

NEWSREEL WORLD

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Programmanus by Steve Hankey



ALANNA LESLIE:

Hi, I'm Alanna Leslie and welcome to a new season of Newsreel World.

Today, we're off to Jamaica, India and Zimbabwe.

ALANNA LESLIE: But first...

The Republic of Botswana has been one of the countries in Africa worst hit by COVID.

The country has been under a State of Emergency for nearly 18 months with curfews currently keeping people in their homes from eight in the evening to four in the morning.

Botswana is also one of many countries that has been critical of wealthy nations hoarding vaccines instead of giving them to countries whose need is greater.

To tell us more, Bonni Dintwa reports from Gaborone.

Bonni Dintwa: Botswana is reeling from being one of the worst hit nations on earth by COVID.

At one point, the southern African country had the second highest death rate per one hundred thousand on the planet.

Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi

Bonni Dintwa: This is the President of Botswana, Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi. He's speaking in Setswana, Botswana's other official language alongside English.

He says and I quote: "Countries are now divided by those who have vaccines and those who don't. First world countries are refusing to sell us vaccines, they are hoarding them and the Covax program, where we were promised vaccines; is not delivering as promised".



Bonni Dintwa: An online movement spearheaded by the hashtag #VaccinateBotswana gained recognition internationally and was created by Batswana who blame the government for not doing enough to secure much needed life-saving vaccines.

Bonni Dintwa: Already in the greater Gaborone area, vaccines have run out.

Thus, a lot of younger Batswana are going to South Africa to get their shots.

Mimi: “My name is Mimi and, right now, I just think we are all in survival mode. So we kind of all have to figure out a way of getting vaccinated and if it means crossing the border, spending money, that’s exactly what we’re going to do.

I mean we’re sitting ducks really honestly at this point.”

Bonni Dintwa: Isn’t it expensive to travel? What are the difficulties that you have to go through?

Mimi: “It requires a few resources including money but we will do anything to self-preserve.

So, in terms of the cost it would be... obviously you have to pay for your PCR test, which is almost a thousand pula and then petrol going into the nearest South African village or town.

I can’t go and get vaccinated because I am not above the age of fifty-four.

I’m sorry but I’m not going to wait, I have to find ways to get myself vaccinated.”

Bonni Dintwa: For Newsreel World, I am Bonni Dintwa.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Bonni.

ALANNA LESLIE: An Olympics volunteer who helped Jamaica’s Hansle Parchment win gold in Tokyo has been invited to the country as a reward for her kindness. Hansle, who competes in the hundred and ten metre hurdles, had accidentally boarded a bus to the wrong stadium for the final.

The volunteer, whose name is Tiana, gave him the money to hire a taxi to get to the venue in time for his race, which he won!

After winning gold, Hansle took the time to find Tiana, thank her and pay her back for the taxi.

This clip is taken from Hansle Parchment’s Twitter account.

Hansle Parchment: “Tiana, remember me?”



Tiana: “Hi, you came back?”

Hansle Parchment: “Yes I am back, to repay you and show you something. You were instrumental in me getting to the final that day”

Tiana: “Really? Really? You won this?”

Hansle Parchment: “Yes, I won!”

ALANNA LESLIE: An American science institute has made a major breakthrough in the search for a brand new form of clean energy.

The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California says it could be on the verge of achieving nuclear fusion, the same process that powers our sun.

The lab uses lasers to heat and compress a tiny ball of hydrogen fuel.

A recent experiment has suggested the goal of mastering nuclear fusion is now very close.

This could provide a limitless, clean energy source in the future.

ALANNA LESLIE: That’s Kuteera by Tamy Moyo featuring Jah Prayzah.

Tamy is a twenty-three year-old Zimbabwean singer who grew up in Harare, Zimbabwe’s capital.

She recently told the BBC what some of her musical inspirations were growing up:

Tamy Moyo: “*I’m such an old soul... old school Chaka Khan...*”

Ain’t Nobody by Chaka Khan

ALANNA LESLIE: Now to India.

The recent death of Vismaya Nair has sparked widespread outrage and renewed discussions over dowries and domestic violence in the country.

Dowries are a payment made by the bride’s family in cash or goods in exchange for a marriage.



Many women are forced to accept this because of family loyalty and social pressure.

Seeking a dowry has been outlawed in India since 1961. However, the practice still goes on.

Ayushi Shah reports from Mumbai.

Ayushi Shah: For many women in India even today, it is a dowry that seals the wedding and not love.

A dowry is a payment the bride's family gives the man she is marrying. From gold and cash to expensive cars and even apartments.

It often puts a massive financial strain on the bride's family.

And even post-marriage, these brides often face abuse and endless violence by their in-laws for not bringing sufficient dowry.

So, what do young people in India think about dowries?

Upasana Makati: "Dowry is a very, very old practice in India and you'd love to believe that it doesn't exist in the society anymore but I definitely think it exists in each and every family in some form or the other."

Ayushi Shah: That was Upasana Makati. I also spoke to Kanish Seth.

Kanish Seth: "Because of dowry, women feel like a burden to their own parents. It's actually very disheartening to see that so many brides are harassed for it across India."

Ayushi Shah: In many such cases, it has resulted in dowry-murders or the woman dying by suicide.

One such case occurred in the southern state of Kerala in June this year. 24-year-old medical student Vismaya Nair was found dead.

The police suspect suicide. Before her death, Vismaya had allegedly been physically and mentally abused by her husband and his family over her dowry.



Her family shared photos sent by Vismaya to them of bruises and other severe injuries sustained in these assaults.

Vismaya's death sparked outrage across the country.

Often, when a married woman faces dowry-related harassment, she feels the need to try and make it work due to societal pressure.

To avoid legal implications, these dowries are passed off as voluntary gifts for the daughter, making it difficult to regulate by law.

Jaya is a house helper based in the bustling city of Mumbai. Due to the fact that dowries are illegal, her name has been changed to protect her identity.

Ayushi: "So how long have you been saving up for your daughters' dowry?"

Jaya: "Since my daughters were a year old I started saving up for their dowry"

Ayushi: "So what if your daughter's husband does not want the dowry?"

Jaya: "Then I will give it to them as a gift with happiness, but more often than not they want a TV, a fridge, rupees, or even a bike, then we have to give it. Otherwise, they start harassing your daughters."

Ayushi Shah: There are people who have the courage to refuse to follow this practice.

Randhir Singh is from Rauna, a village in the backward state of Bihar. He was the first man in his village to reject dowry.

Ayushi: "So, why did you reject the dowry?"

Randhir Singh: "When I lived in my village, I had different thoughts. But when I came to the city, I realised that men and women are equal.

It changed my mind and I decided I would not take dowry."



Ayushi: “What about the people in the village? What was their reaction?”

Randhir Singh: “The villagers had the opposite reaction. They started spreading rumours that I refused dowry because nobody wanted to marry me.”

Ayushi Shah: This illegal dowry system treats women as property and also leads to discrimination against girls, femicide, abuse and endless violence against brides in the country.

Vismaya’s death has rekindled the outcry and need for a permanent solution to end this harmful practice.

This is Ayushi Shah reporting for Newsreel World from Mumbai in India.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Ayushi.

That’s all from me today. Speak to you soon. Bye!