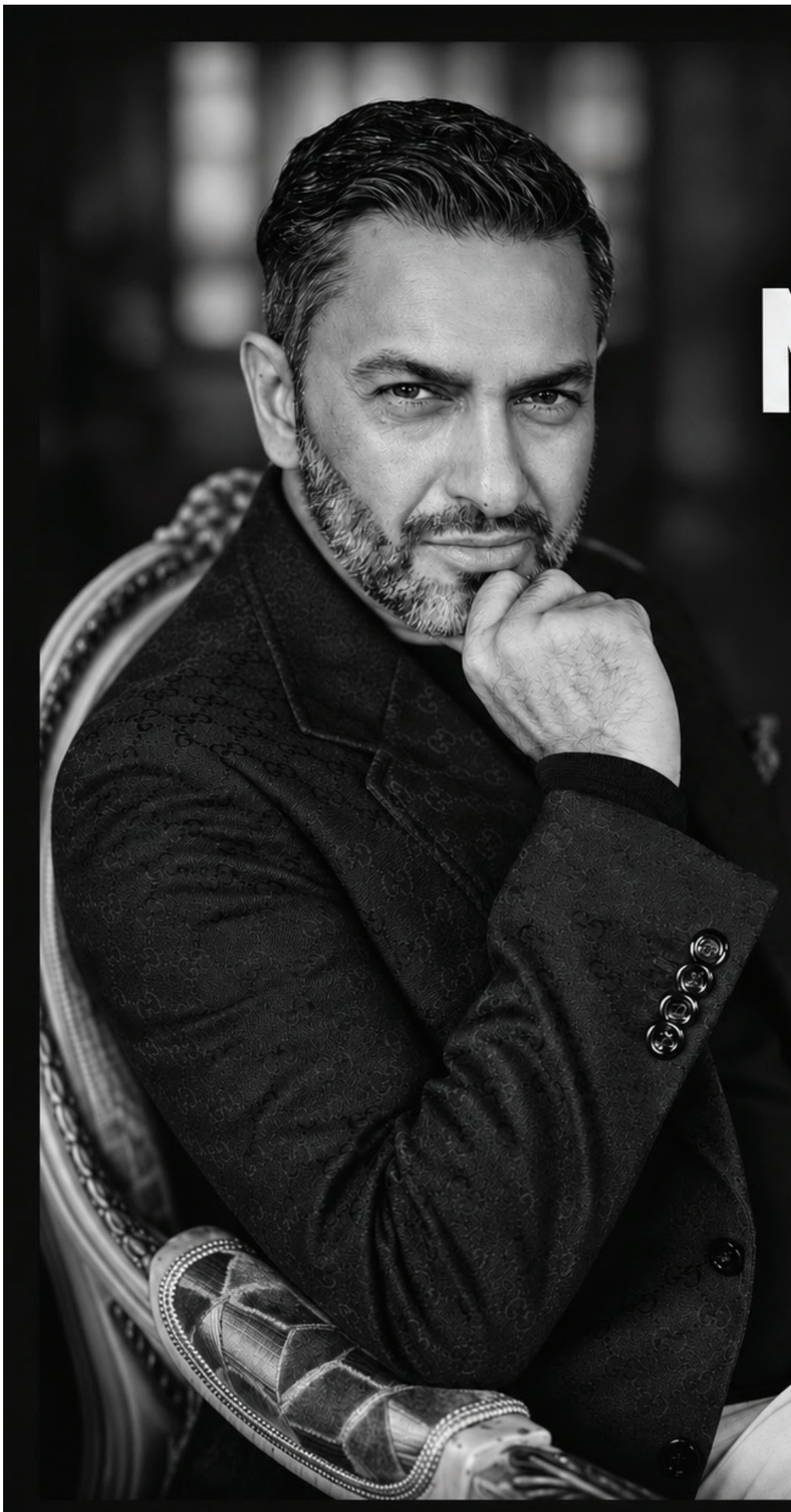
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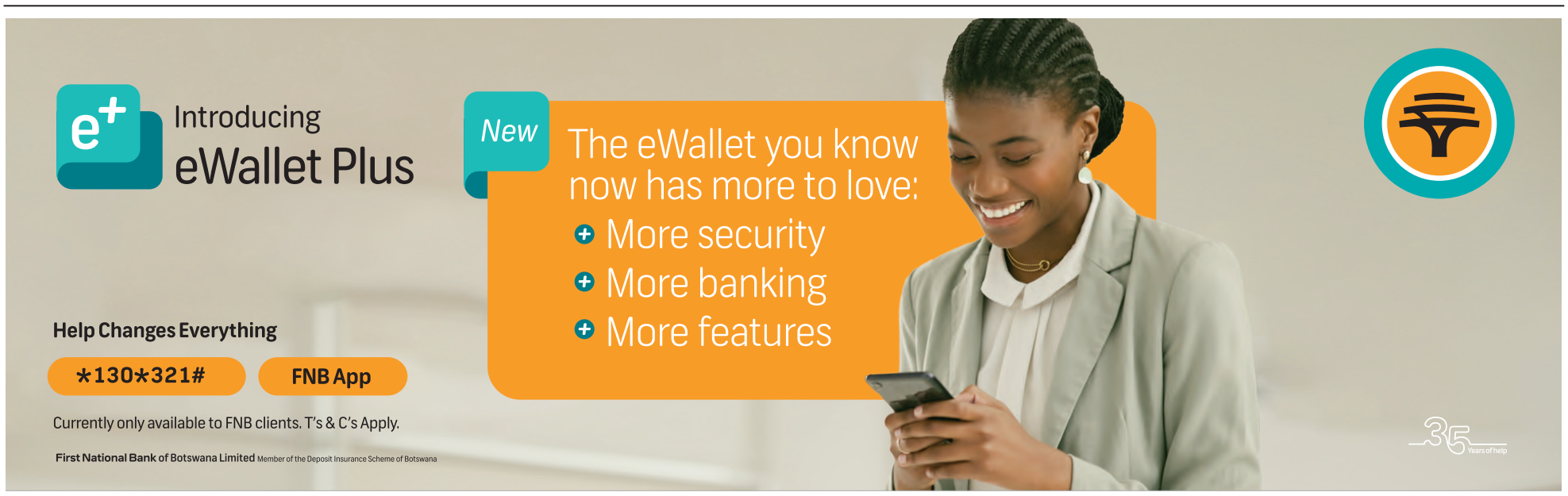


PERSONA NON GRATA NO. 1?

The ink has barely dried on Zunaid Moti's Botswana citizenship, yet the welcome is already turning into a political storm. Opposition politicians and trade unions are challenging his business ambitions, questioning his presidential connections and demanding answers about how he became a citizen. The *Botswana Gazette* unpacks the mounting backlash.

Stories in Pages 2, 3 & 6

UN Probes Botswana's Child Abusers 6.



BCP REPORTS MOTI TO OMBUDSMAN

The opposition party wants an investigation into Zunaid Moti's dealings with Government and President Duma Boko, citing concerns over access to public resources and possible preferential treatment.



> According to Machete, the explanations provided have failed to address fundamental questions surrounding the businessman's dealings with Government.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Congress Party (BCP) is taking businessman Zunaid Moti to the Office of the Ombudsman, demanding an investigation into his dealings with the Government of Botswana and President Duma Boko amid growing concerns over alleged state capture, preferential treatment and the management of national resources.

In a briefing note issued by its Secretary for Publicity, Olebile Machete, the opposition party said it would officially submit a report to the Ombudsman on 7 December 2026, seeking an investigation into the relationship between Moti, the Government and the President.

The party has raised questions about Moti's growing proximity to the corridors of power, his recently confirmed Botswana citizenship and a series of investments reportedly in the pipeline. Machete questioned whether Botswana was being sold to powerful individuals with access to the Presidency.

"Is Botswana for sale or already SOLD?" he asked.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

The BCP argues that Moti appears to have gained extraordinary access to the country's resources. The party is also questioning the circumstances under which he obtained access to what it describes as one of the most lucrative pieces of land in Gaborone.

It wants Government to explain why the opportunity was not opened to other private-sector players in Botswana.

The concerns follow an appearance by Minister of Higher Education Prince Maele in Parliament on Thursday, 12 November, where he confirmed that Moti had been granted Botswana citizenship and outlined several investments reportedly being considered.

According to Machete, the explanations provided have failed to address fundamental questions surrounding the businessman's dealings with Government.

PRESIDENTIAL LINKS

The BCP is particularly concerned about what it describes as Moti's proximity to President Boko. It argues that the relationship raises questions about the integrity of the Office of the President.

The party points to Boko's involvement in Moti's African Hero project, including his role as chairman and the naming of schools after him, as developments requiring public scrutiny.

The briefing note also alleges that in August 2026 Boko publicly declared that he embraced state capture, accusing the President of being unapologetic about rent-seeking conduct and allowing unelected foreign individuals to wield influence over the Presidency.

FURTHER DEMANDS

Machete also criticised the ruling UDC, saying it had failed to demonstrate effective political leadership more than two years after attaining power.

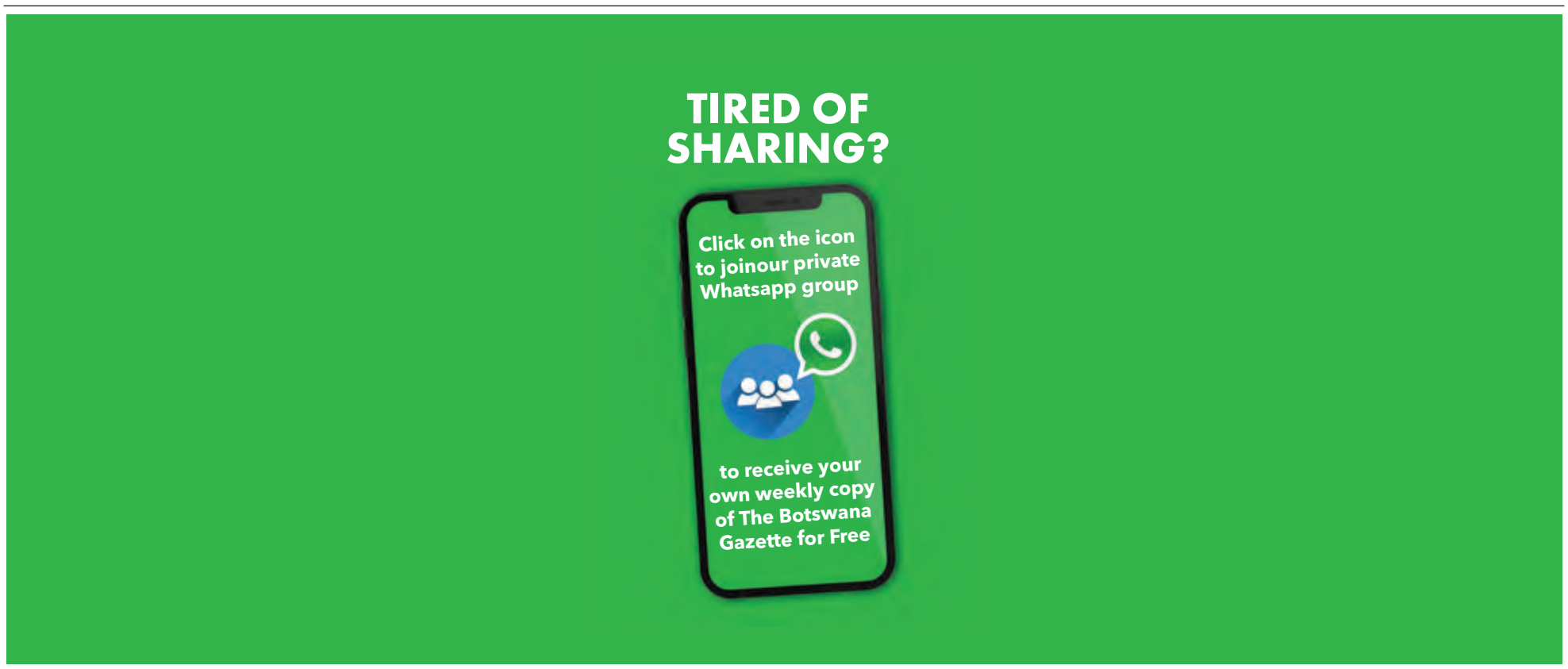
He accused individuals within the ruling coalition of pursuing personal interests while ordinary Batswana struggle with the rising cost of living and deteriorating public service delivery.

> "Is Botswana for sale or already SOLD?"

The BCP says its intervention will not end with the Ombudsman complaint. It intends to officially request lifestyle audits for senior officials in the UDC administration during the first quarter of 2027.

The party has also called on non-state actors to defend the country against what it describes as a dangerous slide towards irreversible national deterioration.

"We encourage the public to report suspicious cases or practices of corruption to DCEC primarily, as well as other existing whistle-blowing platforms," Machete said.



MOTI'S BOTSWANA BONANZA FACES REVOLT

The businessman's citizenship, proposed Gaborone Dam hotel, mining interests and African Hero partnership are drawing mounting resistance from opposition parties, organised labour and public institutions.

GAZETTE REPORTER

Businessman Zunaid Moti's expanding business interests in Botswana are facing mounting scrutiny, with opposition politicians, trade unions and other institutions increasingly questioning the transparency of his dealings and the extent of his relationship with the Government of President Duma Boko.

The latest developments have renewed attention on Moti's growing footprint in the country, following confirmation that he has acquired Botswana citizenship, the emergence of investment proposals spanning tourism, manufacturing and mining, and controversy surrounding the African Hero schools and clinics initiative.

Moti, whose association with Boko predates the UDC's ascension to power, is increasingly at the centre of a debate about the intersection of private investment, political relationships and public accountability.

CITIZENSHIP ROW

The citizenship issue has added a new dimension to the controversy after Minister of Higher Education Prince Maele confirmed in Parliament that Moti had been granted Botswana citizenship under Section 10 of the Citizenship Act.

Responding to questions from Tswapong South MP Dr Kesitigile Gobotswang, Maele said the decision was based on Moti meeting the necessary requirements and his proposed investments in Botswana.

Among the projects cited were a proposed five-star hotel near Gaborone Dam, a manufacturing facility in Gabane expected to create more than 1,000 jobs, and interests in chrome exploration and mining.

The investment proposals also include the wider African Hero initiative, which envisages the construction of 100 schools and



50 clinics across Botswana.

Maele defended the citizenship decision, maintaining that Moti had undergone security vetting by relevant local and international authorities, including Interpol. He also dismissed suggestions that the African Hero arrangement amounted to state capture or corruption, arguing that Botswana needed investors willing to contribute to national development.

The minister's explanation has not put the matter to rest. Questions persist about the exercise of presidential discretion, the timing of the citizenship decision and the relationship between the proposed investments and the administration.

BOKO'S SCHOOL

Much of the scrutiny stems from the African Hero project, whose first flagship development, the Duma Boko School and Clinic, was unveiled in Block 7, Gaborone, in September.

The project has proved particularly controversial because of the President's personal association with the initiative and the history of Moti's support for the UDC during its 2019 election campaign.

Boko is the founding chairman of African Hero, while Moti is associated with the business interests behind the initiative.

The project has also revived questions about an earlier proposal that was returned by the Ministry of Finance after concerns were raised about its financial implications.

Appearing before the Public Accounts Committee in 2025, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance Tshokologo Kganetsano said the original proposal had been considered too costly.

The BCP subsequently alleged that the proposed arrangement could expose Botswana to obligations exceeding P20 billion over 20 years for infrastructure it estimates would cost approximately P3.6 billion to construct. It demanded publication of the relevant agreements, guarantees, payment schedules and other contractual arrangements.

Boko has rejected suggestions that his Government could be captured by private business interests, insisting at the project launch that he was "uncapturable". Moti, for his part, has maintained that the project is privately funded and that he has never received a pula from the Botswana Government since arriving in the country.

UNIONS PUSH BACK

The controversy has also drawn an unusual degree of intervention from organised labour.

The Botswana Teachers Union (BTU) welcomed the prospect of additional schools but raised concerns about the absence of public information regarding the selection of investors, financing arrangements and the obligations Government might have assumed. The union called for disclosure of the contractual terms, warning that public education must remain under public ownership and control.

The Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU) similarly demanded transparency, seeking clarity on the financing structure, project duration, ownership, staffing arrangements and any guarantees or concessions extended to investors.

It also questioned whether the initiative would create secure employment for Batswana or introduce outsourcing and temporary employment arrangements into public services.

The Manual Workers Union also entered the fray, with its chief executive, Robert Rabasimane, defending the union's right to comment on matters of national interest. His remarks followed criticism by Boko of union leaders who had questioned the project.

Rabasimane maintained that trade unions had a broader responsibility to provide checks and balances on governance and would not be silenced when matters affecting the country arose.

The Botswana Federation of Public Sector Unions (BOFEPUSU) has also warned about the potential for state capture, calling for transparency, parliamentary oversight and public accountability in major infrastructure projects.

> "The debate has put the intersection of private investment, political relationships and public accountability under scrutiny."

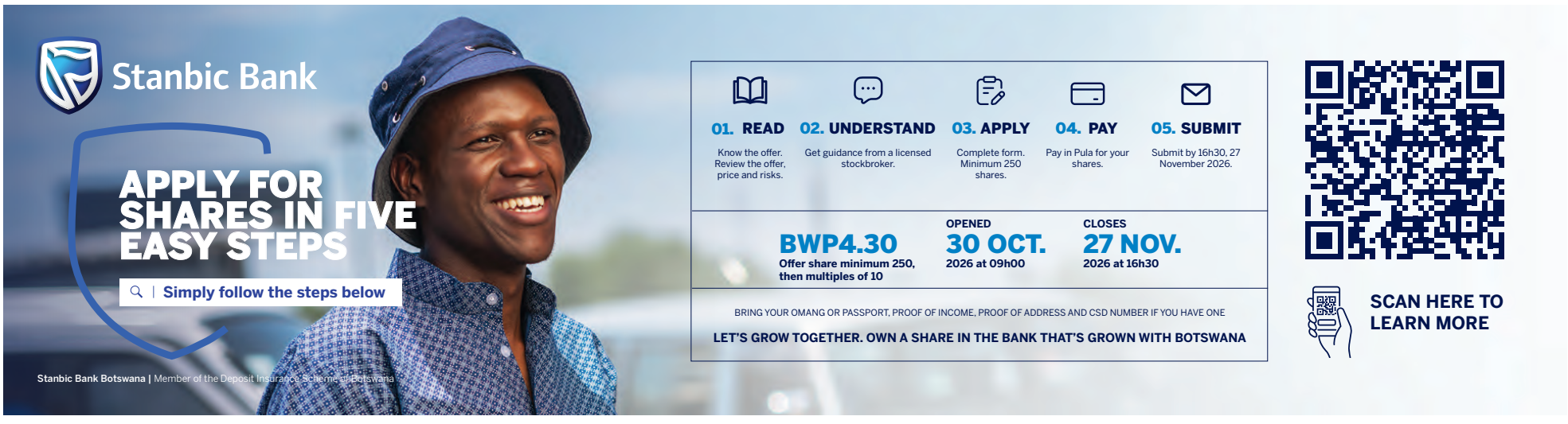
BCP ESCALATES

The BCP has been among the most vocal critics of Moti's growing business interests and the African Hero arrangement.

The party has questioned how a proposal previously returned by Treasury on financial grounds subsequently progressed into a flagship project under the UDC administration.

It has also challenged the circumstances surrounding the President's association with African Hero and the potential implications of the relationship for public accountability.

In its latest intervention, the party says it has taken the matter to the Office of the Ombudsman, escalating its challenge beyond political statements and parliamentary questions.




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Union Questions Moti Citizenship

The Manual Workers Union is demanding answers about the vetting and due process behind Zunaid Moti's citizenship, citing his reported relationship with President Duma Boko.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Manual Workers Union has questioned the circumstances surrounding businessman Zunaid Moti's acquisition of Botswana citizenship, following revelations in Parliament that he had been granted citizenship.

The union has raised concerns about whether the necessary vetting procedures and due process were followed in processing his application.

CITIZENSHIP PROCESS

Addressing the media this week, the union's Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Robert Rabasimane, expressed doubts about the integrity of the process, questioning whether relevant government authorities conducted adequate background checks and complied with all legal and administrative requirements before granting Moti citizenship.

Rabasimane alleged a possible conflict of interest in the granting of Moti's citizenship, citing his friendship with President Duma Boko. He also questioned the citizenship-by-investment arrangement, arguing that it should be subject to stringent safeguards to ensure transparency and accountability.



Manual Workers Union Deputy CEO Robert Rabasimane *Photo Credit: Social Media*

INVESTMENT DOUBTS

He said investors seeking citizenship through investment should first deposit the required funds into local banks to demonstrate that they possess legitimate financial resources and are genuinely committed to investing in Botswana.

Rabasimane questioned why Moti was seemingly allowed to make commitments to build schools and establish businesses without first demonstrating that he had the financial capacity and concrete plans to fulfil those promises.

He said there was no guarantee that the businessman would eventually establish the promised businesses, arguing that citizenship should not be granted on the basis of commitments that might never materialise.

CALL FOR ANSWERS

The union's concerns bring into focus the transparency and accountability of Botswana's citizenship processes, particularly the procedures followed when considering applications from individuals seeking to acquire citizenship.

At the centre of its concerns is whether Moti's application underwent the same rigorous assessment required of other applicants and whether all relevant institutions exercised due diligence before citizenship was granted.

POLITICAL CONNECTIONS

The controversy also places the spotlight on Moti's political connections. The businessman has been described as a close friend of President Boko and was among the reported financial supporters of the UDC ahead of the 2024 general elections.

The union's concerns raise broader questions about whether political and business relationships could influence decisions involving citizenship and whether Government institutions are applying the law consistently, irrespective of an applicant's standing or connections.

MINISTER YET TO RESPOND

The Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Major General (Rtd) Pius Mokgware, had promised to provide a response to The Botswana Gazette but had not done so by the time of publication. He also did not respond to subsequent text messages seeking comment.

UN Probes Botswana's Child Abusers

A UN Special Rapporteur will visit Botswana in December to assess child trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, and whether laws and institutions are protecting vulnerable children.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The United Nations (UN) is preparing to investigate the scale of child trafficking, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in Botswana.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, Ai Kihara-Hunt, will visit Botswana from 1 to 10 December 2026 to assess the situation and the progress made in combating and preventing the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

The visit will examine Botswana's compliance with international human rights norms and standards, including measures taken to protect children from exploitation, trafficking and abuse.

Kihara-Hunt's visit comes as Botswana continues to grapple with public concern over child sexual abuse and gender-based violence, intensified by the Justice for Tshepi campaign. The campaign is a civic and social justice movement calling for accountability and a transparent investigation into the death of Retshepile Setso Tshedu, a 13-year-old girl from Sehithwa whose death was officially ruled a suicide.



The UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, Ai Kihara-Hunt, will visit Botswana from 1 to 10 December 2026 to assess the situation and the progress made in combating and preventing the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. *Photo Credit: UNTV*

According to the United Nations, this will be Kihara-Hunt's first country visit since assuming her mandate in May 2026.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

In preparation for the visit, the Special Rapporteur has invited civil society organisations, activists, academics and interested individuals to submit information on the nature, scope and magnitude of child exploitation and abuse in Botswana.

The submissions will help the UN establish the extent of the problem, identify vulnerable groups and assess whether existing laws, policies and institutions are adequately protecting children.

Among the issues the UN wants investigated is the sale of children for use in criminal activities, begging, forced labour, sports, adoption, marriage and the transfer of organs.

The inquiry will also examine the exploitation of children for sexual purposes in travel and tourism, as well as trafficking for labour exploitation, domestic servitude, forced criminality and sexual exploitation.

The Special Rapporteur is seeking information on the possession, production and dissemination of child sexual abuse material, including visual and non-visual depictions, as well as the grooming or solicitation of children to engage in sexual activities.

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The UN has singled out children in remote and rural areas, those affected by poverty, migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking children, children with disabilities, street children, those in alternative care and Indigenous children as groups potentially facing heightened vulnerability.

TESTING PROTECTIONS

The investigation will further scrutinise Botswana's legislative, policy and institutional framework, including national strategies and mechanisms of cooperation to tackle child exploitation and provide assistance to victims and survivors.

It will also assess the country's response to recommendations arising from the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey and related national action plans.

The UN wants to establish whether victims have access to effective and child-friendly justice, comprehensive care, recovery and rehabilitation, and whether perpetrators are being investigated, prosecuted and punished.

The Special Rapporteur will also examine the protection of victims' rights in criminal proceedings, including the principle that victims and survivors should not be criminalised.

