cultures that the old 32-team structure would have excluded. Some struggled. That is inevitable in any tournament. Others flourished.

Unpredictability is not a weakness in sport. It is its most valuable commodity. If the result is known before the game begins, there is little reason to watch. The magic of the World Cup has always rested on possibility: the possibility that a giant might fall, an unknown player might become a national hero, or a country expected to go home early might suddenly dream of something much bigger.

The expanded format multiplied those possibilities. More countries participated. More supporters had a stake in the tournament. More regions of the world were represented. The established football order was challenged more often.

There will inevitably be arguments about the length of the tournament, player fatigue, scheduling and the logistical complexity of staging 104 matches. Those are legitimate questions. But the central sporting criticism of expansion, that 48 teams would make the World Cup less competitive, has become much harder to sustain.

A WORLD CUP

Perhaps the most important lesson of 2026 is that the World Cup had outgrown the old map of world football. Africa's performance demonstrated it, as did the ability of less fancied nations to compete with far more celebrated opponents.

The 48-team format did not create the globalisation of football. It revealed it. For decades, FIFA has called its tournament the World Cup. In 2026, perhaps it became a little more worthy of the name.

One team left as world champion, but 48 countries arrived believing they belonged. Nine African nations reached the round of 32. The expanded World Cup was expected simply to give us more football. Instead, it gave us something more valuable: more possibility.

On any given day, almost anyone could compete. The 48-team World Cup reminded us that uncertainty, ambition and belief remain the reasons the world watches.



OATLHOTSE, FRANCIS RULE BOARDS

More than 170 players battled for national honours as Providence Oatlhotse and Onkemetse Francis claimed Botswana's premier chess titles.



GAZETTE REPORTER

International Master Providence Oatlhotse and Woman International Master Onkemetse Francis were crowned winners of the 2026 BetXplosion National Chess Championship after five days of competition at Livingstone Kolobeng College in Block 8, Gaborone.

Held during the President's Holidays from July 17 to 21, the championship attracted more than 170 players from across Botswana, including established competitors and emerging talent.

Oatlhotse won the Open Section and received P15,000, while Francis claimed the Women's Section title and P10,000.

Motunge Gaolathe finished second in the Open Section, followed by Mokwena Kingsley in third. In the Women's Section, Woman FIDE Master Natalie Banda took second place, while Woman Candidate Master Maya Otimile finished third.

The field also included FIDE Master Ignatius Njobvu, Candidate Master Ndawana Mosenya, Ofentse Molale, Kenneth Boikhutshwane, Candidate Master Tebogo Pitlagano and Bojosi Sabure.

FIERCE BATTLES

Botswana Chess Federation spokesperson Goitsemodimo Makgatle said the championship demonstrated the continued growth of chess through the quality of competition over the five days.

> "The standard of play witnessed throughout the championship was exceptional."

"The standard of play witnessed throughout the championship was exceptional. We saw experienced players, young talents and seasoned legends competing at a very high level, which is encouraging for the future of Botswana chess. Every round produced exciting battles, demonstrating the depth of talent that exists in our country," she said.

SPONSOR BACKING

BetXplosion sponsored the championship with P184,000, providing prize money across the tournament.

Makgatle said the sponsorship was instrumental in delivering a successful event and acknowledged the players, arbiters, organisers and volunteers.

"We extend our sincere appreciation to all the players, arbiters, organisers and volunteers who worked tirelessly to deliver a successful championship. Most importantly, we are grateful to BetXplosion for sponsoring this event with P184,000. Their support continues to play a significant role in developing chess and creating opportunities for our players to compete at the highest level," she said.

The championship brought together Botswana's leading players and emerging talents, underlining the growing depth of the sport.

JUNIOR DITEEMANE TAKE AFRICA

Botswana's junior table tennis team is testing its progress against Africa's best as a long-term development plan gathers pace.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana Table Tennis Association's junior national team, Junior Diteemane, is competing at the 2026 ITTF Africa Youth Championships in Accra, Ghana, from July 21 to 27.

