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News

Standards Institution project hits wall over unpaid bills

Page 3

Sports

Red Skins revives international volleyball tourney

Page 16

MASERU PREP ADMITS MALADMINISTRATION AND MISGOVERNANCE

... Sends 20 workers home

Page 2

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Ntsoaki Motaung

The management of the troubled Maseru English Medium Preparatory School (MEMPS) has admitted to a series of internal challenges, including maladministration and misgovernance, in a letter that also unveiled a controversial restructuring plan.

The plan has allegedly resulted in the termination of more than 20 employee contracts. Those affected are primarily support staff such as cleaners, gardeners, and security guards, along with several administrative employees.

According to one termination letter seen by Newsday, the implementation of the new strategic plans is the reason for the mass layoffs.

The letter, signed by Head of School Phano Sharite, states that the decision was a "regrettable" but necessary step to address a "downward spiral trend" marked by ineffective administration, declining student enrollment, overstaffing, and a lack of funding.

"A strategic plan was presented by the Governing Board in an effort to reverse the downward spiral trend at Maseru English Medium Preparatory School, which has previously been marked by a number of problems. It is common knowledge that the school's challenges involved ineffective previous administrations, a persistent drop in enrolment, overstaffing, and lack of funding," Sharite wrote.

She added that the situation had been raised in several consultative meetings with staff, "to which you were invited and in which the majority of staffers participated."

"The utter maladministration and misgovernance which plagued MEMPS led to the recent delayed payments of salaries. It became apparent that over 90 percent of the revenue generated from the tuitions was meeting the wage bill and salaries," she added.

Sharite said that, given the dire circumstances already communicated to staff, there was a regrettable but unavoidable need to restructure the school in order to salvage its future. She explained that this process would be guided by a new strategic plan, which laid out measures to address long-standing challenges.

"The restructuring process regrettably also entails releasing employees who do not fit the new strategic plan and its requirements," she wrote.

To this end, Sharite outlined five major decisions aimed at reducing overstaffing and

Maseru Prep admits maladministration and misgovernance

... Sends 20 workers home

managing limited resources. First, the school would no longer provide full-time children's nursing services, with a new arrangement to be phased in under the plan. Second, the full-time HR office was abolished, with its responsibilities reassigned to teacher representatives or staff leadership under the 2025-2030 strategy.

Third, assistant teaching posts were replaced with student tutors, to be filled by individuals holding a Certificate in Early Childhood Education or a Diploma in the field. Fourth, the printing office, registrar, and headmaster's personal assistant positions were scrapped,

with their functions redistributed across existing roles.

Lastly, staffing levels in housekeeping, security, and gardening were cut back to just three employees in each section.

"Severe financial constraints have influenced the decision to remove some of the sections in the structure, but more significantly, these sections are not so essential to carrying out the strategic plan trajectory over the next five years," Sharite said.

"We regret that some employees' contracts will have to be terminated. Regretably, you are among those who have been impacted by the

changes, which is why your employment contract is being terminated.

"You are required to serve a 30-day notice period, effective from today, September 2, 2025, with your last working day being October 1, 2025," she concluded.

However, insiders have questioned the school's narrative of financial distress. Sources told Newsday that MEMPS hired two new employees as recently as May this year, with combined annual salaries exceeding M100,000, raising doubts about the necessity of mass layoffs.

Another sticking point is the school's claim of "consultative meetings." Several terminated employees insist no consultations were held and describe the process as abrupt, with dismissal letters handed out without prior warning.

When contacted for comment yesterday, Sharite ended the call immediately after the journalist introduced herself. She did not answer subsequent calls. MEMPS, once regarded as one of Lesotho's most prestigious primary schools, is now battling a mounting financial crisis.

In August, Newsday reported that staff resignations, unpaid debts, and delayed salaries had pushed the institution to the brink, with morale among remaining staff at "an all-time low."

Newsday also reported in July that the school was at the centre of a growing financial storm after being slapped with a legal demand for more than M3.4 million in unpaid rentals and damages.

The claim, brought by Nashua Maseru through Webber Newdigate Attorneys, related to two rental agreements signed in 2022 and 2023 for equipment hired by the school, each set to run for a period of 60 months.



Judge scolds DCEO over delays in fraud trial

formation (UAT), against the state alongside her former Principal Secretary, 'Mapaseka Kolotsane, and former Deputy PS, Ratšiu Majara, who currently serves as PS in the same ministry.

The trio faces charges of fraud, abuse of power, and allegedly influencing the award of a tender for school textbooks in 2020, when they were at the helm of the ministry.

On Wednesday, the case failed to proceed yet again after the court was told that the DCEO had, only a day before, appointed a new lead prosecutor, Advocate Peleha Joala.

The matter had previously been assigned to South African Advocate Shaun Abrahams, who abruptly withdrew before being handed over to Advocate 'Naki Nku, who also failed to bring it to a conclusion.

The persistent delays drew strong rebuke from Judge Makara, who warned that such

procrastination could be "torturous" to the accused, adding: "It can kill the person emotionally."

Defence lawyers, Advocate Salemane Phafane KC for Phamotse and Advocate Bokang Moshoeshe for Kolotsane, also accused the DCEO of failing to provide crucial documents needed to prepare their defence.

Judge Makara concurred, stressing: "It is the constitutional right of the accused to be furnished by the crown with documents forming the basis of the charge so that they can architect their defence going forward."

Previously, Advocate Phafane had sought a permanent stay of prosecution, an application the court declined, acknowledging Lesotho's resource constraints. Judge Makara noted that while he had dismissed the application, a judge from another jurisdiction might well have struck the case off the roll permanently.

Advocate Phafane argued that the court may now be regretting that decision. "The sad part is that the crown created an impression in the public that the court did not want to proceed with the matter, when in fact the record reflects the crown has never been ready," he said.

Kolotsane has demanded at least 29 documents, including evidence of how Epic and Molumeli were "initially" awarded the Grade 5 textbook tender, and copies of any records showing alleged interference in the process.

Meanwhile, Advocate Joala, newly appointed to lead the prosecution, requested a month to familiarise himself with the voluminous case file. Defence counsel suggested he be given two months, a request the court granted.

The matter will return to court on 11 November for mention, when the crown is expected to advise whether the case is prosecutable or should be withdrawn.



Thoboloko Ntšonyane

High Court Judge Molefi Makara has sharply criticised the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) for dragging its feet in prosecuting the long-pending fraud and abuse of power case against former Minister of Education and Training, Dr. Mahali Phamotse.

The case, which has stalled for five years without meaningful progress, pits Dr. Phamotse, now leader of the United Africans Trans-

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Bereng Mpaki

Although 20 percent of the preliminary work, largely bulk earthworks, has already been completed, the project has run into early turbulence.



In response, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development, which oversees the project, acknowledged the delay but attributed it to

"We understand the importance of timely payments. In fact, during a meeting held on Friday, 5th September, the contractor was fully briefed on the causes of the delay and was assured that all efforts are being made to expedite the process. We remain committed to resolving this matter promptly and ensuring that the project continues

Although the adjustments have since been completed and pile work is set to begin, the problem caused further delays and potential cost overruns.

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Lesotho gears up for 2026 census with M200 million budget

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane, has assured that preparations are well under-way for Lesotho to conduct its next population census in April 2026.

According to Malehloa Molato, Director of the Bureau of Statistics (BOS), the census will require more than M200 million to carry out.

The census, in line with international standards, is expected to take two weeks, though this period may be extended if necessary. The exercise is scheduled to begin on 12 April 2026.

These details were unveiled during the official launch of the census exercise yesterday, at which the ministry received golf shirts, bags, and tablets from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Dr Matlanyane has also launched an awareness campaign, urging the public to support the exercise to ensure its success. She emphasised that the census is an inclusive process, covering every segment of the population.



Population censuses in Lesotho are conducted every ten years, with the last one carried out in 2016. According to that census, Lesotho had a total population of 2,007,201, comprising 982,133 males (48.9 percent) and 1,025,068 females (51.1 percent).

Children aged 0–14 numbered 637,444 (31.8 percent), almost evenly split between boys and girls. Youths aged 15–35 accounted for 794,940 (39.6 percent), while the elderly, aged 60 and above, made

up 6.1 percent of the population. About 8,000 people, predominantly youth, will be employed for the upcoming census.

Molato highlighted that since independence, Lesotho has conducted scientific censuses, aimed not only at gathering essential data for national planning but also at empowering policy decisions.

“The census enables socio-economic analysis and ensures all households are counted,” she said, noting that enumerators will collect information on age, sex, education, employment, household composition, access to electricity and sanitation, sources of drinking water, and housing materials.

She added that the data will also facilitate research, aiding the private sector, non-governmental organisations, and the media, while helping monitor progress toward global development goals.

UNFPA Acting Representative John Kennedy Mosoti pledged continued support, handing over 50 symbolic tablets for enumerators. Mosoti acknowledged challenges in procuring all 8,000 tablets but said some would be borrowed from neighbour-

ing countries that recently conducted censuses.