MISSION FINDINGS

During her visit, Kihara-Hunt will travel across the country and convene meetings with civil society representatives working on child rights and protection, youth-led organisations and children.

The UN says the meetings are intended to gather information from relevant stakeholders and obtain a first-hand understanding of the challenges facing child protection in Botswana.

At the conclusion of the mission, Kihara-Hunt will brief Government officials on her preliminary findings and hold a press conference to share her initial observations with the public.

The Special Rapporteur will subsequently submit a comprehensive report containing her findings, conclusions and recommendations to the 67th session of the Human Rights Council in March 2028.

CKGR Basarwa Resist Return of Others



A report presented to President Boko has warned that Basarwa already living in the CKGR fear losing control of territories they have occupied since the controversial relocations and oppose the envisaged return of fellow tribesmen who were relocated

TEFO PHEAGE

President Duma Boko's plan to restore ancestral land rights to Basarwa in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) faces resistance from within, with CKGR residents opposing the unrestricted return of fellow Basarwa who were relocated to settlements outside the Reserve.

A September 2026 report by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples reveals that some respondents in Molapo and Gugamma said they would actively oppose the resettlement of people from New Xade, Xere and Kaudwane into territories they have occupied since the relocations.

The findings expose competing interests among communities that share ancestral connections to the Reserve, raising questions about how Government will reconcile the land claims of those who remained inside the CKGR with those of thousands who were removed and now live outside it.

The report comes into sharp focus following President Boko's recent declaration that his administration intends to restore ancestral land rights to Basarwa in the CKGR.

Boko's commitment has revived hopes among displaced communities, many of whom have spent decades seeking redress following their controversial relocation from the Reserve.

TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

According to the committee, consultations conducted at Molapo, Metsiamanong, Mothomelo and Gugamma, as well as New Xade, Kaudwane and Xere, revealed that although all communities wanted to benefit from the CKGR, their expectations about physical return differed considerably.

"People in settlements within the CKGR would not universally welcome the return of those who had been living in the settlements in particular those who had voluntarily relocated predominantly to Xere and Kaudwane," the report states.

It adds that some respondents in Molapo and Gugamma insisted that they would actively oppose unrestricted resettlement by people from New Xade, Xere and Kaudwane into land they had occupied exclusively since the relocations

The committee further found that communities already living inside the Reserve wanted their interests represented by an organisation distinct from those representing people currently living in the three resettlement settlements.

CONTINUES TO PAGE 8

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TRIBUNAL

REGISTRAR

The Public Procurement Tribunal invites applications from suitably qualified, experienced and results-oriented legal professionals for the position of Registrar. The successful candidate will provide strategic leadership and oversee the legal, judicial and administrative operations of the Tribunal, ensuring the effective and efficient discharge of its mandate.

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Reporting to the Judge President, the Registrar will be responsible for the effective management and administration of the operations of the Public Procurement Tribunal, including its legal, judicial and general administrative functions. The incumbent will provide strategic and operational leadership, oversee the management of the Tribunal's financial, human and physical resources and ensure the implementation of approved plans, programmes and performance targets. The position will also be responsible for stakeholder engagement and ensuring the effective administration and determination of appeals arising from public procurement processes.

The Job
The incumbent will be responsible for managing the operations of the Tribunal, including among others, the following:

- Maintaining and keeping a proper record of all proceedings and correspondence of the Tribunal.
- Having custody and keeping proper accounts/ records of all awards payable or, paid to the Tribunal.
- Facilitating the development, review and implementation of the Tribunal's short, medium and long term strategic and operational plans.
- Developing and implementing effective adjudication processes, operational guidelines and administrative procedures for the Tribunal.
- Keeping records and monitoring the implementation and enforcement of the Tribunal's rulings, orders and judgements.
- Analysing case statistics and performance data and recommending appropriate interventions to improve service delivery.
- Coordinating stakeholder and public engagement on the Tribunal's processes and procedures.
- Overseeing the Tribunal's performance management processes, monitoring performance against approved targets and implementing interventions to address identified gaps.
- Preparing reports on the operations and performance of the Tribunal for submission to the Minister and other relevant stakeholders.
- Coordinating financial planning, budgeting and manpower planning and monitoring the implementation of approved budgets.
- Facilitating the preparation and submission of annual reports, financial statements, audits and independent auditors' reports as prescribed by the Public Procurement Act.

The Person:
The ideal candidate will possess the following:

- A Bachelor's Degree in Law (LLB) from a recognised university.
- A relevant Master's Degree, or postgraduate specialist qualification will be an added advantage.
- At least fourteen (14) years of relevant legal experience.
- Must be admitted to practice law in Botswana.
- Must have served as a Deputy Registrar for at least two (2) years OR served as an Attorney in the procurement management environment, or a related field at an equivalent level.
- Must be a mature, experienced leader with demonstrated strategic, managerial and administrative capabilities

To apply in confidence, please visit **www.peopleconnections.co.bw**. Applicants should submit a Cover Letter, Detailed Curriculum Vitae, Certified Academic Certificates and at least three (3) referees. Application documents should be in pdf format and merged.

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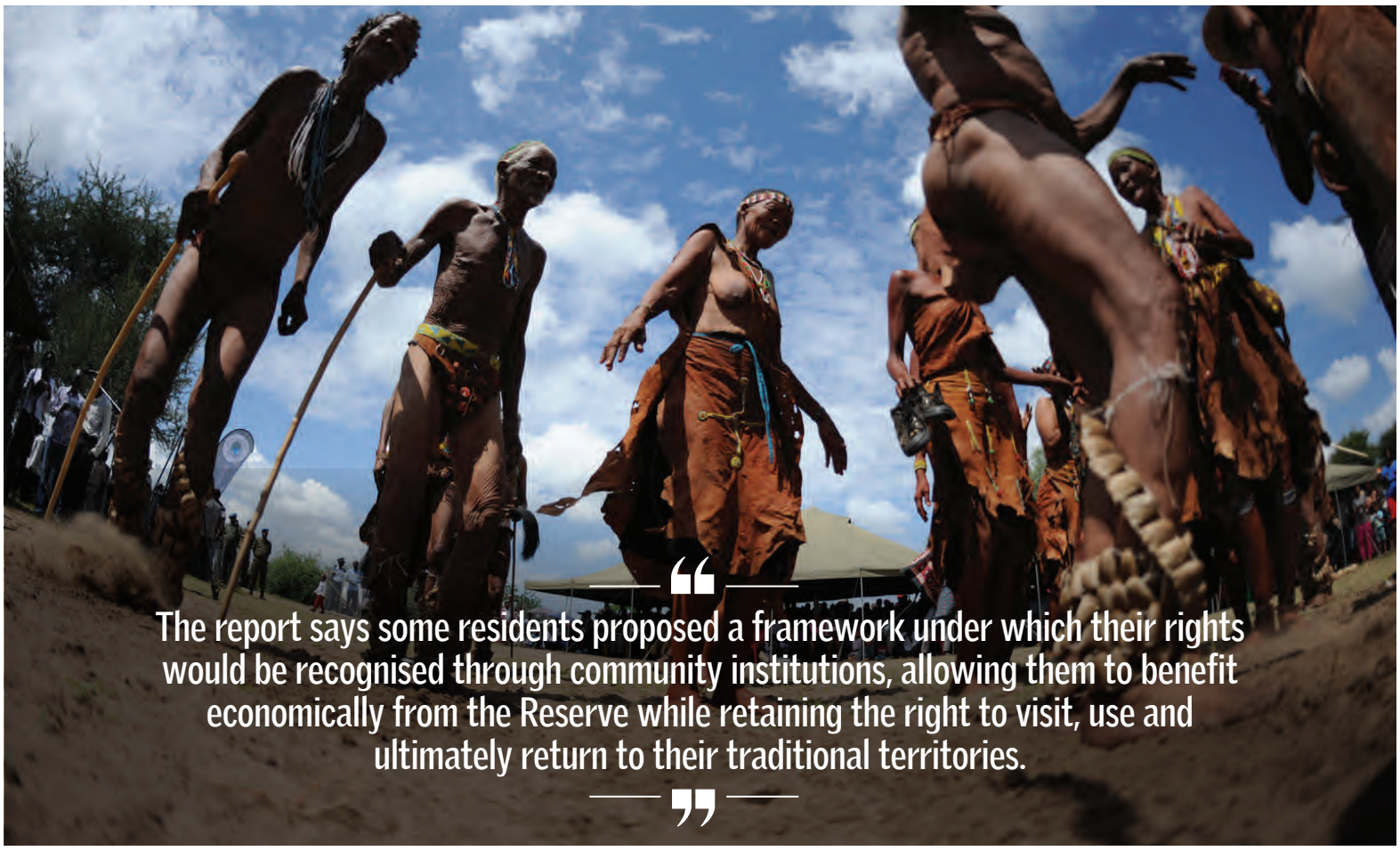
FROM PAGE 7

The disagreement is also rooted in questions of traditional territorial ownership and identity.

The report says communities inside the CKGR identify themselves variously as G//anakhoe, Tsila and G/wikhoe, with each settlement maintaining what it considers clearly defined territorial rights

Residents of Metsiamanong, for instance, maintained that they had no rights of residence or access to natural resources in neighbouring territories associated with Molapo and Mothomelo.

Smaller settlements, including Gugamma, also expressed concern that their traditional boundaries and interests could be swallowed up by larger communities under a collective arrangement.



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ADDRESS THE INSECURITIES-SCHOLAR

Professor Andy Chebanne, a scholar who has extensively researched San communities, in an interview with this publication urged Government to pay close attention to the emerging disagreements and objectively address the insecurities underlying them to prevent tensions that could ultimately undermine the restitution initiative.

He warned that "the emerging socio-political and economic fears must be adequately addressed if the process is to achieve its intended objectives".

NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO RETURN

The committee's findings also challenge the assumption that all Basarwa currently living outside the Reserve necessarily want to relocate back.

At New Xade, where the population is estimated at 1,614, a significant proportion expressed a desire to return to the CKGR. However, a substantial number preferred recognition of their ancestral land rights without necessarily having to move physically.

The report says some residents proposed a framework under which their rights would be recognised through community institutions, allowing them to benefit economically from the Reserve while retaining the right to visit, use and ultimately return to their traditional territories.

Kaudwane, with an estimated population of 1,354, and Xere, with approximately 795 residents, also raised concerns about family separation, cultural erosion and the loss of access to ancestral territories.

The report estimates that approximately 488 people live in the four settlements inside the CKGR, compared with 3,763 in New Xade, Kaudwane and Xere.

It argues that both populations must be recognised as collective rights-holders, regardless of whether they choose to physically return.

"The emerging socio-political and economic fears must be adequately addressed if the process is to achieve its intended objectives."

A DELICATE PROCESS

The committee cautions that restitution must not be reduced to simply allowing people to move back into the Reserve.

Instead, it recommends a process that recognises the rights of all affected communities while respecting their differing aspirations, traditional territories and identities.

The committee's central recommendation is a structured, four-phase CKGR Integrated Roadmap covering 2026 to 2029, intended to resolve outstanding questions through further consultations, legal analysis and negotiations.

CKGR Mission Faces Political Reversal Risk

The CKGR restitution initiative faces the risk of political reversal, with a leading San scholar warning that a potential change of government after 2029 could reverse it if the UDC fails to expedite its implementation and entrench it in law

TEFO PHEAGE

Professor Andy Chebanne, a scholar who has extensively researched San communities and a member of the San Research Centre, has warned that the ambitious Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) land restitution project could be reversed by a future political administration if the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) government fails to fast-track legislation to entrench it in law.

He urged the UDC government to accelerate the project, arguing that "its survival cannot depend on the political fortunes of the administration that initiated it".

While describing the initiative as progressive and historically significant, Chebanne said "its ideological underpinnings made it vulnerable to a future government choosing a different approach to indigenous land rights".

Asked to identify the biggest obstacles to the project, he pointed to politics, the enormous financial requirements and the time needed to implement restitution in its entirety.

> "Any political administration can halt, reverse or choose a different course on the project."

"The project's budget is several times the national budget. In terms of time, I think we will need around 50 years to implement it fully. As for the political risks, remember that this is essentially a matter of ideological inclinations. Any political administration can halt, reverse or choose a different course on the project," he said in an interview with this publication.

LEGISLATE OR RISK REVERSAL

Chebanne believes the UDC should move beyond policy commitments and accelerate legislation that would give the restitution initiative a firm legal foundation.

He argued that "the administration has a limited political window to establish an enduring framework before the next general election" a future administration could abandon or fundamentally alter the project if it remains dependent on executive goodwill".

The warning comes as Government considers the recommendations of the September 2026 Inter-Ministerial Committee report, which proposes a structured, four-phase CKGR Integrated Roadmap covering 2026 to 2029.

The roadmap envisages further consultations, legal reforms, community representation structures and the establishment of durable land tenure arrangements.

However, the committee itself acknowledges that several fundamental questions remain unresolved and require further research, legal analysis and community engagement.

HISTORICAL INJUSTICE

Chebanne traced the origins of indigenous people's land insecurity to the colonial period, arguing that the establishment of protected territories for indigenous communities was informed by British concerns that independence could leave them vulnerable to losing their land and legal protections.

He contended that these fears eventually materialised, with subsequent government interventions failing to adequately protect the communities' rights and livelihoods.

According to him, the subsequent Bushmen welfare programmes represented a downgraded response to the original land question and failed to deliver meaningful economic empowerment.

"Rather than building self-sufficiency, the programmes entrenched dependency on Government, contributing to persistent poverty among San communities. I believe the restitution initiative offers an opportunity to move away from this model by addressing the underlying structural causes of marginalisation rather than simply extending welfare support," he stated.

BEYOND LAND RETURN

Chebanne also cautioned against treating restitution as an exercise confined to returning land, arguing that "genuine redress must translate into economic empowerment and meaningful participation by Basarwa in managing their communities".

He advocated formal employment opportunities for Basarwa in institutions and programmes serving their own communities, saying they should become active participants in their development rather than recipients.

He further called for safeguards against opportunistic individuals and organisations seeking to exploit the restitution process, including instances where non-San individuals or groups allegedly front indigenous interests.

His concerns speak to the broader question of representation, which also emerged during the inter-ministerial committee's consultations.

The committee found that communities both inside and outside the CKGR were concerned about individuals and organisations claiming to represent them without genuine mandates, sometimes benefiting financially or reputationally without delivering meaningful outcomes.

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NOTICE

CAUTIONARY ANNOUNCEMENT:

UNAUDITED HALF YEAR RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

Botswana Savings Bank (BSB) Board of Directors hereby informs holders of BSB securities that the Bank's unaudited half-year financial results for the period ended 30 September 2026 are anticipated to reflect a significant improvement compared to those reported for the half-year ended 30 September 2025.

Specifically, the Bank expects to report a profit after tax (PAT) ranging between P3.8 million and P6.8 million, compared to a loss after tax of P3.9 million reported for the half-year ended 30 September 2025. This represents an improvement in financial performance of between P7.7 million and P10.7 million, equivalent to an improvement of approximately 197% to 274% relative to the comparative loss.

This cautionary statement is based on the Bank's unaudited financial information for the half-year ended 30 September 2026. The results remain subject to finalisation and may change before publication. Accordingly, holders of the Bank's securities are advised to exercise caution when dealing in these securities until the publication of the Bank's half-year financial results.

The financial information on which this statement is based has not been reviewed or reported on by the Bank's external auditors.

By order of the Board

16 November 2026

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#BUILDING BOTSWANA

Botswana's Tendering Blind Spot

A poor continental procurement score, repeated direct awards and audit findings are exposing weaknesses in safeguards governing billions of pula in public contracts.



Mo Ibrahim

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's reputation as one of Africa's best-governed countries is facing an uncomfortable test after the Mo Ibrahim Foundation exposed serious weaknesses in its public procurement system, at a time when multimillion-pula government contracts continue to be approved through direct procurement arrangements.

The latest Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), released in October 2026, ranks Botswana 41st out of 54 African countries for Public Procurement Procedures, with a score of 22.2 out of 100.

The country's performance is only marginally better than neighbouring Zimbabwe, which scored 21.1 points and ranked 43rd, despite Botswana occupying fourth position in Africa's overall governance rankings compared with Zimbabwe's 30th.

STRIKING CONTRADICTION

The findings expose a striking contradiction in Botswana's governance credentials, particularly when measured against regional countries with substantially stronger procurement safeguards. Zambia ranks ninth in Africa for procurement procedures with 51.9 points, Namibia occupies 13th position with 46.6, while South Africa is ranked 19th with 38.9.

All three countries outperform Botswana in an indicator assessing competitive bidding, the exclusion of companies implicated in wrongdoing and safeguards against corruption in government procurement.

Perhaps the most revealing contradiction lies within Botswana's own governance scorecard. The country ranks third in Africa for Budgetary and Financial Management, scoring 91.7 points. It also ranks second for the Absence of Corruption in the Public Sector, with 80.5 points.

Yet its procurement procedures score stands at 22.2 points, raising questions about why strong public financial management indicators have not translated into equally strong safeguards governing the allocation of state contracts.

DIRECT AWARDS

The international findings come against a backdrop of direct procurement approvals involving major infrastructure, energy and service contracts over the past two years.

In February 2025, the then Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Noah Salakae revealed in Parliament that 13 projects had been directly procured by his ministry between April 2024 and February 2025.

Responding to Kgalagadi North legislator Reason Lekhutlane, Salakae explained that direct appointment was a legally recognised procurement method under the Public Procurement Act of 2021.

He further disclosed that although he had not personally initiated direct appointments, he had ratified four projects, including construction of the 110km New Xade Junction–New Xade Road, maintenance works along the Mosaditshwene–Artesia Road, construction of the Radisele–Pilikwe Road and asphalt overlay and road-marking works along the Morwamosu–Motokwe Road.

> "Botswana scores 22.2 out of 100 for public procurement procedures, despite ranking fourth overall in African governance."

However, the 13 projects represent one ministry's disclosures rather than a comprehensive national account of direct procurement approvals.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Botswana Power Corporation's (BPC) tender records show several direct procurement approvals between March 2025 and October 2026, including two separate asset management decisions worth P50.8 million and P48.5 million for the Orapa 90MW Turbine Power Plant in March 2025 and July 2026, respectively.

Other approvals include P69.3 million for insurance and risk management, P15.1 million for payroll migration, P7 million for business process management software, P8.1 million for filter bags at Morupule A and P16.7 million for an uninterrupted power supply system at Morupule B.

SOLAR PROJECTS

Direct procurement approvals have also featured in Botswana's renewable energy developments. In June 2025, BPC approved an amendment relating to capacity increases for

To Page 13

Botswana Open University

PUBLIC AUCTION SALE NOTICE

The public is informed that Botswana Open University (BOU) intends to conduct a public auction sale of **boarded vehicles**.

AUCTION DATE & TIME
28th November 2026
Starts 0800hrs

VENUE
BOU Head Office
Plot 39972, Block 6, Gaborone

REGISTRATION
28th November 2026
0800hrs – 0900hrs

VIEWING OF VEHICLES
25th – 27th November 2026
0900hrs – 1245hrs and 1400hrs – 1630hrs. No viewing on the day of the sale. Viewers must produce a valid Omang (National Identity Card) as vehicles are strictly 100% citizen reserved.

REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT
P5,000.00 per vehicle
An extra P5,000.00 for each additional vehicle.

DEPOSITS

Prospective bidders shall pay a refundable deposit of **P5,000.00 (five thousand pula)** for each intended bid. Bidders wishing to buy more than one (1) vehicle shall be required to pay an extra P5,000.00 for each additional vehicle.

Deposits will be refunded to unsuccessful bidders on **Monday, 30th November 2026**.

Banking Details for Deposits	
Account Name	Botswana Open University
Bank Name	ABSA
Branch Name	Government Enclave
Branch Code	02902/290267
Account No.	3070634
Reference	Customer ID No.

LIST OF VEHICLES

LOT	VEHICLE DESCRIPTION	REG. NO.	YEAR	MILEAGE	RESERVE (BWP)	CONDITION
1	Isuzu KB250 LWB	B 225 AUF	2011	223,848 km	12,200.00	Mechanical problem – overheating
2	Isuzu KB250 LWB	B 748 AUN	2012	189,593 km	12,000.00	Operational
3	Isuzu KB240	B 444 AWD	2012	100,507 km	20,700.00	Operational
4	Isuzu KB240	B 438 AWD	2012	115,855 km	20,700.00	Operational
5	Chevrolet Utility	B 956 BBO	2015	112,492 km	25,600.00	Operational
6	Chevrolet Utility	B 966 BBO	2015	25,062 km	22,300.00	Operational
7	Chevrolet Utility	B 104 BBP	2015	48,917 km	21,500.00	Operational
8	Nissan NP200	B 176 BBP	2015	89,637 km	17,400.00	Operational
9	Nissan NP200	B 177 BBP	2015	54,883 km	17,400.00	Operational
10	Nissan NP200	B 180 BBP	2015	44,412 km	17,400.00	Operational
11	Mercedes-Benz E250	B 592 AXG	2013	195,923 km	48,000.00	Operational
12	Toyota Hilux 3.0 D4D	B 407 ANY	2008	427,135 km	20,700.00	Operational
13	Advertising trailer	N/A	2016	N/A	10,000.00	Good condition

Only bids equal to or above the reserve price will be considered. All vehicles are sold "as is". Refer to the website for additional conditions of service.

ENQUIRIES

Mr. Phillip B. Nkabelang
Tel: 364 6020
Email: pnkabelang@staff.bou.ac.bw

Mr. Benjamin Koboyakgomo
Tel: 364 6077
Email: bkoboyakgomo@staff.bou.ac.bw

www.bou.ac.bw



IDLE DIS OFFICERS BET ON MAGOSI EXIT

Eleven officers who have received more than P8.1 million in salaries while off duty hope the departure of Peter Magosi will clear the way for an amicable settlement of their long-running employment dispute.

TEFO PHEAGE

Eleven officers caught in an employment impasse between the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) and the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) are pinning their hopes on the departure of Peter Magosi to pave the way for an amicable resolution.

Their lawyer, Bakwinya Mazhani of Ramalepa Attorneys, told The Botswana Gazette in an interview that Magosi's exit heralded a fresh start for the intelligence agency and presented an opportunity to resolve the longstanding dispute.

Mazhani said an amicable settlement would be a welcome development for the officers, whose employment status has remained the subject of litigation despite a court ruling declaring them BDF members in good standing.

FRESH START

The officers' hopes come against the background of Magosi's public refusal to take them back into the DIS. He told Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) that he no longer trusted them.

During proceedings reported in July 2026, Magosi maintained that the officers had successfully approached the courts to establish that they belonged to the BDF rather than the intelligence agency.

"I can never take these people back into the organisation because I don't trust them," he told the committee.

He argued that they should be deployed elsewhere in Government, saying their continued payment through the DIS was against his wishes.

By July, the officers had received more than P8.1 million in salaries while off duty, raising questions before the committee about continued public expenditure and the failure to resolve their deployment.

COURT VICTORY

The dispute involves Mpho Baleseng and 10 other officers who challenged the circumstances under which they moved from the military to the DIS.

In an order issued on 13 October 2023, Lobatse High Court judge Justice Jennifer Dube declared them BDF members in good standing.

The court set aside their purported employment contracts with the DIS and declared their purported resignation letters from the military fraudulent, unlawful and without effect.

The officers were also declared entitled to the basic salaries, benefits and salary adjustments enjoyed by their BDF intake counterparts, reckoned from 8 November 2013.

The order further provided for payment of the difference between what they would have earned at the BDF and what they received during their attachment to the DIS.

PROLONGED IMPASSE

Despite that victory, the dispute continued. In January 2024, the officers instituted contempt proceedings against then BDF commander Lieutenant General Placid Segokgo, alleging failure to comply with the court order.

Magosi subsequently defended his refusal to bring them back into the intelligence agency, maintaining that his position followed their own court application asserting their military status.

PAC members questioned whether his stance reflected personal feelings rather than administrative considerations and directed him to engage the other agencies involved to seek a resolution.

With Magosi now out of the DIS, Mazhani said there was an opportunity for a fresh approach to the impasse, with an amicable settlement offering a welcome way forward for the officers.

Defilement Surge Deepens Child Safety Fears

A 10.3 percent rise in reported cases, alongside troubling regional prevalence estimates, is intensifying pressure for stronger child protection and justice systems.

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana recorded a 10.3 percent increase in defilement cases in 2025, deepening concerns about the country's child protection crisis as international research places it among the countries with the highest estimated levels of childhood sexual violence in Southern Africa.

