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BOTSWANA ELECTIONS

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Economic disaster

- Debswana struggles, suppliers cut staff as production halts to zero
- Govt coffers dry out, GABS breakdown cripples businesses



Serame

BAKANG TIRO
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MASSIVE JOB LOSSES ARE looming at Debswana Diamond Company, who are facing awful cashflow challenges due to a huge decline in diamond sales globally caused by multiple factors.

The strain on Debswana operations is felt multiple fold downstream on their suppliers and sub-contractors, forcing them to send part of their workers home to await recovery and resumption of production at the

mines. Fears of retrenchment within Debswana and among their suppliers have been growing in recent months as production ground to a standstill.

The Patriot on Sunday is reliably informed that some of Debswana suppliers have suspended operations after the mining company stopped production, citing low demand for rough diamonds in the global market. According to sources, suppliers and contractors have been told by Debswana that production capacity was lowered as an effective costs' containment measure, forcing

WHO WANTS IT MORE? Race for State House

Presidential Debates due on Thursday (October 24th)

WITH ONLY A WEEK BEFORE the 2024 general elections, Presidents of the contesting political parties will on Thursday lock horns in a Public Debate to sell their manifesto and make a last-minute pitch to woo voters to their side. President Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Duma Boko of Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), Dumelang Saleshando of Botswana Congress Party (BCP) and Mephato Reatile of Botswana Patriotic Front (BPF) will face off in the debate.

In the next five days following the presidential debate, Botswana will be transformed into one huge freedom square, as politicians across the political divide go for the jugular before the October 30th polls.

Open Race

Political analyst, Kitso Morekisi believes that for now it is not clear which party will win the elections by winning the 31 constituencies threshold to form a government. He said political campaigns have intensified as parties launch



Boko



Masisi



Reatile



Saleshando

[PICS.PRESSPHOTO]

descriptions he used to refer to his opponents then, particularly BDP's Masisi.

MANIFESTOS
UDC

The coalition comprises of three

candidates across the country. "This is one of the toughest elections to predict a winner right away. The three parties of UDC, BDP and BCP have done their assignments

very well in terms of preparations. BPF just launched its manifesto, and the party today can't even focus on unpacking it but rather continues to unleash attacks on Masisi and BDP as its patron Ian Khama does in all his political rallies," said Morekisi. According to Morekisi, the

presidential debates on Thursday will set the tone for the party leaders to secure victory for their parties at the polls come October 30th, adding that all eyes will be on UDC's Boko who in the past presidential debates received lot of criticism based on some of Setswana language

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BIHL Trust donates P150, 000 to Delta Waters Scholarship Programme

IN ITS UNWAVERING commitment to empowering Botswana's youth through education, the BIHL Trust has once again extended its support to the Delta Waters School Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Scholarship Programme. This year, the Trust has made a generous donation of P150,000 to assist academically talented students facing financial hardships, ensuring they have access to quality education and the tools they need to thrive.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, BIHL Trust Board member, Professor Rosaleen Nhleikisana emphasised the impact of this contribution, stating, "This donation is a testament to our belief in the potential of every child and our dedication to uplifting the lives of Batswana. By supporting the Delta Waters OVC Scholarship Programme, we are not only investing in the futures of these students but also in the future leaders, innovators, and changemakers of our nation."

Inspired by the Maru-a-Pula OVC Scholarship Programme the Trust has been supporting since 2022, the Delta Waters OVC Scholarship Programme provides essential educational opportunities to children who, despite their potential, face substantial challenges due to their personal circumstances. Through this initiative, these students gain access to quality education, skills development, and vital resources necessary for their academic and personal success. Mr Khoza, Principal of Delta Waters School, expressed sincere appreciation for the continued collaboration with



the BIHL Trust, saying, "We are incredibly thankful to the BIHL Trust for their support. This P150,000 donation will transform lives, giving these young students the chance to overcome their challenges and focus on building brighter futures. With the Trust's backing, we are helping these children reach their full potential and inspiring them to dream beyond their current

circumstances." As the BIHL Trust continues its mission to foster meaningful change through impactful actions, its support of initiatives like the Delta Waters OVC Scholarship Programme remains pivotal in shaping Botswana's future. The Trust strongly believes that investing in the education and well-being of young people is a cornerstone for the country's long-term growth

and prosperity. Professor Nhleikisana closed the event with a poignant message: "Our actions today will reverberate for generations, leaving a lasting legacy for our beloved nation. When we support our youth, we provide them with the tools to succeed, and in doing so, we nurture the very foundation of our communities." The BIHL Trust remains steadfast in its commitment

to transforming the lives of young Batswana. Through its continued investment in education, the Trust ensures that every child, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to rise above adversity and contribute to the progress of Botswana. To date, 7 youth have been supported through the Delta Waters programme, with over P450,000 invested to date.

AU Election Observers arrive

To observe the 30 October 2024 General Elections



AU election observers

THE REPUBLIC OF Botswana is scheduled to hold General Elections on 30 October 2024. As the country makes final preparations, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, will deploy an African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) to Botswana.

The AUEOM comprises 30 short-term observers (STOs), including three (3) Core Team electoral experts.

They will observe the elections from 22 October to 3 November 2024. The mission will be led by H.E. Goodluck Jonathan, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The objectives of the AUEOM are to: (a) provide an accurate and impartial assessment and reporting of the quality of the 30 October General Elections in Botswana, including the degree to which the conduct of the elections meets regional, continental and international standards for democratic elections; (b) offer recommendations for improvement of future elections based on the findings; and (c)

demonstrate the AU's solidarity and support towards Botswana's elections and democratization process to ensure that the conduct of democratic, credible and peaceful elections contributes to the consolidation of democratic governance, peace and stability in the country.

The AUEOM draws its mandate from various AU instruments, notably: (a) the African Union Guidelines for Elections Observation and Monitoring Missions (2002); (b) the OUA/AU Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (2002);

African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981) and (c) African Charter on Democracy, Elections and

Governance (2007). It also aligns with Aspiration 3 of the AU Agenda 2063, which aims to ensure good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law.

The AUEOM will engage with several stakeholders and observe the final preparations and polling process. Based on the findings, the AUEOM will issue its preliminary statement after election day and the final report thirty days from the announcement of the results.

Source: <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/press-release-african-union-commission-deploys-election-observation-mission-to-the-republic-of-botswana-to-observe-the-30-october-2024-general-elections>

BTC revamps Pandamatenga Reading Room

BOTSWANA Telecommunications Corporation Limited (BTC) has handed over the revamped Pandamatenga Village Reading Room back to the community for utilisation. BTC made a commitment to revamp the Reading Room during this year's World Telecommunications and Information Society Day, which was held in May 2024 in Pandamatenga. The newly revamped Pandamatenga Reading Room will serve as a safe space for children, the youth and the elderly to cultivate a passion for reading and literacy.

Giving the key address, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Lesedi Gaolaolwe stated that "the Pandamatenga Reading Room will serve as a valuable resource for the Pandamatenga community, providing a welcoming environment where individuals of all ages will acquire knowledge, learn, and grow". He added that this initiative aligns with the Government's commitment to education and lifelong learning of citizens regardless of their age. Furthermore, Gaolaolwe acknowledged BTC for its continued contribution to the economy of Botswana, stating that over the years, the company has improved its network, hosted the BTC Digital Shift



BTC Board Chairperson Mokgethi Magapa with Permanent Secretary Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Lesedi Gaolaolwe in Pandamatenga

Summit and most recently, paid dividends of over P130 million to the Government of Botswana.

Delivering his message, the BTC Board Chairperson Mokgethi Magapa stated that "BTC, as a responsible corporate citizen company, acceded to the 'call for help by the caretaker of the Reading Room' and thus BTC committed to revamping the Pandamatenga Village reading Room". Mr Magapa added

that a total of P226,063.06 was used to revamp and upgrade the reading room. He stated that this initiative reflects "our belief as BTC in the power of knowledge and the importance of fostering a love for reading and learning among all ages". He concluded by encouraging all patrons to cultivate a learning culture that strengthens our society and gives our future generations more power" he said.

Some of the works done on

the Pandamatenga Reading Room include painting of the interior and exterior walls, installation of air conditioning units and fire suppression system, supply of a computer workstation, comprising of desks and chairs and 5 computers, trunking, power and network cabling as well as provision of network switch, supply and installation of backup power (UPS) as well as addition of direction signages leading to the Reading Room.

Poll staff, police officers vote

ALL VOTERS AND ANY other interested stakeholders are informed that consistent with Section 61 of the Electoral Act, election officers and police officers who will be assigned to polling stations in respect of which they are not registered as voters on the 30th October, 2024, will have an opportunity to vote in advance on the 19th October, 2024. This poll will take place in all the sixty-one (61) constituencies around the country.

All those who are validly nominated as candidates for the 2024 General Elections are informed accordingly so that they could appoint polling agents for the day, if they so wish. The debils as to the exact places to be used as polling stations on the day are provided for in the Gazette which can be obtained from Government Printing. However, more information may be obtained immediately from the Independent Electoral Commission district offices. In a similar vein, please note

that voting by Batswana based in the diaspora will also take place on the October, 2024. Thereafter, the ballots will be dispatched to the Commission secure, safe and in person, by the Presiding Officers, where they shall be received in the presence of representatives of all registered political parties in Botswana.

The Commission looks forward to the cooperation of all those concerned on the day of the said polls, INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION



BOTSWANA STOCK EXCHANGE TENDER NOTICE

SUITABLY QUALIFIED COMPANIES ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY, CONFIGURATION, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF NETWORK AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT FOR BOTSWANA STOCK EXCHANGE AT MAIN OFFICE AND DISASTER RECOVERY SITE

The Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE) is Botswana's national stock exchange given the responsibility to operate and regulate the securities market in Botswana. BSE invites local reputable and qualified entities to submit **PROPOSALS FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY, CONFIGURATION, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF NETWORK AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT AT MAIN OFFICE AND DISASTER RECOVERY SITE.**

Tender Information

Tender No: BSE 002/2024
Tender Name: Proposal for the supply, delivery, configuration, installation, testing and commissioning of network and security equipment for Botswana Stock Exchange at main office and disaster recovery site.

Procurement Method: Open Domestic Bidding

PPRA Code: 120 ICT Technical Support Services, Sub code: 05 Network Management and Maintenance Services

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference (TOR) document pack for this tender is available at BSE Offices, Plot 70667 Fairscape Precinct, BDC Building, 4th Floor, OR via email, upon submission of proof of payment for tender documents. A non-refundable fee of **P250.00** will be required for the TOR documents. Payment must be made by electronic funds transfer (EFT) to the banking

details provided below:
Account Name: Botswana Stock Exchange Limited
Bank Name: Rand Merchant Bank/ First National Bank
Account Number: 62710885643
Branch Name: RMB Corporate
Branch Code: 287867
SWIFT Code: FIRNBWGX

Documents may be collected during working hours from **8 October 2024** between 0800 - 1245hrs and 1400 - 1700hrs.

BSE is not bound to accept any tender nor to incur any expenses in the preparation thereof.

There will be a compulsory site visit on **28 October 2024**. Details of the site visit are in the TOR document pack.

Closing Date for Submissions

The closing date for submission of the responses to the tender is **15 November 2024 at 11:00hrs**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Bidders are invited for a tender opening at **11:05hrs** on the closing date. Details of the tender opening are in the TOR document pack.

Queries or clarifications regarding this tender should be addressed to the e-mail address below.
Email: proposals@bse.co.bw

Ombudsman enhances Human Rights mandate

BAKANG TIRO
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- New strategy to boost execution of new human rights function
- Ombudsman Tiroyakgosi optimistic on 2024-2029 strategic plan

THE OFFICE OF THE Ombudsman is optimistic that its newly launched 2024-2029 strategic plan will be crucial as it comes at a time when Ombudsman is implementing the new human rights mandate tasked to the office following the amendment of Ombudsman Act.

The Ombudsman launched a new strategic five-year plan on Thursday in Gaborone. Speaking at the launch, Ombudsman Stephen Tiroyakgosi said there is yet a detailed strategy focusing on the human rights enshrined in the Botswana's constitution but are also being mindful of the treaties to which Botswana is party to in the area of human rights.

He said these rights include among others, the right not to be discriminated against for any reason contemplated by the law, the right to life, protection from inhumane treatment, freedom of expression/association, conscience etc. Tiroyakgosi said the office is now in a position to advance the human rights of all persons including people living with disability, the vulnerable and marginalized members of society.



Ombudsman Stephen Tiroyakgosi

[PIC:PINO KILANO]

He said some of the statutory functions conferred on the Ombudsman by the new Act include investigation of human rights violations both in the public and private sector, assisting government to monitor, address and report human rights at national and international and promote human rights culture through research and information dissemination on human rights

Meanwhile, Tiroyakgosi said the launch of the new strategic plan comes after a lot of consultations and preparations, adding that it would enhance efficiency with regards to service delivery towards the public. "Much of work has been done to ensure that the strategy caters for the purpose it is intended for, which is to foster

administrative justice and protect the rights for all persons in Botswana," said Tiroyakgosi.

He also said their expectations from the new mandate are vast, he values the task given to the Ombudsman and the opportunity to work with dedicated stakeholders in the human rights sphere and the public at large.

Targets
Some of the strategic

themes of the new strategy are legislative and policy mandate- human rights and administrative justice, public education, outreach and capacity building, stakeholder collaboration and resource management to mention but just a few.

Ombudsman noted that it is keen to enhance human rights compliance by with a target set to achieve 90% compliance with international human rights treaties by 2026.

It also said another priority is to improve public sector accountability which entails reducing complaints of maladministration by 30% by 2027.

When the Ombudsman office was established in 1995 it was only mandated to investigate complaints of maladministration committed against the government and its agencies and recommended the remedial action where the complainant was prejudiced by administrative action from government or its agency.

The office also received complaints of human rights violations, but could not investigate owing to its limited jurisdiction, hence the mandate of human rights to its mandate when the act was amended by Parliament through the Ombudsman Bill, 2021.

Boko launches Kelebeng

■ UDC's youngest candidate confident of victory

AT JUST 35 YEARS OLD, Jacob Kelebeng of the opposition Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) is the party's youngest parliamentary candidate contesting the 2024 general elections. Despite facing more experienced, tried and tested politicians like Friction Leuwe of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), he remains optimistic about victory in the October 30th general elections.

"We will change the narrative in Takatokwane Constituency that young people can't lead and lead well by providing them with the best leadership they have ever encountered in history. My age doesn't matter, remember that Dumelang Saleshando and Botsalo Ntuane first got into Parliament at 33 years. Dr Phenyo Butale and Beauty Manake at 34. Dithapelo Keorapetse and Yandani Boko at 32. Bagalatia Arone at 31. Bogolo Kenewendo at 29 and Daniel Kwelagobe at 26.

I have been active in politics since 2006. I lost parliamentary elections in my first attempt in 2019 at just 30, same age as Gaotlhaetse Utlwang Sankoloba Mathabaphiri of BDP when he first got into Parliament. I have led many institutions including UB SRC, where I was



Kelebeng

also a member of UB Council and Senate board. I have also led National Student Union and African Union Youth Club. Not only that I'm well vested and trained on issues of national interests and statecraft," said Kelebeng.

Kelebeng faces former Takatokwane Member of Parliament, Friction Leuwe at the polls on October 30th.

"I have a degree in Public Admin and Political Science, and currently pursuing my Master's degree in Politics and International Relations. I don't debate issues from a lay perspective. I have read many heavy books on statecraft, debated at length with professors of politics and governance. I'm cautious

not to say certain things out of respect and courtesy to my opponents because it would be inconsiderate to debate certain complex matters with lay people.

So people should understand that my training does not permit me to have social talk on serious matters of statecraft. It's best to let certain issues pass without responding to them."

The Motokwe native is also popularly known of community development initiatives such as horse races, business workshops, consultancy services and charity work. Kelebeng together with his council candidates were launched by UDC President Duma Boko on Thursday, 17th October 2024 at Takatokwane village.



BRICS holds first meeting of diamond industry dialogue platform

A MEETING OF BRICS finance ministers and central bank governors in Moscow on October 9th hosted an informal dialogue platform on cooperation in the diamond industry, held with assistance from the African Diamond Producers Association (ADPA).

During the meeting, diamond industry representatives and regulators from the BRICS countries and members of leading international industry organizations discussed potential ways to promote a regular dialogue to ensure sustainable development of the diamond trade.

"Following the meeting, participants agreed on four main aspects of the dialogue platform: creating added value in supply chains; supporting generic diamond marketing programs in the BRICS markets; ensuring uniform standards for responsible diamond mining and trade; sharing best practices," the press service of the Russian Ministry of Finance reported.

During a separate session,

representatives of the BRICS countries also discussed the feasibility of creating uniform quality standards and rules for trading precious stones and metals in the BRICS markets.

"The launch of a dialogue platform on diamonds in the BRICS+ format with the participation of African diamond-mining countries will help strengthen trade and business ties between our countries, create new forms of cooperation and develop a unified position of all segments of the diamond pipeline - from mining to retail - in the common interests of the stable development of the industry. It is important to emphasize that our cooperation is based on the principles of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme as the only universal mechanism for regulating the global trade in rough diamonds," said Alexey Moiseyev, Deputy Minister of Finance of the Russian Federation.

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Agency

Race for State House

FROM PAGE 1

political formations, Botswana National Front (BNF), Alliance for Progressives (AP) and Botswana Peoples Party (BPP).

The UDC in its manifesto is putting emphasis on delivering decent work and decent remuneration, proposing a P4 000 Living Wage, which has been highly criticized by the ruling BDP as unlikely to achieve.

