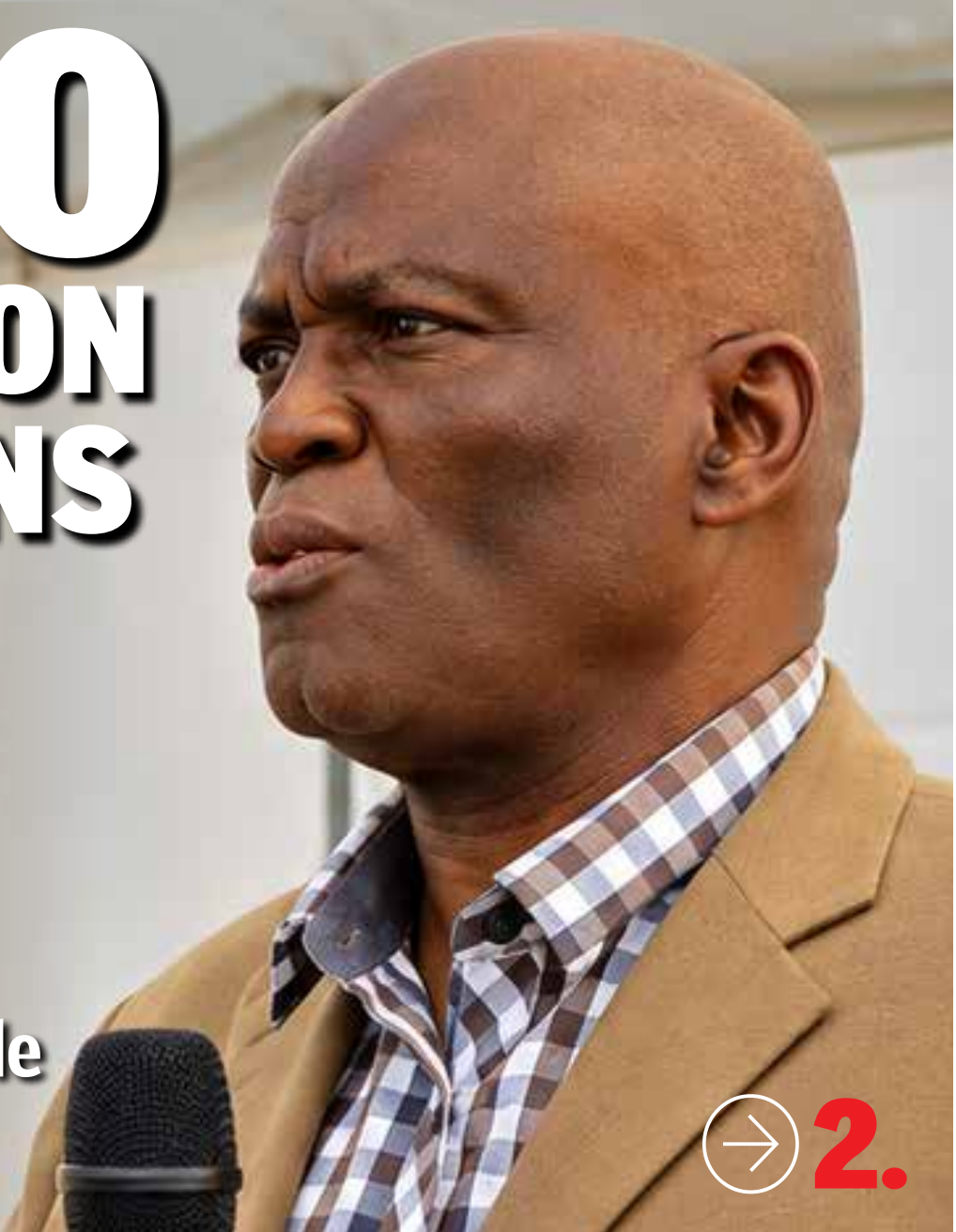


Is Anafiki's Story Worth Telling? ➔ **29.**



MOUPO WARNS UDC ON EXPECTATIONS

Former BNF president
Otsweletse Moupo warns
that the UDC must confront
public frustration over
unfulfilled promises and
move beyond opposition-style
politics now that it governs.



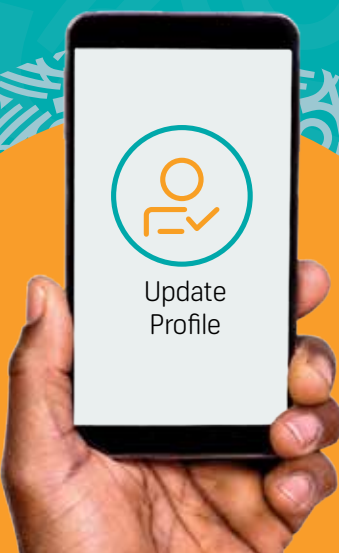
➔ **2.**

Botswana Coy Over Netanyahu Walkout



➔ **3.**

Medicine Stocks Stuck at 42 Percent ➔ **4.**



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MOUPO WARNS UDC ON EXPECTATIONS

Former BNF president Otsweletse Moupo warns that the UDC must confront public frustration over unfulfilled promises and move beyond opposition-style politics now that it governs.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Botswana National Front (BNF) is preparing to confront one of the UDC government’s most politically sensitive challenges, growing public expectations and frustration over the pace of delivery, at its upcoming special policy conference in Selebi-Phikwe.

EXPECTATIONS COL-LIDE

A draft document on the relationship between the party and state power after attaining government, prepared by former BNF president Otsweletse Moupo, describes the situation as a “crisis of public expectation”, acknowledging that sections of society are increasingly disgruntled that the UDC has not delivered on its election promises.

The document says the crisis



has been intensified by what it describes as an unfavourable economic environment inherited by the UDC, including a prolonged slump in the country’s main export commodity market and a severe fiscal crisis.

It attributes the fiscal difficulties largely to what it calls the “gross fiscal mismanagement, generalized waste and corruption” of the previous regime, arguing that the legacy has constrained the UDC government’s ability to fulfil its electoral promises in the short term.

RESULTS DEMANDED

The document does not dismiss public frustration as unreasonable. Instead, it acknowledges

that students, unemployed people, ordinary workers and underpaid private-sector employees voted for the UDC expecting a fundamentally different socio-economic dispensation.

“Now that the UDC is in power, masses are holding it to account,” the draft states.

New message

The document warns that the BNF and UDC cannot continue communicating with the public as though they remain opposition parties.

While it says the party should continue explaining socio-economic problems it believes were inherited from prolonged BDP rule, including the failure to di-

versify the economy, it argues that the political message must now acquire “a new content”.

It calls on public speakers to abandon, or significantly move away from, the traditional opposition style of spending most of their time attacking rival political parties.

Instead, the document says the party’s messaging should be built around demonstrable achievements under the UDC government, supported by “accurate concrete data” on political and socio-economic progress.

ADMIT FAILURES

Crucially, the document also calls for the party to acknowledge the government’s shortcomings

rather than attempting to explain away every failure.

It says the BNF and UDC must explain why positive changes promised by the new government are taking longer than expected while simultaneously offering the public a positive outlook for the future.

Promises watched

The challenge is particularly significant given the scale of commitments made by the BNF and its UDC partners ahead of the 2024 election.

Among the promises contained in the BNF’s 2024 manifesto were the creation of between 400,000 and 500,000 jobs within five years, increasing tertiary education allowances to P2,500, introducing health insurance and reducing the pension eligibility age from 65 to 60 years.

“Now that the UDC is in power, masses are holding it to account.”

These commitments have become part of the expectations against which the new government is being judged, particularly among young people, students, workers and unemployed citizens.

The document argues that only by combining evidence of progress with honesty about shortcomings can the governing movement retain credibility and continue to inspire hope among the population.

TIRED OF SHARING?



Elephant Feast Sparks Backlash

Conservationist warns the allocation of 25 elephants for Independence feasts risks weakening anti-poaching messaging and Botswana's global conservation standing.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The government's allocation of 25 elephants for slaughter during Botswana's Independence celebrations has triggered a conservation backlash, with Elephant Protection Society chairman Oaitse Nawa accusing authorities of undermining the country's wildlife conservation efforts.

CONSERVATION CONCERN

Speaking to The Botswana Gazette after the announcement by the Ministry of Environment and

Tourism, Nawa said the decision suggested that government was not taking elephant conservation seriously and risked sending the wrong message to communities and poachers.

He argued that slaughtering elephants for celebratory feasting could undermine Botswana's longstanding conservation reputation and expose the country to negative international publicity.

POACHING FEARS

Nawa warned that the decision could encourage poaching by creating the impression that killing elephants is acceptable when

sanctioned by government.

"This is a reckless decision that needs to be reconsidered. We have been sensitizing government about some of the decisions they take against elephant conservation, but our efforts seem to be falling on deaf ears," said Nawa.

The ministry has allocated 25 elephants for Independence celebrations across different districts, with the animals expected to form part of the traditional feasting associated with the national celebrations.

MIXED MESSAGE



(Pic: Monirul Bhuiyan/PRESS PHOTO)

Nawa questioned the conservation message government was sending by sanctioning the killing of elephants while simultaneously seeking to protect the country's wildlife populations.

"What message is the government sending to poachers and international conservationists?" he asked.

IMAGE AT STAKE

He said government decisions carry significant weight in shaping public attitudes towards wildlife, arguing that the authorised slaughter could weaken efforts to

discourage illegal killing.

The controversy comes as Botswana continues to position itself internationally as a country committed to wildlife conservation and the protection of its elephant population.

Nawa said the decision could damage Botswana's international image, particularly among conservation organisations and wildlife stakeholders that have long regarded the country as an important elephant range state.

Botswana Coy Over Netanyahu Walkout

Botswana has stopped short of confirming whether its delegation joined the UNGA walkout, leaving key diplomatic questions unanswered for now

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana has stopped short of confirming whether its delegation joined a dramatic walkout during Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), leaving questions hanging over what would amount to a pointed diplomatic gesture towards a country with which Botswana has maintained relations for more than five decades.

Botswana has appeared on widely circulated lists of countries whose seats were empty during Netanyahu's September 24 address in New York. However, available accounts do not conclusively distinguish between every delegation that physically walked out and countries whose representatives were already absent from the chamber.

Reports of a 77-country protest, for example, have grouped together delegations that walked out with those that were absent when Netanyahu spoke. Botswana is among the countries appearing in that broader category. Reuters footage independently



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

confirms that dozens of delegates walked out as Netanyahu took the podium, but does not provide a definitive country-by-country identification.

SEEKING ANSWERS

Against that uncertainty, The Botswana Gazette approached Minister of International Rela-

tions Dr Phenyio Butale seeking an unequivocal confirmation of whether Botswana participated in the walkout and, if so, whether the move was authorised and what message the government intended to send.

Butale did not immediately confirm or deny Botswana's

participation, instead telling the Gazette that government needed more time to respond because of the delicate nature of the matter.

The guarded response leaves Botswana in an awkward position as its name is circulating internationally alongside countries associated with the protest, while the government has yet to establish whether its delegation actually walked out, was simply absent, or whether some representatives left while others remained.

TAKING NOTES

The incident attracted further attention after footage emerged showing an Israeli official moving through the UN chamber and apparently taking notes as he inspected empty delegation seats. Al Jazeera reported that the official was filmed taking notes following the walkout, although the contents of those notes were not visible.

The distinction between deliberately walking out and merely being absent could prove important diplomatically.

Botswana has maintained formal diplomatic relations with Israel since December 1972. It also formally established relations with the State of Palestine in March 2017, according to the Ministry of International Relations' diplomatic records.

Under Butale, Botswana has publicly stated that its foreign policy is anchored on peaceful coexistence, peaceful resolution of conflict, human rights and multilateralism. Earlier this year, the minister said government wanted a human-rights-centred foreign policy while maintaining strategic international partnerships.

That makes clarity over what

happened in New York particularly important. A deliberate walkout would constitute a visible diplomatic action and would raise questions about whether Botswana was signalling a harder position towards Israel. An absence, on the other hand, would not necessarily carry the same meaning.

HIGHLIGHT:
Botswana has appeared on widely circulated lists of countries whose seats were empty during Netanyahu's September 24 address in New York.

For now, Botswana has confirmed neither interpretation. Until government provides its promised response, the central questions remain unanswered: Was Botswana part of the protest? Who authorised it, if it was? What message was Botswana sending? And does the episode have any implications for Botswana's longstanding diplomatic relationship with Israel?

Medicine Stocks Stuck at 42 Percent

CMS figures put average availability of vital, essential and necessary medicines at 42 percent as the Ministry of Health targets 97 percent availability by December.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's medicine supply crisis remains far from resolved, with the Central Medical Stores (CMS) recording average availability of Vital, Essential and Necessary (VEN) medicines at just 42 percent, according to fresh figures released by the Ministry of Health to The Botswana Gazette.

In response to enquiries by The Gazette, the Ministry said that as at 23 September 2026, availability of vital medicines stood at 49 percent, essential medicines at 40 percent and necessary medicines at 20 percent.

The figures provide a fresh snapshot of the pressure confronting the public medicine supply chain despite months of emergency procurement and government interventions aimed at stabilising supplies.

LESS THAN HALF



According to the Ministry, the three categories combined translate into an average VEN medicine availability rate of 42 percent at CMS.

CMS manages a wide range of medicine lines, including tablets, injections, suspensions and creams used to treat different conditions. Some are maintained as regular stock, while specialist medicines may be procured only when required.

CENTRAL STOCKS

The Ministry said CMS stock figures should not be interpreted to mean that medicines unavailable at the central warehouse are necessarily unavailable throughout the health system.

"Some medicines may not be available at CMS but available at different health facilities," the Ministry said.

It added that CMS does not keep bulky quantities of medicines centrally because the supply system is structured to maintain at least one month's supply at hospitals and clinics. As medicines arrive at CMS, they are processed and distributed to health facilities to maintain continuity of care.

DECEMBER TARGET

Despite the current 42 percent average at CMS, the Ministry said it continues to work with CMS and its partners towards achieving 97 percent medicine availability and maintaining a three-month stock reserve at CMS by December 2026.

The target leaves health authorities with a substantial gap to close over the remaining months of the year.

SUPPLY PRESSURE

Medicine shortages have remained one of Botswana's most persistent health-sector challenges. In July, Parliament's Public Accounts Committee raised concerns about shortages of essential medicines and delays in distribution. The Ministry told the committee that regulatory processes were among the factors contributing to delays in distributing some medicines.

The latest CMS figures also come against the background of a medicine shortage crisis that prompted government to pursue emergency and international procurement measures.

In March, the Ministry told Parliament that the crisis had exposed systemic weaknesses in forecasting, procurement, logistics and distribution. Government subsequently established a National Logistics Taskforce and pursued international orders as part of efforts to rebuild supplies.

The Ministry maintains that it is committed to improving procurement processes and stabilising the supply chain, with December 2026 now the deadline against which its 97 percent availability and three-month CMS reserve targets will be tested.



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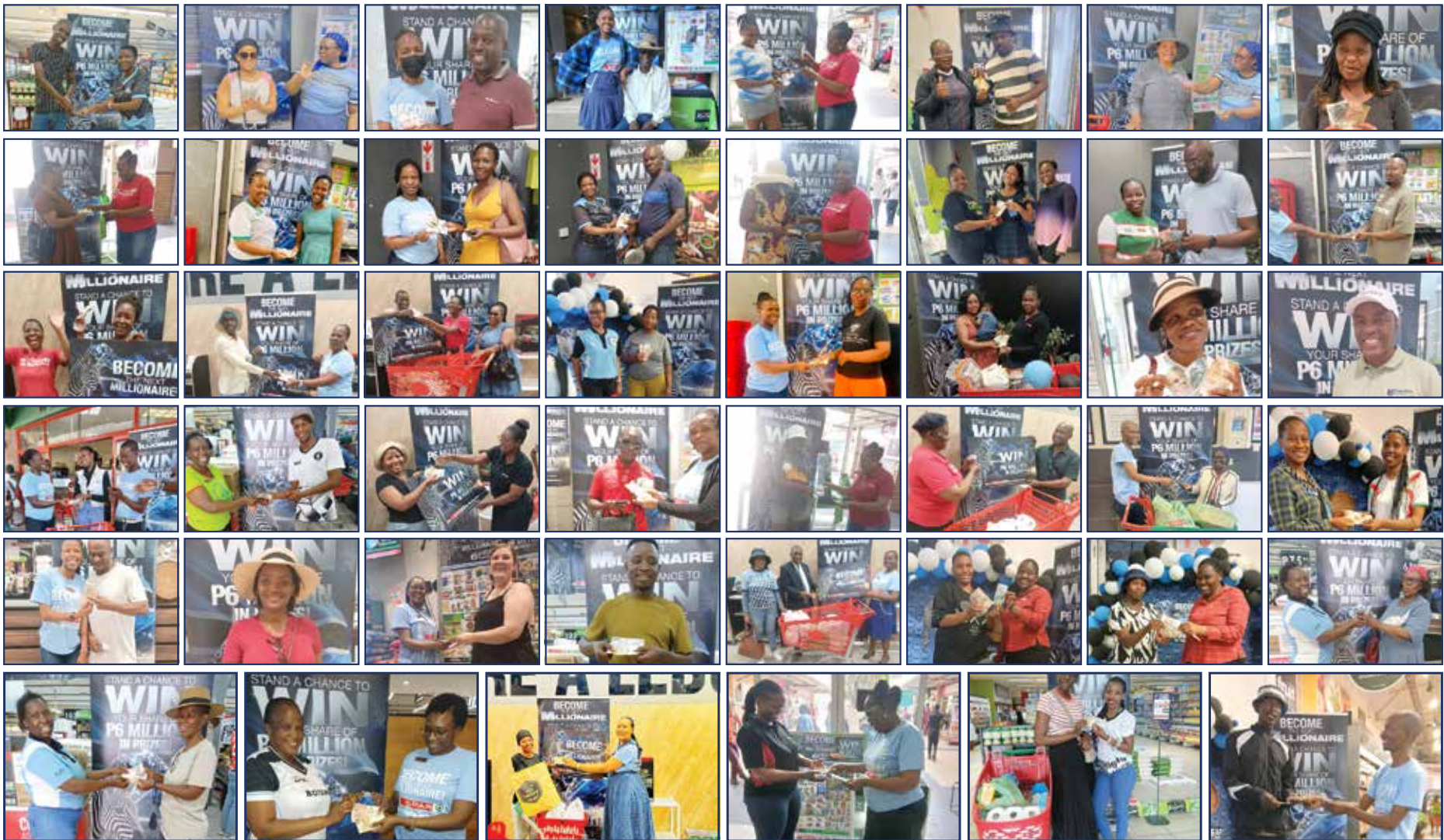
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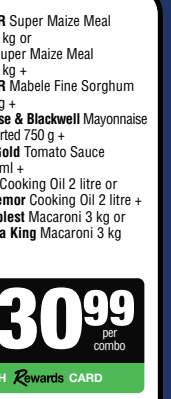
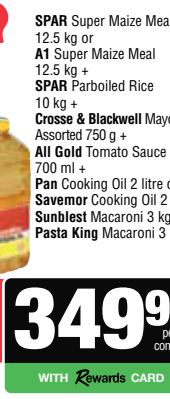
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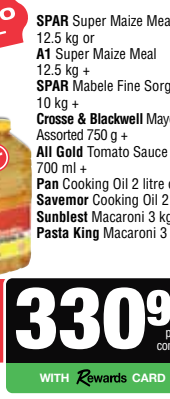


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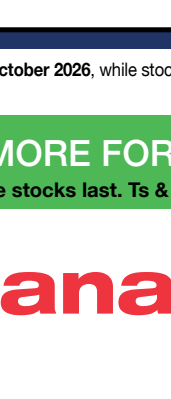
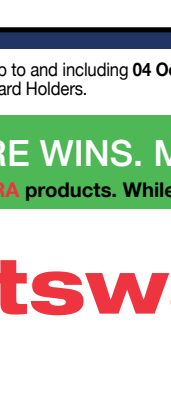


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Feedlots Seek Global FMD



“We are not asking for veterinary safeguards to be ignored, we are asking for a practical and science based pathway to market.”