The delegation includes team manager Godileone Bagwasi, coaches Brown Sebokolodi and Kagiso Emmah Lelatisitswe, and players Boitlamo Nkele, Carol Peengo David, Stephaney Batsholeng, Brianna Mogaladi, Reneilwe Lekorwe, Thato Kgongwana and Gofaone Dzvaka.

Bagwasi and Batsholeng travelled to Ghana earlier for the ITTF Africa Youth Hopes Week and will join the rest of the team for the championships.

BUILDING EXPERIENCE

Botswana enters the continental competition after a strong showing at the South African National Championships, where the junior team faced strong opposition.

The results highlighted progress made through BTTA's player development programme and the growing depth of talent within the squad.



The team combines experienced junior internationals and emerging players, several of whom have represented Botswana at regional and international competitions.

BTTA president Kudzanani Motswagole said the association remains focused on developing players from grassroots level and preparing them for higher competition.

"We are conducting a serious objective of grassroots development, take kids from streets to the podium, for them to dominate the Southern Africa region before competing continentally," Motswagole said.

LONG GAME

Motswagole said some players are as young as 10 and Botswana has become increasingly competitive in the region.

"The team consists young players with some being 10 years, in the region we are now a force and we are terrorizing countries like South Africa which are difficult," he said.

He said the Africa Youth Championships would give the players valuable exposure as they continue developing.

"In Ghana the scope is large in terms of competition, this year the issue is not results, it's for them to get the feel and the grasp of how competition can be, learn so that next year we take the very same team to the same competition to now compete," Motswagole said.

The tournament forms part of a wider strategy to prepare the players for future continental and global competition.

"It's all about strategy, continentally by extension enters you into the world stage. We are really serious about development at table tennis," he said.

BTTA views the championships as a vital step in exposing young players to international standards while maintaining its long-term development programme.



GU CELEBRATES DOUBLE GLORY

Gaborone United will salute its title-winning teams, standout performers and club legends at a night celebrating a landmark season.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Gaborone United will on Friday honour players, administrators and club legends at the Sunbet Built For Greatness Annual Awards at GU Stadium, beginning at 18:00.

The ceremony follows a successful 2025/26 season in which the women's team won the national league title and the men's side lifted the FNB Premiership trophy. The men also reached the Orange FA Cup semi-finals.

Club spokesperson Tshepo Molwane said the event will thank players and officials for their contributions during the campaign.

"The awards that will be held on Friday are meant to thank the players for their good work during the 2025/26 season for both the women and men," Molwane said.

He said the club would have preferred to reward every player but will recognise those adjudged to have excelled.

"If it was possible, we were going to give them awards all, but now it is impossible as we are going to award those who performed best as per adjudications," he said.

SPECIAL TRIBUTES

The ceremony will also remember club figures who made lasting contributions to Gaborone United.

Molwane said the club will recognise the late John Matsheng, who will be buried on Saturday, and the late Degree Dlamini, the club's long-serving manager who died last month.

Former player Tshepo Maikano, who recently retired after an 11-year spell with the club, will also receive special recognition.

"We want to thank him for his commitment to the club," Molwane said.

Award categories for the men's and women's teams include Player of the Season, Players' Player of the Season, Goalkeeper of the Season, Most Disciplined Player and Supporters' Player of the Season.

Club director and financier Nicholas Zackhem will also present the Administrators Award.

SQUAD CHANGES

The awards come as Gaborone United prepares for the 2026/27 campaign after reshaping its squad.

Attacking midfielder Mpho Kgaswane has joined Mochudi Centre Chiefs.

GU has signed midfielder Tlotlo Keipidile on a season-long loan from Black Lions after the clubs completed the necessary paperwork. The club has also secured Thapelo Babedi from BDF XI and Bame Morwalela from Sua Flamingoes on two-year contracts.

TITANS, BDF IX TRIUMPH

Titans delivered a crushing final victory while BDF IX survived a thriller to claim Selebi Phikwe Extravaganza honours.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Titans and BDF IX emerged as champions of the 2026 Selebi Phikwe Extravaganza Softball tournament after four days of competition from July 18 to 21.

