

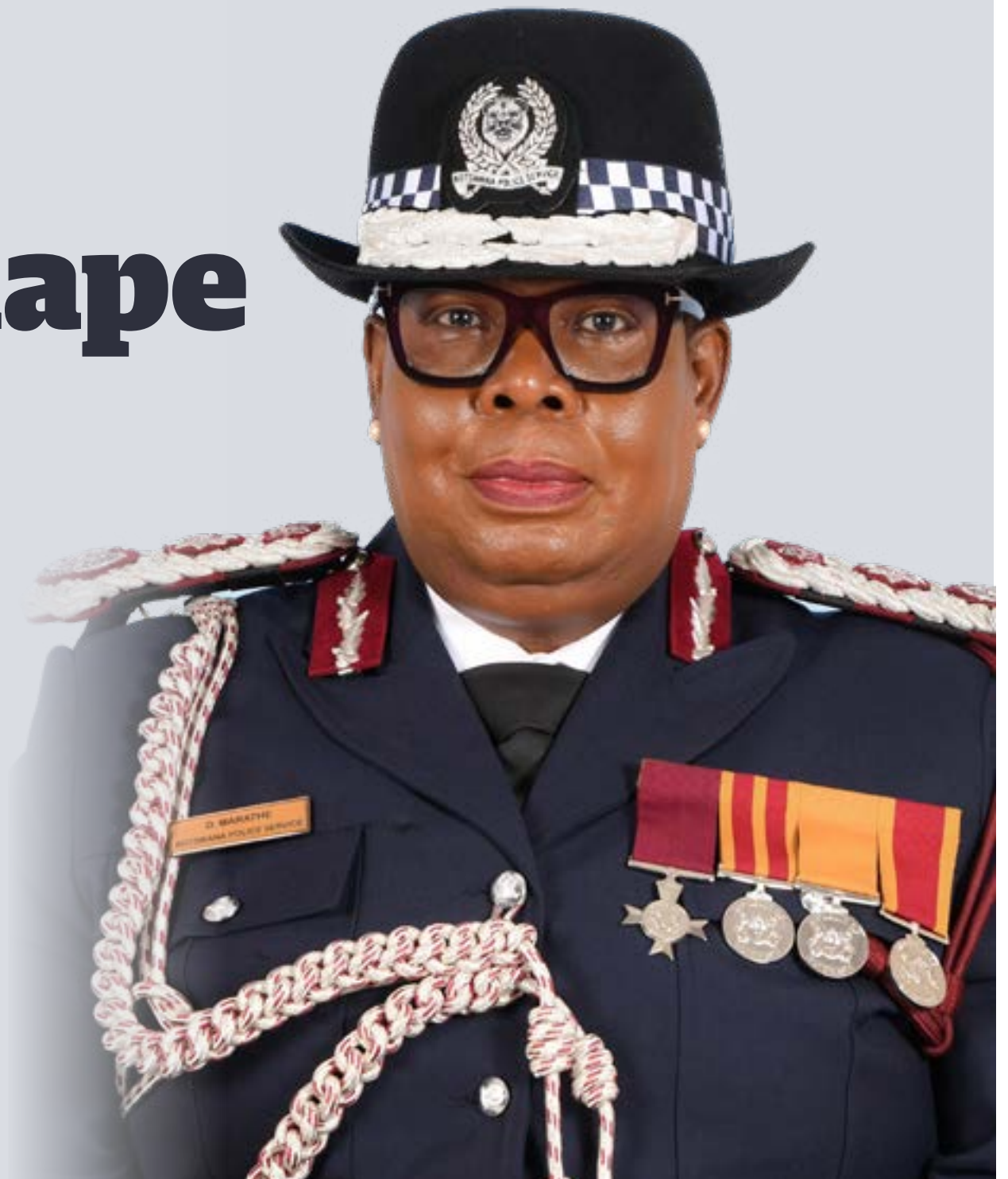


ARTS& LIFESTYLE- Koki Kamala's luxury handbags speak volumes through touch **ON PAGE 30**

Mother Claims Rape In Police Custody

A mother of two young children has taken the Botswana Police Service before the High Court, alleging that she was raped by multiple individuals while unconscious at Bobonong Police Station

FULL STORY PAGE 2



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Mother Claims Rape In Police Custody

A mother of two young children has taken the Botswana Police Service before the High Court, alleging that she was raped by multiple individuals while unconscious at Bobonong Police Station, where she had been taken with her children following their release from a gender-based violence shelter. She also alleges that she contracted HIV through the assault.

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

A mother of two young children has taken the Botswana Police Service before the High Court, alleging that she was raped by multiple individuals while unconscious at Bobonong Police Station, where she had been taken with her children following their release from a gender-based violence shelter. She also alleges that she contracted HIV through the assault.

Thato Ntikele* alleges that she became unusually drowsy and lost consciousness after eating food provided by police officers on the night of 23 June 2023. When she regained consciousness, she says she experienced physical discomfort and noticed injuries she believed indicated sexual assault.

Her two young children were with her at the police station, where the family had allegedly been made to spend the night in a cold lecture hall without beds or blankets. The court papers do not establish whether the children witnessed the alleged assault.

The allegations are contained in a lawsuit filed by the family's lawyer, Tshephang Edwin Makwati of Makwati T.E. Law Group, against the Commissioner of the Botswana Police Service, the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs and the Attorney General.

In the declaration filed before the High Court in Gaborone, Makwati sets out claims of unlawful detention, sexual



assault, infringement of human dignity, degrading treatment and psychological suffering arising from the alleged conduct of police officers and social welfare authorities.

Supporting documents include sworn affidavits from Ntikele and her partner, Donald Sekwapa*, medical records and orders previously issued by the Bobonong Magistrate's Court.

An HIV testing record dated June 2022 indicates that Ntikele tested negative, while a laboratory report dated 15 August 2023 records a positive screening result. Ntikele maintains that she contracted the virus through the alleged rape, although the records do not

independently establish when or how the infection occurred.

The case traces the family's ordeal to May 2022, when a domestic dispute involving Donald's mother, Maggie Sekwapa*, resulted in Ntikele and her children being removed from the family home in Bobonong.

According to the declaration, Maggie obtained an eviction order. Ntikele maintains that neither she nor her two children were parties to the proceedings.

On 11 May 2022, police officers arrived to enforce the order and removed Ntikele and her children from the property. Her youngest child was then six months old, while the older child was two.

Instead of being provided with alternative accommodation, Ntikele alleges that police took them to Bobonong Police Station, where they spent a cold winter night outdoors without blankets, bedding, food or shelter.

"Following the eviction, the police took me and my children (one was 2 years old and the youngest was 6 months) to Bobonong Police Station," Ntikele states in her affidavit.

"We were left to spend the winter night outdoors, without shelter, bedding, food or care."

The eviction was followed by an application initiated by police and social welfare officers to have Ntikele and the children placed at the Botswana Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Centre in Francistown.

The application was based on allegations that Donald had abused Ntikele, claims that both dispute in their court papers.

Donald, who is also represented by Makwati, alleges that the accusations were false and resulted in him being separated from his children for more than a year. He claims that police and social welfare officers portrayed him as an abusive partner despite Ntikele maintaining that she had not been abused.

Ntikele and the children remained at the Francistown shelter from May 2022 until June 2023. During that period, she alleges that her freedom of movement was restricted, while Donald claims he was denied meaningful contact with his family.

The declaration also details a road accident

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Mother Claims Rape In Police Custody

From Page 2

involving a police vehicle transporting Ntikele and the children between Francistown and Bobonong on 16 May 2022. Ntikele alleges that the children sustained injuries and that police initially failed to arrange medical attention.

The family's stay at the shelter eventually ended after the Bobonong Magistrate's Court issued an order on 14 June 2023 directing that Ntikele and her children be released by 21 June.

However, their return to Bobonong allegedly led to the incident that now forms one of the most serious claims in the lawsuit.

In her affidavit, Ntikele states that police officers collected her and the children from the Francistown shelter on 22 June 2023, supposedly to facilitate psychosocial support.

Instead, she alleges, they were taken to Bobonong Police Station and accommodated in a cold lecture hall without beds or blankets.

"That night, on or about 23 June 2023, after eating food allegedly provided by the police officers, I became unusually drowsy and passed out," Ntikele states.

"I experienced hazy recollections of being raped by multiple individuals while unconscious."

She alleges that when she regained consciousness, she noticed vaginal abrasions and discharge, which she believed were consistent with sexual assault.

Ntikele says she subsequently reported the suspected rape to the station

commander, identified in the court papers as Seoke, but was accused of lying rather than being assisted.

According to her affidavit, the commander ordered her and her children to leave the police station without arranging medical assistance or initiating an investigation into her complaint.

Ntikele maintains that the officers responsible for her safety failed to protect her and subsequently failed to respond appropriately when she reported the alleged assault.

The declaration filed by Makwati argues that the defendants are liable for the conduct of police officers and other officials who were acting within the scope of their employment.

It further alleges that Ntikele's treatment violated her dignity and personal liberty, while the circumstances surrounding her detention and the alleged assault subjected her to inhuman and degrading treatment.

Following the incident, Ntikele says she experienced symptoms that prompted her to seek medical attention at Bobonong Primary Hospital.

A

laboratory report dated 15 August 2023 subsequently recorded an HIV-positive screening result.

Ntikele says she had previously tested negative and believes the infection resulted from the sexual assault at the police station.

The earlier negative test included in the court documents was conducted approximately a year before the alleged incident. The records show contrasting results but do not independently establish the timing or source of the infection.

In her affidavit, Ntikele describes the alleged assault and subsequent positive test result as having profoundly affected her health, emotional wellbeing and relationship with Donald.

The lawsuit seeks compensation for the harm she claims to have suffered, including P300,000 for pain and suffering, P500,000 for unlawful detention, P350,000 for infringement of human dignity, P300,000 for loss of amenities of life and P500,000 for alleged inhuman and degrading treatment.

Donald is separately seeking P300,000 for alleged defamation and P300,000 for psychological harm arising from the accusations made against him and his separation from the family.

Additional claims have been brought on behalf of the children for alleged unlawful detention, psychological suffering, infringement of dignity and degrading treatment.

The amounts sought across the various claims exceed P3 million, excluding interest and legal costs.

The

declaration asks the High Court to hold the defendants jointly and severally liable for the damages claimed, meaning that payment by one defendant would discharge the others to the extent of that payment.

The case places Bobonong Police Station under scrutiny over Ntikele's allegation that she was sexually assaulted while under police care and subsequently turned away when she sought assistance.

The court documents reviewed do not identify the alleged perpetrators or establish that police officers committed the assault. They also do not establish that Ntikele was deliberately drugged. The allegations remain to be tested in court.

The documents do not contain responses from the Commissioner of Police, the Ministry of Local Government and Traditional Affairs or the Attorney General.

For Ntikele, the lawsuit follows an ordeal that began when police enforced an eviction order at her partner's mother's home, leaving her with two young children and nowhere to sleep.

She alleges that the same police service that removed her from the property and subsequently participated in placing her under state protection failed to safeguard her when she returned to Bobonong.

What began as a family dispute over accommodation has become a High Court case involving allegations of rape, HIV infection, unlawful detention and the treatment of two children caught between their parents and the authorities.

****The names of the woman and her family have been changed to protect their identities.***



Botswana Pushes Africa To Make Seed Rules Work For Farmers

Botswana has challenged African countries to turn seed policies and regional agreements into practical benefits for farmers, with Lands and Agriculture Minister Edwin Dikoloti calling for easier cross-border seed trade, stronger research and regulation, and greater recognition of traditional seed systems.

BOIKANYO MATHONSI

Speaking at the Africa Seed Summit in Eswatini, Dikoloti said Africa could no longer measure progress by the number of policies and agreements adopted while farmers continued to struggle to access quality seed.

“We need to move beyond harmonisation on paper to effective implementation. This includes strengthening regulatory capacity, facilitating cross border seed trade, promoting research and innovation, and protecting plant genetic resources,” Dikoloti said.

His call came as the African Union (AU) highlighted gaps in seed research, breeding, quality assurance, certification and access to improved varieties, particularly for smallholder farmers.

The AU said more than 500 improved varieties were released across Africa between 2022 and 2024. However, the use of certified seed remained below five per cent for many legumes, roots and tuber crops.

Dikoloti said Botswana had taken steps to strengthen its seed system through the Seeds Act No. 19 of 2023 and the Protection of New Plant



▲ Lands and Agriculture Minister Edwin Dikoloti

Varieties Act No. 18 of 2023.

But he stressed that Africa's seed future should not depend solely on formal commercial systems.

“We must recognise the value of community seed banks, traditional landraces and Indigenous Knowledge Systems. These are important resources for our farmers and for the future resilience of our agricultural systems,”

Dikoloti said regional seed policies must recognise the knowledge and resources held by farming communities.

“Our regional seed policies must remain responsive to the needs of farmers and local communities,” he said.

He added that the success of regional integration should be measured by what reaches farmers.

“Our policies and systems must support farmers, protect our plant genetic resources and create an environment

in which research and innovation can flourish,” Dikoloti said.

The AU said many farmers in rural communities still struggled to obtain quality seed at the right time, in sufficient quantities and at affordable prices.

Climate change was adding pressure, with droughts, floods, pests and diseases increasing demand for locally adapted and climate-resilient varieties.

The summit placed investment alongside regulation, with calls for greater public and private investment in research, breeding, seed testing, certification, extension services and markets.

A declaration and roadmap are expected to guide implementation of commitments made at the summit.

Dikoloti said the real test would be whether those commitments moved beyond conference rooms and into farmers' fields.