Feedlot operators are pushing for a World Organisation for Animal Health-backed route to market as FMD restrictions deepen financial and animal-welfare losses.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana feedlot operators JS Beef and Primelots are invoking World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) mechanisms in a renewed push for a practical, science-based route to market for thousands of cattle stranded by Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) restrictions, weeks after suffering a High Court setback.

CATTLE STRANDED

The Lobatse-area operators say approximately 6,600 cattle remain trapped in their feedlots despite prolonged isolation, repeated vaccination and veterinary supervision. They argue that the crisis is inflicting severe financial and animal-welfare damage while

squeezing thousands of farmers who depend on the feedlots as a market.

“Combined we work with approximately 25 000 cattle producers who supply cattle to our feedlots. These cattle were specifically purchased and prepared for supply to the European Union market. Under normal circumstances they should have been slaughtered, processed and supplied through Botswana’s approved export system. Instead, they remain trapped in our feedlots,” the companies said in a joint statement released last week.

The companies said their feedlots have been in isolation since April 2, with no cattle entering or leaving. The animals are fully traceable, have been vaccinated three times under veterinary supervision and remain subject to biosecurity controls.

COURT SETBACK

Their latest push comes after the Gaborone High Court last month dismissed with costs an urgent application brought by JS Beef and Primefast (Pty) Ltd over the FMD restrictions. Justice Onkemetse Tshosa ruled that the case did not meet the requirements for urgency, finding that the operators had waited too long to approach the court after months of engagement with veterinary and government authorities failed to produce a solution.

The operators had sought targeted relief that would allow the cattle to be slaughtered or exported rather than overturn the broader disease-control regime. Government opposed the application, arguing that the operators’ commercial interests had to be balanced against disease control and the interests of the wider cattle industry.

WOAH ROUTE

With the court route failing to provide immediate relief, the companies are now pressing authorities to pursue mechanisms recognised under WOAH standards.

“We are not asking for veterinary safeguards to be ignored, we are asking for a practical and science based pathway to market. The World Organisation for Animal Health provides mechanisms through which meat from vaccinated cattle can be handled and traded safely when correct controls are applied. The necessary processing measures can be implemented and buyers are interested. What is missing is an urgent and practical agreement between the relevant authorities,” they said.

COSTS MOUNT

For farmers and the feedlots, time has become the biggest enemy. Cattle that would ordinarily spend around 120 days in a feedlot have now been confined and fed for between 280 and 360 days, according to the statement.

The prolonged stay has depleted financial resources, forcing the operators to rely partly on assistance from suppliers and members of the public for feed, while some creditors have postponed payments. The companies say extended confinement is increasingly affecting animal welfare, with some cattle becoming sick and others already dying.

MARKET CHOKE

The pressure stretches beyond the 6,600 stranded animals. With the feedlots sourcing cattle from thousands of producers, failure to clear finished animals restricts their ability to take in new stock, choking an important route to market and transferring the strain deeper into the farming community.

The crisis followed FMD outbreaks that triggered movement and slaughter restrictions. In April, the European Union suspended beef imports from affected Botswana zones while WOAH suspended the larger zone’s FMD-free status.

JS Beef and Primelots insist they are not seeking weaker disease controls. Instead, they want authorities to translate internationally recognised science into a workable route that protects veterinary safeguards without allowing farmers, feedlots and thousands of cattle to remain indefinitely trapped by the FMD crisis.



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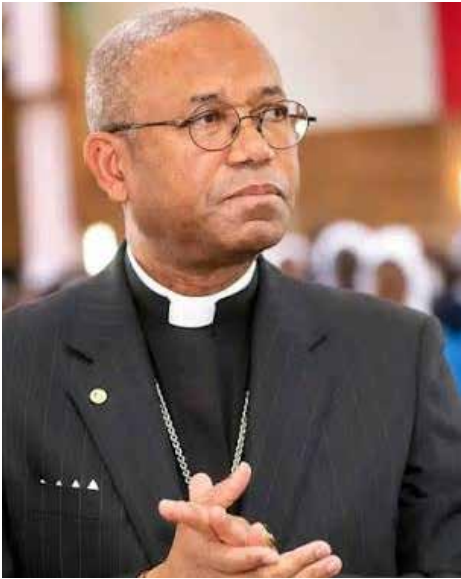
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Mwamba Family Intensifies Release Campaign

The family of former Botswana Anglican Bishop Trevor Mwamba is widening an international campaign for his release as his detention in Zambia stretches beyond six weeks.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The family of former Botswana Anglican Bishop Trevor Mwamba is stepping up efforts to draw international attention to his detention in Zambia, pleading with authorities to release him as his incarceration stretches beyond six weeks.

The campaign received fresh international exposure over the weekend when BBC Africa featured Mwamba's detention, with his son, Eno Mwamba, making an emotional appeal for his father's release. Zambian media have since amplified the family's call.

"All we are trying to do is just to keep bringing attention to his detention and asking broadly for his release," Eno told BBC Africa.

Six weeks detained

Mwamba, a Zambian national and former Bishop of Botswana, was among 11 people apprehended during an August 14 security operation at the Lusaka residence of opposition politician Brian Mundubile.

He is now among 18 detainees challenging their continued detention in Zambia's High Court.

Zambian authorities have linked the group to alleged offences relating to treason. In a statement following the operation, Inspector General of Police Graphel Musamba said security officers recovered firearms, ammunition and other material from the premises, including what police described as restricted military weapons.

Authorities said the seized material was undergoing examination to determine ownership, intended use and any connection to the alleged offences.

The allegations remain before the courts and have not been determined at trial. The United Kingdom government said this month that its High Commission in Lusaka was following the case and had stressed to the Zambian government the importance of transparency and due process.

Family pushes back

Mwamba's family is pushing back against any suggestion that he was involved in violent activity. His son described the 68-year-old as "a man of peace, who has dedicated his life to the service and help of other people."

"My father's detention is a question my family is struggling with because he has contested in Zambian elections before. He ran as the president of UNIP, running for the presidency of Zambia. This time around, he is not running for president. He is part of an opposition coalition and now that has found him in jail," Eno said.

According to his son, confirmation that Mwamba is alive has brought a measure of relief after uncertainty initially surrounded

his whereabouts.

"Given that he's been sighted, he's been seen, we know his whereabouts. We know where he is, and more importantly, we know he's alive," Eno told BBC Africa, describing that as the family's "biggest relief."

Botswana ties

The detention carries particular resonance in Botswana, where Mwamba spent decades of his clerical and professional life. He arrived in Botswana in 1987 and later served as Bishop of Botswana from 2005 until 2013, becoming a familiar figure in the country's religious and public life.

His Botswana connections also run through his family. He is married to Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba, a former

Botswana diplomat and Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, who is the daughter of Botswana's second president, Sir Ketumile Masire.

Pressure widens

Former Botswana president Ian Khama has also drawn attention to Mwamba's plight in recent weeks, adding his voice to concern over the former bishop's detention, although the family has remained at the centre of the campaign for his release.

The family's efforts are increasingly reaching beyond Zambia. The Anglican Church of Southern Africa has publicly expressed concern over Mwamba's detention, while questions about his treatment, whereabouts and access to legal representation have also reached the UK Parliament.



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HB Antwerp Blames Failed Deal

The Belgian diamond firm says the failure to conclude Botswana's proposed 2023 strategic partnership and unlock ODC rough supply has forced it to scale down local operations.



In an interview with international media outlet Reuters last week, HB Antwerp managing partner Boaz Lev directly linked the company's planned downsizing to the failure of those commitments to materialise.

BONGANI MALUNGA

HB Antwerp has blamed the failure of its high-profile 2023 diamond arrangement with Botswana for its decision to significantly downsize local operations, bringing long-running uncertainty sur-

rounding the proposed partnership to a head.

DEAL STALLED

The Belgian diamond company says the restructuring follows the failure to secure the rough diamond supply envisaged when the previous government announced a strategic partnership with HB

Antwerp in March 2023.

Under the arrangement, Botswana was expected to acquire a 24 percent equity stake in HB Antwerp, while the company was earmarked to receive 10 percent of Okavango Diamond Company's (ODC) rough diamond production for five years. Although

key commercial terms had been agreed in principle, definitive contracts were still to be concluded.

RESTRUCTURING BEGINS

In an interview with international media outlet Reuters last week, HB Antwerp managing partner Boaz Lev directly linked the company's planned downsizing to the failure of those commitments to materialise.

"We are performing restructuring and resizing work to match with what we currently have, since whatever was foreseen in 2023 has not materialised to date," Lev told Reuters.

Lev said the company would undergo "significant restructuring", although he declined to disclose how many employees would be affected. Reuters reported that HB Antwerp had repeatedly engaged the government that assumed office after the October 2024 general election but had still not received the ODC supply envisaged under the earlier arrangement.

80 PERCENT WARNING

The development follows a warning issued by HB Antwerp to the Commissioner of Labour in December 2025 that as much as 80 percent of its workforce could be retrenched if the company failed to receive rough diamonds from ODC by the end of March 2026.

That deadline has since passed, with the company now moving ahead with a restructuring that effectively scales its Botswana

operation to the level of business currently available to it.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

The latest position from HB Antwerp contrasts with the stance previously taken by President Duma Boko's administration, which has maintained that the proposed transaction inherited from the previous government never developed into a binding agreement.

Minerals and Energy Minister Bogolo Kenewendo told international jewellery publication JCK in March 2025 that the new administration did not regard itself as having a concluded agreement with the Belgian company.

"We do not have any contracts or agreement with HB," Kenewendo said. She subsequently added: "There are no ongoing negotiations."

In an earlier press conference in Gaborone, before Kenewendo's comments, President Boko similarly said the matter had remained at the due-diligence stage under the previous administration. He said HB Antwerp had proposed bringing expertise in diamond cutting, polishing and marketing to Botswana, but the government was still assessing the proposal when political power changed hands.

INVESTMENT PLAN

The previous administration had gone considerably further in its stated ambitions. Government had set aside about P890 million for the proposed investment and later considered increasing Botswana's contemplated shareholding from 24 percent without injecting additional capital after falling diamond-market valuations altered HB Antwerp's valuation.

BoMRA Takes TB Case Global

BoMRA has asked the World Health Organisation to engage Indian authorities over recalled TB medicines found deficient in critical treatment components.



BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority (BoMRA) has escalated the controversy surrounding faulty tuberculosis medicines to

the World Health Organisation (WHO), seeking intervention over drugs originating from India that were found deficient in critical components needed to treat TB.

The latest development shifts

the matter from a domestic investigation into an international regulatory issue, months after Botswana recalled the affected medicines following an unusual rise in patients failing to respond to treatment.

The escalation was revealed before the Gaborone City Council (GCC) last Thursday, where councillors have been pressing health authorities to explain what action has been taken against those responsible for supplying the defective medicines.

COMPLAINT LODGED

Providing an update, GCC Deputy Clerk-Primary Health Care Kgomo Moruosi said BoMRA had formally approached WHO, requesting the global health body to engage Indian authorities over the matter.

"BoMRA has officially written to the World Health Organisation (WHO) regarding this matter for the organisation to reach out to the Indian government, where the medicines came from. The matter is currently before the WHO," Moruosi revealed.

The development potentially opens a new chapter in a controversy that erupted late last year after routine monitoring by the Ministry of Health detected an abnormal increase in TB treatment failures.

FAULTY BATCH

In December 2025, the Ministry announced that an affected batch of Fixed Dose Combination TB medicines had been quarantined and recalled after

laboratory testing established that it was deficient in Rifampicin and Ethambutol, two critical medicines used in TB treatment.

The Ministry said surveillance had identified 40 patients who were not responding to treatment as expected, compared with 22 recorded over a comparable period a year earlier.

Patients who had received the affected medicines were subsequently called back for clinical reassessment and placed on alternative treatment according to their stage of care. Health authorities also initiated contact tracing and community screening measures aimed at limiting the risk of further TB transmission.

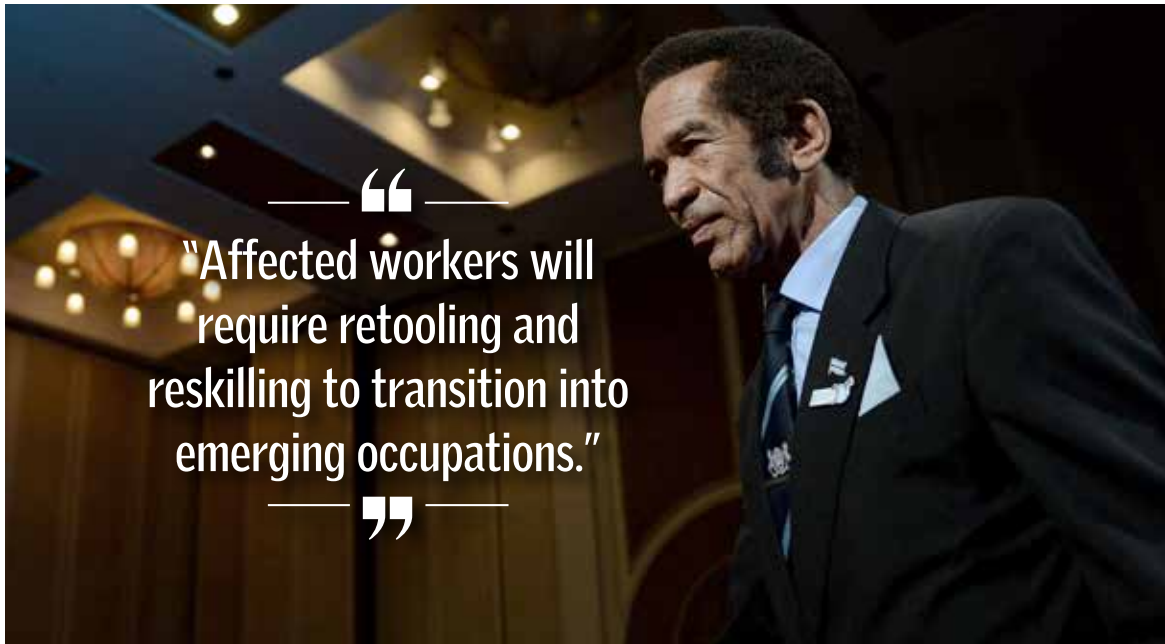
ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

The Ministry's December intervention addressed the immediate public health consequences, but questions have persisted over accountability for the defective medicines and how they entered Botswana's pharmaceutical supply chain.

GCC councillors have continued to pursue those questions, seeking clarity on measures being taken against parties responsible for the medicines.

Khama Says Government Has Not Intervened

Former president Ian Khama says Botswana has neither objected to nor asked him to stop his criticism of African leaders, including Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Former president Ian Khama says his increasingly vocal criticism of African leaders he accuses of undermining democracy does not conflict with Botswana's foreign policy, insisting that government has neither challenged his interventions nor asked him to tone them down.

Khama, who has recently turned his attention to Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema, says he will continue what he describes as a policy of publicly

"naming and shaming" African leaders whenever conventional diplomacy and regional institutions fail to protect democratic norms and human rights.

His position raises a diplomatic dimension for Botswana, which has been strengthening relations with neighbours including Zambia under President Duma Boko.

Botswana and Zambia have deepened bilateral cooperation, including through their inaugural Bi-National Commission in 2025 and the establishment of the Kazungula Bridge Authority this

year. In February, Boko and Hichilema jointly launched the Authority, describing the initiative as part of a broader partnership between the two neighbouring countries.

Boko was also among the African leaders who attended Hichilema's inauguration for a second term in Lusaka on 1 September.

No intervention

Against that backdrop, Khama maintains that his criticism of Hichilema should not be interpreted as an attempt to establish a competing Botswana foreign policy.

He told The Gazette that he had received no communication from the Minister of International Relations expressing concern about his statements or asking him to stop.

"My calls are not in any way running parallel to Botswana's diplomatic or foreign policy," Khama said.

"In any case, I have not received any calls from the Minister raising concerns about my decision or urging me to tone down or to stop and desist."

Botswana's Ministry of International Relations is officially responsible for managing and coordinating the country's foreign policy. Its stated foreign-policy principles include democracy, good neighbourliness, peaceful coexistence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Khama went further, saying he was unaware of any public intervention by Botswana against the alleged abuses he has accused Hichilema's administration of committing.

"Additionally, I have not heard anything that we as Botswana were doing anything to counter Hichilema's human rights abuses," he said. "Had I known, perhaps I could have joined such efforts."

Diplomatic route

Khama said he had not immediately resorted to public criticism but had first attempted to raise his concerns through Zambia's diplomatic representation in Botswana.

"I tried on my own to pursue the diplomatic route when I reached out to the Zambian High Commissioner, but he was outside the country and I was told he would revert, but they never did," he said, adding that "we can't be diplomatic about violent human rights abuses."

Zambia criticism

Khama said he was particularly disappointed with Hichilema be-

cause the Zambian leader had himself experienced repression during his years in opposition under former president Edgar Lungu.

"During Hichilema's ordeal, I reached out through a letter to Lungu urging him to stop what he was doing to the opposition," Khama said.

"This is why I am shocked that someone we fought so much for, like Hichilema, could betray us like this."

Hichilema began his second term this month following an election whose aftermath has been marked by disputes and the arrests of opposition figures. Election observers raised concerns about aspects of the process, while Hichilema's government has rejected allegations of electoral wrongdoing.

Wider frustration

Khama said his criticism extended beyond Zambia and reflected his broader frustration with African regional institutions and the way leaders respond to alleged democratic violations on the continent.

He said he had lost confidence in conventional diplomatic engagement because, in his view, African leaders often return to cordial relations with one another once disputed elections have passed, regardless of what happened to ordinary citizens.

He therefore vowed to continue publicly calling out leaders whom he believes violate constitutional and democratic principles to prolong their stay in power.

"Elections come and go, and these leaders, once elections are gone, go back to wining and dining with each other while citizens are in hospitals, prisons and cemeteries," Khama said.

Pull Quote Suggestion

"My calls are not in any way running parallel to Botswana's diplomatic or foreign policy."

Automation Puts Traditional Jobs at Risk

HRDC warns that automation and digitalisation are displacing routine work as Botswana's labour market shifts towards specialised, technology-driven skills.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana workers and job seekers face a changing labour market in which new technology-driven occupations are gaining importance while some traditional jobs risk disappearing under the weight of automation and digitalisation.

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)'s Annual Priority Skills Report 2026 identifies occupations expected to grow in importance while warning that repetitive and manual jobs are increasingly being displaced by technology and changing workplace practices.

According to HRDC, technological advances, artificial intelligence and climate change are

reshaping skills requirements, creating opportunities for workers with digital, analytical and specialised capabilities while threatening some established occupations.

NEW JOBS EMERGE

Among public-sector priority occupations identified by HRDC are Digital Transformation and AI Leads, Climate-Resilient Project Managers, Urban Planners, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning specialists, Strategic Resource Mobilisation Officers and Policy Advocacy Strategists.

The list also includes Youth Resilience Coaches, Social Entrepreneurs/Venture Creators, firefighters and project managers.

HRDC further identifies grow-

ing demand for SMME business modelling, financial modelling, market analysis, climate-risk assessment and project design.

Emerging specialised professions include energy, labour, human-rights and data-protection lawyers as regulatory and technological changes generate new demands. Skills in ethical AI governance, innovation, resilience, change management and communicating complex data are also expected to become increasingly valuable.

Routine jobs shrink

As new careers emerge, HRDC warns that other occupations and tasks are becoming redundant or vulnerable to technological displacement.

Hospital orderlies, X-ray attendants, manual data-capturing workers, data-capturing clerks and typists are among occupations identified as facing redundancy or displacement.

Bulk printing and posting,

manual sorting, copper cabling, hand-pattern marking and hand grading are also listed among vulnerable activities.

Citing global employment trends identified by the World Economic Forum, HRDC says affected workers will require retooling and reskilling to transition into emerging occupations.

PUBLIC SERVICE SHIFT

The transformation could also reshape Botswana's public service. HRDC argues that government should progressively offload implementation responsibilities to the private sector and concentrate on policy formulation and facilitation.

The report calls for right-sizing the public service while improving work ethics and strengthening implementation of policies and legislation. It identifies a ballooned public service, poor project implementation, corruption, crime, ineffective social protection programmes and rising youth

unemployment among challenges requiring attention.

Under the proposed private-sector-led economic model, government would increasingly facilitate investment, competitiveness, public-private partnerships and employment creation.

