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UDC AT WAR WITH ITSELF

UDC MPs appear increasingly unwilling to bear the political cost of their coalition's declining popularity, as President Boko reportedly moves to enforce party discipline to contain dissent

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UDC AT WAR WITH ITSELF

With the 2029 elections looming and public frustration over unfulfilled promises mounting, UDC MPs appear increasingly unwilling to bear the political cost of their coalition's declining popularity, as President Boko reportedly moves to enforce party discipline to contain dissent

GAZETTE REPORTER

A growing revolt within the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) parliamentary backbench is exposing cracks in the ruling coalition, with some legislators increasingly taking positions that put them at odds with their own government.

Impeccable sources say party President Duma Boko who is under pressure to walk the talk is growing intolerable and losing patience with public criticism from within the ruling coalition and is reportedly preparing to invoke party discipline to rein in dissenting officeholders. "We have already received threats and suggestions that we may be acting against the party's interests," said a legislator who preferred anonymity in an interview with this publication.

The emerging resistance is widely seen as a political survival strategy by legislators who are becoming increasingly conscious of the electoral consequences of defending an unpopular government.

The experience of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in the 2024 general election remains a particularly sobering lesson. Several of its legislators who stood firmly behind former president Mokgweetsi Masisi, even in the face of mounting public discontent, fell by the wayside while Masisi proceeded into retirement with his presidential benefits.

"For some UDC legislators, the lesson appears to be that loyalty to the presidency does not necessarily guarantee political survival.

POLITICAL SURVIVAL

With the UDC facing growing public scrutiny over its unfulfilled electoral promises, its legislators are confronted with the difficult task of reconciling party loyalty with the expectations of their constituents.

Insiders say frustration has been building within the parliamentary caucus over what some legislators perceive as Cabinet's disregard for their proposals, concerns and requests for government intervention in their constituencies.

There are also indications that legislators are becoming increasingly unsettled by growing public displeasure, particularly as they are often the first point of contact between disgruntled citizens and the government.

Unlike ministers, whose positions afford them greater influence over government decisions, ordinary legislators must frequently account for policy decisions over which they have limited control.

In recent times reports were that tensions between Cabinet and the backbench had escalated, with legislators complaining of being sidelined in decision-making processes despite being expected to defend government policies. Among the contentious issues is the growing public resentment over successive tax measures, which are eroding the party's popularity.

THE MASISI LESSON

The disastrous electoral performance of the BDP in 2024, which ended its 58-year grip on power and reduced it to four elected parliamentary seats, remains a cautionary tale for the current crop of legislators.

Already, some political observers are predicting a high parliamentary casualty rate in 2029, particularly among first-time legislators who rode into Parliament on the wave of public demand for regime change.

Unlike in 2024, when the UDC largely capitalised on public dissatisfaction with the BDP, its candidates will in 2029 have to defend their own government's record.

The emerging assertiveness of the backbench could therefore be an early attempt by some legislators to establish political identities independent of the executive.

A FAMILIAR PATTERN

The bigger question, however, is whether the backbench can sustain its newfound assertiveness.

Historically, rebellions within ruling party parliamentary caucuses in Botswana have often been short-lived, with dissenting legislators eventually falling into line following interventions by party leadership.

Whether President Duma Boko will tolerate an increasingly independent backbench or invoke party discipline to contain dissent as some hint remains to be seen.

There is also a distinction between legislators publicly criticising their government and demonstrating the willingness to vote against it when circumstances demand.

BEYOND PARLIAMENT

The discontent is not confined to Parliament. The coalition's constituent parties and their youth structures are increasingly questioning aspects of the government's performance and direction.

The Botswana National Front Youth League (BNFYL) has raised concerns over persistent youth unemployment, limited economic opportunities, and have openly criticized the coalition's tax strategies.

Some observers attribute the growing internal discord to the absence of a UDC congress where ideological differences, policy disagreements and competing interests could be ventilated and reconciled.

In the absence of such a platform, Parliament and the media increasingly risk becoming arenas for settling internal coalition differences.

TESTING THE REVOLT

Meanwhile, there is speculation that the opposition could exploit the growing divisions by tabling a motion of no confidence in the government, effectively putting the backbench's dissatisfaction to the test.

> "For some UDC legislators, the lesson appears to be that loyalty to the presidency does not necessarily guarantee political survival."

Under Section 92 of the Constitution, a successful vote of no confidence could trigger the dissolution of Parliament unless the President resigns or dissolves Parliament earlier.

Such a motion would force disgruntled legislators to choose between their publicly expressed reservations and loyalty to their government, potentially putting their own parliamentary seats at risk.

Ultimately, the real test of the UDC backbench's independence will not be the intensity of its criticism but whether it is prepared to translate that criticism into parliamentary action.

Will State Apologise to Kgosi?

Former president Ian Khama demands that the State clear the late intelligence chief Isaac Kgosi's name over the discredited P100 billion scandal and publicly issue a posthumous apology to him



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

TEFO PHEAGE

Former president Ian Khama has called for a posthumous apology to the late founding Director-General of the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS), Isaac Kgosi, over his implication in the discredited P100 billion scandal, insisting that both he and the deceased intelligence chief deserve the same treatment being extended to other victims of the affair.

Khama, who is also pursuing the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) over the handling of the scandal, has demanded that those responsible for the allegations be held accountable, including political figures and public officials implicated in their formulation and prosecution.

His demands come amid fresh developments in the long-running controversy, with the government moving towards compensating and publicly apologising to former intelligence officer Welheminah Maswabi, popularly known as Butterfly, following years of litigation arising from allegations that more than P100 billion had been stolen from the Bank of Botswana.

KHAMA DEMANDS JUSTICE

Responding to enquiries from The Botswana Gazette on whether he expects similar treatment following the government's latest moves to resolve the scandal, Khama said:

"I expect the same for myself and the late Colonel Kgosi :

I expect and demand for full accountability by the perpetrators from top to bottom of those who were behind this farce, both political actors and officials. I am pursuing my own path to hold them accountable."

Khama's position places the late Kgosi at the centre of renewed demands for redress, raising questions about whether the government will extend its apologies to Kgosi who died before receiving formal vindication.

Kgosi, who served as Botswana's first intelligence chief under Khama, died in 2024, leaving behind unresolved legal disputes arising from his tenure and subsequent encounters with law enforcement authorities.

Although his death ended the possibility of him personally pursuing some forms of legal redress, the State remains free to issue a posthumous apology acknowledging the damage caused to his reputation by the P100 billion allegations.

DPP UNDER PRESSURE

Khama's latest remarks also come against the backdrop of his continuing efforts to secure accountability through the DPP.

The former president previously lodged a perjury complaint against former Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) investigator Jako Hubona, whose affidavit formed part of the allegations that implicated Khama, Kgosi, Maswabi and South African businesswoman Bridgette Motsepe-Radebe.

The DPP has been under pressure to determine whether criminal proceedings should be instituted against those suspected of providing false evidence in the case.

In June 2026, the DPP indicated that a decision was being considered on whether the matter should proceed through public or private prosecution.

Khama has maintained that an apology alone would be insufficient without accountability for the individuals responsible for the scandal.

STATE APOLOGIES

The renewed demand comes after the State formally apologised to Motsepe-Radebe in 2025 following a settlement over allegations linking her to the supposed disappearance of P100 billion.

More recently, a proposed consent order dated 11 November 2026 indicated that the government was preparing to compensate Maswabi and publicly apologise for her arrest, detention and prosecution.

The draft order reportedly acknowledges that the prosecution was wrongful and malicious.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The P100 billion scandal, which erupted in 2019, centred on allegations that enormous sums of money had been siphoned from the Bank of Botswana and transferred through international accounts.

Poverty Not Going Anywhere Soon

More than 683,000 people remain below the poverty line as population growth offsets nearly a decade of gains in the national poverty rate.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's fight against poverty has barely reduced the number of people living below the poverty line over nine years, despite a decline in the national poverty rate, according to the latest government statistics.

The Poverty and Inequality in Botswana Statistical Brief, based on the Botswana Multi-Topic Household Survey (BMTHS) 2024/25, reveals that poverty declined from 33 per cent in 2015/16 to 28.9 per cent in 2024/25, a reduction of 4.1 per centage points over almost a decade.

At this rate, poverty would still affect close to a quarter of the population by the mid-2030s, leaving Botswana significantly short of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 target of ending poverty.

POPULATION PRESSURE

The modest improvement in the poverty rate has done little to reduce the number of people living below the poverty line.

In 2024/25, a total of 683,634 people were classified as poor, compared with 684,284 in 2015/16. This represents a reduction of approximately 650 people over nine years.

"Population growth absorbed almost all of the improvement in the rate," the statistical brief states.

It warns that measuring poverty exclusively through per centages risks concealing the scale of the problem, as governments could record improvements in poverty rates while the actual number of people requiring assistance remains virtually unchanged.

RURAL DIVIDE

The findings also expose the deep geographical inequalities underpinning poverty, with rural Botswana bearing a disproportionately heavy burden.

The rural poverty rate stands at 47.2 per cent, almost five times the 9.7 per cent recorded in cities and towns. This means nearly half of the rural population continues to live below the poverty line.

At district level, the disparities are even more pronounced. Orapa recorded the lowest poverty rate at 2.1 per cent, while Letlhakeng emerged as the country's poorest district, with 61.1 per cent of its population living in poverty.

Half of Botswana's 32 districts recorded poverty rates above the national average, with the highest concentrations found in the Kgalagadi, Kweneng and North West areas.

WORKING POOR

The report further raises questions about the extent to which employment is lifting households out of poverty.



(Pic:MONIRUL BHUIYAN/PRESS PHOTO)

Although working people are generally better protected against poverty, the working poverty rate declined by less than one per centage point over the decade, compared with the national reduction of 4.1 per centage points.

The working poverty rate currently stands at 15.7 per cent, suggesting that employment alone has not delivered sufficient improvements in living standards for a significant proportion of workers.

CONSUMPTION INEQUALITY

Meanwhile, consumption inequality has narrowed, with the Gini coefficient declining from 0.540 to 0.493. However, the report cautions that inequality remains high, with consumption still heavily concentrated among wealthier households.

Rural Botswana is particularly disadvantaged, recording an inequality coefficient of 0.500, higher than the national average.

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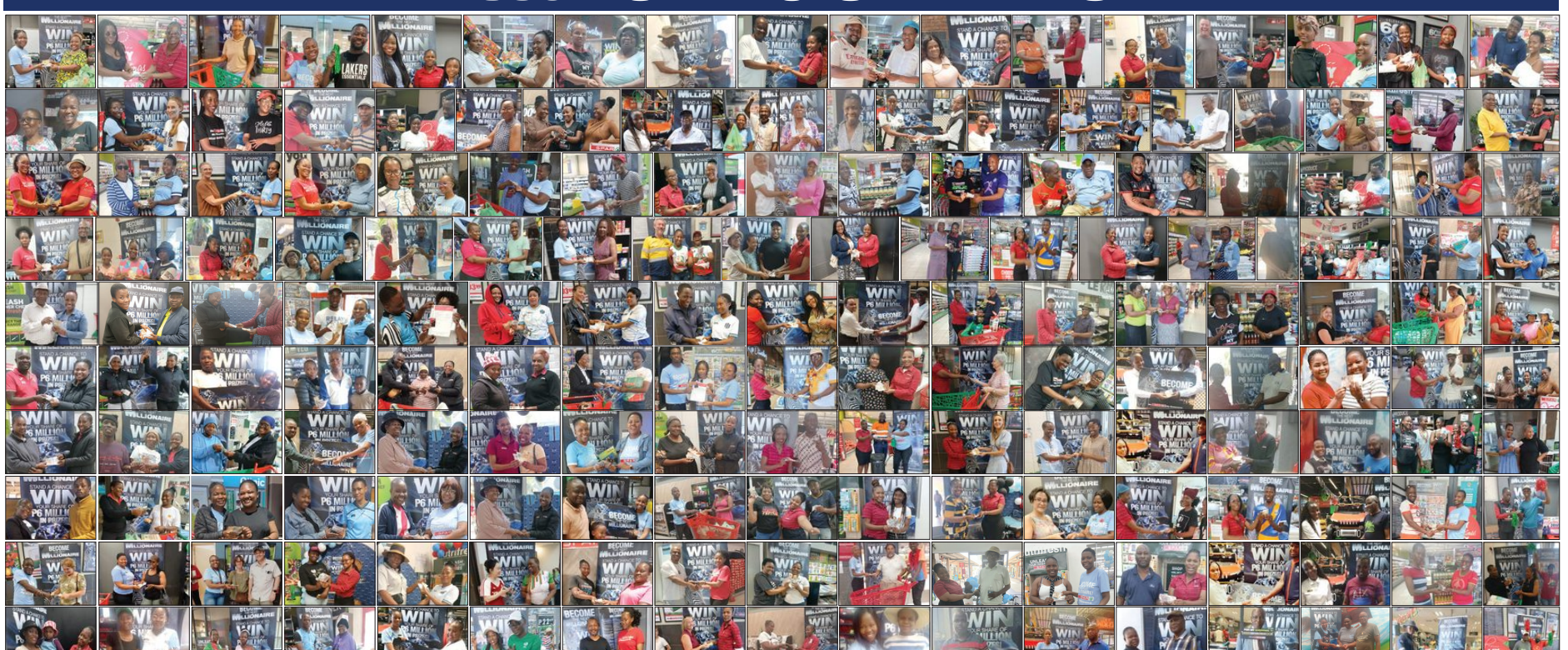

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DCEC Widens Definition Of Corruption

Proposed anti-corruption reforms would broaden the agency's mandate, strengthen its independence and introduce parliamentary oversight.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) is preparing an overhaul of anti-corruption laws to cover contemporary economic crimes and strengthen its independence through parliamentary oversight, according to its 2025 Annual Report.

The proposed Anti-Corruption Bill, 2026, will repeal and re-enact the Corruption and Economic Crime Act (Cap. 08:05) in its entirety, abandoning an earlier plan to amend selected provisions of the legislation.

The decision followed extensive stakeholder consultations and a comprehensive legislative gap analysis that identified limitations in the existing legal framework.

AGENCY INDEPENDENCE

The Directorate says the Bill, which is being finalised for presentation to Parliament during the 2026/27 financial year, will establish it as a fully autonomous statutory body, removing its anti-corruption mandate from mainstream Government administrative structures.

The proposed agency would become a body corporate with the legal capacity to sue and be sued in its own name, a move the DCEC says is necessary to secure institutional independence and public confidence in its impartiality.



Director General of DCEC, Mr Batlhalefhi Moeletsi *Photo Credit: DCEC*

"The establishment of the proposed Agency as a body corporate, possessing the legal capacity to sue and be sued in its own name; would secure the institutional autonomy required to foster absolute public confidence in its impartiality," the report states.

The Directorate argues that the restructuring would insulate the agency from external interference and strengthen its operational independence in line with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

The proposed legislation also introduces a new governance model under which a Parliamentary Committee would oversee the agency's administration and policy, while modernising the definition of corruption to cover contemporary economic crimes.

The Bill further seeks to align Botswana's domestic laws with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations, strengthening the country's framework for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

It would also provide a legal basis for joint investigations with international authorities and the prompt exchange of intelligence to tackle transnational corruption and economic crime.

ENFORCEMENT GAPS

The proposed reforms come as the DCEC continues to grapple with implementation challenges under the existing framework.

The report reveals that uptake of corruption prevention interventions stood at 69.1 per cent, significantly below the Directorate's target of 90 per cent.

Risk assessments and audits targeting procurement, land allocation and licensing were undertaken to reduce irregularities, but the DCEC acknowledged that compliance remained a challenge.

The Directorate also reported persistent investigation backlogs, attributing them to resource constraints despite prioritising parallel financial investigations to improve the quality and turnaround time of investigations.

Asset recovery efforts yielded P32.25 million during the reporting period, with the Directorate placing increased emphasis on financial investigations.



'Restore Basarwa's Hunting Rights'

A human rights lawyer Gordon Bennett who represented Basarwa in the landmark case against the state has urged President Duma Boko to issue a declaration allowing CKGR Basarwa to legally hunt for food.



Photo Credit: Press Photo

TEFO PHEAGE

A proposal before President Duma Boko would allow Basarwa living in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve to obtain special licences to hunt for food while talks on community land rights continue.

Human rights lawyer Gordon Bennett has proposed that President Duma Boko issue a declaration allowing Basarwa residents of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) to legally hunt for food.

The proposal, backed by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as an interim measure, would allow residents to obtain Special Game Licences for subsistence hunting while government and affected communities work towards a long-term settlement.

Bennett, who represented CKGR communities in the landmark Sesana case, submitted the proposals after consulting residents inside the reserve and former residents in New Xade and Kaudwane.

THE LICENCE GAP

According to the committee's September 2026 report, Bennett found that even when Special Game Licences were issued between 1983 and 2001, holders could not lawfully use them inside the CKGR because of a statutory ban on hunting in state game reserves. The licences were discontinued in 2001.

Bennett proposed a presidential declaration under the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act to allow licences to be issued lawfully to CKGR residents. He also called for changes to hunting regulations to protect applicants from arbitrary refusals.

The committee backed the proposed declaration and recommended a transparent process for assessing licence applications and hearing appeals. It also proposed that the Department of Wildlife and National Parks work with residents to monitor subsistence hunting while a permanent system for managing wildlife is developed.

The report says restoring subsistence hunting is an immediate concern for communities that rely in part on traditional hunting for food.

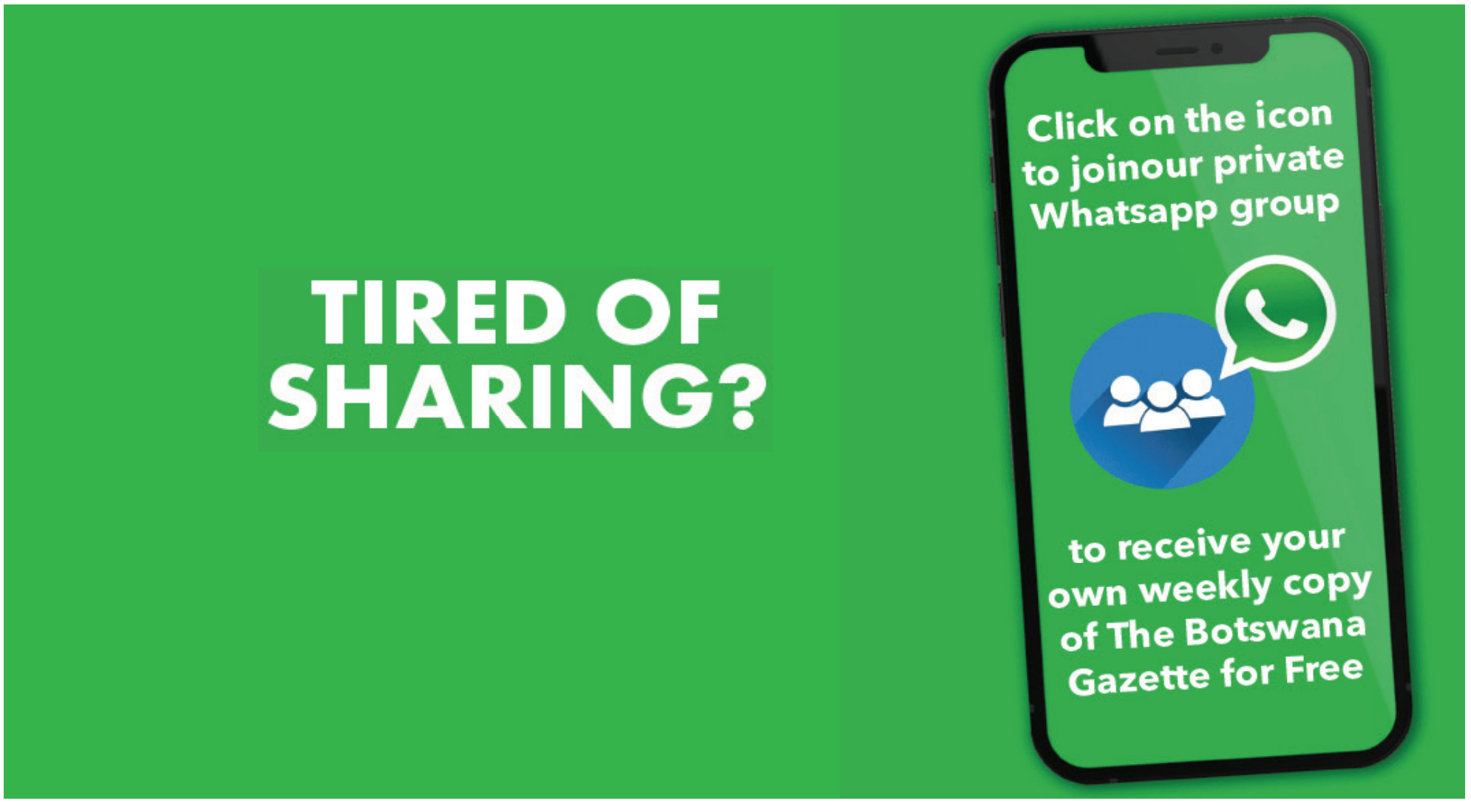
COMMUNITY LAND TITLE

Bennett's longer-term proposal would take a defined area in the southern CKGR out of the state reserve and grant land title to a company owned by the communities. The area would then be declared a private game reserve, with management terms agreed with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

Under that arrangement, the communities would gain legal title to the land, and residents could lawfully obtain Special Game Licences in the private reserve. The report says the proposal can be pursued under existing legislation.

> "Under that arrangement, the communities would gain legal title to the land, and residents could lawfully obtain Special Game Licences in the private reserve."

The committee identified Bennett's land proposal as a viable option and said the final arrangement should be determined through dialogue with affected communities and with their free, prior and informed consent.



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20TH IDM JOINT GRADUATION CEREMONY CLASS OF 2026

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Minister Mohwasa delivering the keynote address.



Minister of Public Service, Eswatini: Hon. Mabulala Maseko congratulating the graduands.



Botswana Campus Country Director, Dr Theophilus Mooko presenting IDM Botswana Valedictorian Award.



Eswatini Campus Executive Director, Karabo Baipidi presenting IDM Eswatini Valedictorian Award.



IDM Botswana Board Chairperson, Ms Gaone Macholo constituting the congregation



A fully packed Royal Aria Convention Centre



Botswana Board Chair, Ms Gaone Macholo, presenting a gift to Minister Mohwasa.



CIPS General Manager for Southern Africa, Paul Vos & Earl of St Andrews & Chancellor of University of Greater Manchester



A celebratory moment as graduands toss their caps into the air.



Pastor Tonka Rachabatsotlhe, AFM Botswana President, leading the opening and closing prayers.



Han C bringing the celebrations together with a befitting summary.



MC: Kabo Muyaluka and Lillian Moremi, guiding proceedings with elegance and flair.

The Institute of Development Management (IDM) successfully hosted its historic 20th Joint Graduation Ceremony on Friday, 30 October 2026, at the Royal Aria Convention Centre in Tlokweng.

The prestigious, well-attended convocation brought together a vibrant regional community, celebrating graduands and their families from Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini (BLE).

The memorable event was graced by cabinet ministers from all three nations, senior government officials, and key industry stakeholders. Among the dignitaries conferring certificates at the ceremony were the Earl of St Andrews and Chancellor of University of Greater Manchester , as well as the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) General Manager for Southern Africa, Paul Vos.

