The Botswana
GAZETTE
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WHEN OLD FEARS RETURN

Parliament's missing-person motion has revived an old Botswana anxiety, forcing the country once again to confront the uneasy boundary between spiritual belief, public desperation and evidence-based policing.

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WHEN OLD FEARS RETURN

Parliament's missing-person motion has revived an old Botswana anxiety, forcing the country once again to confront the uneasy boundary between spiritual belief, public desperation and evidence-based policing.



SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

Botswana has been here before: a child disappears, answers do not come quickly enough, frustration hardens into suspicion, and into the vacuum step traditional practitioners, spiritual claims and unofficial investigators. For years, the country has tried to push the spectre of ritual killings and unexplained disappearances to the margins, treating it as an anxiety best answered by evidence and procedure. Yet the bogeyman refuses to leave. Parliament has now brought it back into public life.

> "A spiritual revelation may point police somewhere. It does not by itself prove what happened there."

Last week, lawmakers adopted an urgent motion tabled by Deputy Speaker and Mmopane-Metsimotlhabe MP Helen Pushie Manyeneng calling on Government to broaden the search for missing people by creating mechanisms through which families and communities, if they choose, may involve traditional practitioners, spiritual leaders and others they believe can help. Their participation would, according to the motion, be coordinated with and subject to oversight by the Botswana Police Service.

The motion arrives at an unusually combustible moment. Families live with unanswered disappearances. Public confidence is strained whenever a search appears to stall. Social media has created an audience for alternative investigators and crusaders for the missing. A new government that came to office promising change is confronting the same dilemma as its predecessors: how to respond to fear, belief and public pressure without allowing untestable claims to substitute for evidence.

That is the tension at the heart of Parliament's decision. The motion may accommodate Botswana's cultural reality and give desperate families another avenue of support. But once spiritual claims enter an active police investigation, a harder question follows: what exactly are the police supposed to do with them?

AN OLD DIVIDE

Botswana has never been a society without traditional medicine or spiritual belief. Traditional practice remains embedded in the social landscape, and the courts have acknowledged its existence. In Motiki v The State, the Court of Appeal described traditional medicine as a practice that was "accepted or tolerated" in Botswana. The Ministry of Health has historically acknowledged the country's pluralistic health system, while the World Health Organisation has documented the role of traditional practitioners. But cultural recognition is not evidentiary recognition.

That distinction becomes critical in a missing-person case. Police are trying to establish facts: where a person was last seen, who was present, what physical traces remain and whether evidence points to a crime. If a suspect is identified, the case must ultimately be capable of surviving a courtroom.

The Botswana Police Service made that distinction during controversies involving traditional practitioners and missing-person investigations in 2013. Police maintained that traditional doctors could provide information like any other member of the public, but did not have a formal investigative role. Investigations had to rest on independently verifiable evidence: fingerprints, clothing, footprints, DNA and other forensic material.

A spiritual revelation may point police somewhere. It does not by itself prove what happened there.

That is why the phrase "police oversight" in Manyeneng's motion carries so much weight. Does oversight mean officers receive information and test what can be tested? Are they expected to follow every revelation? What happens when a practitioner names a person, household or location? And what happens if a frightened community treats that claim as fact before police find corroborating evidence?

TAKATOKWANE'S SHADOW

Those questions are not theoretical. The disappearance of Collen Loba, a child from Takatokwane, pushed them back into public view. Moeladilotlhoko, founded by Tshepho Sethibe, became involved in the search with assistance from traditional practitioners. The involvement reportedly contributed to tensions and public disorder, reviving concerns about what happens when spiritual claims, community fear and an active investigation collide.

Moeladilotlhoko has become one of the most visible forces in Botswana's missing-person conversation, advocating greater involvement of traditional doctors and spiritual practitioners when conventional searches appear to have yielded little. Its visibility also shows how the landscape has changed. A police investigation can now unfold alongside social-media claims, counterclaims and public mobilisation.

Police have previously warned that such activity can complicate investigations, particularly where claims by traditional doctors provoke anger or turn communities towards particular individuals. That concern goes to the danger Parliament must confront: a lead can be investigated; an accusation can destroy a life.

Former deputy commissioner of police Kenny Kapinga, now MP for Okavango West, has taken a firm position against introducing spiritual revelations into police work. Speaking to The Botswana Gazette, he argued that the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act does not recognise such revelations as evidence and that officers cannot reasonably be expected to coordinate claims that cannot be tested through conventional methods.

"Let us stay away from these beliefs and leave the police to do their job without disturbance," Kapinga said.

> "The question is what happens when the State formally opens the door."

Traditional practitioners see the matter differently. Kamogelo Keitholetse, spokesperson for the Dikakapa tsa Setso Association and popularly known as Rabeisane, welcomed Parliament's move, saying it could allow practitioners to assist families without fear of arrest or accusations that they are causing disorder.

Yet even that support comes with a warning. Keitholetse cautioned against allowing every practitioner into missing-person cases, arguing that some may be motivated by publicity or commercial interests rather than a genuine desire to help. He criticised practitioners who publicise cases on social media, saying some use the exposure to market themselves.

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That exposes another complication. Parliament is not simply trying to reconcile policing with culture. It is being asked to define who is legitimate, who is accountable and who bears responsibility when a spiritual claim moves from a private consultation into the public sphere.

SEGAMETSI RETURNS

Botswana has seen before how quickly such fears can become something larger. The 1994 murder of 14-year-old Segametsi Mogomotsi in Mochudi remains one of the country's most painful examples. Her death triggered protests and riots and eventually drew investigators from Scotland Yard. More than three decades later, the episode still hovers over discussion of ritual killings, missing children and official secrecy.

> Until that line is clear, the old bogeyman will remain exactly where it has always been: in the space between what the public fears, what it believes and what the State can prove

Kgatleng Central MP Mpho Morolong has called on the UDC Government to release the long-secret Scotland Yard report into Segametsi's murder. He told this publication that its release could finally provide answers in a case that remains a painful chapter in Botswana's history and help the country find a way forward on unresolved cases of this nature.

The call matters because the current debate is not happening in a historical vacuum. When reports remain secret, cases remain unresolved and authorities do not fill the information gap quickly and credibly, suspicion has room to grow. Rumour becomes explanation. Explanation becomes certainty. And the country again debates whether forces outside conventional policing should be invited in.

Moeladilotlhoko is expected to present a petition on ritual killings and missing persons to the Office of the President on August 31, preceded, according to the group, by a motorcade and march involving families of missing persons. Efforts to interview Moeladilotlhoko for this story were unsuccessful.

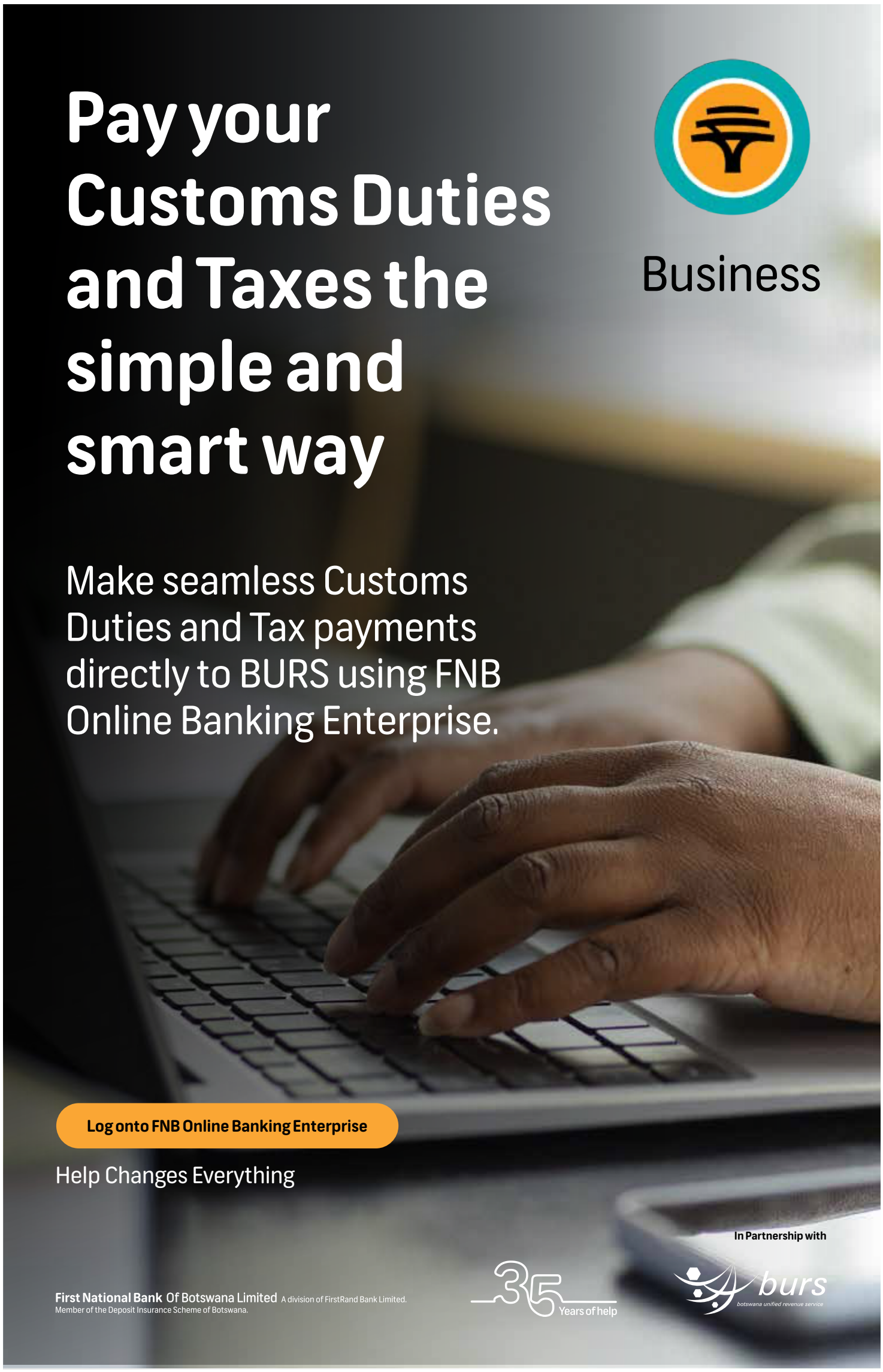
The petition will add pressure to a debate Parliament has pulled back into the national spotlight. The question is no longer whether traditional and spiritual beliefs exist in Botswana, or whether frightened families will seek help wherever they believe it may be found.

The question is what happens when the State formally opens the door.

If the new framework is to work, Government will have to draw a line previous governments struggled to make convincing: one that respects cultural belief and the desperation of families, while ensuring that a police investigation remains governed by evidence, due process and testable facts.

Until that line is clear, the old bogeyman will remain exactly where it has always been: in the space between what the public fears, what it believes and what the State can prove.





Boko Concedes Jobs Pledge Delay

President Duma Boko says the pledge to create 100,000 jobs a year has been delayed by fiscal pressures and the practical realities of governing, but insists mega projects will drive future employment.



President Duma Boko has admitted that delivering on his 2024 election pledge to create 100,000 jobs a year has proved far more difficult from inside government than it appeared from the opposition benches.

BONGANI MALUNGA

President Duma Boko has admitted that delivering on his 2024 election pledge to create 100,000 jobs a year has proved far more difficult from inside government than it appeared from the opposition benches.

Boko conceded that his administration has not yet delivered the 100,000 jobs promised to Batswana, saying the realities of running the country only became apparent after assuming power. Asked by South African broadcaster eNCA whether he had delivered the 100,000 jobs within 12 months as promised during his campaign for high office, Boko gave a blunt response: "Not yet."

He said his government inherited an economy structured in a particular way, with realities that could not have been fully anticipated while operating from outside government.

THEORY MEETS POWER

Boko acknowledged that his administration had conducted extensive research before taking power, but said the findings could not fully prepare it for the realities encountered once it assumed responsibility for running the country.

He argued that research, studies and policy propositions all have inherent limitations, drawing on the philosophical distinction between theoretical and practical truth to explain the difficulties his government encountered.

According to Boko, what appeared achievable at the theoretical level looked considerably different once his administration was confronted with the practical realities of governing. He said the government was now wrestling with the practical application of ideas and had discovered that Botswana's economy was deeply unequal and had experienced years of economic growth without sufficient job creation.

FISCAL SHOCK

Boko's explanation centred heavily on the financial position he said his administration inherited, claiming that government coffers had declined dramatically before the UDC administration took office.

He said Botswana had gone from having about P37 billion in the coffers three years earlier to just P300 million when his government assumed power, while facing a monthly salary bill and a recurrent government budget of about P1.4 billion.

That, he said, forced the new administration to prioritise keeping the state financially afloat rather than immediately pursuing ambitious job-creation programmes.

"You've got to wrestle with keeping the ship afloat. You can't start doing fancy stuff about this thing. You've got to keep it afloat."

He described the situation as the country's "biggest existential challenge", saying the immediate priority was ensuring that citizens remained supported and public servants continued receiving their salaries.

SHORT-TERM PAUSE

"So forget about creating jobs in the short term," he said, arguing that the government first had to ensure that people were paid and that the machinery of the state continued functioning.

Boko said his administration had succeeded in keeping salaries flowing despite what he described as the difficult circumstances it inherited.

MEGA PROJECTS

The President nevertheless maintained that his government is now shifting towards large-scale projects that he believes can transform the economy and generate employment.

He pointed to the proposed Trans-Kalahari Rail Line being pursued with Namibia as one of the mega projects underpinning the government's economic strategy.

Boko said the project, which he expects to begin in the first quarter of 2027, would involve the construction of about 1,200 kilometres or more of new railway track. He said numerous other projects would create more employment as the government works towards realising the election pledge.



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Balance	Interest Rate
P0 – P499.99	0.00%
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Visa Abuse Threatens Botswana Goodwill

Government warns that visa violations, overstaying and misuse of asylum processes by Batswana abroad could damage Botswana's reputation and trigger tougher travel restrictions.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Government has warned Batswana living and travelling abroad to respect the immigration laws of host countries, saying individual violations could undermine Botswana's international reputation and jeopardise opportunities enjoyed by citizens.

Minister of International Relations Dr Phenyo Butale issued the warning in Parliament last week while presenting a statement on the conduct of Batswana abroad, amid growing concerns over visa violations, overstaying, misuse of asylum processes and false declarations.

Butale said conduct that may appear to be an individual matter could have wider consequences for Botswana, affecting the country's diplomatic relations and the ability of its citizens to travel freely.

"Though these matters occur beyond our borders, their consequences reverberate at home, affecting individuals, families, government, and ultimately the reputation and opportunities of Batswana as a whole," he said.

ASYLUM CONCERN

The Minister singled out the increasing number of Batswana seeking asylum in foreign countries as an area of concern. While acknowledging that asylum is a legitimate form of protection for people with genuine grounds, he criticised the alleged use of false declarations, overstaying and working in breach of visitor visa conditions.

He pointed to the United Kingdom's decision in October 2025 to impose visitor visa requirements on Batswana as a warning of what could happen when immigration rules are repeatedly breached.

According to Butale, the UK cited misuse of visitor rules and persistently high asylum claims, with 1,332 asylum claims recorded between January 2022 and June 2025. Of these, 642 were made at ports of entry.



Butale stressed that international travel privileges were not unconditional and could be withdrawn when countries lose confidence in the behaviour of foreign nationals.

US VISA BOND

The United States has also introduced tougher requirements affecting Batswana. Butale said that since January 2026, Batswana applying for B1/B2 visas have been subjected to a visa bond of up to US$15,000, equivalent to approximately P200,000.

He said the requirement placed a significant financial burden on citizens and demonstrated the increasing scrutiny facing Botswana passport holders.

NATIONAL INTEREST

According to the Minister, immigration compliance should no longer be viewed solely as an individual's responsibility.

"It is no longer merely a personal matter but an issue of national interest," he said.

Butale warned that continued violations could affect ordinary Batswana who have legitimate reasons to travel abroad for tourism, education, employment and business.

"The actions of a few can alter the opportunities of many," he said.

PASSPORT REPUTATION

He urged Batswana to recognise the wider significance of their conduct abroad, arguing that the Botswana passport represents more than a travel document. It embodies the country's sovereignty, stability and standing in the international community, he said.

BOTSWANA BUREAU OF STANDARDS

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the following position:

DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES: VACANCY NO: 7/2026/2027

Job Summary

Coordinating the functions of Finance, Human Resources, Information and Communications Technology, and Facilities and Administrative services and reporting directly to the Managing Director, the successful applicant will be expected to play key role in development and execution of corporate strategy and organisational policies, proactively identifying and coordinating appropriate strategic partner organisations, both in the public and private sector, capable of participating in the facilitation and/or provision of service that deliver on the mandate of the Bureau, oversee development and implementation of appropriate operational processes and procedures that deliver of business management services and solutions to the rest of the organisation in the most cost effective, value driven manner to meet the expectations of both the internal and external customers.

Minimum Job Requirements:
Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in Accounting or equivalent plus membership of an internationally recognised professional accountancy/management institution such as ACCA, CIMA, CA with MBA as an added advantage.

Experience: A minimum of 10 years administrative and financial management experience in a large organisation of which 5 years should have been at executive management level.
Fully grounded in matters of corporate governance and demonstrable experience of working with Board(s) of Director.
A valid driver's licence

Competencies: Management and Leadership skills
Strong communications and interpersonal skills
Initiative and pro-active

REMUNERATION
BOBS offers competitive and attractive remuneration packages to the most suitable candidates

This position is offered on a five (5) year fixed term contract.

A detailed CV, names of three referees, and certified copies of certificates should accompany applications and be emailed to: recruitment@bobstandards.bw not later than **10th September 2026**. **BOBS will enter into correspondence with shortlisted candidates only.**

For any enquiries do not hesitate to contact Human Resources at Telephone Number: 3903200/3645560/3645561.

New Appointments

Botswana Savings Bank
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Ms. Bonang Kwape-Sephuma – Director Human Capital

Bonang Kwape-Sephuma is a Human Capital executive with over 20 years professional experience in optimising talent to drive strategy execution. She has made her mark in the human capital space across diBerent countries and cultures (Botswana, South Africa, USA and throughout the African continent). Her previous roles include University of Texas Houston Health Science Centre, Eskom, FNB, BIUST and BDIH. She also brings extensive consulting experience from her tenure as MD of Bonang Group.

Bonang has two Bachelors' degrees (Psychology and Mass Communication) from the University of Missouri – St. Louis and Masters' degree (Industrial/Organizational Psychology) from Roosevelt University. In 2020 she successfully completed a Professional Coaching post graduate certificate from GIBS in South Africa.

Ms Kwape-Sephuma has extensive board-level experience, having served on the boards of organisations across a diverse range of industries. She has served on the boards of Ultimate Care Insurance and Botswana Fibre Networks (Bofinet).



Mr. Kagiso Ramotlhagodi – Head, Credit

Kagiso Ramotlhagodi is an experienced credit professional with extensive experience in lending and credit risk management across the business and personal banking sectors, with a distinguished career spanning some of Botswana's leading financial institutions including Stanbic Botswana, Standard Chartered Bank Botswana and Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency. He is adept at credit assessment, Policy Formulation and Review, Portfolio Monitoring as well as Budget Management and Cost Controlling.

His academic background includes a BSc degree with majors in Mathematics and Finance from the University of Botswana. He augmented his qualifications by undergoing Senior Leaders Development Program with the University of the Witwatersrand and Certified International Credit Professional (CICP) designation from the Finance, Credit, and International Business Association (FCIB). He is currently pursuing a certification in Professional Risk Management (PRM) with the Professional Risk Manager's International Association.



Ms. Melba Jackson – Head, Data

Melba Jackson is a visionary Data, AI and Analytics Leader with over a decade experience in enterprise data strategy, digital transformation, and artificial intelligence across the mining and financial services sectors. Passionate about harnessing the power of data and AI to solve complex business challenges, she is driven by a belief that every strategic decision should be informed by trusted data.

Melba has led the design and delivery of enterprise data platforms, AI-powered decision intelligence solutions, predictive analytics, and data governance frameworks that have enabled executive and board-level decision-making, optimized operational performance, and unlocked new revenue opportunities. Her strong leadership skills - including mentoring, coaching, and high performing team empowerment initiatives has fostered collaborative environments to drive innovation and productivity.

She holds a Bachelor of Information Systems (Information Management) degree from the University of Botswana, is pursuing a Master's in Data Science Management, and completed the Standard Bank Africa Data Science Programme (Nano Degree). She also holds professional certifications in Microsoft Azure Data Engineering, Agile Project Management, Financial Reporting & Analysis, Salesforce and ITIL .She combines strategic leadership with deep technical expertise to help organizations build data-driven cultures, accelerate innovation, and realize the transformative potential of data and AI.



Mr. Akofang Kebonye – Head, Business Banking

Akofang Kebonye is joining Botswana Savings Bank as Head of Business Banking, bringing over 15 years of leadership experience in business banking, corporate banking, trade finance and transaction banking. Prior to joining BSB, he held senior leadership positions at Access Bank Botswana and Stanbic Bank Botswana, where he led strategic growth initiatives, developed innovative financial solutions, and built high-performing teams focused on delivering exceptional customer value.

He holds a Master of Science in Financial Management from Heriot-Watt University, a First Class Honours Bachelor of Financial Engineering from Multimedia University, Malaysia, and is a Certified Trade Finance Professional (CTFP).

Akofang is Passionate about creating positive impact and advancing sustainable development, Akofang is committed to empowering Botswana's businesses through innovative, customer-centric financial solutions.

Outside of work, he is actively involved in community development through business capacity building, as well as volunteer work with Mafitlhakgosi-Mafatshwa Community Association and Alpha Prison Ministry.



Mr. Kethebe Sethunyane – Head, Strategy & Customer Excellence

Kethebe Sethunyane is an accomplished strategy and transformation executive with experience in corporate strategy, customer excellence, business transformation, Enterprise performance management, and operational improvement across the banking, utilities, mining, manufacturing, and logistics sectors.

Prior to joining BSB, Kethebe served as Strategy & Transformation Manager (Executive) at Botswana Power Corporation (BPC), where he led corporate strategy, enterprise transformation, and provided strategic advisory support to Executive Management and the Board. He previously held strategy, business improvement, and business analysis roles at BPC and FNBB. He also serves as a Board Member at BOSASNet. Kethebe holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Industrial Engineering), is pursuing an MBA at the University of Hull, and completed the Senior Management Development Programme (SMDP) at Stellenbosch Business School.

He also holds several professional certifications in strategy execution business architecture, Lean Six Sigma, business process management project management, and organisational change.

About Botswana Savings Bank

Botswana Savings Bank (BSB) is a wholly Government-owned financial institution established under the Botswana Savings Bank Act of 1992. With a national mandate to mobilise savings and provide inclusive financial services, the Bank plays a strategic role in advancing financial inclusion and supporting Botswana's economic development.

Headquartered at Tshomarelo House, Broadhurst Mall, Gaborone, BSB operates a nationwide branch network and is governed by a Board of Directors reporting to the Ministry of Finance. The Bank is supervised by the Bank of Botswana and remains committed to delivering simple, secure and accessible financial solutions that empower individuals, businesses and communities across Botswana.

Security Firms Brace For Labour Act

Security companies warn that Botswana's new working-hour rules could raise staffing costs, while workers welcome the reform but fault Government for inadequate consultation.



SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The impending implementation of Botswana's new Employment and Labour Relations Act is set to reshape the private security industry, with companies warning that changes to working hours could disrupt operations and increase staffing costs.

COST PRESSURE

Speaking to The Botswana Gazette, Security Association of Botswana (SAB) chairman Dilo Hollywood said the industry is not opposed to the new law but is concerned about its operational and financial implications.