RESKILLING RACE

The emerging public service could consequently require fewer employees performing routine administrative tasks while increasing demand for specialists capable of managing digital transformation, complex projects, climate risks, policy and accountability.

HRDC says continuous monitoring of these shifts will be critical to ensuring Botswana trains workers for jobs that will exist in the future rather than occupations gradually disappearing from the economy.

Graduate Skills Expire Before Jobs

HRDC warns that prolonged unemployment is leaving some graduates with outdated skills before they get a chance to enter the workplace.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana graduates are waiting so long for employment that some of the skills acquired at university and other training institutions become outdated before they get an opportunity to use them, a new Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) report has warned.

The Annual Priority Skills Report 2026, presented to the Ministry of Finance on 15 September, identifies prolonged unemployment, limited job opportunities and mismatches between qualifications and industry needs as major challenges confronting Botswana's labour market.

According to the report, sluggish economic growth has constrained employment creation across most industries, leaving relatively few openings for the growing number of graduates entering the labour market.

"Graduates' waiting period for employment is too long because of limited job opportunities and their skills become outdated," the report states.

JOBS REMAIN SCARCE

The findings paint a difficult picture for graduates, suggesting that obtaining a qualification increasingly offers no guarantee of a smooth transition into employment.

HRDC says the problem is compounded by Botswana producing large numbers of graduates with general qualifications while employers increasingly require specialised capabilities.

Government sponsorship, the report notes, has traditionally concentrated on general qualifications, contributing to saturation in some fields while industry

“Graduates’ waiting period for employment is too long because of limited job opportunities and their skills become outdated.”

struggles to find specialised skills.

SKILLS MISMATCH

The report also raises concerns about inadequate workplace exposure among students and trainers.

According to HRDC, industry stakeholders have questioned the quality of

some graduates from local education and training institutions because they have insufficient exposure to real working environments.

TRAINING SHIFT

HRDC is consequently calling for a fundamental shift from qualification-driven education towards skills-based training aligned with the needs of the economy.

It says Botswana must move away from a mindset in which education is pursued primarily to secure employment towards one that also promotes entrepreneurship, job creation, research, innovation and development.

The report recommends accelerating Science, Technology, Research, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education while strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

It proposes rationalising TVET programmes and institutions and establishing centres of excellence concentrating on emerging areas, particularly digital and green skills.

Industry simulations should also be introduced to give students practical experience before entering workplaces, while private-sector participation in curriculum development and student and trainer attachments should be strengthened.

FUTURE DEMAND

HRDC recommends directing government sponsorship towards priority skills linked to NDP12 and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme, using labour-market forecasts to determine how many students should be trained in particular disciplines.

The digital, green and care economies are identified as significant sources of future skills demand.

Artificial intelligence, data analytics, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, specialised healthcare and education are among areas expected to become increasingly important. Tourism, agriculture and the creative industries will similarly require technological modernisation and stronger value chains.

HRDC says the challenge is therefore no longer simply producing more graduates, but developing a workforce whose skills remain relevant to Botswana's changing economy.

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Ministry of Communications
And Innovation
Private Bag 00414
Gaborone
Botswana

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT
VACANCY CIRCULAR NO. 7 OF 2026

Ref: MCI 4/2/9 I (12)

11 September 2026

DIRECTOR GENERAL – DIGITAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
- FO SALARY SCALE

Applications are invited from talented, innovative, decisive and self-driven qualified citizens of Botswana to fill the above vacancy tenable at the Ministry of Communications and Innovation – Headquarters on contract basis.

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

To provide strategic and operational leadership to the Digital Services Authority, ensuring effective regulation, coordination and promotion of digital services in Botswana in line with the Digital Services Act and national digital transformation priorities and strategies.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

- Leads the development, promotion and management of digital service policies and programmes.
- Provide strategic leadership in coordination, development and enforcement of strategies, standards and guidelines that enhance provision and usage of digital services and services continuity.
- Provides advice, information or policy proposals to the Minister on matters relating to digital services.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of the development of supportive and enabling shared digital public infrastructure guidelines to ensure equitable access to effective and appropriate provision of digital services.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of the design of appropriate applications for the support of e-government and information management systems.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of the development and implementation of a National Digital Services Strategic Plan.
- Provide strategic leadership in oversight of the establishment of a structured digital services stability management plan.
- Provides strategic leadership in provision of conducive environment for content creation by forming partnerships or collaborations with both local and international organizations that provide content services.
- Provides strategic leadership in coordination of research to promote the adoption and adaption of new emerging technologies to promote digital services.
- Provide strategic leadership in coordination of the development and administration of information gateways.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of the development and maintenance of a Digital Services Integrity Register for availed digital services provided by public and private bodies.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of protection of government-created digital assets such as platforms, process models, algorithms and trademarks under relevant laws.
- Provides strategic leadership in coordination of development and maintenance of online repository of tools, best practices, and schema standards to facilitate the adoption of open data practices.
- Provides strategic leadership in oversight of the establishment of a standardized framework for secure exchange of information over the internet.
- Provides strategic leadership in coordination of the conduct of audits of public or private bodies to evaluate compliance with the provisions of the Digital Services Act.
- Prepares and submit a comprehensive annual report of the Authority operations.
- Coordinates compliance and adherence to government regulations and instruments.
- Provides professional guidance, coaching and mentoring to staff.
- Monitors and ensures that all the functions and activities of the Authority comply with national legislation and quality management standards
- Undertakes any other duties as required to meet the exigencies of the service.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor’s degree in Information Communication Technology or Computer Engineering or any a related field. Masters in the related field will be an added advantage.

EXPERIENCE: Minimum of twenty (20) years’ experience in Information Communication Technology or digital services management, of which two (2) years should have been served at Deputy Permanent Secretary level or equivalent executive management role. Applicants must have a proven track record of leading large scale digital transformation, e-government initiatives or complex technology programs.

SALARY SCALE: F0 (P789 396) per annum
LEAVE: 30 Working days per annum

BENEFITS:

- Optional contributory Medical Aid Scheme (Government pays 50% and employee pays 50%).
- Commuted Overtime allowance at 15% of basic salary
- Housing allowance at 2% of basic salary
- Gratuity at 30% of cumulative salary

KEY COMPETENCIES:

Leadership

- Deciding and Initiating Action
- Leading and Supervising
- Working with People
- Adhering to Principles and Values
- Persuading and Influencing
- Analyzing
- Formulating strategies and Concepts
- Adapting & Responding to Change

Technical

- E-Government Service Design
- Public Sector Digital Transformation
- Policy, Legal & Regulatory Interpretation
- Emerging Digital Tools & Platforms
- Financial Management & Resource Mobilization

APPLICATION: Applicants should quote the reference number of this advert and give the following information: -

- a) Full names, postal address, date and place of birth.
- b) Full summary of career with duties (Curriculum Vitae-CV) with **full dates**.
- c) Certified copies of relevant certificates and National Identity Card.
- d) At least two (2) copies of recent work-related references (with full contact details) confirming the relevant experience.
- e) Present post, salary grade and date of appointment thereto.
- f) Date of first appointment.
- g) Applicants with Engineering qualifications must provide valid proof of registration with Engineering Registration Board (ERB) or equivalent institution.

IMPORTANT:

All applications for Public Service employees **must** be routed through Permanent Secretaries. Applications not so routed will not be considered. Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements will not be responded to.

Applications should be addressed to;

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Communications and Innovation
P/Bag 00414
Gaborone

Or hand delivered to
Ministry of Communications and Innovation,
Westgate Mall, Records Management Unit, Ground Floor.

For any enquiries contact Human Resources Division at 3625618/3625525/3625524/3625513/3625515

Closing Date: 9 October 2026

Disclaimer:

By submitting your application or CV, you acknowledge that the processing of your personal data is solely for recruitment purposes. Your information may be shared with authorized personnel and approved recruitment Partners in line with the Botswana Data Protection Act, 2024.

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800KM OF PURPOSE

Four days, four stages and one shared cause carried Bomaïd and the AM640+ riders from Jwaneng to Maun, turning endurance into a journey of wellness and community impact.



LEATILE ZACHARIAH

For four days, the road from Jwaneng to Maun became more than a test of endurance. It became a moving statement about health, discipline, community and what can happen when corporate leadership gets off the sidelines and joins the journey.



Led by Bomaïd Chief Executive Officer Moraki Mokgosana as Chief Rider, cyclists in the Albert Milton Foundation's AM640+ Charity Cycle Chal-

lenge covered about 800 kilometres through Kang, Ghanzi and Toteng before reaching Maun on 24 September.

The ride honours the late Albert Milton, former Debswana Managing Director and avid cyclist. This year's challenge marked what would have been his 64th year, with the "+" reflecting a journey that stretched beyond the symbolic 640 kilometres.

ON THE ROAD

The tone was set in Jwaneng, where Assistant Minister of Health Lawrence Ookeditse joined the opening kilometres alongside corporate leaders and partners. At the send-off, the initiative was framed as a collective effort, with public and private sector participants lending their presence to a cause built around healthier communities and



practical giving.

For Mokgosana, the distance was never only about finishing.

"I'm not a very strong cyclist, but I think I train very hard to try and get myself prepared for the event," he said before the ride.

More important, he added, was combining fitness with charity and showing that even executives working in high-pressure environments must make time for their health.

That message followed the riders across the Trans-Kalahari route. From Jwaneng to Kang, then Ghanzi, Toteng and finally Maun, the physical demands of hydration, nutrition, recovery and daily movement gave

the journey to engage customers on understanding their medical aid cover, accessing healthcare outside Botswana, travel insurance and the Thrive with Bomaïd wellness platform. Customers were also encouraged to convert Thrive reward points into contributions towards the ride's community projects.

BEYOND THE BIKE

But the AM640+ was equally about what happened beyond the bicycles.

“The true driver behind every kilometre is impact.”
— Albertinah Milton

Along the route, Mascom donated school supplies to Metsimantsho Primary School in the Charles Hill area, while Epiroc supported D'kar Primary School. Albert Milton Foundation founder and trustee Albertinah Milton said the purpose behind the long kilometres was to mobilise meaningful support for communities.

"The true driver behind every kilometre is impact," she said.

The final stage brought that idea into sharp focus. When the riders reached Bana Ba Letsatsi in Maun, Bomaïd, in partnership with Chobe Holdings, handed over three installed solar geysers to the centre, which supports vulnerable children and young people.

The North West District Council said the arrival demonstrated how sport could be used as a platform to make a positive difference in communities.

For Mokgosana, who has previously climbed Kilimanjaro for charity and cycled from Kasane to Gaborone while distributing books, the lesson was simple: wellness and giving do not have to exist separately.

After four days, hundreds of kilometres and countless pedal strokes, the AM640+ ended where its purpose had always pointed: not at a finish line, but in a community.





From Diamonds to Botswana's Next Chapter

Six decades after independence, Botswana's partnership with De Beers stands as a defining force in the country's development, even as the economy prepares for a future in which diamonds can no longer carry the same weight.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

As Botswana celebrates 60 years of independence, the story of its development cannot be told without De Beers. Few commercial relationships have influenced the course of a nation as profoundly as the partnership between Botswana and the diamond company. It became a partnership through which the wealth beneath Botswana's soil was converted into schools, hospitals, roads, water systems, public institutions and the foundations of a modern state.

FIRST FOUNDATIONS

When Botswana became independent in 1966, it was one of the poorest countries in the world. It had a very small formal economy and an overwhelmingly rural population. Government revenue was scarce and the country depended heavily upon external assistance. The discovery of diamonds could easily have produced extraction without development. Instead, Botswana and De Beers con-



structed something different.

In 1969, the Government and De Beers established what became Debswana. Eventually structured as an equal partnership, it gave Botswana not merely taxes and royalties but ownership, dividends, knowledge and a direct voice in the management of its most important national resource. Orapa began production in the early 1970s, followed by Letlhakane and Jwaneng, which developed into one of the richest diamond mines in the world by value.

SHARED VALUE



“Diamonds gave Botswana something more valuable than stones: they gave it time.”



“Together they showed that mineral wealth need not become a curse”



The significance of the arrangement went far beyond mining. Diamonds became the financial engine of Botswana's development. Their revenues enabled successive governments to extend education, healthcare, clean water and infrastructure across a vast and sparsely populated country.

Botswana's achievement was rightly its own. Wise political leadership, fiscal discipline, social stability and strong institutions ensured that diamond revenues were largely used for national development rather than private enrichment. But De Beers was an essential partner. It brought capital, technology, geological expertise, access to international markets and a

deep understanding of the global diamond trade. Botswana contributed the resource, political stability and an increasingly capable state.

VALUE CHAIN

The partnership also evolved. Botswana did not remain a passive supplier of rough stones. Over time, the country negotiated a larger role in the diamond value chain. The establishment of Diamond Trading Company Botswana and the transfer of De Beers' international sales activities from London to Gaborone were historic steps. They brought sorting, valuation, sales, skills and international diamond buyers closer to

To Page 17



“
In 1969, the
Government
and De Beers
established
what became
Debswana.”



From Page 16

the place where the stones were mined. Botswana also established the Okavango Diamond Company, giving the country a growing independent route to market.

This progression reflected an important characteristic of the relationship: it could be renegotiated. There were disagreements over prices, sales, ownership, beneficiation and the division of benefits. Yet the partnership endured because both sides recognised their mutual dependence. Botswana needed commercial expertise and reliable access to global markets; De Beers needed Botswana's exceptional diamond resources and the legitimacy that came from a stable, long term partnership with the country that owned them.

HUMAN LEGACY

The contribution was also human. Debswana trained generations of Botswana as engineers, geologists, artisans, technicians, administrators and executives. During the HIV/AIDS crisis, Debswana's response helped establish an important precedent for workplace treatment and care at a time when the epidemic threatened families,



institutions and the country's development gains.

There is, therefore, much to celebrate. The diamonds extracted from Orapa and Jwaneng did not simply become jewellery in distant markets. A significant share of their value returned to Botswana and became part of the everyday architecture of national life.

ERA OF TRANSITION

Yet Botswana's 60th anniversary arrives at a moment of transition. In 2025, Botswana and De Beers formally concluded a new sales agreement and extended Debswana's mining licences through to 2054. But the economic era created by diamonds

is drawing to a close.

This does not mean that diamond mining will suddenly end. Projects such as the transition of Jwaneng from open pit to underground mining may sustain production for decades. But diamonds can no longer be expected to carry the economy as they once did. Deposits become deeper and more expensive to mine. Global demand has weakened, consumer preferences are changing, and laboratory grown diamonds have introduced a permanent new competitor into the market. The extraordinary revenues of earlier decades cannot safely be assumed to return.

NEXT ECONOMY

The end of an era is not a condemnation of what went before. On the contrary, it is evidence of what the partnership achieved. Diamonds gave Botswana something more valuable than stones: they gave it time. They financed the creation of a healthier, better educated, more connected and more capable society. They gave the country six decades in which to build the foundations of the economy that must now follow.

The challenge is to convert those foundations into productive diversification. Botswana must use its accumulated infrastructure, institutions, skills and international reputation to develop new sources of export

earnings and employment. Renewable energy, modern agriculture, financial and digital services, tourism, manufacturing and regional logistics must move from policy aspirations to functioning industries. Diamond wealth must become human and productive capital before declining revenues narrow the country's choices.

“
Diamonds gave
Botswana
something
more valuable
than stones:
they gave it
time.”

LASTING PARTNERSHIP

De Beers should be remembered not as a benevolent outsider that developed Botswana, but as a commercial partner in one of the most successful resource relationships of the modern era. Botswana supplied the leadership, discipline and democratic legitimacy; De Beers supplied expertise, investment and access to the global diamond economy. Together they showed that mineral wealth need not become a curse.

At 60, Botswana can look back with gratitude and pride. The partnership with De Beers helped turn a poor, landlocked country into a respected and stable African state. But the greatest tribute to that partnership will not be an attempt to preserve the diamond era forever. It will be to use everything that era created to build the next Botswana: diversified, productive and prosperous long after diamonds have surrendered their place at the centre of the national story.



“
Botswana did not
remain a passive
supplier of
rough
stones.”

PULA, PASSPORT, LET’S GO

Bots60 is calling, the bags are packed and somebody is already checking flights to Joburg, Cape Town or beyond. Before you disappear for the long weekend, here’s how to travel with your money intact, your cards safe and enough forex in your pocket for the moments tap-and-go can’t save you.



GAZETTE REPORTER

The out-of-office is on. The suitcase is almost zipped. Somebody has already volunteered to make the playlist. Botswana’s Independence holidays are here, and whether the escape is a quick dash across the border, a few nights in Cape Town or something considerably further away, there is one part of the holiday plan that deserves more attention than it normally gets: the money.

Because nothing kills holiday mode quite like standing at a till in another country wondering why your card will not work.

CASH STILL WINS

Yes, the world is going cash-less. No, that does not mean you should travel with absolutely no cash.

You will still encounter the taxi driver, street vendor, parking attendant, tip jar or tiny café where a card simply is not an option.

That makes sorting out some foreign currency before leaving Botswana a sensible first step.

Standard Chartered offers foreign currency cash through its branches and foreign exchange dispensing ATMs, giving travellers an opportunity to get their holiday forex sorted before departure.

And during the current promotion, withdrawing foreign currency cash worth P1,000 or more also gives customers a chance to win. The offer is open even to

travelers who do not bank with Standard Chartered.

One customer stands a chance to win P500 each week until 2 October, while two customers stand a chance to walk away with an iPhone 17 in the grand prize draw.

PAY LIKE A LOCAL

Now for the little button on the card machine that can quietly cost you money.

Imagine you are in South Africa and the payment terminal asks whether you would like to pay in Botswana pula or South African rand.

Choose rand.

Paying in the local currency generally allows your bank or card network to handle the conversion. Choosing pula can activate dynamic currency conversion, where the merchant or payment provider converts the transaction for you, often at a less attractive rate or with additional charges.

In short: when in Joburg, pay

like Joburg.

KEEP IT CLOSE

A holiday is also no time to become casual with your card.

Do not allow it to disappear out of sight at restaurants or shops. Check the amount on the machine before tapping or entering your PIN, and avoid accepting unsolicited assistance at ATMs.

If your bank offers instant transaction alerts, switch them on before you travel. The sooner you spot a suspicious transaction, the sooner you can act.

Also keep a backup payment method separate from your main wallet. Losing one card is annoying. Losing every way you have of accessing money is a very different holiday.

BUDGET FOR FUN

Finally, decide what the trip can actually cost before the first cocktail arrives.

Divide the budget between accommodation, transport, food, entertainment, shopping and emergencies. Keep the emergency money separate and try not to treat the credit limit as an exten-

sion of the holiday budget.

A little discipline before departure creates far more freedom once you get there.

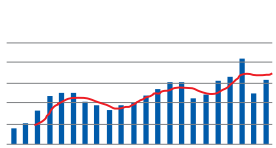
“Pack the passport, pack the sunscreen and pack a little forex too. Sometimes the smallest purchases are the ones that still need cash.”

So wherever Bots60 takes you, travel light, spend smart and get the money admin out of the way before you leave.

Because once the bags are packed, there really should be only one thing left to do.

Go.





“
By 2029/30,
BITC is
targeting P30
billion in annual
investment
mobilisation
and 30,000
jobs a year.
”



BITC Targets P30bn Annual Investment

BITC wants to mobilise P30 billion in annual investment, facilitate P10 billion in exports and support 30,000 jobs a year by 2029/30 as Botswana pushes economic diversification.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC) plans to more than double its annual investment mobilisation target over the next five years, from P13.6 billion in 2025/26 to P30 billion by 2029/30.

Under its newly unveiled 2025-2030 strategy, launched last Wednesday, the investment promotion agency is also targeting P10 billion in annual exports by the end of the period, while its yearly job creation target is expected to rise from 13,600 to 30,000.

The targets place BITC at the centre of Botswana's efforts to diversify an economy facing weaker diamond revenues, persistent youth unemployment and pressure to unlock new sources of growth.

EARLY LEAD

BITC has already exceeded the opening investment target under the strategy. During the 2025/26 financial year, it fa-

cilitated P14.882 billion worth of investment, more than P1.2 billion above its P13.6 billion target.

The organisation also facilitated P7.325 billion in export revenue and supported Botswana businesses entering 14 additional export markets.