Navigating an Ever-Changing World

Delivering the keynote address under the fitting theme, “Thriving as a Continuous Learner in an Ever-Changing World,” the Guest Speaker and Minister of State President, Defence and Security, Honourable Moeti Ceasar Mohwasa, challenged the historic Class of 2026 to look at their qualifications as a foundation for a lifelong journey.

"Artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and emerging economic realities are reshaping the way we work, do business, and build our societies," Minister Mohwasa stated.

He emphasized that the knowledge acquired in lecture halls must be actively complemented by hands-on experience, a spirit of innovation, and a relentless willingness to evolve.

A Shared Responsibility for the Future

The Minister highlighted that the journey ahead requires effort from both the graduates and the state. While graduates must take personal accountability for their intellectual and professional growth, he reaffirmed the government's steadfast commitment to building an economic ecosystem that works for them.

"Government has an equally important responsibility to create an enabling environment that generates employment opportunities, promotes entrepreneurship, and empowers those who aspire to start and grow their own businesses," Mohwasa noted, reassuring the tri-nation audience of regional development goals.

The Beginning of a New Chapter

As hundreds of graduates walked across the stage to receive their well-deserved credentials, the atmosphere at the Royal Aria Convention Centre was filled with joy, ululations, and optimism. The ceremony proved that despite changing global landscapes, IDM remains a critical anchor for human resource development across Southern Africa.

To the Class of 2026: your graduation is not the conclusion of your education, but the commencement of a future defined by endless possibilities. Keep learning. Keep innovating. Keep adapting. The future belongs to those who are prepared to grow with it.

Congratulations to the IDM Class of 2026!

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UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

2026 HALF YEAR RESULTS

Basis of preparation and accounting policies

The abridged consolidated financial statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis and are presented in Botswana Pula, which is the bank's functional currency. Amounts are rounded to the nearest thousand, unless otherwise stated.

The abridged consolidated financial statements for the period ended 30 September 2026 have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement criteria of International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS"), including applicable interpretations issued by the International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee ("IFRIC"), and in compliance with the Botswana Savings Bank Act of 1992.

In preparing the abridged consolidated financial statements, management applied sound business principles and reviewed the key assumptions and inherent uncertainties associated with the recognition and measurement of assets and liabilities. These assumptions were applied consistently and assessed by management to ensure their appropriateness.

The critical accounting estimates and areas of judgements are:

- Measurement of Expected Credit Losses (ECL)
- Lessee's incremental borrowing rate
- Deferred Tax
- Residual values and useful lives of intangible assets and property and equipment

The consolidated financial statements comprise the financial statements of the bank and its subsidiary as at 30 September 2026.

The Group and Company consolidates a subsidiary when it controls it. Control is achieved when the Group is exposed, or has rights, to variable returns from its involvement with the investee and could affect those returns through its power over the investee.

Economic environment

The Directors have reviewed the bank's funding position and available sources of funding and concluded that these are adequate to support the bank's funding requirements. The Directors are satisfied that the bank has adequate resources to continue operating for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the going concern basis has been adopted in the preparation of the half year financial statements.

The continued slowdown within the economy constrained liquidity within the domestic market, elevated cost pressures and subdued business activity created a complex operating environment for both businesses and consumers. Financial institutions were required to balance growth ambitions with prudent risk management while navigating increasingly competitive funding markets.

On the monetary policy front, Bank of Botswana maintained Monetary Policy Rate (MoPR) at 5.5% at its 30 August 2026 meeting. The decision reflected the need to support effective monetary policy transmission amid heightened global uncertainty and persistent inflationary pressures. The MoPR has remained unchanged since the 200-basis-point increase in April 2026.

Headline inflation declined to 7.8% in September 2026, from 9.3% in August 2026, reflecting a moderation in price pressures. However, inflation remained above Bank of Botswana's medium-term objective range of 3.0% to 6.0%. Inflationary pressures continued to be driven by fuel prices, electricity tariff adjustments and other supply-side factors. Inflation is expected to remain elevated in the near term before gradually easing over the medium term.

For the bank, the current economic environment continues to place pressure on liquidity, deposit mobilisation, credit demand, and margins. Nevertheless, a recovery in the diamond market and the gradual impact of economic diversification efforts are expected to support economic growth and create opportunities for business expansion over the medium term.

Financial performance

Botswana Savings Bank delivered an improved financial performance compared with the prior year, marking a positive start to the 2026–2029 Pinagare Strategy. The result was supported by prudent balance sheet management, growth in net interest income and lower operating costs, whilst meeting regulatory requirements.

The performance was achieved despite a challenging operating environment. Funding costs were slightly elevated in the first quarter due to sustained competition for deposits and reliance on higher-cost funding sources but eased moderately in the second quarter. Although inflation moderated in September 2026, it remained above the Bank of Botswana's objective range, with fuel prices and electricity tariffs continuing to weigh on household affordability, business activity and credit demand.

These results provide a solid foundation for advancing the Pinagare Strategy's priorities of building a resilient balance sheet, strengthening customer primacy, improving profitability and accelerating digitalisation to support sustainable long-term growth.

The bank returned to profitability, recording profit after tax of BWP 5.3 million, compared to a loss of BWP 3.9 million in the prior year. This turnaround reflects stronger interest income, disciplined cost management and the early benefits of focused execution against the Bank's strategic priorities.

Net Interest Income increased to BWP 137.2 million from BWP 118.6 million in the prior year, supported by measured growth in the lending activities and an easing in funding costs during the second quarter. Net loans and advances rose to BWP 4.19 billion from BWP 4.06 billion, demonstrating the bank's ability to support customer credit needs while maintaining prudent risk management.

Non-funded income grew to BWP 6.7 million from BWP 2.9 million in the prior year, reflecting stronger transactional activity and continued progress in expanding fee-based revenue streams.

The bank further strengthened its funding position, with customer deposits increasing to BWP 4.17 billion from BWP 3.95 billion. Consequently, the Liquidity Asset Ratio improved to 18.3% from 15.9%, underscoring the effectiveness of deliberate liquidity preservation and prudent balance sheet management.

The Capital Adequacy Ratio remained sound at 15.7%, compared with 17.1% in the prior year. This position reflects the bank's continued focus on maintaining appropriate capital buffers, meeting regulatory requirements and supporting sustainable growth.

Overall, the results demonstrate meaningful progress in restoring profitability, strengthening revenue performance and preserving balance sheet resilience. While market liquidity and funding costs remain key considerations, the bank enters the next phase from a stronger position and remains focused on optimising its funding mix, broadening revenue streams and delivering sustainable value to its shareholder, customers and the communities it serves.

Outlook

As the bank progresses through the first year of the 2026–2029 Pinagare Strategy, Management remains focused on translating the strategy's objectives into measurable improvements in financial performance, operational efficiency, and customer value. The strategy is anchored on building a resilient balance sheet, strengthening customer primacy, improving profitability, and accelerating digitalisation. These priorities are particularly important in the current operating environment which is characterised by constrained market liquidity, elevated funding costs, subdued economic activity and continued pressure on revenue generation.

Going forward, the bank will focus on strengthening its funding base and balance sheet resilience, improving the quality and sustainability of earnings, deepening customer relationships while expanding access to banking services through digital innovation. Through the implementation of Pinagare, the bank aims to enhance its competitiveness, strengthen financial sustainability and deliver lasting value to its shareholder, customers and the communities it serves.

Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the period ended 30 September 2026

	2026 P'000	2025 P'000
Interest income	376,079	325,974
Interest expense	(238,852)	(207,335)
Net interest income	137,227	118,638
Fees and commission income	14,708	12,565
Fees and commission expense	(8,013)	(9,642)
Net fee and commission income	6,695	2,923
Net operating income	143,922	121,560
Other income	2,969	2,959
Amortisation of government grant income	3,073	8,199
Total income	149,963	132,718
Net impairment reversal of financial assets	(10,223)	(16,586)
Net income	139,740	116,132
Employee benefits	(76,081)	(57,124)
Depreciation and amortisation	(10,475)	(14,053)
Administrative and general expenses	(46,627)	(48,814)
Profit before tax	6,557	(3,859)
Taxation	(1,254)	0
Profit for the year	5,303	(3,859)

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position as at 30 September 2026

	2026 P'000	2025 P'000
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	509,113	420,081
Investment in financial assets	253,380	233,640
Other assets	47,725	38,923
Loans and advances to	4,194,220	4,061,159
Current tax receivable	4,653	4,320
Property, plant and equipment	114,521	50,822
Right-of-use assets	50,008	36,243
Intangible assets	38,184	32,357
Deferred tax	4	8,621
Total assets	5,211,809	4,886,166
Equity and liabilities		
Liabilities		
Deposits due to customers	4,174,074	3,954,303
Current tax payable	232	17
Deferred tax liability	4,982	-
Other liabilities	7,459	48,300
Borrowings	507,069	438,834
Dormancy account liability	28,156	28,304
Government grant	27,831	29,438
Lease liabilities	60,960	45,259
Total liabilities	4,810,763	4,544,456
Equity		
Unrecallable capital	19,721	19,721
Reserves	85,882	85,287
Retained earnings	295,443	236,703
	401,045	341,710
Total equity and liabilities	5,211,809	4,886,166

Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity for the period ended 30 September 2026

	Unrecallable Capital P'000	Statutory Reserve P'000	Retained Earnings P'000	Total Equity P'000
Balance at September 30, 2024	19,721	72,287	231,242	323,249
Prior year	-	-	22,320	-
Loss for the year			(3,859)	(3,859)
Transfer between reserves		13,000	(13,000)	
Balance at September 30, 2025	19,721	85,287	236,703	341,710
Prior year			54,030	-
Income for the year			5,304	5,304
Transfer between reserves	-	595	(595)	-
Balance at September 30, 2026	19,721	85,882	295,443	401,045

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the period ended 30 September 2026

	2026 P'000	2025 P'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Interest receipts	372,959	319,426
Interest payments	(281,685)	(237,746)
Fees and commission receipts	14,708	12,565
Fees and commission expense	(8,013)	(9,642)
Rent and other income received	6,042	11,158
Cash payments to employees and suppliers	(93,977)	(103,078)
Cash flows from operating activities	10,034	(7,317)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities		
Movement in loans and advances to customers	(131,431)	224,778
Movement in amounts due to customers	252,785	(483,417)
Movements in other assets	4,633	17,333
Movements in other liabilities	(39,009)	25,538
Movement in dormancy account liability	(148)	(3,970)
Tax paid	(6,151)	(5,255)
Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities	80,677	(224,993)
Cash flows (to)/from investing activities		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(63,699)	13,737
Payments into fixed deposits with banks	39,784	(36,860)
Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities	(23,915)	(23,123)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Borrowings raised	100,000	15,000
Repayment of principal - long term borrowings	(34,731)	(16,879)
Repayment of interest - long term borrowings	(38,917)	(20,307)
Lease liability payments - principal	(2,566)	(2,566)
Lease liability payments - interest	(1,550)	(1,264)
Net cash generated from financing activities	22,236	(26,016)
Net movement in cash and cash equivalents for the year	89,033	(281,451)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	420,081	701,532
Total cash and cash equivalents	509,113	420,081

By order of the Board

Emmanuel Kgantumo
Deputy Chairperson

Dr. Wabo Moswate
Chief Executive Officer (Ag)

DCEC Exposes Empowerment Fronting

The DCEC warns that individuals are exploiting youth and women empowerment programmes to secure public contracts while diverting benefits from intended recipients.



GAZETTE REPORTER

Individuals are exploiting Botswana's youth and women empowerment programmes by using unsuspecting beneficiaries as fronts to secure government tenders while retaining the financial benefits.

In its 2025 Annual Report, the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) identifies fronting as an emerging trend in public procurement and infrastructure projects, with individuals falsely presented as company owners to meet empowerment requirements and sidelined once tenders are awarded.

The Directorate says Presidential initiatives such as the Economic Diversification Drive (EDD), which were designed to promote youth and women empowerment, have inadvertently created opportunities for unscrupulous individuals to manipulate the system for personal gain.

"The implementation of Presidential Directives such as the Economic Diversification Drive (EDD) aimed at youth and women empowerment, though well intentioned, has inadvertently led to a problem wherein undeserving individuals exploit the system by associating themselves with qualified beneficiaries to gain benefits," the report states.

OWNERSHIP MANIPULATION

According to the DCEC, these individuals manipulate company directorships and shareholding arrangements to create the appearance of compliance with empowerment requirements, while ensuring that the actual financial benefits accrue to those behind the schemes.

The Directorate identifies the ease with which company ownership records can be altered at the Companies and Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA) as one of the factors compounding the problem.

It also warns that the manipulation of business addresses to unlawfully secure constituency projects remains prevalent, raising further concerns about the integrity of public procurement processes.

RISING ALLEGATIONS

The revelations come against the backdrop of a growing number of corruption allegations reported to the Directorate.

The DCEC received 957 allegations in 2025, representing a significant increase from 687 in 2024 and 652 in 2023.

Of the 957 reports received during the year, 274 were classified for investigation, while 54 were incorporated into existing cases. A further 359 were referred to other institutions because they fell outside the Directorate's mandate.

The Directorate also provided advice in 131 reports, while 96 lacked sufficient information and were recorded for reference. Another 43 reports were deferred pending additional information.

INVESTIGATION CASELOAD

Corruption-related offences continued to dominate the Directorate's caseload, accounting for 260 cases investigated in 2025. Four cases involved economic crime, while 10 related to money laundering.

The DCEC attributes the relatively low number of money laundering cases partly to the fact that money laundering is largely a consequence of corruption, which constitutes the predicate offence.

Reports from identified sources also increased considerably, rising from 492 in 2023 to 580 in 2024 and 772 in 2025.

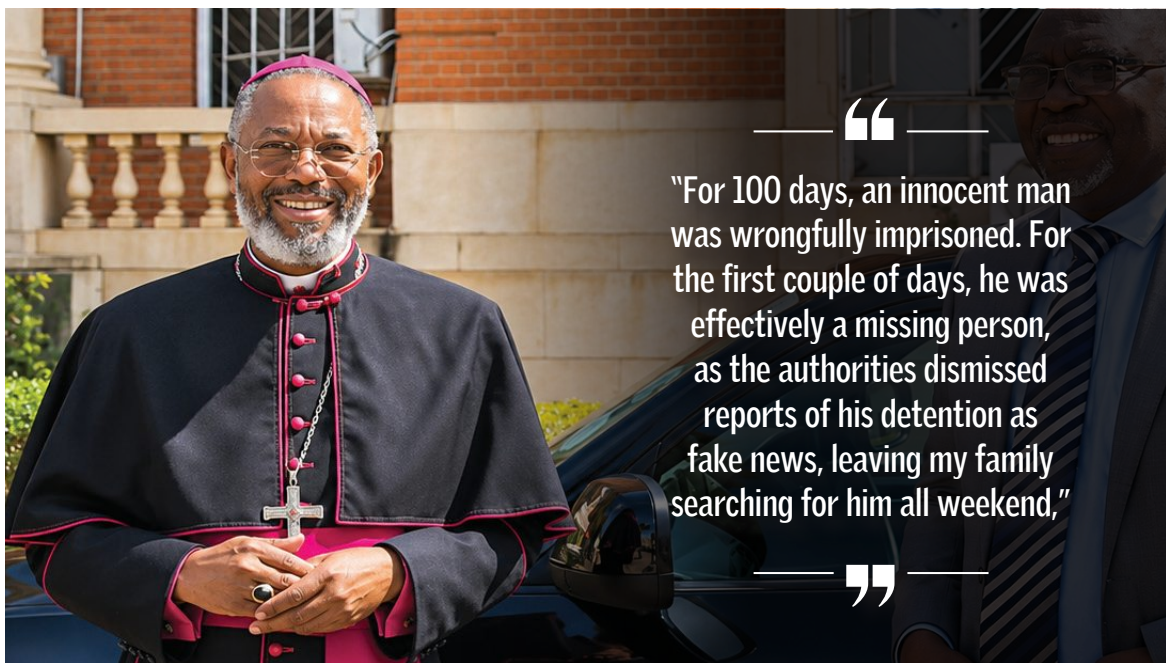
> "The implementation of Presidential Directives such as the Economic Diversification Drive (EDD) aimed at youth and women empowerment, though well intentioned, has inadvertently led to a problem wherein undeserving individuals exploit the system by associating themselves with qualified beneficiaries to gain benefits,"

The Directorate says the increase reflects growing public confidence and willingness to disclose identities when reporting corruption, enabling investigators to obtain additional information and provide feedback to complainants.



Mwamba Escapes Treason Charges

The former Botswana Anglican bishop's son says his father has been released after a new Zambian treason indictment excluded him, although a formal discharge order remains unconfirmed.



BONGANI MALUNGA

Former Anglican Bishop of Botswana Trevor Mwamba has been released from detention, according to his son, Eno Mwamba, after being excluded from Zambia's latest treason indictment.

Court documents dated Monday, 23 November 2026, reveal that 14 suspects have been committed to the High Court for trial over allegations of plotting to overthrow the Zambian government. Mwamba is conspicuously absent from the list of accused persons.

His detention since August attracted international attention and raised questions about due process in neighbouring Zambia.

TREASON INDICTMENT

The 14 accused include opposition politicians Brian Mundubile and Makebi Zulu, alongside 12 others who face treason charges under Section 43(1)(a) of Zambia's Penal Code. According to reports from Lusaka, Mwamba, Francis Mulenga, Emmanuel Mulenga and Darius Mwila are the four individuals from the original group of 18 suspects who have not been committed to the High Court.

Defence lawyer Sakwiba Sikota has reportedly called for their release, arguing that the Director of Public Prosecutions has not clarified their position.

Former Zambian diplomat Emmanuel Mwamba also announced on social media that Bishop Mwamba had been discharged. The latest indictment alleges that the accused attempted to orchestrate an unlawful overthrow of the government between 1 April and 14 August 2026.

Prosecutors allege that the plot involved recruiting serving and retired military personnel, financing military training in Russia, arranging international travel and possessing offensive weapons intended for the alleged operation. These allegations remain unproven, and Bishop Mwamba is not among the 14 individuals formally listed in the indictment.

BOTSWANA LINKS

Mwamba served as Anglican Bishop of Botswana from 2005 until 2013 before relocating to the United Kingdom.

His connections to Botswana extend beyond the church. He is married to Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba, daughter of Botswana's late former President Sir Ketumile Masire and former Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. Mwamba subsequently entered Zambian politics, becoming a leader of the United National Independence Party (UNIP).

His detention also attracted diplomatic attention in Britain. On 16 November, the British government confirmed that its High Commission in Lusaka had raised his case with Zambian authorities, emphasising respect for constitutional rights and due process.

FAMILY RELIEF

Meanwhile, the Lusaka High Court is scheduled to deliver a ruling on 24 November concerning a constitutional bail application originally brought by all 18 suspects.

Although the initial documents did not independently establish whether a formal discharge order had been issued, Eno Mwamba confirmed his father's release on social media, recounting the family's anguish during what he described as 100 days of wrongful imprisonment.

"For 100 days, an innocent man was wrongfully imprisoned. For the first couple of days, he was effectively a missing person, as the authorities dismissed reports of his detention as fake news, leaving my family searching for him all weekend," he wrote on social media.

Mwamba also thanked the international institutions, media organisations, relatives and well-wishers who supported the family throughout the ordeal.

> "My father is a Bishop who has dedicated his entire life to the service of others. So when people heard about his detention, the global outpouring of love and support was truly humbling".

"My father is a Bishop who has dedicated his entire life to the service of others. So when people heard about his detention, the global outpouring of love and support was truly humbling. From the British Parliament, to the EU, the media, with a special shout-out to BBC News, Amnesty International, the Commonwealth, relatives who visited my dad in prison, and every person who called, prayed or sent a message during the darkest moments, a heartfelt thank you," he stated.

Namibia May Frustrate Botswana's Dangote Fuel Plans

Namibia's pipeline safety and transportation arrangements regulatory hurdles could frustrate Botswana's anticipated fuel diversification benefits from Dangote's ambitious project

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's bid to secure a new Atlantic fuel supply lifeline faces a regulatory test in neighbouring Namibia, where Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote's US$2.6 billion petroleum hub has encountered objections over pipeline safety and transportation arrangements.

The N$43 billion facility at Walvis Bay is intended to receive fuel from Dangote's 650 000-barrel-a-day refinery in Lagos and distribute it across southern Africa, including Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe, through a planned 1700-kilometre pipeline network.

According to Namibian media reports, the country's port authority, Namport, has rejected the initial pipeline route through North Port, warning that it passes too close to residential areas and conflicts with long-term port development plans. State railway operator TransNamib has separately demanded that trains, rather than heavy tanker trucks, become the main means of moving fuel inland.

SEVERE SAFETY HAZARD

"Moving fuel by road poses a severe safety hazard," TransNamib stated, according to a draft environmental impact assessment reported by Namibia's New Era and Billionaires.Africa.

The scale of the logistical challenge is substantial, exclusive reliance on roads would mean approximately 270 fuel tankers leaving the facility daily, generating 540 heavy-vehicle movements. A single daily train could replace 55 tankers.

There has been some progress as Dangote's representatives agreed on 10 November to align pipelines inside the port with Namport's designated corridors. However, the final alignment still requires formal approval, while construction cannot commence without environmental clearance. Namibia's environment ministry said last week that it had not received the necessary application.

FACING UNCERTAINTY

Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah launched the project on 4 November, with plans for storage capacity of 1.6 million barrels. The venture also faces uncertainty from proposed legislation reserving fuel storage activities for Namibian-owned businesses, creating another issue requiring clarification from authorities.

The stakes extend beyond a single investment for Botswana. Minerals and Energy Minister Bogolo Kenewendo confirmed in October that government had engaged Dangote, Angola and Côte d'Ivoire to diversify supply and protect the country from shortages.

> "Because we are clear that we never want to have any fuel insecurity, we've engaged Dangote, we've engaged Angola, we've engaged Cote d'Ivoire to ensure that they can supply us,"

"Because we are clear that we never want to have any fuel insecurity, we've engaged Dangote, we've engaged Angola, we've engaged Cote d'Ivoire to ensure that they can supply us," Kenewendo said.

SUPPLY GATEWAY

Botswana identifies Walvis Bay as a supply gateway for Ghanzi and Shakawe, a western corridor accounting for eight percent of national demand. With Botswana relying on imported refined fuels, a functioning Atlantic route could reduce dependence on traditional South African supply chains, although no firm Dangote supply volumes, prices or delivery timetable have been disclosed.

The government is also expanding its Mozambique corridor, where Oman's OQ Trading delivered about 20 million litres of diesel through Matola in October.

As it stands, Namibia's unresolved approvals underline the gap between Botswana's fuel diversification ambitions and the infrastructure needed to realise them. Any extended delay could postpone another alternative route for the country.

BCP Demands Ministers' Lifestyle Audits

The BCP is calling for lifestyle audits of senior public officials, alleging unexplained wealth accumulation among some UDC ministers and questioning existing asset verification mechanisms.



SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Botswana Congress Party (BCP) is pushing for lifestyle audits of senior officials in the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) administration, alleging that some ministers have accumulated substantial wealth within two years of taking office.

Asset Declarations

BCP Secretary for Publicity Olebile Machete told The Botswana Gazette that the existing asset declaration system was failing to provide meaningful accountability because declarations were confidential and Government had yet to develop an effective verification mechanism.