Titans dominated the ladies final, crushing Ghetto Yankees 12-0, while BDF IX edged Wells 5-4 in a tense men's decider.

The tournament produced competitive action across both categories, with individual players also recognised for outstanding performances.

TITANS DOMINATE

Titans secretary Atlang Gabantese attributed the team's success to preparation, commitment and the players' dedication throughout the tournament.

"The win is a result of the commitment and hard work from our players. They have shown discipline, teamwork and determination from the beginning of our preparations," Gabantese said.

She said the victory reflected a collective effort built on consistency and unity.



"Every player played their part, and the support within the team helped us remain focused. We believed in our ability and continued pushing until we achieved our goal," she said.

Gabantese said the title would motivate the team to keep improving.

"This victory gives us confidence, but it also reminds us that we have to continue working hard. Winning requires commitment beyond one tournament, and we will keep building on this achievement," she said.

TOP PERFORMERS

Titans' Onkokame Tlhakoyagomo was named the ladies' Most Valuable Player, while Ghetto Yankees' Nkebeto Thato received the Slugger award for recording the most home runs.

Titans players Gotlamang Sixpence and Ramaphane Malebogo were named Best Pitcher and Best Catcher respectively. Panthers' Itumeleng Letape received the Best Youngster Under-18 award.

In the men's category, Eric Simwanza of Gatalamotho was named Most Valuable Player, while teammate Brian Dekoker claimed the Slugger award.

BDF IX players Kagiso Mogale and Fani Unaswi were recognised as Best Pitcher and Best Catcher respectively, while Gatalamotho's Moatlanegi Victor won the Best Youngster Under-23 award.

> "Every player played their part, and the support within the team helped us remain focused."

The four-day tournament combined championship drama with a platform for emerging players to display their ability.



BOTSWANA HUNTS SEVEN MEDALS

A 25-athlete Team Botswana has settled in Glasgow with a clear target, seven medals across five sporting codes.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Team Botswana has settled in Glasgow, Scotland, and is ready to begin its bid for at least seven medals at the Commonwealth Games, scheduled from July 23 to August 2, 2026.

The squad comprises 25 athletes competing in athletics, boxing, judo, lawn bowls and swimming under Chef de Mission Tebogo Ntesang.

Athletes Tshepiso Masalela and Lee Eppie joined the team on Monday after competing in Diamond League events around the world.

The Botswana National Olympic Committee announced the seven-medal target during the team's send-off ceremony in Gaborone last week.

FINAL PREPARATIONS

Ntesang said the team's arrival, accreditation and integration into the Games environment had gone according to plan.

"The team is safe and sound, all is well and we did not encounter any challenges. we successfully completed accreditation and familiarized the athletes with training and competition venues. We are housed at University of Sterling which is a high performance centre and is equipped with all specifications of a sports hub. We have now entered the final phase of preparation, with training sessions intensifying as they await their respective events," she said.

She said months of preparation had put the athletes in a strong position to face some of the Commonwealth's best competitors.

"Our preparations have been thorough, and the athletes understand the responsibility that comes with representing Botswana on such a prestigious stage. They are motivated, confident and eager to showcase the hard work they have put in over the past months. We have no major injuries in the team and everyone is ready for the challenge," she said.

"Our mission is straightforward. We have come here to compete for medals. We have set ourselves a target of seven medals, and everyone within the team is working towards that goal. We believe our athletes have the talent and the character to deliver strong performances," Ntesang added.

RISING AMBITION

BNOC president Tshepo Sitale said the seven-medal target reflected Botswana's rise as a sporting nation with high-performance structures capable of competing against the world's best.

Sitale said Botswana had also come close to achieving a 50:50 gender balance in its Glasgow delegation.

"This is not an accident. It is the result of deliberate, strategic and painstaking work by CGA Botswana, our national federations and our high-performance structures," he said.