PUBLIC RETURN

BITC Chief Executive Officer Kelet-sositse Olebile said the organisation's performance should be assessed against the public funding it has received since its establishment.

“Since our establishment about 15 years ago, in total the government has funded us to the tune of P1.15 billion, that is the cumulative amount of subvention that we have been given. The return on investment that we have achieved over the years, in terms of Foreign Direct Investment, is a total of P29 billion that has been attracted and recorded,” Olebile said at the launch.

By 2029/30, BITC is therefore targeting annual investment mobilisation

roughly equivalent to the P29 billion in cumulative foreign direct investment Olebile said the organisation has attracted since its establishment.

GLOBAL PITCH

BITC Executive Director for Business Intelligence Dr Margaret Sengwaketse said the strategy is intended to make Botswana more globally competitive through sustainable investment, stronger exports and an improved international profile.

The strategy is built around eight strategic thrusts, including digital transformation, strategic partnerships, financial sustainability, development of the creative industry, institutional performance and strengthening Botswana's international image.

BITC also identifies shifts in global trade, technological advancement, the energy transition and the restructuring of global supply chains as opportunities for Botswana to position itself as an alternative investment and export destination.

BPOPF Profit Surges 52%

BPOPF posted P11.692 billion profit in 2025/26 as investment revenue jumped 63 percent and assets under management rose to P128.337 billion.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund (BPOPF) recorded a P11.692 billion profit in the 2025/26 financial year, a 52 percent increase from the previous year, driven largely by stronger investment revenue.

Investment activities generated P13.555 billion in revenue during 2026, up 63 percent from P8.299 billion a year earlier. The figures were revealed by BPOPF Chief Finance Officer Kegaisamang Dire during the Fund's national membership address tour stop in Kasane last Thursday.

“
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”

INVESTMENT GAINS

BPOPF Chief Investment Officer Tshepang Loeto said diversification beyond Botswana has allowed the Fund to access opportunities in international markets while reducing exposure to domestic economic pressure.

“We have expanded our investment portfolio beyond Botswana and invested in offshore companies such as Apple and Samsung. This is a step which ensures that if the local economy does not perform well we are still in a position to benefit from foreign markets,” Loeto said.

The offshore portfolio extends across companies and industries including Hisense, Adobe, Marriott, HDFC Bank, Sony, Shell and L'Oréal, among others.

ASSETS GROW

Assets under management increased to P128.337 billion from P116.506 billion in 2025, growth of about 10 percent and an increase of nearly P12 billion in the Fund's asset base.

Investment gains substantially outpaced member contributions. Contributions rose marginally from P4.822 billion in 2025 to P4.847 billion in 2026, an increase of 0.51 percent.

CLAIMS RISE

Benefits and claims accrued and due to members increased 39 percent to P6.347 billion from P4.555 billion in 2025. Despite the higher obligations, stronger investment performance allowed the Fund to grow both profit and assets.

Operating expenses rose eight percent to P351 million from P327 million, while investment expenses paid to asset managers increased 29 percent to P775 million from P601 million.

Stan Chart Profit Rises Amid Sale

Standard Chartered Botswana's half-year profit rose 22 percent as the bank advances an anticipated sale while seeking to protect staff clients and franchise value.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Standard Chartered Bank Botswana has posted a 22 percent increase in profit before tax for the first half of 2026, even as the bank manages a planned ownership transition and seeks to reassure employees and clients about continuity.

For the six months ended 30 June, profit before tax rose to P171.3 million from P139.9 million in the corresponding period last year. Return on equity improved to about 22 percent from 20 percent, while the Capital Adequacy Ratio stood at 18.7 percent, comfortably above regulatory requirements.

The performance came against an operating environment marked by inflationary pressures, fiscal constraints and subdued growth, with the bank citing a 3.1 percent growth forecast for Botswana in 2026.

SALE REMAINS PRIORITY

The bank said the anticipated sale of its Botswana franchise remains a key strategic priority. Chief Executive Officer Mpho Masupe said management continues to engage stakeholders while seeking an outcome that protects franchise value, main-



Chief Executive Officer Mpho Masupe

tains confidence and supports long-term sustainability.

Speaking during the bank's H1 2026 Results Presentation and Strategy Update, Masupe said preserving the business and retaining both clients and employees were central to the transition. He said discussions with prospective bidders include measures intended to provide continuity and stability for staff, including possible commitments to protect jobs for a defined period after the transaction.

"We want to be able to preserve the business, absolutely no question," Masupe said, describing employees, systems, practices and institutional knowledge as part of the value any new owner would inherit.

CIB DRIVES GROWTH

Corporate and Investment Banking provided some of the strongest balance sheet momentum. Loans and advances increased 102 percent year-on-year to P2.4 billion, driven by higher utilisation of trade and financing facilities and greater exposure to the Government and Energy sectors.

Customer deposits, however,

declined 10 percent to P8.8 billion. The bank said this reflected a deliberate reduction in higher-cost term deposits as market liquidity conditions improved.

Wealth and Retail Banking showed a mixed picture. Assets under management increased 38 percent year-on-year, supported by client demand for Botswana Government Bonds and offshore investment products. Profit before tax in the segment nevertheless fell to P25.6 million as weaker lending activity and wider economic pressures weighed on earnings.

STAFF IN FOCUS

Masupe said the bank is continuing to invest in staff through training, leadership development and upskilling as the sale process progresses. About 93 percent of employees have engaged with its Discovery learning platform, building skills in areas including artificial intelligence, project management, digital services and wealth management.

The bank is also maintaining counselling, mental-health and wellness support for employees during the transition.

Masupe said the objective is to hand over a strong institution to its eventual owner without losing the systems, risk culture and service standards built over generations. The half-year results therefore leave Standard Chartered balancing two priorities: protecting earnings in a difficult economy while managing a sale process that could reshape the future of one of Botswana's longest-established banks.

Botswana Keeps Investment Grade

Moody's cut Botswana's sovereign rating one notch to Baa2 but changed the outlook from negative to stable, leaving the country within investment grade as fiscal reforms and mining recovery remain central to the outlook.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Moody's Investors Service has downgraded Botswana's sovereign credit rating by one notch, while changing the outlook from negative to stable as it weighs fiscal reforms against continuing economic pressure.

In its assessment released on 25 September 2026, Moody's lowered Botswana's long-term local and foreign currency issuer ratings from Baa1 to Baa2. Botswana remains within the investment-grade category. The Bank of Botswana published the rating action on September 25.

STABLE OUTLOOK

The stable outlook reflects what Moody's considers more balanced risks, with stronger fiscal policy implementation

and prospects of a sustained recovery in mining activity potentially offsetting revenue and financing pressures.

In a statement released last Friday, the Bank of Botswana described the outlook change as encouraging despite the downgrade. "The outlook upgrade is a particularly encouraging development, as it reflects Moody's assessment that Botswana's strong institutional framework, prudent policymaking and sound economic governance remain firmly intact."

The Bank added that the change suggested risks to Botswana's credit profile had eased as government measures begin to strengthen the medium-term fiscal and economic outlook.

REFORM FOCUS

Moody's assessment acknowledged progress under

government's fiscal consolidation programme, including measures to raise domestic revenue and contain expenditure.

The measures cited include adjustments to personal and corporate income tax rates, broadening the VAT base, electronic invoicing and tighter tax compliance monitoring. On expenditure, centralised procurement, stronger spending controls and more efficient management of public resources were identified as measures aimed at containing growth in spending.

RECOVERY TEST

The rating action comes against continued weakness in the diamond industry, which has weighed on government revenue, economic growth and fiscal buffers. Moody's previously downgraded Botswana from A3 to Baa1 in October

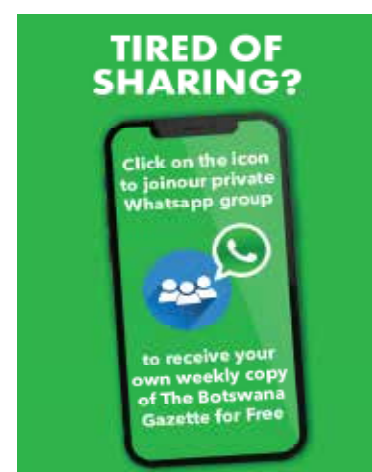
“Preserving Botswana's investment-grade standing will require sustained momentum on fiscal consolidation and economic diversification.”

2025 amid structural challenges in the diamond sector.

Looking ahead, Moody's highlighted a possible recovery in diamond production, stronger activity in other mining industries and continued econom-

ic diversification as potential drivers of improved growth and fiscal performance. Reforms under the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme could also strengthen resilience if successfully implemented.

The Bank cautioned that preserving Botswana's investment-grade position will require sustained fiscal discipline. "Overall, in order to preserve and strengthen Botswana's investment-grade standing, it remains important to sustain momentum on fiscal consolidation, economic diversification, industrialisation and domestic resource mobilisation."



US Jeweller Diamond Sales Rise 8.8%

Natural diamond sales at independent US jewellers rose 8.8 percent in the first half of 2026, offering Botswana an early positive signal as the industry intensifies marketing against weak demand and lab-grown competition.



— “ —
These numbers give us
reason for confidence, but
our work is far from done.
— ” —

BONGANI MALUNGA

Natural diamond sales at independent jewellers in the United States increased 8.8 percent in the first half of 2026, according to Minister of Minerals and Energy Bogolo Kenewendo, providing an early positive signal for Botswana after a prolonged downturn in global natural diamond demand.

Kenewendo also said the bridal segment had returned to growth. The development matters for Botswana because weaker global demand, lower rough diamond prices and reduced sales volumes have weighed heavily on the diamond-dependent economy.

The United States is the world's largest diamond jewellery consumer market, meaning stronger retail sales could eventually feed through the value chain and support demand for polished and rough diamonds.

MARKETING PUSH

The improvement comes amid intensified marketing by Botswana, De Beers and the wider natural diamond industry to rebuild consumer demand and strengthen the appeal of natural diamonds against growing competition from laboratory-grown stones.

De Beers has stepped up global

category marketing efforts, while Botswana and other diamond-producing countries have pushed for greater investment in promoting natural diamonds to consumers.

CAUTIOUS SIGNAL

Reacting to the latest sales figures on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, Kenewendo described the improvement as encouraging but said sustained recovery remains critical for Botswana.

“We are beginning to see what is possible when Botswana's diamonds are marketed with conviction and their story is told to the world. These numbers give us reason for confidence, but our work is far from done. Botswana needs sustained demand for natural diamonds and a stronger position in the value created from them,” Kenewendo said in an interview with international media outlet Bloomberg.

Her remarks point to Botswana's broader challenge of restoring demand for its main export while capturing a greater share of value further downstream in the diamond industry.

ROUGH PRESSURE

Stronger retail sales come while the rough diamond market remains under pressure, with weaker prices and cautious purchasing weighing on producer revenues.

For Botswana, the 8.8 percent increase is an early indication that renewed marketing efforts may be gaining traction. Any sustained benefit will depend on whether stronger consumer demand eventually lifts polished and rough diamond sales.

Funding Costs Squeeze Access Bank

Access Bank Botswana's profit fell 20 percent in 2025 as higher funding costs, impairments and operating expenses outweighed stronger lending and non-interest income.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Access Bank Botswana's profit after tax fell 20 percent to P79.9 million in 2025, despite growth in its loan book and non-interest income, as funding costs, impairment charges and operating expenses weighed on earnings.

According to the bank's 2025 Integrated Annual Report, published on the Botswana Stock Exchange on September 25, profit declined from P100.1 million in 2024. Profit before tax fell 23 percent from P134.6 million to P103.6 million.

INCOME SQUEEZE

Interest income increased six percent to P939 million from P888.5 million as lending expanded. Interest expenses, however, climbed 20 percent to P570.2 million from P474.6 million, pushing net interest income down 11 percent to P368.8 million from P413.9 million.

Non-interest income partly offset the pressure, rising 26 percent to P373.8 million from P296.5 million. Trading income more than doubled, increasing 117 percent to P84 million from P38.7 million, while net fee and commission income rose 12 percent to P289.8 million from



Access Bank Botswana Managing Director, Sheperd Aisam

P257.8 million.

IMPAIRMENTS CLIMB

Impairment charges on financial assets more than doubled to P80.2 million from P39.5 million, adding further pressure to profitability.

Operating expenses rose four percent to P545.6 million from P526.6 million. Personnel expenses increased 19 percent to P252.5 million, while general and administrative expenses declined to P193 million from P210.5 million.

BALANCE SHEET

Despite weaker profits, Access Bank expanded its balance sheet. Total assets rose seven percent to P10.81 billion from P10.07 billion, while gross loans advanced about 13 percent to P6.75 billion from P5.95 billion.

Customer deposits increased three percent to P7.48 billion from P7.26 billion and total shareholders' equity strengthened to P1.15 billion from P1.07 billion. The cost-to-income ratio improved slightly to 73.5 percent from 74.1 percent, while the capital adequacy ratio eased to 18.3 percent from 21.7 percent. Basic earnings per share declined to 11 thebe from 13.81 thebe.



“Sefalana generated record revenue of P12.13 billion, but profit after tax fell 45 percent to P234 million.”

Sefalana Profit Tumbles 45%

Sefalana posted record revenue of P12.13 billion in 2026, but weaker margins and higher costs drove profit after tax down 45 percent to P234 million.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Sefalana Holding Company recorded the highest revenue in its 52-year history during the 2026 financial year, but the milestone was overshadowed by a 45 percent decline in profit after tax.

owed by a 45 percent decline in profit after tax.

The diversified retailer generated P12.13 billion in revenue for the 52 weeks ended April 26, 2026, up nine percent from P11.17 billion in the previous

financial year, according to its 2026 Integrated Annual Report published on the Botswana Stock Exchange on September 24.

Profit for the year fell to P234 million from P426 million, while profit before tax declined 40 per-

cent from P550 million to P331 million, as previously confirmed in July.

MARGINS SHRINK

Earnings before interest, tax and amortisation (EBITA) fell 39 percent to P336 million from

P555 million. Gross profit contracted 12 percent to P701 million from P793 million despite higher sales, while the gross profit margin narrowed to 5.8 percent from 7.1 percent.

Administrative expenses rose to P408 million from P394 million and finance costs increased to P53 million from P38 million. Investment income improved to P57 million from P47 million.

Sefalana said P118 million of the year-on-year decline in profit before tax was linked to once-off factors. The previous year included a P102 million fair value gain, while the 2026 period absorbed an additional P16 million cost associated with currency movements.

SHAREHOLDERS HIT

Excluding those effects, underlying profit before tax declined 19 percent. Basic earnings per share fell to 93 thebe from 169 thebe, while total dividends per share dropped to 20 thebe from 50 thebe in the previous year.

CASH STRENGTHENS

Despite the earnings decline, total assets grew about 12 percent to P5.33 billion from P4.75 billion and total equity increased to P3.20 billion from P2.83 billion.

Cash and cash equivalents rose to P664 million from P528 million, while net cash generated from operating activities more than doubled to P592 million from P280 million. Total comprehensive income increased six percent to P469 million from P443 million, boosted by a P218 million foreign currency translation gain.

Botswana Retains Fiscal Headroom

Botswana's relatively low debt base and strong institutions still give it room to borrow, but investors will increasingly scrutinise whether rising debt funds productive growth.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's relatively low debt burden, investment-grade credit rating and institutional strength continue to provide a buffer against growing fiscal pressure, giving the country room to borrow without immediately unsettling investors.

That is the assessment of Vivienne Taberer, Investment Director in the South African Institutional Client Group, who told the Bank of Botswana Finance and Investment Pitso last Tuesday that investor confidence ultimately depends on whether governments can show that debt is being used to support sustainable economic growth.

“Confidence has to be built sequentially. Governments can borrow for growth but only under specific conditions. If you are just borrowing, the market starts to look at your fiscal trajectory and gets worried,” Taberer said.

BORROWING ROOM

Her remarks come as Botswana navigates widening fiscal deficits and a rising debt-to-GDP ratio, increasing the focus on how government manages future borrowing requirements.

Taberer said Botswana enters that environment from a comparatively favourable position because debt has risen from a low base and the country still has fiscal space that many other economies lack.

“The market also wants to

see that the spending is productive, we want to see credible institutions and we also want to see if, when you start borrowing, you have fiscal headroom. Certain countries in the world don't have that headroom but Botswana does,” she said.

INVESTOR TEST

For international investors, Taberer said debt levels alone do not determine whether borrowing becomes a concern. Markets also assess economic growth, interest costs, institutional credibility and whether borrowed funds are directed towards investments capable of generating future returns.

“The first starting point is that we would like to see that your real interest rate paid on your debt is below the overall real

“Governments can borrow for growth, but markets will watch whether rising debt supports a credible and productive growth strategy.”

GDP that you have. The Domar condition is what we call it,” she said.

The principle is that debt is generally easier to sustain when the economy grows faster than the real cost of servicing it, particularly when borrowing supports productive investment.

DEFICITS WATCHED

Taberer said Botswana also retains advantages that are not always present across frontier markets, particularly institutional strength and an investment-grade credit rating.

“Botswana is in a good starting position although debt to GDP has expanded over the last couple of years but from a very low base. That is something to consider, Botswana still has those good debt to GDP levels,” she said.

She cautioned, however, that investors will increasingly scrutinise the direction of public finances as borrowing rises. “You have quite high fiscal deficits at the moment, that is something that the market is going to be watching.”

Young Entrepreneurs Take Centre Stage

Allan Gray's Botswana awards brought young entrepreneurs together with educators, funders and mentors, testing whether recognition can translate into lasting opportunity.



GAZETTE REPORTER

BUILDING ACCESS

The Allan Gray Orbis Foundation brought about 60 invited guests together in Botswana on Saturday for its Entrepreneurship Awards Ceremony, placing young people with entrepreneurial potential alongside educators, entrepreneurs, funders, institutional leaders and potential mentors.

Held under the theme “LEVEL UP: Built for What’s Next,” the evening combined recognition, dinner and networking around a central idea: promising young people need more than ambition if their ideas are to become viable enterprises.

Opening the programme, Igowbe Mbulawa, co-founder of Finance Kids Botswana, described the purpose of the evening: “Tonight is ultimately about possibility. It is about showing a young person that an idea can become something more. That a problem can become an opportunity. That confidence can be developed.”

BEYOND APPLAUSE

The event highlighted the importance of access to people, information and support as young people move from school to university and from ideas towards enterprise. The Foundation’s published Fellowship criteria identify applicants in Botswana, Namibia and Eswatini as citizens under 21 in the year they apply who are moving into university.

The programme describes support that includes funding, mentoring, entrepreneurial learning and a community of peers. The ceremony itself, however, was not presented as a substitute for that lon-

“The lasting test is whether recognition leads to useful contacts, practical guidance and opportunities beyond the ceremony.”



ger-term work.

Dr. Morena Rankopo, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Child Welfare, said encouraging young people to solve problems builds more than future business owners. “When we encourage a young person to look at a challenge and ask, ‘How can I solve this?’, we are cultivating much more than a potential business owner. We are developing a problem-solver, an innovator and an active contributor to society.”

WIDER PIPELINE

The invitee register included people connected to the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship, the Local Enterprise Authority, Mascom Wireless Botswana, the University of Botswana, schools, media and the Allan Gray community, as well as fellows, coaches and young entrepreneurs. An invitation did not confirm attendance.



The Foundation’s wider Entrepreneurship Challenge was open to high school students in Botswana, Eswatini and Namibia. It used a virtual platform, a business-pitch competition and activities introducing young people to business concepts, and the Foundation said it ran from April through September under published terms.

Gavin Frey, the Foundation’s regional head for Eswatini, Botswana and Namibia, said: “Entrepreneurship is not about having every answer from the beginning. It is about having the courage to begin, the resilience to learn and the determination to keep moving forward.”

WHAT FOLLOWS

At the time of publication, the Foundation had not released the award categories, eligibility rules, finalists, winners, judging process, prizes, presenters or venue. Organisers and speakers were also instructed not to speculate about selection criteria or promise funding, partnerships or business-incubation support.

The competition celebrated 15 outstanding individuals and a school, who collectively walked away with BWP 220,000 in prize money. The Top Game learner received BWP 14,500, while the Learner and Teacher Business Pitch winners were awarded BWP 35,000 and BWP 15,000, respectively. With the top school receiving BWP 20 000

With a room of about 60 people, the lasting test of the event will be whether recognition leads to useful contacts, practical guidance and opportunities that continue beyond the ceremony.