Hollywood said security companies would be forced to employ additional guards to cover shifts currently handled through 12-hour rotations, placing already limited resources under further strain.

He said the changes would compel companies to restructure operations and increase their workforce to maintain the same level of coverage.

"We cannot be against the law," Hollywood said, stressing that the new provisions would have far-reaching consequences for the industry.

WORKING HOURS

Under the new Employment and Labour Relations Act, the ordinary working period is eight hours a day and 48 hours a week, with workers entitled to rest breaks during the working day.

The Act also generally prevents employers from requiring workers to work more than 12 hours in a single day, except in specified circumstances or where authorised. Hours beyond the ordinary working period are generally treated as overtime and attract payment at 1.5 times the ordinary wage rate, with overtime generally capped at 14 hours a week, subject to exceptions.

EXEMPTIONS SOUGHT

Hollywood said companies would have to increase staffing levels to fill additional shifts, potentially driving up operating costs.

He said the association was engaging relevant stakeholders on how the new working-hour requirements could be implemented without destabilising the industry.

Hollywood said the industry was considering approaching Government for exemptions where necessary, arguing that some security operations may require special consideration because of the nature of their work.

WORKERS WELCOME

Meanwhile, Security Officers Association of Botswana (SOAB) president Batanani Morapelo welcomed the legislation, saying it would improve the welfare of security workers who have traditionally worked long hours.

Speaking to The Botswana Gazette, Morapelo said the Act was a positive development for security officers, particularly because of the long hours they had endured.

CONSULTATION GAP

However, Morapelo criticised Government for failing to adequately consult the security industry during the drafting of the legislation.

He said the Act had been drafted without meaningful consultation with the sector and urged Government to change its approach.

Morapelo said all relevant stakeholders should be brought to the table when laws directly affecting their industries are being formulated. He said consultation would help Government understand the practical realities facing different sectors and ensure legislation was implemented effectively.

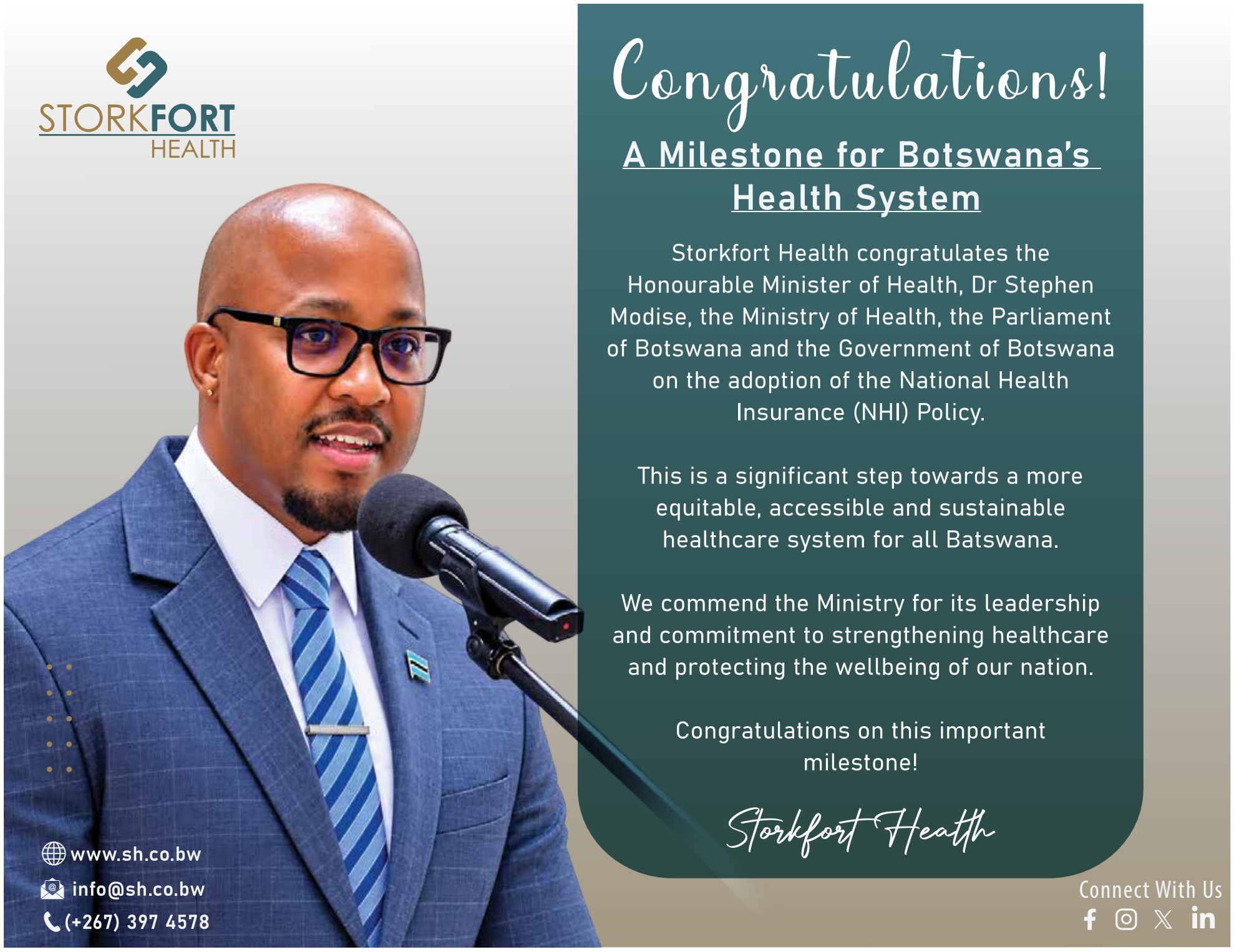



Photo Credit: Social Media

Free Pads Hit Supply Gaps

Government says its free sanitary pads programme has reached 80,498 girls nationwide, but admitted supply interruptions are testing whether the flagship pledge can become a dependable public service.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The UDC government's flagship promise to provide free sanitary pads to female learners is facing a major implementation test, with supply interruptions threatening to undermine a programme intended to keep girls in school and address menstrual hygiene challenges.

NATIONAL REACH

Addressing the media this week on the government's midterm performance, Minister of State in the Presidency Moeti Mohwasa said the programme, introduced in June 2025, had distributed 321,992 packs to 80,498 registered girls across all 10 education regions.

The figures show that government has established a nationwide distribution system, but the interruptions experienced after the first two cycles raise questions over whether it can maintain a reliable supply to beneficiaries.

SUPPLY BREAKS

According to the minister, government has already spent P2.62 million on procurement and distribution during the first two cycles of the programme.

Mohwasa acknowledged that implementation had not been smooth, conceding that supply interruptions had affected subsequent cycles.

"Supply interruptions affected subsequent cycles," Mohwasa said.

For a programme directly linked to the welfare and education of schoolgirls, inconsistent supplies could leave beneficiaries without the products Government promised to provide, potentially undermining the purpose of the initiative.

FLAGSHIP TEST

The programme was introduced as one of the UDC government's priority interventions, making the supply failures particularly significant as government takes stock of its performance since assuming office in 2024.

Mohwasa said the programme was operational and had achieved national reach, but stressed that stronger supply reliability and greater scale were now required.

DELIVERY GAP

The minister said the sanitary-pad programme is not the only area where government says more work is required. He added that the government must rebuild fiscal buffers and ensure that legislation already passed is translated into functioning institutions and measurable improvements for citizens.

The sanitary-pad programme therefore presents a straightforward test of government's ability to turn a popular manifesto commitment into a dependable public service.

While the distribution figures provide evidence of progress, the admission of supply interruptions exposes a gap between launching a programme nationally and ensuring that beneficiaries receive uninterrupted support.

NGO COUNCIL

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VACANCY: FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICER (1POST) NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS COUNCIL (NGO Council)

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Vacancy Circular No 1 of 2026
SALARY SCALE: D3 (P279, 660 - P293, 652) per annum
LEAVE: 30 working days per annum

BENEFITS:
i. Medical Aid Scheme (as per the NGO Council Conditions of Service)
ii. A contract of 60 months, with gratuity at the rate of 30% payable at the expiry of contract.

QUALIFICATIONS
Candidates must be in possession of a Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy/ Finance/Business Administration. Knowledge on QuickBooks will be an added advantage. Must be BICA Registered

EXPERIENCE
Candidates should have at least 8 years of proven post qualification experience in the relevant field of which 2 years should have been at D4 level at Government or its equivalent in Parastatal or Private Sector.

COMPETENCIES
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- Problem solving
- Planning
- Time management
- Drive for Results
- Integrity and Trust
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MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB:
Provision of finance and administrative services, to support the day to day operations of the NGO Council Secretariat.

DUTIES:
- Provides support to the Coordinator to develop and monitor annual budgets: to account for all incomes and expenditures ensuring that they remain within approved budgets; and to present regular income and expenditure reports to the Council.
- Reviews all payments requests to certify that appropriate supporting documents have been provided and the correct project codes have been used and responsible for NGO Council Procurement.
- Prepares all Purchase Requisition Forms and Purchase Orders ensuring that all appropriate supporting documents are attached using correct project codes before submission to the Coordinator for vetting.
- Maintains accounting system.
- Extracts monthly financial reports from the accounting /financial system; prepares project reports and updates for the Coordinator and Council.
- Prepares, reviews and reconciles monthly financial reports for the project activities and brief the Coordinator.
- Periodically (as scheduled) reviews commitments and follow up finalization on various expenditure lines.
- Periodically reviews the NGO Council approved financial and travel policies.
- Develops and maintains an asset register for the NGO Council Secretariat.
- Provides support to the Coordinator to ensure completion of financial audits as required by regulatory authorities and compliance with best practice standards.
- Ensures administrative staff supervision in line with human resources policies.
- Assists in recording NGO Council meeting minutes as required.
- Performs any other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

APPLICATIONS:
1. Applicants should quote the vacancy circular number on the advert, and give the following details:
   a. A Brief summary of career with duties performed (Curriculum Vitae) including the first date of appointment, present post and the date of appointment thereto.
   b. Certified copies of academic certificates, certified **Identity Document(OMANG)** and a minimum of two (2) recent work related references ***(NOT MORE THAT 6 MONTHS)***
2. Applicants from serving Public Officers should be routed through their Heads of Department and Permanent Secretaries. ***Applications not so routed will not be considered.***
3. Applications should be addressed to: The Coordinator, NGO Council, P.O Box 262 AEJ, Gaborone or hand delivered to the NGO Council, Public Relations Office, 11th Floor, Vasha Building, CBD.
4. ***E- mailed or faxed applications will not be accepted nor considered.***

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Only shortlisted applicants will be entered into correspondence with.

CLOSING DATE: 10 September 2026 at 1630hrs

For further details, please contact: Ms. Innocentia Puso at the NGO Council telephone, 73238338.

Botswana Grants Oman Visa-Free Entry

Omani nationals can now enter Botswana visa-free for up to 90 days, but Batswana still face Oman's entry requirements, leaving the new arrangement non-reciprocal.



BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana has granted Omani citizens visa-free access for stays of up to 90 days, opening a new chapter in the country's growing engagement with the Sultanate of Oman.

The visa exemption, confirmed by Oman's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement released last Saturday, allows holders of all types of Omani passports to enter Botswana without applying for a visa before travelling.

ONE-WAY ACCESS

However, the arrangement is currently not reciprocal, with Botswana citizens still required to comply with Oman's applicable entry and visa requirements.

Oman's official visa guidance directs visitors to its visa eligibility system, indicating that Botswana nationals do not enjoy an equivalent 90-day visa-free facility.

ECONOMIC TIES

The development comes as Botswana and Oman have accelerated bilateral cooperation in recent months, with the two countries moving beyond diplomatic engagement towards concrete economic partnerships.

During high-level engagements between the two countries, Botswana and Oman signed agreements covering mineral exploration, petroleum product storage facilities and the development, construction and financing of a solar power plant.

The agreements point to an expanding relationship centred on energy, mining and infrastructure, sectors that Botswana is seeking to use to attract investment and strengthen economic diversification.

TRAVEL CONDITIONS

The visa-free access is expected to further support these ambitions by making it easier for Omani investors, businesspeople and tourists to travel to Botswana.

Under the arrangement, Omani travellers must have passports valid for at least six months from the date of entry and containing at least three blank pages.

> "The arrangement is currently not reciprocal, with Botswana citizens still required to comply with Oman's applicable entry and visa requirements."

The Botswana government has not ruled out discussions with Oman on whether reciprocal visa arrangements could eventually be established.

RECIPROCITY GAP

Botswana exempts nationals from more than 100 countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and European Union member states, from visa requirements for short-term stays.

However, Botswana citizens enjoy visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to only between 57 and 82 countries globally, highlighting the imbalance in reciprocal travel access.

Citizenship Programme Stalls Before Launch

Botswana's Impact Citizenship Programme remains closed to formal applications months after an early-2026 launch was advertised, with government records showing that regulations and operating structures still had to be finalised.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's ambitious entry into the global citizenship-by-investment market has stalled before formal applications could begin, leaving prospective investors waiting for the legal and administrative machinery needed to activate the programme.

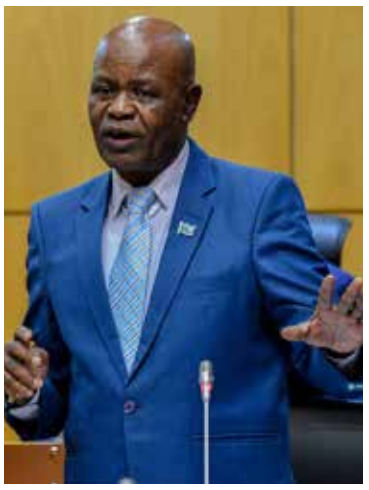
The Impact Citizenship Programme was formally unveiled in September 2025 after President Duma Boko's government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with investment migration consultancy Arton Capital on 26 September 2025. The initiative was later outlined in the government's 2025 State of the Nation Address detailed report as a route through which qualifying investors could obtain citizenship in return for contributions to national development priorities.

The programme portal subsequently advertised that applications would open in early 2026. As of August 2026, however, the portal was still inviting prospective investors to register their interest rather than submit formal citizenship applications.

LAW NOT ENOUGH

The clearest official explanation for the delay came in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs' Committee of Supply speech delivered on 24 February 2026.

The ministry said the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2025, No. 30 of 2025, had been passed by Parliament in December 2025 and assented to, but that regulations were still being finalised to operationalise the law. The ministry said the Act would come into effect once those regulations were completed.



Minister of Labour and Home Affairs ,Major General Pius Mokgware

That distinction is central to the programme's current status: Parliament created the legislative basis for attracting investors of value, but the passage of the Act did not by itself open an application route.

LAUNCH MISSED

The programme had been marketed as a new mechanism for attracting foreign capital while reducing Botswana's reliance on diamonds. Government's 2025 programme outline described both a Government-to-Citizen route and a Government-to-Government channel, with indicative contribution levels beginning at US$75,000 for a single applicant.

The public-facing programme site has advertised a contribution range of US$75,000 to US$90,000, but formal application procedures, final compliance systems and an operational launch date have not been publicly confirmed.

INTEREST WAITING

Interest has nevertheless been substantial. Hundreds of prospective investors registered during the development phase, but registration of interest is not the same as a citizenship application and does not guarantee approval.

The delay leaves Botswana behind the timetable initially promoted to the international investment-migration market, even as other African jurisdictions continue to develop or operate citizenship-by-investment schemes.

DELIVERY TEST

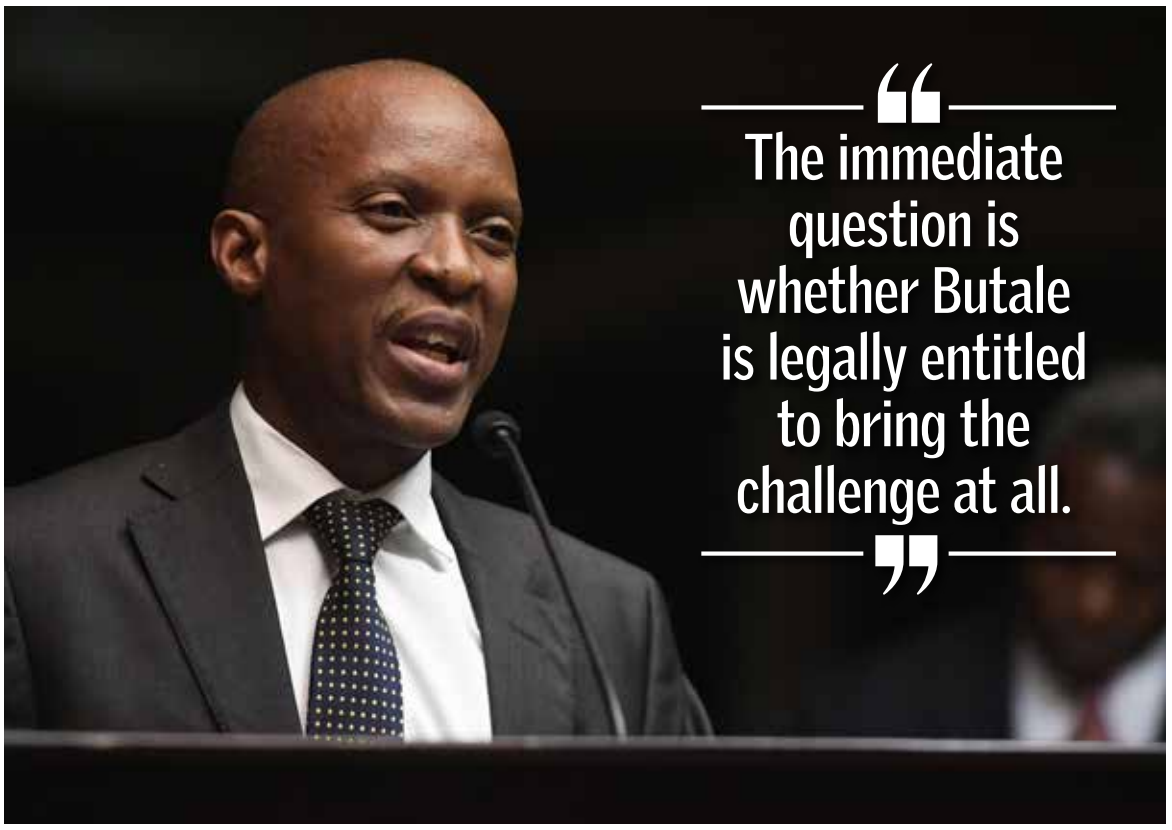
For now, Botswana's Impact Citizenship Programme remains a policy and legislative project rather than a functioning application system.

> "The law exists, but the formal citizenship-by-investment application route has yet to open."

The gap between the announced early-2026 launch and the programme's continued registration-only status has shifted attention from the concept itself to government's ability to complete the regulations, institutions and compliance mechanisms needed to make it operational.

State Challenges Butale's Legal Standing

Government wants the High Court to decide whether Biggie Butale has legal standing before hearing his challenge to the statutory removal of Penal Code provisions that once criminalised consensual same-sex relations.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Government has mounted a preliminary challenge to former politician and lawyer Biggie Butale's bid to overturn the administrative removal of Penal Code provisions that criminalised consensual same-sex relations.

Butale filed his substantive application at the Gaborone High Court on 14 July 2026, challenging Statutory Instrument No. 41 of 2026. The instrument, titled the Rectification of the Laws (Penal Code) Order, 2026, was published on 27 March 2026 and deleted paragraphs (a) and (c) of section 164 from the published Laws of Botswana.

The State is now asking the court to determine whether Butale has locus standi, the legal standing to bring the case, and whether his papers disclose a sustainable cause of action before the merits are heard.

THRESHOLD FIGHT

According to a filing notice dated 5 August 2026, Deputy Attorney General Joao Salbany brought an application for directions under Order 28 of the High Court Rules before Justice William Moncho.

The State wants the proceedings dismissed if either preliminary objection succeeds. Salbany argues that Butale has "failed to establish a direct, current, and legally recognised interest in the relief sought" and that his founding affidavit "does not disclose a legally sustainable cause of action."

He further contends that the alleged deficiencies are "fatal" to Butale's review application and seeks dismissal with costs.

POWER DISPUTE

Butale's challenge is not an attempt to revive the criminal provisions themselves. He accepts the court decisions that rendered them unconstitutional and unenforceable.

His complaint is instead that Attorney General Dick Bayford, acting as Law Revision Commissioner, allegedly exceeded the powers granted by the Revision of Laws Act by deleting the provisions administratively when, according to Butale, formal repeal belonged to Parliament.

Butale says he brings the case "both in my personal interest and that of the public." He also states that he opposes the legalisation of consensual same-sex relations on religious grounds.

COURT HISTORY

The legal history is well established. On 11 June 2019, a three-judge High Court bench in Motshidiemang v Attorney-General, High Court Civil Case No. MAHGB-000591-16, declared sections 164(a) and (c) unconstitutional, together with related provisions.

The Court of Appeal upheld the core ruling on 29 November 2021 in Attorney General v Motshidiemang, Civil Appeal No. CACGB-157-19.

Following the appeal judgment, the Attorney General's Chambers published Penal Code (Amendment) Bill No. 29 of 2022 on 21 October 2022 to amend the affected provisions. Parliament later deferred the Bill in August 2023 while considering how the formal changes should be made.

INSTRUMENT CHALLENGED

Butale argues that while the Bill remained pending, the Law Revision Commissioner published Statutory Instrument No. 41 of 2026 on 27 March this year and achieved through statute-law revision what Parliament had not completed legislatively.

"That conduct is unlawful," Butale argues.

The immediate question before Justice Moncho, however, is narrower: whether Butale is legally entitled to bring that challenge at all and whether his case is properly constituted to proceed.

BONU Defends Ranaka Nurses

BONU says housing and transport shortages, not nurses, are driving after-hours service gaps at Ranaka Clinic and warns that public threats could further undermine healthcare delivery.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Botswana Nurses Union (BONU) has strongly defended nurses and midwives at Ranaka Clinic following concerns raised by Ranaka Ward councillor Motlotlegi Kgole over their alleged unavailability to respond to calls after normal working hours.

SYSTEM GAPS

In a statement responding to the councillor's criticism, BONU said residents' concerns about access to healthcare were legitimate, but nurses should not be blamed for structural problems, including a shortage of institutional accommodation and inadequate transport.

Kgole recently criticised the alleged unavailability of nurses after hours. On Facebook, he painted a gloomy picture of residents' difficulties in accessing medical assistance at night, saying he often wakes up to assist residents but becomes frustrated when nurses allegedly fail to answer calls.

CALL HOUSE ROW

Kgole said he could no longer take patients to Ranaka Clinic because of the alleged failure by nurses to respond to calls. He said nurses had previously told him they needed a call house to respond effectively after hours.

According to Kgole, he persistently engaged council leadership until the call house was renovated and equipped, but concerns over nurses' availability have continued.

THREATS REPORTED

BONU said nurses and midwives working at Ranaka Clinic live far from the facility because of a shortage of accommodation, making immediate after-hours response difficult.

The union said Kgole's Facebook comments had allegedly triggered outrage in the community, with some residents threatening to harass nurses and midwives in public spaces.


Ranaka Ward councillor Motlotlegi Kgole

BONU condemned the threats, warning that intimidation and hostility against healthcare workers could undermine service delivery and put lives at risk.

"Nurses and midwives are professionals who must be safeguarded from intimidation, injury, and public hostility," the union said, urging community leaders and residents to engage healthcare workers respectfully.

TRANSPORT LIMITS

BONU rejected calls for community members to transport nurses in private vehicles when they are called to the clinic after hours.