Police Commissioner Dinah Marathe disclosed the figures at First Lady Kaone Boko's Mpepu Programme Pitso in Maun last Friday. At the same gathering, Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Kgosietsile Ngakaagae called for sweeping reforms to establish a justice system designed specifically for children.

According to Marathe, reported defilement cases rose from 1,666 in 2024 to 1,837 in 2025, an increase of 171 cases. The number of female child victims rose from 1,657 to 1,834 over the same period, highlighting the disproportionate burden borne by girls.

REGIONAL PICTURE

The figures come against a troubling regional backdrop. A 2025 study published in the international medical journal The Lancet estimated that 28.9 percent of adult women and 27.1 percent of adult men in Botswana had experienced sexual violence during childhood.

These were the highest point estimates among the 16 Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. Malawi followed Botswana in the estimate for women, at 27.7 percent, while Tanzania recorded the next-highest estimate for men, at 20.6 percent.

The study, however, used 2023 modelled estimates of historical childhood abuse rather than current police-recorded offences. Statistical uncertainty also means the findings cannot establish definitively which country has the highest actual prevalence. Even with those limitations, the estimates add a regional dimension to questions about the effectiveness of Botswana's child protection mechanisms.

JUSTICE REFORMS

Speaking at the same event, Ngakaagae



argued that conventional courtrooms can be intimidating for children, making the case for a justice framework designed around their specific circumstances.

"I believe we need to develop a new jurisprudence of child justice that is child specific," Ngakaagae stated.

He advocated a distinct framework covering investigations, prosecutions, trials and rehabilitation, rather than simply adapting adult court procedures to accommodate minors. His proposals also included separate judicial leadership and provisions that would allow rehabilitated juvenile offenders to avoid lifelong consequences arising from childhood convictions.

The figures disclosed by Marathe and Ngakaagae's reform proposals at the Maun gathering point to the scale of the challenge facing Botswana's child protection and justice institutions, and the need to ensure that systems responding to offences against minors are equipped to protect and support child victims.

BOPEU Demands Proof Of UDC's 100,000 Jobs

The public employees' union wants verifiable figures on jobs created, warning that investment announcements and targets do not prove that the UDC's employment pledge is being delivered.



The Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU) has challenged the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) Government to account for its ambitious 100,000-job creation promise.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Botswana Public Employees Union (BOPEU) has challenged the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) Government to account for its ambitious 100,000-job creation promise.

In its response to President Duma Boko's 2026 State of the Nation Address (SONA), BOPEU demanded verifiable evidence of employment created rather than reliance on investment announcements and political targets.

The union is questioning the Government's employment delivery, warning that Botswana needs more than promises and ambitious projections to address persistent unemployment, particularly among young people and graduates.

"BOPEU notes the Government's continued reference to the 100,000-job commitment and the broader ambition of creating 512,000 jobs under the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme. However, the nation requires more than employment targets and investment announcements," the union states.

It added: "It requires verifiable evidence of jobs created; the sectors in which they exist, the wages attached to them, their duration and whether they offer sustainable livelihoods."

The union argued that the issuance of licences, announcement of projects and mobilisation of investment capital cannot automatically be equated with employment creation.

JOBS ACCOUNTABILITY

BOPEU's intervention comes amid continued public scrutiny of the UDC administration's ability to translate its election promises into tangible economic improvements, with the union demanding greater transparency over the Government's job-creation commitments.

The union pointed to Botswana's reported unemployment rate of 21.0 percent and youth unemployment rate of 28.9 percent, describing the situation as requiring urgent intervention.

It also raised concern over graduates increasingly accepting casual, temporary or poorly remunerated employment unrelated to their qualifications.

"This is not merely an unemployment problem; it is a national productivity and human capital utilisation challenge," BOPEU said.

To address the accountability gap, the union called on Government to establish a publicly accessible employment accountability register that tracks actual jobs created against announced targets.

It further urged Government to recognise the public service as an important contributor to national employment, institutional capacity and economic development, arguing that recruitment should be guided by genuine staffing requirements, service delivery demands and the need to absorb qualified graduates.

WAGE CONCERNS

Beyond employment, BOPEU used its SONA response to confront Government over the deteriorating purchasing power of public servants, unresolved salary reforms and what it describes as disregard for collective bargaining.

The union said public servants had suffered an accumulated erosion of approximately 9.3 percent in real wages, while the new public service salary structure, Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and Remuneration Policy remained unresolved.

"The fundamental question BOPEU places before Government is: When the economy improves, when will the economic circumstances of public servants improve?" it asked.

The union also reminded the UDC Government that its 2024 election manifesto committed to establishing a living wage as the foundation of remuneration and restoring an autonomous Public Service Bargaining Council.

It proposed P4,000 as a basic salary benchmark for public servants, insisting that the amount should not be achieved by combining basic pay with allowances.

RECOVERY TEST

BOPEU acknowledged signs of economic recovery, including reported first-quarter economic growth of 3.5 percent and a reduction in the projected 2026/27 fiscal deficit to P9.26 billion.

However, it warned that economic recovery must translate into improved living standards.

"Public servants are not spectators in Botswana's economic recovery. They are its architects, implementers and custodians," the union said.

BOPEU maintained that Government must move from announcements to measurable delivery, insisting that workers should not continue bearing the burden of economic adjustment while the benefits of recovery remain invisible in their payslips and household budgets.

Govt Admits Youth Jobs Crisis

The Government says youth unemployment has reached 30.7 percent, with four in 10 young people outside employment, education or training as job creation trails labour-force growth.

GAZETTE REPORTER

The Government has acknowledged that it is struggling to create enough jobs to absorb the growing labour force, as youth unemployment reaches 30.7 percent.

The 2027/2028 Budget Strategy Paper says more than four in 10 young people are neither working nor attending school or training. The paper admits that job creation continues to lag behind labour-force growth, exposing deep structural weaknesses in the economy.

It states that Botswana's labour market faces severe structural challenges, with youth unemployment remaining a critical barrier to inclusive growth, social cohesion and expanded economic opportunity.

"This is due to structural rigidities, weak labour absorption and low productivity growth which continue to weigh on employment creation," the paper says.

UNEMPLOYMENT RISES

According to the latest Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey (BMTHS) 2024/2025, unemployment among people aged 15 years and above stands at 21.0 percent, compared with 17.6 percent in 2015/2016, an increase of 3.4 percentage points, the paper says.

The survey puts unemployment among people aged 15 to 35 years at 30.7 percent, while 40.3 percent of young people were not in employment, education or training (NEET).

The figures expose the scale of the challenge facing Botswana, where thousands of young people remain disconnected from productive economic activity despite years of investment in education and skills development.

The Government says the figures provide a warning that long-term trends underscore the need for sustained and systemic responses to address the root causes of youth joblessness.

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

It further acknowledges that addressing the crisis requires accelerating private-sector-led investment, improving the business environment and strengthening skills development so that higher medium-term growth translates into sustained employment opportunities.

The paper calls for improved alignment between education and labour-market needs, stronger support for entrepreneurship and innovation, and increased investment in youth-led initiatives.

PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEM

However, the Government's own assessment also points to another major weakness undermining employment creation: declining productivity.

Total factor productivity (TFP), a key determinant of long-term economic growth, declined by 1.0 percent in 2024, contributing to the contraction in output that year.

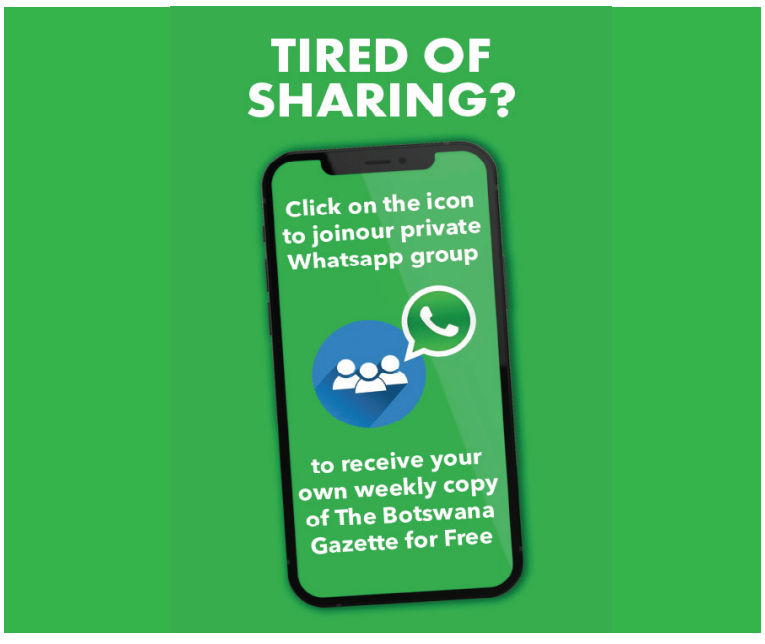
The Government admits that productivity gains have largely been cyclical, driven by commodity upswings rather than sustained structural transformation.

It further notes that significant investments in human capital are yet to yield commensurate productivity gains, pointing to gaps in the alignment of education and training with labour-market needs.

"This underscores that Botswana's productivity challenge reflects not a shortage of capital but the efficiency with which it is allocated and used," the paper states.

The Government says sustaining productivity growth will require more efficient public spending, skills development, technology adoption, innovation and diversification beyond mining.

It warns that further capital deepening without complementary reforms to improve resource allocation and raise returns on investment is unlikely to deliver sustained productivity gains.



Health Ministry Blocks Union Donations

The Manual Workers Union says three public hospitals turned away its medical donations despite shortages, raising questions about the Ministry of Health's policy on external assistance.

SESUPO RANTSIMAKO



The Ministry of Health (MoH) has reportedly blocked the Manual Workers Union (MWU) from donating medical products to three public hospitals, raising questions about its approach to external assistance at a time when healthcare facilities across the country are grappling with shortages of medical supplies.

The latest rejections follow an earlier decision by the Ministry to turn down a donation offer from the Botswana Democratic Party's Serowe South constituency, reportedly on the grounds that it does not accept contributions from political parties.

The Ministry has now allegedly prevented the union from donating to Lobatse Psychiatric Hospital, Scottish Livingstone Hospital in Serowe and Letsholathebe Memorial Hospital in Maun, despite the union having previously made donations to Nyangabgwe Referral Hospital and Marina Referral Hospital.

UNION QUESTIONS MINISTRY

Speaking in an interview with The Botswana Gazette, MWU business consultant Johnson Motshwarakgole questioned why Government would prevent the union from donating medical products while publicly acknowledging shortages in healthcare facilities.

He said the union had initially engaged authorities at the three hospitals to establish their priority medical needs, following the same procedure it had used when donating to Nyangabgwe and Marina referral hospitals.

"We were shocked because we had followed all the necessary procedures. We engaged the hospital authorities about the correct procedures and also approached the Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority (BoMRA), which guided us on the requirements to follow. We did exactly that, only to be told that donations from unions were no longer accepted," Motshwarakgole said.

KGOTLA MEETINGS

Motshwarakgole said the union was now considering taking the matter to kgotla meetings in the affected communities to explain what had happened and hear residents' views on the rejection of the donations.

He questioned whether communities in Lobatse, Serowe and Maun would support the decision to turn away medical assistance at a time when healthcare facilities were experiencing shortages of essential medical products.

BOMRA CLARIFIES

The controversy has also brought into focus the role of the Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority (BoMRA) in regulating medicinal products and overseeing their importation.

BoMRA Public Relations Manager Israel Kgosidiile told The Botswana Gazette that the authority regulates the quality and efficacy of medicinal products but is not involved in the process of donating medicines, as this falls outside its mandate.

POLICY QUESTIONS

The rejections have raised broader concerns about whether the Ministry's donation policies strike an appropriate balance between regulatory requirements, quality control and the immediate needs of patients.

While medical donations must meet prescribed safety and quality standards, questions remain about whether the products offered by the union were assessed and whether the decisions to stop the donations were informed by specific regulatory or administrative concerns.

At the time of going to press, MoH spokesperson Doreen Motshegwa had not responded to The Botswana Gazette's enquiries.

From Page 10

five solar photovoltaic projects in Serowe, Maun, Ghanzi, Charleshill and Molepolole.

The projects were listed under the direct procurement method, with proposed capacities ranging from 16MW to 19MW. A subsequent decision in May 2026 addressed capacity increases for seven solar photovoltaic developments, covering the original locations alongside Kasane and Lobatse.

AUDIT FINDINGS

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation's findings gain additional significance when weighed against Botswana's National Forensic Audit Programme, undertaken by Alvarez & Marsal and presented to Government in April 2026.

The auditors flagged repeated reliance on non-competitive procurement methods, inadequately justified direct appointments, emergency procurement without sufficient justification, tender splitting and changes to evaluation criteria.

The report established that weaknesses surrounding direct procurement and competitive tendering have been recurring concerns within Botswana's public institutions.

BILLIONS AT STAKE

The significance of these weaknesses becomes clearer when considering the scale of public procurement expenditure. According to figures presented by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) in March 2026, public entities awarded approximately 78,800 tenders valued at P33.5 billion during the 2024/25 financial year.

The expenditure represented approximately 12.4 percent of Botswana's gross domestic product, demonstrating the considerable economic importance of public procurement. Yet the regulator has acknowledged capacity constraints affecting its ability to monitor procurement activities.

In December 2025, PPRA chief executive Tumelo Motsumi disclosed during a media briefing that the authority had only five staff members carrying out its national oversight mandate, limiting regular audits, monitoring and investigations.

MVA FUND
Living the promise.

VEHICLES FOR SALE

MVA Fund is selling the following vehicles by way of public auction through a closed bid. The sale is open to 100% citizen individuals or locally registered 100% citizen owned companies only. Bidders must submit a sealed envelope enclosing a certified copy of Omang (ID), letter of offer bearing contact details, and proof of payment for participation. Bids must be submitted in the Tender Box at MVA Fund Offices, Plot 50367 Fairgrounds, 3rd Floor, on or before **3:00pm** on **Friday 27th November 2026.**

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION	VEHICLE REG	VEHICLE MILEAGE	RESERVE PRICE
Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6, Legend 50, A/T, D/C	B 741 BMU	162 735	P196, 450.00
Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6, Legend 50, A/T, D/C	B 727 BMU	163 357	P 208, 200.00
Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6, Legend 50, A/T, D/C	B 866 BMU	152 795	P 208, 200.00
Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6, Legend 50, A/T, D/C	B 982 BMV	142 800	P 208, 200.00
Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6, Legend 50, A/T, D/C	B 983 BMV	119 510	P 197, 800.00
Toyota Quantum Bus 2.8D	B 792 BLU	30 365	P 167, 150.00
Luggage Trailer - Roadster	B 616AWP	NIL	P 4, 500.00

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE
A refundable P 5,000.00 deposit is required to participate in all the vehicle sales, paid to MVA Fund Account indicated below.

Payment: Successful bidder shall be required to make payment by way of transfer within Ten (10) working days from date of written offer payable to MVA Fund bank account below.

Account Name: MVA Fund
Absa Bank Botswana — Branch Code: 290267
Account no: 3070588 — Swift code: BARCBWGX
Branch: Govt Enclave — Reference: Full Names of Individual or Company

Queries or clarification relating to these sales may be addresses in return no later than 7 days before the closing date to **Tshupo M. Mosweu** or **Kagiso P. Kokole** Tel No. 3600114 / 3600118 or Email: tmosweu@mvafund.bw and kkokole@mvafund.bw and procurement@mvafund.bw

Date of sale: Friday 27th November 2026 at 3:00pm.
Viewing: MVA Fund House, Plot 50367 Fairgrounds, Gaborone, strictly during working days (Monday to Friday from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm).
For a detailed terms and conditions of sale visit our website at www.mvafund.bw.

318 8533 | Contact Centre: 79134600 318 8533
ROAD SAFETY - COMPENSATION - REHABILITATION - SUPPORT

MVA Fund House
Plot 50367, Fairgrounds Office Park
Tel: 3188533
Email: mvafund@mvafund.bw
Website: www.mvafund.bw

@mvafund.bw
MVA Fund Botswana
MVA Fund Botswana
MVA Fund Botswana

BPP EXPOSES CRACKS IN UDC COALITION

The smaller governing partner says it is being sidelined in public service appointments and political structures, raising fresh questions about power-sharing within the UDC.



SESUPO RANTSIMAKO

The Botswana People's Party (BPP) has raised concerns over what it considers unequal treatment within the governing Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) coalition, exposing potential fault lines in the alliance's power-sharing arrangements.

MARGINALISATION CONCERNS

Following a Central Committee meeting over the past weekend, the BPP adopted resolutions concerning its working relationship with coalition partners, accusing the UDC of sidelining its members in cadre deployment.

In a statement issued after the meeting, the party alleged that it had been excluded from public service appointments and certain political structures, raising questions about whether smaller coalition partners are receiving adequate recognition and representation in the governing arrangement.

The BPP said that while it recognised and supported cadre deployment by UDC contracting partners to strategic positions, such appointments should serve the collective interests of the coalition and advance its commitments to the people of Botswana.

> "The BPP says it has been excluded from public service appointments and certain political structures."

POWER-SHARING ROW

The party expressed dissatisfaction with what it described as the coalition's failure to adequately recognise and accommodate it in public service appointments and certain political structures.

It maintained that its concerns could not be overlooked, signalling growing discontent over its place and influence within the governing alliance.

"The BPP believes that matters affecting the direction and strategic interests of the UDC must be discussed through established coalition structures, guided by consultation, mutual respect and shared responsibility," the party said.

BRIEFING PROMISED

The BPP's position places renewed focus on how the UDC manages competing interests among its constituent parties, particularly regarding strategic appointments and political representation.

Reached for comment, BPP Secretary-General Mmantlha Sankoloba said she was not in a position to discuss the matter, indicating that the party would soon convene a press briefing to outline its concerns.

According to Sankoloba, the planned briefing will shed more light on the party's grievances and whether it intends to push for changes to the coalition's internal arrangements.

At the time of going to press, UDC spokesperson Dr Stephen Modise had not responded to The Botswana Gazette's enquiries.

VACANCIES

Bring your expertise. Make your mark.

On behalf of our client, we invite applications from suitably qualified candidates for the following positions.

TSABADIRICONSULTANCY

01 Legal Counsel & Board Secretary

Provides legal advisory, corporate governance and Board Secretariat services, advising the Chief Executive Officer, Board and Management, and coordinating Board and committee activities.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB) or equivalent legal qualification
- Admission as an Attorney in good standing
- Master's degree in Law, Corporate Governance or Risk Management, or an MBA, is an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' legal experience in corporate, regulatory, administrative or public law
- Demonstrated experience advising Boards
- Strong legal advisory, research, drafting, negotiation and case-management skills

02 Manager, Finance & Corporate Services

Manages financial planning, reporting and controls, and oversees procurement in line with the Public Procurement Act and other applicable legislation.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Professional accounting qualification (CA, ACCA, CPA or equivalent) is required
- Active membership of the Botswana Institute of Chartered Accountants (BICA) is mandatory
- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance or a related field is an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' post-qualification experience in full accounting operations and financial reporting
- Minimum of three (3) years' experience in a finance supervisory role
- Experience operating within Botswana's statutory, tax and regulatory environment

03 Manager, Human Capital & Administration

Manages end-to-end Human Resources and Administration, from workforce planning, performance and culture to employee relations, wellness, facilities and records.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Bachelor's degree in HR Management, Industrial Psychology, Business Administration or a related field
- CIPD, SHRM or equivalent HR certification is an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' progressive HR experience, including three (3) years in a supervisory role
- Experience in HR operations, organisational development, labour relations and administration

04 Manager, Corporate Communications

Manages corporate communications, stakeholder engagement and public education, protecting the Organisation's reputation and public trust.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Bachelor's degree in Communications, Public Relations, Journalism, Marketing, Corporate Affairs or a related field
- Professional certification in Public Relations or Corporate Communications is an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' experience in corporate communications, public relations, stakeholder engagement or public affairs
- Experience advising senior leaders and managing media and public-facing communication
- Strong writing, editing, presentation and event coordination skills

05 Manager, ICT & Digital Services

Manages the ICT function, ensuring secure and effective digital systems and infrastructure, and driving process automation and the use of digital platforms.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Bachelor's degree in Information Technology, Computer Science, Information Systems or a related field
- Relevant professional certifications are an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' progressive ICT experience, including three (3) years in a supervisory role
- Experience implementing and supporting application systems, software, infrastructure and cybersecurity
- Experience managing IT projects and suppliers, and supporting digital platforms
- Demonstrated experience in IT governance and controls

06 Manager, Strategy & Change Management

Coordinates the development and execution of strategy, oversees priority projects and leads organisational change from plan to measurable outcome.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Bachelor's degree in Business Management, Strategy, Project Management, Organisational Development or a related field
- A relevant postgraduate qualification is an advantage

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of seven (7) years' experience in strategy execution, project management, business transformation or change management
- Experience coordinating cross-functional projects and reporting to senior management or Board committees
- Strong business analysis, planning, performance reporting and presentation skills
- Professional certification in project or change management is an advantage

07 Personal Assistant

Provides administrative and secretarial support to the Chief Executive Officer, managing schedules, meetings, correspondence and records.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Diploma or degree in Business Administration, Secretarial Studies, Office Management or a related field

EXPERIENCE
- Minimum of three (3) years' experience providing executive or senior-level administrative support
- Experience managing complex diaries, meetings, correspondence and travel arrangements

HOW TO APPLY

Send a **cover letter and CV only**, quoting the **position title** in the subject line, to:

recruitment@tsabadiri.com

Closing date: **Friday, 27 November 2026**

Location: **Gaborone**

We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

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MADIBELATLHOPHO MODEL GAINS GROUND

Political parties have agreed to reforms that could formalise independent election monitoring and end a longstanding dispute over access to electronic voters' rolls ahead of the 2029 polls.

BONGANI MALUNGA

The controversial Madibelatlhopho election-monitoring model championed by the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) ahead of the 2024 general elections could soon become a nationally recognised electoral safeguard, following an agreement by political parties to allow individuals to appoint their own election observers.

The development marks a significant political turnaround for an initiative that encountered legal resistance while the UDC was in opposition, with the governing party now seeking to institutionalise similar monitoring arrangements for the wider political landscape.

Minister for State President, Defence and Security Moeti Mohwasa confirmed the breakthrough following the fourth All-Party Conference meeting on Tuesday, where political parties reached consensus on several electoral reforms aimed at strengthening transparency and public confidence.

OWN OBSERVERS

Under the proposed arrangement, individuals will be permitted to appoint their own election observers, subject to an agreed code of conduct. The reforms also seek to ensure equal representation of political parties among individuals authorised by Returning Officers, potentially strengthening parties' involvement in scrutinising electoral processes.

"The intention is to ensure that our elections are not only free and fair but also leave no room for any doubts about the integrity of the voting process," Mohwasa stated.

FROM COURT TO REFORM

The proposed changes could mark a turning point for Madibelatlhopho, an initiative associated with Michael Keakopa that attracted controversy over attempts to independently monitor voter registration ahead of the 2024 elections.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) opposed attempts to deploy political party representatives to monitor voter registration, maintaining that the process was governed by the Electoral Act.

A December 2023 Court of Appeal ruling reinforced the IEC's authority over voter registration, effectively frustrating attempts by political party agents to independently observe the exercise without legal authorisation.

The latest agreement could provide a formal framework for monitoring arrangements similar to those previously pursued by the UDC. However, the precise powers of the proposed observers, particularly during voter registration, remain to be clarified.

For the UDC, the development carries political significance because electoral safeguards it advocated while in opposition could now become available to its political rivals.

VOTERS' ROLL DISPUTE

Another significant breakthrough is the All-Party Conference's agreement that the IEC should provide electronic voters' rolls, potentially resolving one of the most contentious disputes preceding the 2024 general elections.

In October 2024, The Botswana Gazette reported that the IEC maintained it was not legally obligated to distribute electronic copies of the voters' roll to political parties. Then IEC Secretary Jeff Siamisang argued that the Electoral Act did not compel the commission to provide electronic copies, insisting that those seeking the register could purchase hard copies at P1.75 per page.

The position attracted criticism from opposition parties, which argued that restrictions on electronic access undermined their ability to independently scrutinise the voters' register. In May 2024, this publication reported that opposition parties were contemplating litigation against the IEC over the unavailability of electronic voters' rolls and other electoral concerns.

The latest agreement signals a potential reversal of restrictions that previously generated political confrontation over electoral transparency.

MORE CHANGES

Beyond election monitoring and voters' rolls, the All-Party Conference also agreed to permit passports and driver's licences as alternative voter identification documents, introduce transparent ballot boxes and count votes at ward polling stations.