Build Before Funding

Entrepreneurship education creates deeper value when brands invest in teachers and classroom capability, not just prizes and pitch-night winners.



MANUEL VEIRUAPI RUHAPO

Entrepreneurship is often introduced too late. A young person finishes school, struggles to find work, then is told to “start a business”. At that point, entrepreneurship can sound like a response to unemployment rather than a way to notice, test and create value.

The Allan Gray Entrepreneurship Challenge offers a better sequence. Its high-school competition is open to learners in Botswana, Eswatini, Namibia and South Africa. The programme’s free game can be played at home or in class, online or offline. Learners choose from five shop types, make business decisions and can replay the 30-minute experience. A business pitch challenge and other activities sit alongside the game.

PRACTICE FIRST

A learner needs no capital to learn that customers have choices, cash must be managed and decisions have consequences. A simulation cannot create an entrepreneur. It can make commercial thinking less abstract before a young person risks real money on

an untested idea.

CLASSROOM PARADOX

The first paradox is simple: the safest place to develop comfort with business risk is before someone starts a business.

Entrepreneurship education is often judged by a count of registered companies. That is too narrow. Its early value is capability. A learner who can define a problem, listen to a customer, price an offer and explain a decision has skills that matter in a venture, an employer or a community project.

The Allan Gray model treats learning as practice. Its resource library includes teacher lesson plans and learner worksheets for Grades 8 to 12 in subjects including Accounting, Economic and Management Sciences, Life Orientation and Business Studies. Its materials align to South Africa’s CAPS curriculum. Botswana schools should use it as a regional model, not a replacement for Botswana requirements.

A programme succeeds locally when it connects to local realities: the price of a product in pula, a customer in Maun, a farmer seeking a market, a salon building

repeat custom or a digital service solving a daily inconvenience. The aim is not to make every learner a founder. It is to let every learner see an opportunity, assess it and act responsibly.

TEACHER MULTIPLIER

The technology may attract attention, but the teacher creates the learning.

A game can place a learner in a virtual shop. A teacher can ask why a decision worked, what information was missing and how the learner would change the plan. That reflection makes a quick activity transferable.

This is the Teacher Multiplier Paradox: the more scalable an entrepreneurship platform becomes, the more its impact depends on the people who make it relevant in the classroom.

For Botswana teachers, this should not mean adding another unsupported demand. A serious programme needs usable lesson plans, short training, clear subject links and offline access where needed. The Allan Gray Challenge provides lesson plans and worksheets. That is a useful starting standard.

The teacher is also the bridge between aspiration and realism. A teacher can turn a pitch into questions about ethics, customer need, cost, teamwork and failure. This protects young people from the idea that entrepreneurship is simply confidence plus a logo.

SPONSOR DISTANCE

For brands, the temptation is to sponsor a final pitch night, offer a cash prize, place a logo on a backdrop and declare support for youth entrepreneurship. That creates attention. It rarely creates a durable learning system.

The Sponsor Distance Paradox is that a brand can create deeper value by moving away from the stage and closer to the teacher’s work. Useful support may be teacher-development sessions, data or offline access, business visits, practical feedback and follow-on support for viable ideas. These are narrative applications, not current campaign descriptions.

Botswana has institutional foundations on which brands can build. The Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship lists enterprise development, small-business policy, citizen economic empowerment, mentoring and support for innovative projects among its responsibilities. Botswana Digital & Innovation Hub supports technology-driven businesses and fosters entrepreneurship and technology transfer.

There are local examples of cross-sector practice. Institute of Entrepreneurial Development Botswana says it combines learning, coaching, mentorship, industry exposure and real business ideas. It lists FNB, KBL, Botswana Digital & Innovation Hub, the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship and academic institutions among collaborators. The public record does not establish partner commercial outcomes. It does show entrepreneurship development can connect business, education and enterprise support.

A Botswana brand should be clear about the role it chooses. A bank may help learners understand cash flow. A telecoms company may support digital access and customer contact. A retailer may expose learners to merchandising and supplier standards. A mining or energy business may pose local problems for teams to solve. Each application needs school and education-authority input, not advertising imposition.

WHAT IT MEANS

Business owners and executives: Treat enterprise education as capability building, not a once-off donation. Support teacher preparation, practical learning, local business exposure and follow-on opportunity. Measure completion, teacher use and learners’ ability to solve problems. Do not claim job creation or commercial return without credible evidence.

Marketing professionals: Make the brand’s role useful before making it visible. Build content around learner work and teacher contribution, with consent and safeguarding. The strongest story is evidence that young people learned to test an idea, listen to a customer and improve their work.

Brand managers: Use a long-term partnership model. Align the programme with a genuine capability, but keep education objectives ahead of advertising. A trusted early role can create goodwill. It is not proof of future sales, so report it honestly.

The Allan Gray Entrepreneurship Challenge matters because it changes the order of the conversation. Instead of asking young people to become entrepreneurs after options close, it gives Botswana learners a low-risk place to practise how entrepreneurs think. When brands support the teacher, the classroom and the next step after the pitch, they help turn a competition into a capability system.



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

Mascom Supports AM640+ Challenge

The AM640+ endurance ride is linking Jwaneng and Maun while raising support for education, health, ICT access and community initiatives.

Mascom is supporting the Albert Milton Foundation's AM640+ Endurance Cycling Challenge, a three-day ride from Jwaneng to Maun focused on raising support for education, health, ICT access and community empowerment.

The partnership forms part of Mascom's corporate social investment activities, which the company said include education, ICT development and support for vulnerable groups.

SCHOOL DONATION

The ride was preceded by a dinner in Jwaneng on 20 September,

attended by government officials, civic leaders, representatives of the Albert Milton Foundation, corporate executives, sponsors and cyclists.

During the dinner, Mascom donated 130 co-branded backpacks and stationery items to Metsimantsho Primary School in Charleshill. The company said the items would be formally handed over to the school administration.

ENDURANCE CHALLENGE

Speaking at the dinner, Mascom Chief Executive Officer



Dzene Makhwade-Seboni said the event differed from other cycling races because of its scale and endurance demands.

"While many races in Botswana have a CSR aspect to them, this one is different. The AM640+ is an endurance challenge that spans days of long distance, gruelling cycling, all for a

cause," she said.

The route passes through the Trans-Kalahari region, with Mascom noting that it has previously undertaken community projects in villages including Samane, Tsabong, Hukuntsi, Gantsi, D'Kar, Kuke, Toteng and Maun.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Makhwade-Seboni said Mas-

com's participation was linked to its corporate social investment priorities.

"At Mascom, we believe in the power of collective action to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Batswana," she said.

The cyclists are expected to complete the three-day journey to Maun in the coming days.



BDIH Launches "Wanzy"

A Botswana-developed delivery platform has reported more than P2 million in first-year revenue while onboarding 41 local businesses.

The Botswana Digital and Innovation Hub (BDIH) has launched Wanzy, an on-demand delivery and digital marketplace platform developed by Nexus Innovations (Pty) Ltd.

The platform, founded by

Again Oabile, connects consumers with local restaurants, pharmacies, grocery stores and liquor outlets, allowing users to browse, order and receive products through a digital interface.

FIRST-YEAR FIGURES

Wanzy entered the market in

May 2025, initially serving Gaborone and surrounding areas. According to figures provided at the launch, the platform generated more than P2 million in revenue during its first year and has recorded more than 3,000 active customers and 7,000

completed orders.

It has also reported an average of 750 monthly orders, average monthly revenue of P308,000, 41 businesses onboarded and a 72 percent repeat-order share.

BDIH SUPPORT

BDIH Board Chairperson Ikanyeng Molemele said Wanzy demonstrated the role of structured support in moving local innovations towards commercialisation.

"What Wanzy represents is not merely a promising venture, but evidence that Botswana's

innovation ecosystem is beginning to function as it should," she said.

Molemele said sustainable innovation also required governance and accountability, adding that these were necessary for developing an enduring innovation ecosystem.

"We maintain a conviction that innovation must be commercially viable, globally competitive and locally transformative."

COMMERCIALISING INNOVATION

BDIH Chief Executive Officer Kabo Phetlhu said the launch formed part of efforts to connect talent, research, entrepreneurship and industry with commercial opportunities.

"We maintain a conviction that innovation must be commercially viable, globally competitive and locally transformative," he said.

BDIH said its commercialisation support is intended to help locally developed solutions move from development into the marketplace, with a focus on economic diversification, job creation and new models of value creation.

Orange, TEMCO Sign Health Deal

A new partnership will put connectivity, telemedicine and digital health systems at the centre of a planned specialised hospital in Gaborone.

Orange Botswana has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Extraordinary Medical Company (TEMCO), positioning the telecommunications company as the preferred connectivity provider for the TEMCO hospital development ecosystem at the Gaborone Airport Special Economic Zone.

The ecosystem includes a planned 130-bed specialised hospital, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and hospitality and recovery facilities. TEMCO is a National Development Plan 12 project licensed by the Special Economic Zones Authority.

DIGITAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

Under the partnership, Orange will provide connectivity and ICT solutions for hospital and pharmaceutical manufacturing

operations, including secure data management, telemedicine, digital health records and digital payment services.

Orange Botswana CEO Nene Maiga said the partnership would support technology-enabled healthcare delivery.

“This partnership brings together healthcare and technology to create a more connected and efficient patient experience,” Maiga said.

REGIONAL HEALTHCARE

The planned facility is expected to offer services including high-risk obstetrics, neonatal and paediatric intensive care, cancer treatment, cardiac and neurosurgical care, robotic surgery, fertility services, specialist surgery, rehabilitation and other procedures.

Maiga said reliable connectivity would be important to the



project’s regional ambitions.

“TEMCO has regional ambitions, and Orange is proud to support that ambition,” she said.

TEMCO’S VISION

TEMCO Chairman Sailas

Temwa said technology would form part of the hospital’s development.

“Our vision is to build a world-class healthcare facility that meets the needs of Botswana and

the region,” Temwa said.

The MoU also covers smart infrastructure, utilities monitoring and digital services for enterprises operating within the special economic zone.



New Shell Station Opens In Mmopane

Vivo Energy Botswana has opened a new Shell station in Mmopane, adding retail and convenience services as activity in the area.

Vivo Energy Botswana has opened the Shell Mmopane service station, taking its national Shell retail network to 85 stations.

The company said the station responds to increased residen-

tial, commercial and commuter activity in the Kweneng area. It offers Shell fuels and lubricants, a Pick n Pay Go outlet and a Pick n Pay Liquor outlet.

NETWORK EXPANSION

Speaking at the official opening, Vivo Energy Botswana Managing Director Sesupo Wagamang said the investment was intended to align the company’s retail network with areas experiencing growth.

“Our network expansion is about more than increasing the number of stations we operate. It’s about making deliberate investments and establishing a presence where Botswana is growing,” said Wagamang.

CHANGING CUSTOMER

NEEDS

Wagamang said changing customer expectations were also influencing the design and positioning of the company’s service stations.

“Customers are looking for more than a place to refuel. They want quality, reliability and convenience, and they want to be able to meet more of their everyday needs in one journey,” he said.

The company said the investment is expected to contribute

to the local economy through employment, skills development and opportunities for skills transfer, while creating additional activity for businesses and service providers in and around Mmopane.

FUTURE INVESTMENT

Wagamang said the company’s approach would include investments intended to support both business operations and surrounding communities.

“With Shell Mmopane, we are creating employment, supporting skills development, improving access to services and strengthening convenience for customers,” he said.

The company said it would continue to strengthen its retail network and identify opportunities to expand its presence in communities where population and economic activity are growing.



THE ECONOMY STARTS ON THE STREET

Botswana cannot preach entrepreneurship while policing an informal sector that already accounts for nearly one in four jobs.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

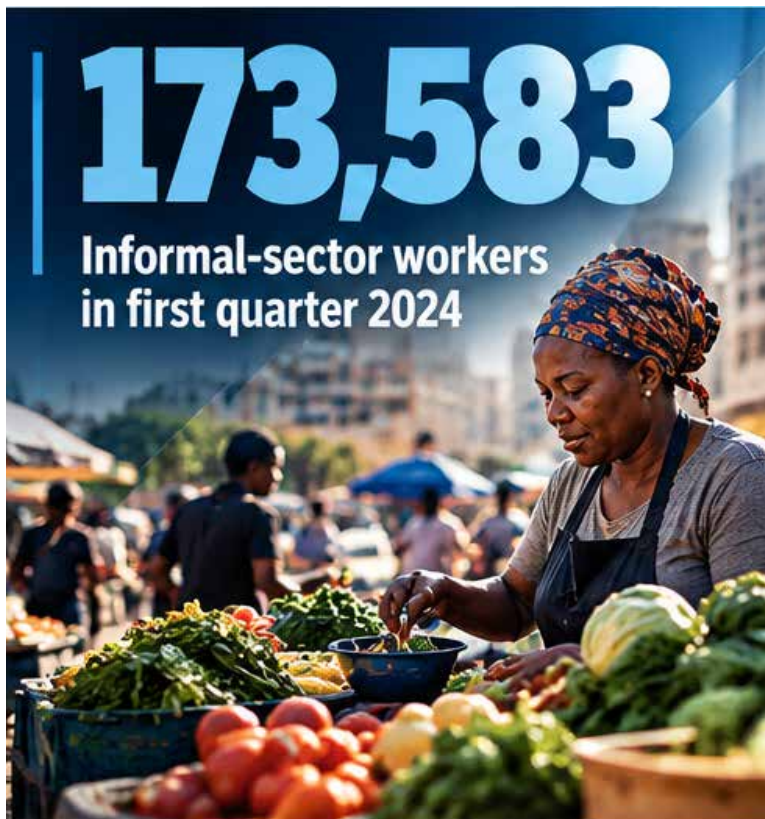
Botswana has spent decades asking how it can create jobs. Perhaps it should begin by asking why it makes it so difficult for people to create their own. Walk through Gaborone Bus Rank, Main Mall, Francistown, Molepolole or almost any large village and you encounter an economy that rarely appears in ministerial speeches about diversification. People sell vegetables, clothes, cooked food, airtime, sweets, second-

hand goods and countless small services. Individually these activities appear insignificant. Collectively they are an economy.

Statistics Botswana estimated informal-sector employment at 173,583 people in the first quarter of 2024, 23 percent of all employment. The largest component was wholesale and retail trade, employing 54,796 people, whom Statistics Botswana says were predominantly working in tuck-shops and as street hawkers. That is not an economic nuisance on the margins of Botswana. It is

nearly one worker in four.

Yet Botswana retains an extraordinary contradiction in its approach to these people. Government talks about entrepreneurship, citizen economic empowerment, SMMEs and employment creation while another arm of government regulates, licences, relocates, charges and occasionally confiscates the possessions of people who have done precisely what government says it wants them to do: create economic activity for themselves.



“That is not an economic nuisance on the margins of Botswana. It is nearly one worker in four.”

In late 2025, Gaborone City Council publicly announced a crackdown on illegal businesses at the bus rank. Francistown’s own official guidance illustrates the regulatory philosophy rather wonderfully. It poses the ques-

tion: “I recently lost my job. Can I set up a table in town and sell commodities to make ends meet?” The answer is yes, provided you first obtain a street-vending certificate. The same council confirms that its bye-law officers have powers to arrest people and confiscate goods for contraventions. There, in miniature, is Botswana’s problem. A person has lost a job. The state cannot provide another. Instead of asking what it can do to help that person begin earning again, its first instinct is to ask whether that person has permission to put up a table.

BOTTOM-UP GROWTH
Economic development does not only arrive in billion-pula investment packages. It also starts with somebody selling five loaves of bread, discovering that customers want ten, buying a larger table, employing a cousin,

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“
One entrepreneur gets a delivery dashboard. The other gets a bye-law officer.”

renting a stall, opening a shop and eventually employing five people. Not every street trader will make that journey. But governments cannot know beforehand which tiny businesses will grow. That is precisely why barriers at the bottom matter. The World Bank has previously made essentially this point in its work on Botswana. Efficient



business regulation can support firm creation and productivity, while higher compliance costs can discourage entrepreneurship and therefore job creation. It specifically advocates risk-based regulation: activities presenting significant health, safety or environmental risks warrant stronger regulation, while low-risk enterprises should face lower administrative burdens. But someone selling tomatoes from a table does not present the same regulatory risk as a petrol station. Regulation should therefore regulate risk, rather than simply regulate economic activity because it exists.

TOP-DOWN THINKING

The Botswana Economic Transformation Programme is perhaps the grandest expression of this instinct. From almost 7,000 submissions, an elaborate government-led process has distilled 186 “high-impact” projects. Government stresses that 60 percent are private-sector-led, and that BETP is intended to remove precisely the bureaucratic obstacles that have frustrated in-



vestment. But there is nevertheless something profoundly paternalistic about the underlying idea that economic transformation can be engineered through laboratories, dashboards, sector strategies, selected projects

One entrepreneur gets a delivery dashboard. The other gets a bye-law officer. BETP itself acknowledges that excessive red tape has stalled projects, and the 2026 Budget promises reforms specifically in-

tended to reduce bottlenecks and compliance costs. But perhaps the most important economic transformation programme Botswana could undertake would be much simpler: stop trying to decide where enterprise should happen and make it extraordinarily easy for enterprise to happen everywhere. Government’s job is not to manufacture an economy. It is to create the conditions in which millions of individual economic decisions can manufacture one.

WORK UNDER PRESSURE

The labour-market numbers make this more urgent. Statistics Botswana’s latest comparable household survey estimates 213,437 actively unemployed people in 2024/25. That is 45 percent more than the 147,206 recorded in 2015/16. Youth unemployment reached 28.9 percent and the broader unemployment measure, including people available for work but not actively searching, was 27.3 percent. Botswana therefore has hundreds of thousands of people whose labour is not be-

ing fully utilised. Against that background, the person selling food at the roadside is not the economic problem. She is part of the response to it.

ENABLE ENTERPRISE

There is an encouraging contradiction inside government itself. In Parliament in December 2025, the Ministry of Trade and Entrepreneurship said government wanted simplified regulations, reduced compliance costs and easier access to technology, finance and markets for the informal sector. That is a very different philosophy from the language of crackdowns, confiscations and illegal traders. The two approaches need reconciling. Government has legitimate responsibilities for public health, consumer protection, traffic management and public space. Formal businesses are also entitled to expect that competitors do not permanently escape obligations they themselves must meet.

But enforcement should distinguish between protecting society from harm and protecting bureaucracy from non-compliance. Botswana’s informal economy contributed only about 3.2 per-



cent of GDP in 2023 according to figures cited by government when launching Chema Chema, despite supporting a much larger share of employment. That

enormous difference is itself revealing. The problem is not that Botswana has too much informal enterprise. It is that informal enterprise is desperately unproductive.

The development challenge is therefore to help the person behind the table become the person behind the counter; the person behind the counter become the owner of the shop; and the owner of the shop eventually become the employer of others. That transition will not be achieved by pretending that street trading is the destination. Nor will it be achieved by declaring war on it. The informal economy is where hundreds of thousands of Batswana are learning to trade, discovering markets, taking risks and, frequently, simply keeping themselves alive.

“
The question for government should not immediately be: Where is your permit? It should first be: How can we help you grow?”

Economic transformation does not begin when an investor signs a memorandum of understanding in a government conference room. Sometimes it begins when an unemployed person unfolds a table beside the road and sells something. The question for government should not immediately be: Where is your permit? It should first be: How can we help you grow?



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana already knows Anafiki's love story. It has been singing it since 1982. Now, the woman behind one of the country's enduring love songs is getting more than a musical tribute — she is getting a movie.