“We need a more connected, innovative and resilient African seed system. Such a system must drive agricultural productivity, strengthen food security and ensure that the benefits of regional integration reach our farmers,” he said.

Fourth Farmers Conference Targets Profitable Farming



▲ **ABOVE:** Farmers Conference will be held from October 15-17

NNASARETHA KGAMANYANE

The Farmers Conference returns this week with a renewed push to turn production into profit. The fourth edition is set for October 15–17, 2026, at Ba Isago Marquee in Gaborone, bringing together farmers, industry experts, financial institutions and other agricultural stakeholders under the theme “From Production to Profit: Building Sustainable and Bankable Farmers”. According to the organising committee, the conference comes at a time when Botswana’s farmers are grappling with foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), El Niño-induced droughts, rising production costs and market uncertainties. Spokesperson Mpho Mutaunirwa said these challenges have exposed a deeper truth facing the sector.

“Producing more livestock or cultivating more hectares does not necessarily translate into greater profits. Farmers must equally understand their finances, manage production costs, maintain records, protect their investments and develop reliable routes to market,” said Mutaunirwa. Mutaunirwa said the conference is designed to bridge that gap. “The Farmers Conference is working to bridge this gap by connecting farmers with the industries, expertise and practical solutions required to build profitable farming businesses,” he said. Since its inception in 2024, the conference has grown from 78 participants to more than 300 attendees. The upcoming edition targets 500 participants. Risk management will

be central to this year’s agenda. Mutaunirwa said the increasing frequency and financial consequences of agricultural disruptions have made risk protection an essential business consideration. “The ongoing FMD challenges and the effects of recent droughts demonstrate why financial preparedness and appropriate insurance protection can no longer be overlooked in agricultural business planning,” he said. Animal health and productivity will also come under the spotlight. Returning veterinary expert Dr Gaseitsewe Sento, director of Vet Agric Consultants, will challenge farmers to examine the difference between a herd that costs them money and one that makes them money.

Beyond the farm gate, Mutaunirwa said farmers must also navigate the changing regulatory environment. “With changes introduced through Botswana’s new Employment Act, agricultural employers need to understand their rights, obligations and the implications for managing farm labour. We are bringing this important legal conversation directly to farmers,” he said. Financial management and bankability will remain a core focus, with an emphasis on financial records, business planning and access to finance. “A productive farm is not necessarily a bankable business. Ultimately, we want to develop farmers who do not merely produce, but who understand the business of farming and build systems that support profitability,” said Mutaunirwa. The three-day programme will dedicate day one to livestock and animal health, day two to crops and horticulture, and day three to a free Farmers Market connecting farmers with consumers and suppliers. Mutaunirwa said building profitable farmers requires a collective effort. “Building profitable farmers requires coordinated efforts across the agricultural value chain, including financial institutions, veterinarians, legal professionals, technology providers, government and the private sector,” he said.

Manual Workers Drag Govt To Court Over 'Civil Service Downsizing Plans'

The National Amalgamated Local and Central Government and Parastatal Workers Union (NALC GPWU) has approached the High Court in Maun seeking an order compelling the Government to negotiate with the union before implementing its Leadership Transformation Programme.

GOITSEMODIMO KAELO

In an application, the union argues that the programme, which includes a Voluntary Separation Project (VSP), deals with employees' terms and conditions of service and therefore cannot be introduced through consultation alone.

The union wants the court to declare that the programme is a matter for negotiation under the existing collective bargaining framework between the parties. It is also seeking an order barring the government from implementing the programme in respect of public servants represented by the union without first negotiating with it, as well as costs of suit.

The Attorney General has been cited as the respondent, representing the government.

In its founding affidavit, deposed to by Deputy Chief Executive Officer Robert Ronny Rabasimane, the union contends that the Leadership Transformation Programme effectively seeks to achieve workforce



Manual Workers Union leaders, Robert Rabasimane and Johnson Motshwarakgole have turned up the heat on government.

reduction through a new policy that bypasses the Botswana Public Service Early Exit Policy of December 2008.

The union maintains that the existing policy forms part of the conditions of service of public employees it represents and cannot be amended or circumvented unilaterally.

According to the affidavit, the relationship between the parties dates back to July 1975, when they entered into a Memorandum of Agreement providing for collective bargaining on issues concerning the terms and conditions of employment of the union's members.

Rabasimane states that

the process leading to the adoption of the Early Exit Policy began in June 2003, when the Government presented a draft policy at the 104th National Joint Industrial Coordinating Committee (NJICC) meeting.

The parties reportedly agreed to establish a task force comprising their representatives to examine the draft and facilitate negotiations.

Further discussions took place in July, September and November 2003, eventually culminating in the Botswana Public Service Early Exit Policy of December 2008.

The union argues that the policy caters for both voluntary and involuntary separation and provides

for procedures to be followed when the employer intends to reduce its workforce.

It further points out that the policy addresses circumstances such as restructuring, the cessation of functions, the introduction of new technologies and working practices, and employees' inability to perform to expected standards.

The union contends that the Leadership Transformation Programme covers substantially similar ground, despite the government's stated objective of promoting leadership renewal, organisational

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Thiite, Zakhem Face Corruption Charges Over **P273 Million Tender**

RIGHT: ►

Zakhem is linked to corruption case involving P273.3million Time Infrastructure Project.

BOIKANYO MATHONSI

Former Gantsi South member of parliament Johane Luther Tine Thiite and businessman Nicolas Zakhem are linked to a corruption case involving a P273.3 million Tutume Infrastructure Project tender and are expected to appear before the Regional Magistrates Court South on October 15, 2026, alongside other accused persons, the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) has announced.

In a statement issued on October 9, the DCEC said the case involved allegations of fraud, corruption and money laundering linked to the tender, reference CDC/RDS/16/2016.

Zakhem could not be served with court papers because he was reportedly outside Botswana at the time.

The directorate alleges that the accused acted together between September 2016 and August 2020 with the intention of defrauding the government.

"The charges arise from investigations conducted by the DCEC which allege that accused persons Johane Luther Tine Thiite,



Nicolas Zakhem, their companies Thiite Rubble Screeners (Pty) Ltd and Zac Construction (Pty) Ltd respectively, between September 2016 and August 2020 acting together and in concert with intent to defraud the Government of the Republic of Botswana," the statement reads.

According to the DCEC, the alleged scheme involved the submission of false work references claiming that the companies had previously carried out work for China State Construction and Engineering Corporation.

Investigators allege that the references were fraudulent and that the accused had never performed the work claimed.

"They submitted fraudulent references in support of their tender bid, representing that the references were genuine when, in fact, they were false in both form and substance," the DCEC said.

The alleged fraud also involved a letter of intent purportedly issued by Banc ABC to provide a performance bond and an advance payment guarantee in support of the tender bid.

The DCEC said the letter was presented as genuine despite allegedly not having been authorised by the bank.

"The letter had not been issued with Banc ABC's authority and the bank had never intended to provide the said bond or guarantee,"

The directorate further alleges that Thiite Rubble Screeners was presented as a citizen owned company eligible for the tender but was allegedly fronting for Zac Construction, which

was not eligible to bid because it was not citizen owned.

The case also includes money laundering allegations involving financial transactions that investigators suspect were intended to conceal, disguise or transfer proceeds from the alleged fraud.

Other accused named in the DCEC statement include Kagiso Nthaga, Tumelo Johane Mbaiwa, Portia Tebogo Gilika and Haas Consult Southern Region Africa (Proprietary) Limited, alongside the two companies linked to Thiite and Zakhem.

The charges include obtaining by false pretences, making documents without authority, cheating, six counts of corrupt practices and three counts of money laundering.

The accused are expected to appear before Regional Magistrate Worship Mareledi Dipate for arraignment.

Manual Workers Drag Govt To Court Over 'Civil Service Downsizing Plans'

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transformation and workforce optimisation.

The programme reportedly sets out eligibility criteria, separation packages, application procedures and arrangements for managing the process.

The union claims that, although the initial phase targets employees on salary bands E to F, the government intends to roll it out in subsequent phases to employees on lower salary bands.

It also argues that the programme differs from the 2008 policy because it includes contract employees.

However, the union maintains that its ultimate effect would be to reduce the number of public servants, regardless of whether the government subsequently recruits new employees.

The dispute intensified in July after the union and other trade unions objected to the programme.

According to the founding affidavit, a meeting involving the Minister responsible for State President, Defence and Security resulted in the suspension of the programme through a letter dated July 13, 2026.

Three days later, the government met trade unions to discuss local per diem allowances, but disagreements also emerged over the proposed leadership programme.

While the unions maintained that the



Robert Rabasimane

matter required negotiation, the government reportedly regarded it as one requiring consultation.

The parties subsequently issued a joint statement on July 29, 2026, recording their divergent positions and failure to reach consensus.

Despite the impasse, the government announced on August 6, 2026, that it had decided to proceed with the Leadership Transformation Programme and local per diem changes.

According to the union, the announcement indicated that the first phase of the programme would target employees on salary scales E to F, with completion expected by the end of October 2026. Further phases were expected to cover other salary bands during the 2026/27 financial year.

The union argues that proceeding without negotiations would undermine the existing Memorandum of

respondent is irrelevant for the purpose of determining whether the policy is negotiable or not," Rabasimane states in the affidavit.

The union further argues that it has a direct and substantial interest in the matter because it is a recognised trade union and a signatory to the agreement governing collective bargaining with the government.

It says its members could suffer prejudice if the programme is implemented without its participation.

The High Court is being asked to determine whether the Leadership Transformation Programme falls within matters that must be negotiated under the existing collective bargaining arrangements.

Agreement and disregard the Early Exit Policy negotiated by the parties.

It insists that the government's stated intention to renew leadership rather than reduce the workforce does not alter the legal character of the programme.

"The intention of the





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Botswana Takes Charge Of SADC Aviation Safety

Botswana has assumed a leading role in Southern Africa's aviation safety oversight at a time when four Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries have yet to ratify a regional agreement intended to strengthen cooperation, improve regulatory standards and address emerging risks in the aviation industry.

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

The appointment of Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana (CAAB) Chief Executive Officer Captain Thuto Toise as Chairperson of the SADC Aviation Safety Organisation (SASO) places Botswana at the centre of efforts to strengthen aviation safety across the 16-member regional bloc.

However, the regional aviation safety framework remains incomplete, with only 12 of the 16 potential State Parties having ratified the SASO Charter. This raises questions about the pace at which Southern African countries are moving towards a coordinated aviation safety system.

CAAB confirmed the development in a statement issued on Thursday following the SADC Civil Aviation Committee (CAC) meeting in Mbabane, Eswatini, from October 7 to 8, 2026. Toise chaired the meeting.

Regional aviation



authorities met to discuss strengthening collective safety oversight, improving institutional capacity and developing coordinated responses to risks affecting civil aviation.

Opening the meeting, Toise warned that weaknesses in individual countries' aviation safety systems could have consequences for the entire region, making closer cooperation between national regulators increasingly important.

"The safety performance of one state has implications for the entire region," Toise said, stressing that aviation safety could no longer be approached as an isolated national responsibility.

His remarks come as Southern African countries seek to strengthen their aviation regulatory systems while supporting an industry that remains important to tourism, international trade, investment and regional economic integration.

For Botswana, the appointment offers an opportunity to influence regional aviation safety policy beyond its borders. However, the effectiveness of the regional framework will depend on cooperation among member states, implementation of agreed decisions and the ability of aviation authorities to address weaknesses

identified through regulatory oversight.

According to CAAB, the SASO Charter provides the institutional foundation for countries to share aviation safety expertise and strengthen regional oversight.

The outstanding ratifications remain an issue in efforts to secure broader participation in the organisation. CAAB did not identify the four countries concerned or indicate when their ratification processes were expected to be completed.

The Mbabane meeting

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TVET Workshops To Repair And Service Police Fleet

The Botswana Police Service is turning to government technical workshops to tackle a backlog of vehicle repairs, under an agreement that will allow its fleet to be serviced at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions while students gain practical experience.

RIGHT: ►

Ministry for State President, Defence and Security has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Higher Education.

BOIKANYO MATHONSI



Minister for State President, Defence and Security Moeti Mohwasa said the partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education aimed to improve efficiency and put existing government facilities and technical skills to better use without adding unnecessary pressure on public finances.

“We have to become more careful about how we spend public money, but at the same time we cannot lose sight of our responsibility to deliver services to our people. The answer, therefore, is not simply to spend less. It is also to find better ways of doing more with what we have. This partnership is one such way,” he said.

Mohwasa said government should examine how its resources were used, particularly

where one institution had unused capacity while another faced shortages.

He said officers could not effectively protect communities when their vehicles were unavailable. Vehicles awaiting repairs could affect response times and police visibility.

“Since coming into the Ministry, I have been concerned about the backlog of vehicles awaiting repairs and the pressure this places on the Botswana Police Service. As policing demands continue to evolve, we cannot afford to have vehicles unavailable for unnecessarily long periods,” he said.

The arrangement brings together the police’s need for vehicle servicing and the Ministry of Higher Education’s workshops, equipment, lecturers and students requiring practical exposure.

Mohwasa said students and apprentices working on police vehicles under proper supervision and appropriate standards would gain experience needed for employment, while the country benefited from existing skills and facilities.

Higher Education Minister Prince Maele said the agreement marked the first interministerial Memorandum of Agreement between the two ministries and a move away from government institutions working in isolation.

“Through this partnership, the Botswana Police Service will benefit from enhanced vehicle servicing and maintenance, while our TVET students will gain industry-relevant experience,” Maele said.