The union said nurses are not permitted to use patients' vehicles, arguing that such arrangements expose both nurses and patients to liability, exploitation and unsafe conditions.

According to BONU, responsibility for safe and reliable transport rests with Moshupa District Council. The union said it had repeatedly called on Government to provide transport for nurses scheduled to be on call.

HOUSING PRESSURE

The union said it has consistently advocated for adequate staff housing to ensure nurses can provide timely services to communities.

BONU called on Moshupa District Council to address staff accommodation and transport challenges rather than allowing nurses to become targets of community frustration.

The union said its members would continue serving with professionalism and dedication but stressed that they must be respected, protected and properly supported to deliver effective healthcare to the Ranaka community.

LSB LOSES FMD COUNSEL CHALLENGE

Chief Justice Gaolapelwe Ketlogetswe dismissed the Society's bid to undo a 30 July order admitting South African Senior Counsel Reginald Willis, warning against unnecessary intervention in foreign-counsel applications.



"The ruling came as the main FMD litigation continued before the High Court, with the two feedlot companies challenging government restrictions that they say have disrupted their operations"

GAZETTE REPORTER

Chief Justice Gaolapelwe Ketlogetswe has rebuked the Law Society of Botswana (LSB) over its handling of a high-profile legal dispute arising from the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) crisis.

The dispute followed Ketlogetswe's order of 30 July 2026 admitting South African Senior Counsel Reginald Willis to practise in Botswana on an ad hoc basis. Willis was engaged to represent JS Beef (Pty) Ltd and Primefast (Pty) Ltd in urgent litigation against the Director of Veterinary Services, Dr Kobedi Segale, Minister of Lands and Agriculture Dr Edwin Dikoloti and the Attorney General over the handling of FMD restrictions.

The LSB later brought an urgent application seeking rescission of the admission order, arguing that it had not been given a meaningful opportunity to oppose Willis's admission. Ketlogetswe dismissed the application with costs.

NATIONAL STAKES

Delivering his ruling, Ketlogetswe said the underlying FMD dispute could not be treated as a minor matter because of its implications for cattle movement, beef sales, export markets and the wider economy.

"This therefore cannot, by any standards, be regarded as a small matter," the Chief Justice said.

The ruling came as the main FMD litigation continued before the High Court, with the two feedlot companies challenging government restrictions that they say have disrupted their operations.

NOTICE DISPUTE

The LSB argued that Willis had been admitted without proper notice and that the Society should have been allowed to oppose the petition. Ketlogetswe rejected that contention, finding that the LSB had been notified in terms of section 7(1) of the Legal Practitioners Act.

He also criticised the Society for failing to clearly signal its intention to oppose the application at the earliest opportunity, saying it instead "chose to silently prepare to oppose a petition as if they were a party thereto."

LSB'S ROLE

The judgment also addressed the Law Society's role in applications for the admission of foreign advocates. Ketlogetswe said the LSB has a regulatory function but does not automatically become a party to every such proceeding.

"It will therefore be in very exceptional cases, I think, where the LSB may wish, and be entitled to intervene, lest it becomes a busy body," he said.

He rejected the argument that admitting foreign counsel would disadvantage local lawyers by denying them exposure to complex litigation, saying the legal test is whether the matter is sufficiently important and complex and whether the foreign advocate has specialised expertise not readily available locally.

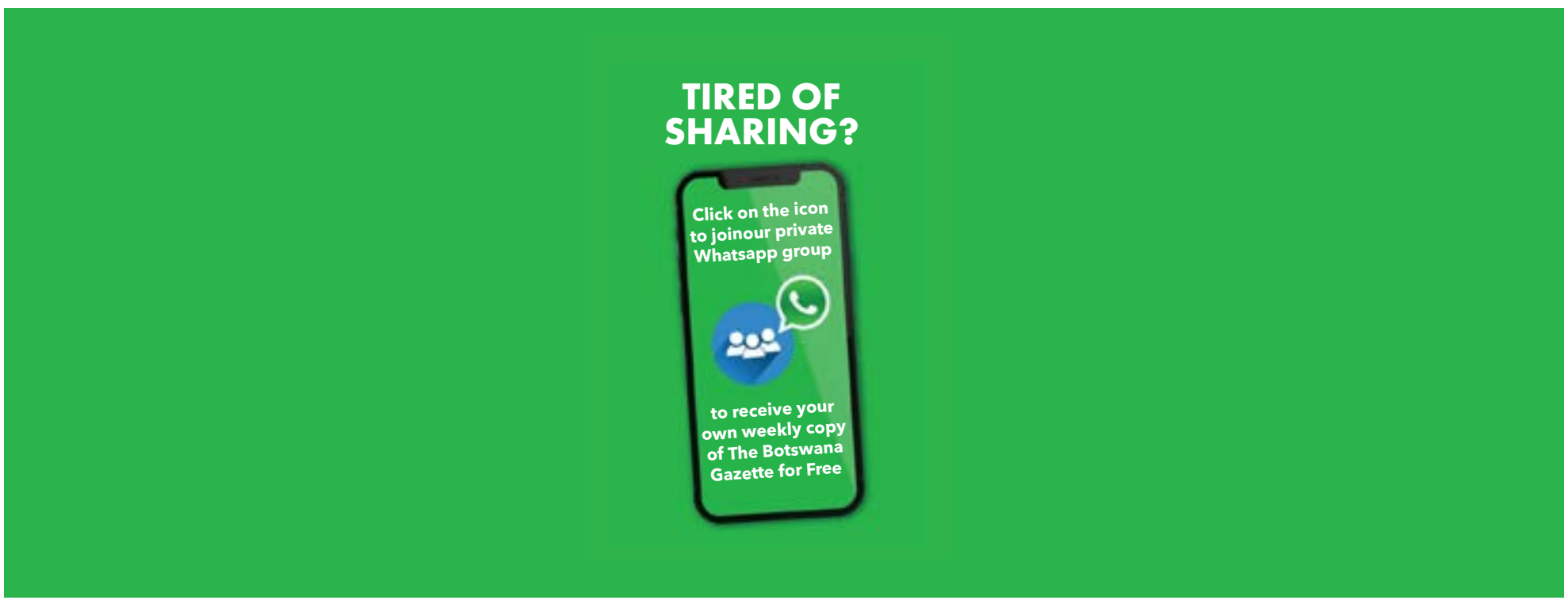
DELAY WARNING

Ketlogetswe warned that unnecessary intervention could generate avoidable pre-trial disputes, delay cases and increase costs for litigants.

"The LSB cannot wish to substitute its judgement for the discretion exercisable by the Chief Justice in such cases."

He also rejected claims that the LSB suffered legal prejudice from Willis's admission, noting that the Society neither pays the advocate's fees nor controls a litigant's choice of legal representation.

"The LSB cannot wish to substitute its judgement for the discretion exercisable by the Chief Justice in such cases," he said.



The Arithmetic Nobody Did

President Duma Boko now says the Steve Harvey arrangement cost P1.7 billion and was "not the best," while Minister Moeti Mohwasa confirms the contract remains alive and under pressure from local creatives. As government wrestles with how to get out, the arithmetic shows why the question has become increasingly difficult to leave unresolved.

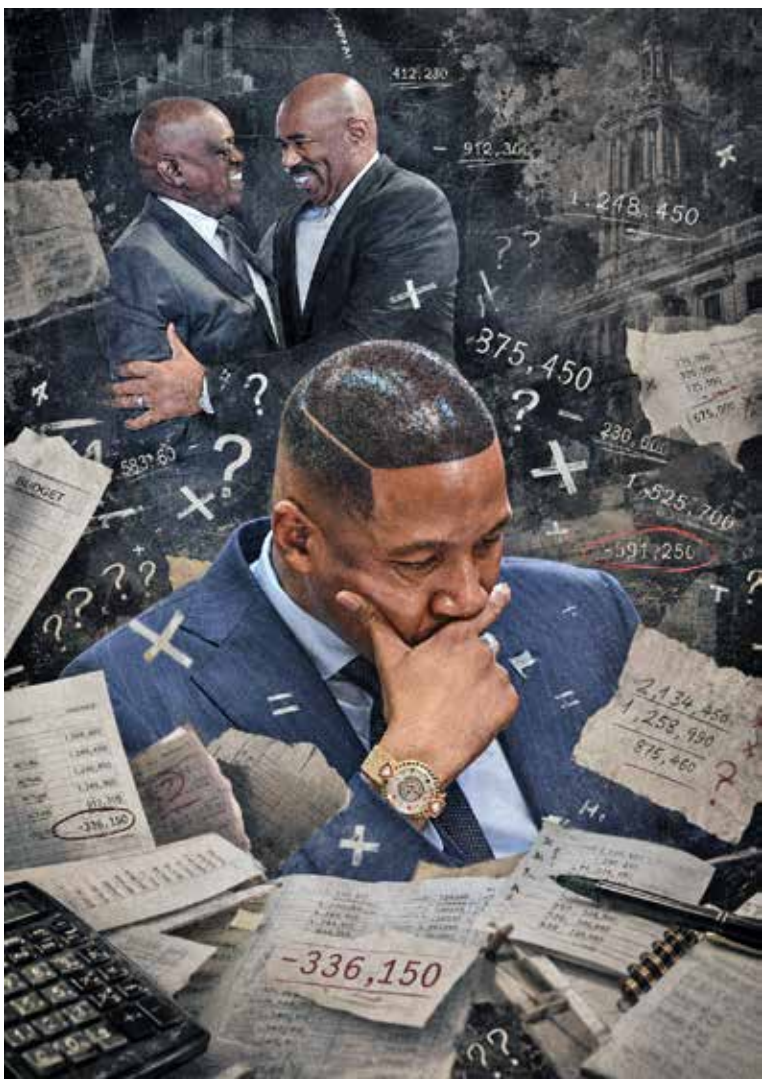
GAZETTE REPORTERS

In a wide-ranging television interview broadcast on Sunday, President Duma Boko was confronted with a controversy his administration inherited but has yet to escape: government's agreement with Steve Harvey Global.

His answer pushed the deal back into the centre of public debate.

Boko said his administration had taken the view that the arrangement "was not the best" and disclosed a figure that raised the stakes further: P1.7 billion.





Until now, parliamentary scrutiny had placed the Botswana Ignite partnership at more than P1 billion. Boko's disclosure suggests government's exposure may be considerably larger than the figure recently placed before the Public Accounts Committee.

But he also made clear that political dissatisfaction does not make for an easy exit. Government, he said, must establish what the law allows and any cancellation must be carried out in accordance with the rule of law.

A day later, Minister for State President, Defence and Security Moeti Mohwasa confirmed that government has met representatives of Steve Harvey Global and Botswana's creative industry as it searches for a way forward.

"There is a contract that is running," Mohwasa said, while acknowledging "pressure from the local creative sector to terminate it."

Together, the statements have returned the controversy to the public fold. Beyond the procurement questions and legal difficulty now confronting government sits a simpler question: what does this money mean in the context of Botswana's creative economy?

The answer is perhaps the most uncomfortable part of the deal.

HALF A MINISTRY

Government paid approximately P355 million for the first year of Botswana Ignite.



The Ministry of Sport and Arts has an annual recurrent budget of roughly P595 million. The first-year Harvey payment is equivalent to almost 60 percent of that amount.

> "There is a contract that is running, but there is pressure from the local creative sector to terminate it."

The Ministry of Youth and Gender has a recurrent budget of about P687 million. The same payment is equivalent to roughly 52 percent of its allocation.

Together, the two ministries' recurrent budgets amount to about P1.28 billion. If Boko's P1.7 billion figure represents the full cost of the Harvey arrangement, it is roughly a third larger than what Botswana budgets in an entire year to run both ministries.

The expenditures are not directly interchangeable. But as a measure of scale, the comparison is difficult to ignore: one entertainment arrangement reached a financial magnitude greater than the annual recurrent resources of two ministries carrying national mandates for youth, gender, sport and the arts.

THE P2 MILLION LINE

The disparity becomes sharper inside the Department of Broadcasting Services.

According to national budget figures analysed by The Botswana Gazette, its annual allocation for acquiring content stands at approximately P2 million, the budget line through which the national broadcaster buys programming, including work by Botswana filmmakers and production houses.

Against that figure, the P355 million first-year payment is roughly 177 times the entire annual content-acquisition allocation.



The comparison cuts directly into one of the creative industry's longest-running grievances: local producers have struggled to se-

Continues to page14



FROM PAGE 13

cure commissions and sustainable funding from their own national broadcaster while government found hundreds of millions of pula for an externally driven project.

Figures presented to Parliament put the cost of 26 episodes of Family Feud Botswana at approximately P20.9 million, or just over P800,000 per episode. At that price, the entire P2 million annual content-acquisition budget would buy fewer than three episodes.

> "One entertainment arrangement reached a financial magnitude greater than the annual recurrent resources of two ministries."

TWO HOURS WEEKLY

BTV operates 24 hours a day, requiring 8,760 hours of programming every year. On an expansive calculation of the Harvey project's television and training outputs, they would account for roughly 100 hours in a year, little more than one percent of BTV's annual schedule.

Yet the flagship production was not filmed in Botswana.

Family Feud Botswana was produced in South Africa despite government having spent more than P56 million upgrading broadcasting infrastructure at home, including facilities at the Mass Media Complex.

Government's own accounting put participation in the first phase at 613 people, including 260 contesting families. Dividing the P355 million payment by that figure is not an accounting measure of individual cost because the contract covered far more than participation. But it provides another measure of scale: roughly P580,000 for every person government counted as having participated.



THE SECTOR'S OWN NUMBERS

The contrast is sharper because government itself says the creative economy matters.

Sport and Arts Minister Jacob Kelebeng has told Parliament that the cultural and creative industries contribute approximately 3.1 percent of GDP and account for 6.2 percent of the country's workforce.

Government has also earmarked P200 million from the alcohol levy to support youth and the creative sector. Yet that entire initiative is smaller than the P355 million paid during just the first year of the Harvey arrangement.

On Boko's newly disclosed P1.7 billion figure, the deal would be equivalent to more than eight such P200 million funding programmes.

The numbers expose the contradiction that has followed Botswana Ignite from the beginning: government justified the project as an intervention intended to develop Botswana's creative industry, yet its financial architecture dwarfed the resources available to that industry itself.

P470M TO P1.7BN

The arithmetic also shows how dramatically the project appears to have expanded.



When the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board approved direct procurement in June 2021, contemporary reporting placed the proposed three-year value at approximately P470 million. More recently, the Public Accounts Committee was told that the partnership was worth more than P1 billion.

Now the President has spoken of P1.7 billion.

Each figure raises questions about what changed between the original procurement approval, the agreement eventually concluded and the obligations government now faces. With no competitive tender, there was also no competing market price against which Parliament or the public could readily judge value for money.

A LIVE CONTRACT

The dispute has now entered a different phase.

The question confronting the Boko administration is no longer simply whether it approves of a decision made by its predecessor. The President has effectively said it does not.

The harder question is what happens after reaching that conclusion.

Continuing risks further expenditure on a project government no longer appears convinced represents value for money. Cancelling may carry legal and financial consequences.



Mohwasa confirmed meetings with both local creatives and Steve Harvey Global but declined to disclose what the discussions had produced.

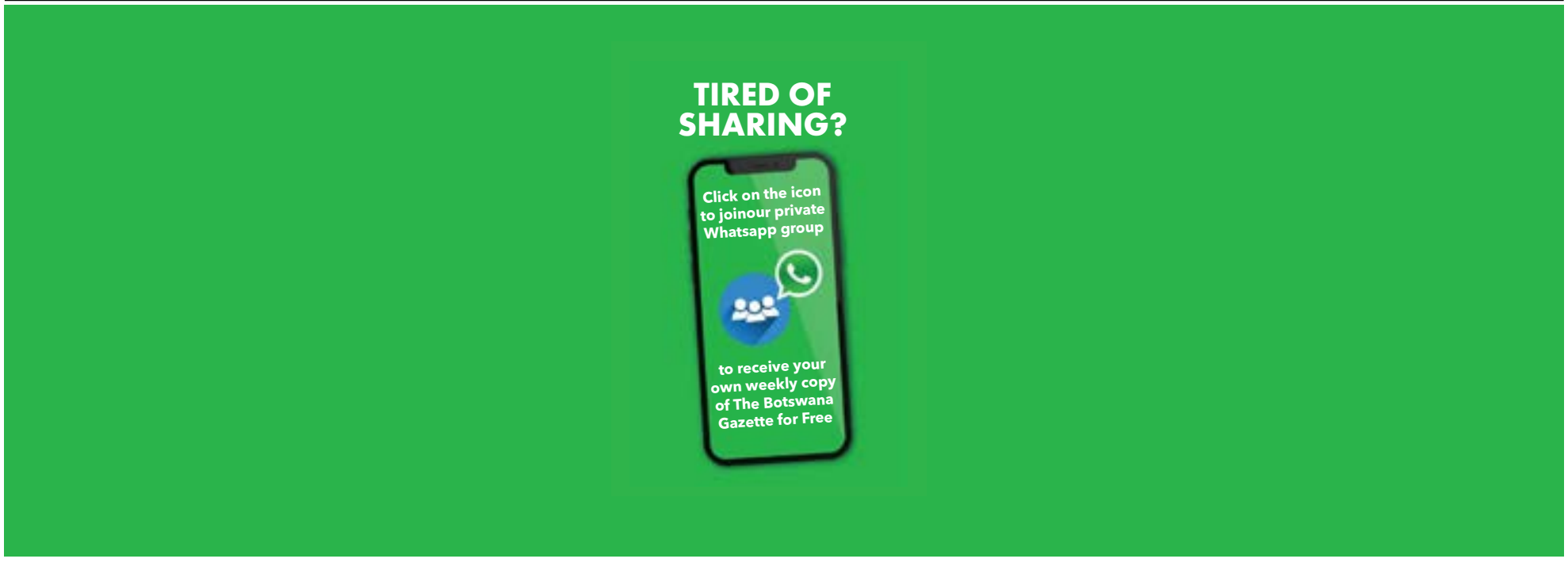
Botswana is therefore in an unusual position: government is questioning a contract that remains in force; the creative industry is demanding its termination; the other contracting party is being engaged; and the President says any exit must survive the test of law.

Meanwhile, the arithmetic remains.

P355 million in the first year. Almost 60 percent of the Sport and Arts recurrent budget. More than half the Youth and Gender recurrent budget. Roughly 177 times the annual DBS content-acquisition allocation. More than the P200 million earmarked to support the creative sector. And, according to the President's latest disclosure, a total arrangement that may reach P1.7 billion.

Those numbers do not answer the legal question of how Botswana gets out of the Steve Harvey agreement.

They explain why the question of whether it does, and how quickly it finds an answer, has become increasingly difficult to avoid.



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Consumer Fair Expands Beyond Exhibitions

The Botswana Consumer Fair has opened its 19th edition with a broader focus on trade, entrepreneurship, innovation and opportunities for local enterprise.



GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Consumer Fair opened its 19th edition on Monday with organisers highlighting its growing role as a platform for businesses, entrepreneurs and consumers while expanding its focus beyond traditional exhibitions. Speaking at the official opening, Sefalana Holdings Group Managing Director and guest of honour Chandra Chauhan said the Fair had become one of Botswana's most recognised business and consumer events.

Chauhan described the 19th edition as a remarkable achievement and said the Fair brings together businesses, consumers and stakeholders from Botswana and beyond. This year's theme, "Showcasing Botswana in Full Colour," reflects the diversity of Botswana's businesses, celebrates innovation and creativity, and recognises entrepreneurs' contribution to economic growth, he said.

REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

Fairground Holdings CEO Gorata Gabaraane said the Fair has attracted more than 550 exhibitors over the years, including small, medium and large enterprises from Botswana as well as participants from Lesotho, South Africa, Eswatini and beyond. Corporate organisations, government ministries, parastatals, development partners, embassies and other institutions also participate, creating what organisers describe as a broad regional marketplace.

Gabaraane said that diversity was what made the Botswana Consumer Fair unique because it was a place where businesses connect with customers, entrepreneurs discover opportunities, partnerships are forged and ideas are transformed into growth. Chauhan said the Fair attracts more than 36,000 visitors and over 550 exhibition stalls annually.

BEYOND EXHIBITIONS

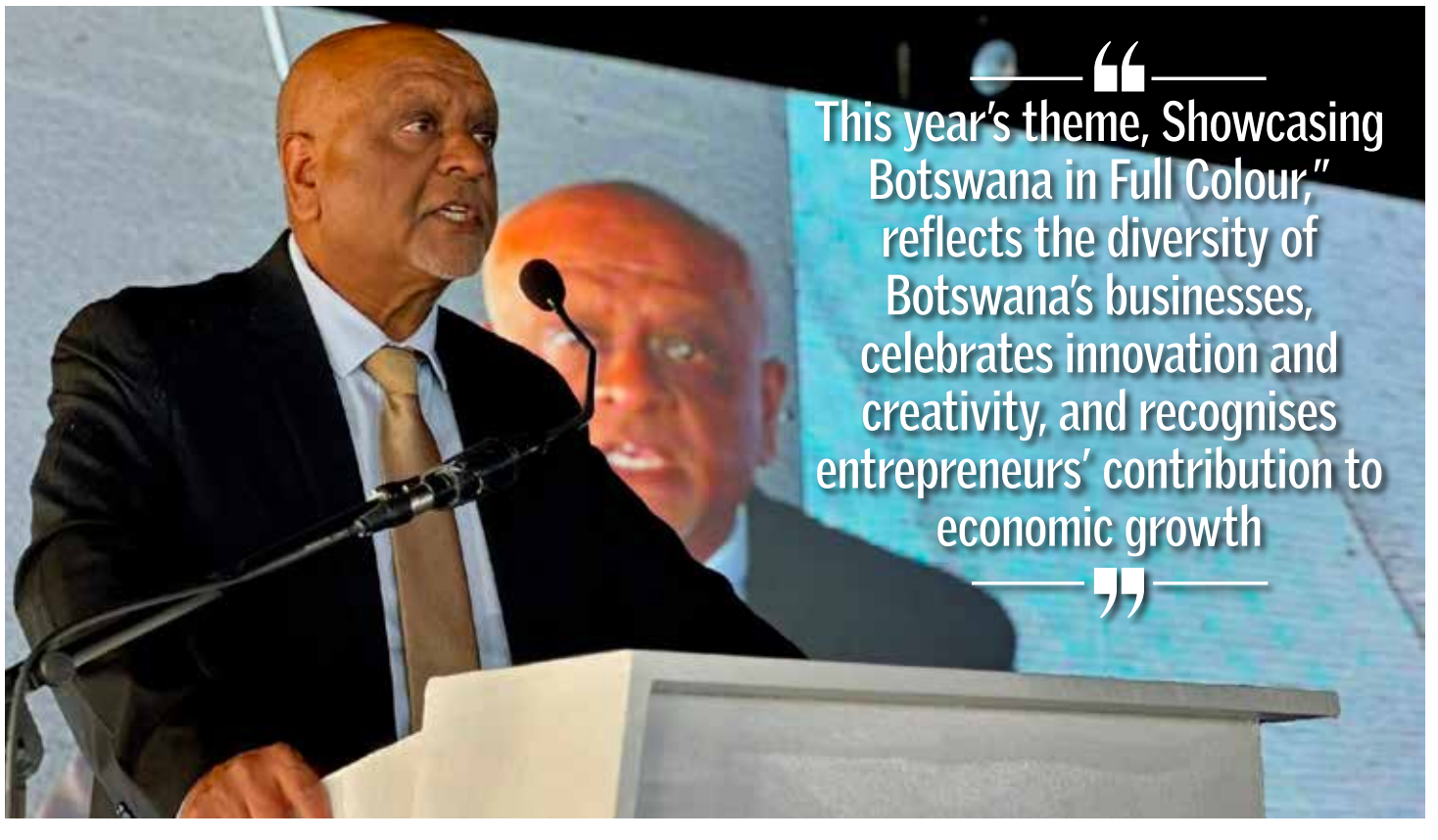
The event has continued to introduce new attractions as it broadens its appeal beyond conventional exhibition stands. The Traders Hub, launched in 2022 as a marketplace for buying, selling and trading, has become one of the Fair's prominent attractions, while this year's Taste & Sip Village adds a food and lifestyle component alongside children's and family activities, live performances, cultural entertainment and interactive experiences.