Priority voting would also be extended to persons with disabilities, pregnant women and senior citizens aged 65 and above. The parties further agreed that electronic voting and counting would not be introduced during the next elections, while an Electoral Tribunal would be established to handle election petitions.

Mohwasa confirmed that the agreed reforms would be submitted to Cabinet before being presented to Parliament as Bills for consideration. Their implementation will therefore depend on parliamentary approval and the legal framework governing electoral monitoring, with the 2029 general elections potentially becoming the first major test of the proposed changes.

BVI
BOTSWANA VACCINE INSTITUTE

TENDER NOTICE

Botswana Vaccine Institute Limited (BVI) is inviting companies to submit proposal for the below mentioned tender.

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR PROVISION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

NO	TENDER REF:	DESCRIPTION:	PPRA CODE:	PROCUREMENT METHOD	COMPULSORY SITE VISIT TIME AND DATE	TENDER CLOSING DATE & TIME
1.	BVI/ FIN/09/2026-27	INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS	CODE: 134- FINANCE RELATED SERVICES SUBCODE:06-AUDITING SERVICES	OPEN DOMESTIC BIDDING	NO SITE VISIT REQUIREMENT	01 December 2026 at 1000hrs (CAT)

Tender documents will be available with effect from **18 November 2026** and will be sent to the bidders via email upon submission of proof of payment of a non-refundable fee of **BWP250.00 (two hundred and fifty Pula Only) each.** Youth owned companies will pay **BWP125.00 (one hundred and twenty-five pula only)** each non-refundable payable to the BVI Account details provided below. Proof of payment must be emailed to procurement@bvi.co.bw. To access the full tender notice please visit https://bvi.co.bw/tenders/

The BVI banking details are as follows:

Bank: Access Bank **Account type**: Current **Branch code**: 552067 **Branch name**: Corporate
Account Number: 1002533640701 **Swift code:** FMBZBWGA

Motswana Arrested Enroute to Russia-Ukraine War

A 38-year-old Motswana has been arrested at OR Tambo International Airport in South Africa for allegedly attempting to travel to join the Russia-Ukraine war.

GAZETTE REPORTER

A 38-year-old Motswana is expected to appear in the Kempton Park Magistrates' Court on Thursday after allegedly attempting to leave South Africa to join the Russia-Ukraine war.

The suspect has been identified as Kefentse Mokgwathise.

According to the South African Police Service, he faces charges under the Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Act 15 of 1998 following his arrest on Wednesday night at OR Tambo International Airport.

He was arrested by a multidisciplinary investigation team comprising INTERPOL Pretoria NCB, the Hawks' Crimes Against the State and Serious Organised Crime Investigation unit based in Germiston, international law enforcement agencies, SAPS Crime Intelligence, the Modus Operandi Centre, the Gauteng Provincial Tracking Team and various security companies.

"Acting on intelligence gathered during the investigation, the multidisciplinary team operationalised an intervention that resulted in the arrest. The suspect was allegedly en route to fight in the Russia-Ukraine war," Hawks spokesperson Katlego Mogale said.

SIMILAR ARRESTS

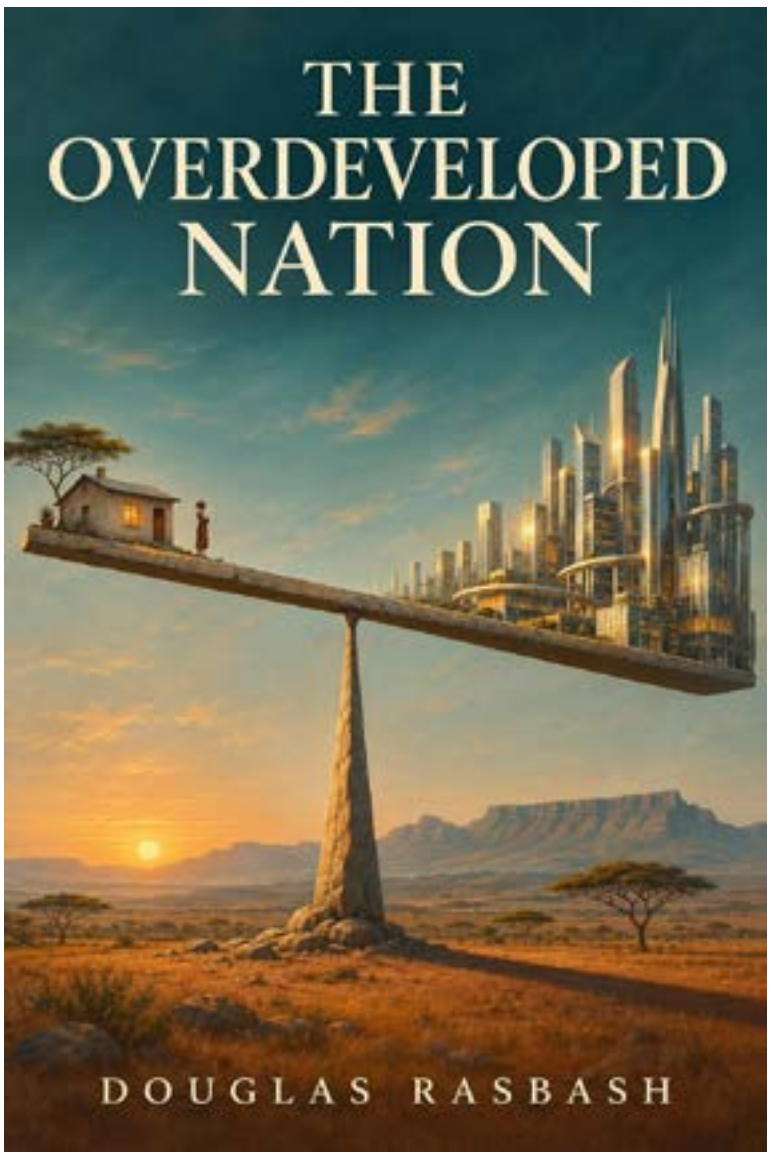
Earlier last week, Mogale said, nine foreign nationals were arrested in connection with a similar alleged attempt to leave South Africa to join the Russia-Ukraine war.

> "The suspect was allegedly en route to fight in the Russia-Ukraine war, according to the Hawks."

The suspects, aged between 20 and 26, were apprehended on Sunday night at OR Tambo International Airport and at a hotel in Bruma.

Mogale stated that, at the time of their arrest, the nine were allegedly preparing to board flights out of the country when police moved in.





Prominent Botswana Gazette features writer Douglas Rasbash turns his scrutiny of megaprojects, inequality and public spending into a new book, The Overdeveloped Nation, asking whether bigger investments truly make ordinary lives better.

THE OVERDEVELOPED NATION: WHEN MORE BECOMES LESS

A nation can build taller buildings, announce bigger investments and expand its infrastructure while ordinary families struggle to live better. In *The Overdeveloped Nation: When More Becomes Less*, Douglas Rasbash explores this contradiction, asking when additional development begins to cost society more than it delivers.

The book opens before sunrise in Chitungwiza, outside Harare. Thandai, a hardworking single mother, prepares for her housekeeping job while her daughter sleeps beside her. National leaders promise modernisation and prosperity. Her immediate concerns are transport fares, food and whether she can afford another room.

Thandai is fictional, but the distance between national ambition and household experience is familiar. Her story gives a human dimension to an exploration of economics, inequality, public investment, technology and environmental responsibility.

The book develops arguments familiar to readers of Rasbash's Botswana Gazette contributions. "Procurement Without Purpose: Why Development Has Not Delivered for Botswana" questioned the assumption that infrastructure spending necessarily produces prosperity. "Botswana's Mega-Project Delusion" challenged the celebration of investment totals before their economic benefits have been established. www.thegazette.news

"The Growth Nobody Feels" examined the separation between national economic performance and household experience, while "From Cowboys to Spacemen" called for a development model suited to contemporary challenges. These concerns find a broader framework in the book's central proposition: underdevelopment and overdevelopment can coexist. www.thegazette.news

A country may lack essential services while committing scarce resources to projects whose full social costs exceed their benefits. Rasbash asks what each additional investment achieves, who benefits, who pays and which alternatives become impossible once resources are committed.

Across twenty-one chapters, comparisons involving Botswana, China, Ireland and South Korea illuminate the politics of construction, the risks of megaprojects and the wealth destroyed through neglect. Maintenance and evaluation become central tests of responsible development.

Artificial intelligence and automation introduce further questions. Greater productivity creates opportunities, but ownership, institutions and the distribution of income determine whether households share the gains. Technological progress requires a social purpose.

> "A country may lack essential services while committing scarce resources to projects whose full social costs exceed their benefits."

Throughout, Thandai's aspirations keep the argument grounded. Privacy, dependable transport, education, meaningful work and greater influence over decisions become practical measures of advancement.

The book recognises the continuing need for investment wherever essential capacity is missing. Its challenge is to connect ambition with evidence, affordability and lasting public benefit.

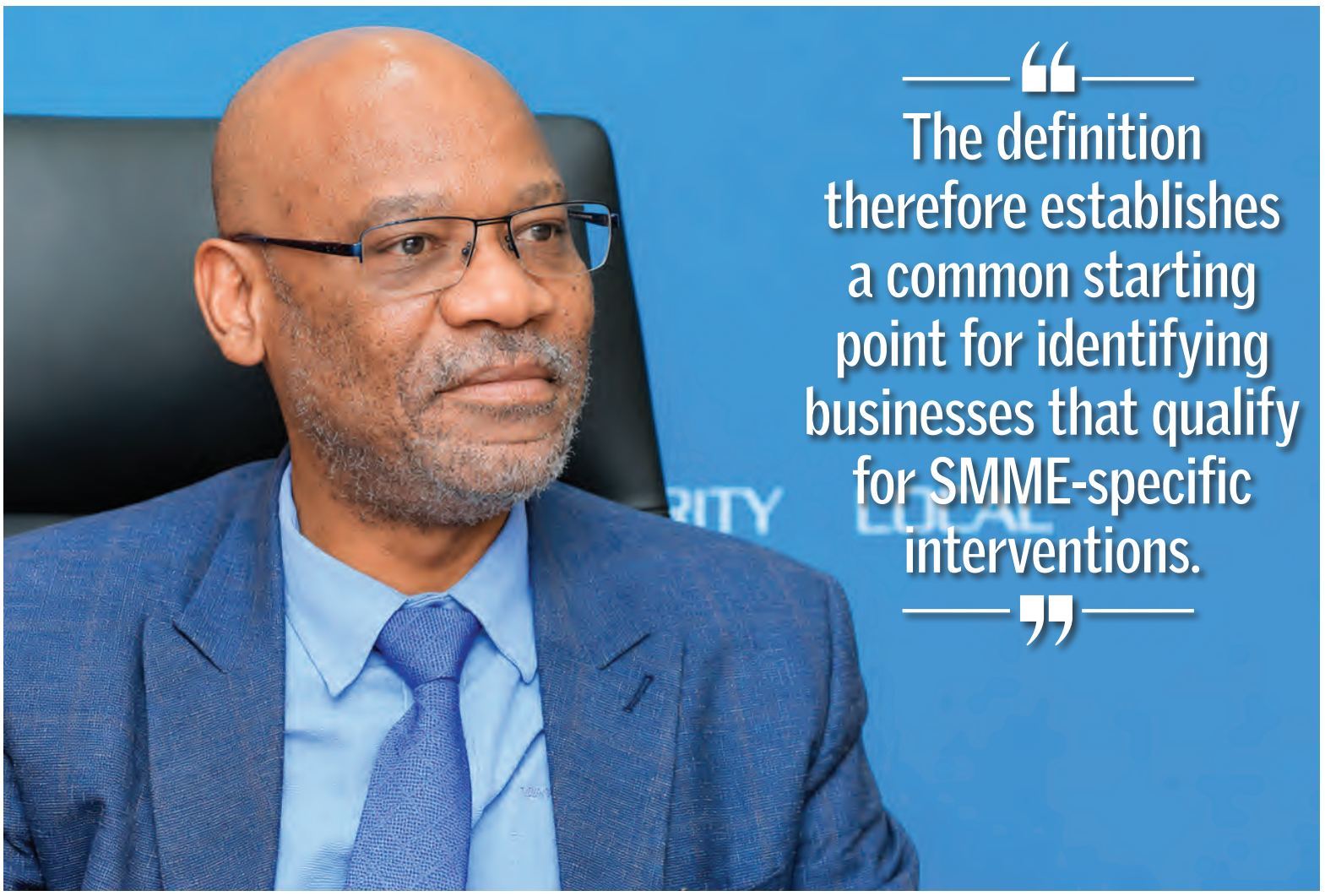
Accessible to readers beyond economics, *The Overdeveloped Nation* asks a question: what must national progress deliver before a mother and her daughter can experience it in their own home and future?

Out in e Books from Amazon…

https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0HRSFLZKN

New SME Rules Unlock Opportunities

Botswana's revised business classification promises fairer access to targeted enterprise support, replacing 27-year-old thresholds and giving entrepreneurs a clearer place in the economy.



LEA Caretaker Chief Executive Officer Thato Jensen *Photo Credit: LEA*

GAZETTE REPORTER

Botswana's entrepreneurs could benefit from fairer access to business development programmes and targeted government support following the official adoption of a revised national definition for micro, small and medium enterprises (SMMEs).

The policy breakthrough, championed by the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), replaces financial thresholds established in 1999 that had remained unchanged for 27 years despite inflation and shifting economic conditions.

Dynah Solani, LEA's Head of Information and Knowledge Management, says the revised definition creates a common framework for determining which businesses qualify for SMME-specific interventions.

OUTDATED THRESHOLDS

"The definition had become outdated because the financial thresholds had not been adjusted for inflation over the past 27 years," Solani explained.

LEA reviewed the original thresholds, adjusted them for inflation and successfully lobbied government to adopt the revised figures, which were subsequently gazetted.

Under the new classification, micro-enterprises employ up to six people and generate annual turnover not exceeding P270,000. Small enterprises fall within the P270,000 to P7 million turnover range, while medium enterprises generate between P7 million and P20 million annually.

Importantly, where employee numbers and turnover place a business in different categories, annual turnover takes precedence.

FAIRER ACCESS

The implications extend beyond simply defining businesses.

Previously, banks, government institutions and enterprise development agencies sometimes applied different financial thresholds when determining which businesses qualified for SME financing and support.

The revised definition establishes a common national framework that these institutions are expected to adopt.

"The definition therefore establishes a common starting point for identifying businesses that qualify for SMME-specific interventions," Solani said.

However, she cautioned that classification does not automatically guarantee access to funding, grants or government tenders. Individual programmes will continue applying their own eligibility requirements.

NEXT POLICY PUSH

LEA is now advocating for a national SMME registration system that would allow qualifying businesses to obtain official certificates confirming their status.

Such certification could eventually become an important requirement for accessing designated government subsidies and enterprise support programmes.

Solani stressed that the registration system remains a proposal and is not yet a legal requirement.

"The revised definition was the first part because it provides the basis for everything else," she explained.

For entrepreneurs, the immediate priority is understanding where their businesses fall within the new categories.

Solani encouraged business owners to approach LEA for guidance on available development services and applicable requirements.

The policy victory marks an important step towards a more consistent and coordinated system of enterprise development, although its practical benefits will depend on how institutions implement the revised framework.



One Economy, Two Energy Policies

As electricity imports fall, BPC seeks a 33% tariffincrease while government regulates petroleum prices to protect consumers, raising questions about the coherence of Botswana's energy policy.



Photo Credit: THEPRESSPHOTO

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Botswana imports virtually all its petroleum. Government regulates fuel prices through a system designed, in part, to protect households and businesses from international price volatility. Yet electricity, increasingly generated domestically using Botswana's abundant energy resources, faces a proposed 33% tariff increase.

Both are forms of energy. Both affect household welfare, industrial competitiveness and inflation. Yet government appears to treat them as entirely separate economic concerns.

One economy. Two energy policies. No apparent coordination.

IMPORTS COLLAPSE

According to Statistics Botswana, electricity imports fell by 61.8% in the first quarter of 2026 and 59.4% in the second quarter, compared with the corresponding periods in 2025.

Over six months, imports plunged from 1,029 gigawatt-hours (GWh) to just 403 GWh, a reduction of approximately 626 million kilowatt-hours.

Meanwhile, more than 200 MW of renewable generation capacity has been connected to the national grid, including major solar developments at Mmadinare and Jwaneng.

BPC has also reported that its own generation assets supplied 86% of electricity requirements in the first quarter of 2026/27, compared with 67% in the previous year.

Botswana is finally reducing its dependence on expensive imported electricity. Surely that should be good news for consumers?

THE SAVINGS QUESTION

BPC's published 2023/24 financial information reveals that imported electricity cost an average P2.07 per kilowatt-hour. Emergency electricity purchased from South Africa's Eskom cost an astonishing P5.02 per kWh.

At the historical average import price, the 626 million kWh reduction represents approximately P1.3 billion in gross avoided electricity purchases over six months.

Domestic replacement generation has costs, of course. But illustrative calculations suggest potential net savings of P545 million to P920 million, depending on replacement costs.

These are not verified BPC savings. They are an indication of the financial significance of reduced imports.

So why, with domestic generation improving and expensive imports collapsing, does BPC need another enormous tariff increase?

The corporation reportedly received an average 9% tariff increase in August 2026. Now it seeks a further 33% for 2027/28.

BPC may have legitimate financial obligations, including debt, maintenance and capital investment. But those costs must be reconciled transparently with the changing economics of electricity supply.

Consumers should not be asked to finance yesterday's problems without receiving the benefits of today's improvements.

ENERGY TRANSITION

The inconsistency extends into Botswana's emerging electric mobility policy.

Government is planning a national electric vehicle charging network for 2027. Replacing imported petrol and diesel with domestically generated electricity could eventually save billions of pula in foreign exchange annually.

But the economics of electric mobility depend heavily on relative energy prices.

Increasing electricity tariffs by 33%, while managing petroleum prices to moderate consumer increases, weakens the incentive to switch from fossil fuels to electricity.

The same applies to industrial electrification and other opportunities to substitute imported petroleum with domestic renewable energy.

Government cannot promote electrification with one hand while undermining its economic attractiveness with the other.

This is not merely an environmental issue. It concerns Botswana's balance of payments, energy security, competitiveness and long-term economic development.

WHO PROTECTS CONSUMERS?

For a household spending P600 monthly on electricity, a uniform 33% increase would add approximately P2,376 annually, assuming unchanged consumption.

Businesses would face higher operating costs, potentially feeding into prices and employment.

Why should the economic consequences of petroleum price increases justify government intervention, while electricity consumers face a potentially much sharper adjustment?

"Consumers should not be asked to finance yesterday's problems without receiving the benefits of today's improvements."

The objective should not be artificially cheap energy. It should be efficiently produced, fairly priced energy that supports national development.

BERA MUST ASK

On 17 November, the Ministry of Minerals and Energy confirmed that BPC's application had not been approved. The Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA) is consulting the public until 11 December.

Before approving any increase, BERA must establish the actual savings from reduced imports, the contractual costs of new solar generation, changes in operating efficiency and BPC's current cost per kWh.

Above all, government must explain how petroleum and electricity pricing fit into a single national economic strategy.

The issue is not whether BPC should recover its legitimate costs. It is whether those costs are efficient, justified and consistent with the country's wider economic objectives.

If Botswana is finally escaping expensive imported electricity, why are consumers being asked to pay dramatically more?

Energy is one economic system. It is time government started treating it as one.

The Botswana Gazette
BUSINESS NEWS

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Photo Credit: Bloomberg

De Beers Takeover Faces Costly Reality Check

Industry experts warn Botswana that acquiring a bigger stake is only the beginning, with substantial capital needed to revive diamond demand

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's ambitious plan to double its stake in De Beers from 15 to 30 percent has been met with a sobering reminder from international diamond industry experts that securing ownership of the mining giant could prove easier than financing its long-term recovery.

While President Duma Boko has hailed the proposed acquisition as a historic opportunity for Botswana to gain greater influence over the global diamond industry, experts have cautioned that the transaction itself will not guarantee a return to profitability.

Their warnings shift attention from the ownership structure to a potentially more expensive undertaking, securing sustained capital injections to finance De Beers' daily operations, rebuild consumer demand and restore the declining appeal of natural diamonds.

DIFFICULT FINANCIAL UNDERTAKING

Tobias Kormind, co-founder of international diamond jewellery retailer 77 Diamonds, has warned that the Global Diamond Consortium (GDC), which Botswana has endorsed as the preferred bidder for Anglo American's 85 percent stake, faces a difficult financial and commercial undertaking.

"Beyond the transaction terms, securing substantial ongoing capital investment will be essential for day-to-day operations and rebuilding consumer demand," Kormind stated in remarks reported by international jewellery publication JCK.

His assessment raises questions about the financial commitments Botswana and its prospective investment partners could face beyond the initial acquisition, particularly as the country grapples with mounting fiscal pressures and a prolonged downturn in diamond revenues.

NO AUTOMATIC REVERSAL

The warning has been reinforced by Rapaport Chief Executive Officer Dan Mano, who believes that changing De Beers' ownership will not automatically reverse the industry's fortunes.

"De Beers remains uniquely positioned to influence the future of the global natural diamond market. But changing ownership alone will not restore confidence. The new owners must demonstrate financial discipline, align rough diamond supply with genuine market demand, and make substantial, sustained investments in global consumer marketing," Mano stated.

He stressed that the immediate priority must be restoring the desirability, value and profitability of natural diamonds throughout the supply chain.

CHANGING LUXURY MARKET

Kormind further warned that prospective owners must confront a changing luxury market in which diamonds are increasingly competing with other high-end consumer products. "De Beers once taught the world to desire diamonds. Its prospective owners now face the immense task of rekindling that desire at a time when luxury fashion houses and watchmakers have completely stolen the consumer spotlight," he observed.

The financial implications could extend beyond marketing expenditure. According to a November 10 Rapaport report, the consortium's proposed acquisition reportedly involves an upfront payment of US$750 million and a further US$250 million in deferred payments. A separate US$500 million capital injection into De Beers was also reportedly under discussion.

These figures have not been confirmed as binding transaction terms, while Botswana's precise financial obligations remain undisclosed.

SUBSTANTIAL CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS

The link between acquisition costs and subsequent capital requirements is particularly significant for Botswana, whose government has yet to publicly detail how the proposed additional 15 percent shareholding will be financed.

During Monday's State of the Nation Address, Boko announced that Botswana had selected the Gareth Penny-led consortium as its preferred partner, arguing that greater ownership would give the country stronger influence over De Beers' strategic direction.

> "Industry experts' warnings shift attention from the ownership structure to a potentially more expensive undertaking, securing sustained capital injections to finance De Beers' daily operations, rebuild consumer demand and restore the declining appeal of natural diamonds."

IMMEDIATE COMMERCIAL CHALLENGE

The industry experts' assessments suggest that the immediate commercial challenge remains restoring the core natural diamond business.

The warnings coincide with renewed production challenges at De Beers' Botswana operations, where rough diamond output declined by 20 percent to 4.83 million carats during the third quarter of 2026, compared with 6.03 million carats during the corresponding period last year.

According to De Beers' production report released on 20

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Botswana Trapped In Growing Borrowing Cycle

Botswana faces mounting borrowing pressures as a P26.35 billion fiscal deficit and P38.46 billion debt-service bill strain government finances



Image is AI Generated for Illustration purposes

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's worsening debt burden and persistent fiscal deficits are pushing the government towards further borrowing, with debt-service payments projected to reach P38.46 billion during the 2026/2027 financial year.

The Ministry of Finance's 2027/2028 Budget Strategy Paper paints a picture of mounting fiscal pressure, warning that widening deficits, declining government financial assets and rising borrowing costs are increasingly limiting the country's ability to finance expenditure without accumulating additional debt.

The paper projects a P26.35 billion fiscal deficit for 2026/2027, equivalent to approximately nine percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while public debt is expected to climb to 45 percent of GDP by March 2027.

CREATING A BORROWING CYCLE

The ministry acknowledges that Botswana's deteriorating fiscal position is creating a borrowing cycle in which government must increasingly turn to lenders to bridge financing gaps, while simultaneously accommodating the growing cost of servicing existing debt.

"With fiscal buffers already constrained, the widening fiscal deficit in 2026 will increase the need for borrowing, raising debt-service costs and further limiting the fiscal space available for priority spending," the ministry states.