He said the proposed audits should cover the President, Vice President, ministers, assistant ministers, permanent secretaries and their deputies, as well as officials involved in land allocation, procurement, licensing, citizenship and investment approvals.

UDC PROMISES

Machete said the UDC had entered office promising to end the culture of corruption it had accused the previous Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) administration of perpetuating.

"The UDC ministers have amassed wealth of unimaginable proportion and in a space of two years," he said, arguing that the asset declaration system was not doing its job.

INSTITUTIONAL INDEPENDENCE

The BCP proposes that lifestyle audits be led by the Ethics and Integrity Directorate, supported by the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) and Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS), with findings reported to Parliament.

However, Machete questioned the Directorate's independence because it falls under the Office of the President.

"There is a real independence problem to solve first. The Directorate falls under the Office of the President, the same office whose dealings are now in question," he said.

He called for the Directorate to be adequately funded and made accountable to Parliament rather than the Executive. Until then, he proposed an independent panel of forensic auditors reporting directly to Parliament.

BCP NOT EXEMPT

Machete said the party would not publicly accuse individuals, insisting that any information it receives would be submitted to institutions with investigative powers.

He maintained that public officials should account for wealth exceeding their lawful income, adding that those with nothing to hide should welcome scrutiny.

The BCP intends to pursue the audits in the first quarter of 2027, with Machete insisting that its own MPs and councillors should also be subjected to the same standards.

"Every MP and councilor should meet the same standard, and that includes the BCP's own. We are not asking anything of others that we will not accept for ourselves," he said.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Reached for comment, Minister for State Presidency Moeti Mohwasa referred enquiries to the Botswana Centre for Integrity, an organisation involved in promoting transparency, integrity and accountability and fighting corruption in Botswana.

However, efforts to reach the Botswana Centre for Public Integrity (BCPI) for comment were unsuccessful, as its telephone lines could not be reached by the time of going to press.

AfDB Flags Botswana Governance Decline

The African Development Bank warns that weakening corruption controls and procurement oversight threaten accountability amid Botswana's economic difficulties.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has raised concerns over the gradual erosion of accountability, transparency and integrity in Botswana, warning that declining governance indicators point to weaknesses in anti-corruption enforcement, public procurement and institutional oversight.

In its Botswana Economic Competitiveness and Transformation Support Programme (ECTSP) Project Appraisal Report, the bank identifies a decade-long decline in key governance indicators and highlights the need for stronger enforcement, procurement integrity and public accountability.

GOVERNANCE DECLINE

According to the report, Botswana scored 65.8 out of 100 in the 2024 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, ranking fifth among 54 African countries. However, its overall score declined by 3.6 points between 2014 and 2024, with the deterioration largely driven by declining performance in anti-corruption, public procurement, accountability and transparency.

The report also points to Botswana's weakening performance in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), where the country scored 58 out of 100 in 2025, ranking 41st among 182 countries.

This was below its earlier scores of 65 in 2012 and 61 in 2019, suggesting a deterioration in perceptions of public-sector corruption over the years.

The AfDB further notes that the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators show weakening performance in regulatory quality and control of corruption.

ENFORCEMENT GAPS

Although Botswana's score under the AfDB's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment governance indicators remained steady at 4.8 out of six between 2023 and 2025, the Bank cautions that maintaining institutional credibility alone will not be sufficient to address the country's governance challenges.

"The governance issue is no longer primarily about institutional credibility itself but about improving enforcement, transparency, procurement integrity, and public accountability," the report states.

The assessment places particular emphasis on the need to strengthen the systems through which public resources are managed, government decisions are scrutinised and corruption risks are addressed.

The findings come at a time when Botswana is pursuing economic transformation reforms aimed at reducing its dependence on diamonds and expanding private-sector-led growth.

FISCAL PRESSURE

The Bank warns that the country's economic difficulties make effective governance and public-sector accountability even more critical.

Diamonds account for approximately 30 per cent of Botswana's gross domestic product and nearly 80 per cent of export earnings, leaving the economy vulnerable to prolonged weakness in the global diamond market.

The report says real GDP contracted by 2.8 per cent in 2024 and a further 0.7 per cent in 2025, reflecting weak diamond output and subdued activity in other sectors.

It also highlights deteriorating fiscal conditions, with the budget deficit estimated at 9.5 per cent of GDP in 2025 and projected at 9.1 per cent in 2026.

The AfDB warns that inadequate financing could result in the accumulation of government arrears and mounting debt-service pressures, potentially undermining public service delivery.

It cites the August 2025 public health emergency, which was partly linked to supplier arrears on medical supplies, as an illustration of the consequences of fiscal pressures.

EARLY IMPROVEMENTS

Despite the concerns, the Bank identifies improvements in the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index and CPIA indicators as early signs that the new government's reform commitments may be beginning to yield results.

Botswana's WHO Candidate Pitches Africa Vision

Botswana-backed Dr Gevorg Tamamyan has placed stronger health systems, equitable access to treatment and institutional accountability at the heart of his pitch to African health ministers as the race for the WHO 's top job gathers momentum

TEFO PHEAGE

Botswana's candidate for the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General position, Dr Gevorg Tamamyan, has challenged Africa to envision a future in which preventable disease outbreaks no longer threaten the continent and children with cancer enjoy the same chances of survival as their counterparts in wealthy nations.

The Armenian paediatric oncologist was among seven candidates who presented their credentials and priorities to African health ministers at the Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA) on Monday, as competition for the leadership of the global health agency intensifies ahead of the 2027 election.

Ethiopian Health Minister Dr Mekdes Daba Feyssa challenged the candidates with a direct question: "What three things can you offer to Africa?"

For Tamamyan, Botswana's nominee, the answer lies largely in addressing the systemic weaknesses that continue to perpetuate health inequalities between Africa and the developed world.

BRIDGING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Tamamyan argued that by 2032, outbreaks such as Ebola should no longer pose a major threat to Africa and that disparities in childhood cancer survival should have been addressed.

"In 2032, we should not say that in Africa, kids with cancer have survival 20-30% while in high-income countries, it's 80-85%. It's about the systems. If we treat kids with cancer, it means we build the system," stressed Tamamyan.

His argument is that the ability of countries to manage complex diseases such as cancer reflects the strength of their broader healthcare systems, from diagnostic capabilities and specialist training to access to medicines and sustainable healthcare financing.

Botswana's candidate has also received a favourable assessment from Peter Singer, a prominent global health expert, who ranked him first with a score of 12 out of a possible 14 points.

Challenging the Status Quo

Tamamyan's engagement with African health ministers follows his address to WHO member states last week, during which he outlined his vision for a more responsive, equitable and accountable global health organisation.

He spoke of cancer patients waiting months for treatment, frontline health workers who died without access to COVID-19 vaccines and WHO personnel risking their lives to evacuate patients under bombardment.

His central message was that WHO must become more effective in supporting those working to save lives, particularly in resource-constrained environments.

Tamamyan also confronted questions about his unconventional candidature.

"I have never worked at WHO. I have never run a ministry. Many people call me the outsider."

Rather than relying on traditional institutional credentials, he pointed to his experience in building healthcare services, mobilising resources and establishing international professional networks.

After returning from Boston to Armenia in 2015, Tamamyan helped develop paediatric oncology services, train specialists and establish a foundation that has covered diagnosis and treatment for children and young adults up to the age of 25 for nine years.

He also highlighted the growth of Onco-Daily, an international oncology media initiative that developed into a major global platform within three years.

BOTSWANA'S CHOICE

One of the defining moments of his address was his reflection on Botswana's decision to nominate him, despite his having no nationality ties to the southern African country.

Tamamyan thanked President Duma Boko and his administration for challenging conventional practices in international politics by looking beyond nationality and placing emphasis on merit.

A MEASURABLE PRESIDENCY

Tamamyan's proposed reform programme rests on three pillars: WHO for People, WHO for Countries and WHO Accountable for Results.

The programme contains 12 measurable commitments, accompanied by an unusual personal undertaking: should he deliver less than 80 percent of his commitments during his first term, he will not seek re-election.

"What gets measured gets done," Tamamyan said.

He called for greater transparency, measurable results and an organisation less susceptible to political bargaining, urging member states to assess candidates on merit and their ability to deliver change rather than geopolitical considerations.

"In practice, humanity means one thing: saving lives. That is the core mandate. Everything else serves it."

He concluded: "I don't belong to any major or minor power. I offer to belong to each of you and to every human being."

THE COMPETITION

Tamamyan faces competition from six other candidates, each offering African governments different approaches to addressing the continent's healthcare challenges.

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maru-a-pula

JOB VACANCIES

Maru-a-Pula School invites applications for the following positions.

1. ENGLISH TEACHER (3) – RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor in English degree and PGDE or the equivalent, plus a minimum of 8 years' relevant work experience teaching IGCSE First Language English and IGCSE Literature, and preferably also Cambridge A Level English Language and Literature. They must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

2. MUSIC TEACHER (1) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Music, teaching qualification and a proven ability to teach music theory and instruments as well as experience with orchestras and vocal training. Affiliation with recognized examining bodies (Trinity, ABRSM and Cambridge) is also required spanning 10 years or more. Candidates must also be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

3. FRENCH TEACHER (1) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Arts degree with a speciality in French and no less than 10 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

4. HISTORY TEACHER (2) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Arts degree with a speciality in History and no less than 5 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

5. CHEMISTRY TEACHER (1) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Science degree with a speciality in Chemistry and no less than 5 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

6. BUSINESS STUDIES TEACHER (2) RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Business Studies or Commerce degree or a similar qualification with no less that 10 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

7. MATHEMATICS TEACHER (1) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a relevant Bachelor's degree with no less that 10 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

8. PHYSICS TEACHER (1) - RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Science degree with a speciality in Physics and no less than 10 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

9. ACCOUNTING TEACHER (1) RE-ADVERTISEMENT

Applicants must have a Bachelor of Accounting or Commerce degree or a similar qualification with no less that 10 years teaching experience. Experience teaching IGCSE and A Levels classes is a requirement. Applicant must be familiar with the use of Google Classroom and other technologies as a way of delivering lessons and encouraging collaborative learning. A teaching qualification and/or BOTEPCO registration is a requirement.

How to apply:

Applications should be sent on or before December 04, 2026.
E-mail: hr@maruapula.org

E-mail applications should include:
1) Subject heading stating position being applied for;
2) A cover letter indicating reasons why your background and qualifications are particularly suited to working at Maru-a-Pula;
3) CV with contact details of three referees.

Please note: All submissions to be sent as 1 pdf document.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted by the school.

If you do not hear back from us by January 31, 2027, please consider your application unsuccessful.

See school website www.maruapula.org for further details

Aligned with the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection, as well as alignment with the Children's Act (2009), Maru-a-Pula School holds itself to a high standard of effective recruiting practices with specific attention to child protection.

We request a clearance of criminal records and a successful background check for all staff working at the school. The successful candidate must be prepared to submit such documents when required.



UDC Leaves Homosexuality to Batswana

The UDC Government declines to take a position on homosexuality and same-sex relationships, leaving it for the public to decide

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

Government has declined to take a position on homosexuality and same-sex relationships, leaving the contentious issue for Batswana to determine through a referendum expected as part of the upcoming constitutional review.

CITIZENS TO HAVE FINAL SAY

The Minister of Environment and Tourism Wynter Mmolotsi said government currently had no position on the matter, arguing that citizens should have the final say on how the country should approach homosexuality and same-sex relationships.

"The government's approach is that it is a matter of national interest which requires the participation of all stakeholders in a wider forum and at different levels. This could be addressed by the impending comprehensive constitutional review," he said.

Mmolotsi was responding on behalf of Minister of Labour and Home Affairs Pius Mokgware to a parliamentary question from Serowe South MP Leepetswe Lesedi.

His response places one of the country's most sensitive social and legal debates within the broader constitutional reform agenda, potentially setting the stage for a national discussion on homosexuality, same-sex relationships and the rights of sexual minorities.

GOV'T LEAVES DECISION TO PUBLIC

Mmolotsi indicated that government would not prescribe a position on the issue at this stage, maintaining that Batswana should decide what they want through the anticipated referendum.

The approach effectively shifts the political responsibility for determining the country's position on homosexuality and same-sex relationships to the electorate.

However, the prospect of deciding questions touching on individual rights through a popular vote raises broader questions about the relationship between majority opinion, constitutional protections and the rights of minorities.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW IN SPOTLIGHT

The constitutional review the minister said is expected to provide an opportunity for Batswana to debate several questions concerning the country's governance framework and fundamental rights.

Mmolotsi's remarks suggest that homosexuality and same-sex relationships could become part of those national conversations, although the precise questions to be put to voters have not been outlined.

> "The public should not have to continuously seek answers about the progress of a constitutional process in which they are ultimately expected to participate"

LEGABIBO RESPONSE PENDING

At the time of going to press, LEGABIBO Chief Executive Officer Nozizwe Ntesang had yet to respond to enquiries from The Botswana Gazette.

Will Government Open the Greenbook?

An ongoing review will determine whether citizens can access the manual governing benefits and privileges funded through public resources.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

Government is considering making the Greenbook, an administrative manual detailing the benefits and privileges enjoyed by senior public office holders, publicly accessible as part of an ongoing review.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

Responding to a parliamentary question from Kgatleng West MP Dr Unity Dow, who wanted to know whether Government would make the Cabinet manual and other documents regulating ministers' benefits available for purchase online or through the Government Printers bookshop, Minister for State Presidency Moeti Mohwasa said a final decision would be taken after the review.

He said Government would also determine how members of the public interested in accessing the document could obtain copies.

PUBLIC ACCESS

"The question of making the Greenbook publicly available is receiving consideration as part of its ongoing review," Mohwasa said.

He explained that although Government was considering opening the document to the public, no final decision had been made on its publication or distribution.

OFFICIAL BENEFITS

The Greenbook, titled Functions, Pay and Privileges for the Cabinet, Speaker and Deputy and the Leader of Opposition, consolidates guidelines on the benefits and privileges applicable to designated public office holders.

These include the President, Vice President, and Speaker of the National Assembly, ministers, assistant ministers and Leader of the Opposition.

PUBLIC FUNDS

The question of public access has implications for transparency and accountability, particularly because many of the benefits and privileges outlined in the manual are financed through public funds.

Previous parliamentary disclosures have demonstrated the Greenbook's role in guiding Government expenditure on senior office holders.

PRESIDENTIAL UPKEEP

In 2022, Government invoked Section XI, paragraph 48(5) of the Greenbook to explain that expenses relating to the President's domestic upkeep, including utilities, were to be met from public funds. The provision was cited during parliamentary questions concerning the provision of water to the President.

The manual has also been cited in Parliament as the basis for determining benefits extended to former senior office holders, including the former Vice President.

TRANSPARENCY QUESTIONs



Existing legislation also provides for housing, transport, garden and water allowances, alongside other benefits for the Vice President, ministers and assistant ministers, as determined by the President.

Dow's question brings renewed attention to how much information the public can access about the benefits enjoyed by political office holders and the expenditure of public resources on these entitlements.

GCC Slams Ministries' Wall of Silence

Gaborone councillors blame permanent secretaries for months of unanswered correspondence on organ donation and electoral reform, echoing concerns raised before the PAC.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Gaborone city councillors have accused government ministries of ignoring their formal correspondence, with repeated follow-ups on proposals concerning organ donation and electoral reform yielding months of silence.

The frustration surfaced at Monday's council meeting, where Phakalane councillor Kaisara Sejoe blamed Permanent Secretaries for allowing correspondence from the Gaborone City Council (GCC) to go unanswered.

"In this country, there's Parliament, the House of Chiefs and the Council Chamber. We cannot have a body of the status of GCC having no responses to formal communication to various ministries. I can't blame Ministers because the Permanent Secretaries, who are the administrators of those ministries, cannot allow such a pile up of unanswered letters," Sejoe stated.

REPEATED FOLLOW-UPS

Among the outstanding matters is a motion submitted to the Ministry of Health asking it to consider establishing an organ donor bank. According to the account presented to the council, follow-ups on 28 April, 28 July and 29 October this year produced no response.

The proposal carries significance for patients battling organ failure. Health Ministry figures reported in August showed 750 patients receiving haemodialysis and another 10 receiving peritoneal dialysis through ministry facilities and private partner clinics. Those figures excluded patients treated exclusively by private providers.

A coordinated organ donation system, supported by appropriate transplant services, could improve access to donated organs and help eligible kidney patients move off long-term dialysis. The World Health Organization identifies improved survival, quality of life and cost-effectiveness among the advantages of kidney transplantation over dialysis.

ELECTORAL REFORM

The council also forwarded a motion to the Ministry for State President, Defence and Security seeking a review of the Electoral Act to allow local government and parliamentary elections to be held separately and independently. Follow-ups on that motion were made on 28 July, 2 September and 29 October, again without a response, according to the council's account.

PAC CONCERNS

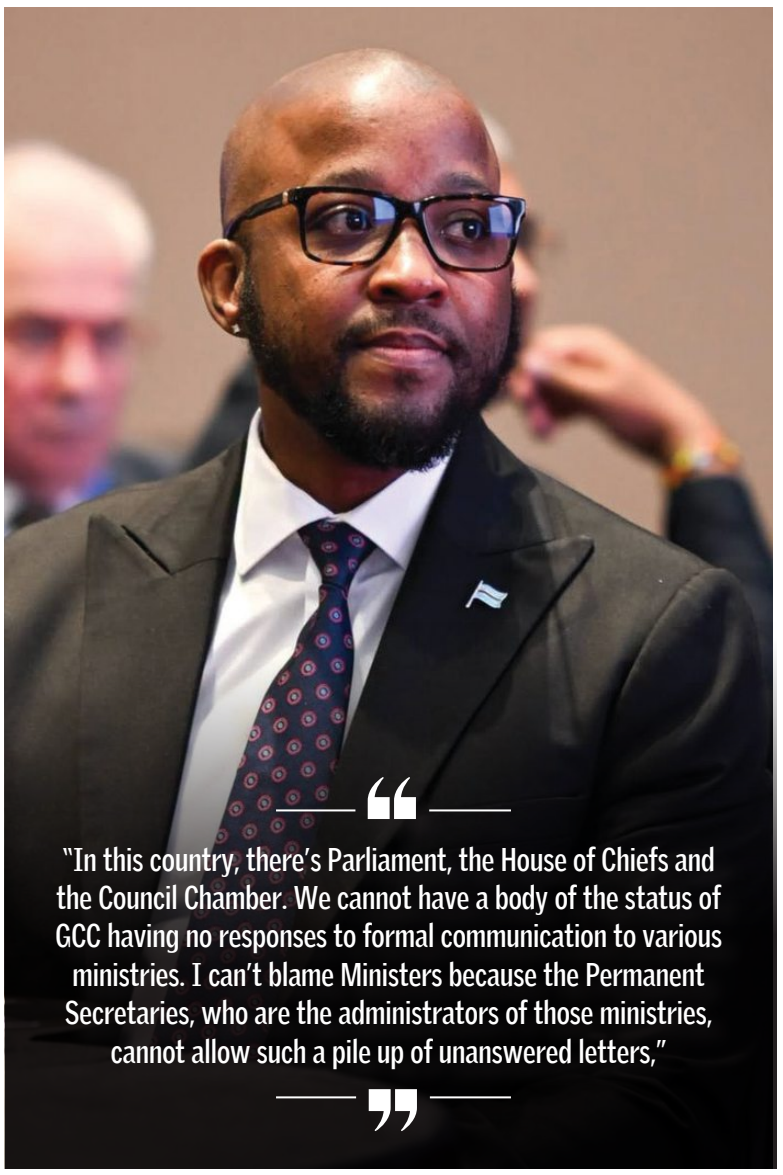
The complaints echo concerns raised during this year's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) hearings about ministries' responsiveness and the accountability of Permanent Secretaries. As The Botswana Gazette reported on 17 June, Ombudsman Stephen Tiroyakgosi told the committee that ministries' slow responses and delays in implementing corrective action were creating case backlogs and allowing disputes to escalate into court proceedings.

He said his office had summoned uncooperative Permanent Secretaries to explain why they had failed to act on its recommendations.

During Permanent Secretary to the President Matshidiso Bokole's appearance before the PAC, the committee also raised concerns about ministries' inadequate implementation of its recommendations, poor performance and project delays that increased costs.

Bokole acknowledged governance and systemic challenges and said the Performance Management Forum was being revamped to strengthen accountability and improve public service performance, according to Parliament's account of the proceedings.

Despite councillors' frustration, Gaborone Mayor Oarabile Motlaleng said the council would continue engaging the ministries to secure responses to its outstanding motions.



"In this country, there's Parliament, the House of Chiefs and the Council Chamber. We cannot have a body of the status of GCC having no responses to formal communication to various ministries. I can't blame Ministers because the Permanent Secretaries, who are the administrators of those ministries, cannot allow such a pile up of unanswered letters,"

Unions Reject Corporal Punishment Return

BOSETU and BTU oppose renewed calls to restore corporal punishment, citing intimidation and legal risks and demanding shared responsibility for learner discipline.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO



Teachers' unions remain opposed to reinstating corporal punishment in schools despite renewed calls by Members of Parliament, arguing that the practice exposes educators to legal risks and intimidation while failing to address the root causes of indiscipline among learners.

TEACHERS' FEARS

Speaking to The Botswana Gazette, BOSETU Publicity Secretary Oreeditse Nyatso said some teachers were living in fear as certain learners took advantage of the ban to engage in unruly behaviour.

Nyatso acknowledged that corporal punishment could serve as a deterrent but said it had created serious problems for teachers, with some facing intimidation from parents, prosecution and disciplinary action from Government.

He said remarks made by Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education Nono Kgafela-Mokoka in April 2025 had reinforced the union's opposition to corporal punishment.

The minister had alleged that a learner in Selibe-Phikwe had been beaten by five teachers and hospitalised. The allegation angered teachers' unions, which challenged her to substantiate it, saying their investigations had not established that such an incident had occurred. Kgafela-Mokoka subsequently apologised to the unions.

Nyatso said the episode reinforced teachers' concerns about the risks of administering corporal punishment, particularly the possibility of facing public condemnation and legal consequences.

MPS' MOTIVES

He also pointed to President Duma Boko's opposition to corporal punishment, saying the President had characterized it as violence.

"His word carries more weight. So the MPs are just playing to the gallery and trying to please some parents," Nyatso said.

He argued that learner discipline should be a shared responsibility involving parents, teachers and Government rather than being placed entirely on educators.

"We can instil the punishment for a short while, but what about in the long run? Who is going to beat the students after completing school?" he asked.

BTU OPPOSITION

BTU spokesperson Lonkokile said the union remained resolute in opposing corporal punishment because teachers had previously found themselves in trouble after physically punishing learners.

She said teachers were unwilling to return to a situation where they could face legal and professional consequences for disciplining students.

Lonkokile maintained that teachers alone could not solve indiscipline in schools and called on parents to become more involved in shaping their children's behaviour.

ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINE

Meanwhile, Assistant Minister of Basic Education and Child Welfare Justin Hunyepa said Government had introduced alternative disciplinary measures, including guidance and counselling and encouraging learners to join Scout clubs.

"His word carries more weight. So the MPs are just playing to the gallery and trying to please some parents,"

Hunyepa said the ban was consistent with international legislative and policy developments, adding that parents should also take responsibility for disciplining their children.