Mosoti stressed the importance of counting everyone, including children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Dr Matlanyane emphasised that the census is crucial for inclusive development and evidence-based policymaking. “It tells us who we are, where we live, what we do, and what we eat. The data speaks for those who cannot voice their needs. It is a mirror reflecting the face of our nation,” she said.

The Minister further highlighted that the upcoming census will be fully digital, marking a historic leap for Lesotho. Real-time data collection will reduce errors, accelerate preliminary results, and enable faster government analysis. “Every household counts. Every life counts. No one should be left behind,” she urged, advising the public to welcome fieldworkers while remaining vigilant against impostors.

She also underscored that the census will empower the government to craft targeted policies, particularly to address unemployment. The United Nations will continue to provide both funding and technical support for the exercise.

Molato added that recruitment for census staff will follow Public Service procedures, with advertisements to be published soon.

Ha Tšosane dumpsite fire ignites health fears

Ntsoaki Motaung

The residents of Ha Tšosane are once again swamped in a cloud of thick, acrid smoke following a fire at the dumpsite, a disaster that has reignited long-standing fears for the community’s health and safety.

While authorities struggle to control the intensity and the subsequent pollution, experts are issuing stark warnings about the link between air pollution and a growing global health crisis.

The fire, which reportedly started in the early hours of September 6, has left a devastating veil of smoke over the community.

According to Minister of Local Government, Lebona Lephema, the blaze began after a security guard at the site smelled smoke and saw fire after midnight.

It is suspected that a frustrated community member, angered by waste scattered by strong winds the day before, intentionally set the fire.

Despite the efforts of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) and later, machinery from various councils, the smoke has persisted, threatening

the well-being of those living nearby.

Recognising the immediate threat, Local Government, Chieftainship, Police and Home Affairs Minister Lebona Lephema announced that his ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, will visit affected families to check for signs of respiratory diseases.

This move comes as the community, which has endured a second major fire at the dumpsite in five years, faces the reality of living with a constant threat to their health.

A 2022 study by Lemohang Precious Moko-ka, titled “The Impact of Tšosane Solid Waste Dumpsite on the Neighbouring Community,” provides empirical evidence of the dangers.

The study found that residents living within a radius of 0-500 meters from the dumpsite reported environmental degradation, bad odours, and health issues.

Findings from the study indicate that the dumpsite’s proximity contributes to land, noise, and air pollution, with some residents even suffering economic losses on rental properties due to the unbearable living conditions.

The study concluded that residents were living in fear and suffering from trauma, with

impacts being most acutely felt closer to the site.

During a recent address to the National Assembly, Minister Lephema stated that the ministry is working on a solution to relocate the dumpsite to Tšoeneng.

However, this statement was met with scepticism and sharp criticism from the leader of the United Africans Transformation (UAT), Dr. Mahali Phamotse.

Phamotse demanded an explanation for how the M20 million allocated this financial year for the relocation had been spent.

She expressed concern that the money, intended for implementation, was being used for yet another study and the identification of new companies.

“This is among the things that derail this country’s progress,” Dr. Phamotse declared, suggesting the funds were not being used for their intended purpose.

The government’s repeated delays and apparent inaction were further highlighted in a report by the Portfolio Committees on Law and Public Safety and Natural Resources, Tourism, and Land.

The report’s findings were damning. The committee found that the Tšosane dumpsite had been illegal since the Environment Act was enacted in 2008 and lacks an Environ-

mental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The committees’ recommendations included a comprehensive EIA to assess the full extent of the damage, a funded clean-up strategy, and an improved budget for modern waste management infrastructure across the country.

Sirak Hailu of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has stated that in the last decade, air pollution has become a significant contributing factor to mortality worldwide.

Hailu noted that six million deaths are currently associated with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as a result of air pollution.

“The trend is particularly alarming in Africa, where approximately 2.8 million people are dying from NCDs, a number that is progressively increasing due to factors like rapid urbanisation and, critically, air pollution.”

“Air pollution has become, and has got its importance as a risk factor for several non-communicable diseases, including chronic lung disease, cardiovascular disease, and also cancer,” Dr. Hailu warned, emphasising the multifaceted health dangers.

Hailu attended the Non-Communicable Diseases and Injuries (NCDIs) Coordination Mechanism – Lesotho meeting, held on Wednesday at the ‘Manthabiseng Convention Centre. The meeting aimed to officially establish the multisectoral NCDI Coordinating Mechanism, raise awareness of NCDIs in Lesotho, and outline a roadmap for their prevention, detection, control, and treatment.

Gov’t withdraws public debt bill amid fierce debate

Ntsoaki Motaung

Following intense discussions in the National Assembly over the past days, the government has withdrawn the Public Debt Management Bill, 2024.

The legislation, which aimed to establish a structured framework for managing public debt, sparked vigorous debate among lawmakers, with opinions ranging from fiscal responsibility to the potential impact on future generations.

Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane, requested that parliamentary debates be paused to allow

further consultations. Speaker Tlohang Sekhmane urged that these consultations be conducted promptly, noting, “In the interest of the house, you should expedite the consultations.”

The Public Debt Management Bill sought to ensure the government meets its financing needs and repayment obligations efficiently, at the lowest possible cost, and with a prudent level of risk. It aimed to link borrowing to clear strategies, such as the medium-term debt management plan and annual borrowing plans, aligned with broader macroeconomic objectives.

The Bill also proposed measures to strengthen fiscal discipline, support monetary

policy objectives, and foster the growth of a robust domestic financial market. It outlined procedures for authorising, managing, and recording borrowing, introduced debt ceilings based on recent revenue performance, and specified rules for raising foreign and domestic debt, issuing government guarantees, and containing risks to public finances.

Additionally, the legislation proposed the establishment of technical and oversight debt management committees to ensure transparency, accountability, and professional handling of debt operations. It would also repeal outdated laws, including the Loans and Guarantees Act of 1967, and required that annual borrow-

ing plans be submitted as part of the national budget for parliamentary approval.

Several MPs raised concerns during the debate. Mokhothu Makhanyane questioned the use of the term “exclusive” right to raise debt, warning it could be prone to abuse. Leader of the Opposition, Mathibeli Mokhothu, proposed that a meeting be held with former Prime Ministers, their deputies, the former Government Secretary (GS), and the current Speaker to review past debt management practices. “All in all, this is an important piece of legislation that is tabled before the House,” he said.

‘Machabane Lemphane-Letsie added that the government should not be given a “blank cheque,” suggesting that Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) be treated as contingent liabilities. Advocate Lekhetho Rakuoane reminded the House that debt binds future generations but acknowledged that the Bill would improve transparency, enabling citizens to understand how and why the country acquired its debt.



Newsday Interview

Part II: Prof Fajana on Stability, Renewal, and the Future of NUL

As the National University of Lesotho (NUL) celebrates its 80th anniversary, Vice-Chancellor Professor Isaac Olusola Fajana reflects on the institution's journey, its challenges, and its renewed ambitions. In this second part of our interview, Prof Fajana speaks candidly about transparency at the NUL Innovation Hub, the revival of academic traditions, his proudest achievements since taking office in 2021, and how the university is positioning itself for the future under its new strategic plan.

Thoboloko Ntšonyane (TN): The NUL Innovation Hub, among others, was established to foster creativity and entrepreneurship among students and staff, but we have seen media reports that it allegedly mismanaged to the tune of M1.9 million in funding. What actions has the management taken to address these concerns, and what are the plans to ensure its effective operation going forward?

Prof Fajana: The *Newsday* report in 2024 was promptly responded to and we effectively disposed of the allegations against our NULIH. The newspaper misreporting must have arisen out of lack of perfect information on how our projects are managed. Going forward, we intend to put more information in the public domain: our policies and reports on our projects will be much more effectively shared.

TN: You are leading this institution during its 80th anniversary celebration, what would you like both the academic community and the broader public to reflect on from this milestone? And how do you envision the future of the institution as you look back on its history?

Prof Fajana: At the mature age of 80 years, corporate organisations and even higher educational institutions like the NUL ought to be thinking or have even devised what in corporate parlance we call the Inner S. This inner curve is a replacement trajectory, a



new set of products which will replace what the organisation has been known for over the years. In the specific case of the NUL, the new inner S is the postgraduate programme whose footprint the NUL has begun a successful trajectory. While our total enrolment is slightly steadily dwindling, the postgraduate component has been increasing significantly in the last five years. This is the area where the NUL has a comparative advantage over the new higher educational institutions in our immediate environment. This development is a welcome one at the age of 80 for the NUL. Other welcoming trends include the resuscitation of academic rituals which seemed to have died over time. In the last two years alone, we have listened to two inaugural lectures, the 5th and the 6th, in the annals of the 80-year-old university. More professors are in a long queue to give their inaugural lectures. Going forward, we have seen the need for the institutional 80-year-old policies and procedures, which became operational over the years, to be revisited, revised or rewritten.

These policies are in large numbers. This is one of our current activities stemming from a reflection of how well and how far we have fared in the last 80 years.

TN: What has been the highlight of your journey with NUL? What is one thing you can say you are most proud to have achieved with your team?