P38 BILLION DEBT-SERVICE PRESSURE

The ministry reveals that Botswana's total public debt, including guarantees, stood at P95 billion as of June 2026, representing 32 percent of GDP. Of this amount, domestic debt accounted for P62.83 billion, while external debt stood at P32.17 billion.

The P38.46 billion projected debt-service bill, including interest, illustrates the substantial repayment obligations confronting government as it seeks additional financing to sustain public expenditure. The ministry warns that increasing debt-service costs could further constrain resources available for essential services and development programmes.

Compounding the situation is the depletion of government savings as the Government Investment Account (GIA), a key financial buffer, stood at just P3.75 billion in July 2026, having temporarily recovered to P6.1 billion in April. This represents a dramatic decline from P37.3 billion in 2014, leaving government with considerably less financial capacity to absorb revenue shocks without resorting to borrowing.

"As financial assets have diminished, deficits have increasingly been debt-financed, accelerating the accumulation of public debt and raising debt-service costs," the ministry notes.

GOVERNMENT EXPANDS BORROWING CAPACITY

To address the financing gap, the government has increased its statutory debt ceiling to 60 percent of GDP and expanded its Government Bond Issuance Programme from P55 billion to P85 billion. Its 2026/2027 borrowing strategy includes P10 billion in domestic bond issuances and up to P2 billion in net Treasury bill issuance, with additional financing expected from domestic and external lenders.

The government has also secured financing facilities including a EUR400 million loan from Standard Chartered Bank Botswana, a USD270 million syndicated facility involving Absa Bank Botswana, First National Bank Botswana and Stanbic Bank Botswana, and a USD170 million facility from the OPEC Fund for International Development.

These arrangements are intended to bridge financing gaps, sustain essential public services and support economic development. However, the ministry acknowledges that rising borrowing costs, subdued economic growth and diminished financial reserves have increased the country's exposure to sovereign debt stress, with the risk rising from low to medium in 2026/2027.

> "The ministry acknowledges that Botswana's deteriorating fiscal position is creating a borrowing cycle in which government must increasingly turn to lenders to bridge financing gaps, while simultaneously accommodating the growing cost of servicing existing debt."

The government maintains that new borrowing will prioritise economically viable investments capable of generating long-term growth rather than financing recurrent consumption.

From Page 19

October, Orapa experienced a particularly sharp contraction, with output falling by 36 percent to 1.85 million carats, largely due to scheduled plant maintenance.

Jwaneng also recorded a five percent year-on-year decline to 2.98 million carats, while De Beers warned that planned maintenance at the mine during the fourth quarter would substantially reduce Botswana's production from third-quarter levels.

The latest quarterly setback comes despite Botswana's cumulative production for the first nine months of 2026 remaining 14 percent above the corresponding period last year, highlighting the uneven recovery across the country's mining operations.

CHALLENGES

The operational challenges are compounded by weaker rough diamond prices, with De Beers reporting a 37 percent decline in its consolidated average realised price to US$97 per carat during the first nine months of 2026.

Financial pressure has also persisted despite efforts to contain costs. De Beers recorded an underlying earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) loss of US$113 million during the first half of 2026, although this represented an improvement from the US$189 million loss recorded during the corresponding period in 2025.

In Botswana, underlying EBITDA from mining operations declined from US$227 million to US$119 million despite increased production volumes, illustrating how weaker prices can undermine profitability even when more diamonds are recovered.

The figures reinforce concerns that Botswana's proposed increase in ownership could coincide with continued pressure on De Beers' earnings, potentially delaying meaningful investment returns. However, the production reductions also reflect planned maintenance and efforts to balance supply with demand, rather than solely operational deterioration.



Choppies Eyes Fintech Future Beyond Retail

Choppies is strengthening AI systems and financial services as its CEO pursues a long-term ambition to move beyond supermarkets alone



Group Chief Executive Officer Ramachandran Ottapathu *Photo Credit: Social Media*

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's retail giant Choppies is plotting a future beyond supermarket aisles, with Group Chief Executive Officer Ramachandran Ottapathu outlining an ambitious long-term vision to transform the company into a financial technology (fintech) business.

Speaking at Choppies' Long Service Excellence Awards ceremony in Gaborone last Friday, Ottapathu revealed that the retailer is gradually integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into its database systems to improve everyday operations and lay the technological foundation for a broader business transformation.

"Our aim is to become, eventually, a fintech company than just merely a retailer. That's a dream we are pursuing, hopefully one day we will get there," Ottapathu remarked.

AMBITION TO EVOLVE

His comments underline Choppies' ambition to evolve from a traditional grocery retailer into a technology-driven enterprise, potentially placing financial services at the centre of its future business model.

The company is already laying the groundwork for this transformation. Its 2026 Integrated Annual Report reveals that AI is being deployed in routine tasks, complex data analysis, risk management and fraud detection.

Choppies has also established a foothold in financial services through its Monyglob platform and Payzana mobile wallet, offering services that extend beyond conventional supermarket transactions.

The financial opportunity is beginning to materialise. According to the group's audited results for the financial year ended June 2026, commission income from financial services increased by approximately 24 percent, from P45 million to P56 million.

ADDITIONAL REVENUE STREAM

Although this remains a relatively small contribution against Choppies' P9.89 billion in overall group revenue, it demonstrates the potential for financial services to become an additional revenue stream.

Choppies' extensive retail footprint could also provide an advantage in pursuing this ambition. The company operates 314 stores across Botswana, Namibia and Zambia, attracting approximately 2.3 million customer visits weekly.

This customer reach presents opportunities to expand digital payments, money transfers and other financial services through an established retail network, potentially generating revenue beyond grocery purchases.

The strategy also mirrors developments among established international retailers. South Africa's Shoprite has expanded into transactional financial services through its Money Market Account, while British supermarket giant Tesco continues to offer Tesco-branded banking products through its partnership with Barclays.

LONG TERM UNDERTAKING

However, Choppies' ambition remains a long-term undertaking rather than an imminent transformation. Its successful execution will depend on continued technological investment, regulatory compliance, cybersecurity and the ability to build customer confidence in its financial products.

Ottapathu did not outline a specific timeline for achieving the fintech ambition or identify which additional financial products the company intends to introduce.

BPOPF Closes In On Letshego Control

BPOPF could own 53.5% of Letshego after other shareholders bought just 14% of the new shares offered in November 2026

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund (BPOPF) is closing in on majority ownership of Letshego Africa Holdings after a weak response from other shareholders left it to buy most of the lender's new shares.

According to results announced on 12 November, Letshego offered nearly 1.1 billion new shares at 73 thebe each to raise P800 million. Shareholders subscribed for only 361.9 million shares, or 33% of the offer.

BPOPF subscribed for 207.5 million shares worth P151.5 million. All other shareholders combined took just 154.4 million shares, worth P112.7 million, representing 14.09% of the total offer.

Under the arrangement, existing investors were given the first chance to buy more shares. BPOPF had promised to purchase whatever was left, committing it to take up the remaining 734 million shares, subject to regulatory approval where required.

Of those, 503.7 million will be added to its initial purchase, giving BPOPF 711.2 million new shares worth P519.2 million on 20 November. Another 230.3 million shares, worth P168.1 million, await approval from regulators, including the Competition and Consumer Authority. The full deal would cost BPOPF P687.3 million.

A NEW OWNERSHIP BALANCE

If cleared, the full purchase will lift BPOPF's shareholding from 37.2% to approximately 53.5%, leaving all other owners with about 46.5% combined, which would give the pension fund the m greater influence over Letshego's direction.

Without that approval, BPOPF would hold just under 50%, and Letshego would receive P631.9 million instead of the full P800 million.

Botswana Life Insurance was Letshego's second-largest shareholder, holding 27.46% at the end of 2025. Other owners include institutions, individual investors and shares held by Letshego itself. The latest announcement does not show each investor's new percentage, meaning a complete post-offer register is still unavailable.

BPOPF'S LOCAL PORTFOLIO

Letshego would join other businesses where BPOPF already holds majority ownership or control. These include Bona Life Insurance, which it ultimately owns through investment companies, and NMG Administrators Botswana, in which its Lecha investment arm holds 51%.

The pension fund also controls telecoms operator Mascom through Deci Investments, a BPOPF-controlled company holding about 60% of Mascom. Its other major but non-majority, investments include retailer Sefalana (49.4%), property group Letlole La Rona (44.82% in mid-2025), PrimeTime Property Holdings (around 32% in 2026) and Chobe Holdings (32% in 2025).

> "If cleared, the full purchase will lift BPOPF's shareholding from 37.2% to approximately 53.5%, leaving all other owners with about 46.5% combined, which would give the pension fund the m greater influence over Letshego's direction."

BoB Tightens Corporate Access To Forex Reserves

Moseki says exchange-rate adjustments are steering companies towards market-held foreign currency rather than central bank reserves, protecting Botswana's import capacity

BONGANI MALUNGA

The Bank of Botswana (BoB) has defended its controversial exchange-rate adjustments as a strategic intervention designed to discourage companies from drawing on the country's official foreign exchange reserves when foreign currency is already available within the banking system.

Speaking at the Financial Stability Council (FSC) media briefing in Gaborone last Wednesday, BoB Governor Lesego Moseki revealed that the adjustments were partly intended to reduce corporate reliance on central bank reserves, encouraging businesses to source foreign currency from commercial banks instead.

Moseki explained that the central bank was aware that substantial foreign currency holdings already existed within the commercial banking sector. However, companies seeking foreign currency were still contributing to demand for the central bank's reserves, prompting them to re-



BoB Governor Lesego Moseki *Photo Credit: The Projects Magazine*

think the exchange-rate framework.

RECYCLING OF FOREIGN CURRENCY

The intervention was therefore designed to discourage such reliance and encourage the recycling of foreign currency already circulating within the domestic banking system. This means encouraging companies requiring foreign currency to obtain it through commercial banks and other market participants rather than placing additional pressure on Botswana's official reserves.

Moseki believes the adjustments have achieved positive results, particularly in preserving the country's foreign currency buffers.

"For us the impact of the adjustments of the exchange rate framework have been very positive. The intention was to preserve the official foreign exchange reserves so that in the future we may be able to buy goods from other countries, also to make our exports more competitive in other markets so that we can get that money that we need to buy," Moseki explained.

PROTECTING FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

His remarks underscore the significance of protecting foreign exchange reserves in an economy heavily dependent on imports. With Botswana relying on foreign markets for essential commodities, machinery, fuel and other goods, maintaining adequate reserves is critical to safeguarding the country's ability to finance future imports.

"We have seen stabilisation and some increase in the level of foreign exchange reserves, that's a positive," Moseki added.

The governor suggested that the central bank considers the adjustments successful not merely because of their potential to make Botswana's exports more competitive but also because they encourage more efficient use of foreign currency already available domestically.

Moseki further noted that the policy presents an economic balancing act, while discouraging corporate reliance on official reserves could strengthen Botswana's foreign currency position, a weaker Pula also increases the local cost of imported goods.

Govt Abandons Cash-First Enterprise Funding

The government is shifting from cash-first enterprise funding towards tailored business support after Gaolathe flagged staggering failures in legacy funding schemes



BONGANI MALUNGA

The Botswana government is moving away from indiscriminately distributing money to aspiring entrepreneurs after Vice President and Minister of Finance Ndaba Gaolathe revealed that some legacy business funding initiatives have recorded failure rates approaching a staggering 99 percent.

Speaking at the 2027/2028 Budget Pitso for General Stakeholders on Monday, Gaolathe delivered a damning assessment of the government's historical approach to entrepreneurship financing, singling out the Chema Chema programme and Youth Development Fund (YDF) as examples of initiatives undermined by structural weaknesses.

His remarks signal a fundamental shift in government's enterprise financing philosophy, with future funding expected to prioritise business preparedness, sector-specific support, access to markets and sustainability rather than simply disbursing money.

NO CLEAR CRITERIA

"When you look at the way Chema Chema was structured in the past, first of all, there was no clear criteria, there was no monitoring, there were no sectoral priorities, there were no segmentation priorities, and many of the projects actually that have been that were awarded Chema Chema, the failure rate is near 98, 99 percent," Gaolathe revealed.

The Vice President argued that the shortcomings of previous financing models went beyond loan repayments, suggesting that many beneficiaries had been inadequately equipped to establish commercially viable businesses in the first place.

He noted that the exceptionally high failure rates associated with Chema Chema and the YDF exposed longstanding weaknesses in how government identifies, prepares and supports prospective entrepreneurs.

NO THROWING MONEY AT ASPIRING BUSINESSES

"But what we have done going forward, which is what is important, is that the government is now moving away from throwing money at aspiring businesses," he declared. Under the emerging approach, entrepreneurs will be expected to benefit from capacity building, business management support, partnerships and market access before progressing to the financing stage.

"The government is moving towards building systems and building ecosystems, and that realisation means that even before you hand out money to support businesses, you need to ensure that those to whom you are handing the money are empowered to actually use that money wisely," Gaolathe explained.

"You need to ensure that they are empowered in terms of capacity to find partnerships, capacity to manage, capacity to find markets, and once they are empowered in that sense, then you move to the next stage of funding them."

PROPOSED CHANGES

The proposed changes also recognise that a one-size-fits-all financing model cannot adequately support businesses operating across different sectors.

Gaolathe explained that agriculture, technology and property ventures require distinct financing instruments and interventions, reflecting differences in their operating environments, capital requirements and commercial opportunities.

The government also intends to accommodate entrepreneurs in remote areas and indigenous communities whose economic circumstances and access to resources may require specialised assistance.Central to the transition will be a new Youth Fund and an ecosystem Fund of Funds, designed to strengthen coordination between training institutions, financial lenders and guarantee providers.

"With the new youth fund, with the new ecosystem fund of funds, government will no longer be throwing money at businesses. It will be an ecosystem that ensures that there's collaboration among training institutions, collaboration among guarantee institutions, financial lending institutions, some of which specialise at startups, some of those specialise at expansion," Gaolathe stated.

LEA, CEDA Sign SMME Support Deal

A new partnership between LEA and CEDA seeks to bridge the gap between business development and financing, with plans to improve funding access, mentorship and support for citizen-owned enterprises.

The Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) and the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) have signed an agreement to coordinate business development and financing support for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).



LINKING SUPPORT AND FINANCE

The agreement brings together LEA's business advisory, training and incubation services with CEDA's financing products. It will cover business plan development, client referrals, mentorship, market access and improved access to finance.

Under the arrangement, LEA will profile entrepreneurs and prepare viable business proposals for funding consideration, while CEDA will refer clients requiring technical training, business planning and incubation to LEA.

The agencies also plan to introduce a digital one-stop portal, strengthen support for informal businesses and establish programmes targeting high-growth enterprises and start-ups.

JOINT IMPLEMENTATION

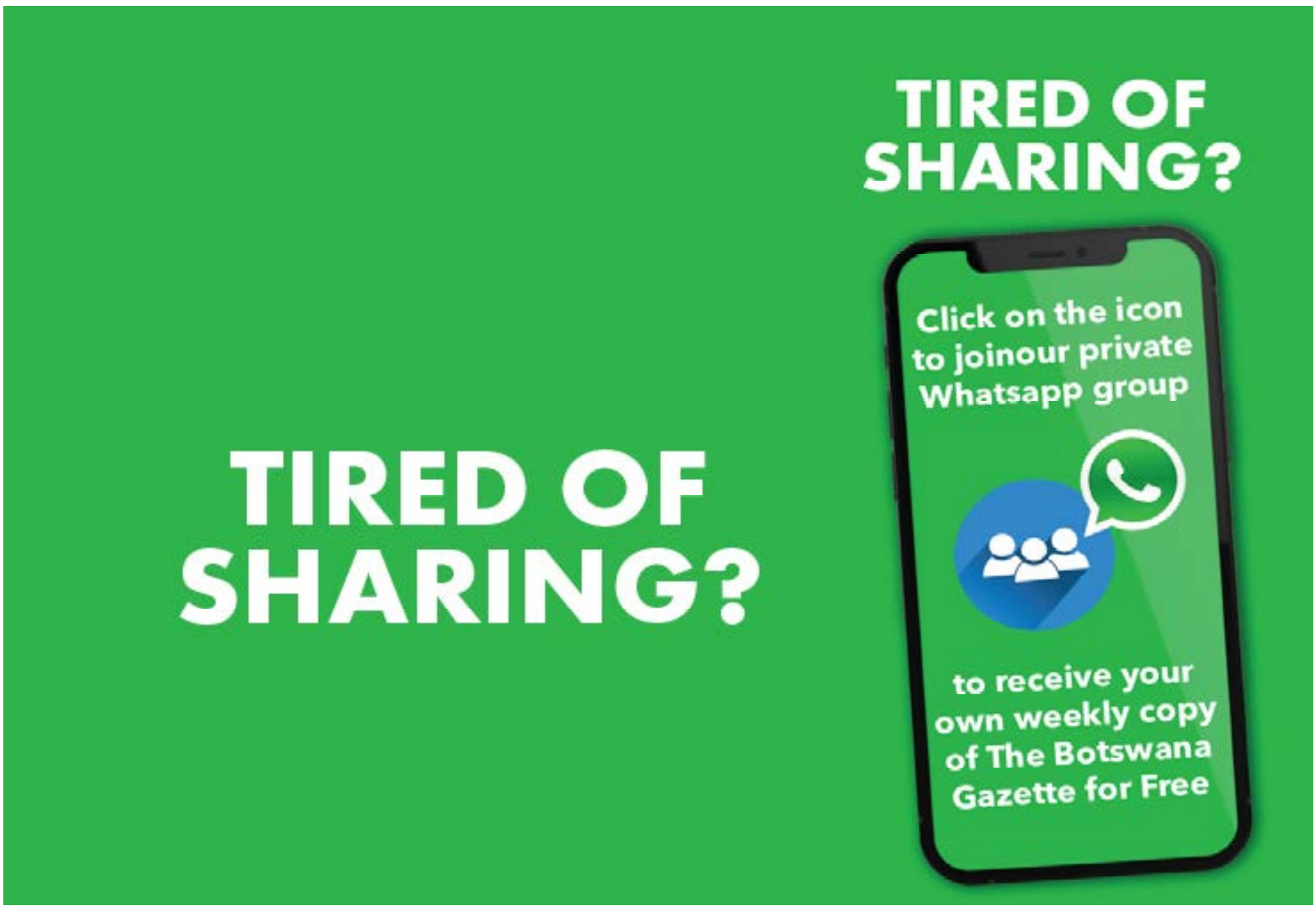
A six-member Joint Steering Committee, comprising three representatives from each institution, will oversee implementation and meet quarterly to assess progress. The agreement also provides for a shared dashboard tracking business survival, job creation, loan repayments and turnover growth.

LEA Caretaker Chief Executive Officer Thato V. Jensen said the partnership would help entrepreneurs navigate the process from business planning to financing.

"Every citizen entrepreneur deserves a clear road from a good idea to a thriving business," he said.

CEDA Caretaker Chief Executive Officer Khalala A. Mokefane said access to funding needed to be accompanied by business support.

"Funding alone does not make a business succeed. Entrepreneurs thrive when they are well prepared, well mentored and well supported," he said.



Stanbic Introduces China Payment Channel

Botswana businesses importing from China will have another payment option following Stanbic Bank's introduction of a system designed to facilitate cross-border transactions in Chinese renminbi.



Stanbic Bank Botswana has introduced the Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS), becoming the first bank in the country to offer clients access to the platform for eligible payments to China in Chinese renminbi (RMB).

The service was launched on Tuesday at Hotel 430, bringing together banking executives, government officials and representatives of China's financial sector.

FASTER CROSS-BORDER TRANSACTIONS

Stanbic Bank Botswana Acting Head of Corporate and Investment Banking Kabo Molimi said clients would be able to initiate eligible payments through their business or internet banking platforms when purchasing goods from Chinese suppliers.

He said conventional payment processes could take up to seven days, while the new channel was intended to improve transaction speed, visibility and processing.

Chief Executive Officer Chose Modise said the launch came as Botswana sought to diversify its economy, strengthen industrialisation and expand international trade.

DEEPENING BOTSWANA-CHINA TIES

Chinese Ambassador to Botswana Fan Yong and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Africa Jia (Jason) Liu addressed the launch.

Assistant Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship Baratiwa Mathoothe, who delivered the keynote address, referred to President Duma Boko's October 2026 visit to China, during which the two countries agreed to elevate bilateral relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Mathoothe said the agreement created opportunities to expand cooperation in trade, investment and industrialisation.

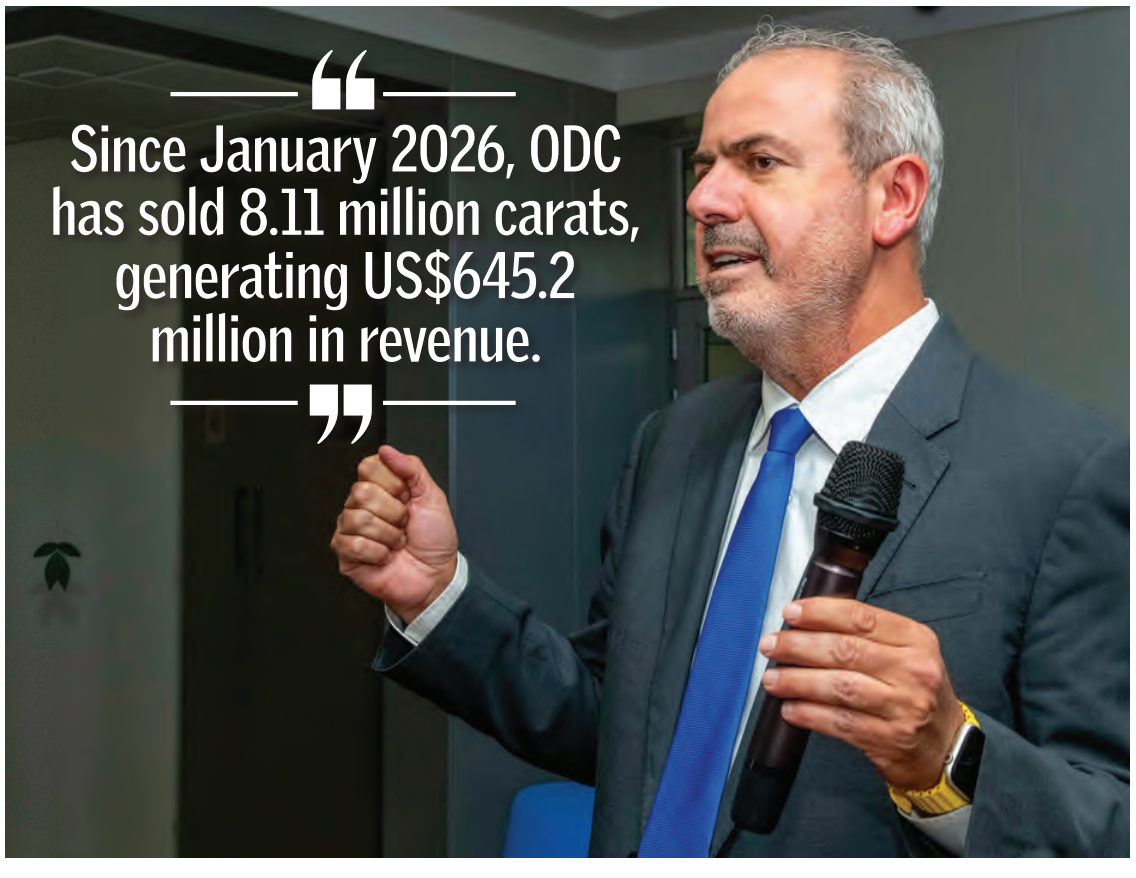
SUPPORTING BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS

The payment channel is expected to serve businesses importing machinery, equipment, raw materials and other goods from China.

The launch also featured a customer testimonial and a panel discussion moderated by Rebone Diloro, with contributions from Molimi and Standard Advisory China Head of Client Coverage China Jessica (Yu) Cao.

ODC Posts Return to Profit

Okavango Diamond Company reports US$147.2 million in auction revenue over three months as it outlines plans to expand its international trading operations amid changes in De Beers ownership.



Okavango Diamond Company (ODC) recorded US$147.2 million in revenue from rough diamond sales between August and October 2026, as the state-owned company reported a return to profitability and outlined plans for international expansion.

ODC Board Chairman Yoram Dvash said the company had sold approximately 1.85 million carats through spot auctions during the period, attracting an average of 167 registered buyers per sale, a 17% increase from the previous year.

AUCTION PERFORMANCE IMPROVES

The company said 272 customers purchased diamonds across its three most recent auctions, while citizen tenders recorded a 45% increase in parcels sold to Botswana businesses compared with the previous year.