The programme will initially operate through

six institutions: Botswana College of Engineering and Technology, Madirelo Training Centre, Kang Brigade Centre, Kweneng Rural Development Association, Palapye Technical College and Maun Technical College.

Maele said the intention was to extend it to institutions across the country, taking services closer to communities.

He said Kweneng Rural Development Association had serviced about 64 government vehicles free of charge last year. Since April this year, it had serviced vehicles belonging to several departments, including five for the Police Service.

Police Commissioner Dinah Marathe said reliable transport was essential for effective policing and responding to

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TVET Workshops To Repair And Service Police Fleet

From Page 11

changing demands.

“A police vehicle is not simply an item on a Government asset register. It is what takes an officer to a community when someone calls for help. It enables officers to respond to an accident, attend to a crime, conduct patrols and assist people who may be in distress,” she said.

Marathe said the Police Service was optimistic about the partnership, but signing the agreement alone would not determine its success.

“The real work begins now because an MoA has value only when its provisions move from paper into practice,” she said.

She said the ultimate measure would be the citizen who expects officers to arrive when needed and public institutions to use government resources responsibly.

Botswana Takes Charge Of SADC Aviation Safety

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also considered SASO’s governance, operational effectiveness and long-term financial sustainability.

Discussions covered implementation of previous decisions, audit recommendations, internal audit governance, financial management, the organisation’s 2026/27 work plan and a roadmap for expanding its aviation security responsibilities.

Regional aviation safety cooperation depends on effective institutions, financial resources, technical expertise and implementation of recommendations arising from safety assessments and audits.

Toise called on member states to strengthen their collective capacity and exchange best practices among civil aviation authorities and other relevant regional institutions.

He also emphasised the importance of a coordinated strategy to improve operational efficiency, strengthen safety standards and mitigate emerging risks.

As Chairperson of the Civil Aviation Committee, Toise committed himself

to carrying out the responsibility impartially while encouraging member states to work together towards the organisation’s objectives.

The leadership appointment also places Botswana in a position to contribute to decisions affecting aviation regulation, institutional cooperation and safety oversight across Southern Africa.

Regional aviation safety arrangements are particularly important for countries such as Botswana, whose air transport industry is closely connected to neighbouring markets through passenger travel, tourism and commercial aviation services.

Weaknesses in aviation oversight elsewhere in the region can affect cross-border operations, while improved regulatory cooperation can strengthen confidence in the wider regional aviation system.

Nevertheless, the CAAB statement did not disclose whether the Mbabane meeting reached binding decisions on outstanding audit recommendations, approved new financial commitments or set

deadlines for the remaining countries to ratify the SASO Charter.

These matters will be important in assessing whether Botswana’s leadership translates into measurable improvements in regional aviation safety oversight.

For Toise, the immediate responsibility will be to help steer a regional institution whose effectiveness depends on member states’ willingness to coordinate their national regulatory systems and implement common aviation safety objectives.

With Botswana now occupying a prominent position in SASO’s leadership, attention will turn to whether the organisation can strengthen its institutional capacity, address outstanding governance issues and secure the participation of all 16 potential State Parties.

The appointment gives Botswana a greater voice in shaping Southern Africa’s aviation safety agenda. Its longer-term success will be measured by progress in strengthening the systems responsible for keeping the region’s skies safe.

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China Calls For More Botswana Exports



BOIKANYO MATHONSI

Botswana has been urged to turn its factories and farms towards China, with Chinese Embassy Economic and Commercial Counsellor Yuqiang Lan calling for more locally made goods to enter the Chinese market.

Speaking at the Made in Botswana, Sold to the World Expo at BIUST in Palapye, Lan said qualifying Botswana products had tariff-free access to the Chinese market under a policy covering 53 African countries.

He said the opportunity could benefit businesses in agriculture, manufacturing and other sectors, helping local producers reach more buyers and expand beyond the domestic market.

“Botswana Unified Revenue Service has established direct operational communication channels with China Customs. Officials are fully equipped to assist local business with registration. This institutional linkage makes customs clearance easier for business,” Lan said.

He encouraged Botswana companies to export competitive, high-value goods, including beef, mutton, donkey meat and high-quality leather products. He said donkey meat fetched high prices in China, while its skin was used as a raw material for medicine.

Lan identified citrus and

other fresh produce as potential exports, saying a bilateral sanitary inspection agreement was expected to support trade.

“In the coming days, the citrus from Selebi Phikwe will be imported to China,”

Other products he highlighted included mung beans, sunflower seeds, dried chillies, morula products, moringa and devil’s claw.

He also encouraged businesses to participate in the China International Import Expo, held annually in Shanghai, to connect with Chinese buyers.

Speaking at the same expo, Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship Tiroeaone Ntsima said Botswana’s domestic market should help local companies strengthen production before expanding internationally.

He said this did not mean businesses should wait indefinitely before exporting. A manufacturer

consistently supplying shops, schools, hospitals and local businesses would gain the experience, scale and track record needed to fulfil larger regional and international orders.

Ntsima said government procurement could help build local capacity where producers met the required standards. Schools needed furniture, uniforms and food, while health facilities and public infrastructure required supplies, equipment and services.

He said procurement decisions should consider whether a Botswana producer could meet the need. Where that was not yet possible, government should identify the investment, technology, standards support or supplier development required.

However, local preference should not lower standards. Ntsima said government purchasing should involve clear specifications, fair competition, timely payment and firm performance expectations. Producers should improve quality and productivity without relying permanently on preferences.

“Public procurement

should create industries and not dependencies,” he said.

He also called on private companies to increase their use of locally produced goods.

“A product proudly labelled Made in Botswana should be visible on our shelves, used in our workplaces and trusted in our homes. The more we buy and improve what we produce, the stronger the foundation from which we export,” Ntsima said.

Lan said cooperation with Botswana also covered infrastructure, energy, mining, education, agriculture and digital development.

China was seeking partners for nine priority projects under Botswana’s Transformation and Acceleration Plan. Cooperation would also focus on mineral diversification, downstream processing, digital infrastructure and investment.

“By combining Botswana’s rich natural resources with China’s market scale, technology, expertise and financial strength, we can achieve true win-win outcomes,” Lan said.



Editorial

Comment

After The Feast, Show Us The Benefits

The P273 million tender case involving businessman Nicolas Zakhem and former MP Johane Thiite raises a question that reaches beyond the accused: how does Botswana ensure that tenders reserved for citizens benefit citizens?

The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime alleges that a citizen-owned company fronted for a company that was ineligible to bid. It also alleges the use of forged references and a false bank letter. These allegations must be tested in court. The accused remain entitled to the presumption of innocence.

But the case gives the country reason to examine how it protects public money and the purpose of citizen empowerment.

Reserved tenders are meant to give Batswana a fair opportunity to build businesses, employ people and develop the experience needed to compete. If eligible companies can simply lend their names to others, that purpose is defeated. Honest citizen businesses lose opportunities, while the public pays for a policy that delivers little meaningful empowerment.

Government must therefore look beyond registration documents. A citizen shareholding on paper should prompt further checks into who controls the business, supplies the resources, carries out the work and receives the financial benefit.

Partnerships can help local firms grow. They should be transparent, comply with tender conditions and leave citizens with real ownership, skills and a share of the returns.

The same care must apply to supporting documents. References should be confirmed with the organisations said to have issued them. Financial letters should be checked directly with banks. Where discrepancies arise, officials should resolve them before making an award.

Oversight must also continue after a contract is signed. Authorities should check whether the successful bidder is doing the work, whether subcontracting follows the rules and whether the promised citizen participation exists in practice.

The recent run of high-profile DCEC cases makes these questions urgent. Investigations and prosecutions are necessary, but prevention deserves equal attention. Botswana cannot rely on criminal proceedings years later as its protection against procurement abuse.

Tender officials need clear responsibilities, proper records and consequences where misconduct is established. Businesses that comply with the rules also deserve confidence that competitors face the same scrutiny.

Through public procurement, Botswana spends money intended to improve lives. Weak oversight can deny communities services and undermine honest enterprise.

Citizen empowerment must be measured by what citizens own, learn and earn. Government owes Batswana a system that checks those benefits before, during and after every reserved contract.

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The Kweneng Land Board Compensation In Kind Saga

Before the Tribal Land Act No. 1 of 2018 came into operation on 20 April 2022, landholders seeking to regularise fields under the Mogoditshane/Metsimotlhabe/Tloaneng/Mmokolodi and Mmopane Development Plan 2001–2025 were told to surrender them for residential plots through Mogoditshane Sub Land Board’s ‘compensation in kind’ model.

The formula offered six residential plots for 0–3.99 hectares; 10 for 4–9.99 hectares; 14 for 10–14.99 hectares; and 18 for 15–24.99 hectares.

This was, in my view, a deliberate effort to divert people from fully utilising land already rezoned for residential development. All that was required was regularisation to adopt the approved layouts.

Landholders sought to maximise their returns by subdividing fields into the minimum agricultural parcels of one hectare. Under the formula, a four-hectare field attracted 10 plots, while four one-hectare parcels could attract 24.

Even that fell short of the land’s potential. Four hectares divided into 400-square-metre portions would theoretically yield 100 plots, before allowing for roads and other planning requirements.

To me, this was a formula designed to dispossess Batswana in



Gilbert Sesinyi.
Registered Land
Surveyor and Land
Philanthropist

the name of equitable distribution. When people countered it to salvage more value, Kweneng Land Board declared the approved programme unlawful, relying on case law I believe did not fit the circumstances.

Kweneng revoked the sub-board’s resolutions, arguing that it lacked authority to acquire land and determine compensation. Yet the sub-board had operated under delegated authority through a resolution issued by Kweneng Land Board.

I believe the real motive was to stop what the board perceived as excessive gains from subdividing fields. The subdivisions, in my view, were lawful. The board alleged criminal behaviour and officials’ involvement, yet none was prosecuted. Where was the evidence?

We began to agitate in courts and tribunals for justice, explaining why the formula fell far short of the land’s actual value. As we started to prevail and some individuals received their land’s true worth, Kweneng Land Board panicked and returned to the arrangement it had declared unlawful.

It is now saying it will uphold the same Mogoditshane Sub Land Board resolutions it revoked. This back-and-forth exposes confusion in an institution that should understand land management.

When the new Act came into operation, the Ministry of Lands and Water Affairs issued transition guidelines covering compensation cases predating 20 April 2022.

Section 8(a) says assessments and determinations made before that date, where landholders signed the necessary documents accepting the compensation amount, should be processed and paid as determined by the Land Board.

Section 8(b) says pending assessments and ongoing negotiations over the amount of compensation should be concluded under the Tribal Land Act No. 1 of 2018 and the Tribal Land Regulations, 2022.

The Kweneng Land Board chairperson has conceded that future compensation must

follow these provisions, which recognise market value. To me, this is not entirely different from the repealed Act’s provision for land of equal value and compensation for improvements.

The million-dollar questions for people now being called back under the resurrected formula are these.

Did you sign documents accepting compensation when or after the sub-board issued its resolution? Has Kweneng Land Board issued its own compensation resolution, or is it relying on the sub-board’s decision?

If compensation was never accepted, should your case not be treated as a pending assessment under section 8(b)? Should it therefore be concluded under the current Act and regulations?

After nearly six years of delays, withheld certificates and leases, and lost opportunities, is the board finally recognising your rights, or seeking to revive an inherently flawed formula?

If the sub-board lacked authority to acquire land and determine compensation, how can its resolutions now provide the basis for settlement? Should the current dealings with Kweneng Land Board

What is Intellectual Property?



Dr Keotshepile Motseonageng

THE BUSINESS OF INFLUENCE

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

For the past few weeks, I have deliberately done something unusual for someone writing a column about Intellectual Property: I have avoided beginning with the definition of Intellectual Property.

That was intentional.

I wanted us to talk about the things we create, the brands we build, the ideas we commercialise and the ownership questions that arise around them before introducing the legal terminology.

Because Intellectual Property should not begin with law.

It should begin with life.

You encounter Intellectual Property before breakfast. The name on your toothpaste is a brand. The design of

the bottle holding your perfume may be protected. The music playing from your phone is copyrighted. The technology inside that phone may involve thousands of patents. The recipe or manufacturing know-how behind a product may be guarded as a trade secret.

Intellectual Property, commonly called IP, refers broadly to creations of the mind for which the law provides particular rights and forms of protection.

Put simply: human beings create things with their minds, and the law provides mechanisms through which certain creations can be protected and commercially exploited.

There are several forms of Intellectual Property, but let us begin with five that every entrepreneur and creative should understand.

Trademarks protect signs that distinguish the goods or services of one enterprise from those of others. These may include names, logos and, depending on the applicable law and requirements, other distinctive signs. When you see a particular mark and immediately associate it with a business, you are witnessing the power of a

trademark.

Copyright protects qualifying original creative expression. Think books, music, photographs, films, artwork, software and other literary and artistic works. Importantly, copyright protects expression rather than an idea merely existing in someone's mind.

Patents concern inventions. They can provide exclusive rights over inventions that satisfy legal requirements such as novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability. In exchange, the invention is disclosed to the public through the patent system.

Industrial designs concern the ornamental or aesthetic appearance of products—the visual features that can make one product look different from another. For businesses competing partly through appearance, design can carry enormous commercial value.

Then there are trade secrets: valuable confidential business information kept secret because that secrecy provides a competitive advantage. A formula, process, method or commercial information may derive its value precisely because competitors do not know it.

Now the bigger question: why should Botswana care?

Because IP is not simply paperwork. It sits at the intersection of creativity, business, innovation, culture and economic development.