Prof Fajana: I want to appreciate the ultimate leadership of the University for giving me the opportunity to lead this legacy and impactful university so far. It has offered me another type of experience in a university where people's diversity is even more pronounced – multicultural (internationalisation), individual preferences and styles, etc, and yet this diversity must be 'managed', rather than 'administered'. There exists a marked difference between the two... I inherited a very unstable, crisis-ridden institution in 2021. Working together with my team, I can say that relative stability and peace have returned to the institution. And this is the one thing I am proud of. I appreciate most especially the director and staff

of the Moshoeshoe I Institute for Peace and Leadership for their active and impactful effort to achieve the level of peace in the institution, and for the sustainability and upscaling of the current peace going forward. In the atmosphere of peace that now subsists, we are proud to announce the commencement of the Confucius Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology, a collaboration between Lesotho and China at the national strategic level, and the commencement of the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment.

TN: How are you going to ensure that the sun will not set on your goals and ambitions of taking this institution to the next level?

Professor Fajana: As my fixed-term contract draws to a close very soon, I have confidence in the quality of successors in the institution. My vision is cast in the stakeholder-accepted Strategic Plan (2024-2029). Meanwhile, achievements have been recorded in all areas of the university business (research, teaching, outreach, innovation and industrialisation). Our processes and services are now faster. Our Senate meetings on examination results no longer take forever. Our curriculum reviews enjoy inputs from industry stakeholders. Moribund academic rituals like inaugural lectures have been resuscitated, etc, all within the implementation regime of the Strategic Plan. The sense of ownership of the Plan is so huge that I have no fear that the plan will be faithfully executed going forward. The NUL in the appellation given to the strategic plan is recalibrating its quality, relevance and visibility creditably well. I appreciate all our stakeholders for the support during my tenure as the tenth Vice-Chancellor of the University. Making the NUL a university of choice and the nation's pride has been through our collective efforts, driven by resilient execution in spite of daunting challenges.

Road Fund marks 30 years of driving road development

Seabata Mahao

The Road Fund Lesotho will celebrate its 30th anniversary next month, marking three decades of investment in building a safer and more connected road network.

The celebrations, scheduled for October 13, will highlight the Fund's role in transforming road user charges into vital funding for road maintenance, rehabilitation, bridge construction, and road safety programmes.

The following day, October 14, the Fund will host the two-day African Roads Maintenance Funds Association (ARMFA) Southern Africa Focal Group (ASAFG) meeting, bringing together regional stakeholders to share experiences and strategies.

Road Fund's Chief Executive Officer Matšepang Sekhokoane described the mile-

stone as both a celebration of achievements and a call for renewed commitment.

"We collect funds and reinvest them to make travel safer, smoother, and more reliable for all Basotho," Sekhokoane said.

Established in 1995, the Road Fund has expanded significantly, growing from an annual budget of less than M20 million to more than M300 million today.

This increase has enabled major projects, including the rehabilitation of key arterial roads, the construction of vital bridges, the installation of streetlights, and upgrades to secondary roads linking rural areas to towns and cities.

Despite these advances, Sekhokoane warned that road infrastructure remains

severely underfunded.

"Research shows that M3 billion is required annually to maintain roads to acceptable standards, far more than the current allocation. Road infrastructure is a backbone of economic growth, but we are still far from meeting the country's maintenance needs," she explained.

The two-day event will also feature expert-led discussions on private sector participation in infrastructure financing, to unlock new opportunities for sustainable road development.

In addition to its infrastructure mandate, the Road Fund will use the anniversary to showcase its corporate social responsibility initiatives. A mobile court vehicle will be

donated to the National University of Lesotho (NUL) to strengthen access to justice and enhance legal education.

The Fund will also hand over two newly built rooms to a child-headed family in Ribaneng, Mafeteng, reflecting its broader commitment to social welfare.

Sekhokoane said the 30-year milestone offers an opportunity not only to celebrate past achievements but also to reinforce national commitment to future investment.

"This 30-year milestone is a celebration and a reminder that we must continue building a road network that supports trade, improves business competitiveness, and ensures the safety of all road users," she said.



RSL, banks seal deal to ease revenue payments



Mathabo Mokoko

Seabata Mahao

The Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) and the Bankers Association of Lesotho (BAL) have entered into a three-year partnership aimed at streamlining cross-border payments, modernising revenue administration, and tackling financial crime in the process.

The agreement, signed in Maseru this week, marks a strategic alignment between Lesotho's main revenue authority and the banking sector. Both institutions pledged to strengthen collaboration in order to boost tax compliance, improve financial transparency, and safeguard the country's economy from systemic risks.

RSL's Commissioner General 'Mathabo Mokoko described the deal as a timely response to the economic, regulatory, and technological challenges confronting Lesotho.

"This collaboration will address complex issues such as tax compliance, transparency, financial formalisation, and safeguarding the financial system against crime and abuse," Mokoko said.

She stressed that the initiative will place strong emphasis on expanding digital tax payment platforms, creating user-friendly systems for taxpayers and banking clients, and promoting efficiency in revenue administration.

The ultimate goal, she said, is to make compliance easier, payments faster, and public services more transparent.

"Our focus is to build a fair, resilient, and sustainable economy for Lesotho," she added.

On his part, BAL's Chairperson Nkau Matete echoed this position, warning of growing threats to the country's financial system.

"This deal will build a financial system that citizens can trust, one that protects savings, secures transactions, and upholds the integrity of the economy," Matete said.

He noted that a strong and secure financial infrastructure is key to maintaining public confidence and supporting the livelihoods of ordinary Basotho who rely on accessible and reliable banking services.

Beyond revenue collection, the agreement establishes a joint framework for assessing how tax policies influence banking operations, financial inclusion, and consumer welfare. Progress reviews will be conducted every three years, enabling the institutions to adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities.

The partnership is expected to be fully operational by mid-2026, with improvements set to reduce long queues, simplify administrative processes, and enhance service delivery in both banking and tax systems.

"By bringing our perspectives together, we can shape policies that are balanced, fair, and supportive of long-term development. This is ultimately about taxpayers, entrepreneurs, workers, and families whose futures depend on a stable, growing economy," Matete concluded.

BEDCO nurtures 50 budding entrepreneurs

Seabata Mahao

Fifty young entrepreneurs from across Lesotho are currently undergoing an intensive training programme focused on business plan development and pitching skills under the 2025 Bacha Entrepreneurship Project (BEP).

The initiative is a flagship youth empowerment project jointly run by the Basotho Enterprises Development Corporation (BEDCO) in partnership with the Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) and Standard Lesotho Bank (SLB).

Launched in 2014, BEP seeks to stimulate job creation, encourage innovation, and strengthen economic growth by supporting youth-led enterprises. Over the years, the programme has trained more than 70 entrepreneurs, with 60 of those businesses still active today.

This year's training, running from September 8 to 16, brings together 50 top candidates chosen from more than 400 applications. According to Lemphane Lesoli, Executive Head of Enterprise Development at BEDCO, the final selection was made after a rigorous review of 200 shortlisted applications.

"These 50 entrepreneurs have shown real promise through their business concepts," said Lesoli.

"We are confident in their ability to contribute meaningfully to the economy of Lesotho."

Lesoli highlighted the growing interest in the programme, noting that the increase in applications reflects a rising appetite among young Basotho to pursue business and innovation.

"This initiative is about more than just funding it is about empowering young people to become job creators."

Programme facilitator Pilane Seithleko explained that the training is designed to be highly practical.

"At the end of this process, some participants will be awarded funding. But our primary goal is to equip them with the skills to refine and elevate their business ideas," he added.

Seithleko stressed that many young Basotho struggle not because of a lack of ideas, but due to insufficient guidance.

"Through BEP, we give them practical tools to turn their ideas into viable and sustainable businesses," he added.

The participants themselves are embracing the opportunity with optimism. Among them is Rethabile Pitso, attending for the second time after finding the experience transformative.

"Last year's training helped me reframe my business plan and gave me the confidence to pitch effectively. That experience helped me reach the top 100 in the Sebatatso competition. I came back this year to grow even more," Pitso said.

EcoCash unlocks new global remittance avenues with Thunes partnership

Staff Reporter

Sasai Econet Financial Services (SEFS) continues to grow further impact of its mobile money platform, EcoCash Spache-Fono, by expanding its global remittance network through a new partnership with Transfer to Mobile Money Ltd (Thunes), a leading international payments provider.

The collaboration will make it easier for Basotho living abroad to send money home quickly, securely, and at greater convenience.

This milestone was announced following a recent, high-level meeting between the SEFS' General Manager, Moeketsi Mafereka, and Thunes' Regional Director, Adelina Moura.

The expanded remittance avenues will allow Basotho to receive money from Zimbabwe through EcoCash Zimbabwe, Australia (mhits), Tanzania (Mixx), Southern Africa region (Mama Money), Europe, North America, South Africa and the Middle East (Ria Money Transfer), the UK and Canada (Visa).

Locals will also be able to receive money from Botswana via the Orange Botswana corridor from October this year.

"These additional corridors are a milestone for us as Sasai Econet Financial Services and a huge relief for Basotho families who rely on remittances to make a living," said Mr Mafereka.

"Through EcoCash, we are making it easier than

ever for Basotho abroad to send money home safely and instantly."