Gabaraane said Fairground Holdings also intentionally procures goods and services from local SMMEs during the planning and delivery of the Fair. She said this creates opportunities for business growth, skills development and job creation while extending the event's economic impact beyond exhibitors.

BUILDING BUSINESS

Chauhan said established businesses had a responsibility to create pathways for emerging enterprises to develop capabilities and gain access to markets. He argued that citizen empowerment and enterprise development were not only social responsibilities but important contributors to a stronger and more competitive economy, adding that Sefalana's operations support local supply chains, suppliers and businesses in the fast-moving consumer goods ecosystem.

Gabaraane said Fairground Holdings remained committed to developing platforms that connect people, create business opportunities and position Botswana as a destination for exhibitions, conferences and events. As the 19th edition gets underway, both speakers emphasised the Fair's role in connecting businesses with consumers while providing space for entrepreneurship, innovation, networking and local enterprise development.



Pula Faces Its Next Test

As Botswana marks 50 years of monetary sovereignty, Finance Minister Ndaba Gaolathe says the Pula's future depends on building a broader, more productive and inclusive economy.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Fifty years after Botswana established its own central bank, withdrew from the Rand Monetary Area and introduced the Pula, the country is confronting a different test of monetary sovereignty: strengthening the economy that stands behind its currency. Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Nkosinathi Gaolathe said the creation of the Pula and Thebe was more than a technical monetary decision, describing it as an act of confidence in Botswana's ability to govern itself and determine its economic destiny.

Speaking at the Bank of Botswana's 50th anniversary celebration for the Pula and Thebe in Kanye on Monday, Gaolathe said the currency had travelled with Botswana through an extraordinary period of national development. But he said its story was ultimately about institutions and public confidence, adding that a currency has value because people believe in what stands behind it and that such confidence must be earned repeatedly through national decisions.

ECONOMIC PRESSURE

That confidence is being tested as Botswana faces prolonged weakness in the global diamond market, pressure on government revenues, narrowing fiscal space and pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Gaolathe said the country remained highly dependent on imports while its export base was still too concentrated, arguing that these realities should not be disguised because they were precisely the circumstances in which strong institutions, credible policies and disciplined choices mattered most.

He said adjustments to the exchange-rate framework had required a balance between competitiveness, inflation, reserves and the wider interests of the economy, while fiscal consolidation demanded difficult choices on government expenditure, efficiency and priorities. The immediate monetary challenge, he suggested, could not be separated from the deeper structural weaknesses of the economy.

BEYOND PULA

For Gaolathe, the deeper issue extends beyond monetary policy. "Ultimately, the strength of a currency reflects the strength of the economy beneath it," he said. "We cannot permanently shield the Pula through monetary instruments alone. We must strengthen what stands behind the Pula."

He said that meant building productive farms and factories, competitive businesses, mines that create greater value domestically, tourism enterprises, energy security, efficient infrastructure, modern financial services, technology companies and entrepreneurs capable of competing beyond Botswana's borders. Gaolathe described economic diversification as "fundamental to our economic sovereignty," warning that while diamonds had financed schools, hospitals, roads and institutions, appreciation for their contribution could not become dependence on what diamonds alone could provide in the future.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Government's economic transformation agenda under National Development Plan 12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme aims to create a high-income Botswana that is digitally enabled, export-driven and economically diversified. Gaolathe said success would ultimately be measured through execution, including businesses established, investments realised, exports produced, jobs created and household incomes improved.

He also stressed that economic opportunity must reach villages and districts, young people, women and entrepreneurs who have ideas but lack capital. "A strong currency is not an end in itself," he said, arguing that economic stability matters because of what it allows people to do with their lives.

As payments become increasingly digital and financial technology changes how people save, borrow, invest and transact, Gaolathe said Botswana must embrace innovation while maintaining trust, security and inclusion. He said the next 50 years should prove that Botswana can build a more diversified economy beneath the Pula, create prosperity on a greater scale and extend participation in that prosperity across the country.

Botswana Bets on Infant Industries

Government says temporary tariffprotection for selected local industries must translate into jobs, investment and globally competitive manufacturing.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana is using temporary tariff protection to give selected local industries time to build capacity, create jobs and become competitive as the country confronts fiscal pressures, rising business costs and growing uncertainty in the global economy. Speaking at a stakeholder and media engagement on the implementation of Infant Industry Protection, Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship Tiroeaone Ntsima said Botswana was at a defining point in its economic development and could no longer rely on "business as usual."

Ntsima said the economic realities facing Botswana created an opportunity to rethink the country's growth model and chart new pathways for prosperity. He said the 12th National Development Plan represented a shift towards precision implementation, targeted interventions, stronger accountability and measurable results, while the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme had been established as its execution engine.

TARIFF PROTECTION

Ntsima said the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme was anchored on private-sector-led growth because sustainable economic transformation could not be driven by Government expenditure alone. Infant Industry Protection, he said, is a recognised development instrument under Article 26 of the SACU Agreement of 2002, allowing less developed SACU member states, including Botswana, to temporarily support qualifying emerging industries through additional customs duties on like products imported from within SACU and the rest of the world.

Following industry assessments, Government identified shade nets, surgical masks and thermal paper rolls as industries with sufficient potential to qualify for support. From February 2026, additional customs duties of 10 percent were introduced on shade nets, increasing the applied rate to 30 percent, while thermal paper rolls attracted an additional 20 percent, taking the rate from zero to 20 percent, and surgical masks received an additional 10 percent, bringing the applied rate to 30 percent.

Ntsima said the objective was not permanent protection, but to give emerging industries time to improve productivity, invest in technology, achieve economies of scale and strengthen their competitiveness. The protection period, he said, should therefore be used to prepare firms to compete without the tariff shield.

BEYOND TARIFFS

The minister cautioned that tariffs alone would not create sustainable industries, saying firms also required access to finance, markets, infrastructure, skills, standards compliance support, technology, business development services and investment. Institutions including BOTC, BDC, CEDA, BITC, SPEDU, LEA, BURS, BEMA and Business Botswana are collaborating to develop a coordinated support ecosystem for the beneficiary industries.

The intended outcome is a framework that aligns institutional interventions with the specific needs of the protected industries. Ntsima said this broader support would be critical if temporary tariff protection was to produce stronger businesses rather than simply delay competition.

JOBS AT RISK

Ntsima acknowledged that the SACU consultations preceding implementation had been lengthy, with some processes taking up to two years while local industries faced what he described as serious existential threats. "Investments in excess of P50 Million, and over 80 jobs remained at risk during this time," he said, adding that Botswana had since successfully negotiated SACU Guidelines on the implementation of Article 26 to provide greater certainty, transparency and predictability for future applications.

He urged beneficiary firms to use the protection period to invest in productivity, quality standards and skills, strengthen competitiveness and prepare for export markets. "The objective of Infant Industry Protection is not to shield firms from competition in perpetuity," Ntsima said. "The objective is to develop industries that can remain competitive long after the protection period has ended."

Trade Ministry Targets Agency Duplication

Trade Minister Tiroeaone Ntsima says Botswana's economic institutions must stop working in silos and operate as one delivery system, with duplication placed under direct scrutiny.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship is moving to confront duplication among its state-owned enterprises and institutions, with Minister Tiroeaone Ntsima calling for a more integrated approach to economic delivery. Addressing the first meeting of chief executive officers of MTE state-owned enterprises on Monday, Ntsima said the gathering should mark "the beginning of a different way of working" rather than become another engagement between the Ministry and its institutions.

The Ministry's wider family includes Botswana Development Corporation, Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency, Local Enterprise Authority, Botswana Investment and Trade Centre, Botswana Bureau of Standards, Botswana Trade Commission, Competition and Consumer Authority, Competition and Consumer Tribunal, Special Economic Zones Authority, and Companies and Intellectual Property Authority, among others. Ntsima questioned whether Botswana was receiving the full economic value from these institutions collectively and said that, although many were working hard, they had for too long operated separately.

Duplication Scrutiny

Ntsima said Government needed to have an "uncomfortable but necessary conversation" about duplication, questioning why two institutions should provide almost exactly the same service. He pointed to the possibility of several agencies maintaining separate business advisory programmes, market-access initiatives, research departments, regional offices and databases serving the same enterprises.

The Minister stressed that this did not mean institutions should immediately be merged or that their statutory independence should be undermined. Instead, he called for greater discipline over institutional roles, with LEA serving as a centre of excellence for enterprise development, CEDA concentrating on financing sustainable citizen businesses, and BDC focusing on major transformational investment and building industries.

Under the proposed division of roles, BITC would serve as the investor and export-market engine, BOBS as an instrument of industrialisation, and BOTC would turn trade data into industrial intelligence. CCA would examine market structures that could prevent new enterprises from entering and competing, CCT would remain independent, and SEZA would focus on place-based industrialisation rather than replicating national agency functions.

One Machinery

Ntsima proposed an "MTE Enterprise Growth Pipeline" through which entrepreneurs would move from formalisation and development to financing, production, standards compliance, domestic markets, exports and ultimately scaling. The aim, he said, was for institutions to share information and avoid forcing businesses to repeatedly start from zero.

"If LEA has prepared a company and declared it investment-ready, CEDA should not treat that entrepreneur as a stranger," Ntsima said. "One enterprise, One file, One journey." He also proposed shared MTE Enterprise Centres where businesses could access development assistance, finance information, standards advice, export information, company registration assistance and investment facilitation.

Agencies should also explore sharing corporate services such as procurement, training, research subscriptions, facilities, fleet, ICT infrastructure, legal panels and conference facilities, the Minister said. The proposals are intended to reduce duplication while allowing each institution to retain a clear and accountable role.

Measuring Outcomes

Ntsima said institutional performance should increasingly be judged by shared economic outcomes rather than activity alone, including new factories, private investment realised, non-diamond exports, new exporters, jobs created, scaled citizen-owned companies, imports replaced and strategic value chains developed. He proposed formalising the approach through an MTE SOE Integration and Economic Delivery Framework 2026-2029.

By the end of 2026, the Ministry is expected to map mandates, programmes, facilities and databases, identify duplication, select priority value chains, establish joint projects and create a shared dashboard. "In 2027, we connect the system," Ntsima said, with consolidation and scaling planned for 2028 and an assessment of reforms in 2029, adding: "We are one economic machinery."

Firms Brace for Slow Recovery

Business sentiment remains weak in the near term, but firms expect conditions to improve through June 2027 as national development projects begin to take effect.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Businesses remain pessimistic about economic conditions in the second and third quarters of 2026, although their outlook improves significantly over the 12 months to June 2027, according to the Bank of Botswana's June 2026 Quarterly Business Expectations Survey. The Bank said the improved outlook was likely driven by expectations of successful implementation of projects under National Development Plan 12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme.

The survey covered 100 businesses across 13 economic sectors and recorded a 54 percent response rate, unchanged from the March 2026 survey. The findings point to a business community that remains cautious about immediate conditions but sees a stronger possibility of recovery over the coming year.

GROWTH OUTLOOK

Firms expect overall output to expand by 2.1 percent in 2026, marking a modest recovery from the 0.7 percent contraction recorded in 2025. The report said the positive outlook suggested "a gradual stabilisation in growth momentum," while noting that firms' projection was broadly aligned with the Ministry of Finance's 3.1 percent growth forecast for 2026.

Businesses expect growth of 1.3 percent in the second quarter and 1.8 percent in the third quarter, although the outlook varies across industries. Construction and Real Estate; Finance, Professional and Administrative Activities; Retail, Accommodation, Transport and Communication; and Manufacturing were pessimistic about second-quarter conditions, while Mining and Quarrying and Agriculture considered conditions neutral.

FINANCING PRESSURE

The high cost of finance was identified as the biggest constraint on business operations, followed by limited government spending. The report linked the financing pressure to elevated domestic lending rates and subdued domestic liquidity conditions, although it said these conditions stabilised during the second quarter of 2026.

> "The positive outlook suggests a gradual stabilisation in growth momentum."

Firms also viewed the exchange-rate environment as unfavourable, partly because of adjustment costs and spillover effects associated with the July 2025 exchange-rate parameter changes. The report said this reflected the import intensity of the Botswana economy, although export-oriented and import-substituting entities would regard the adjustments more favourably.

INFLATION OUTLOOK

Despite the pressures facing businesses, firms expect overall cost pressures to decrease in the second quarter of 2026, mainly because of anticipated lower input costs. Businesses also expect inflation to remain within the 3 to 6 percent objective range in both 2026 and 2027, which the Bank said suggested well-anchored inflation expectations.

Firms anticipate both lending interest rates and borrowing volumes to increase in the year to June 2027. Over that period, Agriculture was the only sector pessimistic about business conditions, while Construction and Real Estate; Finance, Professional and Administrative Activities; Retail, Accommodation, Transport and Communication; and Manufacturing were optimistic, with Mining and Quarrying remaining neutral.



FNB Profit Set to Rise

First National Bank Botswana expects profit before tax to rise by between P200 million and P235 million for the year ended June 2026, with full results due in September.

GAZETTE REPORTER

First National Bank Botswana's profit before tax is expected to increase by between P200 million and P235 million for the financial year ended 30 June 2026, according to a trading statement issued by the bank to meet Botswana Stock Exchange listing requirements. The projected increase represents growth of between 10 percent and 15 percent compared with the previous corresponding period.

FNBB said its overall profit before tax for the period would be higher than that reported in the previous corresponding period by between 10 percent and 15 percent, equivalent to an increase of P200 million to P235 million. The bank reported profit before tax of P1.9 billion for the corresponding period ended 30 June 2025.

BSE REQUIREMENT

The trading statement forms part of the disclosure requirements for companies listed on the BSE, which must announce any likely or anticipated material change to their financial results for the next reporting period through the exchange and the press. FNBB said full details of its financial performance would be provided to shareholders when it announces its financial year-end results.

The results announcement is scheduled to take place on or about 9 September 2026. Until then, the bank has advised shareholders to exercise caution when dealing in the company's securities.

BANKING FOOTPRINT

FNBB is the largest commercial bank in Botswana and provides banking services to individuals as well as large and small businesses through a range of technology-driven services. It operates a nationwide branch and automated teller machine network alongside self-service channels such as Cash Plus and digital platforms including online banking, the FNB App and cellphone banking.

These channels provide customers with access to banking services around the clock, while the September results are expected to give shareholders the full picture behind the profit growth signalled in the trading statement. The bank has not yet provided further details of the drivers of the anticipated increase.

BIBF Builds Future Leadership Pipeline

The Botswana Institute of Banking & Finance has launched a management programme focused on succession planning, practical leadership skills and stronger links between formal learning and workplace performance.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Institute of Banking & Finance (BIBF) launched its Management Development Programme (MDP) on 19 August 2026 at AVANI Gaborone Resort & Casino, bringing together stakeholders involved in management and leadership development across the financial services sector. BIBF Managing Director Molaodi Menyatso said the programme comes at a time of uncertainty in Botswana and globally, requiring organisations to consider how leadership can respond to changing circumstances.

Menyatso said Botswana has a pool of leadership talent, including within the BIBF community, that can contribute meaningfully at both organisational and national levels. The programme is intended to help develop that capacity while giving organisations a more deliberate pipeline for future leadership.

SUCCESSION PIPELINE

BIBF Director of Academics Bakani Thothe said the programme is designed to support succession planning and prepare future leaders through a combination of personalised learning, three months of classroom training, mentoring and workplace application. Participants will cover Personal Mastery, Team Mastery and Business Mastery as part of the programme.



BIBF Managing Director Molaodi Menyatso said the programme comes at a time of uncertainty in Botswana and globally, requiring organisations to consider how leadership can respond to changing circumstances.

They will also complete a Capstone Project based on a real-world workplace challenge, requiring them to apply elements of the programme to a practical organisational problem. The structure is intended to move leadership development beyond theory by linking what participants learn directly to the environments in which they work.

LEADERSHIP IMPACT

Botswana Savings Bank Chief Executive Officer Dr Wabo Moswate said leadership should be assessed by its impact rather than by titles alone. He challenged participants to consider how they would apply what they learn, including what they would do differently, which problems they would address and what they would build.

Moswate said Botswana needs commercially capable, technologically competent and globally competitive leaders as the country pursues economic diversification. He called for stronger links between formal training, mentorship, executive involvement and practical industry experience.

CMI PARTNERSHIP

CMI Engagement Manager for MENA Hakeem Haidar, speaking virtually from the United Kingdom, outlined the programme's partnership with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). Participants will gain access to CMI membership, professional development resources, mentoring opportunities and a CMI Certificate of Recognition.

The recognition is non-credit-bearing and does not automatically award academic credits towards another qualification. Participants may, however, progress towards Foundation Chartered Manager recognition and later apply for full Chartered Manager assessment once they meet the relevant criteria, while BIBF has also confirmed that it is engaging the Botswana Qualifications Authority on recognition of part-qualifications and credit-bearing programmes.

PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT

BIBF Consultant and MDP Facilitator Khulekani Khupe said leadership development must extend beyond classroom training if it is to drive organisational performance and transformation. He said the programme uses coaching, simulations, case studies, assessments, self-reflection and strategic challenges to connect learning directly with workplace application.

Dumela Reconnects Creatives to Markets

The Botswana-born digital marketplace is returning with a renewed push to help photographers, filmmakers, designers and sound creators monetise their intellectual property and reach buyers beyond local borders.

GAZETTE REPORTER



Co-founder Itumeleng Garebatshabe said the platform's ambition had always extended beyond operating as an online content library. "Dumela was never intended to simply be a place where people download pictures, videos or audio," he said. "

Dumela Creative Stock, a Botswana-founded digital marketplace for African creative content, is returning with a renewed focus on connecting local creators with buyers and markets beyond the country. The platform was originally established for photographers, videographers and sound creators seeking a commercial outlet for locally relevant content used in advertising, media, film and other applications.

Its return comes as Botswana places growing emphasis on the creative industries as a potential source of entrepreneurship, employment and economic diversification. Dumela says its central proposition remains helping creators make their work discoverable while creating opportunities to earn from the intellectual property they produce.

MARKET GAP

The platform was initially developed in response to what its founders identified as a shortage of authentic and relatable African photographs, video and audio available for commercial use. Its original model sought to connect that content with buyers while allowing creators to focus on producing work rather than managing every aspect of the commercial process.

Dumela Creative Stock currently provides access to photographs, videos, audio, vectors and other creative assets, with options for both buyers and creators. The platform's return is intended to re-establish that link between African content producers and organisations looking for locally relevant creative material.

BEYOND EXPOSURE

Co-founder Itumeleng Garebatshabe said the platform's ambition had always extended beyond operating as an online content library. "Dumela was never intended to simply be a place where people download pictures, videos or audio," he said. "The bigger vision has always been to create a connection between the African creative and the market."

Garebatshabe said the challenge for local creators was not only producing strong work, but finding commercial markets for it. He said Dumela wanted Botswana creatives to think beyond where their work could be seen locally and consider where it could travel across Africa and internationally.

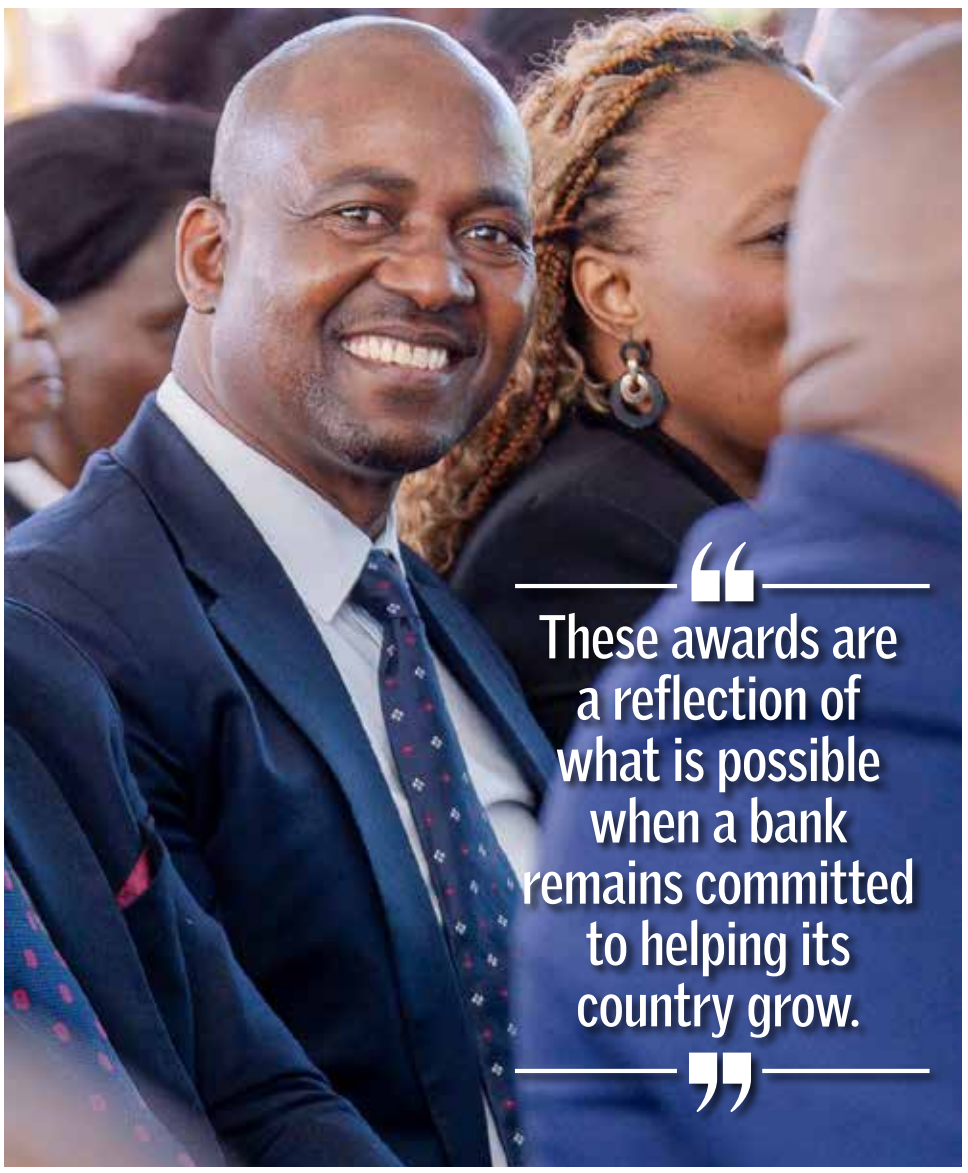
GLOBAL BRIDGE

As the platform reconnects with photographers, filmmakers, designers, sound creators and other creative professionals, it is encouraging creators to retain ownership of their intellectual property, make their work discoverable and explore new commercial opportunities.

"We believe the next stage of Botswana's creative economy will not only be about producing great work. It will be about ensuring that great work can find markets," Garebatshabe said. He described Dumela's intended role as a bridge connecting creators first to Botswana, then to the wider African market and ultimately to international buyers.

INDUSTRYWATCH

Stanbic Botswana Wins Five Awards



Stanbic Bank Botswana has received five international banking awards, with the latest recognition spanning cash management, private banking, investment banking and corporate services.