Our entrepreneurs create brands. Our musicians create music. Our designers create fashion. Our farmers innovate. Our technology entrepreneurs develop solutions. Our communities possess valuable traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

The question is whether we recognise the economic value in what we create and whether we know how to protect and commercialise it appropriately.

That is why I did not begin this column by giving you definitions.

I wanted you to encounter Intellectual Property first.

Now I want you to recognise it everywhere.

My dream remains simple: to help build Botswana's IP culture by making ordinary entrepreneurs and creators understand the value of what they create.

Because before we can protect our ideas, we must first recognise their value.

The Kweneng Land Board Compensation In Kind Saga

From Page 15

not comply with the applicable law?

The issue is the value of compensation, whether paid in money or plots. It must reflect the value of the rights acquired. That is what the Constitution means by

adequate compensation and protection against deprivation of rights without compensation. For nearly six years, landholders have been subjected to delays while nobody is held accountable for lives disrupted and justice

denied.

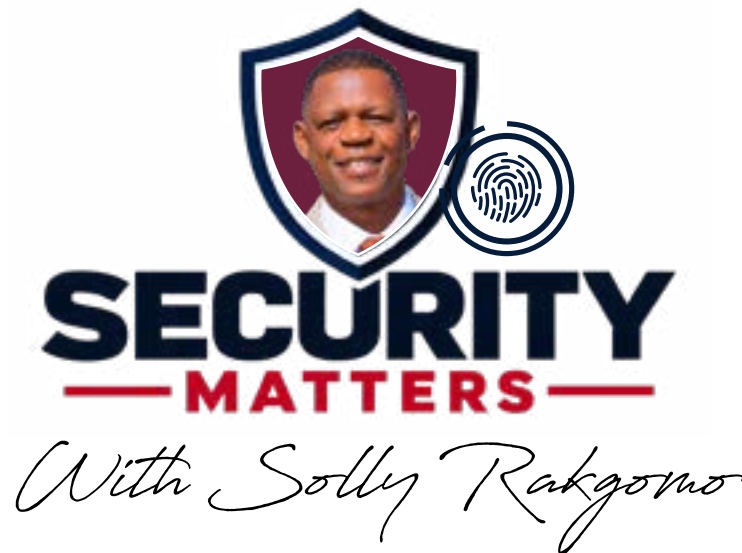
Who will account for the lost opportunities and years of uncertainty? Who will go for us?

A sub-land board acts on delegated authority from the main Land Board. In my view,

its actions are those of the Land Board, which cannot use that distinction to delay people's rights or evade responsibility.

Your hand is you. I cannot blame your hand for hitting me; I blame you.

Aviation Industry In The Era Of Cyber Vulnerability



In the modern age of technology and globalization, the aviation industry is facing a silent threat in the form of cyberattacks. The aviation industry has undertaken a massive digital transformation in the last two decades to enhance operational effectiveness and the experience of travelers. Thales' 2025 report revealed a drastic 600% increase in digital attacks at the global level in just one year. For example, 9th July, Qantas Air faced a digital breach that compromised the personal data of 5.7 million customers, further exposing underlying cybersecurity vulnerabilities in this industry. The rising frequency of cyberattacks in the global aviation industry due to heavy digitalization is equally alarming for many countries especially within the global south, signaling the need to strengthen cyber defense promptly.

The threat landscape is expanding in this industry, as it has been proclaimed that cyber-attacks targeted around 65 percent of airports and 35 percent of airlines over the last 24 years. This indicates that the threat vectors, including distributed denial-of-service (DDoS), phishing, malware, and ransomware, are impacting the aviation industry, ranging from targeting an entity to widespread attacks on complete systems. Notably, the most prevalent cyber threat to the aviation industry is ransomware, as a report says it alone caused 41 percent of data loss and 38 percent of operational disruption in 2024. In the face of evolving threats, the aviation-related international regulatory bodies have established

several cybersecurity frameworks. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) adopted a multifaceted strategy based on cooperation, governance, regulations, and capacity building. The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA), on the other hand, unveiled its cybersecurity strategy, which focuses on protecting airspace systems and preventing any digital attack with a Zero Trust architecture, and introduced new rules to protect the cyber infrastructure. Other international bodies are also working to mitigate the surging threats, including the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which developed a shared cyber risk requirement for all stakeholders, and the European Union (EU), which has designed an information security management system to improve cybersecurity that will be operational in 2026. Despite numerous attempts to secure a digital space through certain policies and frameworks, the threats are still looming, which requires a holistic approach for robust digital security in the aviation sector.

As cybersecurity is a cross-cutting issue that requires the support of a team, different parts of the industry need to work together to detect, mitigate,

and respond. While international bodies are establishing regulations and adopting rules to minimize cyber threats, states and airline companies also need to cooperate to improve aviation digital security. For this, they can incorporate digital defense strategies and technologies, including the implementation of network encryption and segmentation strategies that secure sensitive data and ensure protection against attacks by immediately denying unauthorized access to spread any threat vectors. Also, digital twin technology can be operationalised in the aviation sector, as it will create a virtual replica of any operational technology that further assists the security teams in detecting potential cyber threats and taking quick action. To deal with them, there is a need to enable security audits that will assess the security practices of suppliers and evaluate their compliance with defined standards, along with deploying layered perimeter defenses within the network systems of the supply chain to enhance its security through encryption and access control.

The cyber vulnerabilities exposed in the global aviation industry can be a lesson to vulnerable developing countries such

as Botswana that it needs to enhance the security and resilience of the aviation sector before it experiences a major breach. To overcome digital threats, in the short term, Botswana should invest in building a skilled digital workforce for the aviation sector and conduct regular assessments of the digital systems incorporated at various local airports. In addition, the Botswana Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA) should move away from relying on legacy systems that are susceptible to cyber threats. It has to adopt a cybersecurity-focused technology modernization program that complements NextGen technologies, such as artificial intelligence that can detect digital intrusions much faster than humans.

At the long-term level, Botswana and other developing countries should abide by the rules and regulations provided by the international aviation regulatory bodies, along with the adoption of key digital defense strategies and technologies discussed above. Likewise, Botswana should establish a cybersecurity infrastructure program for the strategic defense of airports.

While these vulnerabilities can be addressed through increasing cooperation among international bodies, states, and key stakeholders, along with the adoption of network strategies and layered perimeter defences at a global level. The most important aspect, in the context of developing countries, Botswana in particular -, is that it needs to incorporate both short-term and long-term countermeasures to lay the pathway for sustainable digital modernization in the future

Op-Ed: When power costs more, energy independence matters more

The conversation about electricity in Botswana is shifting as it sits at the heart of the economy. Electricity is no longer seen only as a household utility or business expense, but increasingly as a matter of affordability, reliability, and resilience. Rising costs and ongoing power interruptions are prompting greater consideration of alternative energy sources.

Reliable electricity is essential for productivity, from small shops to manufacturing plants. The recent nine (9) percent electricity tariff increase for 2026/27, effective 1 August 2026, highlights rising power costs.

The shift to alternative energy is now as much an economic decision as an environmental one.

The Absa Green Energy Loan supports customers in transitioning to solar energy by offering up to 100 percent financing for solar panels and related components. At Absa Bank Botswana loans are available up to P500,000, with repayment terms of up to 84 months and an interest rate linked to the Absa Prime Lending Rate.

For individuals, solar installations reduce reliance on the grid, as this can lower electricity costs over time, and offer greater energy independence. They also provide peace of mind during power interruptions.

For businesses, the benefits are even greater, because power interruptions alone often



Motshidisi Sebina,
Product & Portfolio
Manager, Lending, Absa
Bank Botswana

lead to lost trading hours, disrupted production, damaged stock, or reduced customer service. Solar solutions therefore help businesses build resilience and manage recurring operating costs.

This is especially important for Botswana's small and medium-sized businesses, which face a challenging economic environment. Absa's offering comes as an energy efficiency and alternative power support strategy that help protect margins and enhance operational resilience.

The opportunity also applies to larger commercial and industrial businesses, which must improve efficiency, control costs, and meet rising expectations for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance. The green transition now requires active participation.

Globally, the International Energy Agency reports that solar photovoltaic power is

now the least-cost source of electricity in many African countries. Private-sector clean-energy investment in Africa rose from about US\$17 billion in 2019 to nearly US\$40 billion in 2024.

Despite progress, Africa faces a significant financing gap, and the IEA estimates that about 600 million people lack access to electricity, and achieving universal access will require much greater investment.

Botswana can leverage its abundant sunshine as an economic asset. The country receives more than 3,200 hours of sunlight annually and average solar irradiation of about 21 megajoules per square meter. This then positions the country among the global leaders in solar energy potential.

The benefits of solar energy extend beyond electricity generation. It can help households manage rising energy costs, provide businesses with greater protection against power interruptions, and reduce reliance on imported electricity. Nationally, investing in solar strengthens energy security, attracts investment, and supports the growth of a green economy.

This opportunity is moving from ambition to implementation. Botswana is developing utility-scale solar projects and aims to increase renewables' share in its energy mix. For example, the 500MW Maun Solar Project includes a 500MWh battery storage

system to store solar power generated during the day for use during peak periods.

For Absa, this aligns with our broader purpose of delivering local solutions to local challenges and supporting sustainable economic growth. The bank has integrated sustainability into its business approach, including a Sustainable Finance Issuance Framework, while continuing to support sectors that drive Botswana's economic development.

Most importantly, the Green Energy Loan goes beyond purchasing solar panels. Absa requires vendors to meet technical standards, provide warranties, use accredited technicians and ERB-registered engineers, offer installation insurance, demonstrate BPC rooftop solar experience, and deliver after-sales support. Customers must also secure BPC pre-vetting and installation guidance.

The green transition will take time and requires collaboration among government, businesses, households, financiers, and technology providers.

Each solar installation is a step toward a more resilient Botswana. The question is no longer whether to prepare for a greener energy future, but how quickly we can finance and achieve it. For households and businesses ready to take action, the Absa Green Energy Loan provides a practical starting point.

Saturday 24th October 2026.

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We Ate P30 Million — Modernising Wildlife Culling For The Economy

Before Botswana's Diamond Jubilee on 30 September 2026, government authorised the hunting of 23 elephants and other wildlife to provide meat for Independence celebrations.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism issued complimentary hunting licences under Section 89 of the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act. Elephants were allocated across eight districts, alongside eland, kudu, gemsbok, impala and wildebeest.

Botswana has about 130,000 elephants. They destroy crops, threaten livelihoods and sometimes kill people. Communities' complaints deserve serious attention.

Where culling is necessary, however, we must examine its economics. We should manage wildlife like engineers in 2026, with an eye on lasting value.

I am told one elephant yields about 2,000kg of meat. On that assumption, 23 elephants would provide 46,000kg. At an assumed P100 per kilogram, that represents P4.6 million in meat.

But what other value could those elephants generate?

Using an illustrative hunting price of P600,000 per elephant, 23 paid hunts could generate P13.8 million, while still leaving meat for communities. Hunters also support trackers, skinners, accommodation



**Moiseralele
Master Goya**

and transport.

The amount reaching community trusts depends on contracts and costs. Government should ensure communities receive a fair share, with transparent arrangements to support farmers who lose crops.

Then consider photographic tourism. If each elephant contributed P1.3 million over its remaining lifetime, 23 would represent almost P30 million over decades, alongside work for guides, lodge staff and cooks.

These figures illustrate potential value. They are not verified losses or guaranteed returns: tourism potential, hunting prices and operating costs vary.

Yet the question remains: at 60, with economic difficulties and too few jobs, did we properly consider what we were eating?

Many Batswana, myself included, initially suggested selling elephants to countries or individuals willing to buy them.

I must correct myself. Wisdom is an institution.

International trade in

live elephants is governed by strict CITES rules on permits and acceptable destinations, generally favouring conservation within their natural African range, with limited exceptions. It is not an unrestricted market where elephants can simply go to the highest bidder.

We must work within the law to maximise value.

First, create a Botswana Wildlife Products Industry, drawing on engineers, veterinary specialists and conservation professionals.

Develop suitable game-meat processing facilities in Kasane, Maun and Serowe. Where authorised and viable, animals should be hunted professionally and meat processed hygienically into packages. Hides could support leather production. Ivory must remain subject to applicable legal controls, with no assumption that future sales will be permitted.

That is how culling could support an industry.

Second, auction suitable hunting quotas transparently instead of routinely issuing complimentary licences for feasts. Publish the revenue, the trusts benefiting and the support reaching affected farmers. Conservation needs must determine which animals can be hunted.

Third, introduce a dignity rule. Community meat should arrive hygienically packaged at distribution points, with clear records and fair access.

Elderly people, pregnant women and people with disabilities should not have to scramble around carcasses.

Fourth, give communities a meaningful choice over lawful benefits. Some may prioritise income for classrooms or water infrastructure. Others may need meat. Wherever possible, revenue and meat should both benefit them.

Fifth, protect Botswana's tourism image. International criticism of elephant hunting for celebrations can damage the reputation that attracts visitors. Government must explain the conservation basis for its decisions and distinguish authorised hunting from poaching.

Botswana's elephants are a major national asset. Their value should sustain communities, conservation and employment.

Modernising wildlife management means building value through lawful tourism, hunting and processing, with benefits that last beyond a feast.

Talent is there. Our youth can tan leather, process meat and guide tourists. Wisdom must become the institution that turns that talent into industry, rather than leaving us with seswaa on dusty ground.