FROM SONG TO SCREEN

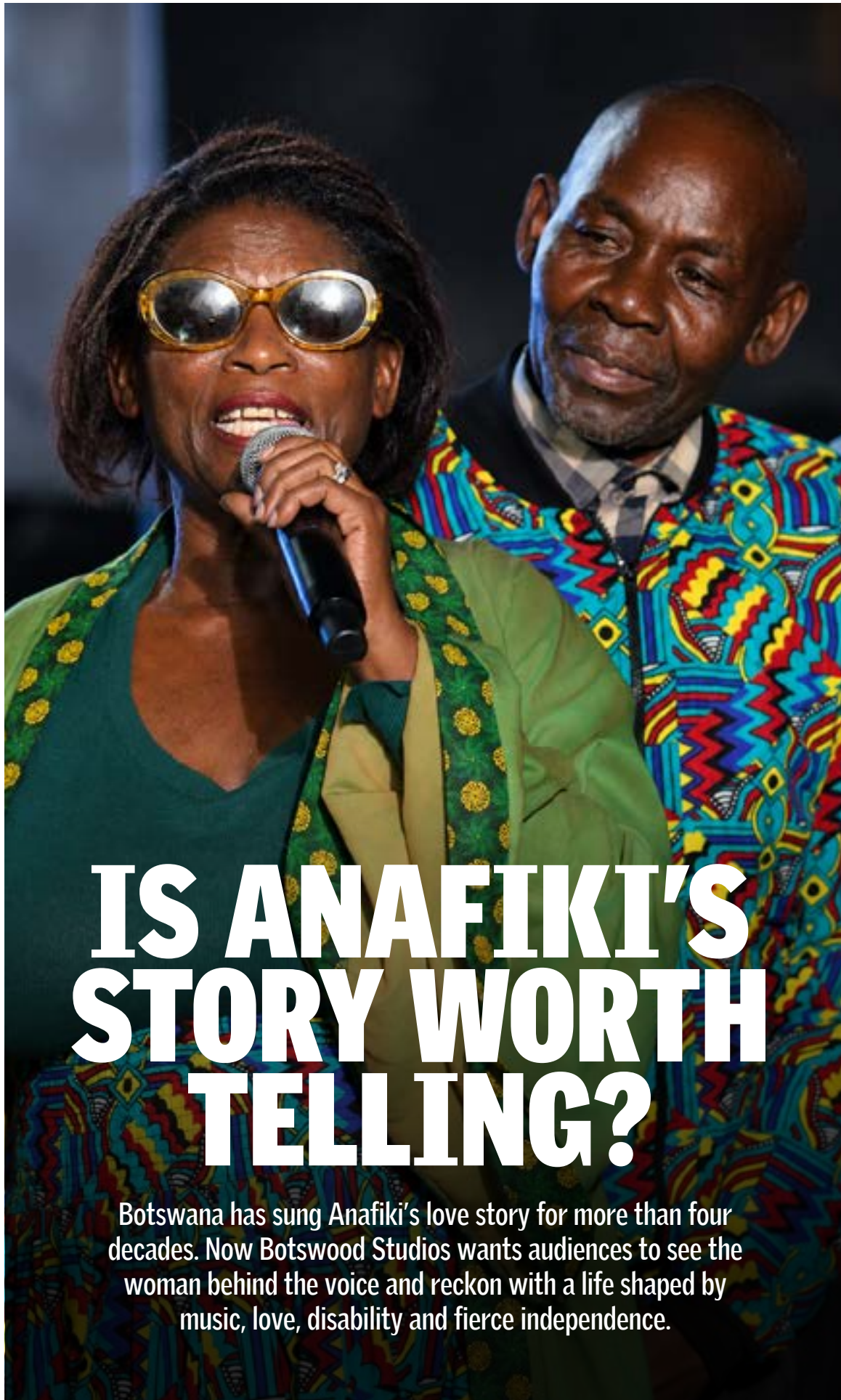
Botswood Studios is bringing *Anafiki* to the big screen, a coming-of-age love story inspired by the life of legendary pianist and performer Anafiki Ditau.

The film follows a royal boy who falls for a visually impaired girl, with music becoming the bridge between two very different worlds. But beneath the romance is a bigger story about independence, resilience, identity and finding a place in a society that often decides what people with disabilities can or cannot do.

“She wasn't a beggar, she lacked.”

For Botswood Studios' Afentse Fenny Lekolwane, the story is personal. Having known Anafiki for nearly two decades, Lekolwane says she saw beyond the requests for assistance.

“She wasn't a beggar, she



Botswana has sung Anafiki's love story for more than four decades. Now Botswood Studios wants audiences to see the woman behind the voice and reckon with a life shaped by music, love, disability and fierce independence.

lacked,” she told *Time Out*, recalling Anafiki's struggle to ask for help with basic needs while fiercely holding on to her independence.

BEYOND THE DIS-

ABILITY LABEL

That tension sits at the heart of the film. Lekolwane says Anafiki's story offers a different lens on disability, one centred on possibility

rather than limitation.

“It's a story of resilience, perseverance and hope,” she says.

Lead actress Palesa Molefe, who plays Anafiki, says

the role challenged her to confront assumptions about visual impairment while discovering the universal simplicity at the heart of the story.

“But it's also just a story about a girl in love, something we can all relate to,” Molefe says.

“It's a story of resilience, perseverance and hope,”

Filmed in Mochudi, the project also features Tebogo Reteng, Sheila Tlou and visually impaired students, who Lekolwane says make up about 95 percent of the students featured.

THE SONG THAT STARTED IT

Anafiki composed “Mpolelle Re Babedi” as a schoolgirl in 1982. More than four decades later, the folk love song remains woven into Botswana's musical memory.

Now her life gets its own soundtrack — and the film raises a bigger question: can the woman behind the beloved song become as memorable as the song itself?

TIRED OF
SHARING?



Creation Botswana Unveils Finalists



From more than 300 applications to six names, Création Botswana Season 2 is putting Botswana's jewellery talent under the spotlight and giving the country's next generation of makers a shot at the global stage.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana's jewellery scene just got a new cast of characters.

After more than 300 designers and manufacturers threw their hats — and jewellery boxes — into the ring, Création Botswana Season 2 has narrowed the field

to six finalists, setting the stage for a season focused on turning creative talent into serious jewellery business.

The journey was anything but

a straight line. Forty submissions first made it to an online judging panel before 14 finalists faced live auditions at KGK Botswana in Gaborone. There, they introduced their brands, demonstrated their skills and laid out their ambitions before a panel of judges.

Now, six remain.

MEET THE SIX

The selected designers are Tshepo Bale of Bale Luxury Collections, Mpho Mokgatlhe of Kolyreign Designs, One Rapelana of Xita, Osego Boshwaen of Boshwaen, Laone Kaelo Rahele of Rahele Jewellery and Hildah Stanley of The Heirloom.

According to Création Botswana Project Manager Nature Inger, the six will be presented together around Independence Day as part of the "Six for Sixty" campaign.

"To mark this important year, we are celebrating 'Six for Sixty': six Botswana designers celebrating 60 years of independence through creativity, craftsmanship and their hopes for the country's future," Inger told Time Out.

FROM GABORONE TO GLOBAL

Season 2 shifts Création Botswana from fashion entrepreneurship into jewellery design and manufacturing, with the programme offering technical training, business development, mentorship, masterclasses, industry exposure and international exchange.

"This new direction recognises Botswana's Diamond Jubilee while creating an opportunity to support local designers working within a sector closely connected to the country's identity, resources and economic ambitions," said Inger.

Création Botswana is part of Création Africa, a French government programme aimed at strengthening Africa's creative industries and building links between African talent and interna-

tional markets.

The campaign also marks 60 years of diplomatic relations between France and Botswana, with Inger saying the partnership combines Botswana's creative potential with French cultural cooperation and knowledge exchange.

"The six designers and Botswana's 60th anniversary are at the centre of the campaign."

"The six designers and Botswana's 60th anniversary are at the centre of the campaign," she said. "Through their stories and work, we hope to honour the country's journey while celebrating a new generation of Botswana creatives who will help shape what comes next."

Waste Is the New Raw Material

The third Sustainable Recycling and Waste Management Summit wants to turn discarded stuff into economic opportunity and take the conversation from conference rooms to the streets.

GAZETTE REPORTER

What if Botswana stopped treating waste as the end of the story?

That is the question hanging over Kasane when the 3rd Annual Sustainable Recycling and Waste Management Summit lands at Cresta Mowana Safari Lodge & Spa from October 7 to 8. Organised by Rolink Noble Health (Pty) Ltd, the summit is pitching a different relationship with rubbish: less dumping, more recovering, recycling and rethinking.

The theme — "Sustainable Pathways: Turning Ideas into Action through Solutions, Opportunities & Finance" — signals a de-



liberate move away from simply talking about the problem.

FROM TALK TO ACTION

Government, local authorities, businesses, academics, civil society and communities are expected around the table, with discussions ranging from resource recovery

and circular-economy opportunities to emerging technologies, policy, institutional capacity and the money needed to make environmental projects work.

The organisers say lessons from the 2024 and 2025 editions have reinforced the need for prac-

tical collaboration.

"We want to leave a long-lasting impact in terms of recycling and waste management because we believe that waste is not waste until it is wasted," they said.

It is a neat line, but the real test is what happens after the micro-

phones are switched off.

TAKE IT TO THE STREETS

On October 9, the summit leaves the lodge behind for a community engagement day featuring litter-picking, environmental awareness and capacity-building activities.

That shift, from PowerPoint to picking up litter could be the summit's most interesting move.

Because circular economy talk can sound abstract until a discarded bottle becomes recyclable material, an old product becomes something useful again, or waste creates a livelihood rather than occupying a landfill.

THE BUSINESS OF RUBBISH

The summit is ultimately asking Botswana to look at waste differently: not merely as an environmental headache, but as a resource with economic possibilities.

The challenge is turning that idea into systems that work and keeping them working long after the summit ends.

Presidential Rides, Rolling History

Presidential rides, Hollywood-era classics and a taste of Botswana in a glass, Diamonds & Chrome turned the National Museum into a time machine on wheels.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Forget the museum as a place where history sits quietly behind glass. For Botswana’s 60th birthday, history has arrived with polished chrome, roaring engines and presidential credentials.

The Diamonds & Chrome Vintage Classics Car Exhibition, running at the Botswana National Museum and Art Gallery from September 26 to 30, puts 10 vintage cars from the 1930s to the 1980s on display, transforming the museum courtyard into a rolling archive of Botswana’s past.

HISTORY HAS FOUR WHEELS

Curated by Vintage Classics Botswana founder Ineeleng Ka-

vindama, the exhibition features everything from a 1938 Chevrolet and 1963 Austin Cambridge to official Daimler vehicles associated with former presidents Sir Seretse Khama, Sir Ketumile Masire and Dr Festus Mogae.

The vintage cars including the 1979 Daimler DS 420 commanded plenty of attention. But the exhibition’s appeal stretches beyond presidential history.

Kavindama wants visitors to see these machines as cultural artefacts, the kind of cars that once helped define eras and now live on in cinema.

“Heritage on wheels,” she told Time Out, pointing to similarities between the exhibition’s classics and cars seen in films such as *The Great Gatsby* and *Fast & Furi-*

ous.

A BOTSWANA FLAVOUR

The opening night also brought another piece of local identity to the museum. Kavindama’s Kathiku Beverages mobile bar served gin to invited guests, including a taste of its indigenous-fruit-inspired range.

Kathiku’s offerings include Mowana-flavoured handcrafted gin, Moretologa Elder Flower & Rose Gin and Mmilo-flavoured handcrafted vodka, with products also available at the Museum Cafe.

The exhibition’s physical transformation extends beyond the cars. Prospec Printing handled major branding at the museum entrances, while Dunlop Tyres Gaborone supported the refurbishment and preparation of tyres for public display.



“These cars are not simply old machines. They are moving pieces of a country’s story.”

bishment and preparation of tyres for public display.

MORE THAN A CAR SHOW

For Kavindama, the bigger picture is tourism, education and memory.

The exhibition offers students, young people and tourists a reason to explore the museum while

documenting Botswana at 60. It also forms part of a broader push to strengthen tourism attractions in southern Botswana.

And perhaps that is the real beauty of Diamonds & Chrome: these cars are not simply old machines. They are moving pieces of a country’s story.

60 Years of Art And Style

Sixty years of Botswana does not fit neatly inside a history book. At the National Museum and Art Gallery and on the Independence Avenue runway, the country’s past became something to look at, touch, remember and wear.

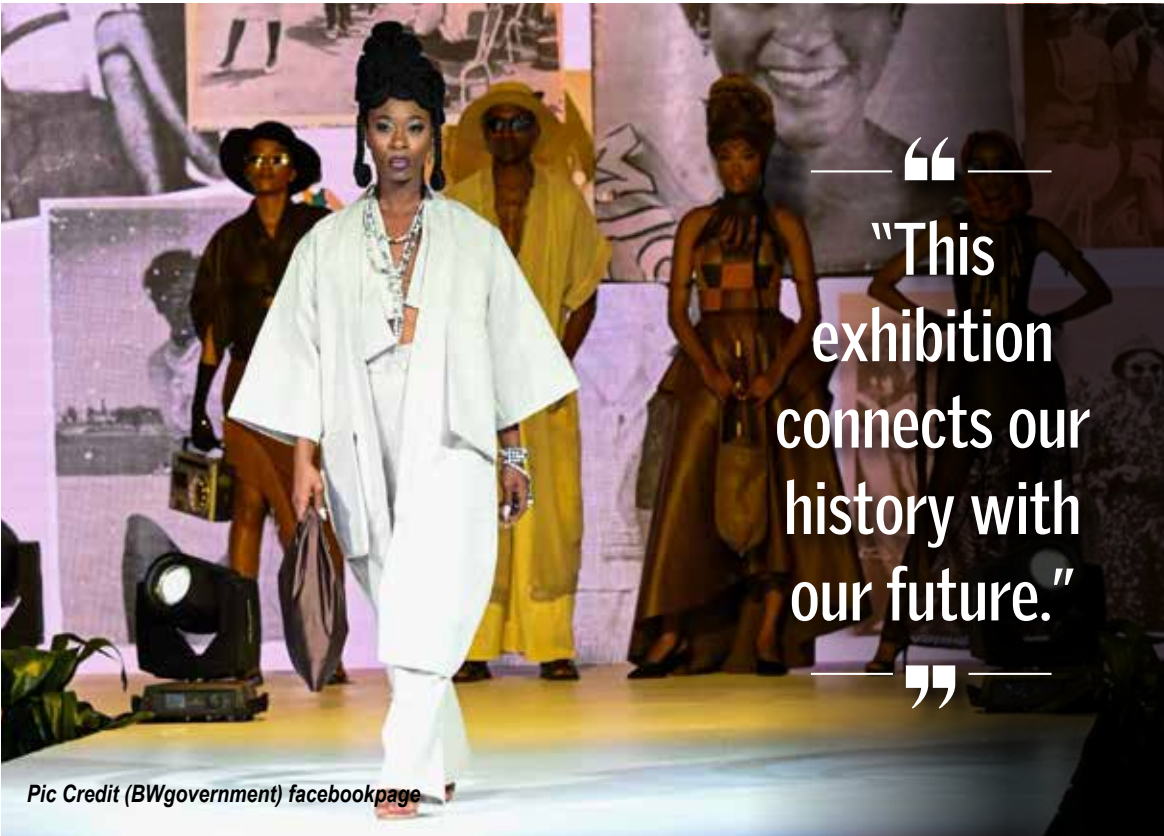
GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana turned 60 and decided history needed a wardrobe change.

The build-up to the Diamond Jubilee has arrived with less of a dusty-history-book energy and more of a cultural remix: a national exhibition digging through six decades of memories, followed by a fashion show that took those decades and sent them down the runway.

THE ARCHIVE COMES ALIVE

At the National Museum and Art Gallery in Gaborone, Bo-



Pic Credit (BWgovernment) facebookpage

tswana’s journey since 1966 unfolds across galleries packed with historical records, photographs, cultural artefacts and creative displays.

Traditional baskets, pottery, wood carvings and vintage cars offer snapshots of another Botswana, while the exhibition’s themes move from democracy

and cultural identity to economic resilience, social development, environmental sustainability and the country’s future.

The Lower Gallery looks at foundations, heritage, development and the environment. Upstairs, the conversation shifts towards leadership, innovation, future vision and global partner-

ships.

Sport and Arts Minister Jacob Kelebeg said the exhibition is intended to connect the country’s history with what comes next.

“This exhibition connects our history with our future,” he said.

That is where the exhibition finds its strongest pulse: not simply in celebrating what Botswana

has survived or achieved, but in asking what gets carried forward.

THEN THE RUNWAY TOOK OVER

By Saturday night, history had traded its museum labels for sequins, silhouettes and swagger.

The Botswana @60 Fashion Show on Independence Avenue transformed the country’s six decades into a fashion timeline, with designers drawing inspiration from 1966, the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and finally 2026.

Trudy Bakwena brought skin-hide couture, while BOTOCY and Sassima were among the designers showcasing collections that turned heritage into contemporary fashion.

The result was a celebration with movement: the past wasn’t simply being remembered; it was being redesigned.

THE NEW NATIONAL LOOK

Together, the exhibition and fashion show offered two ways of reading Botswana at 60. One preserved the story. The other styled it.

And perhaps that is the more interesting anniversary question: after 60 years, what does Botswana want its next chapter to look like?



Gosego Katai Takes Milan

Botswana's Katai joined a crew of African creators descending on Milan, bringing the fashion, sisterhood and full-on pink energy of The Pink Table straight to her 105K-plus followers.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Milan had the fashion. The girls brought the content.

When Botswana digital creator Gosego Katai touched down in Italy for Brutal Fruit Spritzer's The Pink Table – Milan Edition, she was not travelling quietly. Katai joined a colourful crew of African creators for four days of fashion, friendship, spritz and camera-ready moments.

"The sisterhood has spoken and Brutal Fruit Africa has taken your girl to Italy for the iconic pink table," Katai told her more than 105,000 Instagram followers before the trip. "I'll be getting ready to serve looks while sipping on my favorite spritzer with the girlies."

And Milan was ready for the assignment.

THE CREATOR TAKE-

OVER

From September 25 to 28, coinciding with Milan Fashion Week energy, The Pink Table turned the Italian fashion capital into a playground for creators, influencers and winners from across Africa.

The itinerary had all the ingredients of a very expensive girls' trip: rooftop dinners, good food, Lake Como views and enough fashion to fill several camera rolls.

For Katai, a Gaborone-based makeup artist, beauty expert and fashion and lifestyle creator, Milan was also an opportunity to turn an international experience into a digital one bringing her audience along for the ride.

PINK, BUT MAKE IT MILAN

The Pink Table is a community movement built around women, connection and sisterhood, with

fashion and lifestyle woven into the experience.

Milan, meanwhile, needs little introduction as a fashion capital. Put the two together and the city becomes one giant content set.

The streets become the runway. Dinner becomes content. Lake Como becomes a backdrop. Every outfit suddenly has a job to do.

Last year, The Pink Table took its sisterhood to Paris, with Botswana's Marang Selolwane among the invited influencers. This time, Katai gets her Milan moment.

“Milan, meanwhile, needs little introduction as a fashion capital.”

The result is a distinctly 2026 kind of girls' trip: part holiday, part fashion fantasy, part content studio with the whole city as the backdrop.

JAPAN, THROUGH A MOVIE LENS

Forget the flight to Tokyo. For one weekend, Japanese comedy, human drama and anime are crossing continents and landing in Gaborone with the ticket price set at zero.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

The Japanese Film Festival 2026 is bringing a slice of Japan to New Capitol Cinemas Masa from October 10 to 11, turning a Gaborone cinema into a temporary passport to Japanese culture.

The festival arrives on the back of what the Embassy of Japan in Botswana describes as a "wonderful response" from the local community, with this year's programme promising a

wider genre mix.

"Whether you are a dedicated film lover, curious about Japanese culture, or simply looking for an enjoyable outing with family and friends, there is a story waiting for you on the big screen," the embassy said.

And that is where the festival gets interesting. This is not just a parade of Japanese films for devoted cinephiles. The programme is designed to move between moods and audiences, from heartwarming comedy and human drama to visually striking anime.

MORE THAN MOVIES

Cinema has always been one of the slickest ways for cultures to travel. You do not need to speak Japanese to understand a great joke, recognise grief or get swept up in an animated world.

For Gaborone audiences, the festival offers that cultural exchange without the usual passport control or airfare.

The full film lineup and screening schedule are still to be announced, but one detail is already locked in: admission is completely free.

“The festival arrives on the back of what the Embassy of Japan in Botswana describes as a “wonderful response” from the local community, with this year’s programme promising a wider genre mix.”

So, whether you arrive chasing anime, curious about Japanese storytelling or simply looking for something different to do with friends and family, the invitation is open.