Since January 2026, ODC has sold 8.11 million carats, generating US$645.2 million in revenue.

"These results demonstrate what can be achieved through clear strategic direction, commercial discipline, teamwork and strong leadership," Dvash said.

EYES DE BEERS TRANSACTION

Dvash also welcomed the proposed acquisition of De Beers and the planned increase in Botswana's shareholding from 15% to 30%. He congratulated the Global Diamond Consortium on being named the preferred bidder.

He said the transaction could strengthen Botswana's influence in the global diamond industry.

PLANS INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

Dvash said ODC intended to expand its international presence, attract new buyers and modernise its operations as it sought to establish itself among the world's leading rough diamond trading companies.

"Our ambition is straightforward: to transform ODC into a truly international diamond trading company and establish it among the world's leading rough diamond trading companies," he said.

FSG Recognised for Service Excellence

FSG Limited has received a national service excellence award, placing the spotlight on customer care and the responsibilities of funeral service providers.



FSG Limited has won the Service Excellence Award in the Funeral Service Category at the Botswana Service Excellence Awards (BSEA) 2025-2026, held at Travelodge Gaborone on 13 November. The group operates across Botswana, Zambia and South Africa, providing funeral, manufacturing and financial services.

SERVICE DELIVERY

The awards, held under the theme "Positioning Service Industries Explicitly as Botswana's Next Growth Engine", recognise service providers for their contribution to service industry development and economic growth.

FSG Group Chief Executive Officer Fergus Ferguson said the recognition highlighted the responsibility that comes with providing funeral services.

"In our business, service is deeply personal. We engage with people at moments when they need more than a service, they need understanding, reassurance and the confidence that someone is there to support them," he said.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

FSG operates 43 branches across the region, with employees involved in customer-facing and operational services.

Head of Operations Modisaotsile Moletsane said the group intended to improve service delivery through staff development and greater attention to customer feedback.

"We want every family that interacts with FSG to feel that they have been treated with care, respect and understanding," he said.

> "In our business, service is deeply personal."

He added that maintaining service standards required employees to understand their responsibilities and be equipped to meet customer needs.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Moletsane said the group would continue investing in its teams, listening to customers and reviewing its service standards across the markets in which it operates.

Ferguson said the award acknowledged employees responsible for supporting families during difficult periods.

First Capital Backs Blue Run

A P50,000 sponsorship from First Capital Bank Botswana has added corporate backing to The Blue Run, an initiative aimed at raising awareness of men's health and encouraging conversations around wellbeing.



First Capital Bank Botswana has committed P50,000 towards The Blue Run, an initiative organised by Village Oncology and scheduled for 14 November 2026, as part of efforts to promote men's health and healthy lifestyles.

RAISING MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS

The sponsorship forms part of the bank's Movember awareness campaign, which seeks to encourage conversations about men's health and promote proactive approaches to wellbeing.

Head of Marketing and Communications Otsile Sethunya Marole said the initiative was intended to encourage community participation and increase awareness of men's health issues.

"The sponsorship also forms part of the Bank's Movember awareness initiative, which highlights the importance of men's health and encourages greater awareness and open conversations around wellbeing," she said.

CALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

First Capital Bank Botswana Head of Treasury and guest runner Mani Neb said addressing men's health challenges required collaboration between different sectors of society.

"Progress requires partnerships between businesses, healthcare providers, community organisations, families and individuals," he said.

The Blue Run brought together participants and community organisations around health awareness and physical activity, with Village Oncology coordinating the initiative.

Botswana's De Beers Gamble Needs Answers

As Botswana considers doubling its De Beers stake, Dr Douglas Rasbash asks whether the additional shares will deliver measurable financial and economic returns, or primarily greater political influence.



Photo Credit: Bloomberg

DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Botswana has been told that increasing its shareholding in De Beers from 15% to 30% represents an investment in its future. But the public explanation leaves a fundamental question unanswered: what additional economic and financial returns will Botswana receive?

Perhaps the transaction is principally about influence. If so, government should make that case openly. Purchasing influence in a multinational company is a different proposition from purchasing an asset expected to generate an adequate commercial return. Both may have a justification. They require different evidence.

The word "investment" makes the distinction easy to overlook. It carries the reassuring suggestion that money committed today will produce greater prosperity tomorrow. Without a demonstrated return, however, it risks becoming a euphemism for buying political influence.

WHAT IS BOUGHT?

De Beers is an international business with mining interests in several countries. An additional shareholding gives Botswana greater exposure to that wider business. It does not simply increase Botswana's indirect stake in its domestic diamond industry; it also extends Botswana's financial exposure to mines elsewhere.

Government must therefore explain whether it is buying income, future appreciation, domestic economic development or greater influence over an international diamond company. Listing all four as possibilities does not establish the value of any of them.

THE RETURN TEST

The appropriate test is incremental benefit: what Botswana gains by moving from 15% to 30%, compared with retaining its existing holding under the incoming ownership arrangement.

That distinction matters because Botswana already benefits from its diamond industry. Existing employment, royalties, taxes and its direct interest in Debswana cannot simply be presented as returns from purchasing more De Beers shares. Those benefits belong in the starting position.

Likewise, if new management restores De Beers' profitability, Botswana's existing 15% would already participate in that recovery. Buying more shares increases participation. The question is whether the additional participation is worth its additional cost.

DIVIDENDS AND VALUE

The most straightforward commercial return would be dividends. But the public needs a separate record of distributions received on Botswana's existing De Beers shares, clearly distinguished from Debswana receipts. It also needs a credible forecast of future dividends. A right to receive distributions has little immediate financial value if distributions do not materialise.

Capital appreciation is another possible return. Government could buy during a downturn and benefit from a recovery. Yet a fallen price is not sufficient evidence of a bargain. It may indicate an undervalued business, deteriorating prospects or some combination of the two.

The historical decline is substantial. Anglo American's 2011 agreement to purchase 40% for US$5.1 billion implied a whole-business transaction benchmark of approximately US$12.75 billion. Anglo subsequently reported a US$2.3 billion impairment for 2025. Neither past transaction prices nor accounting carrying values establish what the business will earn in future.

Reported negotiations involving approximately US$1 billion for Anglo's 85% provide an indicative price of around US$176 million for an additional 15%. That is a simple proportional calculation, not an agreed Botswana purchase price, and excludes contingent payments and other obligations.

Nevertheless, it illustrates the hurdle. At an assumed annual required return of 8%, US$176 million would need to produce approximately US$14 million a year while preserving its investment value. With no dividends, it would need to become worth approximately US$380 million after ten years to achieve the same annual return. Where is the evidence that it will?

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Domestic economic benefits could strengthen the case. Additional jobs, procurement, manufacturing, research and technical skills would have value. But purchasing existing shares generally pays the seller. It does not itself create productive capacity in Botswana. Nor are such benefits necessarily proportional to the shares owned.

Any accompanying development programme must therefore be specified separately: which activities, how many additional jobs, what domestic value added, at what cost and by when? Benefits already secured through existing agreements must not be counted again.

TECHNOLOGY PROMISES

The technology argument requires the same discipline. Government has highlighted Element Six and industrial synthetic diamonds. Botswana already has indirect exposure through its existing holding. More shares increase that exposure; they do not automatically establish laboratories, factories or technological capabilities within Botswana. Those outcomes require specific arrangements.

BUYING INFLUENCE

A larger holding could strengthen Botswana's voice over production, marketing, investment and restructuring. Such decisions may affect its national interests. But the company also has operations, obligations and commercial interests elsewhere. Influence over that international portfolio is not synonymous with economic benefit at home.

Nor does 30% automatically confer control. The practical gain depends on the shareholder agreement: board seats, voting arrangements, vetoes and decisions requiring Botswana's consent. Being the largest individual shareholder sounds powerful, but its meaning depends on how the remaining shareholders can act together.

Government should publish a comparison of the rights attached to 15% and 30%. Which additional decisions could Botswana shape or prevent? How would those powers protect national income or employment? Could similar protections be negotiated without purchasing the extra shares?

CONCENTRATED RISK

There is also a price to concentrating more public capital in an industry already central to Botswana's fortunes. A diamond recovery could improve both government revenues and the investment. A prolonged downturn could weaken both simultaneously. That exposure belongs in the appraisal.

Share ownership does not automatically make Botswana liable for a corresponding percentage of company losses. Guarantees and binding funding commitments could create additional obligations, however, while any borrowing used to acquire the shares would remain repayable regardless of dividends.

THE PUBLIC CASE

Government says advisers have evaluated the proposals. It would therefore be inaccurate to claim that no assessment exists. The deficiency is that the public explanation reviewed has not disclosed enough to judge the incremental return.

Botswana may decide that greater influence is worth purchasing. But that is a policy choice whose purpose, powers and price should be explicit.

The leader of the opposition has responsibly raised similar questions in his response to the 2026 State of the Nation Address. He was not wrong to do so.

Until additional commercial and domestic economic returns are demonstrated, "investment" risks serving as a euphemism for the purchase of political influence. Botswana deserves to know what that influence will deliver, and why it is worth more than the other uses of its money.

Polygamy's Promise, Polygamy's Problems

As Botswana considers recognising plural marriage, Dr Douglas Rasbash asks whether more spouses would bring greater security and care, or simply create new inequalities.



DR DOUGLAS RASBASH

Botswana is again discussing polygamy. A proposal raised in Ntlo ya Dikgosi has reopened a familiar question: should the law recognise a man having more than one wife? The debate deserves more than tradition versus modernity. It should ask what makes families work, whose interests recognition serves and how adults and children can be protected.

Marriage is not a requirement for people to live together or raise children. Relationships exist beyond its boundaries. Why, then, should the number of adults matter more than their responsibilities, the fairness of their arrangements and the wellbeing of their children?

THE MONOGAMY ASSUMPTION

Human societies have practised monogamy, polygyny and polyandry. Humans form enduring pair bonds, but their family arrangements are adaptable. Our primate ancestry offers no prescription for marriage law: neither monogamy nor polygamy becomes desirable merely because it occurs in nature.

Institutions should be judged by their consequences. A marriage certificate does not guarantee fidelity, competent parenting or security. A larger household does not automatically produce harmony. The useful comparison concerns how different arrangements distribute care, resources and power.

CHANGING FAMILIES

Later marriage, falling fertility and changing relationships are reshaping families across much of the world. Botswana's households extend beyond two parents and their children. Grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles often supply essential care and financial support.

The extended family is hardly an imported experiment. It is an established institution whose contribution can disappear when public debate treats the married couple as the complete family.

Meanwhile, the expectation that one adult earns while another manages the home fits many households poorly. Both may need employment; neither may find it. Perhaps the nuclear household has become too small for everything society expects it to carry.

PARENTING SKILLS

Families are more than arrangements between sexual partners. Raising children requires affection, patience, judgement, practical competence and time. Maternal and paternal feelings matter, but neither marriage nor biological parenthood guarantees the ability to nurture.

One adult may earn reliably but struggle with daily care. Another may be an excellent caregiver with limited earning opportunities. Others contribute teaching, organisation or emotional stability. Why assume that two people necessarily possess every attribute a growing family needs?

Several committed adults could combine these abilities and relieve exhausted parents. But additional adults help only when responsibilities are accepted and relationships are safe. More people can mean conflict or an unequal burden on one woman. Parenting performance matters more than household size.

> A larger household might pool incomes, childcare and parenting skills. But additional spouses and children also create additional claims on finite resources and attention.

HOUSEHOLD ECONOMICS

High unemployment makes family resilience an economic question. Housing, food, transport and childcare stretch limited incomes. Sharing accommodation and domestic tasks can reduce duplication, while reliable childcare enables adults to seek work, study or rest.

Several independent incomes may cushion a household against job loss. However, adding dependants without adding resources can deepen insecurity. A larger family is not inherently cheaper per person, and unpaid care must not be treated as an unlimited female contribution.

These arguments support cooperation between adults. They do not establish that those adults must marry one another. Extended families and shared households can offer similar advantages. The debate should distinguish the benefits of pooled resources from claims made specifically for plural marriage.

WHOSE FREEDOM

Historical polygyny generally privileged men: one husband could have several wives, without women enjoying equivalent freedom. Carrying that asymmetry into modern arrangements demands scrutiny.

Polyandry, one woman with several husbands, exposes the question. Is the purpose to preserve male privilege or recognise consenting adults' choices? An argument based on freedom becomes difficult to sustain if the freedom belongs only to men.

Consent also requires more than agreement spoken under pressure. Economic dependence, family expectations and fear of abandonment can narrow a woman's choices. Existing partners must have a meaningful voice, and everyone needs a practical route to leave.

LEGAL RECOGNITION

Marriage does more than acknowledge affection. It allocates rights and obligations concerning property, inheritance, maintenance and separation. Any proposal for plural marriage must explain how those responsibilities would operate, particularly when another partner enters or someone leaves.

Children's security cannot depend on the popularity of their parents' arrangements. Nor should recognition allow an established spouse's financial position to be weakened without safeguards. These are substantive questions, not administrative details to resolve after a political announcement.

Public debate also needs stronger evidence from families themselves. Women, children and caregivers should help define the questions, so that recognition is assessed through lived experience rather than promises made by advocates on either side alone.

FALLING FERTILITY

In Botswana, the rate was 2.98 in 2022, compared with 6.6 in 1981. In South Korea, it is only 0.8. Replacement occurs when the fertility rate is 2.1. Declining fertility adds another dimension to the polygamy debate. It is too easy to describe fewer births as women becoming unwilling to bear children. Some freely choose not to become mothers; others may want children but hesitate over the conditions in which they would raise them. UNFPA's 2025 research identifies financial insecurity, housing costs and the absence of a suitable partner among barriers preventing people from having the families they want.

For a woman contemplating motherhood, security means more than a marriage certificate. It means confidence that a partner will contribute money, time, affection and practical care over many years. Pregnancy, childbirth and the daily work of raising children involve substantial commitments. Why undertake them if support is uncertain, or if a partner can expand his commitments without her meaningful agreement?

Polygamy must therefore answer a difficult question: would it strengthen that security or further dilute it? A larger household might pool incomes, childcare and parenting skills. But additional spouses and children also create additional claims on finite resources and attention. More adults do not automatically produce more dependable care.

If falling fertility is a concern, the priority should be to make wanted parenthood more secure: affordable homes, reliable childcare, shared parental responsibility and effective protection against abandonment. Legal recognition of a family arrangement should be judged by whether it strengthens the rights and wellbeing of everyone within it. Women's willingness to bear children cannot be assumed; it must remain a choice made with confidence in the future.

> An argument based on freedom becomes difficult to sustain if the freedom belongs only to men.

THE WELLBEING TEST

Polygamy will not cure unemployment, domestic violence, parental absence or relationship breakdown. Defending monogamy cannot make those problems disappear either. Botswana needs a broader discussion about how households obtain care, income and stability, including families that never seek marriage.

The debate could be useful even to people who would never choose plural marriage. It challenges the assumption that one household model answers every need. The state's concern should be whether adults participate freely, responsibilities are enforceable and children receive dependable care. Family policy should start with those outcomes and judge every proposed arrangement against them.

The Brand Trap of Fitting In

The conventions that make brands recognisable can also make them interchangeable, as an unlikely ultramarathon winner reminds us that questioning the rules takes more than novelty.



Photo Credit: Social Media

MANUEL VEIRUAPI RUHAPO | THE BRAND PARADOX

Cliff Young did not look like the man who would win.

In 1983, the 61-year-old Australian potato farmer entered the Sydney-to-Melbourne ultramarathon. With an unusual shuffling stride, he competed against experienced distance runners and won the roughly 875-kilometre race after more than five days. 1 2

His story is often told as a triumph of not knowing the rules: while everyone else slept, the farmer kept going.

The fuller account is more interesting. Young was already an experienced runner. ABC's retrospective describes an informal agreement to sleep until dawn and an incorrectly set alarm that sent him back onto the road shortly after 2am. He gained a lead and subsequently slept very little. 1

He did not win simply because he knew nothing. He had the ability to exploit a different approach.

That distinction matters for brands. The opportunity is not to abandon competence. It is to stop confusing the accepted way with the only way.

UNWRITTEN RULES

A marketing team can inherit a rule without anyone ever writing it down.

A bank must sound solemn. Insurance must speak through polished promises. A premium product must look imported. A launch must involve a stage, speeches and invited guests.

These are examples of assumptions worth questioning, not requirements shared by every business. Yet once a team treats an assumption as compulsory, its choices narrow before the creative work begins.

The Unwritten Rules Paradox is that the conventions making a brand recognisable within its category can also make it difficult to distinguish from competitors.

Familiarity helps people understand what you sell. But if your message could carry a rival's logo without changing its meaning, familiarity may have become interchangeability.

Young's lesson is to separate the finish line from the customary route to it. A brand still needs to earn attention and deliver value. It does not necessarily need to do so in the same tone, place or format as everyone else.

PURPOSEFUL DIFFERENCE

Liquid Death offers a communication example. It sells canned water using irreverent humour and the language of "murdering" thirst. Its own manifesto explicitly challenges the idea that entertaining marketing belongs mainly to products such as beer and junk food. 3

NBC's reporting contrasts that approach with familiar bottled-water messages about purity and hydration. 4

The useful lesson is not that Botswana's water brands should copy its name or attitude. That would merely replace one imitation with another.

It is that a product can satisfy a familiar need while speaking in an unfamiliar voice. The brand changes how people encounter the category without changing their need for the product.

Difference needs a reason. Otherwise, it becomes a performance the customer must decipher rather than a benefit they can appreciate.

BOTSWANA BRANDS

FNB Botswana's Cash Plus provides a local example beyond advertising. Selected banking services, including cash deposits, withdrawals and prepaid purchases, can be accessed through agents rather than only at branches or ATMs. Participating businesses can become agents. 5 6

The service challenges a familiar association between banking and the bank building. It changes the route to the service rather than asking customers to stop needing it.

That is the kind of question more brands could ask: which part of our approach serves the customer, and which part merely looks like our industry?

Imagine a Botswana insurance brand explaining cover through a short Setswana drama about a family confronting an unexpected expense. The story could lead into a clear explanation of the policy, including what it excludes. This is a proposed application, not a reported campaign.

The change would not make insurance less serious. It could make a serious subject easier to enter.

Or consider an agricultural supplier demonstrating equipment on a working farm rather than relying solely on a formal launch. Let farmers see what the product does and ask questions about maintenance. Again, this is an opportunity, not an account of an existing activation.

The point is not to dismiss ceremonies or conventional advertising. It is to choose the encounter because it helps the audience, not because it resembles the last launch.

THE EXPERTISE PARADOX

The Expertise Paradox is that experience can give a brand the capability to compete while conditioning it to repeat familiar answers.

Young's running experience matters because it prevents us from turning his victory into an argument for ignorance. His endurance supported his unconventional approach. 1

For brands, questioning a convention must be backed by operational ability. A conversational voice needs staff who can answer. An unconventional sales channel needs dependable fulfilment. An entertaining activation still needs a useful product.

Nor does challenging convention mean ignoring consent, safety or truthful communication. Young's story is not a recommendation to deprive people of sleep. The analogy concerns assumptions, not reckless disregard for consequences.

WHAT IT MEANS

Business owners and executives: Ask which inherited practices still earn their place. Give teams permission to test alternatives, with the resources needed to deliver them properly.

Marketing professionals: Start with the customer's difficulty, not the category's favourite format. Change the method where doing so improves understanding or participation. Test that improvement rather than treating surprise as success.

Brand managers: Keep the promise clear while allowing its expression to evolve. Judge the experiment by whether people recognise the brand, understand the offer and have a better experience.

Cliff Young's value to branding is not that a farmer accidentally discovered the secret of winning. It is that an unlikely competitor made an accepted approach look less inevitable.

Your brand may not need to run harder along everyone else's route. It may need to ask why it chose that route at all.



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 Botswana Gazette
TIME OUT
THE BOTSWANA GAZETTE
WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2026



BORN AND RAISED 10 YEARS IN

As Born and Raised celebrates ten years of festive-season domination, the Serowe festival is thinking beyond the stage, with plans to groom new event organisers, strengthen local businesses and build a legacy that does not end with its founders.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

Ten years of music, crowds and December madness have brought Born and Raised (BNR) to a defining moment. But while fans are busy dissecting the lineup for its 23 December return to Serowe Stadium, director Molatedi Kgotla is thinking about something bigger: who gets to run the show when the founding team eventually steps aside?

Under the anniversary hashtag #GaSeYaBofelo, BNR is celebrating a decade in entertainment with ambitions that stretch beyond another festive-season spectacle. Its next act could involve passing the festival's operational blueprint to young creatives.

MORE THAN A POSTER

Kgotla believes the industry needs to stop measuring festivals solely by the headline acts they can attract. Putting together an event of BNR's magnitude requires business acumen, serious production investment and attention to everything from security to the VIP experience.

"We should move away from attracting people to our shows through line ups, people should come to Born and Raised for the experience that we have created for the last ten years," he said.

Organisers are even exploring a two-stage setup as they look at ways to improve the festival experience.

PASSING THE BATON

The bigger conversation, however, is succession. Kgotla says the founders are willing to share their human capital and standard operating procedures with younger creatives interested in taking the festival forward.

"This is not the last edition," he said.

It is an opportunity to turn years of event-building experience into a practical learning resource for the next generation of Botswana's entertainment entrepreneurs.

SEROWE GETS A STAKE

BNR's ambitions also extend into the local economy. A non-financial partnership with Serowe District Council will support sanitation, waste management, access roads and venue preparation, while an agreement with Orange Botswana will introduce digital payment solutions.

Second-time BNR performer Ezra Neethings says the platform matters to the creative community, promising to deliver his best performance while emphasising professionalism from both artists and organisers.

> "People should come to Born and Raised for the experience that we have created for the last ten years."

For Kgotla, the festival's value reaches beyond ticket sales. Hotels, street vendors and local businesses also stand to benefit.

DON'T LET THE BEAT DROP IN COURT



With the festive season in full swing, the business behind the big celebrations is taking centre stage. As Born and Raised Festival formalises new partnerships, attorney Njiramanda Mbewe-Boatey is urging Botswana's entertainment industry to get its legal affairs in order, because the smartest legal battles are the ones nobody has to fight.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

The biggest drama at a festival should be on stage, not in a courtroom. Yet Botswana's entertainment industry has seen its fair share of contractual fallouts, turning what should be business relationships into legal headaches. Award winning Attorney Njiramanda Mbewe-Boatey believes it is time to change the script.

Speaking at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Born and Raised, Orange Money through its Duela Easy initiative, and Serowe District Council, the festival's legal counsel made a compelling case for putting legal protection before the party.

LESS COURTROOM, MORE CONVERSATION

For Mbewe-Boatey, being invited to the negotiating table rather than summoned after a dispute is a welcome change.

She joked about perceptions that Born and Raised is particularly litigious, arguing that the festival is simply thorough about ensuring everyone understands their contractual obligations.

"On a more serious note, we need to move away from treating the assertion of contractual rights as a threat," she said.

Her argument cuts to the heart of an industry where disagreements over performance fees, sponsorship commitments, cancellations and deliverables can quickly spiral. When a promoter and service provider fall out, the damage rarely stops with them. Artists, vendors, suppliers and festivalgoers can all feel the consequences.

DON'T LEAVE IT TO WORD OF MOUTH

Born and Raised director Molatedi Kgotla echoed the importance of putting business arrangements in writing, warning industry players against relying too heavily on verbal agreements.

"Don't be too trusting, talking verbally. When you approach the court, you are required to produce an agreement. Let's have written agreements to avoid hearsay because in court it's their word against yours, and you may lose the case," he said.

THE BUSINESS BEHIND THE PARTY

The new partnership, signed a decade after Born and Raised was established, creates a framework for cooperation while enabling electronic ticket purchases and cashless transactions at the festival.

> "The work we do at this table is intended to make it less likely that anyone will need to go to court."

But Mbewe-Boatey sees something bigger than convenient payments. She views the agreement as recognition of the economic possibilities of homegrown creative enterprises.

Festivals create opportunities for performers, technical crews, traders, transport operators and accommodation providers. With sustained institutional support, they can become meaningful contributors to economic diversification and youth employment.

Her message to the industry is refreshingly straightforward: get the paperwork right, communicate early and honour commitments.

"The work we do at this table is intended to make it less likely that anyone will need to go to court," she said.

Because the best festival memories should involve the music, not the lawyers.

When Photography Finds You

A smartphone, a family legacy and a fascination with the unseen have led Giovanni Jangano to his first photography exhibition, where the images ask audiences to look beyond what meets the eye.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

A girl in a white dress walks into a pond. She cannot see what lies beneath the water, and neither can the viewer. It is an unsettling image, but perhaps that is the point.