Moiseralele Master Goya Former Assistant Minister and Member of Parliament for Palapye



MANDATORY KYC UPDATE: INDIVIDUAL POLICYHOLDERS

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- Tribal Authority Letter
- Employment Letter

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Super El Niño; bracing for health impact

We are in the active 2026/27 El Niño season and this time, if all prediction models hold, there is going to be even more carnage than what we experienced in the 2023/24 El Niño season.

Just about two weeks ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) determined the projected El Niño event to be a Level 3 emergency, which is the highest threat level criterion. In short, its impact as a health threat is likely to be extreme.

Defining El Niño and Evaluating Escalating Global Health Risks

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), El Niño is defined as “a naturally occurring climate pattern in which trade winds weaken or reverse, causing warm surface water to build up across the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.”

This phenomenon inflicts violently contrasting climatic impacts around the globe, from torrential downpours and landslides to severe drought and punishing heatwaves. A case in point was the 2024 floods we experienced in Botswana, which claimed nine lives and exposed severe infrastructural vulnerabilities. The damage to roads and property, alongside the near-total paralysis of service delivery across all sectors, was massive.

The public health

fallout was equally severe. Government and UNICEF reports indicated sharp surges in all-cause mortality, childhood and waterborne illnesses, and acute malnutrition triggered by a protracted, crop-killing drought.

With that grim baseline, meteorology experts warn that the current season will mutate into a “Super El Niño” event, eclipsing anything in recent memory. The impact—unless countered by radical intervention and aggressive resource allocation—will be devastating. With a statistical probability hovering at a near-certain 95%, passive optimism is no longer a viable strategy.

National and Civic Implications for Emergency Preparedness

We must operate under the absolute certainty that this climate emergency is here, forcing us to pivot our national resources into aggressive emergency preparedness without delay. Bureaucracy must give way to action. Simultaneously, civic survival hinges on individual responsibility.



Public Health Vulnerabilities: Thermal Stress and Environmental Contamination

According to the WHO, extreme heat acts as one of the leading weather-related causes of illness and death worldwide. We recently received a preliminary report indicating that Botswana is experiencing excess mortality in tandem with a rapid rise in non-communicable diseases.

Individuals who have underlying conditions, such as hypertension and heart-related illnesses, are at a particularly high risk of complications and death. This is because when the body experiences extreme heat, the heart must work much harder to pump blood as part of the body's cooling mechanism. An already weakened heart is at severe risk of failing. Even if the heart holds, the heat itself can overpower the body's regulatory systems and lead to a total shutdown known as heatstroke—a life-threatening condition in its own right. The elderly and children are the most vulnerable. These

heat-related health risks also extend to pregnant women, increasing the likelihood of miscarriages and stillbirths.

With flooding, sewage systems can easily overflow and fail to contain waste. As infrastructure gets overwhelmed, human waste mixes with the outside environment, potentially contaminating our food and water supplies.

Actionable Mitigation Strategies for Citizens and Employers

Hydration and staying out of the heat as much as possible are critical. Carrying a drinking water bottle to work or wherever you go is key. Entities that require their workers to execute tasks out in the open, or in enclosed spaces where heat concentrates, will have to engage occupational health officers to protect their employees.

Stocking up on a few litres of potable water now is also a good idea; one never knows how severely the commodity supply chain will be disrupted, especially if we experience devastating floods.

In the end, we can hope that the prediction models are way off; however, we must prepare as if this is a certainty. Already this year, we have seen devastating earthquakes around the world, as well as massive flood events claiming thousands of lives. We must take this warning seriously.



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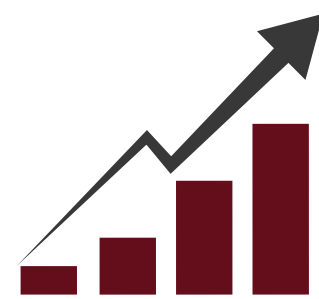


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BPOPF's P50m Tlou Loan In Default As Cash Runs Low



ABOVE: Tlou Energy is reportedly defaulting on its loan payment.

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

The Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund's (BPOPF) P50 million financing of Tlou Energy is in default, according to the company's latest financial report. The Lesedi gas developer ended its financial year with just A\$129,746 in cash and needs fresh capital to advance its Botswana operations. The annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026 states that BPOPF's Board of Trustees gave conditional approval in principle on 2 September to convert its outstanding claim into ordinary shares at A\$0.01 per share.

The transaction has not been concluded. Tlou said BPOPF had not committed new capital and its letter did not constitute a binding conversion agreement or waive the "existing default under its note". The fund retains its financing rights. The conversion depends on Tlou securing committed new capital, agreeing the balances to be converted, giving equivalent treatment to ILC Group's claims, obtaining approvals and agreeing an acceptable capital structure. Approval lapses in August 2027 unless BPOPF agrees otherwise. BPOPF provided P50 million through convertible notes issued in January

2022. They carry interest of 7.75 per cent and mature in January 2027.

The notes' carrying value stood at A\$8.24 million at the end of June. Tlou separately reported A\$3.28 million in interest payable across loans and convertible notes, without disclosing the amount attributable to BPOPF. The fund owns 208.52 million Tlou shares, representing 16.06 per cent of the company, and has board representation through Martin Gabobake. The number of shares to be issued under the conversion remains uncertain because the final balance has yet to be agreed.

Tlou had A\$17.55 million in net current liabilities at year-end, including A\$13.33 million in convertible notes and loans and A\$954,774 payable to former directors. It recorded a loss of A\$59.96 million, up from A\$4.78 million the previous year, including a A\$56.29 million impairment of exploration and evaluation assets.

Those assets fell from A\$78.81 million to A\$20.06 million. Areas outside the core Lesedi operations, including Mamba and Boomslang, were fully impaired because there were no plans to develop them in the near term.

Total assets consequently fell to A\$22.97 million from A\$81.88 million, while liabilities increased to A\$26.05 million from A\$20.51 million.

The independent auditor highlighted a material uncertainty over Tlou's ability to continue as a going concern, citing its loss, cash outflows, net current liabilities and dependence on further funding. The auditor did not modify its opinion. Directors also acknowledged the going-concern uncertainty. Tlou remains dependent on financing from ILC BC, a related party of Executive

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BPOPF's P50m Tlou Loan In Default As Cash Runs Low

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Chairman Ian Campbell. Its facility increased to A\$10 million during the year, with A\$6.51 million drawn by June. ILC Group subsequently agreed to a 12-month standstill on repayment demands and recovery action. It also indicated its intention to convert its claims into shares at the same A\$0.01 price contemplated for BPOPF. The conversions would reduce liabilities but provide no new cash. Tlou recorded A\$13,974 in initial income after commissioning the Kala Data Centre, which has potential capacity of about 1MW. Operations remained materially below capacity because gas production from the Lesedi 4 and Lesedi 6 wells developed more slowly than anticipated. That constraint affects the company's plan to supply electricity to Botswana Power Corporation under a 10MW power purchase agreement. Its approximately 100-kilometre 66kV transmission line is available for use, but completion of the Lesedi substation, about 90 per cent complete at year-end, has been deferred pending funding.

Letshego Launches P800m Rights Offer As It Exits Five African Markets

Letshego Africa Holdings Limited has announced a P800 million rights offer as the Botswana Stock Exchange-listed lender moves ahead with the sale of five of its African businesses.

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

The group is selling its operations in Ghana, Tanzania, Rwanda, Nigeria and Uganda following shareholder approval of the disposals on 19 June 2026. Letshego said the restructuring is intended to reduce exposure to volatile markets, simplify its operating model and concentrate resources on its remaining businesses.

After the disposals, Letshego's operations will be anchored in Botswana, alongside Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho, Kenya and Eswatini.

The continuing operations recorded a 362 per cent improvement in profit to P284 million in the 2025 financial year, while net impairments declined by 77 per cent and the loan-loss ratio improved to 1 per cent.

Letshego said customer deposits increased by 64 per cent to P3.5 billion, while deposits from continuing operations rose by 43 per cent to P2.24 billion.

Under the proposed rights offer, Letshego will issue 1,095,890,411 new ordinary shares at 73 thebe per share, on the basis of approximately one new share for every 1.9847228 ordinary shares held.

The offer price represents a discount of approximately 13.1 per cent to the 30-day volume-



ABOVE:Letshego is exiting some of its markets

weighted average traded price at the last practicable date.

Letshego's largest shareholder, the Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund (BPOPF), which holds approximately 37.2 per cent of the company's issued shares, has agreed to fully underwrite the offer.

The proceeds will primarily reduce debt at Letshego's holding-company level, including settling amounts owed to certain shareholders and transaction-related costs. The company said the additional capital would also support its strategic initiatives and allocation of capital to priority markets.

Letshego Group Chief Executive Officer Reinette van der Merwe said the proposed rights issue would strengthen the company's capital base.

"The proposed rights issue represents a considered step in strengthening Letshego's capital base and

positioning the Group for its next phase," she said.

Van der Merwe said BPOPF's full underwriting demonstrated institutional support for the capital raise and the company's future direction.

Letshego has set long-term management targets that include a return on assets of between 3 and 5 per cent, a return on equity of between 20 and 25 per cent, a cost-to-income ratio of between 40 and 45 per cent, and debt-to-equity below 100 per cent. The company cautioned that these are forward-looking targets and do not guarantee future performance.

The rights offer is expected to open at 9am on 23 October and close at 4pm on 6 November. Trading in the rights is scheduled for 23 to 30 October, while the new shares are expected to begin trading on the Botswana Stock Exchange on 20 November.

BBS Bank Loss Quadruples To P71.5m As Loan Defaults Bite

BBS Bank's losses widened more than fourfold to P71.5 million in the six months ended June 2026, as rising loan defaults and weaker interest income weighed heavily on its performance.

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

The Botswana Stock Exchange-listed bank recorded a loss after tax of P71.5 million, compared with P17.5 million in the corresponding period last year, a deterioration of about P54 million.

At the centre of the weaker performance was growing pressure on borrowers, with BBS reporting defaults across both secured and unsecured lending.

"Pressure on customers' repayment capacity contributed to defaults in both the secured and unsecured lending portfolios, with a greater effect on the unsecured portfolio," BBS said in its interim financial results.

Expected credit losses consequently increased by 63 per cent to P38.45 million, from P23.60 million in the first half of 2025.

The bank said the higher impairment charge reflected pressure on customers' repayment capacity and the seasoning of its unsecured loan portfolio.

The results come amid a difficult operating environment in Botswana, where prolonged weakness in the diamond sector has affected government finances and the wider economy.

BBS said subdued diamond sales had constrained government revenue and expenditure, while higher fuel costs, inflation and increased personal taxation for higher-income earners

had added pressure on household disposable incomes.

Net interest income fell by 52.4 per cent to P50.8 million, from P106.6 million in the corresponding period last year.

The loan book also contracted, with loans and advances declining to P4.50 billion from P4.61 billion at the end of December 2025.

Deposits fell faster, declining by 8.5 per cent from P4.57 billion to P4.18 billion. This pushed the bank's loans-to-deposits ratio to 108 per cent.

BBS closed the period with a smaller balance sheet. Total assets declined by 6.9 per cent to P5.22 billion, while shareholders' equity fell by 17.2 per cent to P343.4 million.

The cost-to-income ratio stood at 143 per cent, reflecting pressure on earnings during the six-month period.

Despite the loss, BBS remained above the Bank of Botswana's minimum capital requirement. Its capital adequacy ratio stood at 17.3 per cent against the regulatory minimum of 12.5 per cent, although this was down from 19.5 per cent at the end of December.

The bank's liquid asset ratio stood at 10.4 per cent, marginally above the statutory minimum of 10 per cent.

The results show growing

repayment difficulties among BBS customers as weaker diamond revenues and constrained

government spending continue to affect the wider economy.



ABOVE:BBS Bank has made significant losses

BoFiNet Moves To Keep Botswana's Internet Traffic At Home

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

Botswana Fibre Networks (BoFiNet) is preparing to launch an internet exchange point that will allow internet service providers, mobile operators and digital platforms to exchange traffic locally instead of routing it through international networks. The state-owned company says the infrastructure is aimed at lowering connectivity costs and positioning Botswana as a regional digital hub.

BoFiNet recently announced that the Digital Delta Internet Exchange Point (Digital Delta IX) will build on the Digital Delta Data Centre (DDDC), its Tier III-certified, carrier-neutral facility in Gaborone.

The development follows BoFiNet's expansion of international connectivity capacity from 300Gbps to 1Tbps through the Ramatlabama and Pioneer Gate border routes, under a long-term capacity arrangement with a strategic partner in South Africa.

While the 1Tbps upgrade increases Botswana's capacity to connect with international networks, Digital Delta IX is intended to improve how traffic is exchanged locally.

BoFiNet said the exchange would allow internet service providers, mobile operators, content providers and cloud service providers to exchange local traffic directly within Botswana.

"This initiative will keep



ABOVE: BoFiNet says the new internet exchange point will allow internet service providers, mobile operators and digital platforms to exchange traffic locally

local traffic in Botswana, dramatically improving internet speeds, reducing costs for operators and consumers, and creating a more resilient internet ecosystem for all Botswana," BoFiNet said.

The company believes the infrastructure can also strengthen Botswana's position as a digital gateway into the Southern African Development Community.

For consumers and businesses, a key question is how much of the expected reduction in network costs will translate into lower internet prices. BoFiNet has not quantified the expected savings or disclosed how much Botswana internet traffic currently leaves the country before being routed back.

BoFiNet Chief Executive Officer Dr Geoffrey Seleka described the exchange as the next stage in the development of the country's digital infrastructure.