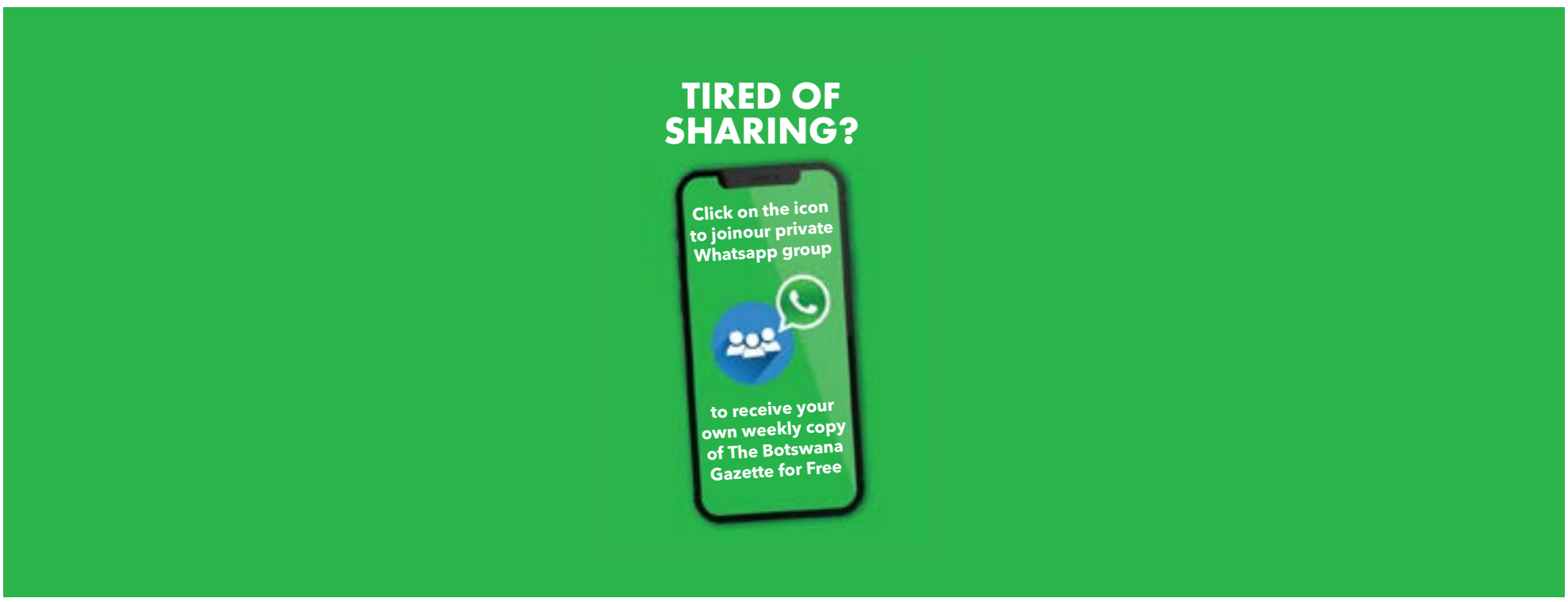
He said the balanced representation sends a message that every young Motswana, regardless of gender, has an equal opportunity to succeed in sport.

MEDAL HOPES

Athletics provides Botswana's largest medal hopes through Prince Selepe in the 100m and 200m, Justice Oratile in the 200m, Tshepiso Masalela in the one mile, Kemorena Tisang in the 400m hurdles, Lee Bhekempilo Eppie in the 400m and Ketlobogile Haingura in the 800m.

> "Our mission is straightforward. We have come here to compete for medals."

The women's athletics team includes Oratile Nowe, Obakeng Kamberuka, Kennekae Batisani, Naledi Monthe, Boitshepo Kelapile and Tshegotatso Bojosi.



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BACKPAGE
THURSDAY 23 JULY 2026
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SPORT



BOTSWANA HUNTS SEVEN MEDALS

A 25-athlete Team Botswana has settled in Glasgow with a clear target, seven medals across five sporting codes.

Photo Credit: Botswana National Olympic Committee



GU CELEBRATES DOUBLE GLORY

Gaborone United will salute its title-winning teams, standout performers and club legends at a night celebrating a landmark season.

29.