Mafereka further emphasised that this development builds on EcoCash's 13-year journey of transforming access to financial services in Lesotho. He expressed his excitement on EcoCash's vital role in connecting Basotho to the global financial system while reinforcing its position at the centre of the country's digital economy.

On her part, Moura noted, "By expanding these remittance corridors for EcoCash, we are enabling Basotho communities worldwide to support their families back home with greater convenience.

For more than a decade, EcoCash Spache-fono has been at the forefront of Lesotho's financial ecosystem, driving financial inclusion and empowerment through its extensive and life-changing services.

Backed by its sister company, Econet Telecom Lesotho's strong network footprint across the Mountain Kingdom, EcoCash has reached even the most remote areas, giving Basotho and local businesses access to safe and reliable digital transactions.

Remittances have historically been a lifeline for many Basotho families, particularly in rural areas. They provide critical income for food, schooling, health care, and housing.

Without them, many households would struggle to meet basic needs. It is estimated that remittances received in Lesotho in 2024 amounted to US\$499.30 million (approximately M9 billion).

ESTATE NOTICE

NOTICE LATE JUSTICE CHRISMAS MABASO B100/25

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon all heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend before the Master of the High Court at the office of the Master of the High Court in the Butha-Buthe district, near the District Administration office, on the 16th SEPTEMBER 2025 at 11AM.

Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the master as the executor dative.

DATED AT BUTHA-BUTHE ON THIS 22nd AUGUST 2025

MASTER OF THE HIGH COURT OFFICES
BUTHA-BUTHE

BEHIND PASSPORT OFFICE BUILDING
OPPOSITE POST OFFICE,
BUTHA-BUTHE

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 37 of the Administration Of Estates and Inheritance Act No. 2 of 2024

ESTATE LATE MAMAKHABANE THEKO E1350/2025

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No. 2 of 2024 calling upon all heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court in Maseru on MONDAY, 13th OCTOBER 2025 at 10:00 am for the purpose of:

Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as Executor dative.

Dated at Maseru on this 27th AUGUST 2025.

Master of the High Court
Magistrate Court

Old Prosecutors Office
Maseru

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 37 of the Administration Of Estates and Inheritance Act No. 2 of 2024

ESTATE LATE MANKHAHLE APAPHIA MAJARA E1321/2025

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 37 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No. 2 of 2024 calling upon surviving spouse, all heirs, legatees and creditors of the deceased to attend a meeting before the Master of the High Court in Maseru on MONDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2025 at 09:00am for the purpose of:

Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as Executor dative.

Dated at Maseru on this 21st AUGUST 2025.

Master of the High Court
Magistrate Court

Old Prosecutors Office
Maseru



Lesotho confronts 'silent crisis' as non-communicable diseases surge



Ntsoaki Motaung

Lesotho is in the grip of a severe and growing public health crisis, as non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and injuries claim an alarming share of lives.

Health officials are calling for urgent, collective action to address what they describe as a "silent crisis."

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), NCDs accounted for 45 percent of all deaths in Lesotho in 2019, giving the country the highest NCD-related mortality rate per 100,000 people in the African region.

"These figures underscore the urgent need for action, as the burden of NCDs is projected to surpass that of communicable diseases in Africa by 2030," said Dr. Sirak Hailu of WHO.

Hailu attended the Non-Communicable Diseases and Injuries (NCDIs) Coordination Mechanism – Lesotho meeting, held on Wednesday at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre. The meeting aimed to officially establish the multisectoral NCDI Coordinating Mechanism, raise awareness of NCDIs in Lesotho, and outline a roadmap for their prevention, detection, control, and treatment.

Cardiovascular diseases remain the leading cause of NCD deaths, followed closely by cancers. Road accidents, many linked to alcohol use, rank as the third-leading cause of death.

"Tobacco prevalence in Lesotho is among the highest in the region, exceeding both global and regional averages. This is deeply concerning given its direct link to chronic lung disease, cancer, and

cardiovascular conditions," Hailu noted.

"While alcohol consumption in Lesotho is reportedly below the regional average, its link to road accidents and other injuries remains a serious issue. The misuse of alcohol is a core factor in the high rate of injuries from road accidents," he said.

He indicated that Lesotho's physical activity levels are better than in some countries, but obesity is a significant risk factor. "Southern and North Africa have some of the highest rates of obesity, which is a key risk factor for hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers," he said.

He said a 2023 study found that 42.5 percent of adults in a rural Lesotho cohort were overweight or obese, with higher rates among women.

According to Hailu, air pollution has emerged as a significant contributing factor to NCD-related deaths, with six million deaths globally attributed to it.

As Dr. 'Malitaba Litaba from the Ministry of Health noted, Lesotho has the highest age-standardised mortality rate in the African region.

Hypertension is a major problem, with many deaths resulting from stroke and heart disease.

She believes that by improving hypertension management, the country can significantly reduce NCD-related mortality.

"After cardiovascular diseases, cancer is the second-leading cause of death. This is maybe because it is a screenable and diagnosable disease, leading to better data collection. However, there is also a worrying rise in childhood cancers," she said.

Road accidents are the third leading cause of death in Lesotho, a factor officials believe is heavily influenced by alcohol abuse.

As Dr. Litaba pointed out, the data show that most injuries from road accidents are linked to alcohol consumption.

In response to this escalating crisis, the government has launched the National Multisectoral Coordination Mechanism for Non-Communicable Diseases, Injuries, and Mental Health.

Minister of Health Selibe Mochoboroane described the initiative not just as a program, but as a "movement to confront a silent crisis".

He said the initiative aims to unite various government sectors, including health, education, finance, and public works, with civil society, academia, and the private sector.

The strategy, according to the Minister, focuses on tackling the root causes of NCDs through policies on nutrition, tobacco use, and physical activity.

Strengthening primary healthcare services to provide early screening and treatment for conditions like hypertension and diabetes, and raising awareness through media campaigns and community dialogues to encourage healthier lifestyles.

Mochoboroane said the government is taking bold steps, including the construction of a new cancer center and the establishment of the Starlight Houses of Hope, Lesotho's first palliative care center.

He acknowledged that this crisis is not just a health issue, but a societal one shaped by social, economic, political, and

environmental forces.

The program will begin with a stakeholder meeting this month to map resources and co-create national plans for prevention and control.

Meanwhile, it is two weeks to go until the fourth UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health (HLM4), and civil society is urging governments to show leadership and step up investments to tackle the world's leading health challenges.

The NCD Alliance's Time to Lead campaign urges countries to prioritise NCDs, including mental health and neurological conditions, close the financing gap and deliver bold commitments at the HLM4 taking place on September 25.

A new landmark report published by the NCD Alliance and authored by a team of researchers at the University of Washington provides clear investment targets to achieve global health and SDG goals.

The report, "Delivering on Health and Financial Protection for All: Government Spending on Essential NCD Medicines and Services", shows that countries are dangerously underspending on NCDs and outlines how much they must invest to get on track and save lives.

To achieve universal coverage and provide financial protection for NCD interventions, the report indicates that countries should aim to spend 1.1 percent to 1.7 percent of gross national income (GNI) on NCDs through their primary healthcare.

Currently, most countries invest just 0.26 percent to 0.46 percent of GNI, highlighting decades of chronic underfunding.

Urgent action needed on Ha Tšosane dumpsite

The recent fire at the Ha Tšosane dumpsite is a stark reminder that the health and safety of Basotho cannot be taken lightly. Once again, residents are engulfed in thick, acrid smoke, exposing them to hazardous air pollution. For a community already grappling with the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and injuries, this environmental disaster presents yet another deadly risk.

Experts have long warned that air pollution exacerbates chronic illnesses, including lung disease, cardiovascular conditions, and cancer. It is alarming to consider that Basotho who are already vulnerable to health crises could now face additional, preventable threats from their immediate environment.

This incident is not an isolated case of misfortune, it reflects systemic neglect and inadequate governance in waste management. Ha Tšosane dumpsite has operated illegally for more than a decade, without an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), despite the Environment Act of 2008 mandating compliance.

The repeated fires, the stench, and the pollution are symptomatic of a broader failure to ensure that the capital's waste is managed responsibly. Residents report not only health concerns but also social and economic costs, including trauma, reduced property values, and persistent anxiety.

While government officials, including Minister of Local Government Lebona Lephehema, have pledged to relocate the site to Tšoeneng, progress remains painfully slow. Millions of maloti have been earmarked for this relocation, yet the community continues to suffer. Instead of seeing tangible results, residents are left facing recurring hazards, signaling that the funds and plans allocated are not being translated into meaningful action.

Promises, consultations, and repeated studies have replaced decisive action and left the community frustrated and at risk.

The stakes could not be higher. According to the World Health Organisation, millions of deaths worldwide, including 2.8 million in Africa, are linked to non-communicable diseases exacerbated by environmental pollution.

Air pollution is not just a nuisance, it is a lethal threat that directly impacts the well-being of families, particularly children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing health conditions. Basotho should not have to endure the compounded effects of poor health infrastructure and environmental neglect.

