



SPEECH

BY

THE PRESIDENT,

HIS EXCELLENCY, CDE E. D. MNANGAGWA,

AT

**THE COMMISSIONING OF VARUN BEVERAGES' NEW
SNACK MANUFACTURING PLANT AND
FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY FOR THE
JUICE AND DAIRY BLENDING FACILITY**

13 MAY 2026

HARARE

Director of Ceremonies;

Vice President, Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C.D.G.N. Chiwenga;

Vice President, Hon. Col. (Rtd) Dr. K. C. D. Mohadi;

National Chairman of ZANU PF and Minister of Defence,
Hon. O. C. Z. Muchinguri-Kashiri;

Minister of State for Harare Metropolitan Province,
Hon. Sen. C. Z. Tawengwa;

Minister of Industry and Commerce, Hon. N. M. Ndhlovu;

Honourable Ministers;

Chairman of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on
Industry and Commerce, Hon. C. Chiduwa;

Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet,
Dr. M. Rushwaya;

Senior Government Officials;

Group Chairman of R. J. Corporation, the Varun Beverages
Holding Company, Mr. Ravi Jaipuria;

Chief Executive Officer and Staff of Varun Beverages;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Comrades and Friends.

It is my distinct pleasure to be part of another milestone in Zimbabwe's industrialisation journey, here at Varun Beverages as we commission the new production plant of the world-famous Cheetos brand, here in Zimbabwe. The local production of such globally celebrated brands, serve as an endorsement of the country's economy, policies and ability to deliver high-quality, internationally competitive products.

The added US\$20 million investment by Varun Beverages also marks industrial diversification, creation of employment opportunities for our people and manufacturing sector-integration, into both regional and global value chains. **Congratulations, Makorokoto, Amhlophe.**

I recall that it has been eight years since I inaugurated the initial plant here at Varun Beverages. At that time, there was only one production line, with a capacity of approximately 10 million bottles per month.

I am pleased to note that this complex has significantly expanded into a world-class manufacturing hub, with the addition of five more production lines, which include the production capacity of nearly 120 million bottles per month. Additionally, the provision of direct employment of approximately 2,000 people, as well as indirect empowerment opportunities for women and youth entrepreneurs is a commendable achievement.

The company's impressive growth strategy, illustrates what can be achieved through consistency, sustained investment, and strong collaboration between Government and the private sector.

Varun Beverages' growing investments in this country are aligned with our national vision of transforming Zimbabwe into a prosperous and empowered upper middle-income economy by 2030.

Throughout your operations and envisioned expansion journey, I urge you to remain mindful that workers are the central drivers of long term company success. It is your human capital base, which acts as key agents in productivity, innovation and organisational resilience. Workers must therefore be appropriately taken care of.

Distinguished Invited Guests;

Today, I have laid the Foundation Stone for the new juice and dairy blend production facility of Varun Beverages Zimbabwe. This forward-looking investment will broaden the foot-print in the beverage and nutrition segment, through both the dairy and fruit sectors, while generating more downstream economic opportunities. Once again, congratulations.

Since the opening of the first industrial line, the economy has recorded remarkable growth, averaging 5.5% per annum.

My Administration, is on course to sustain the current momentum towards achieving structural transformation, for equitable, broad-based and inclusive growth. Emphasis continues to be on domestic value addition and beneficiation, increased productivity, as well as the prioritisation of job creation and diversification.

The manufacturing sector is expected to anchor this thrust through a projected growth of 3.4%. This is primarily driven by strong linkages with agriculture and mining, while capacity utilisation is now surging beyond 60 %.

In view of the strategic importance of the sector, Government has set aside resources to support re-tooling, industrial modernisation and working capital requirements for industry, as well as improving the prevailing policy environment.

The need to build sustainable quality assurance regimes that enhance the country's competitiveness,

protect consumers, to ensure the growth of a resilient and standard driven economy, cannot be over emphasized.

My Government remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering an investor-friendly environment, promoting local manufacturing and import substitution, as well as advancing value chain development.

I am particularly pleased that investments by Varun Beverages continues to support rural livelihoods through outsourcing, with regards maize through-put. As you move on to the next phase of your expansion, I call upon the company to deliberately support small scale dairy farmer for integrated supply chains.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is commendable that Varun Beverages Limited, has committed to broaden its future investments in Zimbabwe through their holding company, RJ Corporation, together with their global partners and network.

These investments include renewable energy generation of about 500 MW. Ventures in the renewable energy sector are most welcome and dovetail with our quest for sustainable green industrial development. The proposed location of the solar farms in Matabeleland South, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West will go a long way to accelerate rural industrialisation and modernisation.

I invite Varun Beverages to explore opportunities in other priority areas set out in the National Development Strategy 2, to accelerate our nation's economic development, modernisation and industrialisation. The company, should equally take full advantage of our country's strategic location and existing Trade Agreements to expand exports across the SADC Region and Africa.

“Zimbabwe is Open for Business” and will continue to be a safe, secure and competitive investment destination.

My Government stands ready to refine the ease of doing business and partner with the private sector to unlock the full potential of our economy.

In this regard, yesterday, Cabinet approved the slashing of numerous regulatory fees, licences and compliance costs, including those related to manufacturing, financial, real estate and health care sectors. My Administration shall not hesitate to take bold decisions towards stimulating investment, multi-pronged industrial growth, job creation and broad based empowerment that benefit our nation and people, as a whole.

In concluding, allow me to once again extend my congratulations to Varun Beverages for the launch of the new production plant and the proposed juice and dairy plant. This is reflective of their confidence in our people and country, as a secure place for their capital, seeing that capital goes where it feels safe.

The plant is, thus, a symbol of transformation and another building block as we build the “*Zimbabwe we all want*”, brick by brick, stone upon stone, and step by step.

With these remarks, it is now my honour and privilege to officially declare the Varun Beverages Cheetos Snacks Manufacturing Plant open and to lay the foundation stone for the forthcoming Juice and Dairy Blend Facility.

God bless you all.

God bless Zimbabwe.

I thank you.