In 2019, UDC had proposed a P3 000 living wage. Moreover, the UDC through their 2024 manifesto themed Inclusive Growth, Quality Lives is proposing to pay P1500 monthly old age pension allowance. Launching the manifesto in August, Boko said the UDC will transform Botswana into a regional hub in Tourism and Hospitality, Transportation and Infrastructure, Banking and Finance, Innovation and ICT, Education and Health.

He promised that the UDC will do away with the over-regulation of the business environment which impedes business and frustrates economic growth.

BDP
BDP says they will create over 300 000 jobs with most of the jobs coming from tourism, mining and agriculture value

chains. The party launched its manifesto in September during a national congress in Tlokweng.

The BDP said it will diversify the tourism industry to include culture, cuisine and sports tourism and develop legislation that promotes citizen inclusion. It is also committed to increasing citizen participation in the high-end tourism market through reserving land concessions and providing support for their growth.

Masi said the manifesto, themed: Changing Together, Building Prosperity, was not just a political document, but a blueprint for a future where every Motswana could thrive. He said the manifesto was not just a collection of promises, but an achievable plan based on realities.

BCP
Like the UDC, BCP is also proposing to pay a P4 000 living wage to the working class and create over 100 000 jobs when it is elected to power.

The BCP promises to foster inclusive growth for every Motswana, promoting social justice and ensuring good governance across Botswana. During the launch of the BCP manifesto in May, Saleshando said given an opportunity to lead Botswana, they will create 300 000 new jobs by 2029, adding that BCP's ambition is to

see each household in Botswana having a breadwinner who has a well-paying job. Furthermore, the BC will introduce an unemployment grant of P600 per month while the old age pension would be increased to P1 500 per month.

BPF
BPF manifesto themed Build Back Botswana was launched two weeks ago by Reatile and BPF patron Ian Khama in Serowe.

Under agriculture, BPF said it will revive and modernize the ISPAAD programme with a package of subsidies on fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides.

It also proposes to develop a National Health Service (NHS) that will incorporate and address all aspects and concerns of the deteriorating health service in Botswana.

Reatile said the BPF manifesto provides a roadmap by which a range of reforms will be implemented not just changing the bureaucratic mentality but changing the way systems operate from constitutional reforms, land, agriculture and foreign policy to mention but just a few.

He said procurement laws will be enhanced to close loopholes that might lead to corruption as it is currently the case under the BDP government.

Economic disaster

FROM PAGE 1

the companies to work with skeletal staff at the mines.

Rough diamonds are going through a very difficult time globally, a development that economists say will further push the economy to the brink of collapse, given that the government revenues have also contracted sharply.

The gloomy situation on the ground was confirmed in an internal memo to staff, signed by Senior Finance Manager, Naiko Carol Ralebala on Wednesday announcing that Debswana will start executing cost containment measures as the company is making losses.

In a memo dated 16th October 2024, addressed to all Debswana employees Ralebala said: "As you are aware, we are facing subdued markets and depleted cash balances, which necessitate immediate and collective action to ensure the sustainability of our company."

She highlighted that cost effective measures will be put in place and include a recruitment moratorium noting that Debswana will not be hiring for any positions unless they are critical to production or safety. She also said all travel requests will be put on hold until further notice, adding that there will be no purchases of food for meetings.

"We will not be allowing any purchases of branded corporate wear during this period. There

will be no purchase requisitions, whether capital or operational, will be approved unless they are directly related to production or safety," wrote Ralebala.

Commenting on the developments, local Economist Lame Bothata said the situation at Debswana is very bad for an economy which is heavily reliant on diamonds being the main source of government revenues. He said government coffers are drying up forcing government departments to embark on cost saving exercises, marking the significance of Debswana to the economy.

"It is said that things have turned out to be this bad. Debswana is the biggest employer and an important contributor to the economy. Diamonds are backbone of Botswana economy and now we can say that we are in serious economic meltdown," he said, adding that job losses are unfortunate thing in an economy but unavoidable when the chips are down.

GABS woes
Meanwhile, the technical glitches encountered by the Government Accounting and Budgeting System (GABS) has negatively affected local businesses, particularly those doing business with government as payments have been delayed for many months.

One prominent businessman in the retail and logistics sector, who preferred anonymity

said GABS is affecting business productivity and drags businesses into debts by borrowing from banks due to pressure to meet supply demand.

According to him, a lot of businesses are still being owed millions by the government and the delays in payments are being attributed to GABS breakdown. "The situation is very bad on the ground. We local businesses who rely on government business are at a disadvantage as compared to the international companies who leverage for finances from their branch networks outside the country. They do far better than us in service delivery while we still await GABS payments," he said.

Outgoing Minister of Finance, Peggy Serame has since admitted that suppliers are paid late because of the underperformance of GABS. Responding to a question in Parliament in August, Serame said the delays by government to pay suppliers on time had the potential to cause cashflow problems for Small Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs).

She also said the apparent cost or impact to the economy was that the late payment of suppliers resulted in dire cash flow constraints that may ultimately collapse some businesses, resulting in huge costs to shareholders and job losses.

WE ARE HIRING



The Botswana Public Officers' Medical Aid Scheme (BPOMAS) is the country's largest Medical Aid Scheme which provides its members with comprehensive medical aid cover and complementary value adding benefits. We are looking to fill the following positions:

- 1) Project Management Services Consultant
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Interested applicants should submit their applications (Cover Letter, Curriculum Vitae (CV), Qualifications and references) to recruitment@bpomas.co.bw

The advert reference must be made.

For more information on the vacancies visit the link: <https://www.bpomas.co.bw/jobs-tenders>

Closing date is 28th October 2024 at 17:00hrs. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



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LAGAGO TAMOCHA*
EDUCATING THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

■ Are Botswana's graduates prepared for the new economic reality?



AS BOTSWANA celebrates the graduation of thousands of students from institutions like BUAN, BIUST, BA ISAGO, ISBS, and UB, a harsh reality awaits many of these new graduates. The current economic climate is challenging, with government ministries and Debswana, Botswana's second-largest employer, tightening their budgets. This financial strain poses a significant challenge for graduates entering the job market. In the face of these constraints, questions arise: Where are these graduates heading, and is the education system adequately preparing them for the realities of the global job market or entrepreneurship?

The Current Economic Climate
The 2023/24 budget strategy indicates significant fiscal tightening due to budget constraints across various sectors. Government ministries have prioritised projects such as digital infrastructure and

climate resilience initiatives but have limited capacity to expand employment. Debswana, traditionally one of the country's largest employers, has faced its own budgetary challenges and is reducing new hires in addition to introducing other cost cutting measures. For graduates, this means fewer traditional employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors.

Challenges Facing Graduates

1. Oversaturated Job Market

With thousands of graduates entering the workforce annually, competition for available positions has intensified. The current economic situation exacerbates this, as both government institutions and large employers like Debswana are hiring fewer people. For many, this means facing unemployment or underemployment soon after graduation.

2. Disconnect Between Education and Employment Needs

Botswana's education system, while

producing graduates, has long been criticised for failing to equip students with the skills needed to thrive in today's economy. The curriculum, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, remains largely theoretical, focusing on academic achievement rather than practical skills or entrepreneurship. This lack of alignment between educational output and market needs means many graduates are unprepared to create employment for themselves or others.

3. Limited Entrepreneurial Support

While the government has initiated some programmes aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship, such as the Youth Development Fund, these initiatives are often underfunded or poorly coordinated. Additionally, the entrepreneurial ecosystem remains underdeveloped, with limited access to capital, mentorship, and market opportunities. Graduates, particularly those from non-business disciplines, often lack the practical skills and

resources needed to successfully start and sustain their own businesses.

4. Global Competitiveness

In an increasingly globalised economy, Botswana's graduates must be able to compete with peers from around the world. Unfortunately, many lack exposure to international markets and trends. While some universities have made efforts to integrate global perspectives into their curricula, many students remain underprepared for the demands of global industries.

Practical Solutions

Curriculum Reform

A significant overhaul of the national curriculum is essential to better align education with the needs of the economy. From primary school through to tertiary education, there should be a greater emphasis on vocational training, critical thinking, and problem-solving. This shift would ensure that students develop

practical skills that are relevant to the job market. For instance, integrating coding, data analysis, and digital marketing into school programmes could prepare students for the growing demand for digital skills.

Entrepreneurship Education

Introducing entrepreneurship education at all levels could cultivate a culture of innovation and self-employment.

Practical courses on starting and managing a business, including financial literacy, marketing, and business development, should be part of the curriculum from secondary school onwards. Universities could establish business incubation centres where students can test and launch their entrepreneurial ideas with guidance from experienced mentors.

Industry Partnerships

Collaboration between educational institutions and the private sector is crucial. By forming partnerships with industries, schools and universities can offer internships, apprenticeships, and work-integrated learning opportunities. This would allow students to gain practical experience while still studying, making them more job-ready upon graduation. Companies can also provide input into the curriculum to ensure that graduates have the skills needed to meet market demands.

Expanding Global Opportunities

Botswana's institutions should

also focus on preparing students for the global job market. This could involve offering more opportunities for international exchanges, encouraging collaboration on global projects, and integrating global case studies into the curriculum.

Enhancing digital literacy would allow students to tap into remote work opportunities, which have become more accessible in the post-pandemic world.

Strengthening Support for Start-ups

The government can also play a more active role in supporting entrepreneurship by expanding funding opportunities and reducing bureaucratic barriers for start-ups. More financial incentives for young entrepreneurs, coupled with technical support, can encourage graduates to start businesses that could eventually generate employment for others.

Building a Resilient Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Developing a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem requires collaboration between government, financial institutions, and the private sector. Initiatives like the Youth Development Fund need to be better funded and structured to offer not just financial support but also training and mentoring. Additionally, creating innovation hubs and start-up accelerators could provide spaces for young entrepreneurs to experiment and grow their businesses.

Preparing Future Generations

To ensure that future generations are better prepared for the economic realities of Botswana and the global market, the education system must undergo a fundamental transformation. Encouraging creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship from an early age is key. Schools should move away from rote learning and instead foster a culture of inquiry, experimentation, and problem-solving. Incorporating digital literacy, global awareness, and entrepreneurship into the curriculum can help equip students with the tools they need to thrive, whether they choose to enter the formal job market or start their own businesses. By adopting a forward-looking approach, Botswana can ensure that its graduates are not just job seekers but job creators, ready to contribute to the country's long-term economic growth.

Botswana's education system, while capable of producing graduates in large numbers, must evolve to meet the demands of the modern economy. In the face of a constrained job market, graduates must be equipped with practical skills that enable them to create their own opportunities. With the right reforms and support structures, the next generation of Botswana's workforce can become a driving force for innovation and economic development, both within the country and globally.



PRESS RELEASE

18 October 2024

REBUTTAL OF MMEGI NEWSPAPER STORY HEADLINED 'RED CROSS READIES FOR 'BLOODY' ELECTIONS'

In the interest of public accountability and transparency, the Botswana Red Cross Society (BRCS) wishes to correct grossly misleading statements and non-factual information in the headline article of the Mmegi newspaper dated 18 October 2024, which cited an alleged report from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

We have noted with great concern that the *Mmegi* newspaper article in circulation attributed certain preparedness by the BRCS for 'Bloody' Elections and cited an alleged confirmation by the BRCS. Note that there has never been any confirmation from the BRCS on the alleged report or its contents. The claims made in the article are **untrue** and **misleading**; therefore, this is a misrepresentation of the Botswana Red Cross Society's humanitarian role in Botswana.

Botswana Red Cross Society (BRCS) is a humanitarian organisation established on March 1, 1968, by an Act of Parliament (CAP 64:01) as a neutral, impartial, and independent voluntary AID organisation. The National Society (NS) was constituted based on international and domestic law by virtue of the Botswana Government's being a signatory to the Geneva Conventions.

Botswana Red Cross Society forms part of the International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the largest humanitarian network in 190 countries worldwide. The IFRC has always supported Red Cross Societies worldwide in events of national importance, such as general elections, through its emergency fund. Similarly, the BRCS has also been benefiting from the IFRC emergency fund and providing support during elections and any other events of National importance since Independence.

As an organisation whose mandate is to provide humanitarian services to our communities and people in Botswana, the BRCS plays a vital role during elections by promoting voter safety and upholding humanitarian principles such as Humanity, neutrality, Impartiality, independence, Voluntary services, and Universality. The BRCS, therefore, maintains its autonomy and independence in humanitarian response matters.

We, therefore, condemn any attempt to ascribe BRCS to any political ideas and positions. These ascensions not only misrepresent the Botswana Red Cross Society's Humanitarian work but also undermine the country's democratic process and the National Society's autonomy and independence in matters of humanitarian response.

In line with the governing Statutes both locally and internationally and as a standard practice, we will continue with our humanitarian response during elections and any other events of national interest.

Thank you

Kutlwano Mukokomani
Secretary General & CEO
Botswana Red Cross Society

Sign:

For any inquiries, please contact us at +267 3952465

Kenya's VP sacked

RIGATHI GACHAGUA WAS elected on a joint ticket with President William Ruto just over two years ago. Kenyan senators have voted to remove Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua from office despite his failure to testify at his impeachment trial after his lawyer said he had been taken to hospital.

In one of the most dramatic days in Kenya's recent political history, Gachagua had been due to appear in the Senate to defend himself on Thursday, a day after he had pleaded not guilty to 11 charges.

However, Gachagua, popularly known as Riggy G, did not show up and his lawyer requested a postponement saying his client was suffering from chest pains and was being treated by doctors at The Karen Hospital. Senators chose to continue the trial without him, prompting the defence team to leave the chamber.

The senators' refusal to delay proceedings until Saturday - as long as would have been legally allowed - shows their determination to oust Gachagua, several months after he fell out with President William Ruto.

Last week, an overwhelming majority of MPs in the National Assembly - the lower house of parliament - voted to impeach him, setting the stage for his two-day trial in the Senate.

Gachagua, a wealthy businessman from the vote-rich central Mount Kenya region who was present in the house on Thursday morning before falling ill, has described the impeachment as a "political lynching".

President Ruto has moved quickly to name a replacement and on Friday morning, nominated Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki to become his deputy. This has been unanimously approved by parliament.

The 52-year-old is a close ally of the president and served as his lawyer during his trial



Rigathi Gachagua

for crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC) that was eventually dismissed because of a lack of evidence.

However, in another dramatic development on Friday, the Nairobi High Court has suspended the impeachment, and Kindiki's swearing-in.

On Thursday evening, the required two-thirds of the 67 senators upheld five charges including inciting ethnic divisions and violating his oath of office. This is enough for him to be removed from office.

The unprecedented move means he cannot hold public office again and he also loses any retirement benefits.

He was cleared of six charges including corruption and money-laundering.

This comes just two years after Ruto and Gachagua were elected on a joint ticket.

The vote draws a line under months of infighting at the top level of government and consolidates Ruto's hold on power.

The row came to a head in June when Gachagua, in an act seen as undermining the president, blamed the head of

the intelligence agency for not properly briefing Ruto and the government over the magnitude of mass protests against unpopular tax hikes.

In a huge blow to his authority, Ruto had just been forced to withdraw the taxes. He sacked his cabinet and brought in members of the opposition to his government.

At the start of the trial, one of Gachagua's lawyers, Elisha Ongoya, said

Before the vote, Gachagua had said he would challenge the decision if it passed.

A doctor is quoted by the Reuters news agency as saying the 59-year-old had gone to hospital with heart trouble, but was stable and undergoing tests.

Ruto has not commented on the impeachment of his deputy or his removal from office besides informing parliament on Friday of his nomination of Kindiki.

Ruto and Gachagua were elected on a joint ticket two years ago - and the partnership helped Ruto win by marshalling support in Mount Kenya, the heartland of the Kikuyu people who are the largest voting bloc in Kenya.

Ruto himself became deputy president on a joint ticket with Uhuru Kenyatta, also a Kikuyu - but fell out with his boss who refused to back him to become president in 2022.

The pair had joined forces when they both faced trial at the ICC for their part in electoral violence following the 2007 election in which 1,200 people were killed.

The prosecution dropped charges against then-President Kenyatta in 2014 and judges threw out the case against Ruto in 2016, one noting a "troubling incidence of witness interference and intolerable political meddling".

Kindiki, who also from the Mount Kenya region, had been a top contender to replace Gachagua.

His nomination requires parliamentary approval before he is sworn in, but it is unlikely to face difficulties as Ruto has the majority in parliament as well as the backing of the main opposition party.

Basillioh Rukanga & Jewel Kiriungi
BBC News, Nairobi

UB honours Dada, Legwaila

Satar Dada

Confer honorary Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa (DLitt) on them

RENOWNED BUSINESSMAN AND philanthropist, Mr Abdul Satar Dada, has received an Honorary Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa (DLitt), from the University of Botswana in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the humanities, social sciences and the business world. The prestigious award was conferred during the University's 42nd Graduation Ceremony on the 17th of October 2024.

Born on the 9th of January 1940 in Moshupa, Mr Dada has built an exceptional career as a business leader and philanthropist, significantly contributing to Botswana's economic growth. As the founder of the Associated Investment Development Corporation and owner of Tswana Pride, the country's largest poultry business, Mr Dada has created thousands of jobs. His entrepreneurial ventures also include Motor Centre Botswana, a prominent Toyota dealership.

Beyond his business achievements, Mr Dada has been a dedicated philanthropist, supporting numerous community projects and people in need. His charitable work includes a \$3.5 million donation of property to the World Memon Organisation, the construction of clinics and houses for vulnerable communities as well as contributions to Botswana's COVID-19 relief fund.