The Botswana Teaching Professionals Council (BOTEPCO) Registrar, Dr Raphael Dingalo *Photo Credit: BOTEPCO*

Teachers Face December Licensing Deadline

Teachers and their employers face statutory penalties as BOTEPCO prepares to intensify enforcement after 31 December 2026.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Nine months after warning that unlicensed teachers and their employers could face fines and imprisonment, the Botswana Teaching Professionals Council (BOTEPCO) has confirmed 31 December 2026 as the deadline for completing registration and licensing.

The council's notice, issued on Monday, reinforces the warning Registrar Dr Raphael Dingalo delivered at Gaborone International School's rebranding launch in February.

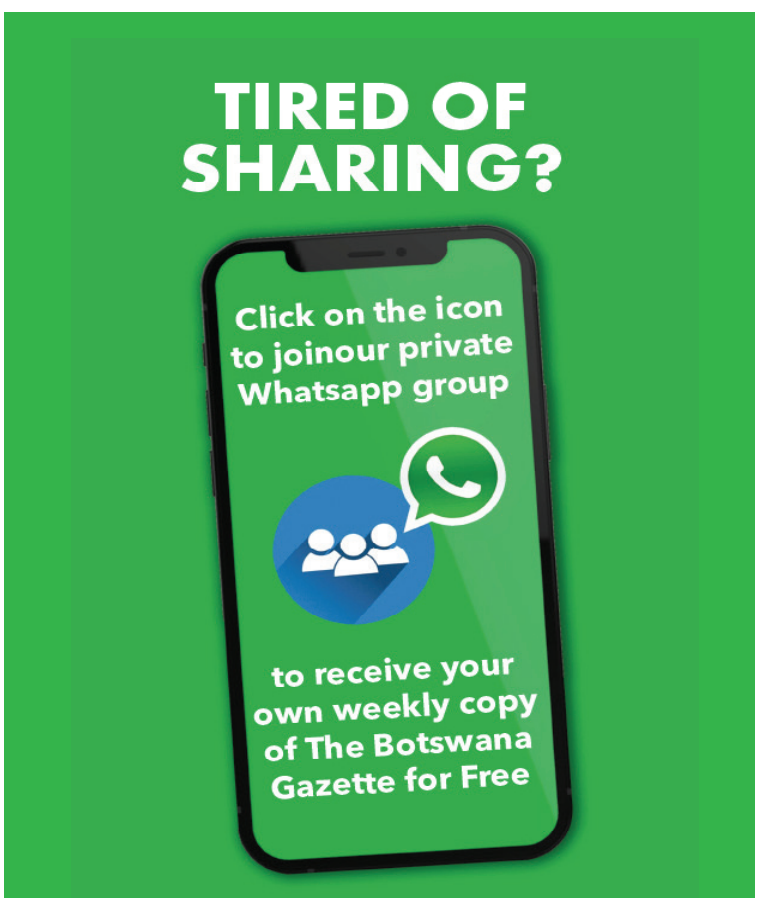
In a statement dated 23 November, BOTEPCO said Minister of Child Welfare and Basic Education Kebuang Nono Kgafela-Mokoka had endorsed its board's decision to end the transition on 31 December. Compliance monitoring and enforcement will intensify after that date.

FEBRUARY WARNING

In February the council revealed that it was considering nationwide compliance inspections amid concerns that some private schools were allowing unregistered teachers to work.

Delivering his keynote address at the GIS event, Dingalo warned that both teachers and their employers had legal responsibilities under the Botswana Teaching Professionals Council Act, No. 22 of 2019. Hiring teachers without the required registration and licence carries heavier maximum penalties than practising without a licence.

EMPLOYER PENALTIES



Under Section 27(2) of the Act, a person practising without a teaching licence commits an offence punishable by a fine of up to P5,000, imprisonment for up to three months, or both. Section 27(3) provides for a fine of up to P15,000, imprisonment for up to 12 months, or both, for a person employing a teacher without the required registration and licence.

The latest statement expressly places responsibility on employers in both public and private schools to ensure that their teachers meet these requirements. The registration drive covers practising teachers from pre-primary through secondary school, including school heads, deputy school heads and teachers working in tutorial schools.

> "Upon expiry of the transitional period, the Council will intensify compliance monitoring and enforcement."

TRANSITION ENDS

According to BOTEPCO, the transitional period began in October 2025 to give teachers already practising when the Act came into effect time to regularise their professional status. "Upon expiry of the transitional period, the Council will intensify compliance monitoring and enforcement," the latest statement by the council reads.

Dingalo's February address also revealed calls for tougher penalties. He said some teachers he had addressed around the country considered the existing sanctions too low, with one region suggesting they should be increased.

The November notice reiterates the existing statutory penalties as the council prepares to step up enforcement. BOTEPCO has urged teachers and education employers to use the remaining period to complete the process before the transitional arrangements end.

The Botswana Gazette
BUSINESS NEWS

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Photo Credit: The Projects Magazine

BPC Reveals Formula for Cheaper Electricity

Utility says diversified generation and stronger electricity demand could unlock better pricing, even as it seeks another steep tariff increase

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) has outlined a potential pathway towards cheaper electricity tariffs, identifying expanded power generation, diversified energy sources and increased industrial demand as critical ingredients for reducing electricity costs.

However, the prospect of cheaper electricity comes at a time when the financially strained utility is seeking another substantial tariff increase to address its mounting operational costs.

Speaking at the Bank Gaborone Insights and Impact Roundtable 2026 in Gaborone on Wednesday, 18 November, BPC Generation General Manager Mogomotsi Kebitseng explained that expanding electricity generation alone would not be sufficient to unlock competitive pricing. He stressed the importance of simultaneously attracting major electricity consumers and developing demand centres capable of absorbing additional power.

MORE POWER

"We need to put in more power but at the same time we need to bring in load and demand centres and as we do that with the blend of all the sources we are likely then to offer a better pricing and a better tariff to these sectors," Kebitseng noted.

Kebitseng suggests that BPC's ability to offer more competitive electricity tariffs will depend on striking a balance between increasing supply and stimulating demand, particularly from energy-intensive industries. He stressed that a diversified generation mix, combined with a larger electricity market, could help spread the costs of generating and supplying power across more customers, potentially creating room for lower tariffs over time.

THE TARIFF CONTRADICTION

The proposed route towards affordable electricity nevertheless presents a striking contrast with BPC's immediate financial requirements. Just two days before Kebitseng's remarks, the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA) issued a public notice revealing that BPC had applied for a 33 percent average tariff increase for the 2027/28 financial year, beginning in April 2027.

The proposed increase, which has not yet been approved, would raise the weighted average electricity tariff from P1.70 to P2.25 per kilowatt-hour. According to BERA, BPC estimates its current average electricity supply cost at P2.41 per kilowatt-hour, highlighting the gap between the utility's operating costs and the revenue it generates from electricity sales.

MORE POWER, LITTLE FINANCIAL RELIEF

The corporation's financial difficulties persist despite improvements in domestic electricity generation.During a parliamentary committee appearance in May, BPC Chief Executive Officer David Kgoboko revealed that local generation had improved from approximately 30 percent to 60 percent over five years without delivering the anticipated financial gains.

He attributed the situation largely to tariffs that do not reflect the actual cost of electricity supply and the rising expense of imported electricity. Kgoboko revealed that existing tariffs recovered only 55 to 60 percent of supply costs, effectively leaving the corporation making a loss on every unit sold.

The financial strain has contributed to creditor balances amounting to approximately P3.5 billion, underlining the corporation's mounting obligations. BPC has consequently submitted annual tariff adjustment applications to BERA over the past five years while advocating for a market-driven, cost-reflective pricing framework.

Earlier this year, BERA approved a nine percent tariff increase effective August, significantly below the 46 percent adjustment BPC had requested. Kebitseng's latest remarks therefore point towards a longer-term solution to Botswana's electricity pricing challenges. However, translating increased generation into genuinely affordable tariffs will require sufficient demand, improved operational efficiency and a stronger financial position.

Botswana Risks Pricing Investors Out – BEMA

Manufacturers warn that rising electricity and fuel costs could drive businesses away as Botswana competes for regional investment



Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association (BEMA) Chief Executive Officer Mmantlha Sankoloba *Photo Credit: Social Media*

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana risks losing existing companies and potential foreign investors to regional competitors if it continues raising electricity and fuel prices without considering the consequences for industrial competitiveness, Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association (BEMA) Chief Executive Officer Mmantlha Sankoloba has warned.

Sankoloba stressed that rising utility costs threaten to undermine the country's investment ambitions, particularly when competing economies are offering subsidised operating costs to attract businesses.

Speaking at the Bank Gaborone Insights and Impact Roundtable 2026, held in Gaborone on Wednesday, 18 November, Sankoloba cautioned that Botswana cannot afford to overlook the cost of doing business while competing with neighbouring countries for the same pool of investors.

AT RISK OF LOSING INVESTORS

"We are going to lose many companies in this country because we tend to increase prices of anything willy nilly. We forget that we are competing with other countries that are highly subsidised. Utility costs are subsidised in many countries of which they have become attractive to our own companies, they have become attractive to potential investment that we go around looking for but here we are not creating an environment that is conducive for the private sector to thrive," Sankoloba remarked.

Her warning comes at a particularly sensitive time, with Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) seeking regulatory approval for a further 33 percent weighted average electricity tariff increase, effective April 2027.

Under the proposal, average commercial electricity tariffs would increase from P2.11 to P2.76 per kilowatt-hour, representing a rise of approximately 31 percent. The application, which remains under consideration by the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA), does not provide for a government subsidy to cushion consumers.

INCREASES IMPLEMENTED

This follows an average nine percent electricity tariff increase implemented in August 2026, while fuel prices were also adjusted upwards in October, with diesel increasing by P2.83 per litre and petrol by P1.54 per litre.

As per BEMA's submission, these increases create a double burden. Electricity is essential for industrial production, while fuel powers the transportation of raw materials and finished products. Rising costs in both areas could erode profit margins and weaken the competitiveness of Botswana-made goods in regional markets.

Sankoloba has effectively challenged the government to treat affordable utilities as an investment incentive rather than merely a source of revenue recovery. However, the proposed electricity increase also exposes a difficult policy balancing act. BPC maintains that existing tariffs do not adequately cover the cost of generating, importing and supplying electricity, placing pressure on its financial sustainability.

BTC Bets on Starlink Amid Profit Slump

With profits heading for a 46% fall, BTC bets on Starlink satellite connectivity to regain ground in Botswana's telecoms market

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC) is betting on a transformative partnership with satellite communications giant Starlink to strengthen its competitive position at a time when its profits are projected to plunge by as much as 46%.

The partnership, announced last Wednesday has assumed greater significance following Friday's financial warning issued through the Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE), which exposed the mounting pressure facing one of Botswana's longest-established telecommunications operators.

PROJECTED DECLINE

In a BSE published trading statement, BTC's board revealed that "profit before tax for the half year ended 30 September 2026 is expected to be between P80 million and P89 million." This represents a projected decline of between 40% and 46% from the P148.4 million recorded during the corresponding period last year.



BTC chief executive Jürgen Peschel *Photo Credit: BTC*

While the company has yet to explain the factors behind its declining profitability, its latest satellite partnership presents an opportunity to reclaim lost ground in Botswana's increasingly competitive telecommunications industry.

The urgency is reflected in Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) figures, which show BTC's mobile market share declining from 15% in March 2024 to 14% in March 2025. During the latter period, Orange Botswana commanded 46% of the market, followed by Mascom at 40%.

BTC's position in mobile broadband was even weaker, accounting for just 7% of the market, compared with Orange's 50% and Mascom's 43%.

LIMITATIONS INTO OPPORTUNITY

The Starlink agreement could, however, give BTC a competitive advantage by addressing one of the telecommunications industry's longstanding challenges of connectivity disappearing once customers move beyond the reach of conventional network towers.

Businesses operating in mining, agriculture, tourism and remote locations have encountered unreliable connectivity that has traditionally disrupted communication between employees, clients and business operations.

Through the planned BTC Satellite service, compatible smartphones will be able to connect directly to Starlink satellites outside conventional mobile coverage areas, enabling messaging, location-sharing and selected data services without specialised satellite equipment.

2027 INTRODUCTION

BTC chief executive Jürgen Peschel has indicated that the service is scheduled for commercial introduction in early 2027. The arrangement could help BTC attract business customers whose operations regularly take employees beyond established network infrastructure, while strengthening customer retention and creating opportunities for additional revenue. The move also follows a growing international blueprint in which Starlink collaborates with established telecommunications operators rather than relying exclusively on direct consumer relationships.

In Uganda, Airtel introduced satellite-to-mobile connectivity through its Starlink partnership in September 2026, while Beeline Kazakhstan launched a similar service during the same month. These arrangements demonstrate how traditional telecommunications operators can use satellite infrastructure to extend their services into previously underserved locations.

The commercial opportunity is significant for BTC but success will depend on competitive pricing, reliable service and customers' willingness to pay for expanded connectivity. Importantly, the satellite arrangement does not automatically guarantee a reversal of the operator's declining profits.

With BTC's detailed interim results expected by 30 November, the bigger question is whether this technological breakthrough can eventually translate into stronger earnings and a recovery of its diminishing mobile market share.

NDB Protects Loans Against Unexpected Losses

NDB strengthens its insurance offering to protect development investments, safeguard borrowers against unforeseen losses and reduce risks to its portfolio

BONGANI MALUNGA

A flood can wipe out a farmer's harvest, disease can devastate a herd and a disaster can cripple a business. For the National Development Bank (NDB), such losses threaten more than livelihoods, they can also undermine the loans financing Botswana's development.

That is the thinking behind the bank's unveiling of NDB Insurance Services in Gaborone last Thursday with Chief Executive Officer Ogone Madisa arguing that financing productive ventures is not enough unless the investments are also protected.

"Since 1964, NDB has helped Botswana turn ambitions into reality. From farmers sinking boreholes, to entrepreneurs buying their first delivery trucks, to businesses investing in lodges, factories and other productive ventures. But along the way, we learned an important lesson. Because life does not always follow our carefully prepared business plans. We can have the best business proposal, excellent cash flow projections, and even a very enthusiastic banker. But unfortunately, the weather does not lead the business plans," Madisa noted.

A VULNERABILITY

Madisa exposed a vulnerability in development lending as borrowers may secure financing and establish viable operations, only for circumstances beyond their control to erode income, damage assets and compromise repayments.

"Floods, livestock diseases and other unexpected events can undo years of hard work and investment. And when that happens, it is not only our customers who are exposed, the sustainability of the business we finance and ultimately our own loan portfolio can also be affected. That is why we believe that protecting development is just as important as financing it," she added.

NDB's emphasis comes amid an established bancassurance market, at least nine other Botswana banks offer insurance through agencies or intermediary arrangements.



National Development Bank (NDB) Chief Executive Officer Ogone Madisa

INSURANCE BLUEPRINT

Several have developed dedicated insurance units, Botswana Savings Bank launched its agency in 2023, while BBS established its insurance agency in 2022. Others offer combinations of life, funeral, credit, property and vehicle protection. Policies are distributed by banks, but claims ultimately depend on insurers and policy terms.

Crucially, this is not NDB's first venture into insurance. Its original NDB Insurance Agency was launched in March 2022, providing cover through established insurers. The latest unveiling therefore signals a renewed push to position protection alongside development finance, rather than an entirely new entry into the sector.

NDB's insurance offering includes crop protection, livestock cover and business-interruption policies, reflecting the risks faced by borrowers in agriculture and other productive industries. Madisa emphasised that success, for NDB, would mean helping enterprises survive setbacks while reducing the chance that one disaster turns a development loan into a distressed asset.



Photo Credit: Social Media

Dangote BDR Results Pending Nigerian Regulatory Clearance

Botswana investors await Dangote refinery share allocations as Access Bank confirms their funds remain in custody pending Nigeria's allotment announcement

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana investors seeking a stake in Nigeria's Dangote Petroleum Refinery will have to wait longer for clarity after Access Bank Botswana announced a new November 27 date for its next update on the much-anticipated share offer.

The delay is not unique to Botswana, as investors across the continent, including those in Nigeria and Kenya, remain dependent on the same underlying share allotment process. The refinery's Initial Public Offering (IPO) attracted applications from all 54 African countries, making the pending regulatory process a continent-wide concern rather than an isolated Botswana setback.

In its latest statement published on the Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE) on Friday, November 20, Access Bank confirmed that Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals had still not published its share allotment results in Nigeria.

UNABLE TO SUBMIT

"The Depository therefore remains unable to submit its basis of allotment nor to publish the BDR offer results," the bank stated. Access Bank explained that it would publish the results as soon as reasonably practicable after the refinery announces its Nigerian share allocations.

The development follows an earlier announcement on November 18, when the bank revealed that the refinery had not received the necessary clearance from Nigeria's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The original regulatory clearance date of November 11 had already been revised to November 17, partly to accommodate investors participating through Botswana's Depository Receipt programme. The delay has consequently extended the waiting period for investors who subscribed to the refinery's shares through the Botswana Stock Exchange.

DEPENDENT ON NIGERIAN ALLOTMENT

In Kenya, investors participating through Global Depository Receipts are similarly dependent on the Nigerian allotment process before the underlying shares can be used to create their investment instruments.

The Dangote offering attracted significant international interest, with strong demand raising questions about how available shares would ultimately be distributed among investors across different markets.

Access Bank has sought to provide reassurance for Botswana applicants regarding the status of their investment funds. The bank confirmed that application monies remain in its custody pending the refinery's allotment announcement. Its earlier communication also indicated that refunds, where applicable, would be processed according to the offer prospectus.

A DELAY IN THE ALLOCATION

The development therefore represents a delay in the allocation and publication of results rather than an announced cancellation of the offer. The transaction represents a significant opportunity for Botswana's capital market, allowing local investors to acquire an interest in one of Africa's largest petroleum refineries through Botswana Depository Receipts (BDRs).

The original timetable had envisaged the commencement of BDR trading on the BSE on December 14, although the date remains indicative. Access Bank has committed to providing another market update by Friday, November 27, but has not guaranteed that the final allotment results will be available by then.

"Access Bank has sought to provide reassurance for Botswana applicants regarding the status of their investment funds. The bank confirmed that application monies remain in its custody pending the refinery's allotment announcement."



FTC Stands In Botswana's Diamond Naming Path

Botswana's Paris Declaration faces a major American regulatory hurdle as lab-grown diamond producers resist the country's campaign to redefine diamonds



BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's ambitious campaign to reserve the word 'diamond' exclusively for natural stones faces a formidable obstacle in the United States, where existing consumer protection guidelines favour terminology that President Duma Boko is fighting to overturn.

The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which regulates jewellery advertising and marketing practices in the world's largest diamond consumer market, is scheduled to review its Jewelry Guides in 2028, setting the stage for a potentially decisive confrontation over the future of diamond terminology.

The regulatory challenge has gained prominence following the November 10 signing of the Paris Declaration on Natural Diamonds between Botswana and France, which seeks to distinguish naturally mined diamonds from laboratory-manufactured alternatives.

RESISTANCE TRIGGERED

However, the agreement has triggered resistance from lab-grown diamond producers, who are leaning on the FTC's existing provisions to challenge Botswana's position.

In a strongly worded response to Boko's position, the Diamond Producers Council, which represents lab-grown diamond manufacturers, told international jewellery publication JCK Online that the President was contradicting American consumer protection principles.



Botswana's ambitious campaign to reserve the word 'diamond' exclusively for natural stones faces a formidable obstacle in the United States, where existing consumer protection guidelines favour terminology that President Duma Boko is fighting to overturn. *Photo Credit: Afrika World*

"President Boko keeps doing exactly what the U.S. FTC has specifically warned about: suggesting lab diamonds are fake and not real," the council stated.

DETERMINING THE TERMINOLOGY

The council further argued that Botswana cannot determine the terminology governing diamond sales in the United States, highlighting the regulatory limits of the Paris agreement. At the centre of the dispute is the FTC's 2018 revision of its Jewelry Guides, which removed 'synthetic' from its list of recommended descriptions for laboratory-manufactured diamonds.

The commission argued that consumers could mistakenly interpret synthetic diamonds as imitation products, despite laboratory-grown diamonds having essentially the same chemical, physical and optical properties as natural stones.

Crucially, the FTC did not ban the term 'synthetic', but warned against using it to falsely suggest that laboratory-grown diamonds are not genuine diamonds. This creates a significant hurdle for Botswana's campaign, particularly because the Paris Declaration does not override American regulations.

"MISLEADING" CONSUMERS

The Diamond Producers Council has maintained that consumers should not be misled about the authenticity of laboratory-grown stones. In a separate interview with JCK Online, a council representative emphasised: "The issue is what a customer understands at the jewelry counter."

Nevertheless, natural diamond industry organisations are preparing their own campaign to influence the FTC's next review. Stuart Samuels, president of the Diamond Manufacturers and Importers Association of America, told JCK that his organisation intends to push for synthetic to become the mandatory description for manufactured diamonds.

"Synthetic is an accurate scientific description, used for decades in the jewelry world," Samuels argued. The stakes are particularly high for Botswana because the United States remains the largest end-market for diamond jewellery globally.

According to De Beers' June 2026 diamond market research, natural diamonds accounted for approximately 85 percent of diamond sales by value among independent American jewellers in 2025. Botswana's diamond industry remains a major source of export earnings and government revenue, influencing American consumer perceptions is therefore commercially significant.

The Paris Declaration, signed by Minerals and Energy Minister Bogolo Kenewendo and French Minister Delegate Nicolas Forissier, commits both countries to promoting natural diamonds and establishes a joint working group expected to issue annual progress reports beginning in 2027.

However, the FTC's scheduled 2028 review represents an opportunity to reconsider the existing guidelines rather than a guarantee that American regulators will change them. As that review approaches, Botswana's campaign and American consumer protection policy appear headed for a critical encounter. The challenge for Botswana will be extending its diplomatic success in Paris into the American marketplace, where the final say on diamond marketing terminology rests with US regulators.

Owning Our Own Economy

As the limits of the diamond era come into view, the question is no longer whether Botswana diversifies, but who gets to own the economy that follows.



Dr T.T.K. Matome, Board Chairperson, Stanbic Bank Botswana

On 2 November, I stood on the floor of the Botswana Stock Exchange and helped ring a bell. A bell never rings for the person holding the rope. It rings for everyone within earshot. That thought captures something larger than any single listing: who gets to own Botswana's future.

At Independence, we chose to treat our diamonds as a trust held for generations not yet born. That trust still carries us: diamonds account for about 30 percent of our GDP and nearly 80 percent of our export earnings. But we have always known that the stones beneath our feet would not carry us forever, and this year has made that knowledge urgent. The economy shrank in 2025 as mineral revenues fell by almost a quarter, and a sovereign rating downgrade followed in March. Diversification has turned from a plan into a necessity. His Excellency the President has called for bold reform and for the private sector to carry more of the load. He is right.

Yet diversification does not happen by declaration. It has to be financed, by capital that is patient, local, and committed to this country for the long run. That is why a deep and active stock exchange is not a luxury for a small economy. It is part of the infrastructure that is integral to providing the capital which finances a broader and more diverse private sector. It is as vital as the roads and power lines that facilitates the sustainable growth of the private sector.