It is imperative that the government acts decisively and without further delay. A comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment must be conducted immediately to evaluate the full scope of environmental and health damage caused by the dumpsite.

A fully funded clean-up strategy must follow, paired with the establishment of modern, sustainable waste management infrastructure that meets international best practices. Authorities must also ensure transparency and accountability in the use of allocated funds, so that resources are directed toward implementation rather than repeated studies or bureaucratic processes.

Every citizen has a right to a safe, clean, and healthy environment. The repeated fires at Ha Tšosane are a clarion call that cannot be ignored. The government must act now to prevent a public health disaster, safeguard communities, and uphold the rights of Basotho to live free from environmental hazards. Failure to do so risks not only lives but also public trust in the very institutions mandated to protect and serve the people.

Immediate, decisive, and transparent action is no longer optional, it is a moral and civic imperative.



No Comment



Kananelo Boloetse

Common Concern

Why are diplomatic jobs being treated like family gifts?

The rule of law in Lesotho is supposed to be the anchor of our democracy, but right now, it feels like it is floating away. Just a few weeks ago, the Sunday Express reported that some people have been given diplomatic jobs, just like that, handed over on a silver platter. To make matters worse, some of them are reportedly relatives of sitting ministers.

Now, let's pause here. Diplomatic jobs are not birthday presents. They are public service jobs, paid for by taxpayers. And our Constitution is very clear about this. Section 20(1)(c) says that every citizen of Lesotho shall enjoy the right to have access, on general terms of equality, to the public service. That means: no favourites, no relatives, no handpicking. Everyone should have a fair chance.

The Public Service Act says the same thing. Section 8(1) makes it plain that entry into the public service should be based on merit, your qualifications, skills, and ability, after a fair and open competition. In simple terms, you apply, you compete, and the best person gets the job. It does not say, "If your uncle is a minister, you are in."

And when it comes to foreign service jobs, the rules are even stricter. Accord-

ing to the Public Service Regulations of 2008, anyone serving in a diplomatic mission abroad is a public officer. These officers are supposed to move between embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Maseru as part of their service. That is the law. The law even lists the jobs in embassies—ambassador, counsellor, first secretary, typist, driver—you name it. What the law does not say is that these jobs are rewards for political loyalty or family ties.

So, if the law is this clear, why is this still happening? Why are people being plucked from nowhere and sent to represent us abroad while ordinary Basotho, who studied and trained for years, do not even get a chance to apply?

This is where the disappointment sets in. It is not just about the jobs, it is about the principle. Public office is supposed to be a public trust. When ministers treat it like a family business, they weaken our Constitution, kill public confidence, and tell young Basotho that qualifications do not matter. Connections do.

We do not have to accept this. These appointments can be challenged. Anyone has the right to go to court and ask that they be set aside because they are unlaw-

ful. And courts in Lesotho have the power to do that. Fairness and legality dictate so.

Think about it: diplomatic jobs are important. These people will represent Lesotho in foreign countries. They will be the face of our nation. Shouldn't we want the best-qualified, most capable people doing that job, rather than someone who just happens to share a last name with a minister?

This culture of handpicking and favouritism has to end. Otherwise, what message are we sending to our youth? That no matter how hard they work, no matter how many degrees they earn, the real key to opportunity is political connections? That's not just unfair—it's dangerous for the future of this country.

The law is clear. The Constitution is clear. What's missing is the will to obey it. If the government cannot respect its own laws, then citizens must demand that the courts step in. Because at the end of the day, this is not just about jobs, it is about the kind of country we want to live in.

Do we want a Lesotho where merit counts, or a Lesotho where family ties decide everything? The answer should be obvious.



September 12: The day citizens became sentinels of the constitution

Three years ago today, September 12, 2022, the High Court of Lesotho delivered a judgment that would become a cornerstone of our constitutional democracy. In *Boloetse and Tuke v. His Majesty The King and Others*, the full bench, led by Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane, did not merely settle a dispute but also erected a formidable barrier against the arbitrary exercise of power and redefined the role of the citizen in a constitutional state.

On this anniversary, the judgment stands not as a relic, but as a living, breathing doctrine that continues to shape the balance of power in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

The case emerged from a moment of high political drama. In the twilight of the 10th Parliament's term in July 2022, the government found itself racing against the clock. Two flagship bills – the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution Bill and the National Assembly Electoral Amendment Bill, products of the long-awaited national reforms process – remained unpassed.

Faced with this self-inflicted legislative failure, the executive branch reached for the most extreme tool in the constitutional toolbox.

Acting on the advice of the Council of State, the then Prime Minister, Dr Moeketsi Majoro, issued a proclamation declaring that the failure to pass these bills constituted a “public emergency which threaten[ed] the life of the nation” under Section 23 of the Constitution. In swift succession, His Majesty King Letsie III, again on the Council's advice, recalled the already-dissolved Parliament under Section 84(2) with a singular directive: to reconvene and pass the two bills.

This move was widely perceived as a cynical attempt to use a constitutional nuclear option to solve a political problem. In stepped two private citizens, Kananelo Boloetse and Lintle Tuke. Their challenge was met with a predictable first line of defence from the state: a challenge to their locus standi, their right to even bring the case to court.

Part I: The citizen as constitutional sentinel

The government's argument was a classic one. It argued that the applicants had not suffered any specific, personal injury different from that of the general public. Therefore, they had no standing to sue. The Court's rejection of this argument was not just a legal technicality but was a philosophical reorientation of constitutional governance.

Chief Justice Sakoane's judgment drew a critical distinction that will forever inform public interest litigation in Lesotho: the difference between a “Bill of Rights review” (where an individual claims a personal right is infringed) and a “rule of law review.” The latter, the Court held, is founded on Section 2 of the Constitution, which declares it the supreme law of the land. When the government violates the Constitution itself, it commits a wrong against every citizen. Therefore, any citizen has a legitimate



interest, a “sacred duty,” to approach the court to challenge that violation.

The Court's language was stirring and purposeful. It described the Constitution as a “solemn and effective covenant regulating the relationship between the Crown and its citizens” and a “mirror reflecting the national soul.” To deny citizens the right to defend this covenant, the Court warned, would be to leave it undefended, as the Attorney-General cannot be expected to sue the government they advise. This would risk driving people from the courtroom to “the lawless street,” undermining the very rule of law the Constitution is designed to protect.

This reasoning, richly supported by precedents from the supreme courts of India, Canada, and the United States, effectively emancipated constitutional litigation from its archaic, private-law constraints. It established the citizen as a legitimate guardian of the constitutional order.

Part II: The merits – demystifying the “public emergency”

Having established the applicants' right to be heard, the Court proceeded to dismantle the government's case on its merits. This analysis was a masterclass in constitutional interpretation.

The Court turned to international law to define the vague term “public emergency.” It invoked the Siracusa Principles, which stipulate that such an emergency must be an “exceptional situation of crisis or public danger, actual or imminent,” that affects the

whole population and threatens the very organised life of the community. It is not a synonym for a political problem, a legislative delay, or even a serious crime wave. The government's attempt to equate the failure to pass bills, a routine occurrence in democracies worldwide, with an existential threat was, the Court found, a gross perversion of the constitutional provision.

Furthermore, the Court clarified the limited purpose of recalling a dissolved Parliament. Under Section 23(8), a recalled Parliament's mandate is strictly confined to “debating and voting upon resolutions” to approve or reject the declaration of emergency. It is not a general legislative session. The directive to pass specific bills was a fundamental violation of the separation of powers and a blatant attempt to use an emergency provision for ordinary political business.

The Court concluded that the dissolved bills were legislative “corpses” that could not be resurrected by an emergency proclamation. The declaration was therefore null and void, and the recall for the purpose of passing the bills was ultra vires (beyond the power) of His Majesty.

Part III: The enduring legacy

Three years on, the reverberations of the Boloetse judgment are deeply felt across Lesotho's legal and political landscape:

1. **A powerful democratic safeguard:** The judgment has democratised the enforcement of the Constitution. It

empowers journalists, civil society organisations, and ordinary citizens to act as “private attorneys-general,” providing a crucial check on executive power that is independent of political cycles.

2. **The sanctity of emergency powers:** The Court drew a bright red line around Chapter II of the Constitution. It established that a state of emergency is not a tool for political convenience but a measure of last resort for genuine, nation-threatening crises. This makes it profoundly difficult for any future government to misuse this power without facing immediate and legitimate challenge.
3. **Clarifying the architecture of power:** The judgment provides crystal-clear guidance on the roles of key institutions: the limited mandate of a recalled Parliament, the critical and objective role of the Council of State, and the non-arbitrary nature of the King's constitutional powers. The Court's reminder that “the King does not err but is caused to err by his adviser(s)” places a heavy burden of responsibility on the Council of State to offer advice rooted in law, not politics.
4. **A warning against constitutional idolatry:** In a profound passage, the Court cautioned against seeing the Constitution as a “panacea for all problems.” It quoted scholar Steven Friedman to note that a constitution cannot achieve what politics cannot deliver; it can only provide the rules for the political process. This served as a sobering critique of the government's claim that passing two bills was the only thing standing between Lesotho and catastrophe.