In addition to his philanthropic efforts, Mr Dada has made remarkable financial contributions to the University of Botswana. As the founder and long-serving chairman of the University of Botswana

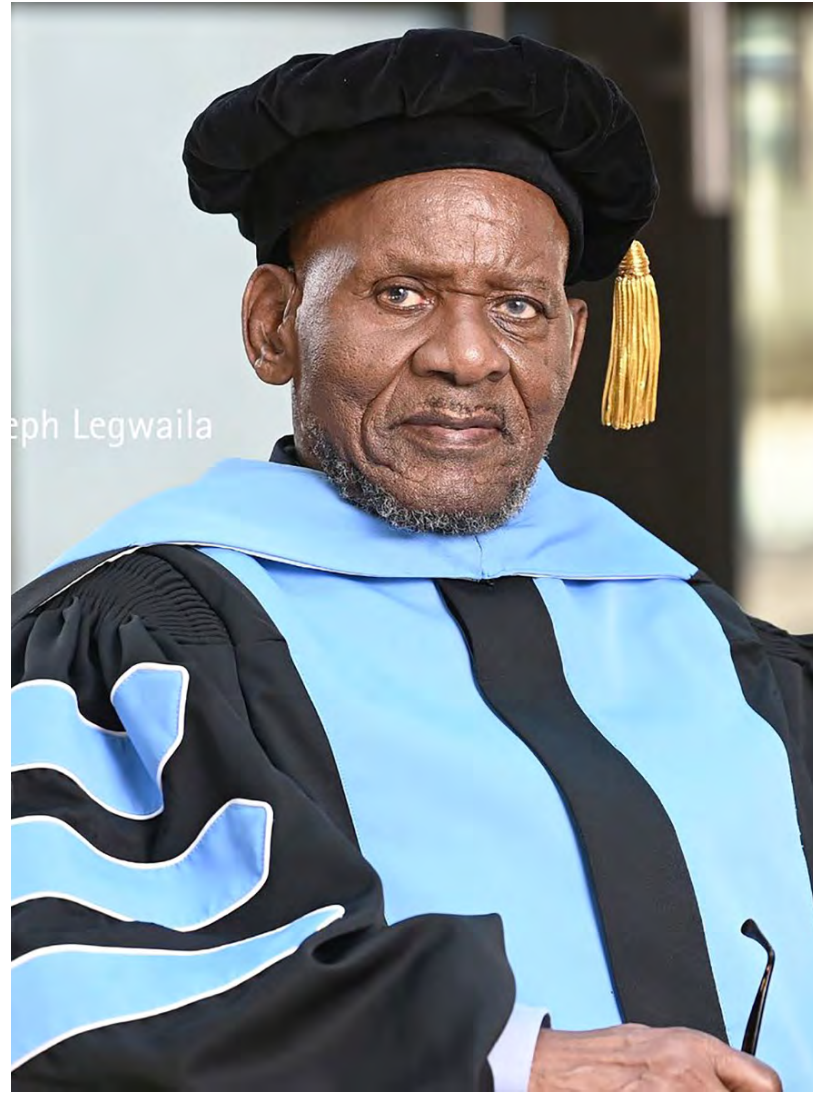


Abdul Satar Dada

Foundation, he has helped raise millions of Pula for the institution over the past 23 years. His dedication to supporting higher education has had a lasting impact on the University and its students.

Mr Dada's leadership extends

beyond business and philanthropy. He has served on numerous boards, including Orange Botswana and Botswana Railways and has been a long-time treasurer of both the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and the Botswana Muslim



Legwaila Legwaila

Association. He is also the president of the World Memon Organisation, an international charitable group.

His contributions to Botswana's political landscape are equally notable. Mr Dada has served as a councillor in Kanye, a Specially

Elected Member of Parliament and an active member of various committees within the Gaborone City Council.

In recognition of his exceptional service to the business world, philanthropy and the University of

Botswana, the honorary degree is a fitting tribute to Mr Dada's lasting legacy. The University is proud to acknowledge his achievements and the positive impact he has made on the nation.

Legwaila Legwaila

Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, a distinguished diplomat and towering figure in Botswana's diplomatic history, has been honoured with an honorary Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa (DLitt), from the University of Botswana. Ambassador Legwaila was honoured during the University's 42nd Graduation Ceremony on the 17th of October 2024. The recognition comes in appreciation of his exceptional contributions to the public service, diplomacy and conflict resolution across Africa and globally.

With a career spanning several decades, Ambassador Legwaila has held various key positions in the public service. He began his journey as Assistant External Affairs Officer in the Office of the President before becoming Senior Private Secretary to President, Sir Seretse Khama.

His impactful tenure as Botswana's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to the United Nations lasted from 1980 to 2002, during which he played a crucial role in multiple international negotiations.

Ambassador Legwaila's educational background is equally impressive. He received his primary education in Bobirwa and Transvaal Province, South Africa, before founding and teaching at a primary school in Semolale.

He later pursued studies at the Serowe Teacher Training College and obtained a BA in History and Political Science from the University of Calgary. He also holds an MA in Political Science from the University of Alberta, further enhancing his capacity to contribute to public service and diplomacy.

His remarkable contributions have earned him several accolades, including the Presidential Order of Honour (PH), awarded by President Sir Ketumile Masire in 1992. Furthermore, his influence extends to various national and international assignments where he has demonstrated exceptional leadership.

Notably, he served as the Chairperson of the founding Board of the Botswana Radiation Protection Agency and led a task force on corporate governance at the Botswana Meat Commission. His expertise was also sought during critical moments when he was appointed Botswana's team leader for Mozambique's SADC Election Observer Mission in 2019 and served as a Special Advisor to former President Festus Mogae during the South Sudan peace process from 2015 to 2018.

Ambassador Legwaila's extensive contributions to diplomacy, public service and conflict resolution make him a highly deserving candidate for this honorary degree. The recognition not only honours his achievements but also reflects the University of Botswana's commitment to acknowledging individuals who have made substantial contributions to society.

'Selebi Phikwe needs sharp minds'

KAIZER SAID SOME OF HIS PLAN for Selebi Phikwe West is for government to utilise the closed BCL shafts and consider turning them into an underground museum to attract tourists to the once mighty Copper and Nickel town. He buttressed that Phikwe possess a great potential that needs a sharp mind to transform its economy and believe that the missing piece of the puzzle for such aspirations to be achieved.

Q: Who is Reuben Kaizer?

RK: I originate from Mmadinare and grew up in Selebi Phikwe and studied Finance and Management Accounting and Audit. Furthermore, I'm a multiple business owner in finance, construction, and the security sector. A former soldier with the BDF and also a philanthropist, leading a charitable organisation called Serve for A Change, which is aimed at developing communities through skills development, taking care of the needy and the orphans and creating opportunities for Phikwe residents.

Q: Take us through your BCP activism journey?

RK: I must emphasise that politics pursued me. The BCP caught my attention because of its Social Democratic Programme DNA, I then became a card caring member back in 2017. The policy document of the BCP is what I live as it aligns perfectly with my principles of patriotism and philanthropist work.

Q: Should you be elected MP, what

Botswana Congress Party (BCP) Parliamentary candidate for Selebi Phikwe West, Kaizer Reuben is confident that his party will cruise to victory in the October 30th elections because it is offering better solutions to revive the town's economy, following the closure of BCL mine which led to massive job losses. He is adamant that BCP will attain the requisite 31 seats that will take party president Dumelang Saleshando to State House. He sat On the **Couch with STAFF WRITER BAKANG TIRO.**

are your plans for Selebi Phikwe West?

RK: I bring hope, a new path of leadership to Selebi Phikwe, mature politics that focus on community building and development of the people. I aspire to transform Selebi Phikwe through skills development and retooling the residents on sustainable measures through diversity of ideas. I aspire for Phikwe with good infrastructure, strong informal sector participation in the development of the town, and greater GDP contribution.

I aspire for Phikwe that creates sustainable job opportunities and an economy that can sustain a P4 000 living wage. I wish for a Phikwe that is rooted in manufacturing and industrialization. Move up the value chain of Copper and Nickel to produce electrical components such as electrical cables, batteries, etc. Set up factories for juice making and other products to fully utilise the production from the Citrus Project.

I also want Government to utilise the closed BCL shafts and consider turning them into an underground museum to attract tourists to the once mighty Copper and Nickel town. Phikwe possess a great potential that needs a sharp mind to transform its economy, and I believe I'm that



Kaizer

missing piece of the puzzle.

Q: What are the challenges that affect Selebi Phikwe West and how do you intend to address them?

RK: Some of the devastating challenges in the constituency are severe poverty, unemployment, underemployment, a collapsed health and education system, and an economy that doesn't work for all.

The 2024 BCP Manifesto is very clear on addressing issues of job creation through move up value chains and bringing back exported jobs to locals. The BCP intends to reform the education and health sector holistically. To ensure that there are enough medications and doctors in government hospitals and to implement a 2-year health check to all Batswana.

Q: The closing of BCL mine affected the Selebi Phikwe economy negatively. What are your plans to have the mine be re-opened?

RK: We want to stop the current sale of BCL assets and reopen the BCL Mine. We believe that the value of the BCL is in its operations rather than its outright sale. Greater BCL beneficiation lies in the jobs it creates and GDP contribution. Reopening BCL presents an opportunity to stimulate the economy through production, job creation, and increased spending, hence stimulating the Phikwe economy.

Q: Can the BCP take Selebi Phikwe

West from the UDC who won it in 2019?

RK: Selebi Phikwe West has always been a stronghold of the BCP. In 2014, the BCP convincingly won the constituency while the UDC became a distant 3rd at the polls. In 2019, the BCP also ensured the UDC wins the constituency under the coalition. I'm convinced that the BCP will win it again.

Q: What is your view on Political Party Funding by government, can it assist opposition parties to end BDP reign?

RK: I am for political party funding that considers all parties to be equal. The fund should be implemented in a way that levels the playing field instead. It can deter capture by big corporates and also encourage accountability among different political entities.

Q: What is your plan after 2024 elections?

RK: I will listen to the voice of the constituents, any assignment or role they wish to entrust me with in the future, I will definitely take heed, whether political or not.

Q: Anything else before we part?

RK: The BCP is heading to this year's elections with confidence of winning state power, and I'm confident we will wrestle power from the ruling BDP. We have a target of 31 constituencies, and Phikwe West will be one of those that send Comrade President Dumelang Saleshando to State House.

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MANUAL WORKERS UNION *Celebrates* DR MOTSHWARAKGOLE

... Among the three awarded Honorary Doctorates by the University of Botswana

Veteran trade unionist Johnson Motshwarakgole has been conferred an honorary Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa (DLitt), by the University of Botswana (UB) in recognition of his sterling efforts in building Botswana's labour movement.

The award was presented during the University's 42nd Graduation Ceremony on the 17th of October 2024.

"With a career spanning over 50 years, Mr Motshwarakgole has been a key figure in advocating for workers' rights across Botswana. He played a key role in founding the Botswana Federation of Public Sector Unions (BOFEPUSU), Southern Africa Trade Union Council (SATUC) and Botswana Federation of Trade Unions (BFTU). His leadership led to critical victories, including the reinstatement of union members following the 1991 and 2011 public service strikes. Beyond his union work, Mr Motshwarakgole has made significant leadership contributions to national commissions.

He served as Vice Chairperson of the Presidential Constitutional Review Commission in 2021 and was a member of both the Ibrahim Salaries Review Commission (2007) and the Steenkamp Salaries Review Commission in the 1970s. His expertise and advocacy helped shape key national policies particularly in the area of workers' rights and wages," the University said in its graduation brochure. Internationally, Mr. Motshwarakgole has represented Botswana at various high-level forums.

These include his role as an official delegate to the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva between 2015 and 2019 as well as his participation in the US State Department Delegation in 2000. Notably, he also joined President Sir Ketumile Masire on a state visit to Chile in 1997, further cementing his influence on the global stage. Through this honorary degree, the University of Botswana acknowledges not only Mr Motshwarakgole's contributions to the labour movement



but also his significant achievements in shaping national and international labour relations as well as his leadership in driving social justice and policy reform.

Dr Motshwarakgole's biggest influence in the labour movement has been at the National Amalgamated Local, Central Government & Parastatal Workers Union (NALCGPWU) where he rose through the ranks to ultimately lead the trade union for many years. He retired two years ago but was retained in an advisory role.

Manual Workers Union Deputy CEO, Robert Rabasimane has glorified Motshwarakgole for his undying spirit in fighting for the rights of Botswana workers. "He is our father and inspirer. We follow in his feet and are stronger because of his advisory and leadership role," Rabasimane declared.

He dismissed negative suggestions about why the award of the doctorate coincided with the elections time. "The University has its own calendar, and they hold their graduations normally in October. There is totally nothing political about this," he said.

Apparently, the University of Botswana was among three universities in the region that had considered conferring a doctorate on Motshwarakgole. He settled for the University of Botswana honour because he felt it was important to be honoured in one's country as the institution's leadership were more intimate and knowledgeable about his impact. Dr Motshwarakgole is more than overjoyed. "This honour humbles me a lot. It means that there is something that I have been doing well. It is a motivation for those that will come after me.

However, all that I have been doing at Manual Workers Union and throughout the union movement in this country has been a collective exercise. I have worked with men and women of very high integrity. This is their honour as well," said Dr Motshwarakgole.

Opinions, Reviews & Analysis



ADAM PHETLHE
ON SUNDAY!

UDC can't win 31 seats

AS WE DRAW CLOSER TO THE 30TH October decisive day, the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) remains a significant player to determine how elections unfold. Since its founding about twelve years ago, the UDC has participated in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. In both instances, it was so near yet so far. It appears the same will be the case this time around. As a coalition, the UDC has for the better part of its existence been characterised by perennial internal instability occasioned by poor inner party democracy. Consequently, the UDC like its principal competitor the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is entering the 2024 contest a divided political formation. Where there is no peace, success is difficult to achieve.

The UDC was founded after recognising that the BDP cannot be brought down by a single predator. The political party that initially attempted on its own to bring down the BDP but failed was the Botswana National Front (BNF). It was no surprise when the BNF became the anchor of the UDC. In fact, some parties have joined and left the UDC at different times for

similar reasons. The most recent to exit is the Botswana Patriotic Front (BPF). And that reason revolves around the manner in which the UDC is managed. This led to several prominent BNF members resigning. Some like the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) have complained and bitterly so, about the UDC's failure to hold an elective congress to elect leadership together. Apart from the BCP's complaints, another issue that has haunted the UDC is that of allocating wards and parliamentary constituencies, and failure to timeously resolve subsequent complaints thereto.

The UDC is far worse than it was in 2019 because then, there were no demonstrable complaints about ward and parliamentary constituency allocations to its affiliates. Some of the notable parliamentary constituencies mired in the complaints are Kgatleng West where Rre Molebatsi Molebatsi and some of his staunch BNF comrades jumped ship to join BPF; Kgatleng East where the former BNF constituency chairman Rre Obakeng Matlou resigned to join the BDP; in Molepolole where there was a complaint about just which affiliate is the rightful UDC candidate; in Mmopane-Metsimotlhabe where Rre Gilbert Watshipi (former BNF) and Alliance for Progressives (AP) Mme Pushie Manyeneng fought for supremacy to represent the UDC. The former has since joined the BPE.

This situation however the UDC attempts to downplay it, has electoral consequences for it in more ways than one. I will mention



just one. And that is the consequence of vote splitting. Votes that would be expected to be in favour of the UDC had the complaints not emerged will be split between the UDC and BPF. In the 2019 general election, the UDC lost about 8 parliamentary constituencies due to vote splitting. While this is so, UDC can still win some constituencies. The big question is how many of these can it win and whether

they will be enough to make the mandatory 31 seats.

The other disadvantage the UDC faces is the fact that it is constituted by political parties whose following is slowly but surely dwindling. As the main anchor, the BNF is not solid. In the 2019 general election, it was allocated about 30 constituencies to win for the UDC but could only win less than ten. It has had its own fair share of

internal problems from which almost all of its members/supporters may not support the UDC in terms of votes. The other affiliate, Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) is not known to have numbers to boost the UDC. So is the AP. The latter is itself embroiled in conflict with the UDC in some wards in Francistown and elsewhere.

With the UDC in its current state, where it is disjointed arising out of its sloppiness

in addressing internal complaints, it is hard if not impossible to fathom how it will be able to win 31 seats in the 2024 general election. While it is magnanimous in not competing against the BPF in the Serowe constituencies, that is too little too late. The horse has already bolted. They say you cannot expect a different outcome from doing the same thing repeatedly. This is true for the UDC because it has dismally failed to decisively deal with challenges which stand between itself and winning power. It is a serious indictment on it not to have held an elective congress to elect its leadership contrary to the provisions of its own Constitution. Reasons proffered as an excuse are as hollow as they can be. Who knows, a fresh elected leadership may have injected a new lease of life where the UDC could be more organised to not only win 31 seats but win with a landslide. Such leadership may have ensured all Botswana opposition parties are not only located under the umbrella but that they are united to put a final stop to the BDP dominance.