"While the DDDC provides the vault for our nation's digital assets, the next logical step is to ensure that this data moves with speed, efficiency, and intelligence," Seleka said. "This is where the next chapter of Botswana's digital journey begins."

BoFiNet expects the infrastructure to help attract international technology businesses, cloud service providers and global content companies to establish a greater presence in Botswana.

According to Seleka, the exchange could create a "magnet effect" that attracts investment, creates jobs and supports innovation in areas including fintech, health technology and artificial intelligence.

"For Botswana, this digital revolution presents an unprecedented opportunity. As we work to diversify our economy and build a future beyond diamonds, we must

recognise that our nation's competitiveness will be defined by our digital ambition," Seleka said.

"This is about national security, economic resilience, and our ability to participate in the global digital economy on our own terms."

BoFiNet has, however, not disclosed the investment required to establish Digital Delta IX, its expected operational date or the operators that have committed to participate. It has also not said whether major international content and cloud companies have signed up.

Participation will be important in determining how much internet traffic can be exchanged locally. Together with the data centre and increased international capacity, the exchange would strengthen BoFiNet's infrastructure as it seeks a greater role in the regional digital economy.

Engen Retail Sales Fall 23% As Motorists Lose Buying Power

TSAONE SEGAETSHO

Engen Botswana has reported a 23 per cent decline in retail sales performance in the first half of 2026, attributing the fall to weaker consumer buying power.

The decline at its service stations was accompanied by weaker lubricant sales, which the petroleum company attributed to reduced economic activity.

“The performance of the retail sales channel of the business declined by 23% in comparison to the same period in 2025 due to the decline in consumer buying power,” Engen said in its latest financial results.

The company said its service station network remained operational during the six months to June. Three stations exited the network in April and no new stations opened, with the reduction in the network also negatively affecting volumes.

The latest fall follows a 5.5 per cent decline in Engen’s retail volumes in 2025. Commercial volumes dropped by 61 per cent, while annual revenue fell by 19.6 per cent from P3.45 billion in 2024 to P2.77 billion last year.

Engen had already identified



▲ Reduced economic activity costs Engen big.

weaker household finances as a factor behind the lower volumes. In its 2025 results, the company said high food and fuel prices had reduced consumer disposable incomes and affected sales volumes.

It also said high fuel prices had curtailed travel, leaving its retail network operating at lower-than-expected volumes. Increased price competition and the opening of service stations by newer competitors also weighed on retail performance.

Lubricant sales performed below the corresponding period in 2025

because of declining economic activity. Engen expects that business to recover in the second half of the year.

The company did not disclose the percentage decline or actual lubricant volumes. Its lubricant business also includes commercial customers, meaning the decline cannot be attributed entirely to households.

Commercial sales moved in the opposite direction during the first half of 2026, increasing by 35 per cent compared with the same period in 2025. Engen attributed the recovery mainly to increased uplifts from new customers.

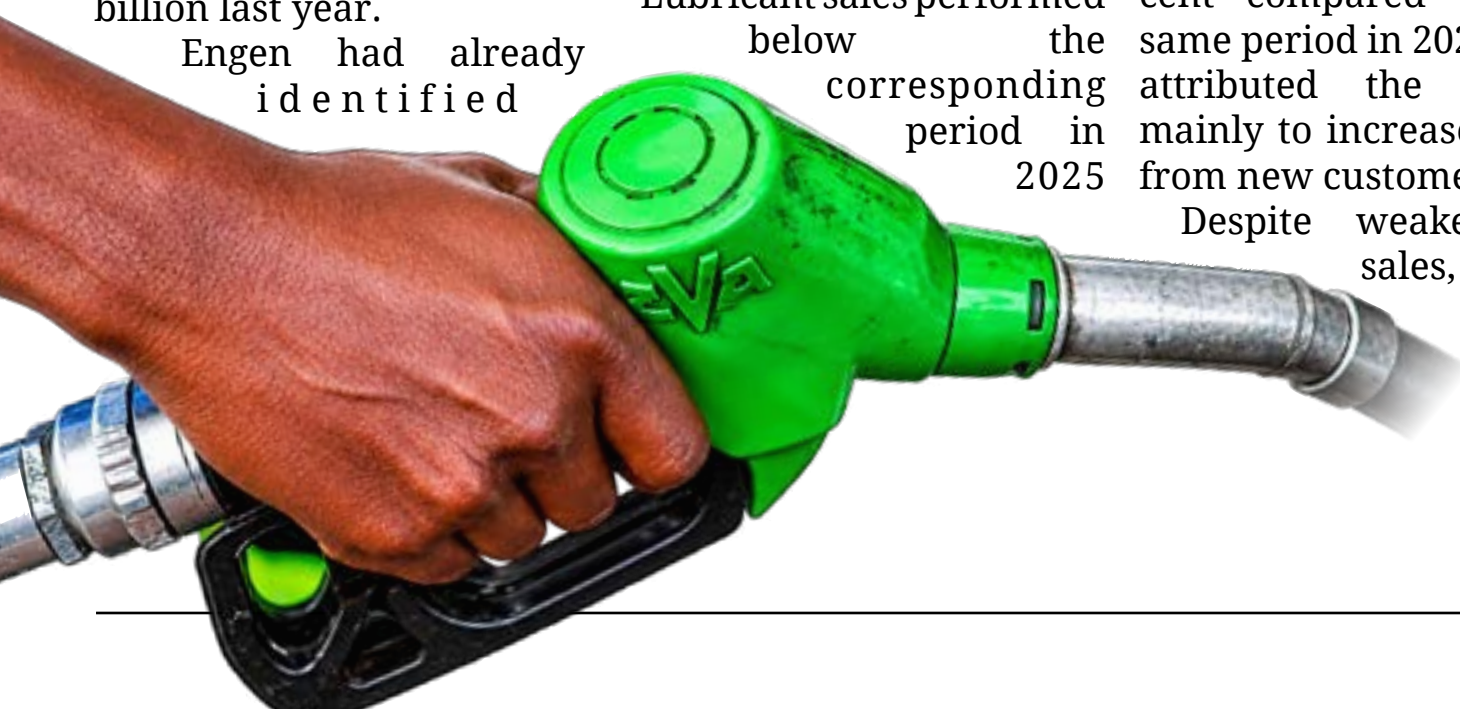
Despite weaker retail sales, earnings

per share increased from 3.7 thebe in the corresponding period of 2025 to 30.9 thebe in the six months to June 2026.

Engen attributed the improvement mainly to a margin increase and a revision to the transport recovery element of the fuel pricing slate in late 2025.

The recovery follows a sharp deterioration in the company’s full-year 2025 results. Preliminary figures showed profit before tax falling by 55.8 per cent from P111 million in 2024 to P49.1 million, while profit after tax dropped by 49.9 per cent from P55.7 million to P27.9 million.

Engen has since revised its 2025 profit after tax upwards by P4.2 million from the preliminary figure released in March. The company said the adjustment followed corrections to cost of sales, the slate receivable and deferred tax.



Absa Botswana Advances Sustainability Journey with EDGE Certification

CHRONICLE REPORTER

Absa Bank Botswana has attained EDGE (Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies) Certification, marking a key milestone in its sustainability journey and reinforcing its commitment to responsible business and environmental stewardship.

This achievement demonstrates progress in integrating sustainability into operations. Currently, 23% of Absa Botswana's total floor area is EDGE certified, exceeding the 9% Environmental Action Plan target for 2027 and surpassing the 18% target set for 2030.

EDGE is a green building certification system focused on resource-efficient design and performance. It provides a recognised framework for improving environmental efficiency in energy use, water use, and building materials.

For Absa Bank Botswana, this achievement is part of a broader effort to embed environmental considerations into operations and value creation for stakeholders.

Commenting on the award, Khrishnan Menon, Chief Operating Officer, said the certification highlights the importance



▲ Absa Bank Botswana Chief Operating Officer, Khrishnan Menon

of turning sustainability commitments into measurable action.

“Sustainability is an important part of how we think about responsible business and long-term value creation. Achieving EDGE Certification across 23% of our total floor area, ahead of our 2027 target, demonstrates meaningful progress in turning our environmental commitments into tangible action.”

This achievement supports Absa Botswana's broader Environmental, Social and Governance

(ESG) agenda and Environmental Action Plan, both aimed at strengthening the Bank's approach to responsible and sustainable business.

“For us, this is not simply about achieving certification, instead it is about strengthening how we measure and manage our environmental footprint, while exploring how credible green-building standards can support broader sustainable finance opportunities for our clients and the markets we serve.”

Absa Bank Botswana recognises that its sustainability responsibilities extend beyond its own operations. The Bank continues to explore ways to contribute to a more resilient and sustainable economy through its business, partnerships, and engagement with clients

and communities.

This creates an opportunity for Absa Botswana to apply the principles of its certification beyond its own operations. Over time, green-building certification can support discussions with property developers, commercial real estate owners, and other clients seeking to enhance the environmental credentials of their assets and explore green-finance solutions.

The EDGE Certification milestone offers an opportunity to reflect on the Bank's environmental footprint and the broader role financial institutions play in supporting sustainable economic development.

The Bank will continue to build on this progress, as sustainability remains central to its long-term approach to responsible business and value creation.

Arts&Lifestyle

ARTS, MUSIC, FOOD, LIFESTYLE

Koki Kamala's luxury handbags speak volumes through touch

STORY ON PAGE 31



Koki Kamala's luxury handbags speak volumes through touch

CHRONICLE REPORTER

Luxury fashion has long demanded to be seen. But African luxury brand Koki Kamala is asking a different question: what if a handbag could also be read?

The answer is A Message You Can Feel, a collection of premium leather handbags featuring raised, readable Braille, putting touch at the centre of a design conversation often dominated by sight.

Unveiled in October, during World Blindness Awareness Month, the collection challenges conventional ideas of luxury by blending craftsmanship, accessibility and meaningful storytelling.

The journey began with a simple question posed to founder and designer Koki Chiepe by a friend, Thami Dish: "Have you ever thought of designing a Braille bag?"

Two years later, that question has evolved into a collection with a message far bigger than fashion.

Chiepe embarked on a learning process, exploring how Braille works, how it is read through touch and how tactile language could be incorporated into leather design without losing its meaning.

But this was no exercise in adding decorative dots to an expensive accessory.

The designer took prototypes to Braille readers, sought feedback and reworked spacing and



positioning to ensure the messages could actually be read. Conversations with blind and visually impaired people became central to the process, turning the design journey into one of listening, learning and collaboration.

At Kibarani School for the Blind in Kilifi, Kenya, the project struck a chord with

members of the school community.

Cyprian, a visually impaired teacher, welcomed the recognition of blind people in the design process, highlighting the sense of exclusion they can experience in society.

For him, the initiative represents more than an

innovative handbag. It signals that blind people deserve consideration in everyday life and in the creative industries.

Student president Dennis Tumaini was equally enthusiastic about the prospect of discovering messages through touch. He also saw an opportunity for the bags to introduce Braille to sighted people, bringing tactile communication into everyday conversations about fashion.

The collection features messages such as Love, Love Comes In All Shades, Beautifully Evolving and Ever Onward. Each phrase transforms the handbag into a personal statement, inviting its owner to experience its message beyond the visual.

For Chiepe, the process has been as much about humility as creativity.

"A beautiful object shouldn't stop communicating simply because someone experiences the world differently," she says.

She admits to making mistakes, changing details and returning to Braille readers to ensure the work met their needs.

"Braille is a language. It deserves the same respect we would give any language we put onto a product," she says.

That philosophy places accessibility at the heart of luxury rather than treating it as an afterthought.

Koki Kamala now

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Living Fountain Invites Couples To 25th Marriage Seminar



CHRONICLE REPORTER

Engaged and married couples will have an opportunity to spend time together, share experiences and reflect on family life when The Living Fountain Christian Ministry hosts its final marriage seminar of 2026 on Saturday, November 14.

Dubbed “To Have and To Hold”, the free seminar will begin at 4pm at The Fountain Gardens, Plot 61018, Block 10, Gaborone.

The gathering will mark the 25th edition of a programme the ministry holds four times a year under the leadership of Apostle Moffat R Lubinda. According to the church, 24 seminars have been held so far.

Organisers say the programme seeks to strengthen the marriage bond, celebrate marriage and build families. It combines time for couples to enjoy each other’s company with opportunities to learn from other couples’ marital experiences.

The usual programme begins with an hour-long photoshoot for couples, followed by games and

dancing. A message based on the theme of each edition also forms part of the gathering, bringing biblical teaching into the discussions about marriage and family life.

The invitation covers couples preparing for marriage as well as those already married. The ministry says the relaxed setting allows participants to share experiences while strengthening the spiritual foundations of their relationships.

National figures provide a wider picture of marriage in Botswana. Statistics Botswana’s Marriage Statistics Brief 2024 recorded 4,517 registered marriages, down from 4,789 in 2023 and 7,631 in 2021.

The report also found that November accounted for 15.9 per cent of marriages registered in 2024, making it the second-busiest month after December, which accounted for 18.2 per cent.

The ministry has invited all engaged and married couples to register for the November seminar. Both registration and attendance are free, with the event closing the church’s marriage seminar calendar for 2026.

Koki Kamala’s luxury handbags speak volumes through touch

From Page 31



hopes to extend the initiative through partnerships with blindness organisations, Braille educators, retailers, cultural institutions and corporate partners. The

brand is also exploring ways to support Braille education and improve access to resources for blind and visually impaired communities.

Founded by Chiepe, Koki Kamala draws inspiration from African landscapes, heritage, storytelling and craftsmanship.