Titled *Into the Unknown*, the photograph has become one of the striking talking points at Zimbabwean-born, Botswana-based visual artist Giovanni Jangano's first exhibition at Alliance Française de Gaborone. It captures the uncomfortable business of stepping into uncertainty, without a guarantee of what comes next.

Across the exhibition, Jangano turns ordinary spaces, human expressions and carefully considered colours into conversations about faith, identity, vulnerability and resilience.

PHOTOGRAPHY CHOSE ME

Interestingly, Jangano's relationship with photography did not begin with a camera. It began with editing.

Growing up in a modest household, he lacked access to the sophisticated smartphones he admired on Instagram. Rather than abandon the ambition to create striking images, he learnt to transform ordinary photographs through digital editing. That curiosity eventually became an artistic pursuit.

"In terms of selecting the type of medium to use as an artist I didn't choose photography, photography chose me and this is my first exhibition," he says.



There is also an artistic inheritance behind the lens. His grandfather, the late Zimbabwean artist Shepard Jangano, established a distinctive family tradition of naming children after celebrated artists. Giovanni's father is Rembrandt, while other relatives carry names including Picasso, Leonardo and Mona Lisa. Giovanni now continues that creative lineage through photography rather than painting.

MORE THAN PRETTY PICTURES

The exhibition refuses to stay in one emotional lane. *Weight of Man* confronts the pressures of masculinity and the expectation that men should endure without showing vulnerability. *In Solidarity with Women for Change South Africa* uses purple, black and grey to address gender-based violence and femicide, while *Beyond Our Differences* celebrates female solidarity without demanding sameness.

In *Queen Esther*, faith, companionship and courage take centre stage. Meanwhile, *Full Circle* returns to his smartphone beginnings, challenging the assumption that compelling photography requires expensive equipment.

Together, the collections reveal an artist interested less in simply documenting appearances than in provoking reflection.

For Jangano, the photograph is not the end of the conversation. It is the invitation.

The exhibition remains on view until 3 December 2026.

December, But Make It Soulful

Forget the nightclub chaos. Saturday Ballads is betting on good music, impeccable style, cooler-boxes and the kind of December memories that do not need a 6am finish.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

December is notorious for parties competing for your attention. But what if the best night out is one where nobody has to shout over the music, the dress code is part of the entertainment and a classic soul record can get an entire generation singing? Enter Taste of Africa's Saturday Ballads, a lifestyle affair making a case for the art of slowing down.

On 12 December, the event heads to Joy City Park (Tsholofelo Park), with a white and nude dress code and a promise to make the experience bigger than the dance floor.

MORE THAN A MUSIC DATE

For organiser Mercy Ramojela, the evolution has been about recognising that audiences want more than a good DJ set.

"We are all about creating an experience for our patrons. At first, it was all about soul music vibes. But we have since realized that our audience wants way more. They want to create memories, feel and look good," she told Time Out.

The ambition is to create a space where a 25-year-old and an 80-year-old can comfortably share the same musical experience. Think elegant socialising, good food, old friends and new connections, without the pressure of nightclub culture.

DRESS LIKE YOU MEAN IT

White and nude are doing more than filling the event's dress-code brief. White brings freshness and simplicity, while nude adds warmth and understated luxury. Together, they set the tone for a crowd expected to bring its fashion game.

And the soundtrack? A nostalgia-heavy line-up featuring DJ Mo-Gee, former Motsweding FM producer Charles Matlou, DJ JazzyPete, DJ Mad-isa, DJ Obza, DJ Lawry T, and Resego Motlhokathari.

Matlou is expected to take guests down memory lane with classic soul ballads, while the wider selection promises soul, R&B and Afro-soul favourites.

> "We want people to remember how the event made them feel."

THE COOLER-BOX PLOT TWIST

In a December calendar crowded with entertainment options, Saturday Ballads is leaning into its own identity. Patrons even had a say in choosing the venue, while cooler-boxes will be allowed free before 5, according to the organiser.

"We want people to remember how the event made them feel," Ramojela says.

That may be the real selling point. Not another party to attend, but an experience worth talking about long after the final record spins.



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

A Fresh Take on Masculinity

Forget fragrance as just another finishing touch. TK Designs wants its latest scent to smell like ambition, faith and the audacity to keep going.

GOSEGO MOTSUMI

A man can have setbacks, questionable Mondays and a life that refuses to follow the script. But smelling fresh? That should never be negotiable.

Enter Abotle, the latest offering from local brand TK Designs, a men's fragrance built around a simple Setswana expression, "bo tle", meaning "let it come". It is less about smelling expensive for the sake of it and more about wearing a little reminder that whatever life throws your way, you can start again.



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

A SCENT WITH A STORY

For founder Thobo Kerekang, Abotle is more than a new addition to the product shelf. Named after his firstborn's middle name, the fragrance carries a deeply personal meaning: "a Bogosi jwa Modimo Bo tle".

Kerekang says his faith informs his decisions, with the belief that keeping God at the centre makes life's struggles easier to navigate.

That philosophy extends to the man Abotle is designed for: ambitious, tested by life, but unwilling to stay down.

"I have failed countless times," he told Time Out. "The failure is a set back, it's a lesson. Get up, recalibrate, learn and move on."

FRESHNESS IS THE STATEMENT

Forget the idea that masculinity has to announce itself with an overpowering scent. Abotle takes a different route, favouring an alluring freshness over intensity.

Its composition opens with apple, ginger and lavender, moves into a sage heart, then settles into cedar, tonka bean and amber.

Kerekang says freshness has always appealed to him because it represents hope and ambition. Every spray, in his words, is a new beginning.

The fragrance has been nearly two years in the making, developed with a curation partner as Kerekang searched for a distinctive signature.

THINKING BEYOND THE BORDERS

Retailing at P500 (US$36), Abotle marks another step in TK Designs' expansion from suits into formal shoes and now fragrance.

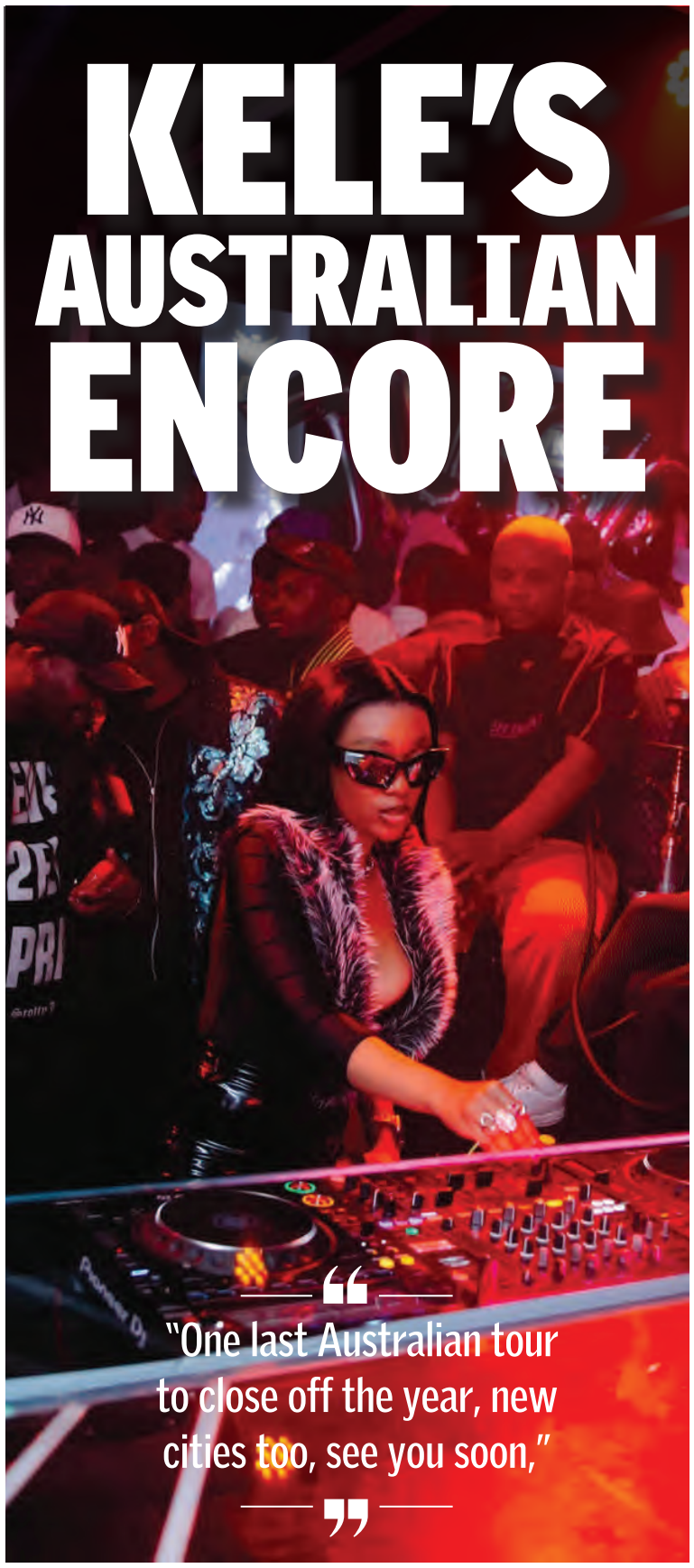
The ambition is to become a household Botswana brand with international reach, guided by the slogan "decidedly different".

There is already another scent on the horizon, Atsile, although Kerekang is keeping its release date under wraps.

> That philosophy extends to the man Abotle is designed for: ambitious, tested by life, but unwilling to stay down.

For now, Abotle has one message for the man who wears it: life will test you, but you are allowed to show up fresh for another round.

KELE'S AUSTRALIAN ENCORE



Australia, get ready to move! Kele Megano is taking Amapiano flavour on another international run, with three cities lined up for a November takeover

Botswana-born, South Africa-based DJ Kele Megano is taking the music party back to Australia with The Next Chapter Tour 2026.

Following an early-year performance, the DJ and digital content creator is heading to Brisbane on 27 November, Melbourne on 28 November and Sydney on 29 November.

The tour will blend the infectious rhythms of Afro House, 3-Step and Afro Tech, extending her growing international footprint and introducing her sound to new audiences.

"One last Australian tour to close off the year, new cities too, see you soon," she posted.

With three cities in three days, Megano is ending the year with her passport stamped and the decks loaded.

Setlang Makes Africa's Influential Women List

From steering Botswana's tourism sector to earning continental recognition, Keitumetse Setlang is joining a list of African women whose influence reaches beyond their industries.



Former Botswana Tourism Organisation chief executive officer Keitumetse Setlang has been recognised among Africa's 100 Most Influential Women for 2026 at the African Women Awards.

The recognition places Setlang among women celebrated for leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation, professional excellence and social impact across the continent.

The fifth edition of the awards is scheduled for 20 November at the Argyle Grand Hotel Nairobi Airport in Kenya.

Beyond the trophies, the platform aims to connect influential women with strategic partners and investment opportunities, positioning recognition as a springboard for bigger ambitions.

The organisers say their commitment is to ensure that "recognition serves as a catalyst for growth, investment and long-term business success."

For Botswana, Setlang's inclusion adds another name to the conversation about women shaping Africa's professional and leadership landscape.

Why Heyana Ditched New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is losing one of its biggest party contenders. Heyana Music Festival is moving the festivities, betting that a different calendar slot could deliver a bigger experience.



Heyana Music Festival is breaking up with New Year's Eve. After two years of navigating festive-season competition, rising production costs and artist availability challenges, the festival has announced a permanent move from 31 December to a date between March and May each year.

The Heyana Charity Fun Day will also shift to the new annual period, keeping its community-focused mission in the mix.

Organisers say the festive season has made it increasingly difficult to secure preferred performers and production services, while competing events and unpredictable holiday trading arrangements have added pressure.

The ambition, however, is bigger than finding a less crowded party weekend.

With investments in venue infrastructure, large-scale stages and ambitious production designs, Heyana wants room to grow into an internationally competitive festival.

"Moving the date gives us greater freedom to secure leading local and international artists," the organisers explained in a statement.

The exact annual date is yet to be announced, but one thing is clear: Heyana is chasing a bigger stage, not a smaller crowd.

The New Traveller Has An Appetite

The Big Five might get travellers through the airport, but what happens when they want to taste the country too? As global travel tastes shift towards food, culture and authentic local experiences, Botswana is being challenged to put its culinary heritage at the heart of its tourism story.



GOSEGO MOTSUMI

The modern traveller wants more than a beautiful sunset, a luxury lodge and a perfectly timed wildlife sighting. They want the meal cooked with local ingredients, the story behind the recipe and perhaps a seat at the table with the people who have kept the tradition alive.

In short, travel is becoming as much about what is on the plate as what is on the itinerary. Botswana wants to get in on that appetite.



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

At the International Forum of Africa Gastronomy (FIGA) Botswana 2026, held at Cresta Lodge in Gaborone, more than 100 African chefs and culinary professionals gathered to explore how food can reshape tourism, create businesses and celebrate cultural identity.

THE NEW TRAVEL CHECKLIST

The numbers suggest there is something cooking. According to figures from the latest Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) cited by Botswana Tourism Organisation Acting Chief Executive Officer Justice Ofentse, more than half of travellers now prioritise food when planning trips. The global gastronomy tourism market reportedly grew from US$8.5 billion in 2021 to US$16.1 billion in 2025.


Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

For Botswana, that means wildlife cannot be the only star attraction. Seswaa, bogobe, phane, delele, tswii and dikgobe deserve their own moment in the spotlight.

> The report further highlights that more than half of travelers now prioritize food when planning trips, driving gastronomy tourism market growth from USD8.5 billion in 2021 to USD16.1 billion in 2025.

"Food tells the story of a place," Ofentse said, pointing to cuisine as a way for visitors to connect with communities, traditions and local livelihoods.

BTO's Marketing Manager for Events and Products, Carol Kgafela who joined a panel discussion on "Culinary Tourism - Positioning Botswana as a Destination," believes the country's food story needs to become part of the safari experience itself.

"We need to make sure that food is a part of the safari story so we build the pride in the food that we have," she said.

MORE THAN A GOOD MEAL

For FIGA founder and host Chef Monana Motswaledi, the gathering was an opportunity to connect African culinary talent and create conversations around the industry's future.

Those conversations went beyond recipes. Chef Edna Rosen, Chef Unami Makali and FoodSafe International Managing Director Nina Hamid explored culinary entrepreneurship, while CIPA's Marietta Magashula addressed intellectual property and protecting innovation in gastronomy.

The bigger question is whether Botswana can turn curiosity into bookable experiences, connecting visitors with farmers, food producers, chefs and traditional food practitioners.

Because the next memorable Botswana holiday might not end with a photograph of an elephant. It might end with a story about the best plate of seswaa a traveller has ever tasted.

TIRED OF SHARING?



R&B AND THE PEOPLE RETURNS

Han C is set to headline the second edition of R&B and the People at Grand Aria on November 22, with organisers promising a different take on the entertainer's performance.



R&B and the People will return to Grand Aria on November 22 for its second edition, following an inaugural event that organisers say attracted strong attendance.

HAN C JOINS THE LINE-UP

The programme will feature South African entertainer Cheezy27 alongside local performers and DJs Quest, Macx Wabana, Neo Played It, Fauz, Nayoszn, Dizzy Dee and the event's founding creative director, Thabang "DJ Frostbite" Kwapa.

Kwapa said the event was designed to bring audiences together through their shared appreciation of R&B music.

"R&B and the People is about more than bringing artists together on one stage. It is about creating an experience where people can connect through music, relive memories and make new ones," he said.

A DIFFERENT HAN C EXPERIENCE

Kwapa said organisers had considered feedback from the first edition when planning the return, with Han C's performance expected to be one of the event's distinguishing features.

> "It is about creating an experience where people can connect through music, relive memories and make new ones."

"Han C's performance is something we want people to look forward to. We are bringing a different side and experience that audiences may not necessarily be used to," he said.

Tickets are selling for P200 and are available through Webtickets online and at Spar outlets. Patrons may bring cooler boxes free of charge until 5pm, after which they will not be allowed.

TAFNAZ DROPS SECOND ALBUM

Two albums in one year, 20 new tracks and ambitions beyond Botswana. R&B musician Tafnaz is expanding his catalogue while setting his sights on audiences across Southern Africa, Europe and Asia.

Botswana R&B musician Tafadzwa "Tafnaz" Nazare has released his second studio album this year, titled *For Every Ear Listening*, following the earlier release of *For You To Feel*.

20 TRACKS, MULTIPLE PRODUCERS

The 20-track project features production contributions from Smile K, Bangu, KD Bangers, Prince Majaye and Stretch. Songs on the album include *Four Walls*, *Medicine*, *Black As You Are*, *Zodiac Lover*, *Best Friend*, *Mind Over Matter* and *Sunset*.

Tafnaz said releasing two albums in one year reflected the volume of creative work he had been developing.

"I have put in a lot of work this year, but I am genuinely enjoying making music. I have so many ideas and stories I want to share, and being able to turn them into complete projects has been rewarding," he said.

EYES ON INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

The musician is also planning a Southern African tour, followed by potential engagements in Europe and Asia, where he says some of his songs have received radio airplay.

"I want to meet the audiences listening to my music, perform for them and explore opportunities to collaborate with artists in those markets," he said.

Tafnaz said audience feedback continued to influence his creative direction.

"The love has been amazing, and I do not take it for granted. Every time someone tells me how a particular song has connected with them, it reminds me why I started making music," he said.



WHAT TIME DOES TO WINE

A New Year's Eve journey through South African vintages invites Botswana wine lovers to discover how time transforms a bottle and how much remains beyond familiar shelves.





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

What if, instead of simply drinking wine this New Year's Eve, you could drink time itself? Before you accuse me of having spent too much time around open bottles, hear me out. Wine is one of the few things in life that allows us to experience time in a glass. Every vintage tells a story of a particular year, its growing conditions, the decisions made in the vineyard and cellar, and ultimately, how beautifully (or occasionally, terribly) it has aged. Yet, despite this extraordinary relationship between wine and time, most of us spend our drinking lives in familiar territory. We find a grape we like, a producer we trust, perhaps a region we recognise, and happily settle in. Nothing wrong with that, of course, but there is an entire world of wine waiting outside our comfort zones.

BEYOND THE FAMILIAR

This is precisely why I created Drink Time Itself, a wine experience built around exploration, access and discovery. The world has thousands of grape varieties and an incredible collection of vintages, but how many do we actually get to encounter? Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Shiraz do a lot of heavy lifting, while some extraordinary varieties and vintages remain largely undiscovered.

SOUTH AFRICAN DISCOVERIES

There is also the practical reality of where we live. Botswana is not exactly surrounded by specialist wine merchants, historic wine cellars and tasting rooms offering a different experience every weekend. Availability, import costs and price inevitably influence what reaches our shelves and, more importantly, what makes it into our glasses. Some magnificent South African wines, particularly older vintages, are simply not easy to find here.

South Africa is my great wine focus, partly because it is right next door, but also because it has an extraordinary wine story that deserves to be explored more deeply. From its celebrated Chenin Blanc and Pinotage to its remarkable old-vine wines, experimental blends and age-worthy reds, there is so much more to the country's wine offering than the familiar names we see on supermarket shelves. Drink Time Itself is, in many ways, my tribute to South African wine, but the bigger ambition is to bring people closer to wines and experiences they might otherwise never encounter. Discovery should not be a privilege reserved for those with extensive private cellars or the means to travel from one wine region to another.

DRINKING THROUGH TIME

We are taking this idea into New Year's Eve, on 31 December, with a rather different approach to the usual wine tasting. Instead of moving through a conventional flight of wines arranged by grape or style, we take our guests on a journey through vintages, starting with the earlier years and gradually moving towards the more recent ones. As the evening progresses, so does time, and we welcome the New Year with a bottle of bubbly. It is a playful way of experiencing how wines evolve, how different years express themselves and what time can do to a bottle. You might discover that a wine you've never considered drinking at ten years old is rather extraordinary at twenty. Equally, you might discover that patience is not always rewarded. Wine, like people, has its own personality.

AT YOUR TABLE

The format is deliberately relaxed and self-paced. There is no need to march around the room clutching a tasting glass, trying to keep up with someone else's schedule, or worrying that you've missed a particular pour. We bring the bottles to you. Our team introduces each wine, shares a little of its story and pours a taste at your table or wherever you're settled. We are pouring throughout the evening, with food served along the way.

And here is where things get particularly interesting: not everyone will necessarily taste the same wines. We work with multiple bottles, often in different quantities and vintages, so the experience evolves as the evening unfolds. Your table might encounter something your neighbours haven't, while the next bottle could be an entirely different surprise. Your evening becomes your own little wine journey, rather than a prescribed tasting where everyone dutifully ticks off the same six glasses.

CELLAR TREASURES

I also spend a fair amount of time speaking to private collectors and people with interesting cellars. As the year comes to an end, some are looking to make room, release bottles or part with wines they have held for years. Occasionally, some rather interesting treasures emerge from these conversations. Where bottles become available for purchase, our guests have the opportunity to acquire something special for their own collections. It is another dimension of the experience: not just tasting history, but sometimes taking a little piece of it home.

Of course, no wine experience I put together would be complete without taking the food seriously. We will have a selection of good food throughout the evening, because nobody should have to choose between an interesting glass of wine and something delicious to eat. There will also be music, a little dancing and enough room to let the evening unfold into the New Year. After all, we are celebrating, not attending a wine examination. You don't need to know your malolactic fermentation from your must concentration to have a good time.

> "Wine is one of the few things in life that allows us to experience time in a glass."

WELCOME 2027

So, this New Year's Eve, we are doing things a little differently. We will drink through the years, discover a few surprises, eat well, enjoy some music and welcome 2027 with a little sparkle. You may arrive with a favourite grape in mind, but I would encourage you to leave some room for the unexpected. You never quite know what will find its way into your glass.

Tickets are already available. Head over to the Botswana Gazette social media pages for the booking link and more information.

Until next time, keep your glass half full, your curiosity well watered and remember: some things are worth waiting for. Others are worth opening right now. At Drink Time Itself, we'll let the wines decide.



LOOKING FOR THE FAMILY OF THE LATE DAVID MONAGENG AND THE LATE LESEDI MONAGENG

ESTATE LATE DAVID MONAGENG AND LESEDI MONAGENG (born RAMONTSHO)
Master's Reference: **ESHGB 000449/24**

The Master of the High Court has appointed Tiso Lekoko Boiteto as Executor Dative of the estate of the late David Monageng and the late Lesedi Monageng. The Executor is trying to trace the family of the deceased so that the estate can be wound up and any heir can receive what is due to them.

DAVID MONAGENG was born on 30 August 1957 at Tlokweng. He died on 30 April 2020 at Mafitlhakgosi Clinic, Tlokweng.

LESEDI MONAGENG, born RAMONTSHO died on 27 April 2010 at Modimele Ward, Moshupa, in the Ngwaketse District.

They got married on 27 December 2001.
If you are a child, parent, brother, sister, grandchild or other relative of either of them including a child of any earlier marriage or relationship of the late David Monageng, or if you know where any of their relatives can be found, please contact the Executor on or before the 18th of December 2026, being 30 days after publication. Please bring or send your Omang and any document showing how you are related to the deceased, such as a birth certificate.

Any person who has a claim against the estate, or who owes the estate money, should also contact the Executor within the same period.

Please contact:

TISO LEKOKO BOITETO
Executor Dative c/o Akheel Jinabhai & Associates, AJA House, Unit 2,
Matante Mews, Plot 54373 CBD, Gaborone
P O Box 20575, Gaborone | Tel: 3163125 / 77016331
Email: tiso@aja.co.bw



STAFF SECONDMENTS + BUSINESS – RELATED TRAINING & SCARCE SKILLS SOLICITING

At Opracon Skills & Academy we help companies with staff secondments, business related training, soliciting for scarce skills within and outside the borders as well as general recruitment as stated below:

SECONDMENTS

We second experienced and trained Tax, IT, HR and Data Protection Officers.

BUSINESS–RELATED TRAINING

Choose from our BQA as well as other courses and equip your staff members through training:
General courses: Team Building(16hrs), Supervisory and Leadership Skills(8hrs), Customer Care(8hrs), Mental Health in the Workplace(8hrs) & Defensive Driving(16hrs).