With the foregoing, it should follow that the UDC will fail to win 31 seats. UDC requires an urgent, honest conversation to re-engineer itself if it still harbours the ambition of governing Botswana one day. It should stop being a revolving door where opposition parties come in and leave almost immediately. Such has not helped it neither will it do so going forward. I am prepared to be persuaded otherwise as always. Judge for Yourself!

adamphetlhe08@gmail.com

The arrogance in BDP regime drives me bonkers

XID LO*

FOR ME THE BDP SHOULD HAVE A real hiding in 2 weeks! My reasoning is that President Masisi and his government have dropped the ball big time! The present regime has completely abandoned the principles that were sired by the founders under The Morula Tree next to Orapa House. Under Masisi, corruption and nepotism has reached heights of stratospheric proportions. Unemployment has rocketed in all age groups and citizens have resorted to begging, crime and some even prostitution. The education and health services have all but completely collapsed! Service delivery is at absolute zero. One thing that drives me absolutely bonkers is the arrogance that has become effervescent in the regime!

In the New Era of The Second Republic I would like to see the following as a baseline:

1. Direct election of the President
2. The prospective VP should run as running mate
3. Cabinet from outside parliament.
4. I personally prefer a proportional



Masisi

representation model rather than first passed the post system.

5. Rather than have one parliamentary elections every 5 years I would prefer a staggered system like in the United States such that there are midterm elections such that 30% of the seats become vacant two and half years after the general elections. This is to ensure that MPs do not rest on

their laurels knowing that they may go.

6. In the final 2 months before general elections some powers should be transferred to the Chief Justice to ensure there is no abuse of government resources by the President or the ruling party

7. Potential Judges are selected by the judiciary. These are interviewed by a parliamentary panel to shortlist 3 and the President chooses one of these.

8. All large tenders are evaluated by a panel of experts in the field. A shortlist appears before a parliamentary select committee live of television.

9. Batswana ba sekei have priority in all aspects of life from education, health through to economics etc.

A Motswana wa sekei being:
(a) A person over the age of 40 years whose parents were Bechuanaland/ Botswana citizens irrespective of race.
(b) A person less than 40 years whose one grandparent(s) was or is a citizens of Botswana irrespective of race
(c) A person whose one parent(s) is or was Motswana as per the above definition of a Motswana wa sekei.

The are many others that I would desire but let's cut the demon's neck first.
**Facebook Post*

BDP, beware of using foreign languages

ALL POLITICAL PARTIES IN THIS year's election have come up with catchy slogans to woo potential voters to cast their votes for them. The Botswana Democratic Party's (BDP) slogan is Re Vaya le Domi! Now there is nothing wrong with the message and it is neither offensive nor insulting. However, there is one small problem - language.

I have asked some BDP activists on the campaign trail the meaning of the message in English. All of them say 'We go with Domi.' Now that is partly correct. I then tell them that the word Vaya is not Setswana after which I ask them what language is Vaya? But they could not tell me, and only then do I tell them that Vaya is a Spanish word.

In Setswana, go tsamaya means 'to go'. But the word remains the same regardless of the pronoun:

Ke tsamaya.... I go...
O tsamaya.... You go...
A tsamaya.... He/She goes...
Re tsamaya.... We go...
Lo tsamaya.... You go (pl)...
Ba tsamaya.... They go...

And the same word is used whether a noun is singular or plural:
Mosetsana a tsamaya.... The girl goes...
Basetsana ba tsamaya.... The girls go...
But things are a little different in Spanish. After all, Spanish and Setswana belong to different language families; Spanish is a Roman language, whereas Setswana is a Bantu language. In contrast to Setswana, there are many ways of saying 'go' in Spanish and this may depend on the pronoun:
Yo voy... I go...
Tu vas... You go...
El/Ella va... He/She goes...
Nosotros vamos... We go...
Vosotros vais... You go (pl)...

Ellos/Ellas van... They go...
And the ways of saying 'go' in Spanish also depends on whether a noun is singular or plural:

El muchacho va... The boy goes...
Los muchachos van... The boys go...
Now if we say 'Go!' as a command in Setswana, the word 'go' also remains the same: Tsamaya!
But again in Spanish the word is different: Vaya!
So, Re Vaya le Domi actually means 'We Go! with Domi'.
This does not make sense. Therefore, the slogan should read: Re vamos le Domi which now correctly means 'We go with Domi'. This tells us that politicians should be very careful when using words from other languages! Perhaps they should contact me should they wish to use Spanish words in their messages to voters!

Grahame McLeod

Do away with deadwood!

AS THE SAYING GOES, FISH ROT from the head! A culture of recycling deadwood has become entrenched in Botswana, seriously compromising quality service delivery and exceptional results. We promote and reward mediocrity at the expense of meritocracy. This phenomenon recently played out when a so-called "new" BNCS board was announced by outgoing Sports Minister Tumiso Rakgare, dominated by old, recycled faces that have been in sport forever, overseeing the decline in different sporting codes, examples include softball, boxing, netball, volleyball you name it. They have nothing to show for lucrative positions they have enjoyed over many years, Nothing! except personal aggrandizement.

Just as one would expect BNCS recently bundled the Zebras travels before a tough Egypt encounter on home soil, a very formidable opponent and guess what, it is just business as usual at the sporting mother body. The new Board is helpless, clueless really. Equally, is the minister. These developments are not isolated incidents and in Botswana it has become our culture that heads never roll. Elsewhere people would have been relieved of their duties or forced to step down.

Now it is happening in football, at Botswana premier league. The ink has hardly dried on the appointment of a new leadership in local football, then boom an announcement is made about one particular administrator being brought back to lead our elite football to dizzying heights, Really now? To say such expectation is shocking is an understatement.

Wait until they bring back more of their



ilk, that's how our football works. It's a cartel of friends appointing each other, finding each other jobs at the expense of the development of our football, just out enjoying themselves at the expense of public funds.

What have these recycled faces achieved in local football, having spent decades moving from one seat to the other like part of the furniture at Lekidi Football Centre? Nothing! Does being a national team player, goalkeeper of some team or being an athlete in some sporting code suddenly make one an exceptional football administrator who cannot be disposed of or replaced by fresh new minds? What do we owe these people?

Sadly, our media is not helping the situation much by just regurgitating the announcement of these recycled deadwood in celebration. They are equally complicit in this nonsense. They should be giving us in-depth analysis of these characters, revealing how long these pretenders have been at

the helm of our football, masquerading as experts and what have they achieved in their tenure leading either local or foreign clubs or as BFL administrators.

How are these people recruited when no advertisement has ever been flighted either by Botswana Football Association (BFA) or Botswana Football League (BFL) inviting capable individuals or at the very least a call for expression of interest to clothe their corrupt appointments with some legitimacy. Does the recruitment happen in clandestine meetings?

This is rubbish, mxem!
Stop rewarding mediocrity, by first getting rid of these old faces and engage some fresh minds who will breathe fresh air and new thinking in the administration of Botswana football. Otherwise we will still be here 10 years later discussing why our football has stagnated.

Concerned citizen Botswana

Rre Seabelo Tlhaselo I knew

A LOT WAS SAID LAST WEEK SABBATH IN Ramotswa at one of our finest transport moguls Rre Seabelo Tlhaselo's funeral. I am one of the those who were privileged to have had some relationship with him. I used to walk into his office unannounced, and he'd try to dismiss me saying I did not have an appointment. I will respond, how do I make an appointment with my brother, before taking a seat. He'd then burst into laughter, and we'd talk business, politics and everything.

I remember when I lost my dad about 3 years ago he called me a week after the funeral and as I walked into his office on that day I found him standing with a serious face and he said to me in stammer, why didn't you tell me your dad was no more. I had no answer and just looked at him for some time and tears just rolled down my face. He sat me down and we started talking softly for about an hour. When he walked me out he said I must not take long without touching base with him.

The Mr Tlhaselo I knew was indeed a family man, businessman, and a gentleman. We used to go out occasionally to a restaurant and he loved good food. But like one speaker said at the funeral I think it's Kgosisikgolo ya Balete Mme Kgosi Mosadi Seboko, how far were we when Rre Tlhaselo's business was not doing so well? I guess some gossiped and laughed about it, but then when he is no more, we pretend to be sorrowful, showing sympathy when it's too late.

This behavior happens a lot in our



Seabelo

churches. When a fellow brother has a challenge, be it phonication problems, we gossip sometimes adding sugar, pepper lemon and garlic to the rumors. When a Pastor goes bersek, stealing God's money or sleeping with church members, we don't approach him to step down or pray with him, instead, we gossip about and make fun of him. Bad news travel fast.

Unfortunately, its entertainment to some. God will sharply judge us for that. Sometimes it disturbs the victim until he loses his mind and suddenly, he counts all birds flying in the sky's and he's seen counting cars at the traffic lights. Let's change our fellow citizens and love, pray and support each other be it in prayer, financially, emotionally or otherwise. God doesn't like people who hate each other and the devil love and celebrate such evil people. Amen!

Eddie Mdluli Jackalas No1

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We invite readers to write Letters to the Editor on various issues, be they social, political, economic or entertainment related. Although we support and encourage healthy debates and sharing of alternative views, we will not publish any letter that is slanderous or libelous.

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Elections are upon us, vote wisely!

PART 1

BOTSWANA'S ELECTIONS ARE just a few weeks away, and on the TV and at election rallies, Batswana will be listening to what their parliamentary and council candidates have to say.

First and foremost, Batswana need to analyse what they hear. Is what they hear true, half true, exaggerated, or merely fabricated and a lie? And people should do this, even for the political party that they have already decided to vote for. Just because you may be a supporter of one party does not mean that they will always speak the truth! In the days of COVID-19, some scientists predicted that the pandemic would decimate Africa. However, the opposite was true – many advanced countries in the West actually experienced higher death rates from COVID than many African countries, including Botswana.

Also, voters should be aware of what the government should do and can't do, and what other stakeholders should be doing to improve the lives of Batswana. And they should also read the party manifestos which inform voters about the policies that they will implement to improve the lives of Batswana should they be elected into power.

In a strong democracy, opposition parties play a pivotal role in ensuring good governance from the ruling party. And rightly so! However, this has to be done in a responsible and meaningful way. Opposition parties have the right and responsibility to criticise government without fear of intimidation.

However, Opposition leaders are experts in character assassination and rallies may become little more than mudslinging events designed to damage the reputation of their political opponents. Although this may be seen as welcome free entertainment by a party's supporters, it does not put food on the table for the electorate. And some of our leaders excel in destructive criticism – only criticising government for this and that... However, what voters really want to hear is what each party would do to address the problems facing Botswana. For example, a party may criticise government in not doing enough to reduce unemployment, especially amongst the youth. But we don't have to be

a politician to know that! However, a mature and caring politician will have done his homework beforehand and so can tell voters what measures they would implement to reduce unemployment if elected into power. Now, that is constructive criticism – identifying a problem and coming up with ways to mitigate it.

At present, the race for the White House in the USA is hotting up. Here the two contenders – Kamal Harris and Donald Trump, are running neck and neck in opinion polls – the race is too close to call; the final outcome is unclear. However, many US political analysts have repeatedly said that the party that is most effective in proposing measures to help resolve the day-to-day problems which Americans face will win in November. Now, if a party here does not do so, then it cannot complain if it does not seize state power this month.

Opposition parties here love to play the blame game by blaming government for all the problems that Botswana is now experiencing; this they believe is a way to buy votes. Although government may be partly to blame, we cannot place all the blame on the ruling party. The Opposition, for example, tell us that the education and health sectors have collapsed. But this is an exaggeration! It's true that government has not fully equipped our schools to create an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning – shortage of desks, textbooks and reprographics and pupils sharing chairs seem to be the norm in many schools.

However, are we still teaching pupils under the trees and are pupils writing on slates? And what about our literacy rate which is expressed as the percentage of people who can read and write? For example, the literacy rate for youths (15-24 years of age) here is 97.7 percent, the seventh highest in Africa. And government is not the only stakeholder; teachers, headteachers, parents and pupils also must play their part to improve our education system.

During the pandemic, opposition blamed government for not obtaining vaccines in good time. However, the reality was rather different! Many Western countries were hoarding the vaccines and so refused to make them available for developing countries such as Botswana.

Opposition also blames



government of the present high cost of living. But this problem is not unique to Botswana; something that the Opposition does not want the electorate to know about. It's a problem that occurs across the globe, even in well governed wealthy Western nations. The bottom line is that these high prices are a direct result of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Sanctions imposed by the West reduced Russia's oil exports, and hence the supply of oil to non-oil producing nations such as Botswana. It's a question of supply and demand – if the demand for oil exceeds the supply, then this will result in higher oil prices worldwide. And our government can do nothing to reduce these prices – they are beyond our control. And high oil prices do not only affect the price that we pay at the pumps. It will also affect almost everything that we buy since most of the goods that we see in our stores are transported by road.

Next gender-based violence (GBV). This, together with rape and defilement, are serious problems in Botswana. In fact, we now have earned the unenviable reputation of having the highest rape rate in the world. To help curb these problems, government has built shelters which provide refuge for those who have been abused. And they have also increased the penalties for rape. Such measures are steps in the right direction. However, to solve such problems, we have to first identify the root causes. They originate in society and so it is up to society to address them. And it all begins with

the family – the pillar of any nation. However, the quality of family life here is poor. Fathers who are usually absent spend their time in bars and then return home to beat their partners and kids. Even though Botswana consider themselves as being a peaceful people, every week we read in our newspapers about Batswana killing their partners, kids, drink buddies... Now most kids emulate their parents' behaviour, and so, it is not surprising that they may also indulge in anti-social behaviour. The reality is that the buck stops at parents; they are responsible for raising children who will grow up to be responsible and law-abiding citizens.

Next unemployment. This has been rising over the last few years and now stands at an alarming 27 percent. However, government alone should not be relied on to provide all the jobs here. When Botswana gained its independence in 1966, the government employed large numbers of people to establish new ministries and provide much needed infrastructure such as schools, clinics, hospitals, roads... However, it is now up to the private sector to provide most of those badly needed jobs. In fact, the most successful economies in the world have been driven by the private sector.

In recent years, international organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, have repeatedly said that the Botswana's government's wage bill is too high and unsustainable. It's now time for the private sector to take the baton!

And whether they like it or not, Batswana now must start up their own businesses and, for this reason, government has recently set up the Ministry of Entrepreneurship to assist new businesses. Government has also over time introduced Batswana to programmes, such as Chema Chema, Temo Letlotlo, and institutions like LEA and CEDA which can provide guidance and finance for such new entrepreneurs.

Now it's up to Batswana to take advantage of such schemes. But despite all this assistance that is available, local businesses often fail within a few years of being set up. The opposition will, of course, point to weaknesses in such government initiatives. For example, they claim that the agriculture sector is in a poor state and has not benefitted by 'poorly planned' government programmes like ALDEP. But farmers must also play their part in growing the sector. In some of these programmes, farmers would plough their land and be paid for it by government. But many farmers then never planted those fields; so many farmers clearly abused government assistance. So, who is to blame here? And there is the president's backyard gardening initiative. The aim of this initiative was to encourage Batswana to grow vegetables and so increase food security, incomes and employment. But these days many of these backyard projects have failed and all that we see today under the shade netting is weeds. Who is to blame here?

I was once employed for several years as a lecturer at Tonota College of Education. Whilst there, I taught courses in crop production and crop science to prepare our students to teach agriculture in our junior secondary schools. But many of the students had a negative attitude to practical work in the garden. But agriculture is a practical hands-on business! Therefore, it's not surprising that many young people these days want office jobs as white collar workers; work, like farming, that involves getting hands dirty is so often despised.

Some years ago, some young people in Gaborone were interviewed by a reporter for the BBC programme Business Africa. They were all asked the question: What can be done to provide jobs here in Botswana? And almost

all of them sang the UDC song: Government must give us jobs! They were simply expecting government to rain down jobs from heaven!

However, one young man said that it was wrong to simply sit back and wait for government to hand out jobs on a silver plate! Instead, he has set up his own business in Old Naledi – a small café selling local foods. He says that it is doing well and he has since been able to employ some locals to assist him. Such people show initiative and provide jobs; we need more of them!

The Opposition also claims that our graduates may not have the skills needed by the labour market. That might be true and so government should ensure that courses followed by our students in schools and tertiary institutions should be revised to produce students with those skills. Opposition claims that government is not doing enough to attract foreign investment to the country. Although such investment might provide crucial jobs, many foreign companies are actually reluctant to invest here since the market for their goods is too small – only 2.4 million people, and yet this country's larger neighbour boasts a population of 60 million thus ensuring a much larger market. Plus, the problem of low productivity here!

Finally, infrastructure. For our economy to grow and provide much needed employment, world class infrastructure is essential. Opposition leaders have criticised government in providing inadequate supplies of potable water in Botswana. However, in recent years government have implemented many water projects such as the construction of the pipeline from Mmamashia wellfield, a second North South Water Carrier pipeline, water projects supplying water to Lobatse and surrounding villages, and supplying water to villages in the Tutume area, water treatment works... Although the Morupule power station was commissioned over ten years ago, it is still not fully operational and this state of affairs has also been blamed on government. However, much of the blame must also be blamed on the Chinese company that built it. And we know about the defunct Palapye Glass Works.

Grahame McLeod

The Patriot on Sunday

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

CASENO: CVHFT-000037/19

In the matter between:
PELONTLE MOGOMOTSI
And
SEKESANI RASEBOLAI

CASENO: CVHFT-000037/19
PLAINTIFF
DEFENDANT

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to judgment of the above honorable Court the following property of the above – mentioned Respondent/Defendant will be sold by public Auction by **Deputy Sheriff Kebonyekgosi Ntebele** to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE: 22nd October 2024
VENUE: Nshakashokwe
TIME: 11:00 AM

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD: 1x1 Toyota Hilux B515ACF, 1x1 Bull Rack, Cattle Brand ASD5, 1x30 Cattles, 1x1 S/B Shotgun, 12 Gauge Serial No 97035442.