Stanbic Bank Botswana has received five international banking awards in 2026, with recognition covering cash management, private banking, investment banking, banking branding and services for large corporates.

The awards include Best Bank for Cash Management in Botswana and Botswana's Best Investment Bank at the Euromoney Awards for Excellence, Best International Private Bank at the Euromoney Global Private Banking Awards, Banking Brand of the Year Botswana at the Global Banking and Finance Review Awards, and Botswana's Best Bank for Large Corporates at the Euromoney Awards for Excellence in Banking.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION

Speaking at the bank's bell-ringing ceremony, Standard Bank Group Regional Chief Executive for South and Central Africa Francis Karuhanga said the awards reflected the bank's performance across several areas.

"Stanbic Bank Botswana's recognition across these critical areas of banking excellence is a strong reflection of the depth of the business, the strength of its people and the trust it has built with clients," said Karuhanga.

FOCUS ON GROWTH

Stanbic Bank Botswana chief executive Chose Modise said the recognition reflected the institution's focus on supporting economic development.

"These awards are a reflection of what is possible when a bank remains committed to helping its country grow," said Modise.

The bank has previously received international recognition for areas including digital banking, sustainable finance, customer experience and overall banking performance.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

Modise said the bank's approach was centred on developing financial solutions and partnerships aimed at supporting businesses and communities.

"Every solution we develop, every partnership we build and every investment we make is driven by our belief that a thriving institution, empowered entrepreneurs and financially resilient communities are fundamental to Botswana's long-term prosperity," he said.



Orange Expands Digital Safety Drive

Orange Botswana has taken its digital safety campaign to Francistown, bringing learners together for lessons on cyberbullying, screen-time balance and responsible internet use.

Orange Botswana has expanded its For Good Connections digital safety campaign to Francistown, bringing together learners from schools across the city for activities focused on responsible internet use.

DIGITAL SAFETY LESSONS

Held at John Mackenzie School on Saturday, the event featured workshops on cyberbullying, digital wellbeing and maintaining a balance between screen time and offline activities. Learners also participated in team-building and sporting activities.

Orange Botswana Communications and Public Relations Manager Tebogo Nadisah said the programme was intended to give children practical skills for navigating the digital environment.

"The internet offers tremendous opportunities for learning and growth, but it is equally important that children understand how to use it responsibly."

EXPANDING THE PROGRAMME

Nadisah said the initiative, which was launched in Gaborone last year, would be extended to other parts of the country.

"Our intention is to take it to different parts of Botswana so that more children, parents and communities can benefit from these important conversations around digital safety."

She said protecting children online required cooperation between schools, parents and communities.

"Creating a safer digital environment is a shared responsibility."

The Francistown event included interactive discussions, practical learning sessions and recreational activities involving learners from different schools. The programme addresses issues including cyberbullying, screen-time balance and digital wellbeing.

> "Creating a safer digital environment is a shared responsibility."

Standard Bank Expands UnionPay E-Commerce

Merchants in nine African markets can now accept UnionPay online, widening access to cross-border customers and digital payments.





Standard Bank Group and UnionPay International have expanded UnionPay e-commerce acceptance to merchants across nine African markets, allowing businesses to accept online payments from UnionPay cardholders.

The service is available in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with nearly 900 participating merchants across the continent.

SUPPORTING CROSS-BORDER SALES

The expansion builds on a partnership announced in 2024, as businesses increasingly seek customers beyond their domestic markets amid growth in e-commerce, tourism, travel and regional trade.

UnionPay cards are accepted in 183 countries and regions, including 51 African countries. The network has about seven million cards issued across Africa.

PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR MERCHANTS

Through the expanded service, merchants can process e-commerce transactions in local currencies, US dollars or both, depending on individual market requirements.

Standard Bank Group Business and Commercial Banking chief executive Bill Blackie said access to international payment methods was becoming increasingly important for businesses operating across borders.

"African businesses are increasingly selling beyond their domestic markets and the ability to accept trusted international payment methods is becoming essential to that growth," said Blackie.

FOCUS ON DIGITAL COMMERCE

UnionPay International Africa branch general manager Feng Chen said the partnership would increase payment options for UnionPay cardholders shopping with African businesses.

"Our collaboration with Standard Bank enables more merchants to accept UnionPay online and gives UnionPay cardholders greater choice and convenience when transacting with African businesses," said Chen.

The service is expected to support businesses in sectors including hospitality, tourism, retail and e-commerce by providing additional online payment options and internationally recognised authentication standards.

Vivo Energy Tests Emergency Readiness



A simulated tanker crash in Gaborone put emergency procedures, communication systems and inter-agency coordination under pressure.

Vivo Energy Botswana has conducted a large-scale emergency response simulation in Gaborone to assess its preparedness for a major fuel transportation incident.

SIMULATED TANKER CRASH

The exercise simulated a road traffic accident involving two fuel tankers on Haile Selassie Road, resulting in a significant fuel spill and a secondary collision with a third-party vehicle. The scenario was designed to test rapid decision-making, communication and coordination while protecting people, property and the environment.

The exercise was conducted with Botswana Oil Limited and Puma Energy, with the participation of the Botswana Police Service, Fire Department, Ambulance Services and relevant district authorities.

TESTING RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Vivo Energy Botswana said the simulation tested its emergency response procedures, incident management systems and communication protocols, while also assessing coordination with emergency agencies and identifying areas for improvement.

Managing Director Sesupo Wagamang said the exercise was intended to test the company's ability to respond to an actual emergency.

"Safety is our number one priority. Conducting exercises of this nature allows us to rigorously test our emergency response capabilities, strengthen coordination with key stakeholders and ensure that we are fully prepared to respond effectively should a real incident occur."

> "Safety is our number one priority."

LESSONS FROM THE EXERCISE

Wagamang said preparedness requires regular testing and collaboration.

"Preparedness cannot be achieved through planning alone. Regular simulations enable us to validate our emergency procedures, identify areas for improvement and ensure our people have the skills and confidence to respond quickly and effectively."

He said observations from the exercise would be incorporated into the company's continuous improvement programme.

"Every exercise presents valuable lessons. We will carefully evaluate today's observations and incorporate them into our continuous improvement programme."

Hotwire Wins Three Global Awards



The Botswana communications consultancy adds three international accolades to its growing list of industry recognition.

Gaborone-based communications consultancy Hotwire has received three awards across two 2026 international programmes, recognising its work in strategic communications, reputation and advisory.

THREE NEW ACCOLADES

Hotwire was named Best Strategic Communications Consultancy 2026 – Botswana and received the Reputation Advisory Excellence Award 2026 – Botswana at the MEA Markets African Excellence Awards. It also received the Best Communications & Advisory Firm 2026 – Botswana award at Corporate Vision Magazine's 2026 Corporate Excellence Awards.

GROWING RECOGNITION

The latest awards follow Hotwire's recognition as Public Affairs & Communications Firm of the Year – Botswana at the Corporate Vision Global Business Awards in 2024 and 2025.

Managing Director Kabelo Binns said the awards reflected the consultancy's development over the past two decades.

"We are proud to have started and built Hotwire here in Botswana. Over the past 21 years, we have grown alongside our clients, our team and the market," he said.

FROM COMMUNICATIONS TO ADVISORY

Established in 2005, Hotwire works across sectors including financial services, tourism, energy, mining, consumer, development and social impact. Its services include strategic communications, reputation advisory, stakeholder engagement and creative communications.

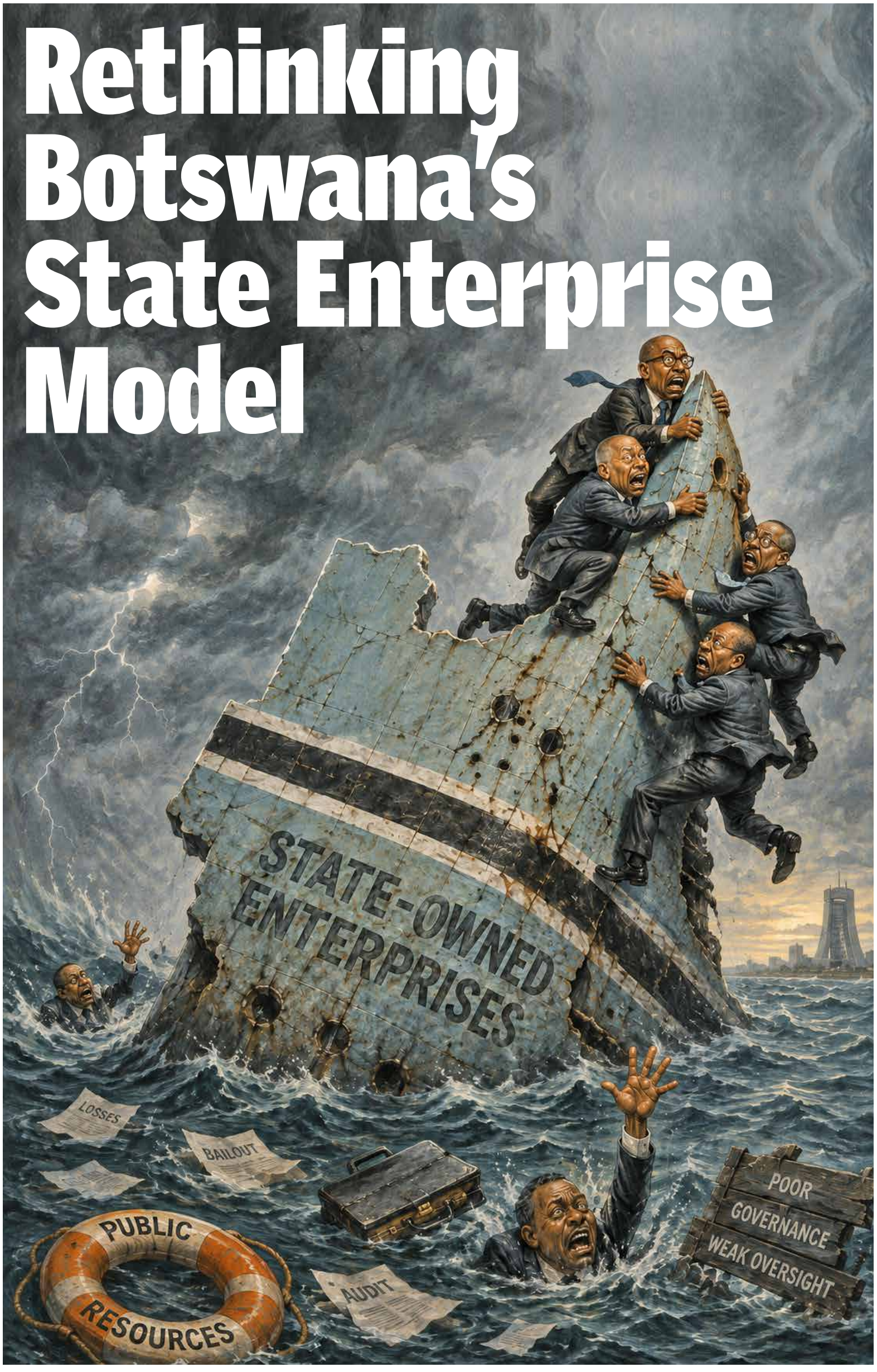
MEA Markets Awards Coordinator Melissa Bramall said the 2026 winners continue to "redefine the business landscape in Africa and much further afield".

Binns said the consultancy intended to expand its reach while retaining Botswana as its base.

"There is something special about building this from Botswana and seeing it travel," he said.



Rethinking Botswana's State Enterprise Model



Mounting fiscal and governance pressures are forcing Botswana to confront whether fragmented ministerial oversight of SOEs has outlived its usefulness and whether a professional state holdings group offers a credible way forward.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Botswana's State-Owned Enterprises are once again under the national spotlight. The Public Accounts Committee has raised concerns about governance failures, qualified audits, delayed annual reports, recurring losses and continued dependence on taxpayer support across parts of the SOE sector. Undertakings have been given to return commercial SOEs to profitability and to hold certain Ministers to account if they do not.

A further point is this: is it reasonable to expect civil servants and inexperienced Ministers to become corporate managers? Can PS Transport make business decisions about BR, CAAB and AB? Can a Minister of Agriculture oversee corporate profitability at BAMB and BMC? But perhaps the more important question is no longer whether some SOEs are underperforming. The real question is whether Botswana's entire model of state enterprise ownership and oversight has reached the limits of its usefulness.

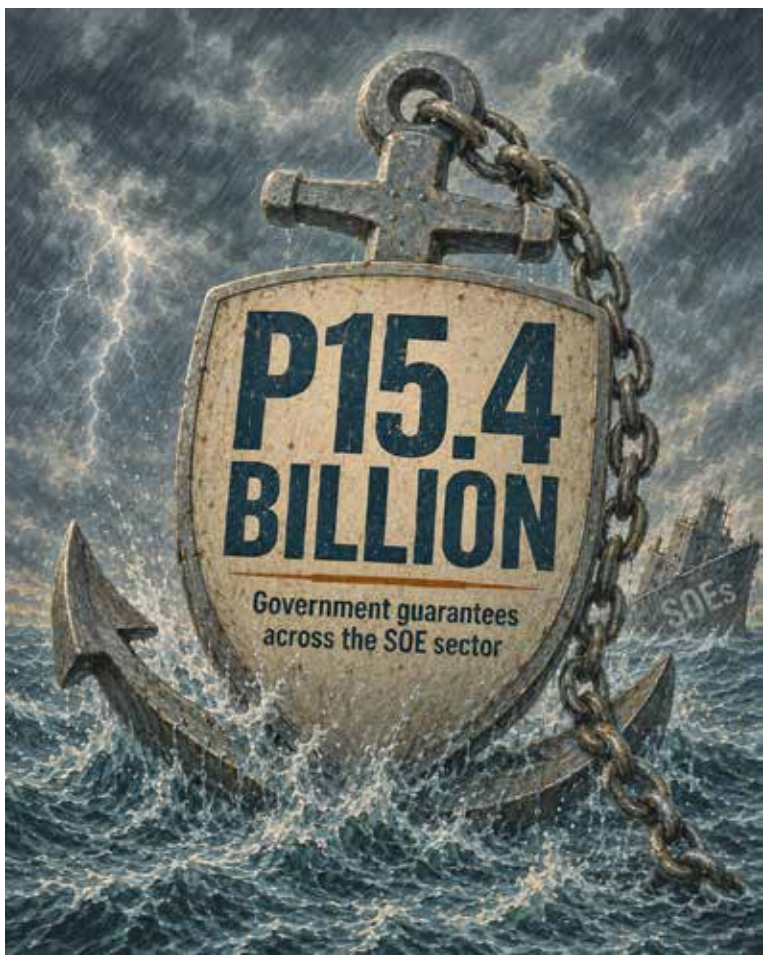
> "The real question is whether Botswana's entire model of state enterprise ownership and oversight has reached the limits of its usefulness."

DEVELOPMENT LEGACY

For decades, SOEs were central to Botswana's development model. At independence, the country inherited a very small private sector, weak capital markets, limited industrial capacity and little indigenous ownership of strategic infrastructure. The State therefore stepped in as investor, operator, planner, employer and economic driver. Governments built power systems, telecommunications, water infrastructure, railways and agricultural support systems because there were few alternatives capable of doing so. SOEs became instruments of sovereignty and nation-building.

But the global economy evolved. Many countries shifted toward corporatisation, professional portfolio management, independent regulation and sov-

To Page 23



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ereign holding companies. Botswana, however, still largely manages its SOEs through fragmented ministerial structures designed for the economic realities of the 1970s rather than the competitiveness pressures of the 2020s.

CONFLICTING MANDATES

Many SOEs operate under multiple and sometimes mutually conflicting objectives. Some are expected simultaneously to function as commercial enterprises, providers of public goods, employment generators, instruments of regional development and vehicles of social policy.

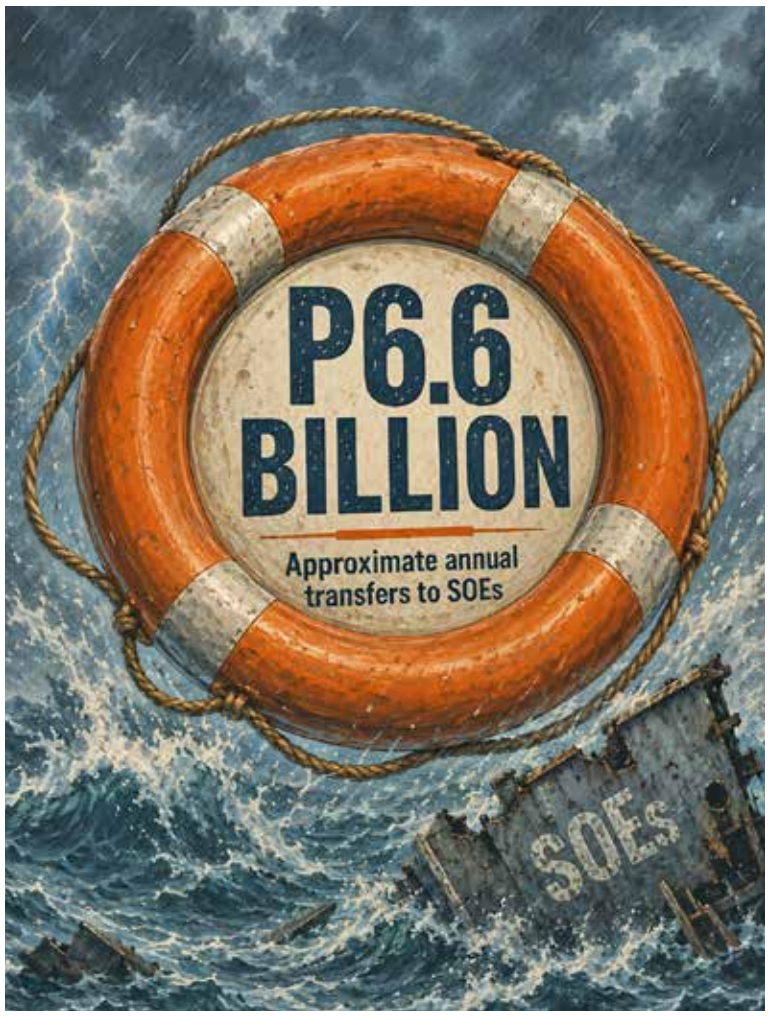
An SOE may be expected to remain financially viable while also keeping prices affordable, supporting remote regions and pursuing broader developmental goals. A loss may therefore reflect inefficiency, but it may also reflect deliberate public policy obligations imposed by government. Under the current system, these trade-offs are rarely measured transparently. Subsidies remain blurred, accountability becomes confused and performance assessment becomes inconsistent.

FRAGMENTED OVERSIGHT

Combined annual turnover across major commercial SOEs may already lie between P22 billion and P30 billion. Yet Botswana still does not manage these entities as a single strategic national investment portfolio.

Instead, they remain scattered across ministries operating under differing governance standards, reporting systems, procurement rules and oversight structures. Ministries often formulate policy, influence regulation, supervise boards and monitor performance within their own sectors. The result is structural conflict, duplication, fragmentation and weak accountability.

A recent governance assessment of major SOEs revealed a deeply uneven picture. Only a handful of entities achieved strong governance scores above 70 out of 100, notably Botswana Power Corporation and Botswana Telecommunications Corporation. A large number fell into high-risk territory, including Air Botswana, Botswana Railways, Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board, Botswana Tourism Organisation and Botswana Meat Commission.



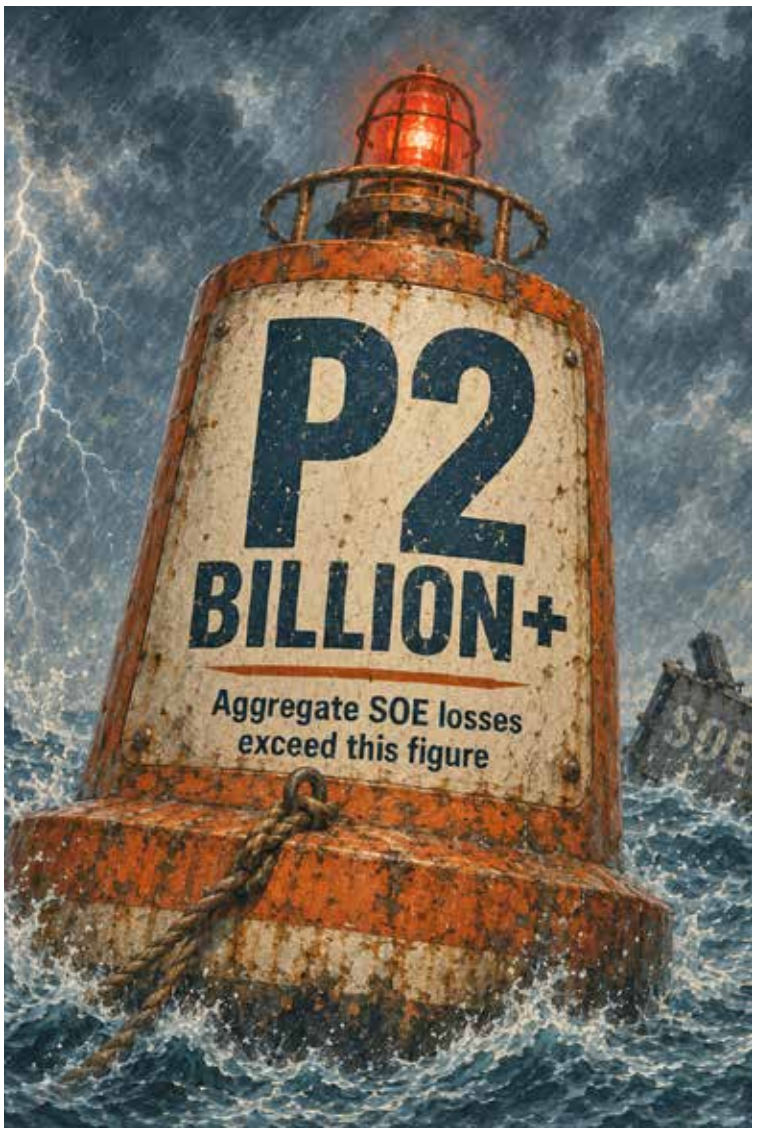
FISCAL EXPOSURE

Botswana's SOE sector is therefore not a marginal governance issue. It is a major macroeconomic system. Current estimates suggest approximately P6.6 billion in annual transfers, P15.4 billion in guarantees, aggregate losses exceeding P2 billion and contingent liabilities above P10 billion. More than half of SOEs continue receiving government support, nearly half received qualified audits and roughly one-third failed to publish audited accounts altogether.

> "Every pula transferred to persistently underperforming entities is a pula unavailable for health, education, infrastructure, water security, energy transition or private sector development."

These are no longer merely administrative concerns. They are macroeconomic risks. Every pula transferred to persistently underperforming entities is a pula unavailable for health, education, infrastructure, water security, energy transition or private sector development. Weak governance within SOEs does not simply affect annual reports. It affects productivity, fiscal sustainability, investor confidence and long-term competitiveness.

At the same time, it would be wrong to suggest that SOEs create no value. They provide strategic infrastructure, transport systems, telecommunications, agricultural support, development finance and employment that underpin the wider economy. The issue is whether Botswana is extracting sufficient public value relative to the enormous fiscal resources tied up within the system.



HOLDINGS MODEL

Botswana has discussed SOE reform, restructuring, commercialisation, privatisation and rationalisation for decades. Yet despite recurring PAC concerns and mounting fiscal pressure, the institutional architecture has remained largely unchanged. Fragmentation persists. Oversight remains inconsistent. Accountability remains diffused.