The Boloetse and Tuke case was a defining moment where the judiciary firmly stepped into its role as the ultimate interpreter and guardian of the Constitution. It was a victory for procedural integrity over political expediency and for popular sovereignty over executive overreach.

The true test of a landmark judgment is not its immediate outcome, but its enduring vitality. Three years later, the principles established in Boloetse are regularly invoked by lawyers, cited by judges, and relied upon by citizens. It has become a foundational text, a shield that continues to protect the nation from the slow erosion of its constitutional foundations. It serves as an enduring reminder that in a democracy, the power to define the rules of the game does not belong to the players alone, but ultimately to the people and the Constitution they have ordained.

As we reflect on this anniversary, we are reminded that the strength of our democracy does not lie solely in the words of our Constitution, but in the courageous citizens who step forward to defend it and the wise judiciary that ensures their voices are heard. The shield forged three years ago remains unyielding, protecting the Basotho nation from the erosion of its foundational principles.

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LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER COMMISSION

TENDER NOTICE

PROVISION OF ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES FOR THREE FINANCIAL YEARS (2025/26, 2026/27, and 2027/28)

The Lesotho Highlands Water Commission (LHWC), established under the 1986 Treaty between the Governments of Lesotho and South Africa, is responsible for overseeing the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), advising both governments, and serving as a communication channel beyond the LHWP. LHWC invites bids from reputable firms registered in Lesotho and South Africa for the provision of Annual External Audit Services for three consecutive financial years ending **31st March 2026, 31st March 2027, and 31st March 2028.**

Submission of Bids

Sealed bids, clearly marked “**Tender for the Provision of LHWC Annual External Audit Services (2026–2028)**”, with no identifying details of the bidder on the envelope, should be delivered to:

Commission Secretary

Lesotho Highlands Water Commission
5th Floor, Standard Lesotho Bank Tower
Maseru 100, Lesotho

Bidders from South Africa should courier their bids to the above address.

Submission Deadline: 30th September 2025, no later than noon (local time).

Eligibility and Requirements

Interested bidders must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be a registered and accredited auditing firm in Lesotho or South Africa.
- Demonstrate experience in conducting external audits for similar organizations.
- Comply with relevant international auditing and accounting standards.
- Provide company registration documents, professional certifications, and three (3) references from previous clients.

Enquiries

For further information or clarifications, please contact: sec@lhwc.org.ls



EXPRESSION OF INTERST

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) invites registered companies and interested individuals for short term hire of vehicles. The database of vehicles will be used for the period of **three (3) years.**

BIDDING DOCUMENT

Document is obtainable from Procurement Unit Second Floor Election House during working hours from 09:00am to 4:00pm.

SPECIFICATIONS OF REQUIRED VEHICLES

1. Double Cab 4*4
2. Double Cab 4*2
3. SUV's
4. Quantum
5. 22-seater buses
6. 60-70 seater buses/coaches
7. Drop-side trucks 10 Tons
8. Box truck 10 Tons
9. Double Cab 4*4 (Mamokoto)

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Provided Individual/ Company details form should be filled.
- Attach valid **relevant** Trading License.
- Attach valid copy of Tax Clearance (Both companies & individuals).
- Companies intending to work with individuals must provide an agreement signed by both parties together with the vehicle's documents. (*APPLIES TO FLEET COMPANY*)
- Attach a certified copy of National ID and IEC Registration Card/Number of the Owner or Company owners.
- All vehicles should have a fire extinguisher.
- Attach certified copies of registration certificates/blue cards of vehicles.
- Attach certified copies of insurance certificates from insurance companies registered with Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL) not insurance brokers, for all categories of vehicles (insured with passenger liability).
- The vehicle will be replaced on the condition that it is involved in accident and declared ride-off. The replacement vehicle must of the same model and features.
- Vehicle Owners must specify one district desired for work (application for more than one district will result in disqualification).

NB:

- All required documents must be submitted
- The owner has to fuel the vehicle and provide a driver.
- IEC has a right to deploy vehicles to any district if need arises
- IEC uses Government of Lesotho Rates
- Vehicles will be hired on a monthly basis.
- Vehicle must be roadworthy
- Vehicle must have the following:
 - Canopy
 - Valid Fitness
 - Valid permits
 - First Aid
 - Tools (Wheel spanner and Jack, triangle*2, spare wheel)
- The tyres must in good conditions
- Provide the envelope clearing marked “**TYPE OF VEHICLE AND NAME OF DISTRICT**” containing Original and four copies.

Important information to companies or individuals in the Districts level:

- The envelopes for Expression of Interest can be delivered at all IEC District Offices.
- The closing date at District level is on **Wednesday 25th September 2025 at 16:00pm.**
- The envelopes from District Offices, should reach Head Quarters Maseru before 12:00pm on **Friday 26th September 2025.**

Sealed documents bearing no identification of the companies/individuals should be deposited in the tender box at the Election House, Ground Floor, Corner Maluti and Caledon Road Maseru West **On or before 12:00 pm Friday 25th September 2025** and will be opened on the same date at **14:00hours.** Envelopes should be clearly marked: “**Type of vehicle (e.g. 4x4 Double Cab) and name of district (e.g. Maseru)**”.

For further information, relating to the above information please contact,

The Procurement Unit

Independent Electoral Commission
Election House
2nd Floor
Corner Maluti and Caledon Road
Maseru West
Tel: +266 – 22 314991/59019086
Email: tenders@iec.org.ls

The Independent Electoral Commission reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders



LESOTHO COMPETITIVENESS AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION (CAFI) PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

“ADVERTISEMENT”

CONSULTING SERVICES - INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT (IC) SELECTION

Country : Lesotho
Project Name : Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion (CAFI) Project
Credit No. : 7169-LS
Assignment Title: Internal Auditor
Reference No.: CAFI-WB-0086

The Government of Lesotho has received credit from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank to implement the Lesotho Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion (CAFI) Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development through the CAFI PMU, now invites interested individuals to indicate their interest in the assignment. Interested individuals should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience for the assignment.

The selection criteria will be based on the following information, inter alia:

- ▶ A relevant degree in accounting, finance, business administration, or a related field.
- ▶ Professional certification is highly desirable.
- ▶ A minimum of 5 years of experience in internal auditing, with a preference for experience in donor-funded projects.
- ▶ Strong knowledge of financial management practices, internal control frameworks, and risk assessment methodologies.
- ▶ Excellent analytical, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- ▶ Ability to work independently and collaboratively within a team environment.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be obtained

at the address given below and at the following website: www.cafi.org.ls. Interested candidates are required to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) and Curriculum Vitae (CV) together with educational certificates to the address below.

The attention of interested candidates is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” February 2025 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

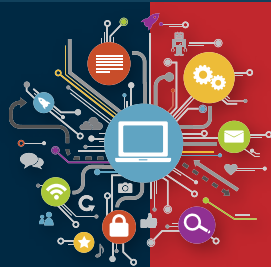
A candidate will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in Procurement Regulations.

**Further information can be obtained at the address below during of-
fice hours [08h00 to 16h30 local time].**

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form, in sealed envelopes labelled “ **Internal Auditor**” to the address below in person or by e-mail on or before **Friday, 26 September 2025 at 14h00.** E-mail submissions should be sent to imohejane@cafi.org.ls cc nleutsoa@cafi.org.ls and ltsoinyane@cafi.org.ls as a single attachment.

Managing Director
Lesotho Competitiveness and Financial Inclusion Project
1st Floor ‘Matanki House
P.O. Box 747,
Maseru 100
Lesotho
Tel.: (+266) 22 315 100

NB: Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



Technology

Newsday

First community hotspots transform Lesotho's rural villages

...as T-Connect Lesotho hands over first hotspots in Matsieng, Thaba Bosiu and Mokhotlong powered by Starlink through T - Connect

Staff Reporter

A fresh chapter in Lesotho's digital journey was opened this week as T-Connect Lesotho officially handed over the first Community Hotspot in Matsieng, at the office of Principal Chief Seeiso Bereng Seeiso. The installation marks a decisive step towards bridging the digital divide between rural villages and the capital.

This milestone follows the successful rollout of Community Hotspots in Thaba Bosiu, at the office of Principal Chief Khoabane Theko, and in Mokhotlong at the office of Principal Chief Lerotholi Seeiso. Together, these handovers are the beginning of a national movement to connect underserved communities with reliable, high-speed internet powered by Starlink through T-Connect.

Voices of hope in Matsieng

In Matsieng, Principal Chief Seeiso Bereng Seeiso emphasised that the hotspots were arriving at a time of urgent need. Unemployment has placed enormous pressure on families, with qualified graduates unable to find opportunities.

Mosiua Matlere, a parent from the village, shared his experience: "My daughter graduated in nursing, but because of a lack of employment and access to opportunities, she stays at home stressed, wondering when her time will come. With this Community Hotspot, she finally has a

window to the world. She can search for jobs, up-skill, and connect with opportunities that were once out of reach."

Thaba Bosiu: Tradition meets technology

Just days earlier, Thaba Bosiu made history as the first community in Maseru District to receive a Community Hotspot. Known as the birthplace of the Basotho nation, Thaba Bosiu carries a deep cultural heritage, but it is now also the birthplace of digital empowerment.