TERMS OF SALE: Cash or Electronic Fund Transfer.

DEPUTY SHERIFF KEBONYEKGOSI NTEBELE
C/O PABALINGA AND ASSOCIATES
PLOT 14014, UNIT 7, CBD AREA
P O BOX 3275, FRANCISTOWN
GABORONE
Contact Mr. Ntebele @ 71694303

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

CASE NO: CVHGB-001350-23

In the matter between:
LETSEGO FINANCIALSERVICES PROPRIETARY LIMITED
and
PHENYO SEKAPE

Plaintiff
Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

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

DATE OF SALE: 8th November 2024
TIME OF SALE: 10:30 hours
PLACE OF SALE: Broadhurst Magistrate court, Gaborone

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD: 1 x 1 A4 Audi B 467 ARP (White in colour), 1 x 1 Tv (Samsung), 1 x 1 4 Burner stove, 1 x 2 Beds, and 1 x 3-Seater Sofa.

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

DATED AT GABORONE ON THIS 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2024.

KEBONYEKGOSI NTEBELE c/o RAMALEPA ATTORNEYS
Plaintiff's Attorneys
Plot 4853, Independence Avenue
Extension 11, Gaborone
P.O. Box 70567
GABORONE(UB)
(VR/dm/15800) 71694303

RAMALEPA ATTORNEYS
NOTARIES & CONVEYANCERS

H/W MOOKETSI
IN THE MAGISTRATE COURT OF THE NORT EAST DISTRICT HELD AT FRANCISTOWN
CASE NO: CCMFT-000765-24

WORLDWIDE COMMODITIES(PTY) LTD
And
MASS CASH GROUP
MR MATT PRICE

PLAINTIFF
1STDEFENDANT
2ND DEFENDANT

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION


BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to judgment of the above honourable Court the following property of the above – mentioned Respondent/Defendant will be sold by public Auction by **Deputy Sheriff Zachariah F Mashamaite** to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE: 08 NOVEMBER 2024
VENUE: BROADHURST MAGISTRATE COURT(GABORONE)
TIME: 10: 30 hours

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD: 1x VOLKSWAGEN MODEL: POLO 07 OF REGISTRATION NO:B580BKI(WHITE), 1x NISSAN HARDBODY OF Reg No: B951BDP(WHITE)

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Cash or EFT

DEPUTY SHERIFF ZACHARIAH F MASHAMAITE
P O BOX 30426, FRANCISTOWN
Contact Mr. Mashamaite #74271019, 77638433



IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA HELD AT FRANCISTOWN
CASE NO: CVHFT-000001/19

In the matter between:
WITNESS MBAIWA
And
LUKA NFANYANA

PLAINTIFF
DEFENDANT

NOTICE OF SALE IN EXECUTION

BE PLEASED TO TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to judgment of the above honorable Court the following property of the above – mentioned Respondent/Defendant will be sold by public Auction by **Deputy Sheriff Kebonyekgosi Ntebele** to the highest bidder as follows:

DATE OF SALE: 21st October 2024
VENUE: In front of Tutume District Council
TIME: 11:00 AM

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD : 1x VW Polo B791BLZ, 1x1 VW Polo B810blz, 1x1 3 Piece Sofas, 1x1 4 Burner Gas Stove, 1x1 Gas Cylinder, 1x1 4 Seater Dining Table with 3 Chairs, 1x1 TV Stand, 1x1 Television.

TERMS OF SALE: Cash or Electronic Fund Transfer.

DEPUTY SHERIFF KEBONYEKGOSI NTEBELE
C/O PABALINGA AND ASSOCIATES
PLOT 14014, UNIT 7, CBD AREA
P O BOX 3275, FRANCISTOWN
GABORONE
Contact Mr. Ntebele @ 71694303

Business

Leading the charge

Botswana Telecommunications Corporation Limited (BTC) recently announced a substantial dividend payout of P130 million to its main shareholder, the Government of Botswana, underscoring its commitment to sustainable growth and national development. In an exclusive interview, Acting CEO Boitumelo Paya shares insights on navigating the complexities of leading the country's only listed telecoms company.

Navigating the Current Landscape

LEADING BTC HAS BEEN both a challenging and rewarding journey. As the telecommunications landscape evolves, our focus is on creating value for all stakeholders while ensuring robust connectivity and fostering innovation. With an ever-competitive market, BTC strives to remain a leader, particularly in fixed services, while striving to get a piece of the pie of the mobile and fintech solutions.

Excitement and Anticipation

Every workday, I look forward to new opportunities for growth and collaboration. What excites me most is our potential to drive digital transformation in Botswana, the possibilities of improving connectivity and supporting a knowledge-based economy fuel our passion.

The Highs and Lows of Leadership

Leading the only publicly listed telecommunications entity in Botswana comes with its share of highs and lows. The pressure to deliver shareholder value, while we face competition and market fluctuations. But our recent P263 million dividend payout to shareholders reflects our dedication to delivering returns. With our continued focus on mobile growth, fintech, and digital services, these have shown remarkable year-on-year growth.

Significance of Dividend Payouts

The recent dividend payment not only reinforces BTC's commitment to shareholder value but also highlights its role in contributing to national finances. We are committed to improving connectivity and fostering innovation while supporting the government's vision of a high-income economy.

Addressing Performance Concerns

While there have been concerns about BTC's performance, the leadership is optimistic. We declared the highest dividend since our listing in 2016, and our revenue growth of 3% indicates a foundation which we can start from. We are focused on defending our dominance in fixed services while tapping into new revenue streams through fintech and digital services.

Competitive Landscape

The telecommunications market in Botswana is experiencing unprecedented growth, with a penetration rate of 168%. This competitive environment pushes us to innovate continually.

Building a Knowledge Economy

BTC is at the forefront of contributing to Botswana's knowledge economy. We are introducing e-learning, e-health, and e-agriculture services to support government initiatives. The corporation's extensive connectivity network serves as a vital foundation for delivering



Acting CEO Boitumelo Paya

these digital services.

Maintaining Market Dominance

Although BTC has faced challenges from new entrants, it maintains a stronghold, especially in the B2B segment. Our resilience in the mobile sector is evident; we have seen significant growth despite being third in the market.

Combating Theft and Vandalism BTC, with losses of our copper infrastructure amounting to P56 million last year.

We are enhancing our security measures and transitioning to other technologies, fiber which are less susceptible to theft. Collaborating with law enforcement has also resulted in numerous arrests, demonstrating BTC's commitment to safeguarding its infrastructure.

Investing in Employee Satisfaction

To ensure a motivated workforce, BTC is dedicated to fostering employee engagement. We believe in building a positive work environment and providing growth opportunities through digital platforms.

With a diverse staff of 862, including 374 females and 488 males, BTC is committed to inclusivity and employee well-being.

Conclusion

With a strategic focus on innovation, collaboration, and community engagement, BTC is poised to navigate the dynamic telecommunications landscape in Botswana. As the company continues to evolve, remains optimistic about its future, dedicated to achieving sustainable growth and enhancing connectivity for all.

Who is Boitumelo Paya?

An experienced executive leader, I joined BTC in 2020 as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and totally new to the telecommunications sector.

Prior to that I had over a decade of experience in the beverage industry, starting at Kgalagadi Breweries (Pty) Limited (KBL) in Botswana, before being transferred to the UK as Finance executive overseeing Africa. Then later moved to Malawi as Finance Director and even served as interim CEO during my tenure there.



Fintech body buoyant

Fintech Association Botswana is confident that the local fintech sector is poised for growth particularly with the implementation of the Scam Radar Project that is designed as a consumer protection tool to address the rise in financial scams. Tavonga Muchuchuti, the President of Fintech Association Botswana Association, fields questions from **STAFF WRITER BAKANG TIRO**

Who is Tavonga Muchuchuti?

TM: I'M A SIMPLE GUY THAT LOVES TO solve problems. My life goal and purpose are to identify the problems that plague the African stratosphere and solve them; so my life is set around fixing problems. Professionally I'm the President of Fintech Association Botswana and Managing Director of Xavier Africa. I also serve on the corporate boards of the Botswana Accountancy College (BAC) and the Africa Fintech Network (AFN). My background is deeply rooted in technology and finance, where I've led AI-driven projects to help organisations optimise operations and embrace digital transformation. I'm passionate about

using fintech and artificial intelligence to solve real-world challenges, especially around financial inclusion. Currently, I'm pursuing a Ph.D. in Digital Transformation, specialising in AI and hyper-automation, to further deepen my expertise in these areas.

How long have you been at the helm of Fintech Association Botswana?

TM: I've been leading the Fintech Association Botswana as President for just under a year now. During this time, we've made significant progress in advancing financial inclusion and innovation, including developing the Scam Radar project, creating advocacy pathways with Government and co-creating Botswana's first fintech academic programme. My

approach has been centred around building partnerships with regulators, innovators, and industry stakeholders to create a thriving fintech ecosystem.

Take us through Fintech Association Botswana, its mandate, and objectives.

TM: Fintech Association Botswana is primarily focused on driving financial inclusion and creating a robust, sustainable fintech ecosystem in the country. Our mandate is to create a collaborative environment where fintech companies, regulators, and other key stakeholders can work together to develop inclusive digital financial solutions. We recognize that there are significant barriers in Botswana's financial system, especially for marginalized



Muchuchuti

partner with fintech startups to streamline operations, enhance customer experience, and introduce innovative products such as digital wallets and instant payment solutions. The Fintech Association Botswana has played a key role in facilitating these partnerships by bringing stakeholders together through initiatives like our power breakfast, which fosters dialogue on financial inclusion, regulatory reform, and ecosystem development.

As the man at the helm of Fintech Association Botswana - what is your vision for the organisation in the face of tough competition from other emerging digital finance service providers?

TM: My vision for the Fintech Association Botswana is clear: to establish a robust, inclusive digital finance ecosystem that serves the needs of all citizens, while positioning Botswana as a leader in fintech innovation in the region. The focus is on financial inclusion—we need to ensure that digital finance solutions are not just for the urban elite but are accessible to people in every corner of the country, particularly those in rural and underserved areas.

One of the pillars of this vision is building trust. The proliferation of scams and financial fraud has undermined consumer confidence in digital finance, which is why initiatives like the Botswana Scam Radar are so central to our strategy. By reducing the risks associated with digital transactions, we can restore trust and encourage broader adoption of fintech solutions. Alongside this, we are working to create a regulatory environment that fosters innovation. Our aim is to collaborate closely with policymakers and regulators to ensure that new regulations are not only protective but also enabling, giving fintechs the freedom to innovate while safeguarding consumers.

How has the association performed in the past financial year?

TM: The past year has been a pivotal one for Fintech Association Botswana, marked by significant achievements and strong progress towards our long-term objectives. One of our key milestones was securing full accreditation with the Alliance for Digital Finance, a recognition that aligns us with global standards and best practices. This not only strengthens our credibility on the international stage but also opens up new opportunities for partnerships and collaboration with global fintech entities.

Another major accomplishment was the co-creation of Botswana's first fintech academic programme with a local university. This initiative addresses a critical gap in the industry—building a sustainable talent pipeline of digital finance professionals who can support the sector's growth. By working closely with academia, we are ensuring that students and professionals are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the rapidly evolving fintech space.

Financially, we have also made significant progress, raising over P50,000 in grant funding in our first tranche, which supports key projects like the Scam Radar. Additionally, we grew our official paid membership by 200%, reflecting the increasing interest and involvement in the fintech ecosystem from both startups and established financial institutions.

On the events front, we hosted our first power breakfast, in collaboration with the Bank of Botswana, NBFIRA, and key players in the digital finance space. This event brought together over 50 professionals from across the financial sector to discuss issues like scams, regulatory challenges, and financial inclusion. The discussions led to the drafting of a white paper that has been presented to key policymakers and stakeholders, outlining strategic actions to advance the sector.

Know Your Corporate Leader



Full Name: Tshepo Mongalo
Position: Head of Digital Services
Institution: Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC)
Date Started: January 2011
Nature of business: Telecommunication

and rural populations, and our mission is to eliminate these barriers through innovation and strategic partnerships.

Our key objectives over the next three years are to reduce financial crime and scams, which are a growing concern in the digital finance space. We are tackling this through initiatives like the Botswana Scam Radar project, which is designed to protect consumers and restore trust in digital financial services. We also aim to build a national talent pipeline, ensuring that we have the local skills necessary to support the industry's growth. Another objective is to provide developers with the tools they need to quickly iterate and build solutions that address the unique needs of Botswana's market. Additionally, we are creating platforms where industry stakeholders can co-create regulations with policymakers to ensure that the regulatory environment supports innovation rather than stifling it.

The Fintech Association Botswana has been awarded a grant to develop and launch Botswana Scam Radar. How is the implementation of this project?

TM: The Scam Radar project has made tremendous progress since we received the grant from AllianceDFA. We're currently in the third phase of development, and the platform is on track for completion by the end of November. Once the development is finalised, we plan to host an official launch, bringing together key stakeholders from the financial ecosystem—including banks, mobile money operators, regulators, and fintech innovators. This launch will mark a major milestone in our efforts to address financial crime within the digital finance space.

The project has been meticulously managed from the start. We ran a rigorous and transparent tender process, overseen by our association's tender committee, which culminated in the selection of a citizen-owned tech company to develop the platform. This decision reflects our commitment to building local capacity

and supporting homegrown talent, while also ensuring the platform is tailored to the specific dynamics of our market. Our focus has been on integrating multiple layers of verification and real-time data updates into the system to ensure that the platform remains accurate and responsive to emerging scams.

What does the Botswana Scam Radar project entail and how will it shape the fintech sector in Botswana?

TM: The Botswana Scam Radar project is designed as a consumer protection tool aimed at addressing the rise in financial scams as digital finance adoption accelerates. The platform has three key functionalities being Verification; Reporting and Data Aggregation.

The impact of the Scam Radar on Botswana's fintech sector will be profound. Trust is one of the biggest barriers to adoption in digital financial services, and scams have eroded that trust, especially among first-time or low-tech users. By providing a reliable tool that consumers can use to verify the legitimacy of digital transactions, we anticipate a significant increase in consumer confidence. This, in turn, will encourage more widespread use of digital financial services such as mobile money, digital banking, and fintech apps.

How is the fintech sector in Botswana - the successes achieved and challenges?

TM: The fintech sector in Botswana is steadily evolving, with growing interest from both the private and public sectors. Over the last year, we've seen notable successes, particularly in how fintech has contributed to financial inclusion. Digital financial products like mobile money have become essential in providing financial access to the unbanked and underbanked populations, especially in rural areas where traditional banking infrastructure is limited.

One of the most significant successes has been the increasing collaboration between traditional financial institutions and fintech companies. Banks are beginning to

PUBLIC TENDER NOTICE

Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) wishes to invite offers for the below tenders.

1. BURS/CS/SER/30/2024-25- PROCUREMENT OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO UNDERTAKE A DIAGNOSTIC STUDY AND IDENTIFY REQUIREMENTS SPECIFICATIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE CUSTOMS TRANSIT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO BE PROCURED TO MANAGE THE TRANSIT PROCESS/PROCEDURE FOR THE BOTSWANA UNIFIED REVENUE SERVICE (BURS)

PPRA Code & Grade under the following categories

Code: 317 - Other Consultancy Services
Sub code(s): 01 - Management Consultancy Services

NB: Foreign Companies must be in possession of documentation that allows the company to trade in its country of origin (an equivalence of Botswana's Companies Intellectual and Property Authority-CIPA). The documentation shall indicate legal status, place of registration and principal place of Business and shall be in English or translated to English by an Official and Certified Translator.

Procurement Method	Open International Bidding
Fee	P250.00
Collection Date	11 th October 2024
Tender Closing	15 th November 2024

Interested companies are advised to purchase tenders from **07:30 to 12:45 and 13:45 to 16:00 hours during weekdays, at BURS Head Office CBD, Finance Division - Tower block (Motswere), 4th Floor, South wing, Reception.** In line with Government Policy Reform 2015: Affirmative Action in favour of youth, youth companies pay half price to purchase the tenders on production of citizen youth directorship proof.

Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) ONLY accepts Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) or Point of Sale (POS) as only methods of payment. Bank details are available on request from procurement@burs.org.bw.

The Invitation to Tender can only be collected on production of the official receipt from; Botswana Unified Revenue Service, **Procurement Unit (Motsentsela), South Block, Ground Floor, New BURS Headoffice, Lot 54379, Eastern Commercial Road, CBD, Gaborone.**

Any clarifications or queries relating to the issue of these document should be forwarded to Procurement unit at procurement@burs.org.bw

The response to the Tender, are to be hand delivered or couriered to BURS and deposited in the tender box located at **Procurement Unit (Motsentsela), South Block, Ground Floor, New BURS Headoffice, Lot 54379, Eastern Commercial Road, CBD, Gaborone, not later than 10:00hrs on the day of closing.** Bidders are informed that public bid opening procedure shall be followed.