The foundations are being laid. The Exchange has spoken of reaching an "inflection point", and the evidence supports it. Equity turnover reached a record P5.9 billion in 2025, new instruments and regional partnerships are arriving, and companies are once again choosing to raise capital at home. Yet the market remains narrow: by late 2025, the Botswana Stock Exchange had 33 listed companies, while domestic equity market capitalisation stood at approximately P57.5 billion as at September 2025. Meanwhile our pension funds hold assets worth roughly two-thirds of our GDP. How much of that is invested at home is among the most important economic questions of our time.

But beneath the progress lies a harder truth. Local retail investors accounted for about 6.5 percent of equity trading on the BSE in 2025, and only about 3 percent in the first half of this year. Most Batswana experience the capital market, if at all, at arm's length, through a pension fund they rarely see. We do not have as active a citizenry trading or immersed in the capital markets as, for instance, other markets. Not yet, at least.

For a generation, the relationship between most citizens and our financial institutions, commercial banks in particular, has run in one direction. You deposit, the institution lends, the institution earns. Share ownership in these institutions changes that. It entitles people to share in the rewards of growth, and it gives them a voice to hold institutions to account. A country whose people own a stake in its great enterprises is a country whose prosperity is more widely felt, and more stubbornly defended. It is a country making strides towards democratization of private sector wealth.

This is why inclusion in capital markets is not a question of financial products. It is a question of economic citizenship. When a single mother in Moshupa, an entrepreneur in Palapye, or a grandmother in Serowe can own a share of a listed company, they cease to be spectators of their economy's growth and prosperity. They now start to help build it and share in that prosperity. It is a matter of agency.

"For a generation, the relationship between most citizens and our financial institutions, commercial banks in particular, has run in one direction. You deposit, the institution lends, the institution earns. Share ownership in these institutions changes that."

Such is a practical case too, not only one based on principle. When Batswana own Botswana's enterprises, dividends stay in Batswana households, to be spent and reinvested here. A broad base of local shareholders steadies a market when foreign capital moves on. Also, companies that answer to thousands of citizen owners have every reason to govern themselves well, because many more eyes are watching. Share ownership also builds the habit of long-term saving among young people, who will inherit both the opportunities and the obligations of an economy beyond diamonds. Inclusion, in other words, is not charity. It is sound economics.

Getting there will take more than invitations. It needs financial education that reaches well beyond Gaborone and Francistown. It needs digital channels that make investing as simple as sending money by phone. It needs entry points small enough to be a foothold rather than a fortune. And it needs honesty; a share is not like a bank deposit, its value can fall as well as rise, and every investor deserves clear information and sound advice before deciding.

It also obliges every company that asks for the public's capital. Listing is not only an invitation; it is a commitment. To be stewards, not spectators. To tell the truth in good years and in hard ones. To remember that the prosperity of the communities we serve is the truest measure of our own.

The offer Stanbic Bank Botswana currently has before the market is one step on this road. It will not be the last, and it should not be. I hope to see many more businesses, from family-owned businesses to state-owned enterprises, open their doors to citizen shareholders. Each new listing adds another room to the house we are building together.

In seasons of uncertainty, the instinct of capital is to sit still. Botswana cannot afford that instinct. Our home was built by people who believed in a future they would not live to see in full. The task of this generation is to make sure that the future of today is owned by the many, not the few.

The investment bell has rung. Let it be heard in every corner of this country; from Struizendam to Kasane, and from Charles Hill to Martins Drift!

1 Diamonds account for about 30 percent of GDP and nearly 80 percent of export earnings. African Development Bank, Country Focus Report 2026: Botswana, as reported by Devdiscourse, "Diamond slump puts Botswana at crossroads as AfDB calls for new investment and growth model", 14 August 2026. https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/other/3963244-diamond-slump-puts-botswana-at-crossroads-as-afdb-calls-for-new-investment-and-growth-model

2 Ibid. Real GDP contracted by 0.7 percent in 2025, and mineral revenues fell by 23.4 percent.

3 S&P Global Ratings lowered Botswana's sovereign rating from BBB to BBB- on 13 March 2026, with a negative outlook. BOPA, "Botswana: Diamond Downturn Demands Bold Reforms – Boko", via AllAfrica, 25 May 2026. https://allafrica.com/stories/202605260021.html

4 Remarks by H.E. President Duma Boko at the Botswana–South Africa Business Forum, May 2026. BOPA, "Botswana: Diamond Downturn Demands Bold Reforms – Boko", via AllAfrica, 25 May 2026. https://allafrica.com/stories/202605260021.html

5 Aupa Monyatsi, "Botswana Stock Exchange at an Inflection Point", WFE Focus, World Federation of Exchanges, January 2026. https://focus.world-exchanges.org/articles/botswana-stock-exchange

6 Equity turnover of P5,910.9 million was the highest since the Exchange's inception. Botswana Stock Exchange, Market Performance Report for the Period 1 January to 31 December 2025. https://test-www.bse.co.bw/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/BSE-MARKET-PERFORMANCE-REPORT-FOR-PERIOD-1-JANUARY-TO-31-DECEMBER-2025.pdf

7 For example, Continental Reinsurance's P2.13 billion IPO on the BSE. Mmegi, "Continental Reinsurance floats P2bn IPO on Botswana Stock Exchange", 19 August 2026. https://www.mmegi.bw/ampArticle/123747

8 Botswana Stock Exchange, FY2025 Market Performance Report (op. cit.): 33 listed equity companies; domestic companies' market capitalisation of P59.75 billion at 31 December 2025.

9 African Development Bank (op. cit.): pension assets were about 68.6 percent of GDP in 2025.

10 Domestic retail investors accounted for 6.54 percent of equity turnover (P386.8 million) in 2025: BSE FY2025 Market Performance Report (op. cit.); and 3.2 percent (P53.0 million) from January to June 2026: Botswana Stock Exchange, Market Performance Report for the Period 1 January to 30 June 2026. https://www.bse.co.bw/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/BSE-MARKET-PERFORMANCE-REPORT-FOR-PERIOD-1-JANUARY-TO-30-JUNE-2026.pdf

Banks Adopt New Industry Charter

New banking standards set out requirements for customer protection, responsible lending and environmental, social and governance accountability.



The Bankers Association of Botswana (BAB) has introduced a Banking Industry Charter and a revised Code of Good Banking Practices aimed at strengthening customer protection, financial inclusion and transparency in the banking sector.

The frameworks were launched in Gaborone on 23 November 2026 at Travelodge and establish standards for customer relations, banking practices and environmental, social and governance (ESG) responsibilities.

CUSTOMER PROTECTION

Speaking at the launch, BAB Council Chair Shepherd Aisham said the documents were developed through collaboration between banks and other stakeholders.

He said they addressed ethical standards, accountability and access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises, women, young people, entrepreneurs and the agricultural sector.

BAB Chief Executive Officer Dr Leseding Senatla said the 2026 Code of Good Banking Practices outlined customers' rights and responsibilities when dealing with financial institutions.

The code covers banking fees, interest rates, complaints handling, customer confidentiality, debt recovery, electronic banking and fraud prevention. It also provides guidance on card security and unauthorised transactions.

ESG AND REGULATORY STANDARDS

Senatla said the charter required banks to align their operations with national development priorities, including economic diversification, poverty eradication, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

Banks will be assessed against ESG benchmarks, with implementation plans, measurable indicators and disclosure frameworks. Their boards will also be required to review ESG performance annually.

Bank of Botswana Governor Lesego Caster Maseki said public trust remained central to banking, warning that increased use of digital financial services had heightened exposure to fraud, cyber threats and misuse of personal information.

Maseki said customer protection standards should apply equally across physical branches, mobile applications and call centres. He identified accountability, financial inclusion and industry ownership as key areas requiring attention.

Maseki urged banks to incorporate the commitments into their business strategies, staff training and performance targets.

BICA Graduates Urged to Uphold Ethics

Accountants entering the profession are warned against compromising standards as AI reshapes the industry.

Newly qualified accountants have been urged to uphold professional integrity, exercise independent judgement and adapt to technological changes as they enter the profession.

The call was made by the Botswana Institute of Chartered Accountants (BICA) at its Awards and Graduation Ceremony, held at Travelodge on 20 November 2026, where the Class of 2026 was challenged to maintain ethical standards and accountability.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Speaking at the ceremony, BICA President Onnelle Maripe, FCA, said professional qualifications carried responsibilities beyond academic achievement, particularly in maintaining public trust and promoting accountability.

She urged graduates to exercise sound professional judgement, demonstrate competence and pursue continuous professional development to keep pace with changes in accounting standards, technology and the business environment.

"Botswana needs your innovation, expertise and professionalism," Maripe said.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT

Delivering the keynote address, Auditor General Keneilwe Senyarelo, ACPA, FCCA, said accountants and auditors played an important role in ensuring public resources were properly managed and used for their intended purposes.

She said accountability required the involvement of accounting officers, finance professionals, internal auditors and management, rather than resting solely with the Office of the Auditor General.

Senyarelo said accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls and independent assurance helped identify institutional weaknesses and discourage financial irregularities.



AI AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

Addressing the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI), she said technology would change how financial information was processed but would not remove the need for human oversight.

> "Botswana needs your innovation, expertise and professionalism."

She cautioned graduates against relying blindly on AI-generated information and audit reports, saying professional judgement remained essential when reaching audit conclusions.

Senyarelo also warned against compromising professional standards to satisfy employers or personal interests, stressing that accountants must remain objective and auditors independent.

Both speakers acknowledged the contribution of families, employers and tuition providers to the graduates' academic and professional development.

FirstPreneur Graduates 143 Businesses

The two-year FNBB programme recorded an average 86 per cent turnover increase and 244 additional jobs among participating citizen-owned businesses.



A total of 143 citizen-owned businesses have graduated from First National Bank Botswana's (FNBB) FirstPreneurDevelopment Programme, following a two-year initiative that recorded growth in business turnover and employment creation.

The graduation and excellence awards ceremony was held at Phakalane Convention Centre on 19 November 2026. Speaking at the event, FNBB Chief Executive Officer Steven Bogatsu said participating businesses recorded an average 86 per cent increase in turnover, while creating 244 additional jobs. Employment across the businesses increased from approximately 700 to just under 1,000.

95 PER CENT COMPLETION RATE

Bogatsu said the programme initially enrolled 150 entrepreneurs, of whom 143 completed the two-year initiative, representing a 95 per cent completion rate.

The graduating cohort included 70 women-led businesses, while nearly half of the participating enterprises were youth-owned. Six businesses owned by visually impaired entrepreneurs also participated through a partnership with Pudulogong Rehabilitation Centre in Mochudi.

The businesses represented various locations across Botswana, including Gaborone, Francistown, Maun, Ghanzi, Selibe Phikwe, Bobonong and Ramotswa.

FOCUS BEYOND FINANCING

Bogatsu said access to finance alone was insufficient to ensure business sustainability, pointing to the importance of leadership, financial management, strategic planning and operational efficiency.

The programme was implemented in partnership with Project124 Africa and provided participants with mentorship, networking opportunities, market exposure, trade exhibitions and commercial engagement.

According to Bogatsu, the initiative was established to address business development needs by equipping entrepreneurs with skills and networks to improve their operations and access commercial opportunities.

CREATIVE BUSINESSES SEEK MARKETS

The ceremony also featured contributions from entrepreneurs, including Mboko Basiami, founder and creative director of Botswana fashion brand Glotto.

The brand's work in contemporary African fashion and cultural storytelling reflects the participation of creative enterprises in Botswana's wider business landscape. Its development and exposure to international fashion platforms also highlight the potential for locally developed brands to pursue markets beyond the country.

Bogatsu said FNBB intended to continue supporting enterprise development initiatives focused on business mentorship, market access and practical support for citizen-owned businesses.

He encouraged the graduating entrepreneurs to continue developing their businesses, exploring new markets and creating employment opportunities.



Standard Chartered Donates 152 Computers

The donation, launched in Selebi-Phikwe, will equip public schools with technology to support digital learning.

Standard Chartered Botswana has donated 152 desktop computers to public schools as part of an initiative aimed at improving access to digital learning resources.

The initiative was launched on 20 November at Lebogang Community Junior Secondary School in Selebi-Phikwe, in collaboration with the Ministry of Child Welfare and Basic Education. The first phase involved distributing 26 computers, with the remaining equipment earmarked for identified beneficiary schools.

SUPPORTING DIGITAL LEARNING

The recipient primary schools include Boswelakgomo, Lapologang, Boitshoko, Botshabelo, Boitumelo and Reuben.

The bank has also partnered with UNICEF to install digital learning solutions and protective software on the computers. The systems are intended to provide learners with access to educational resources while incorporating digital safeguards.

The computers are expected to support classroom activities, including assignment preparation, research and the development of digital and problem-solving skills. Teachers will also use the equipment for lesson preparation and classroom engagement.

BUILDING DIGITAL SKILLS

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Standard Chartered Botswana Chief Executive Officer Mpho Masupe said the donation formed part of the bank's broader community development efforts.

> "The computers are expected to support classroom activities, including assignment preparation, research and the development of digital and problem-solving skills"

"Here for Good is a promise to look beyond the business we do today to the opportunities we create for tomorrow," Masupe said.

Masupe added that the bank's contribution extended beyond its commercial operations to supporting communities and creating opportunities for young people.

The initiative builds on the bank's other community programmes, which include employee-led mentorship, financial literacy sessions and support for learning resources.

Standard Chartered Botswana has operated in the country for 129 years.



Sell the Status

Customers do not buy brands only for what a product does; they also buy the place the brand helps them occupy in the eyes of others.

MANUEL VEIRUAPI RUHAPO | THE BRAND PARADOX | THE BOTSWANA GAZETTE

A bank account can move money. A shirt can cover the body. A restaurant can serve a meal. A mobile network can carry a call.

Yet customers often choose between similar products for reasons that are not printed on the packaging. They choose the brand that makes them feel competent, respected, included or different.

This is the central idea behind Will Storr's The Status Game. Storr argues that people are constantly participating in social games in which they seek to be valued by their group. Status is not limited to wealth or fame. It can come from competence, generosity, loyalty, courage, taste or commitment to a shared ideal.

For brands, this creates a useful but uncomfortable question: what status does the customer gain by choosing us?

THREE STATUS GAMES

Storr describes three broad ways status is gained.

The first is dominance. Status comes through force, intimidation, exclusion or the ability to control others. In brand strategy, this appears when a company behaves as if being the biggest gives it permission to ignore customers, suppliers or competitors.

Dominance can create awareness, but it rarely creates affection. A business may be difficult to avoid and still be easy to dislike.

The second is success. Status comes from competence and achievement. The brand is respected because it performs. It delivers faster, lasts longer, solves a difficult problem or makes the customer's life simpler.

The third is virtue. Status comes from representing the rules and ideals a group respects. The brand is valued because it stands for local pride, fairness, responsibility, generosity or cultural belonging.

Most strong brands combine success and virtue. They are good at something, and people believe they use that ability in a worthwhile way.

THE STATUS PARADOX

The first brand lesson is the Status Paradox: customers may want the product, but they often want the recognition attached to the product more deeply.

A person may open an account because they need banking services. They may remain with the bank because it helps them feel financially capable, rewarded and part of a progressive community.

FNB Botswana's official vision is to be the bank of choice through innovative solutions and superior customer experience. Its local offering includes digital banking, eWallet, rewards and business services.

The strategic interpretation is not that every FNB customer is seeking status. It is that a financial brand can help customers play a success game. The customer is not only transacting. They are trying to become more capable, more independent and more recognised as someone who manages life well.

That meaning must be earned. An application that fails, a reward that disappoints or a branch experience that humiliates the customer can destroy the status the brand was supposed to provide.

BOTSWANA BELONGING

Botswanacraft offers another interpretation. Its official site calls the brand "Sharing Culture" and combines a craft shop with Botswana baskets, San crafts, a restaurant, venue hire and public events in Gaborone.

The customer is not simply buying an object. They may be buying a connection to Botswana, a way to host visitors, a visible expression of taste or participation in a cultural setting.

This is a virtue game. The brand's value is connected to what the group recognises as meaningful and worth preserving.

The point is not that every purchase carries a grand cultural intention. It is that brands become stronger when they understand the social meaning surrounding the transaction.

A local clothing label does not only sell fabric. It can help customers signal confidence in Botswana design. A restaurant does not only sell food. It can help people host, celebrate or belong. A telecommunications company does not only sell data. It can help a family remain present in one another's lives.

The brand must then deliver the functional promise as well. Virtue without competence becomes performance. A brand cannot ask customers to feel proud while giving them a poor product or indifferent service.

VIRTUE AND SUCCESS

The second paradox is the Virtue-Success Paradox: a brand needs both moral meaning and practical competence, but the two are not interchangeable.

A company can sponsor worthy causes and still lose customers if its service fails. Another can offer an excellent product and still struggle to build affection if customers believe it stands for nothing beyond profit.

Storr's framework helps brand managers separate the signals. Success asks, "What are we good at?" Virtue asks, "What do people believe we are good for?" Dominance asks, "What happens when we use power carelessly?"

The answers should agree.

WHAT IT MEANS

Business owners and executives: Identify the status game your brand enables. Does it help customers achieve, belong, contribute or be respected? Then make sure the business genuinely creates that value.

Marketing professionals: Stop treating status as synonymous with luxury. Map the groups that matter to your customers and identify the behaviour those groups admire. Build campaigns around earned competence or credible contribution, not empty aspiration.

Brand managers: Watch for status withdrawal. Customers can remove their respect quickly when a brand breaks its promise, disrespects them or claims values it does not practise. Protect the everyday experience as carefully as the advertising.

The most powerful brand is not always the one that tells customers, "You are better than everyone else." It may be the one that helps them become useful, capable, connected or proud within a group that matters to them.

That is the real translation of The Status Game into brand strategy. Brands do not merely compete for attention. They compete to define what their customers can be proud to signal, and what the wider community will respect them for delivering.



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

The Missing Link in eMobility

A national charging network planned for 2027 could transform Botswana's energy security, but the ambition must become a costed and measurable commitment under NDC 3.0.

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH


Photo Credit:AI Generated

Botswana's transition to electric mobility may be approaching a decisive turning point. Dr Ecco Maje, Managing Director of eMobility Botswana (Pty) Ltd, has confirmed exclusively to The Botswana Gazette that a national electric vehicle charging network is planned for 2027. The Special Purpose Vehicle responsible for advancing the programme is now operational.

The significance extends far beyond plugging in vehicles. A comprehensive transition could ultimately displace petroleum imports worth as much as P16 billion annually, approximately 7% of GDP on an illustrative P229 billion base. These are potential gross import savings, not immediate net economic benefits. Nevertheless, the opportunity deserves national attention.

Botswana imports virtually all its transport petroleum, exposing households and businesses to international oil prices, foreign exchange pressures and external supply disruptions. Electric mobility offers an alternative: powering transport increasingly with domestically generated electricity, including Botswana's abundant solar resources. This is an economic and energy security imperative.

THE KEY

Discussion has concentrated on electric buses, cars and trucks. But vehicles require a system that makes them practical. Motorists considering journeys from Gaborone to Francistown, Maun or Kasane need confidence that dependable charging will be available. Delivery businesses and freight operators require the same assurance.

Without it, electric vehicles remain constrained by battery range and access to private charging. A national network could transform them into a practical option for journeys across Botswana.

International experience demonstrates why infrastructure matters. According to the International Energy Agency, public charging points worldwide exceeded five million in 2024, more than doubling since 2022. China has developed the largest public network alongside its expanding electric vehicle market. Europe requires fast charging at regular intervals along designated transport corridors.

Charging availability and vehicle adoption reinforce each other. Drivers hesitate to buy without reliable chargers; investors hesitate to install chargers without enough customers. A planned national network can break this coordination problem by establishing minimum coverage and market confidence.

Botswana therefore needs a connected system serving towns, economic centres and international corridors. Stations must be accessible, interoperable and reliable, with adequate electricity supply. A collection of isolated installations will not provide equivalent confidence.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Consider a passenger vehicle consuming seven litres per 100 kilometres. At an illustrative petrol price of P14 per litre, fuel costs P98 over that distance. An electric vehicle using 17 kWh, at P1.60 per kWh, would consume electricity costing approximately P27.

That suggests an energy cost reduction exceeding 70%, before charging losses and other operating costs. At 20,000 kilometres annually, the illustrative saving approaches P14,200. Actual savings will depend on vehicle efficiency, electricity tariffs and public charging prices.

Nationally, lower petroleum imports could ease pressure on foreign exchange and reduce exposure to volatile energy markets. More transport expenditure could circulate domestically, supporting electricity generation, installation and maintenance services.

These gains must be weighed against imported vehicles, batteries and charging equipment, together with generation and grid investment. Avoided imports do not automatically become additional GDP. Nor will the full opportunity materialise immediately: fleet replacement takes years.

Nevertheless, replacing imported transport energy with domestic solar electricity offers Botswana a powerful route towards diversification and greater economic resilience.

> "Drivers hesitate to buy without reliable chargers; investors hesitate to install chargers without enough customers."

STRENGTHEN NDC 3.0

There is a significant gap between these ambitions and Botswana's draft international climate commitments. The country's Third Nationally Determined Contribution, NDC 3.0, sets out mitigation and adaptation commitments to 2035 under the Paris Agreement.

The September 2026 working draft recognises electric mobility, anticipates additional electricity demand and acknowledges charging infrastructure as an enabling requirement. However, it does not establish a clearly defined, costed and national charging network with clear timelines.

It also acknowledges that electric bus and charging infrastructure costs remain unconfirmed and excluded from mitigation investment estimates, and records the absence of a confirmed national corridor charging commitment.

This is an implementation gap. Anticipating transport electrification without explicitly providing its essential infrastructure weakens the credibility of delivery. Dr Maje's announcement creates an opportunity to close that gap before the document is finalised.

The recommendation is unequivocal: Botswana should explicitly include, cost and prioritise the National Electric Vehicle Charging Network in NDC 3.0, with implementation beginning in 2027.

The commitment should identify corridors, initial station numbers and charging capacities, delivery milestones, responsible institutions, electricity requirements and investment costs. It should distinguish the needs of private motorists, public transport operators and heavy freight, whose charging patterns and power requirements differ substantially.

The network must also enter the NDC's financing framework as an identifiable priority for domestic investment, private participation and international climate finance. An uncosted aspiration cannot provide the same foundation for mobilising resources or holding institutions accountable.

CREDIBLE DELIVERY

Government need not own every station. Public support can establish essential corridor coverage while private operators develop commercially viable facilities at service stations, shopping centres, hotels, workplaces and transport terminals.

Botswana Power Corporation, the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority, transport authorities and eMobility Botswana require coordinated responsibilities. Tariffs, payment systems, technical standards and consumer protection should be established before investment expands. Drivers must be able to locate working chargers, understand prices and pay conveniently.

Renewable generation, storage and grid reinforcement should be integrated where economically justified. Reliability matters as much as installation: a charger that regularly fails provides little reassurance to motorists and undermines confidence in the entire transition.

A national master plan should therefore accompany an independently assessed investment programme, measurable coverage and reliability targets, and an agreed delivery framework. Transparent modelling should assess petroleum displacement, emissions reductions and energy security benefits. Charging infrastructure should not receive separate emissions credits where the same reductions are already counted under vehicle adoption.

Early investment should follow transparent demand forecasts and prioritise routes where coverage can support adoption. Remote locations may need public support because their strategic value exceeds their initial commercial returns. Procurement should include maintenance obligations and performance reporting, rather than rewarding installation alone. Publishing station availability and progress against milestones would help citizens, investors and operators judge whether the promised national network is becoming a dependable service across the country.