The challenge Botswana faces is therefore no longer ideological. The issue is not whether the State should own strategic assets. Many successful economies retain substantial state ownership in energy, transport, telecommunications and infrastructure. The real issue is whether Botswana can continue managing strategic public assets through fragmented administrative structures that no longer match the scale and complexity of the modern economy.

That leads increasingly toward what may now be the only serious long-term solution: the establishment of a Botswana State Holdings Group plc.

Under such a model, major commercial SOEs would gradually be consolidated under a single professionally managed holding corporation operating with a unified Group Board, common governance standards, integrated performance monitoring, consolidated fiscal oversight and modern corporate reporting disciplines. Ministries would focus on policy. Independent regulators would regulate. The Holdings Group would manage ownership, governance, investment performance, risk and accountability.

Botswana would gain consolidated visibility over the true fiscal position of the SOE system. Shared audit systems, procurement platforms, legal services, governance frameworks and digital systems would reduce duplication and improve efficiency. Fiscal risks and contingent liabilities could be monitored centrally rather than scattered across ministries. Most importantly, Botswana would begin managing SOEs not as disconnected administrative extensions of ministries, but as strategic national assets.

The proposal could even allow for partial Botswana Stock Exchange listings of selected subsidiaries or the Group itself, deepening capital markets, improving transparency, mobilising pension fund capital and introducing market discipline while retaining strategic state control.

In effect, Botswana would move from fragmented state administration toward sovereign asset management. The country may now require a complete redesign of how the State owns, governs and manages commercial public assets. In Botswana's case, that future may increasingly point toward a Botswana State Holdings Group plc.

Accidents Happen, But Do We Learn?



From Matsha to Kariba, repeated transport tragedies raise a harder question for Botswana: whether institutions expose failure, learn from it and prevent the next disaster.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Ninety-four people are now confirmed dead after the Mbuya Nehanda ferry capsized on Lake Kariba earlier this month. Seventy-seven were rescued. The government-owned vessel was authorised for 90 passengers. Zimbabwe's government later acknowledged that about 180 passengers, together with goods, had been aboard.

That is not simply an accident. It is a failure of a safety system. Accidents are unpredictable; systemic failures are not. The ferry encountered strong waves and capsized. That explains the final physical event. It does not explain how a passenger vessel came to be carrying roughly twice its authorised passenger capacity. One asks: What happened? The more important asks: How was it allowed to happen?

When accidents recur, systems are the cause. Botswana should understand that distinction because we have asked the same question after tragedy, again and again.

MATSHA LESSONS

In November 2015, students from Matsha College were being transported home after completing their examinations. Government policy was that students should be transported in buses. Yet 126 young people were placed aboard a government truck. It overturned near Dutlwe. The eventual death toll rose to nine.

Students had been killed in similar truck accidents in 1995, 2003 and 2005. Yet the practice continued.

A parliamentary attempt to establish an independent inquiry into why government had breached its own policy was defeated. The question is not whether accidents happen. They always will. The question is whether institutions learn from them.

PALLAROAD WARNING

On 10 December 2019, Botswana Railways passenger train 501 derailed near Pallaroad, killing two BR employees. Heavy rainfall and water were involved, but subsequent public hearings revealed deeper institutional questions. Evidence showed that the affected area had been inspected only hours earlier, yet the drainage structures were subsequently overwhelmed.

> The Matsha students should have changed the way government transports children.



The inquiry findings reportedly went substantially beyond blaming the weather, identifying natural, technological, human and organisational factors and leadership failures. Rain caused the water. Rain did not design the drainage system, maintain the railway or determine inspection procedures. Those were institutional decisions.

MORE THAN CONDOLENCES

On 28 March 2024, a bus carrying Easter pilgrims from Botswana to Moria plunged from the Mmamatlakala Bridge in Limpopo. Forty-five people died. An eight-year-old girl was the sole survivor.

At the time, The Botswana Gazette resisted declaring a cause before investigators had done so. We asked wider questions about vehicle roadworthiness, driver hours, passenger-transport permits, road-safety regulation and institutional responsibility, and called for a national commission of inquiry extending beyond the driver to the way road safety itself was governed.

Blaming the last human being in the chain is easy. Examining the system that put him there is much harder.

Then, in July this year, another passenger bus travelling north from Gaborone struck a cow on the A1 near Lechana. The driver lost control and the bus overturned. Nine people died, including the driver and a six-month-old baby. Wandering livestock on Botswana's highways is not an unforeseeable event. Botswana Police statistics recorded 14 fatal crashes involving domestic animals in 2024, resulting in 15 deaths.

> The question is not whether accidents happen. They always will. The question is whether institutions learn from them.

Once a hazard is known and repeatedly kills people, it ceases to be merely bad luck. It becomes a management problem, and eventually an accountability problem.

THE REAL TEST

That is why the Kariba tragedy should resonate so strongly in Botswana. The vessel was overloaded. The passenger count appears initially to have been uncertain. Survivors said

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passengers had expressed concern about the conditions before the vessel capsized. The ferry was government-owned.

There will be investigations, condolences, funerals and promises that lessons will be learnt. We have heard all of these before. The real test comes six months later, when the television cameras have disappeared.



Who was responsible for enforcing the passenger limit? Who knew that overloading was occurring? What inspection regime applied to the vessel? Were recommendations implemented? And, critically, will the findings of the investigation be published?

Those are the questions that turn mourning into prevention.

TRANSPARENCY MATTERS

There is an uncomfortable tendency after transport disasters to concentrate responsibility at the bottom of the institutional hierarchy. Political responsibility for transport safety in Botswana rarely seems to travel upwards. Officials promise investigations. Committees of enquiry are established and reports are written. But where is the accountability?

> Accidents happen. The scandal is when the same accidents are allowed to happen again.

Transparency is a safety device. This is not principally an argument for ministerial resignations every time somebody crashes a vehicle. It is an argument for a culture in which those exercising public authority know that serious failures will be exposed publicly and independently examined.



When accident reports are published, engineers can learn from them. Parliament can determine whether recommendations were implemented. Journalists can follow the institutional trail. Families can understand why their relatives died. Officials know failures cannot simply disappear into confidential files.

Above all, publication changes incentives. If a permanent secretary, chief executive, regulator or minister knows that after a major disaster an independent report will identify what their institution knew, what it failed to do and which previous recommendations it ignored, safety suddenly acquires institutional weight.

Botswana needs an independent accident investigation system.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

Accidents happen. Repeated failures are different. Botswana does not need another road-safety slogan. It needs institutional memory. The Matsha students should have changed the way government transports children. Pallaroad should have changed the way railway infrastructure, drainage, inspection and operational risk are managed. Mmamatlakala should have produced an uncompromising examination of passenger-bus regulation and road safety. The deaths on the A1 should finally force serious action on wandering livestock.



The 94 people lost on Lake Kariba should remind the entire region of a brutal truth. The measure of a government is not whether accidents occur under its watch. They will. The measure is what happens afterwards. Does it expose failure or conceal it? Does it ask who was responsible or who can most easily be blamed? Does it publish the evidence or protect the institution?



Does somebody answer for failure? And, most importantly, does anything actually change before another family receives the telephone call that destroys their world?

Accidents happen. The scandal is when the same accidents are allowed to happen again.





JUST BEING COOL ISN'T ENOUGH

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

The internet can make you famous overnight. Staying relevant and solvent takes something else. At Creators Assembly, Botswana's creative entrepreneurs made the case for finding your niche, building a brand and having more than one way to make money.

Being cool can get you noticed. It cannot necessarily pay the bills.

That was one of the sharpest takeaways from Creators Assembly, powered by BBS Bank, where Botswana's creative heavyweights unpacked what it really takes to turn talent into a sustainable career.

For content creator Kennedy Thal, monetisation was never the master plan. It happened almost accidentally.



"I worked at sea, I then started making comedy skits because I was stuck on a ship in the middle of nowhere," he said. One video took off, leading to his first brand collaboration with Wimpy.

The lesson? Sometimes the opportunity finds you but you still have to know what to do with it.

COOL NEEDS A NICHE

Thal believes creatives must stop thinking only like artists and start thinking like businesses.

"You need to think of yourself as a business, be disciplined about your craft," he said, stressing the importance of building relationships with brands and treating oneself as a brand.

But branding, he argued, should go deeper than looking good online.

He said: "What you really want to do is teach people something, find your passion and share that with the world."

"What I realised is that there are people who are offering coolness, but find your niche above just being a cool person."

For Thal, that niche extends beyond content. He has explored gardening consultancy and selling chickens, proving that diversification can grow from genuine interests.

> "What you really want to do is teach people something, find your passion and share that with the world."

MUSIC WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Vee Mampeezy knows the remix.

The award-winning musician has expanded his empire into fast food, beverages and e-hailing, turning a music career into a broader entrepreneurial portfolio.

"The complexities that we are experiencing in the music industry were a wake-up call to find other means of staying afloat," he said.

That is less about abandoning creativity than protecting it.

> "What I realised is that there are people who are offering coolness, but find your niche above just being a cool person."

BUILD BEYOND YOUR LANE

Moderator and media personality Leungo Andre Pitse offered his own case study in diversification, moving from media into ventures including Ayoba and, most recently, Soya restaurant in Gaborone's CBD.



The message from the panel was clear: audiences may follow your talent, but they invest in your value.

Because in the new creative economy, being interesting is a start. Being useful, distinctive and diversified is the real flex.



KGOSI YA MOSADI THIS WEEKEND

Charma Gal is reclaiming her throne, bringing Botswana's music faithful back to Tlokweng for another loud, colourful celebration of Mosakaso, culture and star power.

After three crowd-pulling editions, Charma Gal is ready to reign again. The fourth Kgosi Ya Mosadi In Concert lands at Royal Aria Stadium in Tlokweng on 29 August, promising a big night of Botswana music and culture.

The concert has grown beyond a performance slot. It is a celebration of local sound, spectacle and the unapologetic energy of the "queen of Mosakaso." Charma Gal's latest single, "Mosepele," adds fresh fuel to an already anticipated show.

TIMEOUT BRIEFS

BY GOSEGO MOTSUMI

BOMU SETS NEW DATE

Botswana's biggest music awards are shifting gears and this year's ceremony comes with a presidential first, a new viral category and a very patriotic dress code.



The BOMU Awards have moved to 28 August 2026, bringing Botswana's music industry together at the Gaborone International Convention Centre ahead of the country's 60th Independence celebrations.

The 14th edition, themed "Music Beyond," will celebrate artists, producers and the behind-the-scenes players shaping the local sound. President Duma Gideon Boko is expected to attend, marking the first time a sitting president has graced the awards.

Thirty-five categories will compete for attention, including newcomer Most Viral Song, while nominees continue to receive nominee fees, a long-standing feature of the ceremony.

And the dress code? "3 Colours of Botswana – Bold Colours/National Motifs." In other words: bring the music, bring the flag and dress like independence is a mood.

DIVINE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE 2.0

The second Divine Worship Experience is creating a room where generations, churches and musical voices can leave the differences at the door and worship together.

On 12 September, Botlhale International will become a gathering place for worshippers, families and young people seeking something beyond another night out.

Organised by Kingdom Worship Events, The Divine Worship Experience 2.0 is built around four ideas: Christ-centredness, excellence, unity and authentic worship. Organiser Kutlo Lindo says the event is designed not simply as a concert, but as a space for spiritual growth, fellowship and transformation.

The lineup has been deliberately curated to move between celebration, reflection and deeper worship, rather than simply chasing big names.

The ambition is straightforward: people should leave having experienced more than a performance. Early-bird tickets



cost P150, standard tickets P200, while a double ticket goes for P350. For one evening, the stage becomes a meeting place for faith, music and community.



SIFISO NENE HITS GABORONE

South African comedy heavyweight Sifiso Nene is bringing his "Because of Success" tour to Gaborone with a local comedy milestone getting its own punchline.

Gaborone is getting a cross-border comedy injection when award-winning South African comedian Sifiso Nene brings his Because of Success Tour to Nuestra Casa, Molapo Crossing, on 3 September.

Known for energetic storytelling and observational humour, Nene arrives with an impressive awards résumé, including the Joe Mafela Award and the 2024 Best Solo Show Award.

But the night is also about homegrown comedy. Botswana comedian Thapelo Malani will host the show as he marks a decade in comedy, having started his journey in August 2016. Joining them is emerging comedian Zoe Kgasa, adding another voice to the lineup.

Presented by Major Moves Comedy, the 8pm show promises a regional comedy exchange where South African experience meets Botswana's rising stand-up scene.



IS CREATIVITY THE NEW CURRENCY?

Talent can start the conversation, but business keeps it going. At the recent Creators Assembly, Botswana's creative community confronted a new reality: imagination is no longer just culture, it is capital.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Creativity has always been Botswana's quiet superpower. At the recent Creators Assembly hosted at Maruapula School in Gaborone, it got a business card.

Powered by BBS Bank under the theme "Creativity: The New Currency," the summit brought artists, producers, entrepreneurs and industry players together to tackle a question that refuses to go away: how do you turn talent into a sustainable living?

The answer, judging by the conversations, is less about chasing the next viral moment and more about building something that can survive after the views disappear.

TALENT MEETS THE BOTTOM LINE

Music, film, content creation and visual arts took centre stage as creatives unpacked monetisation, entrepreneurship, digital platforms and the structural barriers that keep talent from becoming viable businesses.

Creator Assembly founder and music artist, Han C said the platform grew from conversations with artists looking for guidance and opportunity. His message was blunt: creatives need financial literacy, collaboration and professionalism if they want careers rather than fleeting moments of attention.

The summit's underlying pitch was even bigger. If Botswana can build stronger commercial pathways for its creatives, the sector could become another engine of economic diversification, generating jobs, businesses and intellectual property.

BUILD YOUR OWN STAGE

Rapper and podcast host Scar pushed creators to stop waiting for traditional gatekeepers.

Digital platforms, he argued, have made it possible to build direct relationships with audiences, but ownership means consistency, branding and knowing exactly who you are speaking to.

"Repetition is the mother of all learning," he said.

South African DJ and producer Mdoovar took the conversation deeper, warning that social media visibility alone cannot fix an industry with weak structures around distribution, marketing, market access and monetisation.

Meanwhile, the National Arts Council Creative and Cultural Sector Development Coordinator Marang Selolwane called for stronger infrastructure, digital investment and greater private-sector participation.

CREATIVITY IS BIGGER THAN CONTENT

Veteran actor Sello Maake KaNcube reminded the room that creative work is not merely entertainment. It documents identity, interrogates society and preserves memory.

"Performance is the soul of a society and of our people," he said.

That idea may be the summit's most powerful currency of all: creativity creates value long before someone puts a price on it.

And as Robot Boii, choreographer Azonto, Masbello, Mr T and a lineup of dancers closed the second day with an energetic outdoor showcase, the message landed with rhythm: Botswana's creative economy is not waiting for permission.

It is building its own market.

RESILIENCE GETS AN ARTISTIC VOICE

As Botswana turns 60 and Ukraine marks 35 years of restored independence, 10 creatives use art to explore what it means to endure, rebuild and remain unbroken.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

History can be heavy. Art has a way of making it move.

As Botswana celebrates 60 years of independence and Ukraine marks 35 years since restoring its independence, the two nations are meeting in an unexpected place: the gallery. On August 31, Thapong Visual Arts Centre in Gaborone will host 10 Botswana-based creatives as they respond to Ukraine's story of endurance through photography, sculpture, visual art and fashion.

Titled Resilience: The Unbreakable Human Spirit, the multidisciplinary exhibition is curated by Thabo Kgatlwane and presented by the Embassy of Ukraine in Botswana in partnership with TSW. Rather than simply illustrating the realities of war, the exhibition examines what remains when people are forced to confront hardship.

WHEN ART ANSWERS HISTORY

Three visual artists — Wilson Ngoni, Totang Motoloki and Ronald Kegomoditswe — join photographers Sentle Baitse, Boi Seitshiro and Tsaone Lawrence Bahiti, sculptors and craft artists Akanyang Ntshingane and Iranian national Shirin Ettihad, and fashion designers Mboko Basiami of Glotto and Moitshepi Mokaila of Desicive.

Together, they bring their own interpretations of identity, struggle, hope, perseverance and transformation.

The result is not a foreign story simply retold through a Botswana lens. Instead, it is a local artistic response to a universal question: how do people endure, rebuild and remain themselves when circumstances attempt to break them?

"Resilience is not simply about surviving hardship. It is about finding the strength to create, rebuild and continue," says Kgatlwane.



That idea gives the exhibition its pulse. Survival may be the starting point, but creativity becomes the response.

TWO NATIONS, ONE HUMAN THREAD

For Ukrainian Ambassador to Botswana Dr Oleksiy Syvak, the exhibition connects Ukraine's current reality with values that resonate beyond its borders.

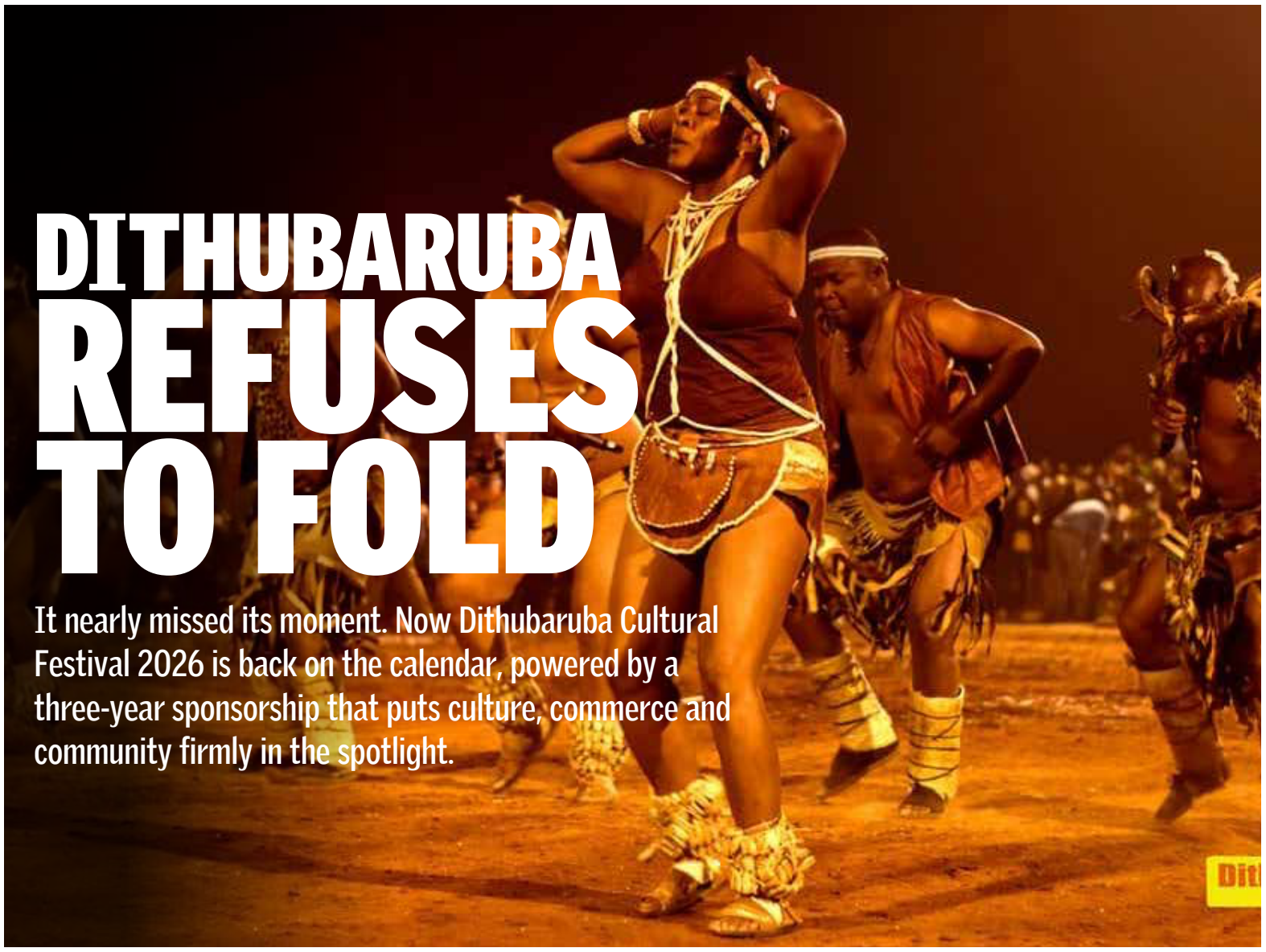
"Resilience, for us, has never been an abstract idea. It has been a daily reality," he says, describing the exhibition as a reflection of the shared human determination to protect freedom, dignity and the right to shape one's future.

The exhibition will also give audiences a closer look at the artists' perspectives, with QR codes supported by TSW providing access to their statements and creative visions.

"Survival may be the starting point, but creativity becomes the response."

The official opening will bring together artists, diplomats, government representatives, cultural stakeholders, collectors and art lovers, followed by a cocktail reception.

As Botswana looks back on six decades of nationhood, Resilience looks forward, asking a sharper question: after everything we survive, what do we choose to create?



DITHUBARUBA REFUSES TO FOLD

It nearly missed its moment. Now Dithubaruba Cultural Festival 2026 is back on the calendar, powered by a three-year sponsorship that puts culture, commerce and community firmly in the spotlight.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Culture almost lost its date with Molepolole. Instead, Dithubaruba Cultural Festival has pulled off the kind of comeback that feels bigger than a sponsorship cheque.

Set for September 5 in Molepolole, the annual celebration of Bakwena heritage will return after Absa Bank Botswana renewed its title sponsorship with a P1.5 million, three-year commitment. The bank will contribute P500,000 annually, with its wider activation and community initiatives expected to push the total investment to about P2.5 million.

CULTURE MEETS COMMERCE

For Dithubaruba, the timing matters. Kgosi Kgari III of Bakwena revealed that financial constraints had put this year's festival in doubt.

"There was a point where we genuinely feared that this year's Festival might have to be postponed," he said.

Absa's intervention, he added, has ensured that Dithubaruba 2026 proceeds as planned.

Dennis Mambure, Absa's Head of Marketing and Corporate Affairs, said the partnership goes beyond keeping the festival alive. It will also support financial inclusion and economic empowerment through initiatives including the Women in Business Workshop Series, MobiTap and the SHE Account.

The idea is simple: heritage can be a cultural asset and an economic engine at the same time.

HERITAGE WITH A PURPOSE

This year's theme, "Unlocking Heritage, Transforming Our Integrity," puts that philosophy front and centre.

Dithubaruba has long been more than a stage for traditional performances. According to Kgosi Kgari III, the festival stimulates hospitality, retail and transport businesses while creating opportunities for artisans and young people and drawing cultural tourists to Molepolole and Ntsweng.

The programme will also kick off with Pitso ya Borre, a road-safety event hosted with the MVA Fund on September 4, aimed at men and boys.

> "Dithubaruba is not just a cultural celebration, it is a socio-economic catalyst."

For a festival that nearly disappeared from this year's calendar, Dithubaruba is returning with something to prove.

September 5, then, is not simply another festival date. It is a reminder that sometimes preserving the past requires investing boldly in its future.

The Soul Crowd Wants More

Denim was crisp, the ballads were heavy on nostalgia and the crowd came ready to sing along. Taste of Africa's Saturday Ballads is becoming a fixture for Botswana's grown-and-groovy crowd even as organisers admit the latest edition came with a few off-key moments.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Forget the club thump. This crowd came for the slow burn.

Taste of Africa's Saturday Ballads returned to Avani Gaborone Resort & Casino this past weekend, drawing a sizeable crowd of mature music lovers dressed in the event's "Denim and White" theme and ready for an evening of soul, memories and songs that refuse to age.

The fourth edition delivered classic ballads, familiar voices and a space full of people who know every word before the DJ even drops the track.