Principal Chief Khoabane Theko, speaking with heartfelt pride, called it a game-changer: "I am overwhelmed by happiness because this is a life-changer. Giving access to connectivity means access to a better life. T-Connect Lesotho is nothing short of a game changer."

A revolution in Mokhotlong

The most recent handover took place in Mokhotlong, one of Lesotho's most remote mountain districts. Known for its natural beauty but also its isolation, Mokhotlong has long been cut off from the benefits of the digital age.

At the installation ceremony held at the office of Principal Chief Lerotholi Seeiso, Morena Tholo, the atmosphere was filled with excitement as villagers experienced high-speed internet for the first time.

The Chief described it as nothing less than

transformational: "For decades, Mokhotlong has been cut off from opportunities that others take for granted. With this Community Hotspot, our children can finally access the world's knowledge, our graduates can look for jobs, and our families can explore new ways of thriving. This is not just internet; it is a bridge to dignity and equality."

Starlink: The technology behind change

The force enabling these breakthroughs is through T-Connect, a digital transformation group that brings reliable, specialised high-speed internet to places unreachable by fibre or mobile towers.

"This is the first step in a long journey to deliver on our brand promise – digital transformation of Africa. We hope that the community will learn and work differently," said T-Connect Group CEO Advocate Phelane Phomane.

More than connectivity: A social shift

The Community Hotspots represent more than a technological upgrade; they are a social revolution.

Students can now join online classes, conduct research, and tap into global knowledge. Graduates and job seekers can find remote work, start digital businesses, or freelance globally.

Young people can learn coding, digital skills, or explore creative industries online. Women can access digital literacy programmes, expanding opportunities for financial independence.

Above all, the hotspots bring hope, acting as a

shield against the despair that fuels social challenges such as crime, substance abuse, and unemployment-related mental health struggles.

A national blueprint

By prioritising rural areas over urban centres for the first installations, T-Connect Lesotho has sent a powerful message: digital progress is for all, not just for cities.

If rolled out nationwide, Community Hotspots have the potential to redefine Lesotho's digital landscape and serve as a blueprint for inclusive transformation across Africa.

A future to look forward to

As children in Matsieng, Thaba Bosiu and Mokhotlong logged on for the first time, their joy was contagious. Parents whispered about future possibilities, while elders nodded with pride, recognising this as a moment that honoured both tradition and progress.

Principal Chief Lerotholi Seeiso captured the spirit of the day: "Our people have been waiting for this moment for generations. With this Community Hotspot, the world has finally reached Mokhotlong. This is the dawn of a new future."

These Community Hotspots are only the beginning of a larger mission to ensure no village, school, or business is left behind. In the coming weeks, T-Connect Lesotho will unveil the next phase of this programme, one that promises to unlock even greater opportunities for communities across the country.

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Dallas T appointed national director for African Music Icons 2026

Chris Theko

Lesotho has taken a bold step onto the continental stage with the appointment of Tello ‘Dallas T’ Leballo as the National Director for the African Music Icons (AMI) 2026.

The announcement signals a new chapter for the Mountain Kingdom’s creative industries, positioning the country at the heart of one of Africa’s most anticipated cultural and television events.

The African Music Icons (AMI) is a ground-breaking cultural and television event designed to amplify African music on the global stage. Far beyond the glamour of an awards ceremony, AMI serves as a hub for industry dialogue, cross-border collaboration, and policy innovation.

By mobilising artists, investors, policymakers, and creatives, it seeks to transform African music into a sustainable cultural and economic force, redefining the role of African artists as global ambassadors of culture.

The announcement was made on Wednesday this week, and for Leballo, the appointment carries both personal and professional significance.

“On a personal level, it is both humbling and exhilarating. I have dedicated much of my career to broadcasting, cultural advocacy, and building platforms for African voices to be heard. To be entrusted with this role feels like a culmination of those efforts, a recognition that our stories, rhythms, and voices matter profoundly on the global stage.

“Professionally, it presents an extraordinary opportunity to apply my experience in media and cultural entrepreneurship towards shaping a legacy project that positions Lesotho, and Africa



more broadly, at the very heart of global cultural conversations,” Leballo said.

While many may see AMI as just another awards show, Leballo insists it is much more than that. He said the platform creates a redefining moment for African artists as it has a cultural and economic aspect to it.

“Awards alone can dazzle, but AMI’s essence is transformative,” he explained.

“It is a vehicle for redefining the African artist as not only a performer but as a cultural ambassador, an economic driver, and an innovator. By creating space for dialogue, cross-border collaboration, and industry problem-solving, AMI becomes less

about the trophies and more about building infrastructure for growth. It mobilises policy-makers, investors, and creatives to collectively design solutions for sustainability, fair recognition, and global visibility. In short, it reframes African music not as niche entertainment but as a global cultural force.”

Leballo sees the platform as a golden opportunity for Lesotho’s musicians to take their place on the international stage. He mentioned that Lesotho artists are brimming with originality yet often operate at the periphery of continental conversations.

“AMI offers even Lesotho artists a direct gateway to continental and global platforms, enabling them to showcase their artistry alongside Africa’s most celebrated names,” he said.

“Beyond visibility, it positions Lesotho as a cultural contributor rather than a cultural consumer. The ripple effects extend to tourism, creative entrepreneurship, and national branding, in essence, allowing Lesotho to punch above its weight on the continental cultural map.”

The issue of sustainability in the creative industries is one Leballo takes seriously. He hopes to use AMI as a platform to address it head-on.

“The starting point is to foster an ecosystem where creativity translates into livelihoods. I hope to champion partnerships that link artists with corporate sponsors, digital platforms, and policymakers in a way that ensures the value chain is both respected and rewarded,” he explained.

“We must normalise professional structures, from artist management and rights protection to digital monetisation, so that creativity is no longer seen as a hobby but as a viable career path. Sustainability, in my view, lies in embedding cre-

ativity into national development strategies and ensuring artists are equipped with both the tools and networks to thrive.”

Looking ahead, Leballo hopes his leadership will leave a lasting legacy not only for the African Music Icons but also for Lesotho’s cultural identity.

“I hope my tenure will be remembered for expanding the horizons of possibility, where African artists, and Basotho artists in particular, recognised their place not as footnotes in global culture but as headline contributors,” he said.

“For Lesotho, I want the legacy to be that this small mountain kingdom stood tall in celebrating, exporting, and shaping Africa’s soundscape. If in 2026 an artist from Lesotho is standing on an international stage saying, ‘I began my journey through AMI,’ then my leadership will have served its purpose.”

As the countdown to AMI 2026 begins, Lesotho, guided by Leballo’s vision, is poised to make history alongside Africa’s brightest musical talents.

Leballo is a pioneering figure in Lesotho’s media and cultural industries, with a career spanning broadcasting, media production, and cultural entrepreneurship.

From his early days on Radio Lesotho, to implementing the Ultimate Radio, and later on founding the first digital radio station in Lesotho, Sky Alpha HD.

Widely known for his innovative approach to storytelling and advocacy for African voices, he has played a central role in shaping platforms that showcase local talent while connecting Lesotho to wider African and global audiences.

His work has positioned him as one of the country’s most influential media personalities and a respected voice in continental cultural conversations.

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Comedy, kindness, and family: David Kau on 21 years of making Africa laugh

Chris Theko

When David Kau steps onto a stage, laughter follows naturally. But beyond the punchlines and applause, the celebrated South African comedian carries with him the quieter stories of family, fatherhood, and everyday life that continue to shape his career.

Newsday caught up with Kau on the sidelines of the Spring Jump Off Comedy Show at Victory Hall in Maseru, where he headlined alongside fellow South African heavyweight Chris Mampane and Lesotho's own top comedians Leotoana, Masapo, and Skaftin. The atmosphere was electric, a blend of anticipation, joy, and regional pride as talents from both sides of the border shared one stage.

For Kau, comedy is more than a profession; it's a calling. "It is a talent that's God-given, something no one can take away from me," he said with quiet confidence.

His material, he explained, starts from within. "I start with myself and my own life. When I began, I was single, no kids, just a guy from a small town. Today I am a husband and a father of three. Every day, there is something new to talk about before I even look at politics or the country. My wife, my kids, my friends, even playing golf, life itself keeps me inspired," said Kau.

In his early years, comedy defined his path. Today, Kau admits that his priorities have shifted. "My career used to come first. Now, my family comes before my career. As much as I have my family because of my career, everything I have today is because I became a comedian. But my wife and kids are the ones pushing me to be better than before. They are my fuel," he said.

That perspective has deepened his approach to both life and comedy, grounding him



in values that resonate beyond the stage.

In recent years, the entertainment industry has been shaken by the tragic loss of several comedians to suicide. One of them is an award-winning South African stand-up comedian, Ebenhaezer Dibakwane. Kau addressed this issue with honesty and empathy.

"Being a comedian comes with a price. Peo-

ple think you are always laughing, but life still happens. You can come off stage from a high and find yourself alone with your thoughts. That is why I always say: people must be kind. A simple 'Hey, you had a great show' can change someone's life. You don't know what someone is going through," Kau said.