With A Message You Can Feel, the brand makes a compelling case that luxury is not merely what catches the eye. Sometimes, it is what reaches the fingertips, communicates with dignity and makes someone feel seen even without sight.

Rastafari, Reggae and a Call for One Love in Molepolole

NNASARETHA KGAMANYANE

Molepolole is set to host a different kind of gathering; one where reggae basslines, poetry and cultural dialogue meet under the principle of One Love.

The Royal Dub Sessions returns this year to a farm in Suping Ward, Molepolole, bringing together reggae musicians, poets, selectors, cultural practitioners and members of the Rastafari community for what organisers call more than a music festival.

It is the brainchild of Joel Otladisa Mosimanyana, popularly known as Ras Spitz or DJ Spitz Phoenix sound engineer, poet, singer, selector and owner of Bakwena Cultural Village. He is curating the event in collaboration with Phemelo Moikabi of Ga-Malete, Ramotswa, a seasoned sound engineer, reggae musician and Riddim MC.

For Mosimanyana, the vision is clear.

"This is not just a party. It is a cultural meeting place. We want to create a space where people can reason about peace, self-reliance and One Love through music," says Mosimanyana.

He adds: "The Royal Dub Sessions is about bringing love, brotherhood and sisterhood together. We want people from all walks of life elders, youth, families to come and build community with us."



Rastafari has had a presence in Molepolole and Botswana for about 40 years, community members say. But they are quick to reframe its meaning. Not an organised religion in the conventional sense, Rastafari is described as a spiritual knowledge system, a lifestyle and a cultural interpretation of values that varies with place.

"Rastafari is a way of life, a knowledge system. It is how we live, how we eat, how we relate to one another and to the land," Mosimanyana explains.

Followers are found across the country, not in one enclave, and include doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, university lecturers, researchers, families and youth. The spiritual significance of Haile Selassie I, former Emperor of Ethiopia, remains central for many.

While rooted in Rastafari culture, the event is not exclusive.

"Everyone is invited, provided they respect the rules of the gathering. This is not a closed thing. Come



one and come all, as long as you bring respect," says Mosimanyana.

On lifestyle, the community practises Ital living natural, wholesome foods, vegetarianism, no alcohol or cigarettes though Mosimanyana stresses personal choices should not be taken as doctrine.

"We live Ital, we love natural living. But we don't judge. We teach principles, and people grow in their own way," he says.

Music is the heartbeat.

The programme moves between reflective reggae, spacious and atmospheric dub, and the more energetic pulse of dancehall and riddim.

"Dub gives you space to meditate, to feel the bass. Dancehall gives you energy to move. We need both reflection and celebration," Mosimanyana says.

Live on stage will be Chantty Natural from Ramotswa, owner of Eartone studio; Elder IjahMan States from Otse, with over 30 years of live reggae experience; and Ras Lista ko Mokwena, known for fusing reggae with Botswana folk.

Also billed are Noxybuddy, Paul CultyCul the "Musical Chef" from Lobatse now based in Maun and Gen Hood from Francistown. From Cape Town comes Alcapone JJ, who first met Spitz when Spitz hosted a reggae radio show at University of Cape Town.

Poetry features University of Botswana lecturer Moletlanyi Tshipa, with MCs Ms Stonono and Goddess Isis. Behind the decks: DJ Spitz Phoenix as Selekt, Ras DJ Ancient, former Kweneng District Council member for Gaphatshwa and DJ MaJahPan from Zimbabwe.

This edition is a revival. The first Royal Dub Sessions was held in 2019 before COVID-19 and financial constraints forced a pause.

"We started in 2019 and then life happened. Now we are back to continue what we started. This is a new chapter for reggae culture in Botswana," Mosimanyana says.

Camping facilities are available for hire. Guests are encouraged to bring camp chairs and cooler boxes. Children are welcome.

Hours of Power, Fashion and Music



NNASARETHA KGAMANYANE

Veronica Brooks is not just putting women on stage. She is putting them at the centre of the business.

Trading as VebDiva, Brooks is the force behind the



African Attire Female Annual Music Festival, a bold 18-hour celebration set for 28 November 2026 at Rasesa Lodge in Mochudi that dares to ask: what happens when women headline, own the stage, and get paid for it?

Running from midday until 6am, the festival flips the script on Botswana's male-dominated festival circuit. Its line-up brings together female performers and DJs from Botswana and South Africa, young and established, deliberately curated to prove that female talent can carry a major festival on its own.

"To me, #BommeBasadi represents respect, unity and recognition of women — their strength, creativity and contribution to our communities," Brooks says. "We are making a clear statement

that women have the talent, experience and influence to lead major entertainment events."

But music is only half the story. This is a fashion takeover too.

Guests- women and men are expected in African attire, from leteisi to modern Afro-fusion designs. At 6pm, the crowd becomes the show with Best-Dressed Awards celebrating originality and cultural pride. For Brooks, it is also a market: a chance to put Kgatleng designers, stylists and creatives in front of buyers.

"Empowerment means creating real opportunities for women to be seen, respected and paid for their talent," she says.

"This festival places their work at the centre of the experience."

The vision is deliberately lifestyle-driven. Brooks promises a full cultural experience — music,

food, fashion and safe social space — with tight attention to sanitation, security, orderly entry and refreshments.

Tickets are deliberately accessible: P100 Early Bird Single, P180 Early Bird Double, P150 Standard and P200 at the gate. The event is 18+.

"We want everyone to enjoy themselves in an environment where dignity, personal boundaries and mutual respect matter," Brooks says, urging safe transport and responsible drinking.

For Brooks, Rasesa is just the start. In three to five years, she wants Bomme Basadi to be a national annual calendar event that exports talent, not just entertains.

Her message to the young girl in Kgatleng staring at a poster of powerful women is simple:

"Your talent matters, your dreams are valid and your voice deserves to be heard. I want her to recognise possibilities for her own future — as a performer, DJ, presenter, designer or entrepreneur."

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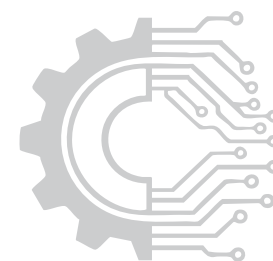
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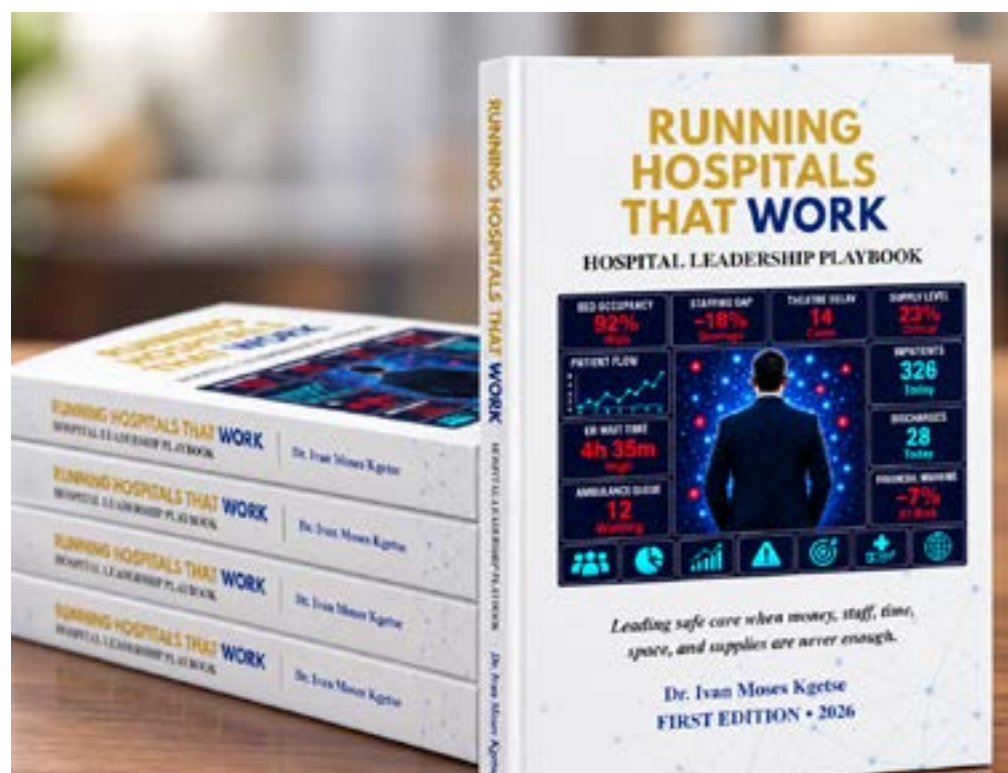
RUNNING HOSPITALS THAT WORK

CHRONICLE REPORTER

Newly released book *Running Hospitals That Work* is definitely a game changer in the medical fraternity. The 184-paged read is practical field guide for hospital leaders working under pressure. It shows how to build safer, more accountable and more reliable hospitals through better routines for patient safety, governance, patient flow, resource control, communication, escalation and follow through.

Self published and penned by Dr Ivan Moses Kgetse under the Dare To Lead Better brand, this book is very much relatable and realistic as can be! The Author's background as a Hospital Superintendent gives us finer insights and intricate details on how to actually run a Hospital.

"I was inspired to write



Running Hospitals That Work by the daily reality of hospital leaders who must protect patients and guide teams even when staff, time, space and supplies are limited" said Dr Kgetse in an interview with *The Monday Chronicle*. Some of the Author's day to day activities have moulded and guided him to writing this book. The read therefore gives us an unfiltered and first hand information from someone

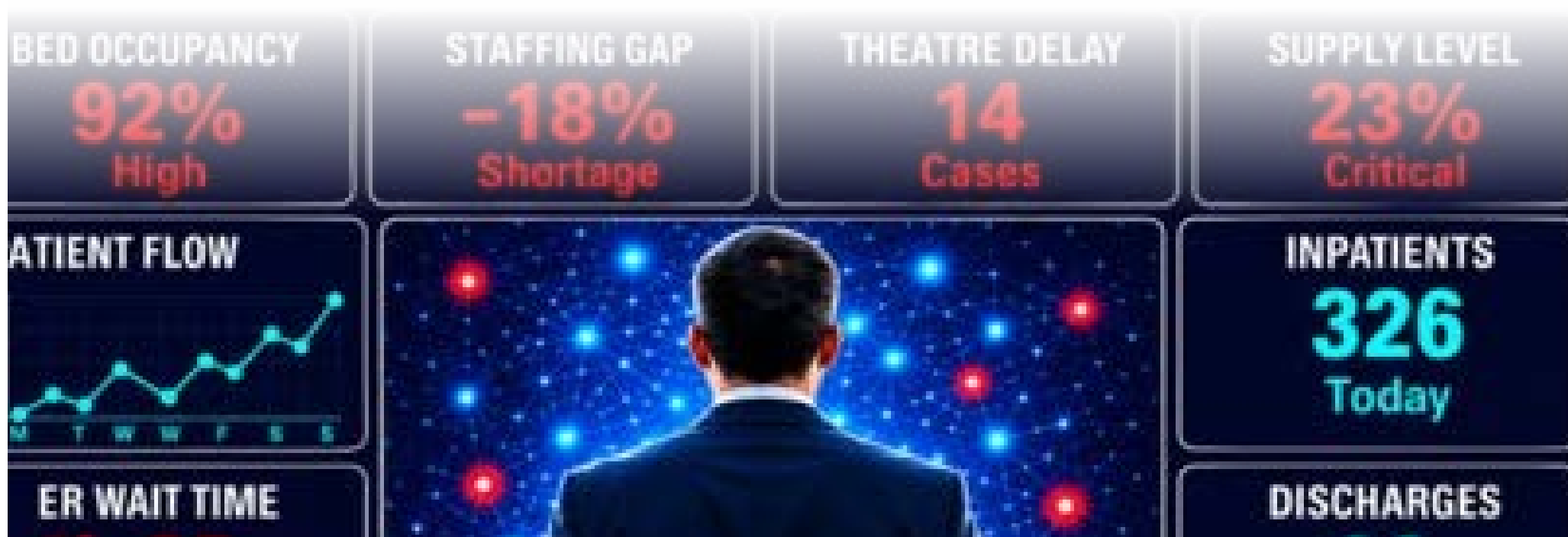
in the thick of things.

Upon reading this book, one will be able to have clear routines, checklists, dashboards, meeting structures and decision tools that make risks visible, decisions traceable, accountability clearer and follow up unavoidable. *Running Hospitals That Work* is therefore a blueprint and template that can be used to ease operational challenges at Hospitals.