BoD obtains prospecting permit on Five Marsfontein Kimberlites

BOTSWANA DIAMONDS PLC, THE London AIM and Botswana Stock Exchange listed diamond company, is pleased to announce that it has obtained a prospecting permit in the Marsfontein region of South Africa covering five kimberlites known to contain diamonds. This prospecting right covers 900.67 hectares and surrounds the iconic Marsfontein diamond mine, which had a payback period of under four days. The licence includes kimberlite bodies: M2, M3, M7, M8 and M9 and is adjacent to the Company's Thorny River properties in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The primary target for the company is M3, which, according to historical records, has a strike length of 100m and a true width of 10m with more in some areas. Bulk

sampling by an earlier explorer have given grades of between 13.9 and 137 carats per hundred tonnes and the diamonds are reported to have good colour, quality and size distribution. M3 sits on higher ground and is not in a water course. There has already been extensive benching which will allow easy mining access to the body without significant expensive drilling and blasting. Chairman, John Teeling, commented: "Obtaining this permit is very good news - five kimberlites around the mined out and hugely successful Marsfontein mine. We are particularly interested in the M3 kimberlite which has never been mined. Our work indicates it is very prospective and we believe it enhances our adjacent Thorny River properties - easy to mine with good potential grades and quality. The diamond industry overall is

currently in a depressed state with a cyclical downturn in demand and a structural change down to the growth of lab grown diamonds. We believe demand will recover for mined diamonds and lab grown diamonds will take a certain percentage of the cheaper end of the jewellery market. M3 is almost ready to mine and we will confirm what is there and be ready to mine when prices recover".

This release has been approved by James Campbell, Managing Director of Botswana Diamonds plc, a qualified geologist (Pr. Sci.Nat), a Fellow of the Geological Society of South Africa, a Fellow of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, a Fellow of the Institute of Materials, Metals and Mining (UK) and with over 38-years' experience in the diamond sector. [bse.co.bw]

BDC launches Milk Afric



BOTSWANA DEVELOPMENT Corporation (BDC) launched the Milk Afric Dairy Project in Lobatse on Tuesday, marking a pivotal moment in Botswana's journey toward food security and economic diversification. The launch in Lobatse attracted key stakeholders, including government officials and industry leaders, united in their commitment to the growth of the dairy sector.

Milk Afric is poised to catalyse growth in the dairy industry, fostering innovation and excellence, representing a significant advancement for Botswana's agricultural sector. It is a beacon of hope for economic growth, job creation, and entrepreneurial opportunities in the region.

Cross Kgosiidiile, Managing Director of BDC, highlighted the significance of Milk Afric, noting its successful development of essential infrastructure, such as dairy processing equipment and local cattle procurement. "This project represents

more than dairy—it is a testament to our dedication to quality and sustainability," Kgosiidiile said.

Milk Afric's Caretaker CEO, Botshelo Mokotedi, emphasized innovation in the project, including advanced farming techniques like artificial insemination and embryo transfer, which boost efficiency and sustainability. He stressed the project's local impact, fostering partnerships with farmers and creating job opportunities in Lobatse.

In his keynote address, Mmusi Kgafela, Minister of Trade and Industry, outlined the importance of boosting local milk production, which currently meets only 15% of the national demand. He called for further investment to expand production and enhance processing capabilities.

Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Molebatsi Molebatsi emphasised the project's alignment with Vision 2036, reaffirming government's commitment to building a self-sufficient dairy sector.

Giyani Metals discovers manganese targets



FitzRoy

GIYANI IS ENHANCING collaboration with the Botswana Ministry of Mines and focusing on high-potential areas for battery-grade manganese production. Giyani Metals Corp., the developer of the K.Hill Battery-Grade Manganese Project in Botswana, has identified new manganese oxide ore targets and successfully renewed six out of seven prospecting licences in Southern Botswana.

These developments reinforce Giyani's long-term exploration and production strategy for battery-grade manganese and further strengthen the company's relationship with the Botswana Ministry of Mines.

Charles FitzRoy, President and CEO of the company, commented: "We are delighted to announce the identification of multiple new manganese oxide ore targets and the successful renewal of six out of seven of our prospecting licences across Southern Botswana. This directly attests to our strong relationship with the Botswana Ministry of Mines and our sincere

commitment to unlock value from these areas. This further affirms our belief that Botswana offers exemplary infrastructure supporting the pathway to development, further cementing the country's reputation as tier-1 mining jurisdiction.

"We firmly believe, following preliminary work including a remote sensing survey, that these retained licences are prospective. Relinquishing unprospective licences allows us to consolidate our efforts and intensify our focus on our long-term strategy while satisfying the legislative requirements of the Botswana Ministry of Mines," said FitzRoy.

"This strategic decision underscores our commitment to the ongoing development of our flagship K.Hill Project and enables us to allocate resources effectively toward high-potential areas for increased ore sources above and beyond our extensive portfolio that will drive our goal of being a dominant producer of battery-grade manganese. I look forward to updating shareholders on the progress of these licenced areas in due course."

Notice of Annual General Meeting



Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of shareholders of the Company will be held at Hotel 430 at 13h00 on Tuesday, 5 November 2024, for the purpose of transacting and considering the following business and if deemed fit, passing, with or without modification, the following resolutions:

Agenda

- To read the notice of AGM (notice) and ascertain the presence of a quorum required in terms of the Constitution.
- Ordinary resolution 1:**
RESOLVED THAT, the Audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 together with directors' and auditor's reports thereon be adopted.
- Ordinary resolution 2:**
RESOLVED THAT dividends of 16 Thebe per ordinary share declared for the interim period, and 27 Thebe per ordinary share for the year ended 30 June 2024 be approved as recommended by the directors and the distribution be ratified thereof.
- Ordinary resolution 3 – 5:**
RESOLVED THAT the following directors retire by rotation in terms of the Company's Constitution and are eligible to offer themselves for re-election:
 - Mr Asad Petkar (Resolution 3)
 - Mr Massimo Marinelli (Resolution 4)
 - Ms Doreen Ncube (Resolution 5)

Mr Petkar, Mr Marinelli and Ms Ncube, being eligible and available, offer themselves for re-election and shall be re-elected by way of separate resolutions (Resolution 3-5). Biographical information of the directors to be re-elected is set on pages 84 to 85 in the Integrated Report.
- Ordinary resolution 6:**
RESOLVED THAT the following Director retire in accordance with the terms of the Company's Constitution and does not offer himself for a re-election on the basis that the Director has reached the maximum tenure as prescribed in the Company's Board Governance Framework.
 - Mr John Kienzley Macaskill (Resolution 6)
- Ordinary resolution 7 – 9:**
To ratify the appointment of the following Directors of the Company by separate resolutions:
 - Ms Lee-Anne Van Zyl (Non-Executive Director) (Resolution 7)
 - Ms Keneilwe Patricia Mere (Independent Non-Executive Director) (Resolution 8)
 - Ms Pinkie Mothopeng-Makepe (Independent Non-Executive Director) (Resolution 9)

	Annual Retainer BWP	Annual Sitting Fee BWP	Total Proposed Annual Fees for 2025 BWP
First National Bank of Botswana Limited Board			
Member	156,000	124,800	280,800
Chairperson	312,000	249,600	561,600
Audit Committee			
Member	104,000	87,360	191,360
Chairperson	156,000	170,560	326,560
Risk and Capital Management Committee			
Member	N/A	70,720	70,720
Chairperson	78,000	141,440	219,440
Human Capital and Remuneration Committee			
Member	N/A	62,400	62,400
Chairperson	78,000	86,200	164,200
Directors' Affairs and Governance Committee			
Member	N/A	62,400	62,400
Chairperson	78,000	86,200	164,200
Board Credit Risk Committee			
Member	N/A	62,400	62,400
Chairperson	78,000	86,200	164,200
Board Compliance and Conduct Committee			
Member	N/A	62,400	62,400
Chairperson	78,000	86,200	164,200
Strategy	N/A	31,200	31,200

Additional information in respect of Ordinary Resolution 10

- Director Fees (Sitting, Retainer and Strategy) have been increased by an inflationary increase of 4%.
- Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors employed by the FirstRand Group do not receive fees as members of the Board.
- Fees are reviewed annually in line with industry benchmarks and are approved at the AGM for the year ahead.
- Board and Committee meeting fees are paid at a flat rate, with a premium rate for the Chairpersons.
- Sitting fees cover preparation and sitting for meetings.
- All members of the Board (at a Main Board Level) are paid a retainer, with the Chairperson of the Board earning a premium retainer.
- All Committee Chairpersons are paid a retainer relative to the complexity of each Committee.
- Only members of the Audit Committee are paid a retainer.
- The retainer covers retention for skill and expertise, round robin applications, ad hoc and special meetings, training, attendance of bank events, and engagement with Bank stakeholders.
- The retainer will be paid on a quarterly basis, at the beginning of each quarter.

Ordinary resolution 11:

RESOLVED THAT, as recommended by the Audit Committee of the Company, Ernst & Young be appointed as auditors of the Company for the period ending 30 June 2025 and that Directors be authorised to determine the remuneration of the auditors accordingly.

Additional information in respect of Ordinary Resolution 11

The remuneration of the Company's auditors is determined by the Audit Committee as per the Audit Committee Charter.

Ordinary Resolution 12:

RESOLVED THAT, the auditor's remuneration of P8 620 000 paid for the prior year's audit be and is hereby ratified.

10. To transact any other business which may be transacted at an AGM.

Voting and proxies

All holders of ordinary shares entitled to vote will be entitled to attend and vote at the AGM.

A holder of shares who is present in person, or by authorised representative or by proxy shall have one vote on a show of hands and have one vote for every ordinary share held on a poll.

Each shareholder entitled to attend and vote at the AGM is entitled to appoint one or more proxies (none of whom need be a shareholder of the Company) to attend, speak and subject to the Constitution of the Company vote in his/her/its stead.

The Integrated Report and form of proxy which sets out the relevant instructions for its completion can be found on the FNB Botswana website www.fnbbotswana.co.bw

To be effective, a duly completed form of proxy must be received at the Transfer Secretaries, Central Securities Depository Company of Botswana, Plot 70667, 4th Floor, Fairscaple Precinct, Fairgrounds Private Bag 00417, Gaborone by no later than **12h00 on 1 November 2024.**

By order of the Board


Gaone Setlhake
Company Secretary

Revolutionising financial inclusion through Digital Financial Services

WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT Africa has been on her Digital Transformation Journey for the last decade or so but an undeniable consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic was the forced adoption of Digital channels for consumers, especially due to associated lockdowns during that period. The wheels were already in motion but the events from the pandemic have catalysed consumer confidence in Digital platforms, and in turn given traditional Financial service providers an entirely new market to sell to.

Something that I find extremely interesting is that due to the forced nature of the adoption, customers of all age groups and walks of life had no option but to embrace these emerging technologies and innovations which in turn opened the potential of new and alternative distribution channels. A potential key beneficiary from this quantum shift is financial inclusion.

The CGAP (Consultative group to assist the poor) describes financial inclusion as a desired state where all people and businesses have access to and are empowered to use affordable, responsible financial services that meet their needs. These services include payments, savings, credit and insurance amongst others. The definition is expanded by other thought leaders to include the following marginalised or previously overlooked groups;

Low-income populations: which includes the poor and the working poor who often lack access to basic financial services.

Women: Especially in rural areas often face significant barriers to accessing financial services

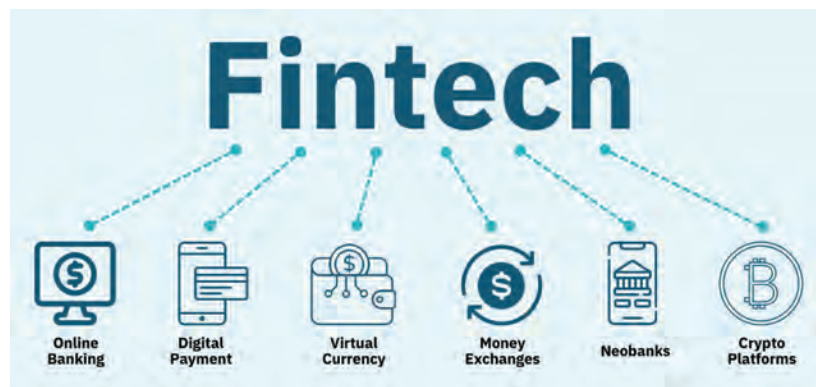
Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME's): Due to the lack of structured data, these entities frequently struggle to obtain credit and other financial services.

Youth & Elderly Population: Both young and older people struggle to participate in financial systems due to age related barriers.

Rural Populations: People living in rural areas often struggle to gain access to Financial Institutions and their services.

Migrants and Refugees: These groups may face legal and logistical challenges in accessing financial services.

In parts of Africa, where many people reside in remote areas and rely on cash transactions, traditional banking infrastructure struggled to meet the needs of the



unbanked population. In fact, the Global Findex Report of 2021 by the World Bank indicated that over 300 million adults in Sub-Saharan Africa remain unbanked. The barriers to entry include high fees, lack of documentation and geographical constraints.

What's the current state?

Worldwide, there are currently just under 1.5 billion* people who do not have any financial account at a bank, mobile money provider or any other applicable institution. Closer to home, approximately 70% of Africans** do not have access to the above services and I strongly believe that the advent of Digital Financial Services could be the key ingredient in the secret sauce that will unlock this opportunity. Digital Financial Services offer a beacon of hope and at its very core it is destined to win because it is leveraging off existing ecosystems to provide parity through financial access and give the unbanked, underbanked and underserved an equal opportunity to participate in economic growth activities.

Emergence of Digital Financial Services

Digital Financial Services (DFS) have emerged as a powerful tool for bridging the financial divide. The rise of mobile technology, particularly mobile phones, has enabled innovative solutions catering for the needs of the unbanked and underbanked populations. Companies like M-Pesa in Kenya; M-Pesa in Tanzania and Mozambique, OneMoney in Zimbabwe amongst many others have revolutionized the landscape by allowing users to send and receive money via mobile devices, laying the foundation for other services like savings accounts, loans, and insurance products. To put things into context, a leading authority in this space the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) has shared statistics which outline that in the early 2000's mobile phone usage

Governments; and Central Banks.

The Effects of DFS on Financial Inclusion in Africa are Profound:

Increased Banked Population: Countries like Kenya have seen an increase in the number of banked individuals. According to the Central Bank of Kenya, mobile money services have contributed to increased financial access, with over 70% of adults now using formal financial services.

Economic Empowerment: With access to financial services, individuals and small businesses can build credit histories, allowing them to secure loans for entrepreneurial ventures. This economic empowerment drives local economies, creating jobs and fostering innovation.

Women's Financial Inclusion: DFS has played a pivotal role in increasing financial access for women, who often face additional barriers to traditional banking. Empowering women with financial tools not only supports household economic stability but also contributes to broader societal well-being.

Resilience During Crises: The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of digital financial services. During lockdowns, those with access to DFS were able to continue transactions, receive government support, and access essential services, underscoring the need for resilient financial systems.

Where Does Artificial Intelligence fit in - The Role of AI as an Enabler?

With the rapid advancement of data analytics and machine learning, the question is how does all this assist in granting consumers financial access? There is rich non-traditional data which can be mined, aggregated and analysed using a wide range of data sources to assess various factors such as credit risk. These alternative data sources include social media activity, mobile money transaction history mobile phone usage, the opportunities are unlimited. This approach is particularly useful for individuals who lack formal credit histories. The associated technologies such as AI chatbots with human like responses can also assist to give personalised financial advice, financial education and 24/7 access to services which will empower consumers and give them the peace of mind that they are making informed decisions on the products and services that they purchase. With AI being a very much developing

field, it will be extremely interesting to see how Financial Service Providers (FSP) can really harness its full potential to increase accessibility, affordability, customer experience and the variety of services that can be offered.

Reaching the last mile - Challenges and the Road Ahead ?

Despite its many successes, DFS in Africa is not without challenges. Issues such as digital literacy, cybersecurity threats, regulatory hurdles and infrastructure limitations tend to impede growth. To ensure sustainable progress toward financial inclusion, stakeholders including governments, financial institutions, and technology providers must collaborate to address these challenges.

Enhancing Infrastructure: Investments in internet connectivity and mobile network coverage are crucial to reaching the remotest populations.

Promoting Financial Literacy: Educational programs that enhance digital and financial literacy can empower users to take full advantage of DFS offerings.

Strengthening Regulation: A balanced regulatory approach can foster innovation and allow for growth while safeguarding consumer protection and financial stability.

Conclusion

Digital financial services have emerged as a catalyst for financial inclusion in Africa, enabling millions to access essential financial resources and services. By addressing the barriers that have historically excluded large segments of the population, DFS presents a pathway toward economic empowerment and sustainable development. As technology continues to evolve, the collaborative efforts to enhance infrastructure, literacy and regulation will be vital in ensuring that the benefits of digital financial services are maximised for all Africans, paving the way for a more inclusive and prosperous future for all.

* - World Bank
[https://www.cgap.org/financial-inclusion](https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/financialinclusion/overview#:~:text=Great%20strides%20have%20been%20made,adult%20population%20had%20an%20account.** - CGAP (Consultative group to assist the poor)

<a href=)

How does WhatsApp make money?

... It's free - with some tricks



ZOE KLEINMAN

THE MAIN MESSAGING APPS ARE all free to use, so what is in it for them?

In the past 24 hours I've written more than 100 WhatsApp messages.

None of them were very exciting. I made plans with my family, discussed work projects with colleagues, and exchanged news and gossip with some friends.

Perhaps I need to up my game, but even my most boring messages were encrypted by default, and used WhatsApp's powerful computer servers, housed in various data centres around the world.

It's not a cheap operation, and yet neither I nor any of the people I was chatting with yesterday, have ever parted with any cash to use it. The platform has nearly three billion users worldwide.

So how does WhatsApp - or zapzap, as it's nicknamed in Brazil - make its money?

Admittedly, it helps that WhatsApp has a massive parent company behind it - Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram as well.

Individual, personal WhatsApp accounts like mine are free because WhatsApp makes money from corporate customers wanting to communicate with users like me.