CONNECTING THE PIECES

Charging infrastructure alone will not complete the transition. Vehicle affordability, electricity supply, grid capacity, public transport reform, regulation and finance must advance together. NDC 3.0 offers the opportunity to connect them within a measurable national programme.

Botswana cannot control international oil prices or geopolitical disruption. It can increasingly influence the domestic production and reliability of the electricity powering its economy.

The proposed network could unlock substantial household savings, lower business costs and greater energy independence. Its inclusion in NDC 3.0 should therefore be treated as an immediate strategic priority. The technology exists and the energy resource is abundant. Botswana must now connect the pieces of the puzzle.

COP and the Expectations Trap

After three decades of climate diplomacy, rising public expectations are colliding with slower institutional progress and diminishing time to act.



DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

The Conference of the Parties on climate change has just ended its thirty-first annual session. It is being framed by some as one of the most disappointing climate conferences. But what constitutes a successful COP? And how has our definition of success changed over the past three decades? When COP1 was convened in Berlin in 1995, the very act of bringing the international community together to discuss climate change was considered a diplomatic achievement. Expectations were relatively modest. Climate change was largely the domain of scientists, environmentalists and a handful of visionary policymakers. Most of humanity remained remarkably uninformed about the implications of its own development. Thirty-one years later, the world expects a COP not simply to discuss its predicament but to change its trajectory. Perhaps one of the great paradoxes of the COP process is that its success in educating humanity has contributed to the perception of its own failure. The more we understand, the more we expect. And the more we expect, the less satisfied we become with what is delivered.

SHIFTING OBJECTIVES

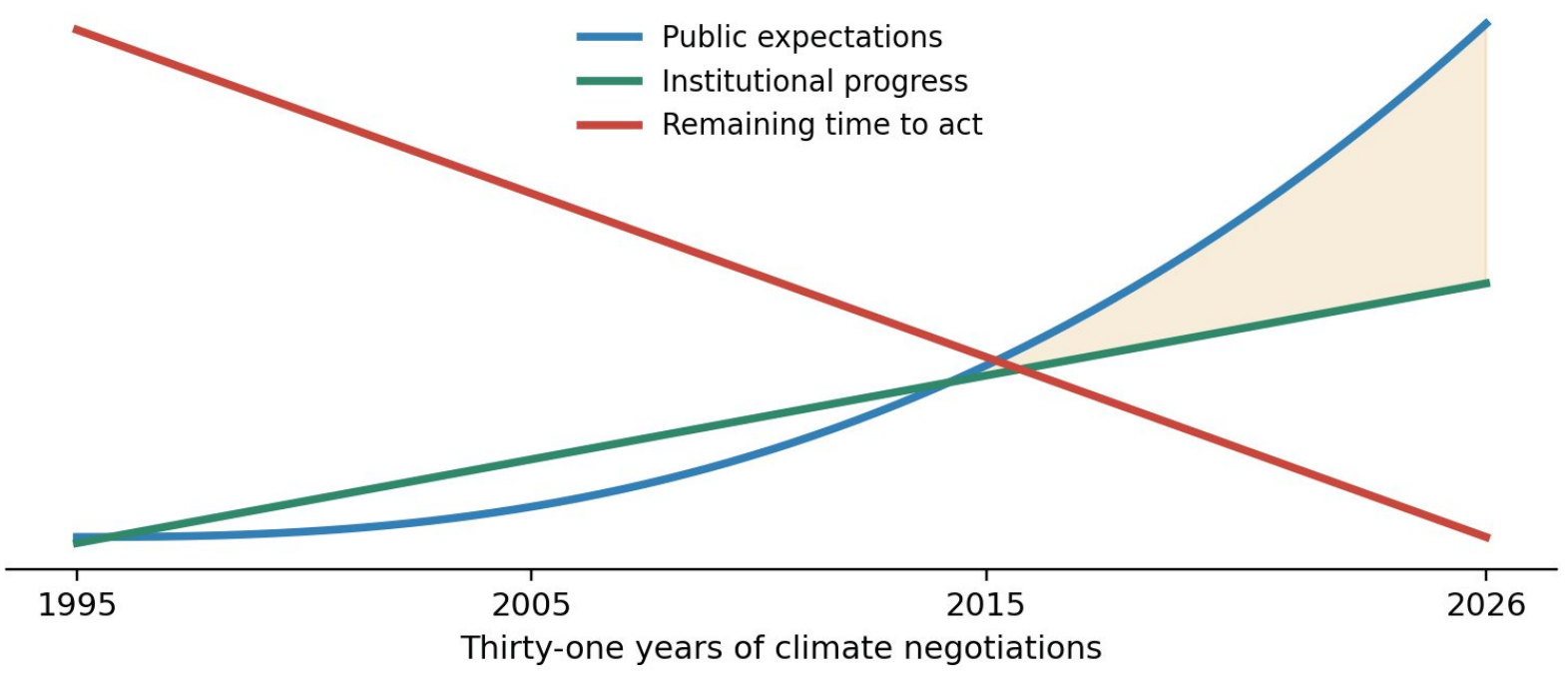
It is instructive to examine how the objectives of successive climate conferences have evolved. What began as essentially a diplomatic undertaking has become an extraordinarily complex exercise in the economic, technological and social transformation of human civilisation.

At Berlin in 1995, the achievement was dialogue and agreement to negotiate stronger commitments. At Geneva, the following year, the emphasis shifted towards accepting the emerging scientific consensus and strengthening the international response. By Kyoto in 1997, the international community had moved from recognising the problem to agreeing on legally binding emissions reduction targets for developed countries. Paris in 2015 represented another fundamental shift. Climate change was no longer considered primarily the responsibility of industrialised nations. Almost every country committed itself to participating in a global effort to limit warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. By Glasgow, the question was whether the transition could be accelerated. By Dubai, the world was formally taking stock of whether it was doing enough. At Baku, attention centred on financing the transition, while Belém placed greater emphasis on implementation. And now, at COP31, the fundamental question is why mitigation is not happening fast enough. The objective has progressively shifted from participation to performance.

> “Climate diplomacy must ultimately translate into domestic economic policy.”

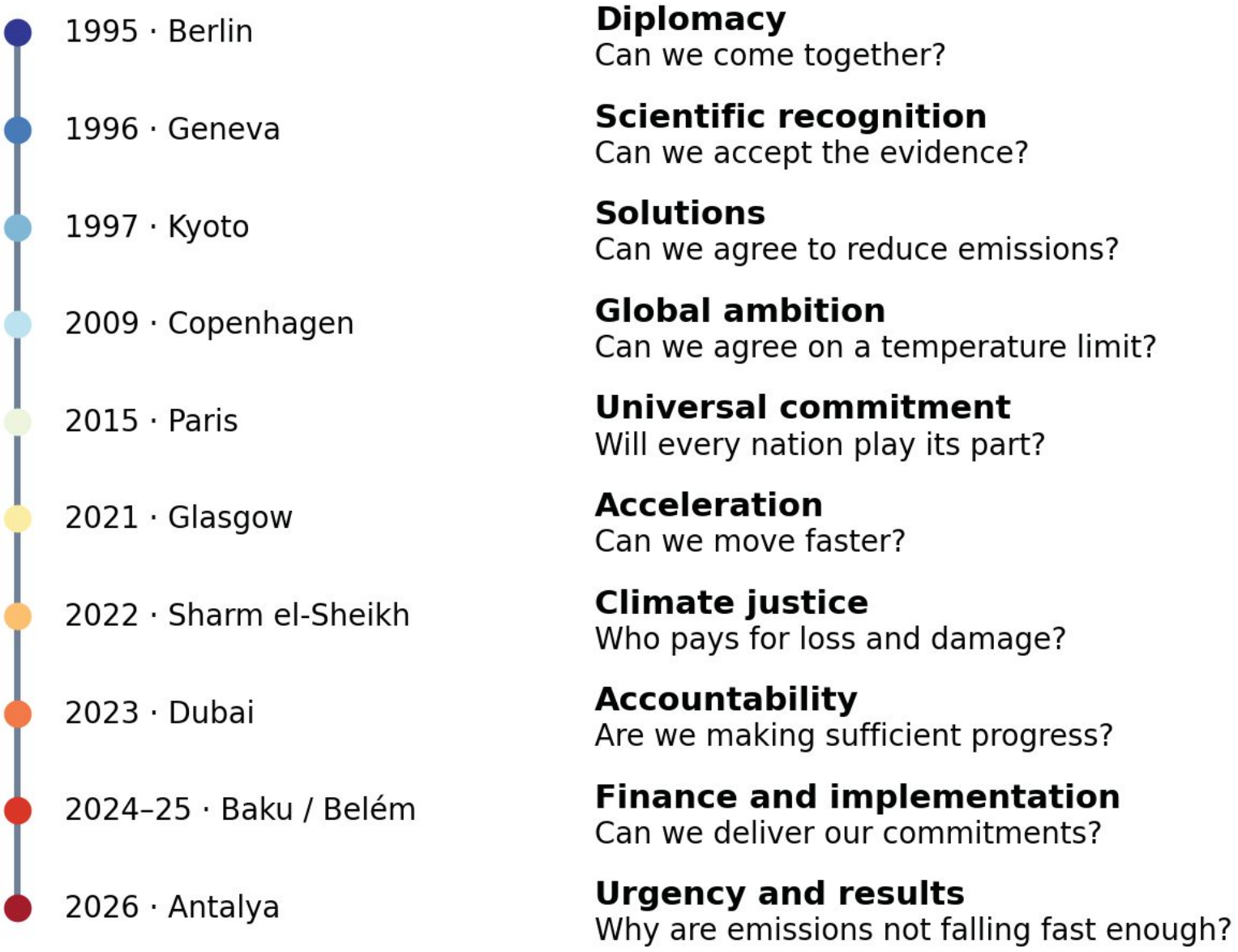
TYRANNY OF EXPECTATIONS

Expectations are a fascinating feature of human behaviour. Satisfaction is determined not solely by what we receive but by the difference between what we receive and what we expect. An achievement that would have generated enormous satisfaction thirty years ago may generate considerable disappointment today. The COP process is particularly vulnerable to this phenomenon because it has helped create an increasingly informed global population. The science has become more sophisticated. The consequences of climate change have become more visible. The economic implications are better understood. The technological alternatives are increasingly available. In 1995, an electric car was largely a curiosity. Solar energy was expensive. Battery storage was rudimentary. The economic case for decarbonisation was considerably more difficult to make.



The COP expectation gap. Conceptual illustration; the trajectories are illustrative, not empirically measured.

To Page 27



The evolution of COP objectives. Selected milestones illustrating changing measures of success, rather than formal conference mandates.

From Page 26

Today, renewable energy is often cheaper than conventional alternatives for new electricity generation. Electric mobility is commercially established. Technologies exist to substantially reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. What was once a debate about technological possibilities has increasingly become a debate about political willingness. And that changes expectations profoundly.

WIDENING GAP

There are three trajectories that help explain the growing dissatisfaction with COP. The first is the rising trajectory of public expectations, driven by scientific understanding, technological progress, education and increasingly visible climate impacts. The second is the more gradual trajectory of institutional progress, constrained by national interests, geopolitical rivalry, economic dependencies and the difficulties of international consensus. The third is the declining trajectory of the time available to prevent increasingly dangerous climate consequences. These three trajectories are creating an uncomfortable convergence of circumstances.

Even if institutional progress continues, the gap between expectations and delivery can widen. Governments may believe that they are making progress while society increasingly concludes that they are failing. Both perceptions can coexist. But the atmosphere is entirely indifferent to either.

GENERATIONAL DIVIDE

There is also a profound generational dimension to the changing nature of COP. Many of those who attended the first climate conference are now retired. Young people entering the workforce today were not even born when the Kyoto Protocol was negotiated. For the generation that established the COP process, climate change was largely a future threat requiring international cooperation. For the emerging generation, it is an inherited predicament requiring immediate action. They have grown up with climate science, satellite imagery, extreme weather events, instant communications and an unprecedented awareness of the interconnectedness of the planet.

> “But the atmosphere is entirely indifferent to either.”

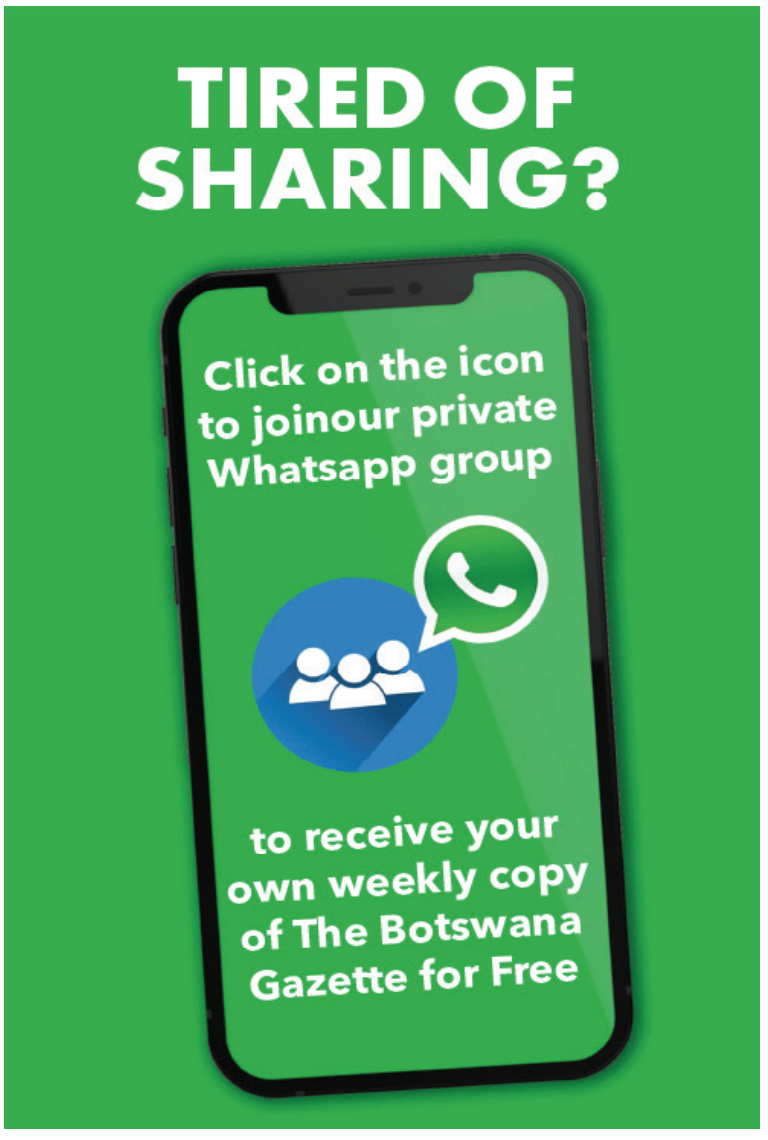
They are understandably less impressed by declarations of intent. They are increasingly impatient with a generation of political leaders that has spent three decades negotiating the terms of a transition whose necessity is already understood. They want to take over the driving seat, not least because they will be travelling considerably further down the road. The frustration is not simply directed at the speed of progress. It is directed at the continued use of political and economic thinking that helped create the predicament in the first place.

BEYOND NEGOTIATION

The institutional architecture of COP was designed primarily to facilitate international agreement. Its political format depends on consensus. Even legally binding agreements negotiated through the COP process rely on countries to implement them. Increasingly, however, it is being expected to deliver international transformation. These are very different undertakings. Negotiating an agreement requires diplomats. Transforming energy systems, transport networks, agriculture, industries and patterns of consumption requires engineers, investors, economists, entrepreneurs and billions of households. Perhaps we are expecting an institution designed to negotiate change to become an institution capable of delivering change. The distinction is important. For countries such as Botswana, the relevance of COP will increasingly be judged not by the size of their delegations or the sophistication of their national commitments, but by actual investment in renewable energy, electric mobility, climate resilience and the transformation of their economies. Climate diplomacy must ultimately translate into domestic economic policy.

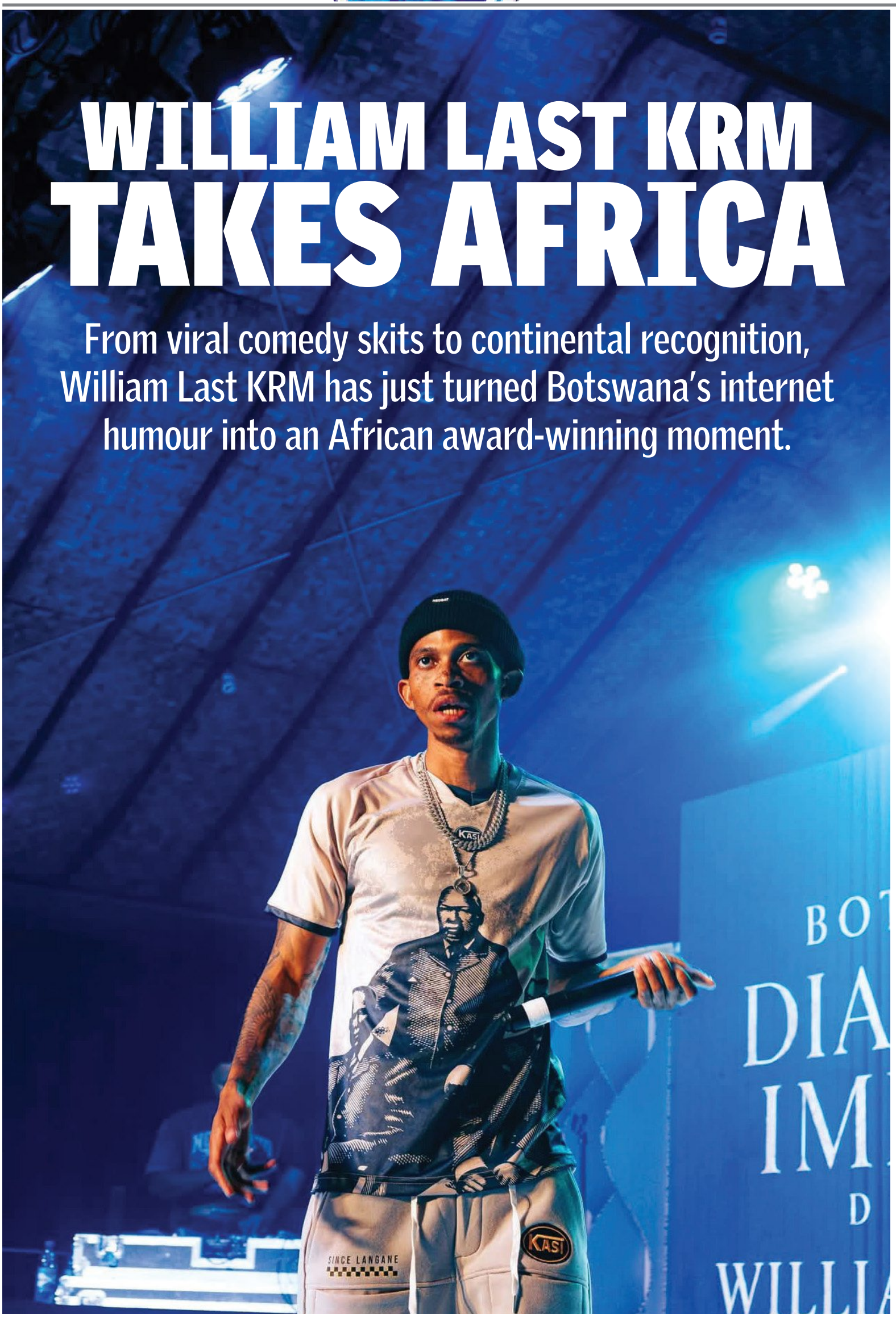
REDEFINING SUCCESS

None of this should excuse institutional underperformance. Rising expectations are not unreasonable when they are supported by scientific evidence and technological possibilities. Nor should disappointment obscure what the COP process has achieved. Without it, the world would arguably be considerably less informed, less coordinated and less prepared. But we need to recognise that the criteria by which we judge COP have fundamentally changed. Participation is no longer sufficient. Neither is agreement, ambition, commitment or even the mobilisation of finance. These are intermediate objectives, not the ultimate purpose of the exercise. The ultimate measure of a successful COP is the trajectory of global greenhouse gas emissions, alongside our ability to adapt to the consequences of climate change. Perhaps COP31 will be remembered not simply for its perceived shortcomings, but as another indication that the world has outgrown the modest expectations of its original climate conference. As indeed it should. The spectre of a world 3°C hotter is catastrophic. Botswana and many parts of the planet would struggle to survive. Expectations are rising, patience is diminishing, and a new generation is increasingly anxious to assume responsibility for its own future.



WILLIAM LAST KRM TAKES AFRICA

From viral comedy skits to continental recognition, William Last KRM has just turned Botswana's internet humour into an African award-winning moment.



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana has entered the group chat, and William Last KRM is making sure everyone hears the laughter. The comedian and content creator has beaten some of Africa's biggest entertainment personalities to claim African Social Media Star of the Year at the 2026 Openserve South African Social Media Awards (SASMAs).

Born Bofelo William Molebatsi, the digital entertainer walked away with the continental accolade on Saturday, 21 November, at Mosaïek Theatre in Fairland, Johannesburg, marking a significant moment for Botswana's growing creative presence online.

A BIG WIN, BIGGER COMPANY

The victory came against a heavyweight shortlist featuring Khaby Lame, Khanyi Mbau, Kefilwe Mabote, Kie Kie and Zee Nxumalo. It was a competitive field spanning comedy, entertainment, fashion and digital influence, making the local comedian's win all the more noteworthy.

His reaction was characteristically brief but loaded with excitement. "We did it," he posted, triggering a wave of congratulatory messages from Batswana, including Minister of Sports and Arts Jacob Kelebeng.

THE INTERNET IS THE STAGE

William's rise has been fuelled by comedy skits, music and viral content that have helped him build an audience beyond Botswana's borders.

> His success also reflects how social media has rewritten the rules of entertainment, allowing creators to turn relatable humour and digital storytelling into continental influence.

His success also reflects how social media has rewritten the rules of entertainment, allowing creators to turn relatable humour and digital storytelling into continental influence.

Held under the theme "Culture in Motion", the sixth annual SASMAs celebrated the creators shaping Africa's digital entertainment landscape. The ceremony featured 27 categories, recognising everything from podcasting and gaming to social media personalities and content creation.

For Botswana, the biggest headline was unmistakable. William did not just make people laugh, he made the continent pay attention.

WEMBLEDON: SERVING COURTSIDE LUXURY

Forget the tennis score. Wembledon Open is playing a different game, where celebrity sightings, premium pours, music and strictly all-white tennis fashion are the real grand slams.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI



Gaborone is getting ready to trade the usual weekend uniform for crisp whites and courtside glamour as the Wembledon Open returns for its fifth edition on 28 November. But this is not exactly about who has the best backhand. It is about who brings the best energy, makes the right connections and knows how to turn a Saturday into a social occasion.

Taking over Gamecity Marquee & Courtyard, the tennis-inspired lifestyle affair powered by Sunbet has built its identity around exclusivity, celebrity culture and an all-VIP atmosphere. Curated by Taes Entaile of Richman, the event is betting on something beyond a star-studded lineup: the experience itself.