THE SOUL CROWD HAS SPOKEN

The concept was born in 2024 after organisers spotted a gap in Botswana's entertainment calendar: an event built specifically around soul and classic music.

The first edition attracted more than 700 people, signalling that nostalgia could be serious business. This year, the growing crowd suggested the appetite has only increased.

> "Botswana's mature music lovers want their own space to unwind."

Among the performers were South African DJ Obza and former RB2 presenter Resego Motlhokathari, alongside local DJs and entertainers.

For co-founder and Marketing Director Mercy Ramojela, the turnout was encouraging but the event was not without its glitches.



"The event went beautiful, but was very disappointed at how some of our partners failed to keep their end of the bargain," said Ramojela in an interview.

WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT

The promised wine-tasting experience did not happen after a partnership fell through, while electricity problems briefly disrupted the day.

Organisers later apologised to patrons, acknowledging the disappointment and promising to be more deliberate about partnerships.

Still, the audience stayed with them.

"When the unexpected electricity challenges occurred, you showed remarkable patience and understanding," the organisers said in a post-event statement.

BIGGER ROOM, SAME VIBE

The night's fashion code — Denim and White — added another layer to the experience, turning the dance floor into a sea of nostalgia with a dress code.

But perhaps the biggest takeaway was simple: Botswana's mature music lovers want their own space to unwind.

Ramojela says organisers are listening.

"Next time we will choose a bigger venue, looking at how much our numbers are growing."

CAN AI KILL THE BOOK FESTIVAL?

AI can generate a story in seconds. But can it create the electricity of a room full of people arguing, laughing and imagining together? The Gaborone Book Festival is betting it cannot.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Artificial intelligence may be rewriting the rules of creativity, but the Gaborone Book Festival is making one thing clear: the human gathering is not obsolete.

Returning for its ninth edition after a two-year pause, the festival has come back less like a routine literary date and more like a reset. For co-curator Keikantse Phele, the break offered the curatorial team an opportunity to step back and ask a deceptively simple question: what should the festival become next?

"We took a pause for two years," Phele says, explaining that the time allowed the team to reflect on "what do we want to do? How do we want to look like?"

The answer appears to be simple: make room for bigger questions.

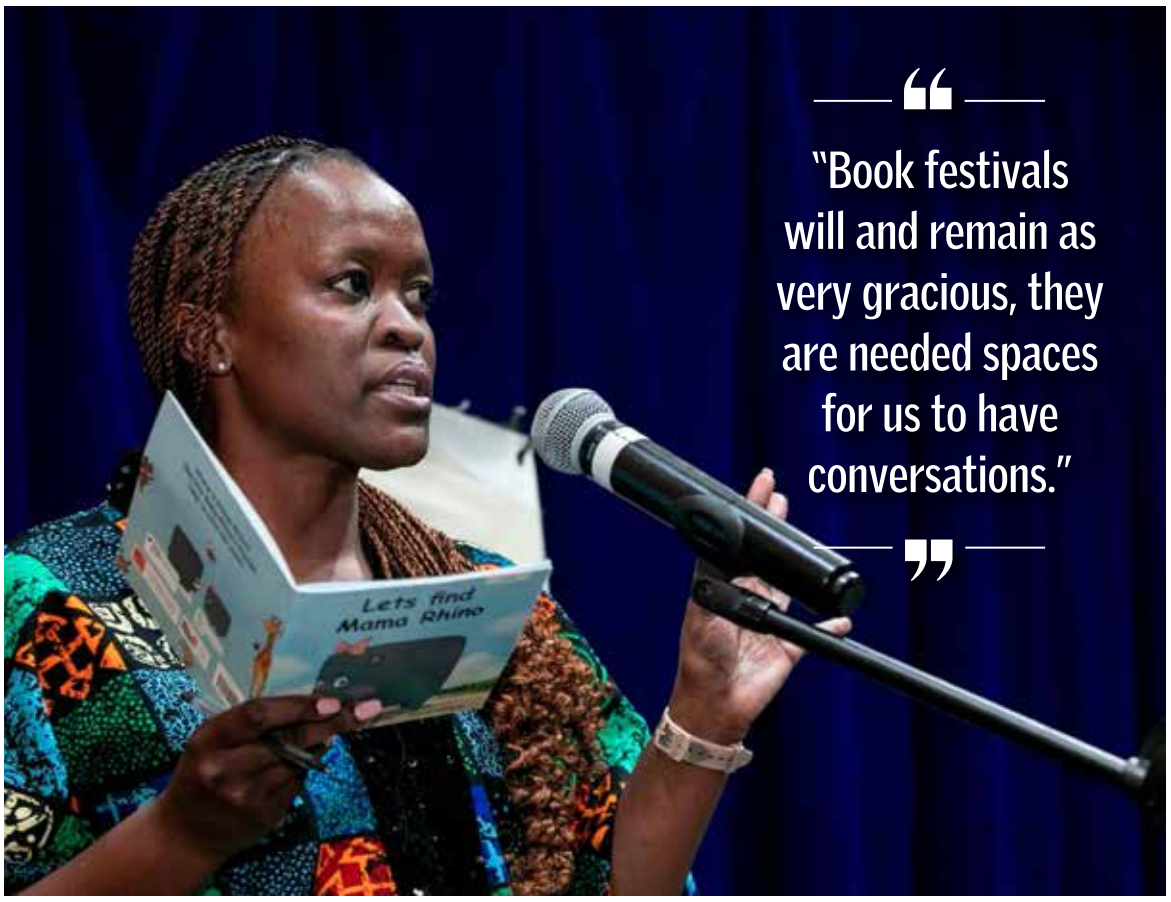
THE AI ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

The festival arrives at a moment when AI is challenging everything from authorship to originality. Naturally, that raises another question for literary gatherings: if technology can produce words, do we still need physical spaces devoted to them?

Phele's answer is an emphatic yes.

"Book festivals will and remain as very gracious, they are needed spaces for us to have conversations," she says.

And these are not meant to be polite conversations only. GBF aims to create room for "controversial conversations" and serious debate, particularly around African literature and who gets to shape its future.



"Book festivals will and remain as very gracious, they are needed spaces for us to have conversations."

Where are African stories going? Who are they written for? How should they be retold? And can writers collaborate with technology without losing the human pulse that makes storytelling matter?

STORIES MEET THE WORLD

The festival is also pushing literature beyond the page, with conversations exploring storytelling and the environment against the backdrop of climate change.

That made the edition feel particularly alive. Books become the starting point, not the finish line.

This year's festival was staged in partnership with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with Dr Kirk Sides, an Associate Professor of English at the university, serving as co-curator.

The programme featured a largely local line-up of authors and writers, including Thalefang Charles, Phodiso Modirwa, Kenneth Middleton, Gothataone Moeng, Priscillar Ndadi, Pearl Stabile Ndovu and Onica Lekuntwane.

The festival also widened its creative lens beyond literature, featuring musician and filmmaker Game Zeus Bantsi and acclaimed folklore artist Ntirelang Berman.

In a world increasingly crowded with AI-generated content, GBF's message feels timely: stories may be generated by machines, but the conversations that give them meaning still need people.

When A Book Hits Netflix

Sue Nyathi's The Polygamist went from a rejected manuscript and self-published copies to a Netflix hit streamed across more than 60 countries. At the Gaborone Book Festival, the Zimbabwean author unpacked what happens when a story leaves the page and why writers need to understand the business waiting beyond the book.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

A book can be a finished story or a passport. Sue Nyathi knows the difference. Her The Polygamist began as a self-publishing gamble and ended up as a Netflix phenomenon, proving that sometimes the stories publishers overlook are the ones the world cannot stop watching.

At the Gaborone Book Festival, Nyathi pulled back the curtain on the journey from novel to screen, offering authors a lesson that had little to do with glamour and everything to do with knowing the value of their work.

FROM 500 COPIES TO GLOBAL STREAMING

Nyathi's path was hardly instant. After several publishers rejected The Polygamist, she found her own editor, typesetter before self-publishing copies in 2012.



The was book eventually adapted into a Netflix series that reached the platform's Top 10 in more than 60 countries.

"The series going viral was surreal at first," Nyathi said. "We had expected it to do well because it is a high value production and thought it would probably just trend in Southern Africa but it exceeded expectations."

The screen version relocates the story from Zimbabwe to South Africa, shifts into isiZulu with subtitles and makes several changes to the characters. Nyathi, who was not involved in the production, says the adaptation still respected the story's core.

"As a writer, there is always a degree of anxiety when your work moves into another medium because you are entrusting your characters to other people."

YOUR BOOK IS A DOOR

For Nyathi, adaptation is not simply about seeing your characters on television. It is about understanding the creative and commercial possibilities hiding inside a manuscript.

"The importance of reading your contract and understanding your adaptation rights as an author cannot be overemphasised," she said.

Her message was simple: authors need to think beyond publication.

"You must think of a book as a door to other opportunities."

The success of The Polygamist has also pushed the story beyond entertainment. Nyathi said Amnesty International has used the book to raise awareness around narcissistic relationships, while UNAIDS used the series in HIV-prevention campaigning.

"You must think of a book as a door to other opportunities."

THE BUSINESS OF BEING A WRITER

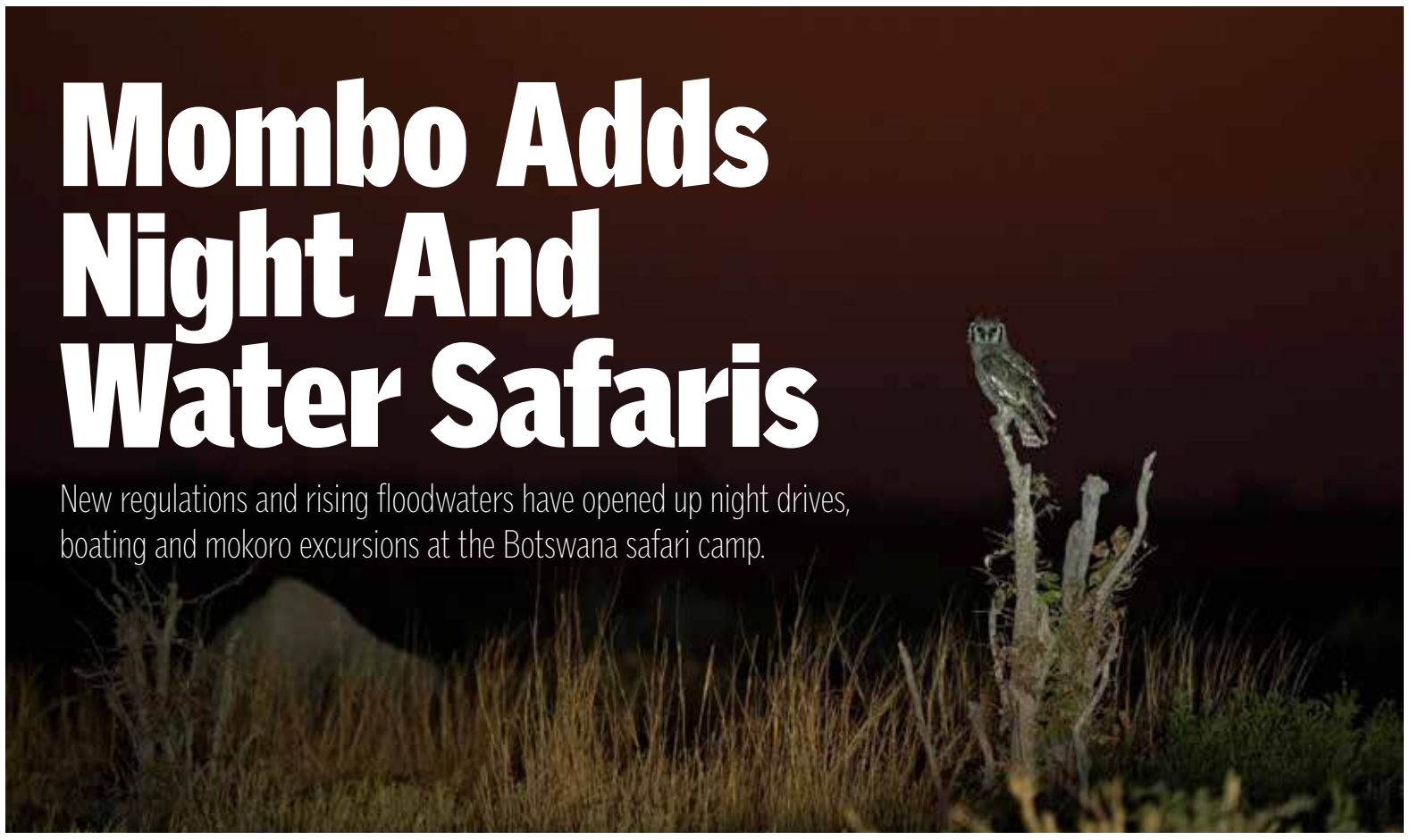
Nyathi's own route to authorship was unconventional. She spent almost two decades in finance before leaving corporate life at 40 to write full time.

She wrote The Polygamist after work, turning a childhood dream into a second career.

Her story is a reminder that the publishing industry may decide whether a book gets a chance but it does not always get the final word.

Mombo Adds Night And Water Safaris

New regulations and rising floodwaters have opened up night drives, boating and mokoro excursions at the Botswana safari camp.



Wilderness Mombo has introduced night drives, boating and mokoro excursions, expanding safari activities at the camp on Chief's Island in Botswana's Moremi Game Reserve.

NEW SAFARI OPTIONS



The changes follow recent regulatory adjustments allowing after-dark game drives, while higher water levels have reconnected channels around Chief's Island, enabling water-based activities.

"For more than three decades, the Mombo story has been told from the seat of a game-drive vehicle," said Simon Stobbs, Wilderness Chief B2B Sales Officer. "Now our guests can head out after dark on a night drive, and glide across the reconnected channels by mokoro or boat."

Night drives offer opportunities to observe nocturnal species such as genets, civets and springhares, as well as lions and hyenas. The boating experience operates from Kubu Jetty on a six-seater boat fitted with a covered canopy, while mokoro excursions use traditional-style canoes guided by experienced polers.

SEASONAL CONDITIONS

The water activities have been made possible by increased water levels following local rainfall and seasonal inflows from Angola's highlands.

The camp, which opened in 1991, has historically operated daytime, vehicle-based game drives because of regulations governing its private traversing area. The channels surrounding the camp were also previously unsuitable for boating.

> "Now our guests can head out after dark on a night drive, and glide across the reconnected channels by mokoro or boat."

AGE RESTRICTIONS APPLY

The new activities are available to guests staying at Wilderness Mombo and Wilderness Little Mombo. All three experiences are restricted to guests aged 16 and above and remain subject to seasonal water levels, weather, availability and operational conditions.

MALLY RELEASES 'WINNER' EP

UK-based Motswana gospel artist Mally explores faith, perseverance and hope on her latest six-track project.

UK-based Motswana gospel artist Mally has released *Winner*, an EP exploring themes of faith, hope and perseverance through a mix of gospel, Amapiano, Afro-pop, soul and adult contemporary influences.

A FAITH-DRIVEN PROJECT

The EP features tracks including *Hold On*, *Favor*, *I Got Joy* and *Higher Be Lifted*. Mally said the project was created to offer music for worship, reflection and encouragement.

"The message behind Winner is simple: through God and Jesus Christ we are more than conquerors," Mally said. "Every song is meant to take listeners on a spiritual journey."

BUILDING AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER

Mally, who was born in Botswana and is now based in England, has been pursuing her professional music career internationally since 2021. Her releases are available on streaming platforms including Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube Music, Amazon Music, Audiomack and Pandora.

She began singing in church as a praise and worship leader at 13 before moving into professional recording. She writes and composes her original music, incorporating jazz harmony into her gospel sound and performing in English, Setswana and Nigerian Pidgin English.

LOOKING HOMEWARD

Mally said she is interested in collaborating with Botswana-based musicians as she continues developing her international career.

"There is so much creativity, and I would love the opportunity to collaborate with local artists because I believe we can create music that resonates both locally and internationally," she said.

> "There is so much creativity, and I would love the opportunity to collaborate with local artists."

Mally independently manages her releases through HOS PR and holds a Master's degree in Business Management from the University of Hull.



Train staff to strengthen DPA compliance



Rebaone F. Ditlale- Lead Skills Consultant (2)

Organisations collect and process large amounts of personal data, including workers records, customer details, identification documents, financial information and contact details daily. The introduction of Botswana's Data Protection Act No.18 of 2025 (DPA) has increased the responsibility placed on organisations that process personal data. While businesses may have data protection policies and security measures in place, these measures won't work unless workers are aware of their duties. Workers who handle personal data every day must understand their responsibilities under the law. Data protection training is therefore an important part of an organisation's compliance programme.

DATA PROTECTION IN PRACTICE

Workers interact with personal data in almost every department; from human resources who handles employee records, to finance who processes banking information, to marketing who manages customer information, and IT who manages systems containing personal data. Training helps staff understand important data protection principles such as lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimisation, storage limitation, integrity, confidentiality, and accountability. Workers need to be trained to understand that personal data should be processed for legitimate purposes only and handled responsibly.

TRAIN TO REDUCE DATA BREACHES

Workers can unintentionally cause data protection risks, and ignorance of law is not an excuse. Sending an email containing personal information to the wrong recipient, leaving confidential documents unattended on a desk, or using weak passwords can expose an organisation to a data breach. Training provides workers with practical knowledge on how to protect personal data on daily basis as they perform their tasks. Staff should know how to securely handle sensitive data, verify recipients before sharing information, identify phishing attempts and report suspected data breaches promptly.

CREATING A CULTURE OF COMPLIANCE

Data protection training should not be mistakenly treated as a once-off activity. Organisations should provide induction training for new hires and refresher training for existing staff. Refresher trainings are important as law as keep on changing so that organisations stay informed and compliant. Training should be designed in a way that they are tailored to the type of personal data handled by different workers regularly. Additionally, staff training and awareness has been identified as an important aspect in implementing the Data Protection Act in any organisation.

OUR SERVICES

The Data Protection Act (DPA) mandates every organization to put strict safeguards regarding personal data and in that regard, we can assist with crafting Data Protection Policies in line with the said Act. Some organizations such as schools, hospitals, regulatory bodies etc, are required to have full-time Data Protection Officers (DPO). If you cannot afford a full-time DPO, we can act as your organization's DPO on contract basis. If you need training for your staff on the provisions of the Data Protection Act and other business courses such as Leadership & Supervisory Skills, Customer Care, Team Building as well as secondments of Tax, HR and DPOs, contact us at: +267 76 213 233 or +267 393 9435 or skills@aupracontax.co.bw. This article is general, and written advice or training is recommended if decisions are to be made. If you require to join our free WhatsApp groups or to know more about our services, please send us a text/WhatsApp on the numbers above.

oprácon
SKILLS & ACADEMY
Skills brokerage - Upskilling - Business Training

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

CASE NO: CVHGB-0003861-21

In the matter between:

SARONA MPHAFE (a female minor child represented by her mother and natural guardian)	**1st PLAINTIFF**
OLEBOGENG UNITY MPHAFE	**2nd PLAINTIFF**
And	
BAMALETE LUTHERAN HOSPITAL	**DEFENDANT**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to a judgement of the above Honourable Court, the movable property of the above-mentioned Defendant will be sold by public auction to the highest bidder by Deputy Sheriff **Onkemetse Medupi** as follows;

DATE OF SALE ; 25 SEPTEMBER 2026
PLACE OF SALE ; BAMALETE LUTHERAN HOSPITAL
TIME ; 1100HRS

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD ; 2 Ceiling operating lights, 2 Centrifuge 5810, 4 vital signs monitors wall mounted, 1 electrical mechanical operating theatre table,1 Dell computer server, 1 ISUZU Reg B887 AMB, 1 Toyota Hiace Reg B268 AJZ, 1 Toyota Dyna Reg B124 ALD,1 Anasthetic machine drager, 2 Auto Clave Machines, 1 Auto Clave machine ALP, 1 Cardiotograth (CTG), 1 CD4 machine,1 Toyota Hiace Reg B389 AGD, 1 Nissan Combi Reg B466 BLI, 1 Nissan Combi Reg B256 BLI, 1 Toyota Corolla Reg B601 BPL, 1 Toyota Hilux Reg B492 BPF, 1 Anasthetic machine fabius plus xl, 1 Anasthetic workstation xl monitor.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE; The terms of the conditions may be reviewed at the Deputy Sheriff's office and Plaintiffs' Attorneys.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS 25TH DAY OF AUGUST 2026.

DEPUTY SHERIFF ONKEMETSE MEDUPI
CELL;72315134
C/O COLLIN DUNCAN AND ASSOCIATES
PLAINTIFFS' ATTORNEYS
PLOT 703, EXTENSION 2
EAGLE HOUSE
MALEBOGO CLOSE
P O BOX 80429
GABORONE

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFIED COPY OF LOST TITLE DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that the undermentioned intends applying for a certified copy of **DEED OF TRANSFER No. 826/2009** dated the **24th** day of **SEPTEMBER 2009** passed in favour of **RAVENS NEST (PROPRIETARY) LIMITED** in respect of the following property, that is:

CERTAIN : Piece of Land being Portion 7 of Farm No. 11-NQ;

SITUATE : In the North East Administrative District;

MEASURING: 6,7421 Ha (Six comma Seven Four Two One Hectares)

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

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS THE 10TH DAY OF AUGUST 2026

VAN NIEKERK ATTORNEYS,
Plot 4660, Ditau Street, Area G
P. O. Box 37, Francistown

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT LOBATSE **CVHGB-002387-23**

In the matter between:

FIRST CAPITAL BANK LIMITED	**Plaintiff**
and	
CATALOK (PTY) LTD	**First Defendant**
LINCOLN LONE BOME	**Second Defendant**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to a Judgment granted by the above Honourable Court, the following immovable property will be sold by public auction by **DEPUTY SHERIFF NTSHWARELANG OOKAME** to the highest bidder as follows: -

DATE OF SALE : 25TH SEPTEMBER 2026
TIME : 10:00 AM
VENUE : LOT 59751, GABORONE
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : Certain piece of land being **LOT 59751, BLOCK 7 GABORONE**, in **GABORONE WEST EXTENSION 48** measuring **447m²** held under Deed of Transfer **No. 691/2012** dated **29TH day of MARCH 2012** made in favour of **LONE LINCOLN BOME** together with some developments, thereon being a Two Bed-roomed house with fitted wardrobes, attached shed, separate toilet, lounge, fitted kitchen with base and wall units granite tops, screen wall and electrified fence.

TERMS OF SALE : Subject to Conditions of Sale.
Only cash or bank guaranteed cheques will be accepted.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS THE 25TH DAY OF AUGUST 2026.

SWABI & COMPANY
Attorneys, Notaries & Conveyancers

SWABI & COMPA NY
Plaintiff's Attorneys
First Floor, Unit 17 Kgale Mews,
Gaborone International Finance Park
P O Box 403506
GABORONE
(Ref: DS.spm.S00101)
Deputy Sheriff Ntshwarelang Ookame
Cell no.72879169,77435503



IS KEBINATSHIPI STILL GETTING FASTER?

Coach Chilume Ntshwarang credits Collen Kebinatshipi's world-class season to discipline, hard work and steady growth as the 400m star heads toward the Diamond League final.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Collen Kebinatshipi's impressive form this season is not the product of a sudden change, according to his personal coach, Chilume Ntshwarang, who says the Botswana 400-metre world champion is showing the rewards of sustained hard work and discipline.

"Nothing is different," Ntshwarang told this publication in a telephone interview. "He became a 400m world champion and he is just showing that this was not by fluke. He is also growing as an athlete."