Since last year firms have been able to set up channels for free on WhatsApp, so they can send out messages to be read by all who choose to subscribe.

But what they pay a premium for is access to interactions with individual

customers via the app, both conversational and transactional.

The UK is comparatively in its infancy here, but in the Indian city of Bangalore for example, you can now buy a bus ticket, and choose your seat, all via WhatsApp.

"Our vision, if we get all of this right, is a business and a customer should be able to get things done right in a chat thread," says Nikila Srinivasan, vice president of business messaging at Meta.

"That means, if you want to book a ticket, if you want to initiate a return, if you want to make a payment, you should be able to do that without ever leaving your chat thread. And then just go right back to all of the other conversations in your life."

Businesses can also now choose to pay for a link that launches a new WhatsApp chat straight from an online ad on Facebook or Instagram to a personal account. Ms Srinivasan tells me this is alone is now worth "several billions of dollars" to the tech giant.

Other messaging apps have gone down different routes.

Signal, a platform renowned for its message security protocols which have become industry-standard, is a non-profit organisation. It says it has never taken money from investors (unlike the Telegram app, which relies on them).

Instead, it runs on donations - which include a \$50m (£38m) injection of cash from Brian Acton, one of the co-founders of WhatsApp, in 2018. "Our goal is to move as close as possible to becoming fully supported by small donors, relying on a large number of modest contributions from people who care about Signal," wrote its president Meredith Whittaker in a blog post last year. Discord, a messaging app largely used by young gamers, has a freemium model - it is free to sign-up, but additional features, including access to games, come with a pricetag. It also offers a paid membership called Nitro, with benefits including high-quality video streaming and custom emojis, for a \$9.99 monthly subscription.

Snap, the firm behind Snapchat, combines a number of these models. It carries ads, has 11 million paying subscribers (as of August 2024) and also sells augmented reality glasses called Snapchat Spectacles.

And it has another trick up its sleeve - according to the website Forbes, between 2016-2023 the firm made nearly \$300m from interest alone. But Snap's main source of revenue is from advertising, which brings in more than \$4bn a year.

The UK-based firm Element charges governments and large organisations to use its secure messaging system. Its customers use its tech but run it themselves, on their own private servers. The 10-year old firm is in "double digit million revenue" and "close to profitability", its co-founder Matthew Hodgson tells me.

He believes the most popular business model for messaging apps remains that perennial digital favourite - advertising.

"Basically [many messaging platforms] sell adverts by monitoring what people do, who they talk to, and then targeting them with the best adverts," he says.

The idea is that even if there is encryption and anonymity in place, the apps don't need to see the actual content of the messages being shared to work out a lot about their users, and they can then use that data to sell ads.

"It's the old story - if you the user, aren't paying, then the chances are that you are the product," adds Mr Hodgson. [BBC]

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The deep-sea 'emergency service' that keeps the internet running

WILLIAM PARK

NINETY-NINE PERCENT OF THE world's digital communications rely on subsea cables. When they break, it could spell disaster for a whole country's internet. How do you fix a fault at the bottom of the ocean?

It was a little after 17:00 on 18 November 1929 when the ground began to shake. Just off the coast of Burin Peninsula, a finger-like protrusion on the south of Newfoundland, Canada, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake disturbed the evening's peace. Residents noticed only a little damage at first – a few toppled chimney pots.

But out at sea, an unseen force was moving. By around 19:30, a 13m-high (43ft) tsunami made landfall on the Burin Peninsula. In total, 28 people lost their lives as a result of drowning or injuries caused by the wave.

The earthquake was devastating for the local communities, but it also had a long-lasting effect further out at sea. It had triggered a submarine landslide – called a turbidity current – flowing more than 1,000km (621 miles) away from the earthquake's epicentre on the Laurentian Continental Slope at speeds between 50 and 70 knots (57-80mph).

Although the landslide was not noticed at the time, it left a tell-tale clue. In its way lay the latest in communication technology at the time: transatlantic subsea cables. And those cables broke. Twelve of them were snapped in a total of 28 places. Some of the 28 breaks happened almost synchronously with the earthquake. But the other 16 breaks happened over a much longer period, as the cables snapped one after the other in a kind of mysterious ripple pattern, from 59 minutes after the earthquake to 13 hours and 17 minutes later, and over 500km (311 miles) away from the epicentre. (Read more about the undersea rivers that

threaten the world's internet.)

If they'd all been snapped by the quake itself, the cables would have all broken at the same time – so scientists began to wonder, why didn't they? Why did they break one after the other?

It wasn't until 1952 that researchers pieced together why the cables broke in sequence, over such a large area, and at intervals that seemed to slow with distance from the epicentre. They figured out that a landslide smashed through them – the snapping cables traced its movement across the seafloor. Until that point, no one knew of the existence of turbidity currents. Because these cables broke, and because there was a record of the time they broke, they helped in the understanding of ocean movements above and below the surface. They caused a complex repair job, but also became accidental scientific instruments, recording a fascinating natural phenomenon far out of human sight.

Over the following decades, as the global web of deep-sea cables expanded, their repair and maintenance resulted in other surprising scientific discoveries – opening up entirely new worlds and allowing us to spy on the seabed like never before, while also allowing us to communicate at record speed. At the same time, our daily lives, incomes, health and safety have also become more and more dependent on the internet – and ultimately, this complex network of undersea cables. So what happens when they break?

How our data travels
There are 1.4 million km (870,000 miles) of telecommunication cables on the seafloor, covering every ocean on the planet. Laid end to end, these cables would span the diameter of the Sun, and are responsible for the transfer of 99% of all digital data. But for something so important, they are surprisingly slender – often little more than 2cm in diameter, or about the width of a hosepipe.

A repeat of the 1929 mass cable outage would have significant impacts on communication between North America and Europe. However, "for the most part, the global network is remarkably resilient," says Mike Clare, the International Cable Protection Committee's marine environmental



advisor who researches the impacts of extreme events on submarine systems. "There are 150 to 200 instances of damage to the global network each year. So if we look at that against 1.4 million km, that's not very many, and for the most part, when this damage happens, it can be repaired relatively quickly."

How does the internet run on such slim cables and avoid disastrous outages?

Since the first cables were laid in the 19th Century, they have been exposed to extreme environmental events, from submarine volcanic eruption to typhoons and floods. But the biggest cause of damage is not natural.

Most faults, with figures varying 70-80% depending on where you are in the world, relate to accidental human activities like the dropping of anchors or dragging of trawler boat nets, which snag on the cables, says Stephen Holden, head of maintenance for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at Global Marine, a subsea engineering firm who respond to subsea cable repairs. These usually occur in depths of 200-300m (but commercial fishing is increasingly pushing into deeper waters – in some places, 1,500m in the Northeast Atlantic). Only 10-20% of faults worldwide relate to natural hazards, and more frequently relate to cables wearing thin in places where currents cause them to rub against

rocks, causing what are called "shunt faults", says Holden.

(The idea that cables break because sharks bite through them is now a bit of an urban legend, adds Clare. «There were instances of sharks damaging cables, but that's long gone because the cable industry uses a layer of Kevlar to strengthen them.»)

Cables have to be kept thin and light in deeper waters, though, to aid with recovery and repair. Hauling a large, heavy cable up from thousands of metres below sea level would put a huge amount of strain on it. It's the cables nearer the shoreline that tend to be better armoured because they are more likely to be snagged by nets and anchors.

An army of stand-by repair ships

If a fault is found, a repair ship is dispatched. "All these vessels are strategically placed around the world to be 10-12 days from base to port," says Mick McGovern, deputy vice-president for marine operations at Alcatel Submarine Networks. "You have that time to work out where the fault is, load the cables [and the] repeater bodies" – which increase the strength of a signal as it travels along the cables. "In essence when you think how big the system is, it's not long to wait," he says.

While it took nine months to repair the last of the subsea cable damage caused by the 1929 Newfoundland

earthquake, McGovern says a modern deep-water repair should take a week or two depending on the location and the weather. "When you think about the water depth and where it is, that's not a bad solution."

That does not mean an entire country's internet is then down for a week. Many nations have more cables and more bandwidth within those cables than the minimum required amount, so that if some are damaged, the others can pick up the slack. This is called redundancy in the system. Because of this redundancy, most of us would never notice if one subsea cable was damaged – perhaps this article would take a second or two longer to load than normal. In extreme events, it can be the only thing keeping a country online. The 2006 magnitude 7 earthquake off the coast of Taiwan, severed dozens of cables in the South China Sea – but a handful remained online.

To repair the damage, the ship deploys a grapnel, or grappling hook, to lift and snip the cable, pulling one loose end up to the surface and reeling it in across the bow with large, motorised drums. The damaged section is then winched into an internal room and analysed for a fault, repaired, tested by sending a signal back to land from the boat, sealed and then attached to a buoy while the process is repeated on the other end of

the cable.

Once both ends are fixed, each optical fibre is spliced together under microscope to make sure that there is good connection, and then they are sealed together with a universal joint that is compatible with any manufacturer's cable, making life easier for international repair teams, McGovern says.

The repaired cables are lowered back into the water, and in shallower waters where there might be more boat traffic, they are buried in trenches. Remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs), equipped with high-powered jets, can blast tracks into the seabed for cables to be laid into. In deeper waters, the job is done by ploughs which are equipped with jets and dragged along the seabed by large repair vessels above. Some ploughs weigh more than 50 tonnes, and in extreme environments, bigger equipment is needed – such as one job McGovern recalls in the Arctic Ocean which required a ship dragging a 110-tonne plough, capable of burying cables 4m and penetrating the permafrost.

Ears on the sea floor

Laying and repairing the cables has led to some surprising scientific insights – at first somewhat accidentally, as in the case of the snapped cables and the landslide, and later, by design, as scientists began to intentionally use the cables as research tools. These lessons from the deep sea began as the first transatlantic cables were laid in the 19th Century. Cable layers noticed that the Atlantic Ocean gets shallower in the middle, inadvertently discovering the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Today, telecommunication cables can be used as "acoustic sensors" to detect whales, ships, storms and earthquakes in the high seas. The damage caused to cables offers the industry "fundamental new understandings about hazards that exist in the deep sea," says Clare. "We'd never have known that there were landslides under the sea after volcanic eruptions if it wasn't from the damage that was created." In some places, climate change is making matters more challenging. Floods in West Africa are causing an increase in canyon-flushing in the Congo River, which is when large volumes

of sediment flows into a river after flooding. This sediment is then dumped out of the river mouth into the Atlantic and could damage cables. "We know now to lay the cable further away from the estuary," says McGovern.

Extreme Repairs

Extreme Repairs is a BBC.com series about the world of big infrastructure repair and maintenance, featuring the brave men and women who risk their lives to keep us all safe and connected.

Some damage will be unavoidable, the experts predict. The Hunga Tonga-Hunga Haapai volcanic eruption in 2021-2022 destroyed the subsea internet cable linking the Pacific Island nation of Tonga to the rest of the world. It took five weeks until its internet connection was fully functioning again, though some make-shift services were restored after a week. While this huge eruption (casting a plume of ash 36 miles (58km) into the air) was an unusually large event, connecting an island nation in a volcanically active area will always carry some risk, says Holden.

However, many countries are served by multiple subsea cables, meaning one fault, or even multiple faults, might not be noticed by internet users, as the network can fall back on other cables in a crisis. "This really points to why there's a need for geographic diversity of cable routes," adds Clare. "Particularly for small islands in places like the South Pacific that have tropical storms and earthquakes and volcanoes, they are particularly vulnerable, and with climate change, different areas are being affected in different ways." hAs fishing and shipping get more sophisticated, avoiding cables might be made easier. The advent of automatic identification system (AIS) on shipping has led to a reduction in anchoring damage, says Holden, because some firms now offer a service where you can follow a set pattern for slowing down and anchoring. But in areas of the world where fishing vessels tend to be less sophisticated and operated by smaller crews, anchor damage still happens.

In those places, an option is to tell people where cables are, and to increase awareness, adds Clare: "It's for everyone's benefit that the internet keeps running." [BBC]

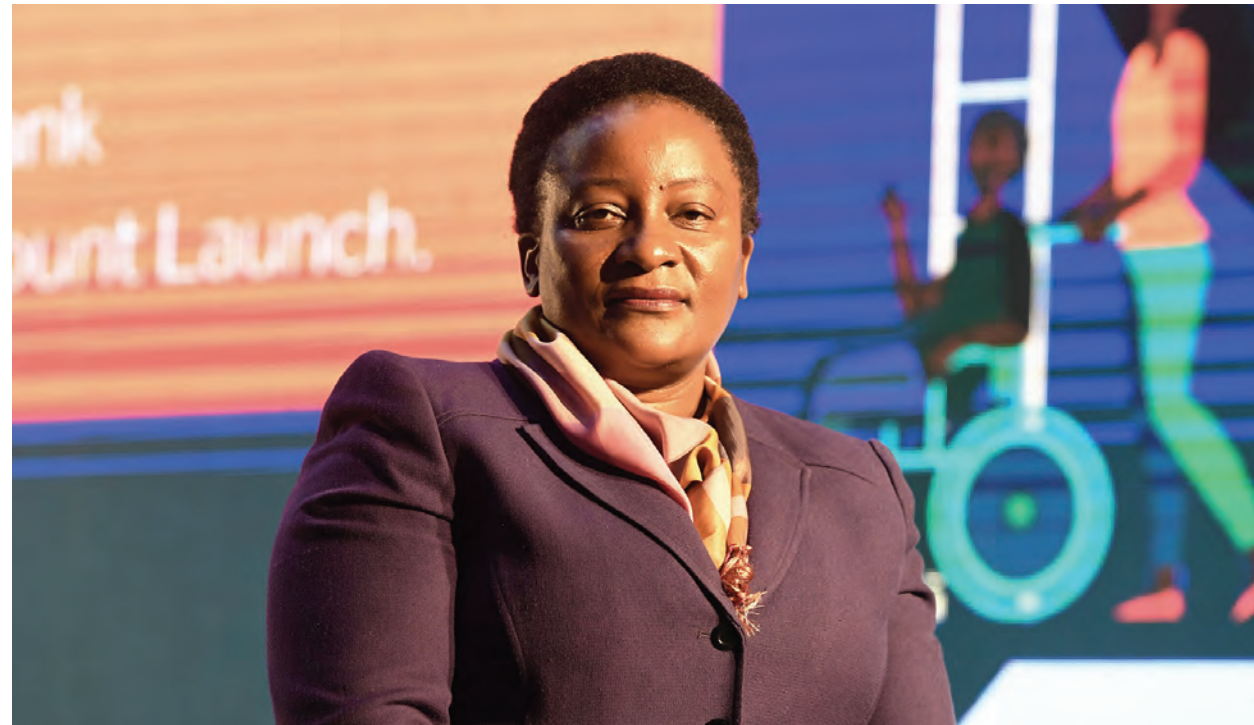
Access Bank, TRANS launch Distributor Credit Programme

ACCESS BANK BOTSWANA, A proudly African financial institution committed to fostering sustainable socio-economic development across Botswana, is proud to announce the launch of its Beverages Distributor Credit Programme. A partnership within the Programme has been established between TRANS and Access Bank with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two parties today.

The Beverages Distributor Credit Programme is set to play a pivotal role in supporting socio-economic empowerment and progress, with a specific focus on fostering growth within the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) operating in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector across Botswana. Launching within the Beverages subsector, the platform presents TRANS distributors with an opportunity to scale and thrive, and thereafter unlock even more value for themselves and other Botswana businesses.

The Beverages Distributor Credit Programme is a testament to Access Bank Botswana's unwavering commitment to promoting financial inclusion and supporting the economic advancement of local businesses. By entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with TRANS, Access Bank Botswana aims to solution critical pain points faced by Botswana businesses and contribute to the overall economic development of Botswana.

The Access Bank Botswana Beverages Distributor Credit Program is anchored on 3 key aspects: Financial Inclusion: The Beverages DCP is designed to bridge the financial gap for SMEs operating in the FMCG space, allowing them



Pauline Motswagae, Head of Wholesale Banking at Access Bank Botswana

access to credit facilities tailored to their specific needs; Strategic Partnerships: The collaboration with TRANS underscores Access Bank Botswana's commitment to forming strategic partnerships that drive positive change in the local business landscape. This collaboration is the beginning of a long-term partnership through which both TRANS and Access Bank endeavour to serve more customers, stakeholders and the community at large; Socio-Economic Empowerment: By providing financial support to distributors, the program aims to empower local businesses, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the overall socio-economic progress of Botswana. To streamline access to credit, the programme will simplify the credit application process, offering distributors a seamless experience and quick access to the funds they need to grow their businesses.

A significant portion of the

distributors are youth owned businesses who will be empowered by this program to tap into the available services and fast-track growth of their businesses. Pauline Motswagae, Head of Wholesale Banking at Access Bank Botswana, stated, "The Beverages Distributor Credit Programme is a strategic move to empower local businesses, particularly SMEs in the FMCG sector. We believe that by providing financial support and fostering partnerships with a key industry player like TRANS, we can contribute significantly to the economic diversification and growth of Botswana. Indeed, Access Bank Botswana remains dedicated to promoting responsible banking practices, ensuring that the Beverages Distributor Credit Program aligns with ethical lending standards and contributes to the long-term sustainability of local businesses.

Visit Access today to Access more funding and TRANSform your business."

Amongst the key value proposition mechanics within the DCP between Access Bank Botswana TRANS are: Working Capital Time Loan - To finance the purchase of stock on credit based on invoices submitted; Bank Guarantees - To guarantee purchase of stock from TRANS; Term Loans - To enable distributors to finance renovations, asset acquisition and expansion initiatives; Vehicle and Asset Financing - To enable distributors to purchase medium/light trucks for product distribution as new or demo vehicles from reputable dealers.