EXPERIENCE OVER EVERYTHING

Last year's edition attracted patrons from neighbouring countries, giving the event a regional networking dimension. This year, the musical offering cuts across local sounds, from R&B and three-step to kwaito, with DJs and performers bringing different generations of music into one space.

"We don't sell a lineup but sell the experience, the trend currently is that people want the experience," Entaile told Time Out.

That philosophy extends beyond the dance floor. Expect food, expertly crafted drinks, tennis-inspired fashion and plenty of camera-ready moments. Hennessy, Moët & Chandon and Windrush are among the sponsors.

CELEBRITY COURTSIDE

The celebrity appeal is also part of the draw. Actors Thembinkosi Mthembu and Kwenzo Ngcobo return for another appearance, bringing familiar faces from the small screen into the Wembledon social arena.

On the music front, D General makes his debut, while Oneal Africa returns behind the decks. Fatso 98, Sol Phenduka and Gomza are also on the entertainment roster.

There is even an opportunity for an aspiring presenter to become part of the spectacle. The Wembledon TV Presenter search is offering P2,500, merchandise and hampers to the successful entrant, with entries closing on 26 November.

> "We don't sell a lineup but sell the experience, the trend currently is that people want the experience."

Tickets start at P250, with standard admission at P300 and VIP and VVIP packages available. Gates open at midday, with the festivities running into the night.

And for those not quite ready to leave the courts, Wembledon Open Spaces: The Cool Off after party- RNB and Afrobeats takes over Vibe Court at Soya-Masa Square on 29 November, from 10am to 11pm.

DIAMONDS FADE, THE DELTA MUST STAY



Botswana has spent 60 years turning diamonds into prosperity. Wilderness chairman Kabelo Binns believes the next 100 years should be about protecting something money cannot replace: the wild.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

What happens when the diamonds run out? For Wilderness chairman Kabelo Binns, the answer should be obvious. Botswana must still have its elephants, lions and the Okavango Delta. At a stakeholder engagement at the Botanical Gardens in Gaborone, Binns delivered a passionate message for making conservation tourism the country's next great economic inheritance.

THE NEXT BIG GEM

Binns' message was less about celebrating an anniversary than challenging Botswana to think beyond its diamond legacy.

Having started his career in the diamond industry, his transition into conservation tourism has given him a different perspective on wealth.

"I will never speak ill of diamonds. They built Botswana. But a diamond can only be mined once, it should only be sold once," he said.

Wildlife, however, offers something different. A lion can be seen thousands of times, while the Delta can welcome visitors for generations, provided it remains protected.

"Diamonds gave us the means to build a nation. Our wilderness gives us the means to sustain one."

THE BUSINESS OF KEEPING IT WILD

Born in Maun in 1983, Wilderness has grown into an African conservation tourism operation spanning eight countries, but Botswana remains central to its identity.

The company employs approximately 1,000 people locally and has purchased nearly P2 billion in goods and services from Botswana's economy since 2017. In the last financial year alone that was P282 million, P32 million of it from wholly citizen-owned businesses, many of them grown through their Citizen Supplier programme.

"And over the last decade, for every one Pula earned as dividend by our shareholders, Government received P5.30 in fees, tax etc and our staff nearly P8," he said.

Binns also made a case for its low-impact, high-yield tourism model, warning against overcrowding concessions, adding beds and lowering prices at the expense of the country's premium wilderness offering.

"The Okavango and the Linyanti are our hallowed ground. And hallowed ground is not for sale."

PEOPLE ARE THE REAL LUXURY

Beyond the financial figures, Binns placed Botswana's tourism success firmly in the hands of its people.

He praised local safari guides for combining generations of indigenous knowledge with scientific training, describing them as among the best in the world.

Through its training and community initiatives, Wilderness has also supported 2,700 children through Eco-Clubs and trained 41 citizen pilots.

His ambition is to see tourism standing shoulder to shoulder with diamonds by Botswana's 70th independence anniversary, with its economic value doubled but its environmental footprint unchanged.

The challenge, ultimately, is not simply to attract more visitors. It is to ensure there is still something extraordinary for them to come and see.

Botswana's Beats Hit Abidjan

From presidential company to the international stage, Dato Seiko and Han C took Botswana's sound into a room where Africa's economic future was being negotiated. Now comes the bigger question: what happens after the applause?



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana's cultural export is looking for a seat at the big table, and Dato Seiko and Han C have just made an interesting case for it.

The two artists joined President Duma Boko at the second International Exhibition of Extractive Resources and Energy (SIREXE 2026) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where Botswana was Guest of Honour. With more than 30 countries, investors, ministerial delegations and industry heavyweights in attendance, the event was largely about Africa's infrastructure, mining and energy future. But Botswana also brought something that cannot be measured in barrels or mineral reserves: its music.

NOT JUST A PERFORMANCE

For Dato Seiko, the invitation represented more than an opportunity to perform. It was a chance to put Botswana's cultural identity in front of an international audience and challenge the idea that artists belong only on entertainment stages.

"I embraced our heritage with pride, highlighting our traditions, values and unique creative expression," she said in an interview.

She believes the creative industry deserves recognition as an active participant in national development, not simply an accessory to it.

"We are not just storytellers; we are entrepreneurs, cultural ambassadors and drivers of innovation who shape how nations are seen and experienced," she said.

That distinction matters. When artists enter spaces traditionally occupied by politicians, diplomats and business executives, the conversation about national influence becomes bigger than trade agreements and investment deals.

AFTER THE APPLAUSE-

But international exposure is only the opening act. Dato Seiko says that Botswana's creatives must become more deliberate about accessing global markets, from improving the quality and packaging of their work to building professional networks and sustainable business models.

The ambition is to move beyond performing for recognition and start building careers that travel.

"I would like to see lasting relationships, cultural collaborations, exchange programmes and opportunities for Botswana artists to access new markets and audiences," she said.

The real measure of the Abidjan experience will not be the photographs or presidential proximity. It will be whether the connections translate into paid performances, commissions, partnerships and sales.

Botswana's artists have entered the room. Now the challenge is making sure the doors stay open.



Europe Takes The Screen

Forget the plane ticket. Five films from five European countries are bringing stories of rebellion, identity, ambition and belonging to Gaborone for three days of cinematic exploration.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI



Gaborone is getting a European passport, and it comes with popcorn. The 8th European Film Festival is bringing five films from five countries to Maitisong Theatre from 8 to 10 December, offering a cinematic escape that crosses borders without leaving the city.

Presented by the Delegation of the European Union to Botswana and SADC in partnership with Alliance Française de Gaborone, this year's programme moves beyond pretty pictures and predictable plots, diving into stories about ordinary people, complicated identities, family ties and the ambition to change one's world.

FIVE COUNTRIES, FIVE STORIES

Spain gets the opening-night spotlight on 8 December with *El 47*, a film inspired by the true story of Manolo Vital, a bus driver whose actions helped shape modern Barcelona in the 1970s. It is a reminder that sometimes changing a city starts with one person refusing to accept the status quo.

Wednesday turns the spotlight on Germany's *Transit* at 4pm, followed by Ukraine's *My Thoughts Are Silent* at 6:30pm. Thursday brings Finland's *Stormskerry Maja* at 2:30pm before France closes the festival with *Illusions perdues (Lost Illusions)* at 6pm.

Five films, five national perspectives, and plenty of material for the post-screening debate.

CULTURE WITHOUT A VISA

Beyond the entertainment, the festival offers a chance to experience European storytelling in its original languages, with English subtitles making the stories accessible to local audiences.

The opening will feature remarks from EU Ambassador to Botswana and SADC, Belén Calvo Uyarra, and Alliance Française Director Anne-Charlotte Monneret. German, Ukrainian and French diplomatic representatives will also feature across the programme.

> Five films, five national perspectives, and plenty of material for the post-screening debate.

Best of all, all five screenings are free and open to the public. Seating is limited, so advance booking is recommended. The opening reception is invitation-only.



A DAM GOOD RETURN

A little South of France, a little Botswana, and absolutely no need for a passport. Between U & I is bringing its final 2026 Long Table Experience back to Gaborone Dam, but this time, the secret destination is out.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Some places deserve a second date. Gaborone Dam clearly made the guest list.

On 5 December, Between U & I's Long Table Experience returns to the waterside setting that stole the show in August, transforming a familiar Gaborone destination into an afternoon of curated dining, style and connection.

But there is a plot twist. For the first time, guests know exactly where they are going before they arrive.

Founder Uyapo Ketogetswe says the decision to revisit the Dam was inspired by the magic of the previous edition and the reminder that extraordinary experiences do not always require extraordinary distances.

"Sometimes, you simply need to experience a familiar place differently," he told Time Out.

MYSTERY, WITH A TWIST

Secrecy has traditionally been part of the Long Table's appeal, with guests discovering their destination only as the experience unfolds. This December, however, the organisers are switching things up.

"You asked, we listened," Ketogetswe says, explaining that revealing the location is their way of giving guests a glimpse into the experience before they arrive.

The surprise, he insists, has not disappeared. It has simply moved elsewhere.

A LITTLE FRENCH, A LOT BOTSWANA

Expect shades of blue, white and cream, with the dress code borrowing from the effortless summer aesthetic of the South of France. Think leisurely afternoons by the water, elegant tablescapes and understated glamour, with a distinctly local flavour.

Beyond the aesthetics, the culinary experience will continue exploring Setswana cuisine and local ingredients through contemporary techniques and global influences.

The bigger picture is equally exciting. After taking guests across Botswana in 2026, Between U & I has its sights set on Namibia and South Africa in 2027.

> The bigger picture is equally exciting. After taking guests across Botswana in 2026, Between U & I has its sights set on Namibia and South Africa in 2027.

For Ketogetswe, the ultimate measure of success is not the perfect photograph or beautifully styled table. It is the feeling guests take home.

"We want the Long Table to be remembered not just as a dinner, but as a reason to discover, connect and experience Botswana differently."

WINE, HILLS AND GOLDEN HOUR

Two hundred guests, wine, curated food and the Mabutswe hills. Sunset x Wine wants to make golden hour Tlokweng's most coveted date with the good life.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Curated by Wine On A Sunday, the experience is deliberately limiting attendance to 200 guests, trading mass appeal for a more personal encounter with wine, the people behind the labels and fellow lifestyle enthusiasts.

Co-organiser Steven Ramms says the idea is to create an experience that extends beyond the glass.

"Sunset x Wine is a wine and lifestyle experience curated by Wine On A Sunday," he told Time Out.

SOUTH AFRICA TAKES THE POUR

The event's centrepiece is a three-hour wine tasting programme, running from 15:30 to 18:30, featuring producers Township Winery, HER Wine Collection and Jay Nkosi Wines.

Rather than simply sampling different bottles, guests will have an opportunity to meet wine representatives, explore their portfolios and discover the stories behind the brands.

There is also a business angle to the experience. The participating producers will get an opportunity to introduce their wines to Botswana consumers, build brand awareness and explore potential distribution partnerships.

A curated cheese board, music and networking will keep the afternoon flowing before the signature Grand Sunset Toast takes centre stage.

THE SUNSET IS THE HEADLINER

The Mabutswe hills are not just there to look pretty. Their natural landscape and golden-hour transformation are central to the concept, bringing together wine, nature and the pleasure of slowing down.

> The Mabutswe hills are not just there to look pretty. Their natural landscape and golden-hour transformation are central to the concept, bringing together wine, nature and the pleasure of slowing down.

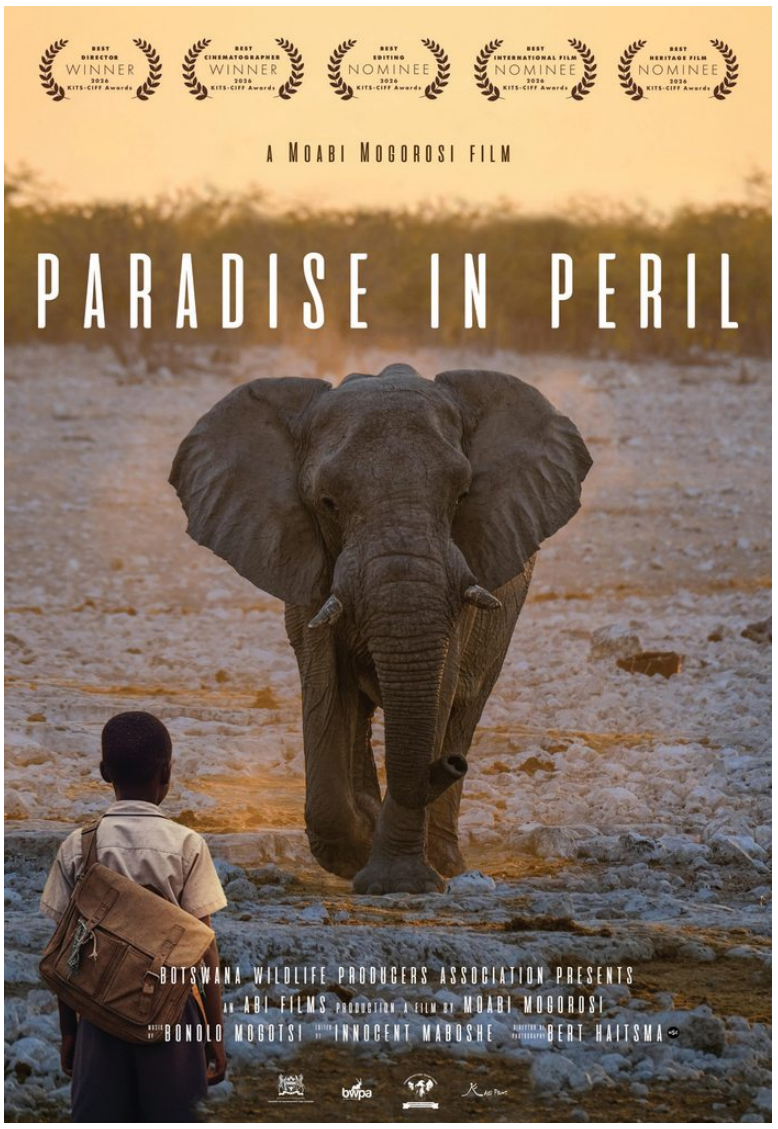
Running from 14:00 to 22:00, the experience invites guests to embrace the occasion in earth-coloured attire.

Tickets cost P350 and include wine tasting, eight tasting coupons, a curated cheese board, bottled water and a branded wine glass.



Botswana's Double Film Triumph

Five nominations, two trophies and a growing international footprint. Botswana: Paradise in Peril has given local filmmaking something to celebrate, taking home top honours for directing and cinematography at a regional conservation film festival.



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Botswana has entered the international film awards conversation, and *Botswana: Paradise in Peril* is bringing home the hardware. The homegrown documentary scored two major wins at the 2026 Kingdom in the Sky Conservation International Film Festival (KITS-CIFF) in Lesotho on 21 November, turning five nominations into a double victory for local filmmaking.

The production claimed Best Director and Best Cinematographer, having also competed for Best Editing, Best International Film and Best Heritage Film. For producer Moabi Mogorosi, who travelled to Lesotho to receive the awards, the recognition is a moment of validation for a team determined to tell Botswana's stories.

TWO TROPHIES, ONE BIG STATEMENT

Commissioned by the Botswana Wildlife Producers Association (BWPA) and produced by local company ABI Films, the documentary explores Botswana's wildlife conservation efforts and the challenges faced by communities living alongside wildlife.

Its creative approach helped distinguish the production. Rather than allowing outside perspectives to dominate the conservation debate, the filmmakers put affected communities at the centre of the narrative.

"Our decision was that, okay, let's spend a lot of time with the locals, people who are primarily affected. Let them school us. And from there let's portray them from a position of authority," Mogorosi said in an interview.

The documentary also explores marginal areas, regulated sustainable hunting and the benefits rural communities derive from conservation programmes, engaging with an international debate over hunting as a conservation tool.

THE NEXT AWARD IS FUNDING

While the two wins put Botswana's documentary filmmaking on an international stage, Mogorosi says the industry needs more financial backing to build on the momentum.

He pointed to the challenge of producing films with shoestring budgets, or sometimes no budgets at all, while marketing remains an additional hurdle.

"Don't just make films, let's market them aggressively," he said.

During the three-day festival, Mogorosi also participated as a panellist in industry workshops held on 19 and 20 November.

> "Don't just make films, let's market them aggressively."

For *Paradise in Peril*, two awards mark a significant achievement. For Botswana's filmmakers, the next ambition is ensuring that international recognition comes with the resources and opportunities to produce even more work.

WH&WN! Plans Kasi-Urban Experience

The event will bring together music, food and local creative talent, with 100 guests expected to attend.

WH&WN! is set to host Kasi X Urban: Simunye One Time, an end-of-year event combining Botswana's kasi culture with contemporary urban entertainment through music and food.

The experience will bring together approximately 100 guests, including 75 members of the public selected through an in-app competition on the TSW App and 25 invited influencers and tastemakers.

MUSIC AND LOCAL TALENT

The entertainment programme will feature Eskimos as the headline act, with Bambino hosting the event. The line-up will also create space for local creative talent, placing Botswana's entertainment scene at the centre of an experience that celebrates the sounds, personalities and influences shaping contemporary urban culture.

A TASTE OF KASI CULTURE

Food will form part of the programme through a curated dining concept drawing on Botswana and kasi flavours. According to the organisers, the menu will combine local ingredients and traditional influences with contemporary culinary techniques.

The event's name, Simunye, translates to "we are one" and reflects its theme of shared cultural identity through music, food and community.

WH&WN! said the experience was designed to give TSW App users access to lifestyle events and opportunities to connect through shared cultural interests.

> "The experience will bring together approximately 100 guests, including 75 members of the public selected through an in-app competition."

The event, titled Kasi X Urban: Simunye One Time, forms part of the platform's Hot Drop experiences.



Dividend Tax Relief Comes With Limits

Under the Income Tax Act effective 1 July 2026, dividends between resident companies can escape the usual 10% withholding tax when paid from profits already taxed in Botswana.



JONATHAN HORE (MANAGING TAX CONSULTANT)
GAVIN MASHIRI (TAX DIRECTOR)
ONALENNA RANGALE (ASSISTANT TAX MANAGER)

Botswana's new Income Tax Act has removed a 10% withholding-tax charge from certain dividends paid between resident companies, offering relief where the underlying profits have already been taxed.

The change took effect on 1 July 2026. While the new law introduces several measures that broaden the tax base, this exemption offers a benefit to qualifying resident corporate shareholders.

THE EXEMPTION

Dividends are payments made by companies to shareholders, generally as a return on their investment. Such payments are ordinarily subject to withholding tax (WHT), which the paying company deducts before distributing the balance.

Under the new rules, a resident company paying dividends to another resident company is exempt from the usual 10% WHT to the extent that the distribution comes from profits already subjected to corporate income tax (CIT) in Botswana.

Relief applies to qualifying dividends between resident companies, not to every shareholder. The exemption is designed to avoid an additional withholding charge when already-taxed profits are distributed within the resident corporate sector.

WHO STILL PAYS

The exemption does not extend to dividends paid to resident individuals or to non-resident shareholders, whether individuals or companies.

These payments generally remain subject to the 10% withholding-tax rate, although a different rate may apply under a relevant double-taxation agreement. The distinction between shareholder categories is therefore critical when declaring and paying dividends.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

For qualifying distributions, the authors calculate that the exemption reduces the effective tax burden from 32.05% to 24.5% for most companies. The precise outcome depends on the tax treatment of the profits and the applicable circumstances.

The change also raises a practical compliance question for companies that have continued deducting withholding tax from qualifying dividend payments since the new Act came into force.

> "Relief applies to qualifying dividends between resident companies, not to every shareholder."

REVIEW PAST PAYMENTS

Companies that deducted tax on qualifying dividends after 1 July 2026 should review those payments. Where WHT was withheld unnecessarily, the paying company and its corporate shareholder may need to establish how to correct the deduction and whether the amount can be recovered from the tax authorities.

> "Companies that deducted tax on qualifying dividends after 1 July 2026 should review those payments."

A wider tax review can also help businesses identify compliance gaps and avoid costly mistakes. Because the application of the exemption depends on the facts of each distribution, companies should seek professional advice before making tax decisions.

OPRACON CONTACTS

For tax guidance or reviews, contact +267 71 815 836 / +267 3939 435, jhore@aupracontax.co.bw or www.opracon.co.bw. For free tax WhatsApp groups or information on nine tax e-books, message +267 71 614 524. This article is general information and is not a substitute for tailored tax advice.

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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ENTER INTO A CONTROLLED TRANSACTION IN TERMS OF SECTION 34(1) OF THE TRIBAL LAND ACT OF 2018

NOTICE IS HEREBY issued in compliance to the provisions of the Tribal Land Act of 2018, Section 34 (1) that the following proposed transaction, for the sale of the under-mentioned property, to be entered into between **Sibonga Sibusiso Ndlovu and Prisca Sibanda -Non-Citizen**, that is to say -

CERTAIN	:	Piece of land being Lot 1309 Matopi
SITUATE	:	At Matopi (cadastre 535) in the Tati Tribal Area;
MEASURING	:	577.2696Ha (Five Hundred and Seventy-Seven Point Two Six Nine Six Hectares);
WHICH PROPERTY IS HELD	:	Memorandum of Agreement of Lease No. FT TL 102/2025 registered on the 14th day of July, 2025 in favour of LEKEDZANI MPOFU;
SUBJECT	:	To the reservations and conditions contained in the aforesaid Lease which may be inspected at the Offices of M. Mmohe Attorneys, Plot 3936, Peolwane Street, Minestone, P. O. Box 1860, Francistown.;
CONSIDERATION	:	BWP1 500 000.00 (One Million Five Hundred Thousand Pula)

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE THAT:

a) Any Botswana Citizen interested in entering into a similar transaction in respect of the above property, shall be given priority notwithstanding the agreement reached by the abovementioned parties regarding the controlled transaction.

b) Should any person wish to object to the proposed controlled transaction, notice of such objection with reasons thereto, should be addressed to the Tati Land Board, with copies of the objection to the undersigned within thirty (30) days of the date of publication hereof.