Ntshwarang described Kebinatshipi as a talented, disciplined and hard-working athlete, saying those qualities have contributed to his status as a world champion. Kebinatshipi's next race is the Diamond League final on September 4, where his camp will seek to maintain his current form.

SEASON BUILD

Kebinatshipi opened his season on March 8 with a 100m time of 10.53 seconds before switching his focus to the 400m. On March 21, he clocked 44.55 seconds.

His progress continued in April. On April 3, he recorded 9.89 seconds in the 100m, matching the time later that day, while also producing a 39.18-second split in the 4x100m relay. His performances have reflected development in both speed and endurance, with his times placing him among the world's leading quarter-milers.

RELAY IMPACT

Kebinatshipi also played a key role in Botswana's relay performances during the season. On May 2, he helped the national team record 2:57.52 in the 4x400m before improving that mark to 2:54.47 the following day.

He closed May with a then-season-best 400m performance, running 43.92 seconds on May 23.

RECORD PUSH

The improvement continued into June and July. Kebinatshipi clocked 43.54 seconds on June 28 and 44.00 seconds on July 4 before producing a national record on July 10.

> "He became a 400m world champion and he is just showing that this was not by fluke."

He ran 43.44 seconds on July 10 to set a new Botswana national record and personal best, moving closer to Wayde van Niekerk's world record of 43.03 seconds, set nearly a decade ago.

On August 23, Kebinatshipi ran 43.59 seconds, continuing his fine form as he approaches the conclusion of his season.

TAFISA Congress Targets Lasting Legacy

Botswana's first TAFISA World Congress is being positioned as a global showcase whose value will be judged by tourism, business, skills development and a lasting Sport for All legacy.

GAZETTE REPORTER



Gaborone will host the 30th TAFISA World Congress from October 18 to 20, 2027, marking the first time Botswana hosts the global gathering and only the second time it is held on the African continent after Cape Town in 2001.

Molefhi Kannemeyer Obenne, chairman of the organising committee, said the congress should deliver benefits beyond hosting an international event. "Our ambition must go beyond simply saying that Botswana hosted an international congress," he said at a recent press conference.

With approximately 500 participants expected, Obenne said Botswana should view the delegates as potential tourists, investors, institutional partners, researchers, policy leaders and international ambassadors.

ECONOMIC RETURN

Obenne said the congress could support Botswana's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) ambitions by generating demand for accommodation, transport, restaurants, tourism, technology, security, printing, branding, entertainment and communications.

He said procurement and programme design should deliberately consider how much of the value created by the congress can remain in Botswana, how many local companies can participate and how many young people can gain practical experience.

MEASURING VALUE

Obenne said public investment in the congress should produce measurable results. "Whenever public resources are committed to an event of this nature, the public has every right to ask: What will Botswana get back?" he said.

He identified direct economic impact, business opportunities, human-capital development, tourism, institutional partnerships, Sport for All programmes, brand impact and future-event opportunities as areas for measuring the congress's return.

"Government expenditure must therefore be viewed as an investment portfolio with measurable outcomes, not simply as the cost of three days of conferencing," he said.

LASTING LEGACY

Obenne said the congress should involve government, the Botswana National Sport Commission, private businesses, universities, sport organisations, tourism and hospitality, civil society, media, young people and communities, with benefits extending beyond Gaborone to communities across Botswana.

"Our legacy cannot start when the Congress ends. It must start now," he said. The organising committee intends for the congress to contribute to Botswana's Sport for All agenda while supporting skills development, partnerships, tourism and economic activity.

"The world will come to Gaborone," Obenne said. "Our task is to ensure that when the world leaves, Botswana is stronger than it was before they arrived."





P3.3m Fuels Tonota's Premier Ambition

Newly promoted Tonota FC enters the Botswana Premier League with P3.3 million in sponsorship backing, a strengthened squad and ambitions to challenge for the title.

Newly promoted Tonota FC is entering the Botswana Premier League with ambitions that extend well beyond survival, targeting the league title and an unbeaten campaign after securing a combined P3.3 million sponsorship commitment from Old Mutual Botswana and Bet267.

Tonota, which won the First Division North title unbeaten last season, unveiled its new Premier League kit and sponsorship agreements on Tuesday. Old Mutual Botswana has committed P2.5 million over three seasons, while Bet267 will contribute P400,000 per season for two seasons. Together, the commitments amount to P3.3 million.

Club chairman Tumelo Toteng said promotion was not the end goal. "We still want to win the league. We still want to finish the league undefeated," Toteng said. He added that the club wants to qualify for the CAF Champions League rather than the CAF Confederation Cup, making a Premier League title central to Tonota's ambitions.

"We want to play CAF Champions League, not CAF Confederation," he said.

SQUAD DEPTH

The club has strengthened its squad ahead of its first Premier League campaign, with 15 new signings among a squad of 35 players.

Tonota FC president Boikhutso Ramahobo said the club had retained players who helped secure promotion while adding Premier League experience. "One of the most important thing that we must note that is that we have been able to assemble a very good team, 15 new signings out of the 35 that we have," Ramahobo said.

"We still have that crop that promoted us and mixed it with experience from the Premier League. We have that depth, you know, that's what is needed to do well."

Ramahobo said the club also had confidence in coach Thaloba Nthaga, whose contract has been extended by three years. "We have one of the best coaches in Botswana, Thaloba Nthaga, we have confidence in him hence why we extended his contract with three years," he said.

He described the sponsorship commitments as significant, particularly amid difficult economic conditions. "My gratitude comes from the fact that it is a very bad economy, we are grateful to all our partners," Ramahobo said.

BEYOND FOOTBALL

Gaone Sibanda who is the Managing Director Old Mutual www-Short term Insurance said the partnership was intended to extend beyond match days, with the company planning financial education, engagement with supporters and families, and interaction with local businesses.

"Football brings communities together. It gives young people something to aspire to. It creates conversations between generations and gives communities a shared identity," Sibanda said. She added that football also supports an ecosystem of players, coaches, administrators, transport operators, food vendors, accommodation providers, suppliers and small businesses.

For Old Mutual, Sibanda said the partnership reflected a shared belief in "ambition, progress and the communities we serve."

Bet267 director Mpho Chamo said the company's P400,000 annual commitment reflected its confidence in Tonota FC's leadership, players and supporters. The company will feature on the club's sleeve and replica shirts and plans supporter engagement activities during the season. Chamo also urged supporters to use licensed betting operators and emphasised responsible betting.

> "We still want to win the league. We still want to finish the league undefeated."

For Tonota, the sponsorships provide financial backing as the club moves into Botswana's top flight with expectations shaped by an unbeaten promotion campaign. "An unbeaten championship season does not happen by accident," Sibanda said. "It requires preparation, discipline, teamwork and consistency."



TITANS PODIUM FUELS BIGGER AMBITIONS



Titans Softball's third-place finish in Switzerland has strengthened the club's belief that it can compete internationally and push for even greater results.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Titans Softball returned from Wittenbach, Switzerland, with a third-place finish in the Women's Softball European Cup, an achievement the club says reflects its growing international competitiveness.

For secretary Atlang Gabantese, the podium finish was significant not only for the club but also for its representation of Botswana. "We went there not only to compete, but also to represent our club and Botswana with pride," Gabantese said.

A third-place finish at a European Cup, she added, demonstrated that Titans' players could compete at a high international level while validating the work, commitment and sacrifices invested in building the team. But Gabantese said the result should not be regarded as the club's final destination.

"For us, third place is not the end goal; it is an indication that we are capable of achieving even greater things on the international stage," she said.

PRESSURE TEST

The tournament challenged Titans to adapt quickly to a highly competitive international environment, with opponents bringing different playing styles, levels of experience and approaches to the game. The intensity left little room for mistakes and demanded discipline, mental strength and focus.

Travel and adjusting to a different environment added another challenge, but Gabantese said the players handled themselves professionally. "What impressed us most was their resilience," she said. "Even when things did not go according to plan, they continued fighting and believing in themselves."



LESSONS ABROAD

Gabantese identified the team's response under pressure as a defining aspect of its campaign. "There were moments when we could easily have allowed difficult situations to affect our confidence, but instead the players showed character and stayed together," she said.

The experience also exposed Titans to different tactical approaches and higher levels of intensity while highlighting the importance of consistency. The club returned with lessons for both its players and technical team, as well as a stronger belief that it belongs in international competition.

"We now understand that with proper preparation, investment and exposure, Titans can compete with some of the best teams internationally," Gabantese said.

NEXT TARGET

Titans' immediate priority is to build on the European Cup performance and ensure the podium finish is not a once-off achievement. The club wants to continue developing its players, strengthen the team and create more opportunities for international competition, with the ambition of improving on third place the next time it competes at this level.

> "For us, third place is not the end goal; it is an indication that we are capable of achieving even greater things on the international stage."

Beyond results, Gabantese said Titans wants to become a stronger platform for developing softball talent in Botswana and contribute to the growth and international recognition of women's softball in the country. "This experience has given us greater motivation, and we believe the best is still ahead of Titans Softball," she said.

OREBONYE'S WYDAD FUTURE UNCERTAIN

Tumisang Orebonye's future at Wydad Casablanca remains unresolved as reported interest from other Moroccan clubs collides with the new coach's desire to assess the Botswana striker.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana international Tumisang Orebonye could be heading for another move in North Africa, with his future at Wydad Casablanca increasingly uncertain.

Sources close to the situation say the striker is attracting interest from clubs in Morocco, with some sides believed to be prepared to offer him a bigger role and more consistent playing time.

Orebonye returned to Morocco after spending part of last season on loan in Libya, but his next destination remains unclear as discussions surrounding his Wydad future continue.

GAME TIME

The 2025-26 campaign proved difficult for Orebonye, who struggled to secure a consistent run of matches before his temporary switch to Al Shamooa. Sources say the player's desire for regular football is now a major factor in determining his next move.

With his Wydad contract entering its final year, an agreement between the player and club could potentially pave the way for an early separation. However, the situation has not reached a conclusion.

COACH'S CALL

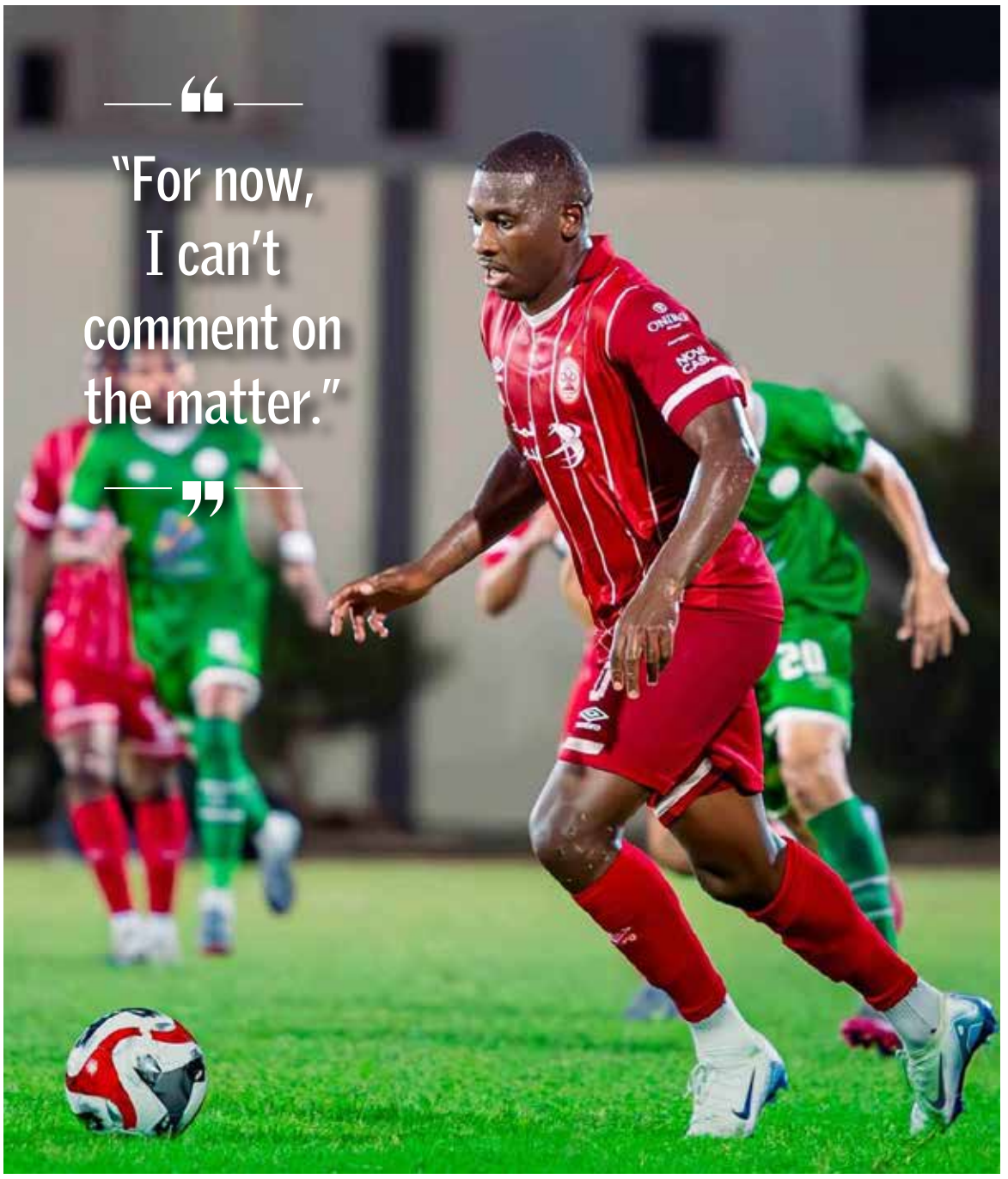
Wydad's new coach is understood to want an opportunity to evaluate Orebonye before any final decision is taken. That could delay any potential move despite interest from elsewhere.

The Botswana striker therefore finds himself in a waiting game, with his immediate future dependent partly on whether the new technical setup sees him as part of its plans.

MOROCCO INTEREST

Despite the uncertainty, Orebonye's reputation in Moroccan football remains strong. The striker has previously worked with respected coaches such as Nasreddine Nabi, Abdelhak Benchikha and Fernando Da Cruz, giving him valuable experience of the demands of North African football.

His Botswana national team experience also adds to his appeal, particularly for clubs looking for an attacker capable of competing at a high level. Several clubs are reportedly watching developments closely and could make a move should Orebonye become available.



NO COMMENT

When approached about reports surrounding his Wydad future and possible interest from other Moroccan clubs, Orebonye chose not to discuss the situation. "For now, I can't comment on the matter," he said.

That response leaves the door open to further developments, with the striker's next move likely to become clearer once Wydad's technical team reaches a decision. For now, Orebonye remains a Wydad player, but sources suggest his future could look very different before the transfer window closes.

Kgatleng Open Tests Junior Depth

The Mochudi tournament gives BTTA a crucial competitive checkpoint as Botswana's young table tennis players prepare for a demanding international calendar.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Phoenix Assurance Botswana Kgatleng Open will give the Botswana Table Tennis Association (BTTA) an opportunity to assess and fine-tune its junior players as the association prepares for several international youth competitions.

The annual tournament, scheduled for Kgamanyane Junior Secondary School in Mochudi this Saturday, will feature Under-12 and Under-15 players alongside the Senior division, giving BTTA's technical team a chance to assess emerging talent under match conditions.

BTTA Vice President Technical and Tournament Director Kabo Mosarwe said the tournament comes at an important stage of the association's preparations. "For us, this tournament comes at a very important time because we are preparing our young players for a number of major international competitions. We need to see how they perform under pressure, how they respond to different opponents and where we need to improve before they compete internationally," Mosarwe said in an interview.



INTERNATIONAL TEST

BTTA is using the competition as part of its preparations for events including the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal, the Commonwealth Youth Championship, WTT Youth Contender tournaments and the AUSC Region 5 Games.

For the technical team, the Kgatleng Open is intended to provide more than an opportunity to compete for medals. It will allow coaches to evaluate players in match situations and assess the consistency, discipline and competitive maturity required for international competition.

"International competition is very different from training. These tournaments allow us to expose the players to pressure and different playing styles. It also helps us as coaches to identify the areas that require attention before the players go into international competitions," Mosarwe said.

YOUTH PIPELINE

The Under-12 and Under-15 divisions form part of BTTA's longer-term youth development programme, with the association seeking to establish a stronger pathway for players progressing through its national junior structures.

Holding the tournament in Mochudi also forms part of BTTA's effort to decentralise competitive opportunities. The association is taking tournaments to different parts of the country to broaden participation, identify talent and give young players outside Gaborone access to quality competition.

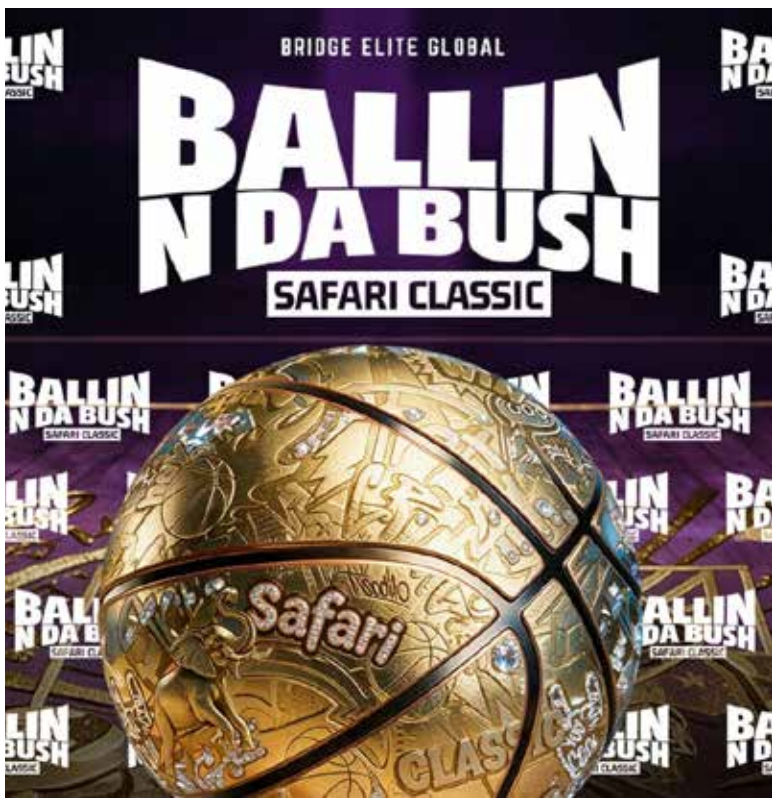
Mosarwe said regular domestic competition is important to developing players targeting the international stage. "Our objective is not only to prepare players for one tournament. We are building a pathway. We want these young players to gain experience early, improve their technical and tactical understanding and eventually become senior national team players," he said.

SELECTION STAKES

With the junior programme serving as the foundation for Botswana's future national teams, the Kgatleng Open will provide a competitive checkpoint ahead of the upcoming international assignments. For the young players, it is also an opportunity to gain match experience and demonstrate their readiness for consideration within the national youth structures.

Ballin N Da Bush Set For September

Botswana is preparing to host an international basketball tournament offering a US$100,000 prize purse and a pathway for local players.



Botswana has launched the Ballin N Da Bush Safari Classic, an international basketball tournament scheduled for September 28 to 30 at the University of Botswana Indoor Sports Arena in Gaborone.

The tournament is expected to feature clubs from Africa and Europe competing for a US$100,000 prize purse, equivalent to about P1.3 million. It is governed by the International Basketball Union and supported by Talent Capital, Bridge Elite Global and MyStocks.Africa.

BUILDING A BASKETBALL PLATFORM

Speaking at the launch in Gaborone on Tuesday, Talent Capital chief executive officer Mooketsi T.M.J. Morolong said the tournament was intended to create opportunities for local players while developing the broader basketball industry.

"We are not just hosting a tournament; we are building an ecosystem that will commercialise local talent and create scalable economic infrastructure through sports," said Morolong.

The Safari Classic follows an **invitational qualifying** tournament held at the SSKB Basketball Courts in October last year. Participating teams included Botswana's BDF V, Broadhurst Aspire and UB Relics, alongside clubs from South Africa, Mozambique, France, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Burkina Faso.

QUALIFIERS SET THE STAGE

According to organisers, the top three teams from **the qualifying to**urnament secured places in the main event.

"The invitational qualifiers allowed us to identify the highest-performing teams and assemble a competition that reflects the quality and standard we want the Safari Classic to be known for," Morolong said.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The tournament will also include basketball clinics led by former NBA players Earl Barron and Devin Green. Organisers have further announced plans for a permanent basketball academy aimed at developing local players and connecting them with international schools, colleges and professional clubs.

Morolong said the event forms part of a longer-term plan for basketball development.

"This is bigger than a single tournament. We are creating a platform that gives African talent global exposure, attracts investment into sport and establishes Botswana as a home for world-class basketball."

> "We are not just hosting a tournament; we are building an ecosystem that will commercialise local talent."

Tournament fixtures, participating teams and ticketing details are expected to be announced ahead of the event.

Botswana Talent Shines Beyond Borders

Young footballer Karabo Ditshupo is making his mark in Northern Ireland, offering another reminder that Botswana's sporting talent is emerging far beyond the country's borders.

ABRAM MAGOWE



Botswana's next generation of sporting talent is not confined to stadiums and training grounds at home. Across the diaspora, young Batswana are quietly making their mark in different sporting environments, and 11-year-old footballer Karabo Ditshupo is one of them.

Born in Northern Ireland on 1 January 2015 to a Motswana family, Ditshupo is steadily building a reputation as a promising young footballer in Banbridge town, where his performances have earned him trophies, medals and individual awards.

EARLY PROMISE

Still a schoolboy, Ditshupo has developed a particular reputation for his ability from free kicks, with his accuracy, confidence and technique helping him contribute important goals for his team.

His development, however, has been about more than individual moments. Coaches have described him as respectful, hardworking and eager to learn, while his performances have also earned him representative recognition and media attention.

Away from football, he continues to balance his training and matches with schoolwork, a demanding schedule that is already teaching him discipline, responsibility and time management.

FAMILY FOUNDATION

Behind Ditshupo's progress is his mother, Topo Ditshupo, a registered nurse who has raised him as a single parent while supporting his football ambitions.

Her role has been central to his development, providing the encouragement and stability needed for him to pursue the sport while remaining focused on his education.

The family also has a connection to Botswana football. Karabo is the nephew of Maano Ditshupo, the former captain of Township Rollers Football Club.

For a young player growing up thousands of kilometres from Botswana, his journey is also part of a broader story about the country's sporting potential.

BEYOND BORDERS

Young Batswana are developing their talents in different sporting systems around the world, creating a wider pool of athletes whose connections to Botswana remain significant even when they are born or raised abroad.

Ditshupo is still at the beginning of his football journey, and it is far too early to predict where the sport will eventually take him. But his progress in Northern Ireland demonstrates that promising Botswana-linked talent can emerge anywhere.

The original profile argues that young athletes in the diaspora should receive greater recognition and encouragement, particularly when they demonstrate exceptional ability, discipline and commitment.

For now, Ditshupo continues to learn, train and compete, one young footballer among a growing generation showing that Botswana's sporting story increasingly stretches beyond its borders.

"Exceptional talent can emerge anywhere, including among Botswana's sons and daughters growing up in the diaspora."

TIRED OF SHARING?



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The Botswana Gazette
SPORT

IS KEBINATSHIPI STILL GETTING FASTER?

33.

Coach Chilume Ntshwarang credits Collen Kebinatshipi's world-class season to discipline, hard work and steady growth as the 400m star heads toward the Diamond League final.



TAFISA CONGRESS TARGETS LASTING LEGACY



33.