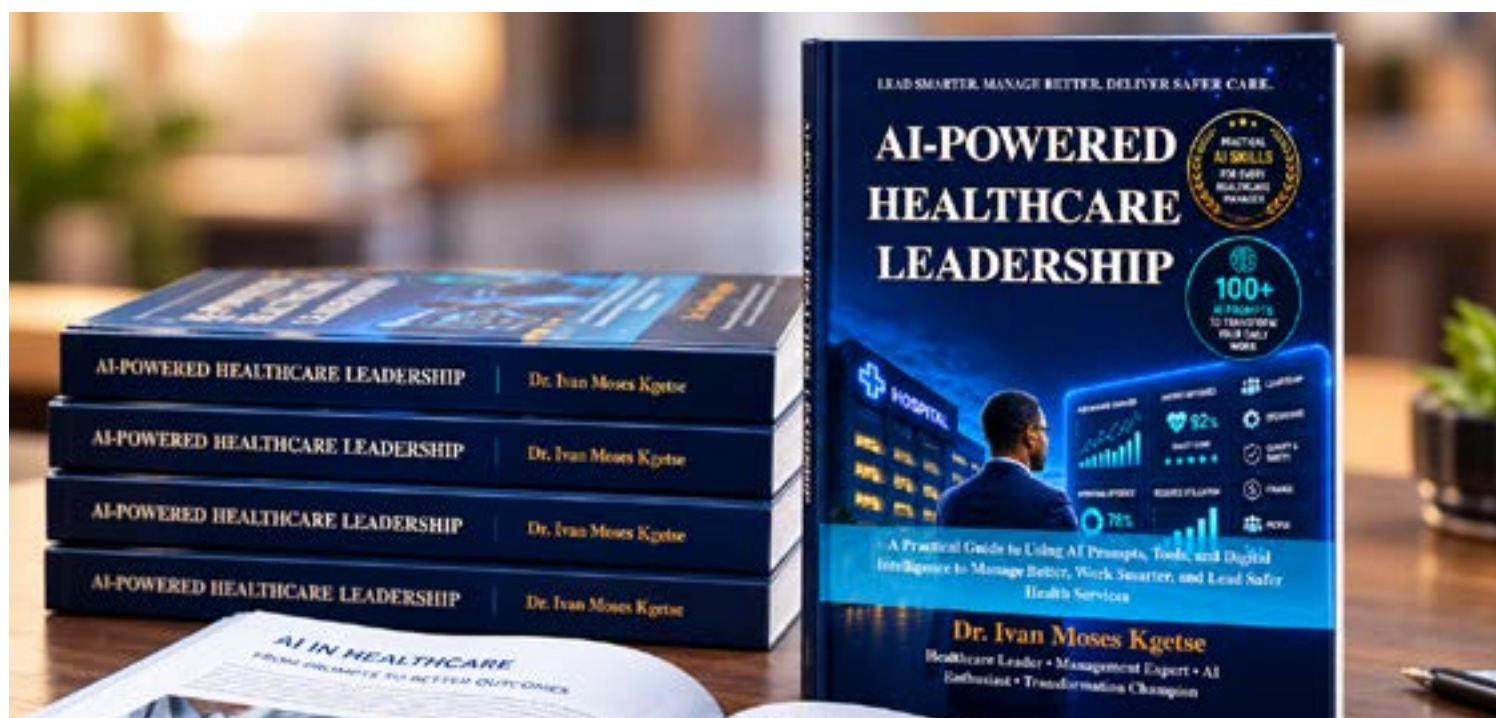
"I also wanted to turn practical leadership experience into a usable playbook that helps leaders create order, accountability and safer care under pressure"

stipulated Dr Kgetse. With the challenges that Botswana is currently facing with medicinal shortages, overcrowding of inpatients and shortage of staff, this book ought to be an eye opener and reference point that can be used by the relevant authorities.

Running Hospitals That Work is currently available at P220 per physical copy, and it will be officially unveiled in November 2026. A copy can also be bought through the Author on +267 73 1 33 1 53. Kindle edition is available at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0H6Y73W8C>



AI POWERED HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP



CHRONICLE REPORTER

Fresh and forward thinking recently released book AI Powered Healthcare Leadership is quite and intriguing and mindful read. The 141-paged book is essentially a practical guide for healthcare managers, administrators and frontline leaders on using Artificial intelligence (AI) safely and effectively in daily operations. It includes clear explanations, more than 100 copy

ready prompts, case studies and templates for planning, communication, reporting, decision making and service delivery.

Written and self published by Dr Ivan Moses Kgetse under the Dare To Lead Better brand, this read is in line with keeping up to technological advancements. The rising use of AI can be seen everywhere, from social media flyers and videos, to how things

operate with the use of pre-determined instructions and much more.

"I was inspired by the rapid arrival of AI in healthcare and the uncertainty many leaders feel about where to begin" highlighted Dr Kgetse in an interview with The Monday Chronicle. The Author is of the view that many thought they would lose their jobs based on AI, with less human intervention. However, the reality is that human beings still need

to be present to do Those prompts, and algorithms before AI can execute!

Upon reading this book, one will be able to have practical confidence to use AI for better planning, communication, quality improvement and team leadership while keeping safety, privacy and accountability at the centre. The Author goes on to elaborate how AI can be responsibly used and how its pros outweigh the cons.

"This book was written to make AI practical, responsible and accessible, so healthcare leaders can use it to save time and improve decisions without compromising human judgement, patient privacy or accountability" stipulated Dr Kgetse.

AI Powered Healthcare Leadership is available at P170 per physical copy. The book, which is officially going to be launched in November 2026 is also purchasable through the Author on +267 73 1 33 1 53.

Kindle edition can be obtained via <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0H6Y9GGQF>



About the Author

Dr Ivan Moses Kgetse is a Botswana based healthcare leader, educator, author, mentor and coach. His work focuses on practical hospital leadership, healthcare management, responsible AI and stronger systems for safe care healthcare. He supports current and emerging leaders through teaching, speaking mentoring, coaching and practical learning.

Mares Not Ready to Surrender Olympic Dream

CHRONICLE REPORTER

Botswana senior women's national team coach Gaolethoo Nkutlwisang has refused to throw in the towel despite the Mares suffering a 1-0 home defeat to Tanzania in the first leg of the CAF Women's Olympic Qualifiers.

The Mares face an uphill battle to keep their Olympic ambitions alive after surrendering home advantage at the National Stadium in Gaborone on Friday, courtesy of a 66th-minute strike by Clement Opah. The goal handed Tanzania a slender but crucial advantage going into the second leg.

However, Nkutlwisang insists the contest is far from over as her charges prepare for the decisive return leg scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, at the Azam Complex Stadium in

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The encounter, which kicks off at 3pm Botswana time, will determine whether the Mares keep their hopes of qualifying for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games alive.

"The players have to adopt a fighting spirit, as we all know their supporters will fill up the stadium. That can also motivate us. The tie is still worth fighting for, we will give it our all," Nkutlwisang said during post match proceedings.

While remaining optimistic about her side's chances, Nkutlwisang acknowledged that the Mares were architects of their own downfall, particularly through their inability to retain possession and impose themselves on the contest.

The coach identified Botswana's excessive reliance on long balls

during the opening half as a major tactical weakness, compounded by their failure to win second balls.

This repeatedly surrendered possession to Tanzania, denying the Mares an opportunity to establish sustained passing combinations and dictate the tempo of the encounter.

More frustratingly for Nkutlwisang, Tanzania's winning goal stemmed from a tactical threat her technical bench had already identified before the match.

The visitors' ability to exploit diagonal passes towards advancing runners had been flagged as a major danger, yet Botswana failed to anticipate and neutralise the threat when it mattered most.

The defeat leaves Botswana with little margin for error in

Tuesday's return fixture, where they must overcome both a one-goal deficit and Tanzania's home-ground advantage.

With the hosts expected to enjoy passionate backing from their supporters, the Mares will need a significant improvement in ball retention, tactical discipline and attacking efficiency to reverse their fortunes.

The anticipated intimidating atmosphere presents an opportunity rather than an excuse, something that the team is relishing according to Nkutlwisang.

With only one goal separating the sides, Botswana's Olympic dream remains alive but their performance in Dar es Salaam will determine whether that belief translates into progression or heartbreak.



Maponda hat-trick piles pressure on Piro

Gaborone United forward Thabo Maponda emerged as the hero of the evening after scoring the season's first hat-trick to inspire his side to a 3-1 victory over Morupule Wanderers on Friday night at the GU Stadium.

GOITSEMODIMO KAELO

The emphatic victory piled further pressure on Morupule Wanderers coach Pontsho 'Piro' Moloi, who is still searching for his first win since joining the club during the off-season.

Moloi has endured a difficult start to life at the club, managing just two draws and suffering two defeats in his first four matches. The latest setback will do little to ease the pressure on the former GU coach, who inherited a side that enjoyed a relatively successful campaign last season.

Maponda, however, stole the show with a clinical performance in front of goal, scoring twice in the first half before completing his hat-trick after the break to condemn his former coach's side to another defeat.

His opening goal was arguably the pick of the three, as the forward produced a moment of individual brilliance to put GU ahead. After dribbling past a couple of defenders, Maponda unleashed a shot that struck the underside of the crossbar before crossing the goal line.

It was a goal worthy of the occasion and set the tone for what proved to be a frustrating evening for the



Gaborone United forward Thabo Maponda

visitors.

Maponda continued to trouble the Morupule defence, making good use of his movement and attacking instincts to create problems whenever GU pushed forward. His second goal before half-time gave the hosts further control of the contest and left Morupule with an uphill task heading into the

break.

The forward completed his treble in the second half, capping a memorable individual display and ensuring that GU collected maximum points in front of their home supporters. Morupule managed to find the back of the net once, but their efforts were not enough to prevent another disappointing result in

what has been a difficult opening stretch under Moloi.

Both sides showed an appetite for attacking football, with the encounter offering moments of entertainment as they sought to impose themselves on the game. However, GU proved the more effective side, displaying greater cutting edge in the final third to punish their opponents. For the hosts, the result will provide a timely boost as they look to build momentum, while Maponda's hat-trick will be a major talking point following an impressive individual performance. For Moloi, the defeat raises further questions about Morupule's early-season form and his ability to turn the team's fortunes around. Having arrived with expectations of maintaining the standards set last season, the coach now faces the challenge of finding a winning formula before the pressure intensifies.

With four matches played, two draws and two defeats leave Morupule still without a victory under their new coach. Moloi will need a swift response from his players to halt the slide and restore confidence in a team struggling to replicate last season's performances.



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Chiefs turn Royal Encounter Into a Statement of Supremacy



GOITSEMODIMO KAELO

Mochudi Centre Chiefs claimed the bragging rights in the 'Royal Encounter', edging bitter rivals Township Rollers 2-1 in an entertaining encounter played under the floodlights at the National Stadium on Saturday.

In a fixture loaded with emotion, tension and a week's worth of verbal sparring, Chiefs let their football do the talking, striking twice in the first half through midfielders Gilbert Baruti and Mpho Kgaswane to secure a victory that will taste particularly sweet to their supporters.

Rollers, who have endured their share of battles against their old foes, found the net through Bakang Seboko, but his effort proved insufficient to prevent Chiefs from walking away with the spoils in a contest that lived up to its billing.

The result was more than just three points and bragging rights. It was the perfect response from Chiefs after a week in which the rivalry between the two giants spilled beyond the pitch, with questions of professionalism, preparation and gamesmanship dominating the build-up.

Chiefs had set the tone by proclaiming themselves leaders in professionalism and inviting Rollers to benchmark against them, a declaration that added another layer of spice to an already combustible fixture.

Then came the drone controversy.

A Rollers security official was reportedly involved in a heated confrontation with Chiefs officials over a drone allegedly flown over Rollers' training session, with suspicions that the device was being used to spy on their preparations.

The incident threatened to overshadow the football, adding fuel to the fire ahead of a showdown that needed little encouragement to capture the

imagination of the supporters.

But when the dust settled and the floodlights came on, it was Chiefs who seized the moment.

Baruti and Kgaswane delivered the early blows, giving their side the platform to dictate the narrative in a match where every challenge, pass and goal carried the weight of the rivalry.

Rollers responded through Seboko, briefly breathing life into their hopes and ensuring Chiefs could not afford to relax. However, the Blues were unable to turn their response into an equaliser, leaving their opponents to celebrate a victory that will reverberate well beyond Saturday night.

The atmosphere at the National Stadium reflected the occasion, with supporters streaming in to witness a contest that had been billed as the Royal Showdown. The pre-match drama had raised expectations, and the players were left with the responsibility of delivering the spectacle.

For Chiefs, the victory provides a timely boost and strengthens their claim to have the upper hand in a rivalry where reputation matters almost as much as results. Beating Rollers is never an ordinary assignment, and doing so after a week of verbal exchanges makes the achievement even sweeter.

For Rollers, the defeat will sting, particularly after the intensity of the build-up. The Blues will have to reflect on how they allowed Chiefs to establish their advantage and why their late response failed to produce a share of the spoils.

Ultimately, the Royal Showdown belonged to Chiefs.

The talking had been loud during the week, but Baruti and Kgaswane supplied the decisive words on the pitch. As for the drone drama and the professionalism debate, they can wait for another day.



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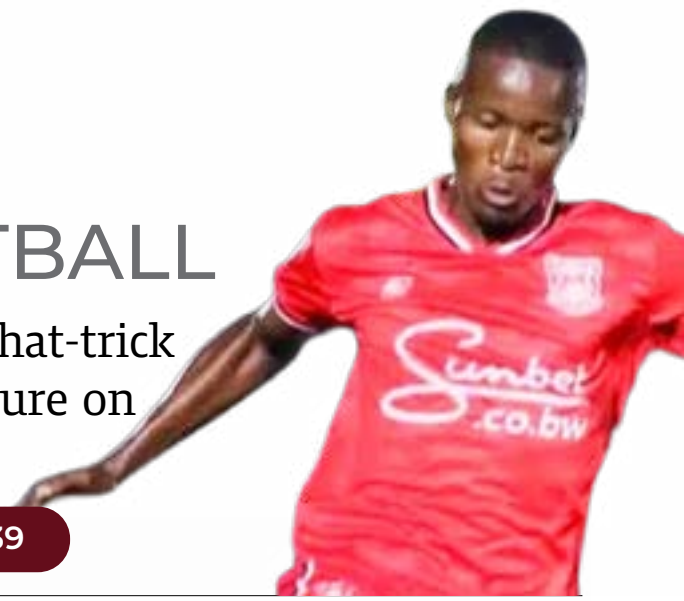
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FOOTBALL

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