MMOHE ATTORNEYS
ATTORNEYS, NOTARIES & CONVEYANCERS

Plot 3936, Peolwane Street, Minestone,
P. O. Box 1860, Francistown
Telephone: 2441616

MAPHAKWANE J.
IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA HELD AT LOBATSE

CASE NO: UAHGB-000133-26

In the matter between:

EAGLE SYSTEMS (PTY)LTD	**PLAINTIFF**
And	
DELSWIZ MANUFACTURING (PTY) LTD	**1ST DEFENDANT**
TICHAONA NDHLOVU	**2ND DEFENDANT**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to the judgement of the above Honourable Court, the movable property of the above-named Defendants shall be publicly sold in execution by the Deputy Sheriff as follows:

DATE OF SALE : 4th of December 2026
VENUE : BroadHurst Magistrate Court
TIME OF SALE : 10:30 hrs
PROPERTY : Boardroom table,x23 Office chairs,x3 Double door metal carbinets,x3 Single door cabinets,x3 Office desks,x1 Three door office cabinet,Hisense microwave,x1 Dell monitor and CPU,x1 Dell monitor and CPU,x1 Dell monitor,x1 Canon Printer,Safe way heater,x1 Wooden book shelf,x2 HP CPU,x9 Extension cable,x1 Industrial scale,Pinnacle Primiarc 503VRD welding machine,Riland Titans 500DP welding machine,x7 Grinders,x1 Vacuum clearner,x2 Industrial drilling machines,CUT 1651 DC inverter plasma cutter,Riland MMA 315G IGBT Inverter Arc Welder,Matweld ARC-200 portable DC inverter arc welder,x2 2.2 Cutting discs,x9 Welding Rods,x8 Shovels,x1 Hoe,Volkswagen Crafter Fuel ingector X8,x18 Wire cup brush,x2 Picks,x1 Saw,REMA TIP TOP Rubber cut 414,x14 Wire rope slings,x8 Welding helmets,x33 Safety helmets,x1 Karcher pressure washer,x6 HARRIS cylinder regulators,x20 Five tone lifting clamps,ROTHENBERGER pipe threading set,x2 Fully fitted tool box,x19 Angle grinder pads,x 4 Rubber sanding pad,x20 1L Pro struct 688 splicing cement,x1 Industrial splicing kit with 3 electronic control box,Heating plates and pressure systems,x2 Heavy duty rope,x25 Pedlocks,x23 Fall protection safety harness,x10 5-Micron PP sediment filter cartridge,x5 Industrial pressure tanks,Shredding machine,x6 Chain blocks,x35 Mounting adaptors,x24 Plastic chairs,150L Black containers,Yellow emergency lights,x5 Industrial metal shelves,x1 Metal cabinet,x3 Conveyer belt,x2 Crease gun,x2 Abrasive Sandblaster,x3 Foldable tables,x14 Step ladders,

TERMS OF SALE : Cash or Electronic Fund Transfer

DATED AT THIS 10th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2026

DEPUTY SHERIFF SEIKISE MANYAPETSA
Cell: +267 71280307
MPHETOLANG LEGAL
PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEYS
PLOT 54513, UNIT 5A,GABORONE
P O BOX 45064
GABORONE
TEL +267 3163400

MPHETOLANG LEGAL
ATTORNEYS, NOTARIES & CONVEYANCERS

Botswana Loses 1,328 Nurses

Botswana recorded 18,101 public health workers in 2024, but falling nurse numbers and a decline in doctor-and-nurse density raise concerns about healthcare capacity.



KATLEGO PEARL LEKWALE – RESEARCH CONSULTANT

Botswana had 1,328 fewer nurses in 2024 than in 2021, even as its total public health workforce reached 18,101, according to a new Statistics Botswana report.

Published in September 2026, the Public Health Personnel 2024 report shows that nursing staff declined from 8,948 in 2021 to 7,620 in 2024. Over the same period, the combined density of doctors and nurses fell from 42 to 35 per 10,000 people. Together, the figures raise questions about whether the health system has enough frontline personnel to meet demand.

WORKFORCE PROFILE

Of the 18,101 people employed in the public health system in 2024, 13,378, or 73.9%, were service providers, including nurses, doctors, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals.

Management and support staff accounted for 4,598 workers, or 25.4%, while the occupations of a further 125 employees were unspecified. Women made up 63.7% of the public health workforce, compared with 36.3% men.

NURSING DECLINE

The nursing decline stands out against a more mixed picture for doctors. Public-sector doctor numbers rose from 906 in 2020 to 1,068 in 2024, although they remained below the 2021 figure of 1,091.

Nursing, however, moved in the opposite direction. The loss of 1,328 nurses over three years is significant because nurses provide much of the direct, day-to-day care delivered in clinics and hospitals.

The fall in the combined number of doctors and nurses relative to the population is another important indicator. Health workforce density helps show how the supply of clinical personnel compares with the number of people they serve.

STAFFING PRESSURES

These figures do not, by themselves, establish that every health facility is understaffed. Staffing needs differ according to patient numbers, population growth, specialisations and the geographic distribution of healthcare workers.

The overall workforce count does not tell us where staffing pressures are most acute. It does, however, point to the need for closer examination of nursing recruitment, training and retention, as well as the deployment of staff across facilities.

Regular workforce assessments, patient-experience research and targeted studies can help identify gaps and guide decisions on where additional personnel and resources are most urgently needed.

RESEARCH SERVICES

The contributing firm provides market research, surveys, polls and feasibility studies for businesses, SMEs and public-sector organisations. Enquiries: +267 7668 5116 / +267 39 39 435 | research@aupracontax.co.bw.

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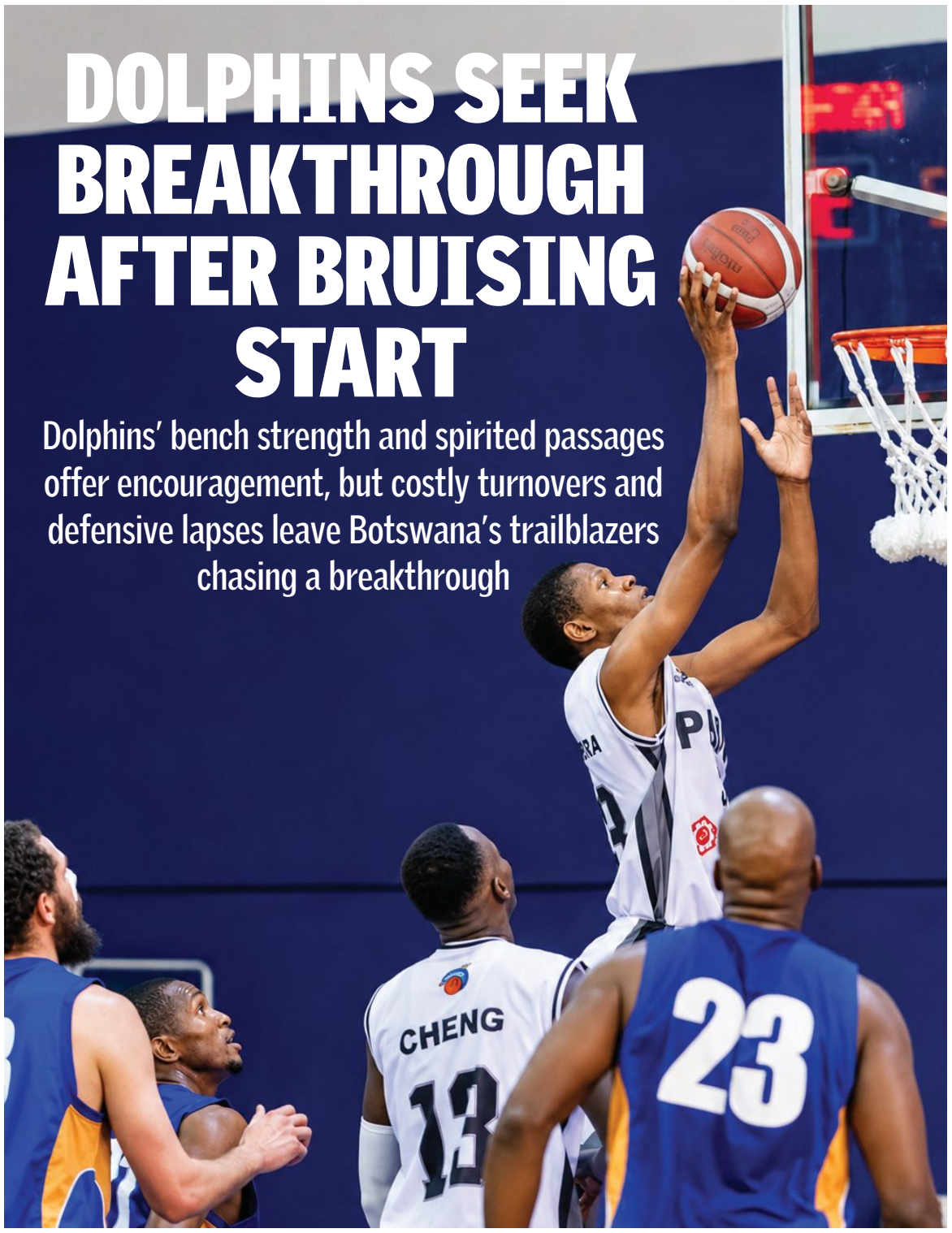
TIRED OF SHARING?



DOLPHINS SEEK BREAKTHROUGH AFTER BRUISING START

Dolphins' bench strength and spirited passages offer encouragement, but costly turnovers and defensive lapses leave Botswana's trailblazers chasing a breakthrough



BONGANI MALUNGA

Dolphins have shown flashes of promise in a bruising start to their Elite 16 campaign, with productive bench performances and competitive stretches offering encouragement despite two opening defeats.Botswana's first club to reach this stage of the Basketball Africa League (BAL) qualifiers lost 78–62 to Uganda's Namuwongo Blazers on Monday before suffering a heavier 94–62 defeat against Mozambique's Ferroviario da Beira on Tuesday in Nairobi, Kenya.

BENCH PROVIDES A SPARK

Dolphins began their opening encounter with intent, racing into a 10–2 lead before the Blazers recovered to take control. Even after falling well behind, the Botswana side mounted a late rally, cutting the deficit to 11 points during the fourth quarter.

William Stanford Jr. provided the biggest scoring contribution with 14 points off the bench, helping Dolphins' reserves outscore their opponents' second unit 22–13. Makur Jongkuch added 11 points and six rebounds.

Daniel Prinsloo also delivered a substantial contribution, finishing with 11 points, eight rebounds and three assists. His three successful three-pointers gave Dolphins another attacking outlet. However, Dolphins struggled to turn enough possessions into points. They converted 23 of their 66 field-goal attempts, a 34.8 percent success rate, and made nine of 27 attempts from beyond the arc.

Their mistakes proved particularly expensive, the Blazers scored 23 points off Dolphins' turnovers, repeatedly punishing lost possession. That damage outweighed the Botswana side's encouraging bench contribution.

SECOND-HALF UNRAVELLING

Tuesday's encounter offered another period of resistance before Ferroviario pulled away decisively. After losing the opening quarter 25–17, Dolphins responded by winning the second 19–18. They reached half-time trailing just 43–36, keeping the contest within reach against the Mozambican outfit.

The recovery unravelled after the interval. Ferroviario won the third quarter 27–16 and the fourth 24–10, outscoring Dolphins 51–26 across the second half. A seven-point half-time deficit ultimately became a 32-point defeat, underlining the cost of failing to sustain their earlier competitiveness.

Jongkuch led Dolphins with 14 points, while Tlotlo Tshekega added 12. They were the only Dolphins players to reach double figures, leaving the team short of the scoring support needed to withstand Ferroviario's second-half surge.

> "Botswana's first club to reach this stage of the Basketball Africa League (BAL) qualifiers lost 78–62 to Uganda's Namuwongo Blazers on Monday before suffering a heavier 94–62 defeat against Mozambique's Ferroviario da Beira on Tuesday in Nairobi, Kenya."

Dolphins now turn their attention to Tanzania's Dar City on Thursday, November 26, in their final Group B fixture. Their opening performances have identified both promise and priorities, protect possession, find more consistent scoring support and extend their strongest passages across four quarters.

Prisons Club Wins Three Boxing Golds

Katlo Kgowe takes the Best Boxer title as Prisons Boxing Club finishes third at the national championships.



Prisons Boxing Club won three gold medals at the 2026 Botswana Boxing Association (BoBA) National Boxing Championships with Katlo Kgowe also receiving the tournament's Best Boxer award.

Mmusi Tswige, Makhani Shathiso and Kgowe secured gold medals for the club at the national competition, which brought together elite boxers from across Botswana.

INDIVIDUAL AND CLUB AWARDS

Kgowe also received recognition for the Best Bout of the tournament following his victory over national team boxer George Molwantwa.

Prisons Boxing Club won the Most Decorative Club award and finished third in the overall club standings.

> "Prisons Boxing Club won three gold medals at the 2026 Botswana Boxing Association (BoBA) National Boxing Championships with Katlo Kgowe also receiving the tournament's Best Boxer award."

Other medal winners included Queen Molefe and Warona Makaba, who claimed silver medals, while Gillian Ditshwene secured bronze.

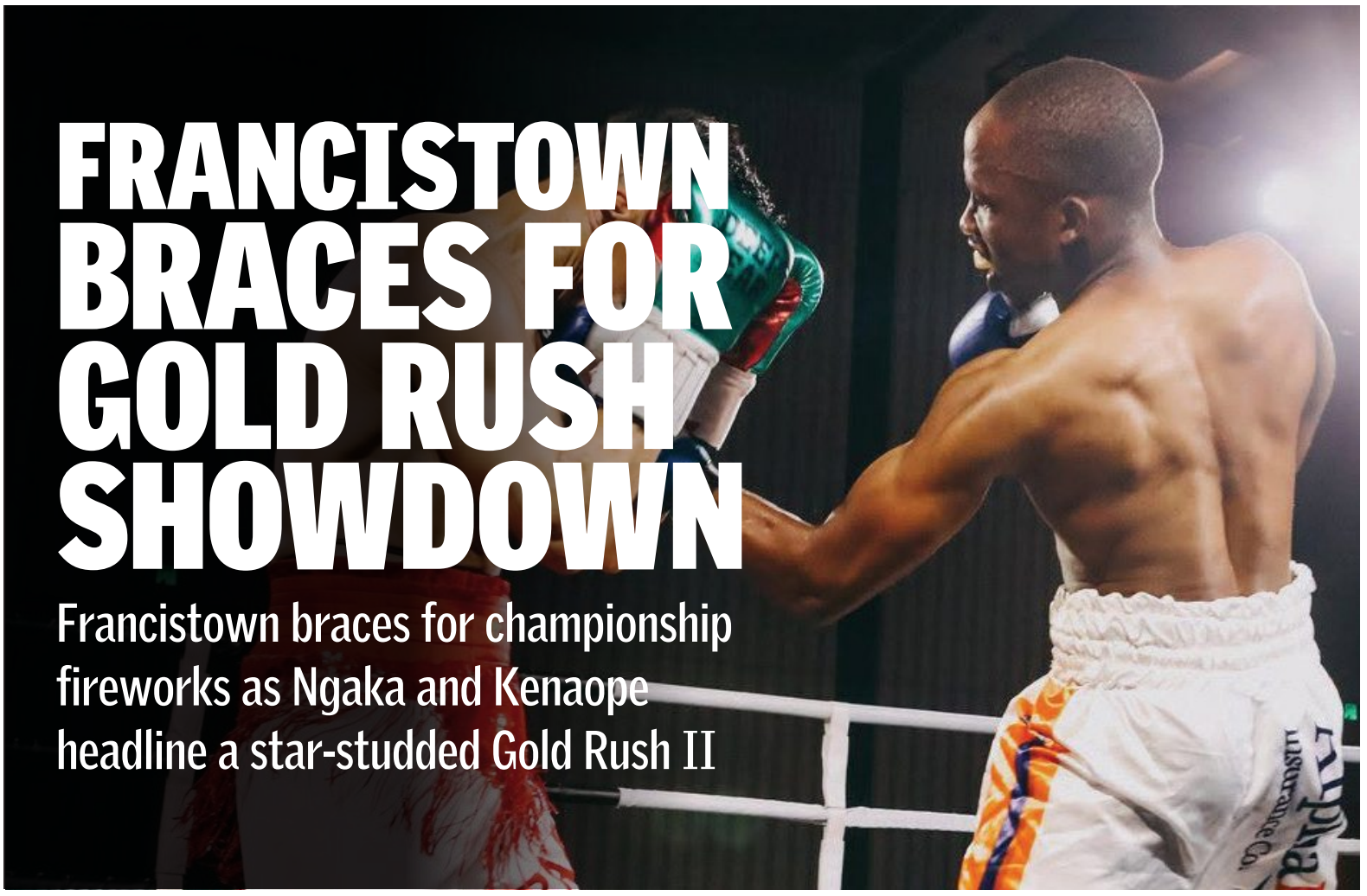
NATIONAL TEAM SELECTION

The championships also provided an opportunity for athletes to earn selection for national team duties.

Coach Rauwe Gibson was identified for national team responsibilities, alongside Mmusi Tswige (70kg), Phomolo James (49kg) and Samuel Mogolodi (50kg).

Gaolathe James, who competed in the 60kg category, was eliminated during the qualifying rounds.

The championships formed part of BoBA's national competition programme, bringing together boxers to compete across different weight categories.



FRANCISTOWN BRACES FOR GOLD RUSH SHOWDOWN

Francistown braces for championship fireworks as Ngaka and Kenaope headline a star-studded Gold Rush II

BONGANI MALUNGA

Francistown is gearing up for a battle for boxing gold as Moabi "The Eagle" Ngaka faces hometown challenger Boifang "Dollar B" Kenaope for the Botswana National Lightweight Championship on December 12.

The eagerly anticipated title showdown headlines The Gold Rush II, a five-bout professional boxing extravaganza promoted by The Perfect Punch Promotions at Adansonia Hotel, with international opposition, former titleholders and an Olympian strengthening the card.

The main event pits contrasting records and ambitions against each other. Ngaka enters with four wins, four losses and two draws (4-4-2), while Kenaope carries two wins, one defeat and one draw (2-1-1). Ngaka has contested ten professional bouts to Kenaope's four, although experience alone will not decide this title fight.

Ngaka, who hails from Tobane, is seeking another memorable night at the same venue. He won the inaugural Gold Rush headline contest in June 2025, stopping Ontlafetse Phane in the fourth round after weathering a lively opening from his opponent.



CHAMPIONSHIP CREDENTIALS

His championship credentials stretch further back. In October 2021, Ngaka stopped Onkarabile "Scara" Mothibedi in the 11th round to claim the World Boxing Federation International super-bantamweight title. Subsequent setbacks mean he now has a chance to prove his experience remains an asset in another domestic title contest.

Kenaope, however, arrives with momentum. The Francistown boxer stopped the experienced Tshephang "Gearbox" Babui in the fourth round of their October 30 contest in Gaborone. Victory over Ngaka would give him a national crown and arguably the biggest scalp of his developing professional career.

The supporting attraction could rival the headline fight for intensity. Namibia's former WBO Africa super-featherweight champion Flame "Special One" Nangolo meets Botswana's former WBF International champion Mothibedi over six rounds at 59kg.

EXPERIENCED ENTRANT

Nangolo won his first 14 professional fights, five by knockout, before compatriot Martin Mukungu stunned him with a first-round knockout in May 2026 to take his continental belt. His documented 14-1 record makes him one of the card's most experienced entrants, although he will be intent on restoring his reputation.

> "The main event pits contrasting records and ambitions against each other. Ngaka enters with four wins, four losses and two draws (4-4-2), while Kenaope carries two wins, one defeat and one draw (2-1-1). Ngaka has contested ten professional bouts to Kenaope's four."

Mothibedi carries championship pedigree of his own, having defeated Babui on points for the WBF International super-bantamweight title in 2020. He also scored a split-decision win over Aobakwe Ditodi in August 2026.

Another six-round contest features rising prospect Tshiamo Malabola against Aobakwe Mphezulu at 63.5kg. Malabola as unbeaten after two professional fights (2-0-0), compared with Mphezulu's one win and one defeat (1-1-0).

Malabola comes in fresh from his October 30 victory over Tebogo Senete, which earned him the Professional Boxing Association of Botswana national super-lightweight title. Mphezulu, meanwhile, has already experienced Gold Rush competition, beating Babui by split decision at the inaugural event in 2025.

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

Tokyo Olympian Mohamed Rajab adds international appeal when he tackles Zambia's Harrison Mware in a six-round contest at 52kg. Rajab, who represented Botswana at the delayed Tokyo 2020 Games, has made a winning start in the paid ranks and is listed at 1-0-0 in the professional boxing circuit so far. Mware stands at 1-1-0, making this a relatively even contest on professional experience, though Rajab brings a distinguished amateur background.

The remaining bout gives two winless professionals an opportunity for a breakthrough. Ontlafetse Phane (0-2-0) faces Nonofo Molatlhegi (0-1-0) over six rounds at 63.5kg. Phane will be determined to erase the disappointment of his defeat to Ngaka at the original Gold Rush, Molatlhegi aims to rebound after a stoppage defeat to Karabo Motshwarakgole in August.

In an interview with Gazette Sport, Ngaka welcomed the challenge and stated his readiness for the contest.

"I am extremely grateful to NovaCare Obstetrics and Gynecology for believing in me and coming on board as my sponsor. Boxing requires serious commitment, discipline and sacrifice. Having a company that believes in my journey makes a big difference. Their support is helping me prepare for this important championship fight by allowing me to focus on my training, physical conditioning and overall preparation," Ngaka told this publication.

"This fight is not just about me as an individual. It is about representing Botswana, making my supporters proud and bringing the national title to my corner. I hope this partnership will also inspire other businesses to invest in local athletes and sports development," he added.



GOLDEN GRAND PRIX SETS APRIL DATE

Restored Gold status and a history of shattered records sharpen anticipation as Gaborone prepares for its April 2027 athletics showcase

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Golden Grand Prix has set its next date with the record books at Gaborone's National Stadium with 24 April 2027 pencilled in. The meeting returns with World Athletics Continental Tour Gold status and a formidable reputation for fast performances.

RECORD PEDIGREE

The competition has built a reputation for rewriting record books, with national and meeting marks repeatedly falling in Gaborone. That history gives each edition an added edge, with the prospect of breakthrough performances sharing the spotlight with the battle for podium places.

At the latest edition in April 2026, Canada's Andre De Grasse clocked 19.84 seconds over 200m, bettering Letsile Tebogo's 19.87 meeting mark from 2023. American Gabby Thomas's 10.95 over 100m also eclipsed Christine Mboma's 10.97 meeting standard. The 2025 edition delivered two standout national records as Oratile Nowe lowered Botswana's women's 800m mark to 1:58.96, while Egypt's Bassant Hemida clocked 50.77 in the women's 400m.

The pedigree stretches back to the predecessor Gaborone International Meet. In 2022, Mboma's 10.97 established Namibian senior and African under-20 records, while Tsaone Sebele set Botswana's women's 100m record at 11.25.

STAR ATTRACTION

International visitors have included Sha'Carri Richardson, Kenny Bednarek, Dalilah Muhammad, Kirani James, Akani Simbine, Ferdinand Omanyala, Mary Moraa, Muzala Samukonga, Aaron Brown and Jerome Blake.

Field stars Ese Brume, Luvo Manyonga, Marquis Dendy, Lorraine Ugen, Leonardo Fabbri, Zane Weir and Jo-Ane van Dyk have also competed, alongside Twanisha Terry, Courtney Okolo and Bryce Deadmon.

Botswana's own attractions across the event's different incarnations include Tebogo, Nowe, Isaac Makwala, Amantle Montsho, Nijel Amos, Baboloki Thebe, Bayapo Ndori, Collen Kebinatshipi and Tshepiso Masalela.

GOLDEN COMEBACK

The restoration of Gold status was announced in October 2026 for the 2027 meeting. This year's competition ran at Silver level after organisers failed to satisfy World Athletics requirements following the 2025 edition.

Returning to the Continental Tour's highest tier signals renewed confidence in the organisers' ability to meet international standards. Gold regulations cover technical supervision, medical services, doping controls, athlete arrangements, prize money and reporting.

The upgrade strengthens the meeting's appeal to elite athletes while giving local competitors access to higher placing points on home soil. The challenge now is to turn that organisational comeback into another memorable afternoon on the track.

> "The competition has built a reputation for rewriting record books, with national and meeting marks repeatedly falling in Gaborone. That history gives each edition an added edge."



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