His message is a sobering reminder that be-

hind every punchline is a person carrying their own struggles.

With the rise of content creators and viral comedians on social media, one might assume traditional stand-up is under threat. But Kau is unbothered.

"No comedian is my competition. I compete with alcohol, taverns, nightlife; that is my competition. Going to a comedy show takes effort. You buy a ticket, sit down, and order food and drinks. But there's room for everyone. Social media comedians have their own audience, and we have ours."

With over 1.2 million followers of his own, Kau embraces both worlds. "It's not like I don't know social media. I still get jobs from it. It's just another platform. They must keep doing what they're doing, and it must make a living for them too," he affirmed.

Beyond his own success, Kau has been instrumental in nurturing South Africa's comedy scene, founding platforms that introduced new talent to audiences. His advice to aspiring comedians is simple but powerful.

"Be original. Don't steal material. Write your own jokes, perform your own material. Keep doing it. Keep asking for gigs, even if you don't get paid at first. Your time will come," he said.

As David Kau marks 21 years of making Africa laugh, he shows no signs of slowing down. His comedy has matured with his life, but his mission remains constant: to make people laugh, to connect, and to inspire.

In his own words, "You're only as good as your last show. I always aim to be better than before."

With laughter as his tool, kindness as his message, and family as his foundation, David Kau continues to prove why he remains one of Africa's most enduring comedic voices.

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Lioli opens title defense against newcomers



Seabata Mahao

As the dust settles on the drama-filled 2024/25 campaign, Lesotho football fans are gearing up for another rollercoaster ride when the 2025/26 Vodacom Premier League kicks off tomorrow.

Reigning Vodacom Premier League (VPL) champions Lioli FC will headline the opening

weekend as they launch their title defense against league newcomers Members FC.

The clash sets the stage for a fascinating showdown; the experience of a decorated giant against the fearless ambition of a debutant. For Lioli, it is about stamping authority; for Members, it is about proving they belong.

Elsewhere, Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) FC will welcome Maroala FC, the other newly pro-

moted side, in another intriguing fixture. Both Members and Maroala earned their places in the country's top flight by clinching the A Division South and North Stream titles, respectively.

Their arrival injects fresh storylines, youthful hunger, and the promise of new rivalries into the league.

For Members FC, Saturday's encounter is

nothing short of a baptism of fire. Facing the reigning champions in your very first Premier League game is daunting, yet club president Lekhooa Mlani Tšolo insists the team is ready for the challenge.

"We have played several friendly matches before the season starts, and the club seems well-prepared to compete with established clubs," Tšolo told Newsday Sports.

"The players are in good shape, and the coach is pleased with their condition."

Members tested their mettle during the pre-season Ramela Cup, taking on Agric College, a match that Tšolo described as vital in gauging readiness and identifying weaknesses.

The team has also benefited from continuity in leadership, with head coach Mahlomola Moea and his assistant Ntlaloe Ntlaloe retained to steer the club through uncharted waters.

"There have been no changes in our technical team. We believe in our coaching staff and their ability to guide the team effectively," Tšolo added.

Over in Leribe, Maroala FC are also preparing for their big step into the top tier. Head coach Kenny Mohooanyane admitted the transition has been far from easy.

"Preparations have been intense. Transitioning from the A Division has not been easy, especially because we had to rebuild the squad," Mohooanyane said.

The coach conceded that defensive frailties have been a concern in pre-season, but he expressed confidence that the club's new signings will plug the gaps.

"We have been working hard to strengthen the defense, and I'm confident the new players will help us compete effectively. We want to make our fans proud. We know the expectations are high, and we are ready to rise to the occasion," he explained.

As Members and Maroala rise, others have fallen. Mzamane FC and Ace Maseru were relegated to the A Division following difficult campaigns, making way for the new blood that will now test itself against Lesotho's elite.

Seabata Mahao

The cycling community is on the brink of history this month as siblings Kabelo and Pontšo Makatile prepare to represent the Mountain Kingdom at the 2025 UCI Road World Championships in Kigali, Rwanda, from September 21 to 28.

This year's edition is a landmark moment for the sport, the first time the world championships will be staged on African soil. For Lesotho, it is even more symbolic: a chance to showcase national pride, resilience, and proof that determination can thrive despite limited resources.

The Makatile siblings will be the country's only representatives after the Federation of Cycling Lesotho (FCL) was forced to scale back its original plan of sending four riders.

Promising cyclists Khotsofalang Rakaota and Motlatsi Lempe, who had shown promise in domestic races, were left out after failing to meet the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) criteria, which require riders to earn sufficient international ranking points.

FCL's Public Relations Officer Malefane Morie described the situation as painful but unavoidable.

"Rakaota and Lempe are incredibly talented riders, but due to financial constraints, they could not attend the international races needed to earn the required points. It's not about their dedication, it is about access," Morie explained.

Despite the setbacks, Kabelo earned his spot through a UCI-ANOCA development program designed to support African cycling talent. The initiative has provided him with intensive training and logistical assistance as he gears up for the world stage.

His sister, Pontšo, Lesotho's leading female road cyclist, is also on the official entry list. However, her participation remains uncertain due to funding gaps.

Makatile siblings fly Lesotho's flag



"We are doing everything we can to get Pontšo to Rwanda. She deserves to be there, and we're hopeful that support will come through," Morie added.

Kabelo believes the journey from local village circuits to the biggest cycling stage is almost surreal.

"Growing up, I only raced in Lesotho. To

now compete against the best in the world is something I never imagined," he told Newsday Sports.

He will line up for the demanding 164-kilometre men's road race, which is expected to test even the world's strongest riders. His training has focused on building endurance and mental resilience to withstand the brutal course.

"Most riders do not finish the race. My goal is to finish. Just crossing that finish line would be a huge achievement for me and for Lesotho. Having someone who believes in you and pushes you is everything. That is what has helped me get here."

While the Makatile siblings prepare for Kigali, another Basotho cyclist will fly the flag in Europe. Tumelo Makae, based in Switzerland with his professional team, will compete in the Mountain Bike and Pump Track events.

Makae has steadily built a reputation on the international MTB circuit and continues to broaden Lesotho's presence in global cycling disciplines.

For the FCL, the dual representation at the world championships in both road and mountain biking is a milestone, but also a reminder of the challenges that persist.

"We need systemic support. International participation inspires the next generation and shows what's possible. Our goal is to make cycling part of people's lives," Morie affirmed.



Red Skins revive international volleyball tourney



Seabata Mahao

Red Skins Volleyball Club is set to reignite top-flight volleyball in Lesotho with the much-anticipated 2025 Red Skins Volleyball Club Open Tournament, scheduled for September 26–28 at the Lehakoe Sports Facility in Maseru.

This will be the second edition of the tournament, following a break in 2024 when Lesotho hosted the Zone VI Club Championships. With more than 20 teams already confirmed, including strong outfits from Eswatini, Botswana, and South Africa, fans can expect a vibrant weekend of competition, cultural exchange, and international sportsmanship.

Sanctioned by the Lesotho Volleyball Association (LVA) and the CAVB Zone VI, the tournament aims to sharpen the competitive edge of participating clubs while giving local sides exposure to international play.

Beyond the action on court, the event is also positioned to strengthen regional sporting ties and boost volleyball's development in Lesotho.

"We are excited to bring back the tournament with even more energy and international participation," said Red Skins in a statement.

"This is more than a competition it is a celebration of sport and unity."

The men's and women's categories will feature leading local clubs such as Red Skins, LDF VC, LMPS, Mahlaseli VC, Titans VC, and Green Spikes VC. They will square off against international challengers, including Ecowater VC, Bob Cats VC, and Scorpions VC from Eswatini, Kalavango VC from Botswana, and BadNews VC from South Africa.

Competition will follow a format of pool stages leading into knockout rounds, with fixtures determined by

draws and seeding. All matches will be played under FIVB regulations.

Teams wishing to participate can register by contacting the organisers at (+266) 62060099. Regular registration, set at M1 200, closes on September 6, while late registration at M1 500 will remain open until September 13.

Although teams are responsible for their own travel and accommodation, the organisers will provide logistical support where possible. The Lehakoe venue will be fully equipped with indoor courts, spectator seating, changing rooms, medical facilities, and security.

Prizes on offer include M10 000, medals, and a trophy for first place; M5 000 and medals for second place; and M3 000 with medals for third. Individual honours such as Most Valuable Player, Best Setter, and Best Coach will also be awarded.

Spectators will enjoy free entry, with matches broadcast live on Facebook and YouTube. To further engage fans, Red Skins VC will run social media challenges, post match-day updates, and host a media launch in the lead-up to the event.

Currently funded by private individuals, the tournament remains open to corporate sponsorship, with opportunities for businesses to contribute through financial backing or in-kind support, including branded apparel, trophies, and promotional material.

Looking ahead, organisers envision the Red Skins Open as a permanent fixture in the region's volleyball calendar, with ambitions to grow it into a continental competition in years to come.

"Let the games begin! Come play, come cheer, and let us grow the spirit of volleyball together," urged the Red Skins in a statement.



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