"We are proud to be the first partner in Access Bank Botswana's DCP launch, furthering our commitment to empower our value chain. This partnership is more than a financial program, it's a testament to our dedication to building a resilient, empowered distribution network that fuels business growth across Botswana," said Thapelo Mmono, TRANS Head of Marketing.

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lifestyle

Batswana at Zim fashion week

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ZIMBABWE FASHION WEEK WILL THIS year feature some of Botswana's most talented runway models, namely John Moeng, Gape Mboni, Sydney Kgosietsile and Prisca Upahwa Mbaha. The much anticipated fashion week will take place from October 30th to November 2nd 2024. Widely known for the richness of its artistic creativity, the event is expected to be a turning point for Botswana's modelling industry, particularly by launching local talent into international spotlight.

As it stands, Zimbabwe fashion week is all about cultural expression and most importantly is an open space for the showcasing of arts and culture. As such, the four days of fashion exhibition will showcase exclusive designer taste yet also providing a platform for networking opportunities within the industry. The annual event famously known for the display of Zimbabwean fashion has been seen growing throughout the years. It is therefore expected to host various runway shows that present both emerging and established designers.

One of the models locally known for his 2.2 metre height John Moeng has expressed his excitement about the upcoming event sharing that as a model in Botswana he has been privileged to had participated in several local events as a model, events inclusive of France Botswana cultural night, Kusi ideas festival, Forbes under 30 summit



John Moeng

and Fashion without borders. "I always knew an opportunity would come some day and here it is.

I believe that this is infact a great international start for me and I am looking forward to having a great time by busking in the rays of fashion", he shared.

Though one might say modelling is an uncommon career for men locally, 21 year old Moeng whose modelling career began in June 2023 revealed that after each of his performances from various events, he often is bombarded with comments that leave him in awe, something that has gained him much recognition locally.

As Glotto clothing label brand ambassador, the tall model shared that recently his height has opened him many doors, a physical feature he never thought would make him famous.

He said in every modelling opportunity he gets he puts in his all, ensuring that every outfit he wears is presented in the most creative way possible. Quite unexpected, Moeng expressed that he did not apply to take part at the Zimbabwe fashion week but believes it was through God's favor that he was singled out.

With regard to the runway outfits, Moeng said designers have been working on creating pieces that will be showcased at the event. Sharing his expectations for the Zimbabwe fashion week, he said "My desire from this event is to gain international recognition. I just want to be discovered. I want people to know that Botswana has talented models".

Transition to university life abroad made easier

AS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW academic year approaches, many students are preparing to transition from high school to universities overseas. Studying abroad is widely seen as one of the best investments for the future, especially for young Africans. According to recent statistics, Sub-Saharan Africa has over 430,000 students studying internationally, with Nigeria alone contributing about 72,000 students to the cohort. The demand for overseas education is also rising in other African countries, with 14,000 students from Kenya and 2,548 from Botswana studying abroad.

Studying abroad offers a series of opportunity for freshers, ranging from receiving higher quality education, to developing progressive pathways towards a sustainable career, including forging new friendships, and assimilating to new and exciting cultures. Conversely, the phase can also be a source of anxiety as this could be the first time, students leave their homes and familiar support networks, encounter new individuals, and adjust to a different educational setting. Balancing this transition can sometimes be draining and stressful, so St. George's University (SGU) School of Medicine in Grenada, West Indies has compiled the tips below to help students cope with these changes.

Maintain Connections:

Students often miss their high school community when they begin university. It is crucial to stay in touch with their social circles, family, and friends. Setting up WhatsApp groups before leaving can help former classmates keep in contact and stay updated with each other's lives. Equally important is staying connected to oneself by acknowledging and understanding personal emotions. Journaling about experiences and feelings can help in feeling better.

Get organized:

Being organized can make the transition to university life smoother. Planning ahead, such as organizing an agenda for the first week on campus, can help students settle in and manage their new responsibilities effectively. Extend this structured approach to other aspects of life, ensuring a balanced schedule between study and relaxation.

Avoid Comparisons:

Students might be tempted to compare themselves to others who seem to handle the transition better. However, this can harm their confidence and well-being. Everyone comes from different backgrounds, so it's vital to focus on personal goals and progress.

Maintaining a healthy perspective can help manage pre-university anxieties.

Connect with future classmates:

It is beneficial for students to connect with peers who are also attending the same university. This can enhance their overall experience and ease the transition into a new academic environment. Building a network of friends before arriving can provide a sense of belonging and support, making the journey less stressful.

Learn relaxation techniques:

Learning how to relax is essential for managing stress, both before and during university. Techniques such as mindfulness, yoga, meditation, muscle relaxation exercises, deep breathing, and guided imagery can help students stay calm and focused, especially during exam periods and other challenging times.

Set Realistic Expectations:

Accept that it is normal to face challenges and feel homesick initially. Setting realistic expectations about your transition from high school to university life can help manage disappointments and keep motivation levels high.

Engage in campus activity:

Join as many clubs, societies, and participate in events to meet new people, expand your horizons and discover new interests. Engaging in extracurricular activities is a proven way to build your own social circle and feel part of a community.

Seek help and guidance when needed:

It is imperative to get out of the mindset that seeking help is a sign of weakness. In fact, the opposite is true so don't hesitate to reach out to counsellors or mental health professionals if feeling overwhelmed with all the new experiences university presents.

To sum up, some students might find the transition from high school to university life a challenging period, especially if it involves traveling abroad. However, there are ways in which students can cope with the anticipation of making new friends, academic pressures, and leaving familiar support systems behind. If students still find themselves looking for guidance, they can check if their university has specialized departments offering support to international students that may be missing home. For example, SGU has a dedicated Global Students Lounge that provides cultural adjustment support, a peer mentoring program, and other activities for international students to help their transition to university life smoother.

World Food Day 2024

World Animal Protection Calls for an Equitable, Humane and Sustainable Food Systems

WORLD ANIMAL PROTECTION IS calling for urgent action to create food systems that prioritize the welfare of animals, people, and the planet. As the global population continues to grow, the demand for food is rising, emphasizing the need for sustainable practices that will ensure food security and food justice through the protection of animals and restoration of ecosystems. This appeal comes just a day to World Food Day that will be marked tomorrow, 16th October 2024.

Sally Kahiu, External Affairs Lead at World Animal Protection during an online webinar to mark World Food Day 2024 said: "Annually, over 70 billion land animals are raised for food through industrial production. This system is fundamentally flawed. We must act now to create a food system that is not only environmentally friendly but also sustainable and equitable for those who work within it. The health of our planet, our food systems, and animal welfare are interconnected. By adopting equitable, humane, and sustainable food systems, we can achieve a better secure future for all."

To have an equitable, humane and



sustainable food systems that supports our food demands, World Animal Protection is advocating for the following key changes including:

- Nationally Determined Contributions: Governments must develop stronger NDC targets that address the urgent need to transform food systems, aligning the latest climate science to limit global warming

and to recognize Equitable, Humane and Sustainable systems as the solution to achieving Food Justice.

- Traditional Food Systems: Stakeholders need to recognize the critical role that African traditional food systems (small-scale farmers) play in sustainable and climate smart agriculture, that provide food and protects our environment, ensuring

climate-safe future.

- Harmful Practices: We must bypass harmful practices caused by Industrial Animal Agriculture, that are climate unfriendly; African governments need to discourage the entrenchment of these systems from the global north; and instead, promote inherent African traditional food systems that are built on principles of nutrient circularity and agroecology

- Climate Finance: Climate financiers should redirect much needed finances to boost the indigenous small-scale farmers that play a critical role in providing affordable food and livelihood to the local communities

SKY Girls BW empower Shakawe girls



THIS PAST FRIDAY, SKY GIRLS BW, IN collaboration with UNFPA Botswana, visited Gowa Junior Secondary School in Shakawe to empower young girls through education and inspiration. In celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child, a special edition magazine was distributed, focusing on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), including key topics such as consent and debunking myths surrounding menstrual health.

In addition to the magazine, the event featured a motivational talk designed to boost the girls' confidence, aligning with this year's theme for the International Day of the Girl Child: 'Girls' Vision for the Future.' Speaking at the engagement, SKY Girls BW Program Manager, Mmapula

Sedie, emphasized, "We are all responsible for nurturing the dreams and aspirations of young girls. Whether you are a teacher, a parent, a community member, or a UNFPA representative—each one of us has a role to play. By supporting one another and fostering collaborations such as these, we can create an environment where girls feel empowered to pursue their ambitions and realize their visions for the future."

Tlangelani Shilubane-Petersen, Head of Office at UNFPA Botswana, added, "Every girl has dreams and aspirations that deserve our protection and support. Investing in girls' rights today paves the way for a more equitable future. Let's support them in realizing this future; let's stand with them, and not in their way."

SKY Girls BW is a supportive community

for teenage girls across Botswana, empowering them to navigate the challenges they face. Through a quarterly magazine distributed nationwide and an active social media presence—boasting a cumulative following of over 200,000—SKY Girls BW provides vital resources and encouragement. In addition to their magazine and online platforms, they conduct school talks nationwide, teaching refusal skills to help girls confidently say, "Ke Shapo ka Smoking."

This partnership with UNFPA marks the first of many initiatives to reach girls in remote areas of Botswana with limited access to digital platforms. Together, they are committed to creating and sharing crucial resources to help more girls lead informed, empowered lives.



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Sport

Zebra's' AFCON dream

AMANDA DAVID

editors@thepatriot.co.bw

AFTER AN IMPRESSIVE LEG AGAINST Cape Verde both home and away under the leadership of former national football team Head Coach Didier Gomes Da Rosa's leadership, fans and supporters are left wondering what the future holds for the Zebras in their pursuit of qualification for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) finals. This comes after the head coach announced his resignation in Francistown on Tuesday after the zebras 1-0 defeat against Cape Verde and the national team being 3 points shy from qualifying for the AFCON games.

The Patriot on Sunday interviewed local Sports Analyst Thomas Motsewakhumo, who believes that the decision by Da Rosa disadvantaged the team because he announced it after a back to back win over Cape Verde, a win which catapulted Botswana to the second position on the group standing with 2 games to go. He further noted that though Da Rosa's timing was bad, the national team could still triumph in the competition.

Motsewakhumo further observed that as things stand Botswana only needs a win against Mauritania at home to confirm its second appearance at the AFCON finals. The win against Mauritania would ensure Botswana accumulates 9 points and if Cape Verde losses to Egypt it will mean both Egypt and Botswana go through. Botswana's last fixture away against Egypt will be a



Olebogeng Ramotse [R] and Marawan Attia Fahim Ghallab of Egypt during the AFCON qualifier match against Egypt at the Obert Itani Chilume Stadium

[PIC:PRESSPHOTO]

formality.

"I expect Botswana to win against Mauritania taking into consideration the fact that they beat us narrowly 1-0 at their own backyard. Botswana has in the past proven a hard nut to crack at home especially at Obed Itani Chilume stadium which is our hunting ground. Between 2006 and 2024 we have played against Mauritania 5 times with Mauritania winning four of the games and Botswana one. The last time Mauritania came to Botswana we won 2-1 in 2007 in the same competition," he added.

Motsewakhumo further recommended that the Botswana Football Association (BFA) elevate Pontsho Moloi who has been the Da Rosa's assistant to ensure the team remains focused on securing a place in the AFCON finals, adding that bringing in a new face at this crucial stage might prove detrimental because both players and assistant coaches are familiar with each other.

Coach Da Rosa who has been the Zebra's head coach since November 2023, told the media at the post match press conference that though he is resigning, he is rooting for the boys and he is confident that they would qualify for AFCON finals.

"I am confident about the future, that the team will qualify for AFCON. We need to draw with Mauritania. I am very confident that the team will go to the finals," he said.

Da Rosa alluded that his decision to quit was brought about by lack of consultation on BFA's part in taking crucial decisions that affect his team, which include the decision to not participate at the upcoming CHAN tournament.

Corporates urged to support table tennis

THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE African Table Tennis Federation (ATTF), Wahid Enitan Oshodi, has called on the private sector to support table tennis, similar to other sports. Oshodi, who was unanimously elected as the 6th President of the continental sports body, succeeded Egypt's Khaled El-Salhy and praised his predecessor for his dedication to the sport.

"I think the support I have received has been overwhelming, and the team we have built has been very supportive. We must also commend the outgoing President for his excellent work, and we hope to continue from where he left off. It is time to bring table tennis to the forefront in Africa, alongside sports like athletics, football, and basketball. We have many young talents in Africa, and now is the time to help them reach the top of world table tennis," Oshodi said.

"We cannot continue to rely solely on government and ITTF funding for our tournaments and activities. It is time to involve private and corporate bodies to help grow the sport's fortunes and hopefully raise the standard to produce more superstars in Africa," Oshodi added, emphasizing the importance of unity among member associations in Africa, stating that unity would help achieve more for the continent.

Re-elected Executive Vice President of Finance, Hajera Kajee of South Africa described Oshodi's election as a testament to his achievements in the sport. She expressed optimism in his ability to transform table tennis in Africa. Newly elected ITTF Council member,



Oshodi

Olabanji Oladapo, echoed this sentiment, highlighting Oshodi's commitment and passion for the sport and calling for more support for the new board to surpass the achievements of previous ATTF administrations.

Unanimously elected

Nigeria's Wahid Enitan Oshodi was unanimously elected as the 6th President of the African Table Tennis Federation (ATTF) during the Elective Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the African Union (AU) Headquarters in

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Oshodi becomes the second Nigerian to lead the continental body, following Engr Segun George, who served from 1988 to 1996. As the Executive Vice President of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), Oshodi will succeed Egypt's Khaled El-Salhy, who completed three terms as ATTF President.

The 40-member electorate unanimously supported Oshodi, reflecting overwhelming delegate support for his leadership over the next four years. With this election, Oshodi stands as the only Nigerian heading a continental sports organization.

Cameroun's Alfred Bagueka was also unanimously elected as the Deputy President of ATTF. Additionally, Germain Karou and Andrew Mudibo were elected as Executive Vice Presidents (EVP) for Technical and Development, respectively.

The positions for EVP Administration, Finance, Media/PR, and Marketing saw keen competition among candidates from Egypt, Algeria, South Africa, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mauritania, and Uganda. For EVP Marketing, Ghana's Mawuko Afadzimu triumphed over Uganda's Robert Jjagwe with 22 votes to 18. Ethiopia's Tesfaye Bizane won EVP Media/PR with 29 votes. South Africa's Hajera Kajee secured EVP Finance with 20 votes, and Egypt's Moataz Ashour won EVP Administration with 32 votes.

Also, Nigeria's Olabanji Oladapo was elected into the ITTF Council as one of the eight-member Council from Africa.

Ncayagae wins netball scholarship

THE BOTSWANA NETBALL ASSOCIATION IS delighted to announce that Lesedi Mojadi Ncayagae, one of the nation's promising netball athletes, has successfully been awarded to go and read for a Diploma in Creative Industries at Edith Cowan College in Australia. This achievement is part of an elite program funded by the Botswana National Sport Commission (BNSC), and it paves the way for Lesedi to further pursue a Bachelor of Communications at Edith Cowan University in Australia.

Born on December 10, 2003, in Jwaneng, Lesedi has demonstrated her prowess on the netball court, representing Botswana at national, regional, and international levels. She has been an integral part of the U18 and U19 National



Ncayagaet

Teams, serving as captain and vice-captain, respectively. Notably, she led the U18 team during the 2020 AUSC Region 5 Games and the U19 team in 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi.

Lesedi has been coached by the seasoned Neo Dema, whose mentorship helped her rise through the ranks at Jwaneng Netball Club. Her hard work and commitment to both her athletic and academic endeavors have earned her recognition as Sportswoman of the Year at Acacia Primary School (2017) and Kgosi Mpe Community Junior Secondary School (2019).

She becomes the second player from Jwaneng Netball Team to benefit from this prestigious BNSC program, further cementing her status as a role model for young athletes in Botswana.

Spar refurbishes Batlokwa sports field

IN A SIGNIFICANT GESTURE OF COMMUNITY empowerment, the SPAR Foundation handed over a newly upgraded sports field to Batlokwa National Primary School in Tlokweneng recently. The donation enhances schools' infrastructure and promotes healthy lifestyles and sports development at the grassroots level.

"It represents the start of a relationship between us and Batlokwa National School and the Tlokweneng area in general. We would like to think that the partnership embodies the spirit of community and shared purpose between the different parties. It wasn't merely upgrading the physical space, we are investing in

the future of the children who will be using it," SPAR community projects coordinator, Janine Wilkinson said.

For the community of Tlokweneng, the donation symbolises hope for youth development and recreational engagement. The sports field will serve as a platform where young talents can be nurtured from an early age, in line with Botswana's growing sports culture. "Considering that we are not the only school in Tlokweneng, we felt very privileged to receive such a donation from SPAR. In this modern day where we have our very own athletics stars in Botswana, such a donation ensures that we nurture such talents from early beginnings,"

said Gaseitsewe, the school head of Batlokwa National Primary School.

The refurbished sports field project demonstrates SPAR's dedication to nurturing communities at the grassroots level, with a clear focus on creating sustainable development opportunities. "We hope that by upgrading the fence, levelling the field, and providing shaded seating, the children at the school and the community at large will be able to make greater use of the space. This is why our mission extends beyond providing quality products and services; we are deeply rooted in making a meaningful impact on the community," Wilkinson explained.



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