“Whether you are a dedicated film lover, curious about Japanese culture, or simply looking for an enjoyable outing with family and friends, there is a story waiting for you on the big screen,”





TIMEOUT BRIEFS

BY GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana's creative festival has a date with 2027. Stanbic Bank Music N Lifestyle Festival is coming back and Royal Aria is where the culture crowd will gather.

Botswana's annual collision of beats, bites, style and creativity has officially secured its next date. The Stanbic Bank Music N Lifestyle Festival returns on 24 April 2027, taking over Royal Aria in Tlokweng for another full-day celebration of the country's creative energy. The festival has grown into a meeting point for music, fashion, food and art, but its big-

ger play is economic: putting homegrown talent, small businesses and the wider creative industry in the same room and giving them an audience. With the date now locked, the countdown can begin. What happens on the Royal Aria stage, however, remains under wraps. For now, Botswana's culture calendar has one more date circled in ink.

BATHO BA METSI AIRS ON INDEPENDENCE DAY

Forget the postcard Okavango. Batho Ba Metsi turns the camera towards the people who live, work and create around its waters, bringing their stories to national television this Botswana Day.

Batho Ba Metsi is bringing the voices of the Okavango Delta to Botswana's screens this Independence day. Meaning "People of the Water", the Botswana-made documentary follows Palesa Molefe across the Delta as she meets mokoro polers, basket weavers, elders, youth storytellers and cultural custodians whose lives and traditions are shaped by its waters. Directed by Moabi Mogorosi, the film looks beyond the Delta's familiar wildlife-and-wilderness image, presenting it as a living

cultural homeland with stories, traditions and perspectives that deserve to be heard. At its heart, *Batho Ba Metsi* asks audiences to see the Okavango not only as a natural wonder, but as a place shaped by the people who live alongside it and carry its cultural knowledge forward. The documentary will air on BTV1 on Wednesday, 30 September 2026, from 8 to 9:30pm, as part of Botswana Day celebrations.



A Toast To Simonsig

Six wines, six courses and one very Botswana twist. Between The Toast turned wine tasting into a dinner-table conversation about craft, culture and what's in the glass.



Wine tasting can sometimes feel like homework with better lighting. Between U & I's *Between The Toast* is taking a different route: put the bottle on the table, add food, and let the stories flow. For its second edition, 80 guests gathered on 19 September for an evening with Simonsig Family Vineyards winemaker Nathan Valentine, moving through a six-wine flight paired with six courses. The menu travelled from salmon blinis and caviar to curried cauliflower tacos,

hot honey sliders and beef seswaa bitterballen before landing on Biscoff ice cream. That seswaa pairing was the local plot twist. "The thinking, heritage and craft behind each pour" was the point, according to Between U & I Event Curator Uyapo Ketogetswe. Rather than another glossy wine night, *Between The Toast* wants the table to do some talking — about food, place, people and the stories bottled inside every pour.



GIRLS, MEET AVIATION

What if the next generation of Botswana's aviation stars simply needs to see herself in the cockpit first? Safari Air put that idea into action at Girls in Aviation Day 2026.

For a day, the runway became a classroom and the cockpit, engineering bay and flight operations room became career possibilities.

Safari Air joined Girls in Aviation Day 2026, a global Women in Aviation International initiative delivered in partnership with Chiedza CheAfrica, exposing

girls aged 10 to 18 to the machinery and people behind the aviation industry. The programme swapped career-day clichés for hands-on encounters, with aircraft experiences, engineering demonstrations, flight operations activities, mentorship sessions and panels featuring women working across aviation. The message was simple: "If She Can See It, She Can Be It." For a Botswana aviation industry connecting remote communities and tourism destinations, the bigger conversation is who gets to imagine themselves as part of that journey. The girls were not simply shown aircraft. They were shown possible futures.

YOUR PALATE, YOUR CALL

Liking a wine is not the same as judging its quality, and developing a palate means understanding your own preferences rather than learning to admire every glass.



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

PHENYO MOTHAGODI

There is a particular kind of pressure that comes with drinking wine. Someone pours you a bottle, you take a sip and immediately realise that you do not particularly like it. Perhaps it is too acidic for your taste. Perhaps the tannins make your mouth feel as though you have been chewing a particularly dry piece of furniture. Then somebody at the table announces, with considerable confidence, that it is an excellent wine. Suddenly, you are faced with a decision: do you trust your own palate, or do you assume that your tongue has failed an examination?

Many wine drinkers seem to believe that developing a palate means eventually learning to like everything. After enough tastings, vineyard visits, wine courses and conversations with people who can say things such as “tertiary characteristics” without blinking, you are apparently expected to reach a point where every glass fills you with admiration. Rubbish. Developing your palate does not mean training yourself to enjoy every wine you encounter. It means learning to understand what you enjoy, what you do not enjoy and, perhaps most importantly, why.

PREFERENCE VS QUALITY

Saying, “I don’t like this wine,” is an expression of personal preference. Saying, “This is a bad wine,” is a judgement about the

quality of the wine itself. Those are two entirely different things.

You may be drinking a technically excellent, beautifully made and highly rated wine that simply does nothing for you. It may have balance, complexity, a long finish and a pedigree capable of making collectors slightly emotional. Yet, after tasting it, you may simply not enjoy it. That is perfectly fine.

The opposite can also be true. You may love a wine that a critic considers simple or unremarkable. If it gives you pleasure, that matters too.

FAMOUS WINE

We are particularly vulnerable when a wine arrives with a reputation. Give a bottle a famous name and an impressive price tag, and people approach the wine with an entirely different mindset.

The danger is that we become afraid to admit when we do not like what is in the glass. I have watched people drink wines they clearly did not enjoy and then describe them positively because everyone else appeared impressed.

Perhaps the wine really is exceptional. But personal enjoyment is not a democratic vote. One of the most useful sentences in wine is: “I can appreciate why this is a good wine, but it isn’t for

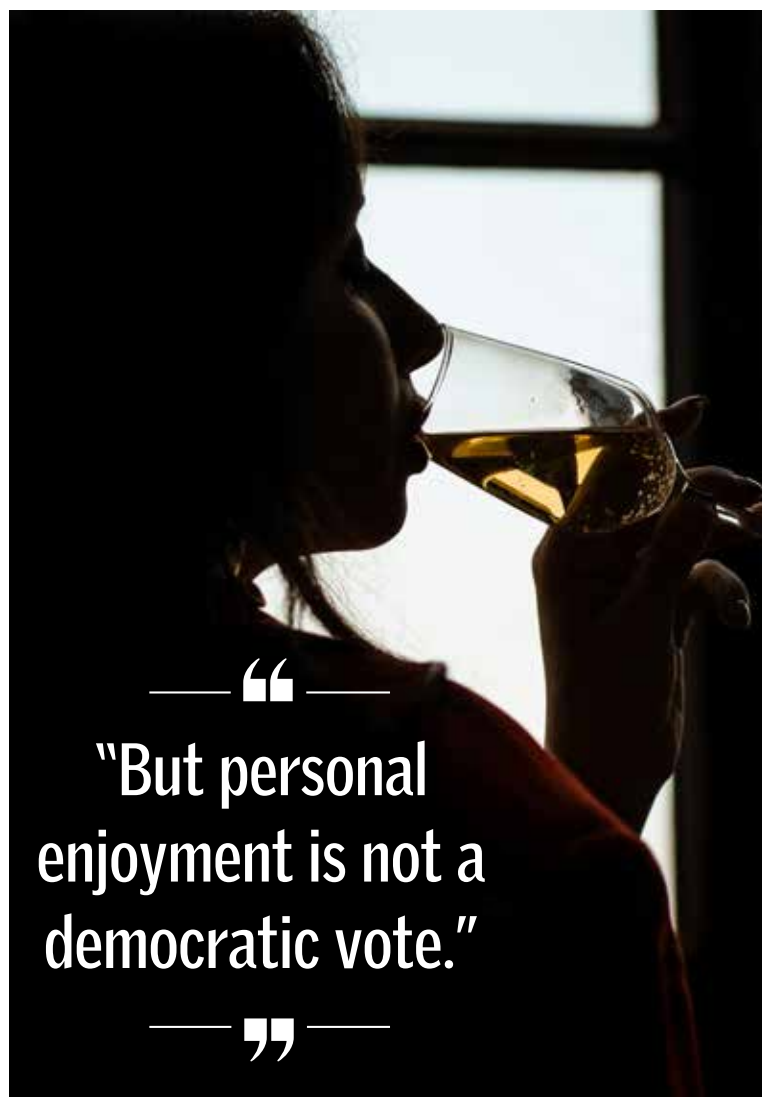
me.”

GROUP PROJECT

At the Gaborone Wine Club, one of the things I enjoy most is disagreement. Put the same bottle in front of the room and you will receive remarkably different reactions. One person loves it, another is unconvinced, and there will occasionally be one person looking around the room as though the rest of us have collectively lost our minds.



The most interesting conversations often begin when someone says, “I don’t get it.” That is not ignorance; it is an invitation to conversation. Is it too heavy, too acidic, too sweet or too domi-



“But personal enjoyment is not a democratic vote.”

“Developing your palate does not mean training yourself to enjoy every wine you encounter.”

nated by oak? Sometimes another person will explain what they enjoy about the wine, and sometimes you may simply agree to disagree.

PALATE EVOLVES

A wine journey is rarely a straight line. You may begin by enjoying Moscato and later discover Cabernet Sauvignon. You may spend several years convinced that powerful, structured red wines are the pinnacle of civilisation, only to find yourself drinking Chenin Blanc with alarming enthusiasm every weekend. You may dismiss Pinot Noir for years and then encounter one bottle that makes you reconsider every confident statement you have ever made about the grape.

That is what development looks like. Your palate changes because you experience more. You may eventually discover that you do not dislike Sauvignon Blanc; you simply prefer a different style of Sauvignon Blanc. You may realise that your issue with Chardonnay was not Chardonnay at all, but a particular winemaking style that tasted as though someone had fermented a particularly enthusiastic piece of oak.

The point is not to force yourself to enjoy things because you believe an experienced wine drinker should. The point is to keep tasting with enough curiosity to allow yourself to change your mind.

TRUST YOURSELF

A well-made wine is not automatically your favourite wine. You can recognise that a wine is balanced, complex and well made while admitting that you do not particularly enjoy drinking it. Equally, you can enjoy a simple and inexpensive wine without insisting that it belongs in precisely the same conversation as a great, age-worthy bottle made with extraordinary craftsmanship.

Wine becomes considerably more enjoyable when you stop seeking approval for what you like. If you like a wine, say so.

If you do not like it, say that too. Better still, try to understand why. Was it too heavy? Was the acidity overwhelming? Did the alcohol feel too prominent? Was it too sweet, too woody or simply not what you were in the mood for?

That does not mean closing yourself off from wines you have previously disliked. One disappointing bottle is not enough evidence to dismiss an entire grape variety, region or style. Explore again. Try another producer. Taste the grape in a different region or style. You may change your mind, or you may not. Either is fine.

“Wine is a world of extraordinary diversity, and your responsibility as a drinker is not to agree with everyone else.”

Wine is a world of extraordinary diversity, and your responsibility as a drinker is not to agree with everyone else. It is to remain curious enough to keep discovering while being confident enough to trust your own palate.

So, the next time someone hands you a famous, expensive and critically acclaimed bottle and asks what you think, do not panic. Taste it properly. Think about it. Give it time in the glass. If, after all that, you still do not like it, you are perfectly entitled to say so. “It’s a good wine. It’s just not for me.” Then, with a clear conscience, pour something you actually enjoy.

IN THE MAGISTRATE COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF GABORONE
HELD AT BROADHURST

CASE NO: 000496-26

In the matter between:
TLOT LISANG LEBURU
And
AGNESS MAROBA

Plaintiff

Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to judgment of the above honorable Court the following property of the above –mentioned Defendant will be sold on public Auction by Deputy Sheriff Onkgopotse Motlhagodi to the highest bidder as follows;

DATE OF SALE : 30 OCTOBER 2026
VENUE : BROADHURST MAGISTRATE
TIME : 10.00
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : 4 Burner Stove, 9kg Cylinder Gas, Russell Fridge and Samsung Phone.

TERMS OF SALE : Cash can further be viewed at the office of the deputy Sheriff.

DEPUTY SHERIFF ONKGOPOTSE MOTLHAGODI
P O BOX 402648 GABORONE
CONTACT MR ONKGOPOTSE MOTLHAGODI: 71868324

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

CASE NO: CVHFT 000 324/24

In the matter between:
ABSA BANK BOTSWANA LIMITED
formerly **BARCLAYS BANK OF BOTSWANA LIMITED**
And
SEGAMETSI LEJAGE

Plaintiff

Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT pursuant to a Writ of Execution issued out of the above Honourable Court in the above matter, the right, title and interest to and in the following immovable property of the Defendant will be sold by Public Auction by **Deputy Sheriff Ookeditse Masolotatse** to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE : 30th October 2026
VENUE : Tribal Lot 333, Tatisiding
TIME : 0900 Hours
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : The Defendant’s right, title and interest to and in certain piece of Land being Tribal Lot 333, Tatisiding, measuring 1000m² (One Thousand Square Metres), held under Memorandum of Agreement of Lease No. FT TL 1059/2019 dated the 4th day of October 2019 and made in favour of **SEGAMETSI LEJAGE** together with developments thereon, being a walled yard consisting of a Three bedroomed house with Master ensuite, bathroom/toilet, living room, dining room, kitchen, laundry room and a double door garage.

TERMS OF SALE : Cash or bank transfer only.

CONDITIONS OF SALE may be inspected at the offices of the hereunder mentioned Deputy’s Sheriff’s offices at Lotsane Ward, Palapye, Gamphone’s Complex, Next to Standard Chartered Bank, Palapye. He can be contacted at 74724543.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS THE 28TH DAY OF AUGUST 2026

VAN NIEKERK ATTORNEYS
Plot 4660, Area G, Ditau Street, P.O Box 37, Francistown
Telephone No. 241 3421

FIRST AND FINAL LIQUIDATION AND
DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT
ESHGB-000135-25

IN THE ESTATE of the late **KEALEBOGA KELLY MOLOSIWA** who died at Bokamoso Private Hospital, Mmopane, Kweneng District, Botswana on the 02nd day December 2024.

FIRST AND FINAL LIQUIDATION AND DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT in Estate will lie open for inspection at the office of the Master of the High Court at Gaborone for a period of twenty-one (21) days from the date of publication hereof.

Any objection to the Estate Account may be lodged with the Master.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THE 16TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026

Kabelo Matshidiso Tema
C/O Masuku Legal Practice
Plot 128, Unit 7,1st Floor, Kgale Court
P O Box AE 463 AEH
GABORONE

CELL: 3113331/72507374

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT GABORONE (MOTSWAGOLE J)

CASE NO. CVHGB – 003535 – 2024

In the matter between:-
“I AM” PAPERS (PTY) LTD
and
GOLD-TONED RIBBON (PTY) LTD
LEPATE MAJOO

Plaintiff

1st Defendant
2nd Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT pursuant to the Judgment granted by the Honourable Court the following movable property hereunder of the Defendant will be sold by public auction by Deputy Sheriff to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE : 7th October 2026
TIME OF SALE : 10:30 am
PLACE OF SALE : Broadhurst Magistrate’s Court
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : 1 x 1 Hino Truck Registration B 711 BHE

TERMS AND CONDITIONS : Cash or Bank guaranteed cheque otherwise details and conditions of sale may be inspected at the Plaintiff’s Attorneys Office.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS 28th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026.



RAMALEPA
ATTORNEYS
NOTARIES & CONVEYANCERS

D. J. MOYO c/o RAMALEPA ATTORNEYS
Plaintiff’s Attorneys
Plot 4853 Independence Avenue
(Along Nelson Mandela Drive)
Extension 11, Gaborone, P.O. Box 70567
GABORONE (UB)
(VR/mm/16647)72192666
3914511

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ENTER INTO A CONTROLLED
TRANSACTION IN TERMS OF SECTION 5 OF THE LAND
CONTROL ACT (CAP. 32:11)

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that the following controlled transaction is proposed:

THE SELLER : Rotric Engineering and Industrial Supplies (Proprietary) Limited
THE PURCHASER : Inkukukaya Botswana (Proprietary) Limited
CERTAIN : Piece of land being Portion 4 of the Farm No. 17-NQ
MEASURING : 10,3575 Ha (Ten comma Three Five Seven Five Hectares)
WHICH PROPERTY : Is held under Deed of Transfer No. 307/94 dated 22nd March 1994, made in favour of Rotric Engineering and Industrial Supplies (Proprietary) Limited

CONSIDERATION : P1,800,000.00 (One Million Eight Hundred Thousand Pula).
SUBJECT : To the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Agreement of Sale, which may be inspected at the Offices of Van Niekerk Attorneys, Ditau Street, Plot 4660, Area G, P. O.Box 37, Francistown.

BE PLEASED TO TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that:

a) All Botswana citizens interested in entering into a similar transaction in respect of the above property shall be given priority notwithstanding the agreement reached by the above-named parties regarding the controlled transaction.

b) Should any person wish to object to this proposed controlled transaction, notice of such objection with reasons therefore be addressed to the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture with copies to the undersigned (Van Niekerk Attorneys) within Ninety (90) days from the date of publication hereof.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS THE 16th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026

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

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

CASE NO: CVHFT-000303-25

In the matter between:
ALAKANANI MACHACHA
And
LUNGISANYI MOSINYI
In Re:
ALAKANANI MACHACHA
And
LUNGISANYI MOSINYI

APPLICANT

RESPONDENT

PLAINTIFF

DEFENDANT

SUBSTITUTED SERVICE

TO: **LUNGISANYI MOSINYI**
P O Box 366
SHASHEMOOKE

Formerly residing at Shashemooke, but whose present whereabouts are unknown:

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that summons for imprisonment of debt has been issued against you in this Honourable Court by **ALAKANANI MACHACHA**.

You are hereby **LUNGISANYI MOSINYI** summoned to appear before **JUSTICE SECHELE** at **FRANCISTOWN HIGH COURT** on the 9th day of **November 2026** at **09:00 a.m.** to show cause why a decree for civil imprisonment should not be made against you at the suit of **ALAKANANI MACHACHA** in respect of the non-payment of the sum of **P60 000.00**, interest at the rate of 10% per annum reckoned from the 29th day of November 2022 to date of final payment, costs of suit at attorney and own client scale recovered against you by the said **ALAKANANI MACHACHA** by a judgment of this Court bearing the date of the 22nd October 2025.

TAKE NOTICE FURTHER that if you fail to give such notice, judgment may be granted against you without further reference to you.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2026.

M MMOHE ATTORNEYS
(Applicant’s Attorneys)
Plot 3936, Peolwane Street, Minestone
P.O. Box 1860
FRANCISTOWN

DEPUTY REGISTRAR & MASTER

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

CASE NO: CVHFT 000774/2019

In the matter between:
ABSA BANK BOTSWANA LIMITED
formerly **BARCLAYS BANK OF BOTSWANA LIMITED**
And
MBAKO NFILA

PLAINTIFF

DEFENDANT

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT pursuant to a Writ of Execution issued out of the above Honourable Court in the above matter, the following immovable property of the Defendant will be sold by Public Auction by **Deputy Sheriff Stanley Sikalesele Mbolai** to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE : 29th October 2026
VENUE : Lot 5786, Donga, Francistown
TIME : 1000 Hours
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : Piece of Land being Lot 5786, Donga, Francistown, measuring 432m² (Four Hundred and Thirty Two Square Metres), held under Deed of Transfer No. FT 812/2005 dated the 8th day of November 2005, registered in favour of **MBAKO NFILA**, together with developments thereon, being a walled yard consisting of a fitted three bedroomed house with master bedroom ensuite, common bathroom and toilet, kitchen, dining room and sitting room.

TERMS OF SALE : Cash or Bank transfer only.

CONDITIONS OF SALE may be inspected at the offices of the hereunder mentioned Deputy Sheriff’s offices at Plot 1377, Extension 3, Palapye, Palapye. His contact numbers are 4925987/71635200.