- ***HR (Accredited):*** HR Fundamentals(16hrs), HR Summit(16hrs), Labour & PAYE Update(8hrs)
- ***Tax (Accredited):*** Tax Basics(8hrs), Corporate Taxes(8hrs), Advanced Taxation(16hrs) & Tax for Financial Services providers(16hrs)
- ***Information Related Laws (Accredited) :*** Data Protection Act, (8hrs)

RECRUITMENT + SCARCE SKILLS

We help organisations to source for skills inside and outside Botswana as well as conducting the actual recruitment processes.

skills@aupracontax.co.bw +267 3939 435 +267 76 213 233

INTENTION TO CHANGE MARRIAGE PROPETY REGIME

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

1. Bushi Alfred Ntile and Nnaniki Patricia Galebutswe Ntile, married in community of property on the 12th February 2004, at Tlokweng wish to change their property regime to out of community of property.

2. The parties intend to apply to the High Court of Botswana after the expiration of the three (3) weeks statutory notice from the date of first publication hereof.

3. Any person, creditor or debtor, who may have an interest in the assets and/or liabilities of the parties estate, should they have objections to the parties changing their property regime, are to inform the parties Attorneys, Mokopakgosi Attorneys, before the expiration of the said 3 weeks period, or make representations before the High Court of Botswana once the contemplated application is lodged.

DATED AT GABORONE THIS 2nd DAY OF NOVEMBER 2026

MOKOPAKGOSI ATTORNEYS
APPLICANT'S ATTORNEYS
PLOT 546, EXTENSION 4, GABORONE
P.O. BOX 45287, RIVERWALK
GABORONE

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

JUDGE – LEKORWE
IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
HELD AT LOBATSE **CVHGB – 001426-26**

In the matter between:
GLB (PTY) LIMITED **Plaintiff**
and
MEM ENGINEERING (PTY) LIMITED **1st Defendant**
PREM LATA SINGLA **2nd Defendant**

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to a Judgment granted against the 1st Defendant by the above Honourable Court, the following movable property will be sold by public auction by **DEPUTY SHERIFF NTSHWARELANG OOKAME** to the highest bidder as follows: -

DATE OF SALE	:	08TH DECEMBER 2026
TIME	:	09:00 AM
VENUE	:	Plot 1250, Unit 4, Extension 6, Gaborone West Industrial, Gaborone
PROPERTY TO BE SOLD	:	Taurus Batteries – 610 x 1, 622 x 1, 619 x 1, 639 x 1, 646 x 1, 650x1, 657x1, 652 x 1, 669 x 1, 682 x 1, 616 x 1, 631 x 1, 630 x 1, 636 x 1, 646 x 1, 652 x 1 Willard Batteries – 646x1, 640/3 x 1, 632x1, 619x1, 1x Blue Metal Money Safe, 1 x Samsung TV, 1 x LG Complete Computer, 1 x Samsung CPU, 1 x Canon Printer, 1 x Micro A12E Light Duty Scale, 1 x Heavy Duty Scale, 2 x 1000L Tanks, 202 x 5 Containers, 252 x 6 Containers, 1 x Motor Vehicle Corolla with registration Letters and Numbers B666ALL, Subgrade Metals, Steel Metals, Cans and Aluminium Metals.
TERMS OF SALE	:	Subject to Conditions of Sale. Only cash or Electronic Funds Transfers will be accepted.

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS THE 11TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2026.

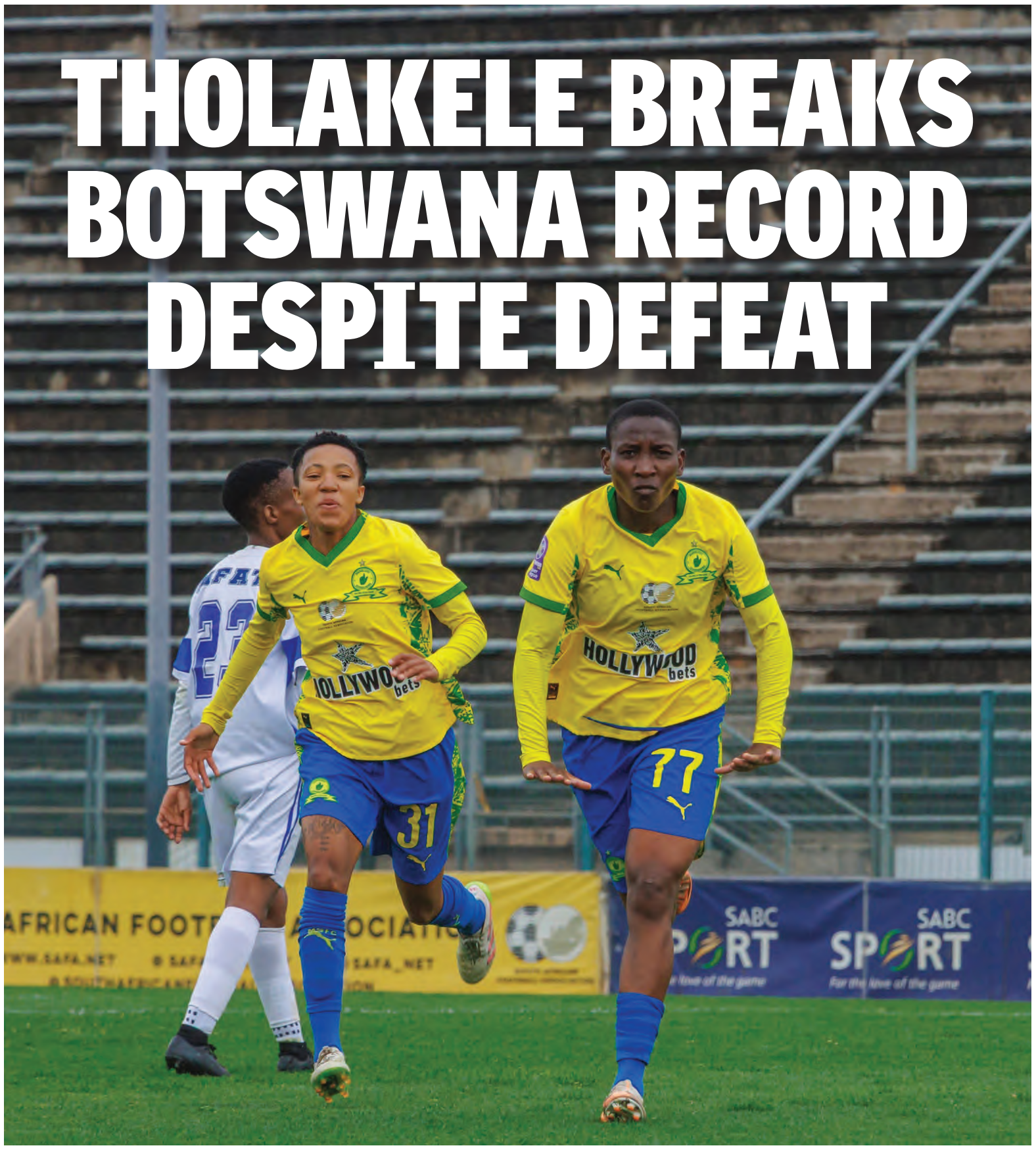
SWABI & COMPANY
Attorneys, Notaries & Conveyancers

SWABI & COMPANY
Plaintiff's Attorneys
First Floor, Unit 17 Kgale Mews,
Gaborone International Finance Park
P O Box 403506
GABORONE
(Ref: DS.spm.S00211)
Deputy Sheriff Ntshwarelang Ookame
Cell no.72879169,77435503

TIRED OF SHARING?



THOLAKELE BREAKS BOTSWANA RECORD DESPITE DEFEAT



Refilwe Tholakele became the first Motswana to score in two CAF Women's Champions League finals despite Sundowns' latest continental heartbreak

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana international Refilwe Tholakele has etched her name into African football history by becoming the first Motswana to score in multiple CAF Women's Champions League finals, despite Mamelodi Sundowns suffering a 3-1 defeat against Morocco's AS FAR on Sunday.

The prolific striker's latest achievement came at the Suez Canal Stadium in Ismailia, Egypt, where her first-half equaliser briefly revived Sundowns' hopes of securing a record third continental crown.

Tholakele's 25th-minute strike was more than a consolation for the South African giants. It represented another significant milestone for Botswana football, making her the first player from the country to score in two separate CAF Women's Champions League finals.

HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT

Her historic achievement follows her exploits in the 2023 final, when she scored twice to inspire Sundowns to a convincing 3-0 victory over Sporting Club Casablanca in Côte d'Ivoire.

On that occasion, Tholakele opened the scoring with a 21st-minute penalty before adding her second in the closing stages. Fellow Southern African star Boitumelo Rabale, who represents Lesotho, scored Sundowns' other goal.

The brace capped a remarkable tournament in which Tholakele finished as the competition's leading goalscorer with five goals, becoming one of the standout performers in Sundowns' second continental triumph.

Three years later, she has added another chapter to her impressive continental record. Her latest strike also took her overall CAF Women's Champions League tally to seven goals, drawing level with Melinda Kgadiete's longstanding Sundowns scoring benchmark in the competition.

LATEST MILESTONE

The Botswana international had entered the 2026 final with six career goals after scoring against Cameroon's Lekié Football Filles during the group stages. Tholakele's latest milestone further strengthens her reputation as one of Botswana's most accomplished female football exports.

Her continental exploits this year began in Gaborone, where she scored seven goals during the CAF Women's Champions League COSAFA qualifiers, including a brace in the final against Zambia's ZESCO Ndola Girls.

> Tholakele's 25th-minute strike was more than a consolation for the South African giants. It represented another significant milestone for Botswana football, making her the first player from the country to score in two separate CAF Women's Champions League finals.

However, her individual success could not prevent Sundowns from suffering another painful defeat against AS FAR. Imane Touriss opened the scoring in the 23rd minute before Tholakele responded two minutes later with a superb curling effort from a tight angle. Hiba Youssoufi restored the Moroccan side's lead in the 38th minute before Touriss completed her brace in the 77th minute to seal victory.

AS FAR consequently became the first club to win three CAF Women's Champions League titles and the first to successfully defend the trophy. While Sundowns were denied another historic triumph, Tholakele emerged from the disappointment with another continental record for Botswana.

TIRED OF SHARING?





11-MEDAL HAUL MARKS WTT BREAKTHROUGH

Botswana amassed 11 medals on its WTT Youth Contender hosting debut, a striking leap from its solitary 2024 continental bronze.

Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's junior table tennis stars have announced themselves on the global stage after collecting an impressive 11 medals at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Youth Contender Gaborone 2026, marking a significant breakthrough for the country's emerging generation of players.

The Junior Diteemane secured one gold, two silver and eight bronze medals at the four-day competition, which concluded on Saturday at the Botswana National Youth Centre (BNYC).

The hosts finished seventh in the overall medal standings despite accumulating the highest number of medals among all entries, surpassing Nigeria's nine, while regional rivals Zambia and South Africa collected six apiece. Croatia and India shared top spot with two gold and two silver medals each. Botswana's lower ranking reflected the competition's gold-first medal classification system.

BATSHOLENG LEADS HISTORIC CHARGE

Stephney Batsholeng emerged as Botswana's standout performer, claiming gold in the Under-11 girls' singles category to secure a landmark title on the international WTT circuit. She topped an all-Botswana field, which included silver medallist Makanaka Banni, whom she defeated 3-1 in their encounter. Batsholeng also secured bronze in the Under-13 girls' singles.

Another standout performer was Reneilwe Lekorwe, who secured silver in the Under-15 boys' singles after overcoming Namibia's Kamrouz Ghayouri in the semi-finals before losing 3-0 to Uganda's Joseph Sebatindira in the final. Lekorwe also partnered Boitlamo Nkele to win bronze in the Under-15 mixed doubles.

Botswana's remaining bronze medals were secured by Kevin Mlandu and Dhaarmic Karthik in the Under-11 boys' singles, Sethunya Buisanyang and Legae Motlhabane in the Under-11 girls' singles, Andile Mmono in the Under-13 boys' singles and Carol David in the Under-13 girls' singles.

A MAJOR LEAP FROM PREVIOUS TOURNAMENTS

The scale of Botswana's achievement becomes more apparent when compared with previous international competitions. At the 2024 ITTF Africa Youth Championships, also hosted in Gaborone, Botswana managed just one bronze medal in the Under-19 girls' team competition.

The latest 11-medal haul represents ten more podium finishes than that continental campaign, although the tournaments differ in competition structure and strength of opposition. In April 2025, Botswana's junior team collected one gold and three silver medals at the Johannesburg Table Tennis Association Open Championships in South Africa.

Further progress was evident in July 2026 when the national junior team secured at least two gold medals and one silver during the early stages of the South Africa Regional and Open Championships in Polokwane.

Botswana had also previously gained exposure to the global WTT circuit when Lekorwe, Nkele and David travelled to Dammam, Saudi Arabia, in December 2025. The Gaborone results therefore mark an important step from international exposure towards winning titles and reaching finals on the WTT circuit.

BIGGER TESTS AWAIT

Botswana Table Tennis Association (BTTA) has acknowledged that consistency, tactical awareness and managing pressure remain areas requiring improvement. With Botswana scheduled to host another WTT Youth Contender in December 2027, the challenge will be translating home-soil success into sustained medal-winning performances against stronger international fields.

Basil Overcome Unbeaten Dinaledi To Claim Crown

Basil HC dismantled previously unbeaten Dinaledi 10-4 to clinch the national indoor hockey title, capping an impressive domestic campaign

BONGANI MALUNGA

Basil Hockey Club delivered a ruthless championship performance to end Dinaledi Hockey Club's unbeaten run and claim the national indoor hockey crown following a commanding 10-4 victory in the final at the University of Botswana (UB) Courts last Saturday.

The emphatic victory capped an impressive campaign for Basil, who rose to the occasion when it mattered most to overcome a Dinaledi side that had gone through the regular league season without tasting defeat.

Despite Dinaledi's formidable record heading into the championship playoffs, Basil produced a dominant display in the title decider, winning by a six-goal margin to underline their championship credentials.

ROAD TO GLORY

Basil's road to glory included a semifinal victory over Hitmen Hockey Club, setting up a potentially difficult showdown against a Dinaledi outfit that had established itself as one of the competition's strongest contenders.

Dinaledi had earlier demonstrated their resilience in a dramatic semifinal encounter against UB Oryx Hockey Club. The two teams could not be separated in regulation time, battling to a thrilling 4-4 draw before Dinaledi prevailed in the ensuing penalty shootout to secure their place in the final.

However, their impressive unbeaten league record ultimately counted for little against a Basil side determined to finish the championship on top.

IMPRESSIVE LEAGUE NUMBERS

Basil's triumph was backed by an impressive record in the regular league standings, where the club's published standings showed that they accumulated 36 points from 15 matches. The champions registered 11 victories, three draws and just one defeat, finishing with an outstanding goal difference of +55.

Their points tally placed them six points ahead of second-placed UB Oryx HC, who had accumulated 30 points from 14 matches, while Hitmen HC occupied third position with 19 points from 14 outings.

Those figures highlight Basil's consistency throughout the campaign, with the club combining a strong winning record with an impressive goal difference. The championship triumph provided the perfect conclusion to their campaign, particularly given the calibre of their opponents in the final.

The defeat in the final represented a painful conclusion for Dinaledi following an impressive season, demonstrating the unforgiving nature of championship playoffs where an unbeaten regular season offers no guarantee of silverware.



From Basil's perspective, however, the emphatic 10-4 victory provided the ultimate reward as they emerged as national indoor hockey champions.

LA28 Raises Bar For Botswana's Sprinters

Only two Botswana sprinters recorded what would now qualify as LA28-standard individual times in 2026, highlighting a tougher Olympic road beyond the nation's established stars

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana's ambitions of maintaining its growing dominance in international athletics face a stern test after World Athletics unveiled significantly tougher qualification standards for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

The new benchmarks, announced on 10 November 2026, raise the performance requirements across several disciplines, potentially making it more difficult for Botswana to secure individual Olympic places despite its impressive sprinting pedigree.

An examination of Botswana's leading performances in 2026 reveals that only Letsile Tebogo and Busang Collen Kebinatshipi recorded times meeting the new standards across the men's 100m, 200m and 400m events, exposing the challenge facing their compatriots.

THE BIGGEST SQUEEZE

The biggest squeeze is in the men's 400m, where the qualifying mark has been slashed from 45.00 seconds at Paris 2024 to 44.40 seconds for LA28.



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

Botswana's historical depth is impressive, with seven athletes having achieved 44.40 or faster: Kebinatshipi, Tebogo, Bayapo Ndori, Lee Eppie, Isaac Makwala, Baboloki Thebe and Karabo Sibanda. However, that historical achievement contrasts sharply with recent performances.

Kebinatshipi's national record of 43.39 seconds and Tebogo's 2026 season's best of 44.37 seconds are comfortably inside the new benchmark. In contrast, Eppie's 44.50 and Ndori's 44.62 season's bests would have satisfied the Paris standard but fall short of LA28 requirements.

The men's 200m standard has also tightened from 20.16 to 19.95 seconds. Tebogo's 19.76 season's best puts him safely inside that benchmark, while emerging sprinter Prince Phaezel Selepe's impressive 20.01 leaves him just 0.06 seconds outside the new requirement.

STANDARD DROPPED

In the 100m, the standard has dropped from 10.00 to 9.93 seconds. Kebinatshipi clocked 9.89 twice in 2026, while Tebogo's season's best of 9.95 falls marginally short despite his personal best of 9.86.

Botswana's female athletes face an equally demanding challenge. Oratile Nowe's national record of 1:56.76 in the women's 800m is already faster than the new 1:57.00 standard. However, her 2026 season's best of 1:57.32 demonstrates the narrow margins involved. The Paris requirement was a considerably more forgiving 1:59.30.

The women's 400m standard has also been reduced from 50.95 to 49.90 seconds, leaving Obakeng Kamberuka, whose personal best stands at 50.97, needing significant improvement. Elsewhere, middle-distance runner Tshepiso Masalela has previously clocked 1:42.70 in the men's 800m, better than the new 1:43.00 standard, but his 2026 best of 1:44.99 falls short. His 1500m personal best of 3:30.71 is also just outside the revised 3:30.00 requirement.

CHALLENGE

African 400m hurdles champion Kemorena Tisang faces a similar challenge. His national record of 48.32 seconds would have satisfied the Paris qualifying mark of 48.70, but LA28 demands 48.00.

Despite the tougher standards, World Athletics has widened the world-ranking qualification route. Approximately 60 percent of athletes are expected to qualify through rankings, compared with 50 percent for Paris 2024.

Crucially, the individual track performances recorded in 2026 do not count towards LA28 qualification. The qualifying window for most individual track events opens on 19 June 2027 and closes on 18 June 2028.

Botswana's formidable men's 4x400m relay team, which clocked a record-breaking 2:54.47 at the 2026 World Relays in Gaborone, also has a separate qualification pathway through the 2028 World Relays, where the top 14 teams will secure Olympic berths.

SUPPORT

In an interview with Gazette Sport, Botswana National Olympic Committee president Tshepo Sitale confirmed that they already have measures in place to assist Botswana's athletes meet the benchmarks. He cited the existence of the Olympic Solidarity Scholarship and continental scholarships which guarantee financial support of at least P5000 and a peak of P10 300 per month. Sitale noted that the assistance is geared towards helping the athletes access nutrition, gear, event participation and specialist care.

SITALE SEES OLYMPIC PROMISE IN DAKAR SIX

BNOC president Tshepo Sitale says Botswana's medal-less Dakar campaign produced promising talent that must now be nurtured towards senior Olympic qualification

BONGANI MALUNGA

Botswana National Olympic Committee (BNOC) president Tshepo Sitale believes the country's six-member Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics contingent has laid a promising foundation for future Olympic success despite returning home without a medal.

Speaking in an interview with Gazette Sport, Sitale hailed the youngsters' performances, insisting that the international experience gained in Senegal was more valuable than immediate medal success. He stressed that the BNOC's priority is now to nurture the athletes, sustain their competitive development and ultimately transform them into senior Olympic contenders.

"We will continue to monitor and support them so that they qualify for the Olympics at senior level," Sitale told this publication.

TRACK FINALISTS IMPRESS

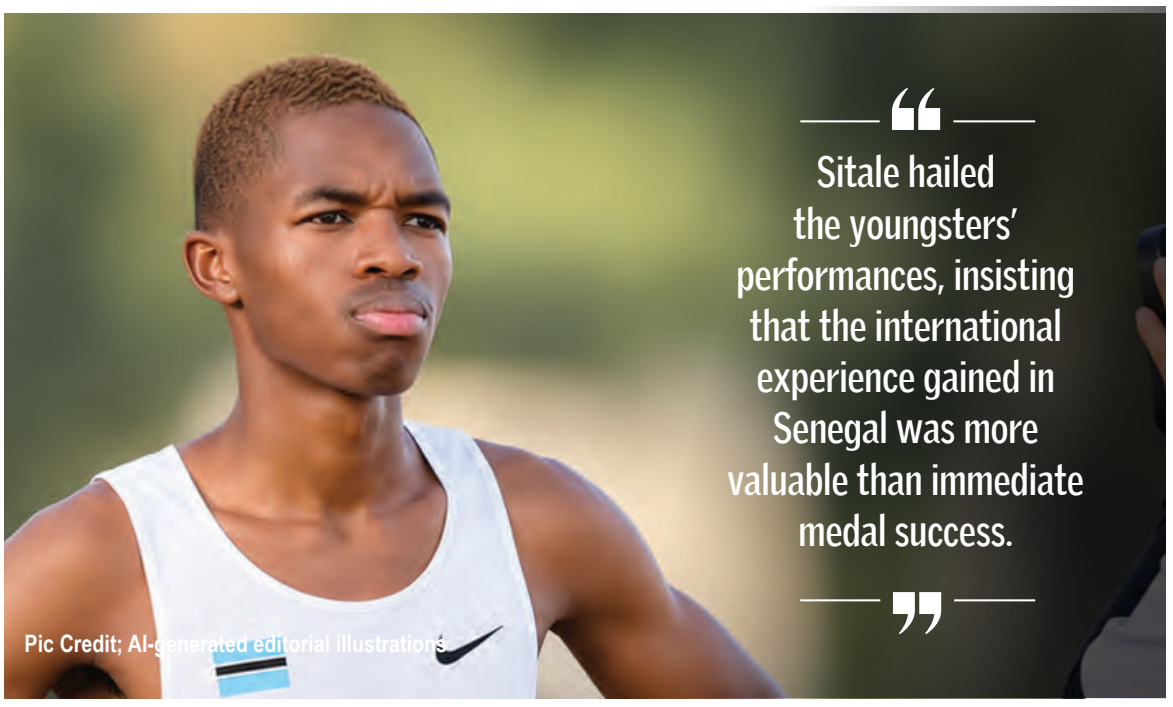
Sitale pointed to Botswana's impressive qualification record in athletics, where both track representatives advanced to their respective finals against some of the world's finest emerging talent.Men's 400m representative Aobakwe Geza finished sixth in 49.41 seconds, while Mpho Maano secured eighth position in the women's 800m final after clocking 2:26.58.

The BNOC president believes their ability to reach the final stages demonstrates the country's potential to develop another generation of internationally competitive athletes.

MASABA MAKES HISTORY

Boxer Precious Masaba also emerged as one of Botswana's standout performers, becoming the country's first female boxer to participate in the Youth Olympics and progressing to the quarterfinals of the women's 51kg division.

Masaba defeated Jordan's Tala Hussein in her opening bout before losing to Canada's Mehreen Khakh in the last eight, narrowly missing an opportunity to compete for a medal. Meanwhile, team captain Theresa Tagarira came agonisingly close to securing Botswana's first medal of the Games after reaching the bronze medal contest in the women's 44kg judo category.



Pic Credit; AI-generated editorial illustrations

Tagarira eventually finished joint fifth following defeat to Venezuela's Rosalvick Aguilar, a performance Sitale also singled out as evidence of the squad's promise.

SWIMMERS SHOW PROGRESS

In the swimming category, Melodi Saleshando and Tema Modirelabangwe also demonstrated encouraging progress. Both swimmers won their respective 50m backstroke heats, with Saleshando recording 30.87 seconds and Modirelabangwe clocking a personal best of 29.95 seconds.

Sitale highlighted their performances as further justification for the BNOC's development-focused approach. He explained that the organisation deliberately avoided setting medal targets for the six athletes, recognising that the Youth Olympics should primarily serve as a platform for international exposure and long-term development.

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LA28 RAISES BAR FOR BOTSWANA'S SPRINTERS

Only two Botswana sprinters recorded what would now qualify as LA28-standard individual times in 2026, highlighting a tougher Olympic road beyond the nation's established stars

Photo Credit: Diamond League



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