DATED AT FRANCISTOWN ON THIS 3RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2026

VAN NIEKERK ATTORNEYS
Plot 4660, Area G, Ditau Street,
P. O. Box 37, Francistown
Telephone No. 241 3421

Boiteko pharmacy looking for a qualified and fully bhpc
registered pharmacist to work under the pharmacist in charge
Email:boitekochemist@gmail.com
Contact:73334586)
Deadline 05th october 2026

HERD BOY WANTED IN CHANOGA,
AGED 30 YEARS AND ABOVE.
CONTACT +267 76914747

SGH TAKES GERMAN EXCHANGE CUP

A two-week Botswana visit ended with football, host families and cultural exchange as Germany's Schickhardt Gymnasium Herrenberg claimed the tournament title.

Schickhardt Gymnasium Herrenberg (SGH) of Germany won the German Cultural Exchange Soccer Tournament on Saturday, 26 September, defeating Legae Academy 3-0 in the final at Rainbow Schools in Gaborone.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

The tournament brought together German exchange students, Rainbow learners and teams from MAPS, Westwood, Regent and ENKO. Regent finished third.

The competition formed part of a cultural exchange programme between Rainbow High School and SGH that dates to 2009, when German student Axel Kastel joined Rainbow for his teaching practice and became involved with its Under-19 football team.

TWO-WEEK VISIT

The relationship later developed into a formal exchange programme, with students travelling between Botswana and Germany

on alternating visits. SGH teacher and coach Ruben Donner, visiting Botswana for the third time, said the German delegation spent two weeks participating in football activities and cultural experiences.

“The arrangement gave the students an opportunity to experience local food, culture and everyday life while developing relationships with their host families.”

BEYOND FOOTBALL

The group also travelled to Kasane, which Donner identified as a highlight of the visit, particularly for students' exposure to Botswana's wildlife and natural



environment. Donner said German students stayed with Botswana host families rather than in hotels or hostels, allowing them to experience local food, culture and everyday life.

FOOTBALL CONNECTION

One participant said the exchange enabled students to learn how other teams operate while experiencing cultural differences, including how football is organised in Germany.

The German students also played matches against Rainbow staff and boys before competing

in the tournament. **EXCHANGE HISTORY** Rainbow's first delegation travelled to Germany in 2012. The programme was later interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic before resuming with another Rainbow delegation to Germany in 2023.

Botswana Hosts Padel Grand Finale

Botswana took the men's and women's titles as First Capital Bank's regional padel tournament brought players from five countries to Gaborone.

First Capital Bank Botswana hosted the Padel Club Regional Tournament Grand Finale in Gaborone from 26 to 27 September, bringing together teams from the bank's operations across five countries.

Held under the theme "Belief Comes First, On Every Court," the tournament featured competition between regional teams, alongside activities involving families, young people and members of the wider padel community.

BOTSWANA TAKES TWO TITLES

Botswana won both the men's and women's categories, while Zambia was crowned overall



country champion based on its performance across the tournament.

First Capital Bank Botswana Chief Executive Officer Lesego Osman said the event provided an opportunity to strengthen relationships across the region.

"Beyond the competition on the court, the weekend gave us an opportunity to strengthen relationships across our region, celebrate our people and showcase Botswana as the host of an important regional moment."

SPORT AS A CONNECTOR

Osman said sport created opportunities for participants to interact beyond competition.

"Sport creates a unique environment where people can connect, compete, learn from one another and build relationships."

First Capital Bank Botswana Head of Marketing and Communications Otsile Sethunya Marole said the tournament demonstrated how sport could facilitate connections across borders.

"The tournament underscored the power of sport to connect people across borders and create meaningful shared experiences."

Marole said the theme reflected the weekend's emphasis on individual and team participation.

“The tournament underscored the power of sport to connect people across borders and create meaningful shared experiences.”

"'Belief Comes First, On Every Court' captured the spirit of the weekend. It was about believing in yourself, believing in your team and creating an environment where people can come together and enjoy the experience."

NTHAGA SWITCH SAVES ZEBRAS

Lebogang Ditsele came off the bench to equalise as Botswana held Tunisia 2-2 and completed an unbeaten North African start to their 2027 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying campaign.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Zebras left North Africa unbeaten after Lebogang Ditsele came off the bench to rescue a 2-2 draw against Tunisia in their second Group H Africa Cup of Nations 2027 qualifier on Monday night.

Botswana had also drawn 2-2 with Libya four days earlier and again showed resilience in Rades, twice responding after Tunisia threatened to take control of the contest.

NTHAGA REACTS

The decisive moment came early in the second half. Tunisia went 2-1 ahead in the 49th minute after Olebogeng Ramotse's attempted clearance fell to Hazem Mastouri, who held off Mosha Gaolaolwe before beating goalkeeper Goitseone Phoko for his second goal of the match.

Interim coach Thaloba Nthaga responded by withdrawing Ramotse and introducing Ditsele. The substitute added greater physical presence in midfield and another player capable of driving forward in support of the

attack.

The change paid off quickly. Ditsele struck in the 60th minute to bring Botswana level at 2-2 and halt Tunisia's early second-half momentum.

FIRST-HALF PRESSURE

Botswana had spent long periods without the ball before the interval, with Phoko repeatedly called into action. Gape Mohutsiwa provided the Zebras' first major attacking threat when he struck the crossbar in the 11th minute, but Tunisia controlled much

of the possession that followed.

Against the run of play, Botswana took the lead in the 38th minute. Thero Setsile, Thatayaone Kgaman-yane and Tumisang Ore-bonye combined to pressure Tunisia debutant Mohamed Nasraoui, whose own goal put the Zebras ahead.

Tunisia responded six minutes later when Mastouri headed home to make it 1-1. Phoko was central to Botswana reaching halftime level, making four saves in the opening 45 minutes.

PRESSURE ABSORBED

The first-half statistics reflected Tunisia's territorial control. The hosts completed 336 passes to Botswana's 167 and registered 105 passes in the final third, compared with 31 by the Zebras.

“The result leaves Botswana with two points from two difficult away assignments against Libya and Tunisia, with four goals scored and no defeats.”

Botswana nevertheless stayed in the contest and, after falling behind shortly after the restart, Nthaga's substitution gave the side renewed aggression and attacking intent. Ditsele's equaliser rewarded that response.

The result leaves Botswana with two points from two difficult away assignments against Libya and Tunisia. The Zebras scored four goals across the two matches and avoided defeat in both.

TIRED OF SHARING?



RAGUIN MAKES BOTSWANA TENNIS HISTORY

Ntungamili Raguin leaves Japan with two titles, nine straight singles wins and Botswana's first appearance in an ITF J500 singles final.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Ntungamili Raguin has made Botswana tennis history by becoming the first player representing the country to reach an ITF J500 singles final, capping a remarkable two-week campaign in Japan.

The 17-year-old Mofswana finished runner-up at the prestigious ITF J500 Osaka on Sunday after going down 6-4, 6-1 to Japan's

eight seed Koki Nara in a final that lasted one hour and 35 minutes.

The title slipped from his grasp, but Raguin leaves Japan having broken new ground for Botswana tennis on several fronts.

MIKI DOUBLE

His Osaka run came only a week after he completed a memorable double at the ITF J200 Miki, winning both the singles and doubles titles. His singles tri-

umph made him the first player representing Botswana to capture a J200 singles crown.

He carried that momentum into Osaka, where he pieced together another impressive run against some of the world's leading junior players.

OSAKA BREAKTHROUGH

Among the defining moments was his quarter-final victory over world number 20 Kai Thompson, the tournament's top seed. Ragui-

n then swept aside world number 49 Hyu Kawanishi 6-0, 6-3 in the semi-finals to secure Botswana's first-ever place in a J500 singles final.

Rain disrupted the Osaka final, forcing organisers to move the match from Osaka to the indoor courts at the Bourbon Beans Dome in Miki.

Nara eventually ended Raguin's charge, but the defeat did little to diminish a Japanese tour

in which the Botswana youngster registered nine consecutive singles victories across the J200 Miki and J500 Osaka tournaments.

NEW BENCHMARK

Raguin's results represent a significant breakthrough for both the player and the Botswana Tennis Association, particularly given the level of competition at J500 events, which sit among the higher tiers of the International Tennis Federation junior calendar.

Raguin leaves Japan as Botswana's first J200 singles champion and its first J500 singles finalist.

His fortnight in Japan delivered two titles, a major final and victories over highly ranked international opposition, while establishing two national firsts. He leaves as Botswana's first J200 singles champion and its first J500 singles finalist, setting a new benchmark for the country's emerging tennis players.

The silver medal in Sunday's J500 singles final denied him a chance to complete a historic treble of accolades, but Botswana tennis had already entered previously uncharted territory.

Motlakaloso Retires After 175 Caps

Ntebogang Motlakaloso ends a 19-year international career that took her from Botswana's junior ranks to 175 caps, a Nations Cup title and a pioneering spell in Singapore.

BONGANI MALUNGA

After 19 years and 175 international caps, Ntebogang Motlakaloso has called time on a national-team career that carried her from Botswana's junior ranks to the global stage.

The veteran defender has retired from international netball after a career defined by longevity, major international tournaments and a pioneering stint in Singapore that opened doors for Botswana players abroad.

Motlakaloso's final appearance for Dinaledi came against continental giants South Africa in the group stages of the Netball World Cup Sydney 2027 Africa Quali-

fier in Nairobi last week, where Botswana suffered a 72-32 defeat.

FINAL BOW

It was a subdued ending on the scoreboard, but one that does little to diminish a career stretching back almost two decades. Motlakaloso's journey in Botswana colours began in 2007 when she represented the country at Under-17 level before establishing herself among the country's leading netball players.

She was part of Botswana's squad at the 2008 Nations Cup in Singapore, where Dinaledi finished runners-up, before going on to represent the senior national team at the 2011 World Netball Championships in Singapore.

SINGAPORE BREAKTHROUGH

That tournament proved significant beyond national-team duty. Motlakaloso, Kagisano Mawela and Tebogo Radipotsane subsequently secured opportunities in Singapore's Netball Super League, marking an important breakthrough for Botswana players in an international league.

Representing M1 Starfish in the 2012 season, Motlakaloso was named MVP International, becoming the standout foreign player in the league and underlining her quality beyond Botswana's borders.

FULL CIRCLE

Her international story with Singapore eventually came full circle. Fourteen years after being part of the Botswana squad that settled for silver at the Nations Cup, Motlakaloso returned with Dinaledi in 2022 and helped the country final-

ly conquer the competition.

Botswana went unbeaten throughout the tournament before beating Fiji 65-37 in the final to lift the Nations Cup title, one of the defining achievements of Motlakaloso's long career.

For the Botswana Netball Association (BONA), her departure represents the loss of far more than an experienced defender.

"Motlakaloso's retirement marks more than the end of a playing career; it signals the closing of an era. Her contribution has extended beyond the statistics, inspiring teammates and younger players through her discipline, longevity and dedication to the national cause," the association said in a statement.

END OF ERA

Across different generations of Dinaledi players, coaching changes and fluctuating fortunes for Botswana netball, Motlakaloso remained a constant presence.

Her career stretches beyond the 175-cap milestone, from a young



player emerging through Botswana's system to an international league award winner and, eventually, a Nations Cup champion.

"As she hangs her bib and steps away from international competition, Botswana netball bids farewell to a player who gave nearly two decades to Dinaledi," BONA stated.

TOP 8 RETURNS WITH P1.5M PRIZE

African Hero's P4 million sponsorship restores Botswana's elite knockout competition after six seasons, with champions set to earn more than the country's league and FA Cup winners.



BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's Top 8 is returning after a six-season absence with its biggest winners' cheque yet, as African Hero injects P4 million into a competition that will reward the champions with P1.5 million after a three-month knockout campaign.

The top-eight format, last staged under previous sponsor Mascom in the 2019/20 season, will kick off in October and conclude on December 12, restoring a compe-

tion that was once one of domestic football's biggest commercial properties.

Financially, the comeback represents a modest increase on where the tournament left off. The 2019/20 Mascom Top 8 paid P1.4 million to the champions, meaning African Hero has raised the headline prize by P100 000.

Its significance becomes clearer against Botswana's current football economy. Gaborone United collected P1.4 million for winning the 2025/26 FNB Premiership, while Jwaneng Galaxy received P800 000

for lifting this year's Orange FA Cup. The Top 8 therefore offers P100 000 more than the reward for winning a 30-match league campaign and P700 000 more than Botswana's main FA Cup.

REGIONAL STAKES

The regional comparison is even sharper. South Africa remains in a different financial league, with the 2026 MTN8 champions set to bank R10 million, equivalent to approximately P8.39 million at September 27 exchange rates, more than five times Botswana's Top 8 winners' purse.

Botswana nevertheless compares strongly with several other Southern African knockout tournaments. Eswatini's 2026 Ingwenyama Cup champions received E1.45 million, worth roughly P1.21 million, while Zimbabwe's 2026 Chibuku Super Cup offers US\$75 000, presently around P1.02 million, to its winner.

In Zambia, the 2026 ABSA Cup champions receive K1.1 million, approximately P769 000, while Malawi's directly comparable Airtel Top 8 offered its 2026 champions K40 million, equivalent to about P314 000 at current exchange rates.

The figures place Botswana's revived tournament well short of South Africa's commercial scale, but above several established knockout cups in the region.

BEYOND CHAMPIONS

African Hero has also built a substantial individual awards structure into the tournament. The Player of the Tournament will pocket P50 000 and the Coach of the Tournament P30 000, while the best goalkeeper and leading scorer will each receive

P25 000.

The Young Player and Referee of the Tournament will each earn P20 000. The assistant referee and supporters' player will each receive P15 000, while the Fan of the Tournament gets P10 000.

Those end-of-tournament awards total P210 000, meaning at least P1.71 million of the sponsorship can already be identified between the champions and listed individual awards, before Man of the Match payments and any additional team rewards.

The African Hero Top 8 will also restore the previous Mascom Top 8 benchmark of P5 000 for the Man of the Match award, the joint-highest prize for the accolade in the history of local football.

The battle begins from October 23 to 25 when Gaborone United face Nico United, Jwaneng Galaxy meet Township Rollers, Sua Flamingoes tackle Orapa United and Mochudi Centre Chiefs take on Morupule Wanderers.

COMMERCIAL RETURN

Speaking at the launch of the competition last Friday, BFL Board Chairman Sipho Showa said the tournament represents an important opportunity to strengthen the commercial offering of Botswana football.

"The Top 8 has a special place in our football landscape. It has a history, it has a following and it has significant commercial potential. Our responsibility as the BFL is to continue developing football properties that benefit our clubs, players, supporters and partners. This partnership with African Hero gives us an opportunity to do exactly that," Showa stated.

Jack, Chiswaniso Rule Zone VI

Sekao Boifang Jack and George Chiswaniso turned consistency across five legs into the overall CAVB Zone VI title, giving Botswana a regional beach volleyball crown.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana beach volleyball stars Sekao Boifang Jack and George Chiswaniso have been crowned overall CAVB Zone VI Beach Volleyball Series champions after a campaign built on consistency across all five legs.

Jack and Chiswaniso sealed the overall crown in Maputo, Mozambique, on Sunday despite narrowly missing out on gold in the final leg, where Angola beat them 2-1 in a fiercely contested final. The defeat denied the Botswana pair a second individual-leg gold medal of the 2026 series, but not the bigger prize.

POINTS PAY OFF

Points accumulated across the five-leg campaign proved decisive, leaving Jack and Chiswaniso at the summit of the overall standings and confirming their place among the region's leading beach volleyball combinations.

The pair entered Sunday's final with their work through-

out the season having already placed them in a strong position. They negotiated their way to the gold-medal match before Angola edged them over three sets.

Their overall triumph is significant because the campaign was not without setbacks.

MAPUTO FOUNDATION

One of their biggest results came during the second leg in Maputo in March, where Jack and Chiswaniso produced a dominant run to gold. They dispatched Mozambique's Ednilson José Tivane and Helton Andrade Guvo 2-0 in the semi-finals, winning 21-13, 21-13, before facing another Mozambican pair, Aldveino Nguvo and Rafael Junior, in the final.

The Batswana again needed only two sets, taking the title 21-17, 21-19. It was a significant points haul after a difficult opening leg in Windhoek, Namibia, from February 20 to 22. That event attracted 24 men's teams from across the region.

Botswana had two combinations in Windhoek, with Jack

and Chiswaniso joined by Trevor Manduwa and Baleofi Mosiwa. Manduwa and Mosiwa reached the quarter-finals before going down 2-1 to an Angolan pair. Jack and Chiswaniso responded at the next stop in Maputo, turning the early setback into gold and positioning themselves firmly in the overall title race.

During the fourth leg in Swakopmund in August, both Botswana pairs were stopped in the quarter-finals. Jack and Chiswaniso suffered a 2-0 defeat against South Africa, while Mosiwa, by then partnered by Elton Elias, lost 2-0 to Angola's Eduardo Helio and Carlos Muondo.

The Swakopmund setback made their response in the final leg crucial. Jack and Chiswaniso reached Sunday's final in Maputo and collected another major haul of points. Although Angola denied them the leg victory in a three-set battle, silver was enough for the Botswana pair to finish the five-event series as overall champions.

SECOND PAIRING

Botswana's second pairing of Mosiwa and Elias also completed a strong campaign. They finished sixth in the final leg and



fifth in the overall Zone VI standings, giving Botswana two teams near the upper end of the regional field.

Mosiwa featured throughout the campaign, initially partnering Manduwa before later teaming up with Elias. His quarter-final appearance alongside Manduwa in the second leg ended in a 2-0 defeat to Mozambique.

The performances underline Botswana's growing depth in men's beach volleyball, with Jack and Chiswaniso remaining the

standard-bearers.

CONTINENTAL PEDIGREE

The duo entered the 2026 campaign with considerable continental pedigree. At the African Games in Accra in 2024, they defeated Egypt and Congo in the group stages, overcame Mozambique 2-1 in the quarter-finals and, after losing to Morocco in the semi-finals, beat Sierra Leone 2-0 to earn bronze, Botswana's first team-sport medal at the African Games.



MARES PRIORITISE MATCH SHARPNESS

Gaolethoo Nkutlwisang is using international game time to test combinations, build confidence and sharpen the Mares before the October 10 Olympic qualifier against Tanzania.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana women’s senior national team coach Gaolethoo Nkutlwisang believes competitive game time could prove crucial to the Mares’ preparations for their upcoming CAF Women’s Olympic Qualifier against Tanzania on October 10.

The Mares stepped up preparations with a 1-1 international friendly draw against Namibia at Lobatse Sports Complex

last Saturday, a match Nkutlwisang viewed as an important opportunity to assess combinations and improve the squad’s match sharpness.

Laone Moloi handed Botswana the lead in the first half before Namibia fought back after the break to secure a share of the spoils.

MINUTES MATTER

While victory would have provided a confidence boost, Nkutlwisang said the scoreline was secondary to giving players meaningful minutes

against international opposition before the Tanzania assignment.

The coach was particularly encouraged by Botswana’s first-half performance, midfield control and the number of goalscoring opportunities created.

“We played well in the first half. We did show signs of fatigue while the pitch also proved to be a bit heavy but that’s not an excuse. Generally the team’s combinations worked well as we dominated

the midfield battle,” Nkutlwisang told the media after the match.

“The amount of chances that we created are positives from this game. This also gave players in our system a chance to show up at this level, we saw them being more relaxed than before.”

CONFIDENCE BUILDING

Beyond experimenting with combinations, Nkutlwisang believes friendly matches are helping less experienced

members of the squad adjust to the intensity and demands of international football.

With places in the team potentially still up for grabs ahead of the Olympic qualifier, the Namibia encounter gave players another opportunity to stake their claim while becoming more comfortable in the senior national team environment.

TANZANIA NEXT

The Mares’ ability to create chances and control significant periods of the contest will encourage the technical team, although the second-half fatigue highlighted areas that may require attention before facing Tanzania.

“Generally the team’s combinations worked well as we dominated the midfield battle.”

Nkutlwisang maintains that exposure to competitive fixtures is central to ironing out those weaknesses. The friendly forms part of Botswana’s build-up towards what promises to be a crucial encounter with Tanzania next month as the Mares continue their pursuit of a place at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games.

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ZEBRAS FIGHT BACK IN TUNISIA

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Lebogang Ditsele came off the bench to equalise as Botswana held Tunisia 2-2 and completed an unbeaten North African start to their 2027 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying campaign.



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