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Matekane becomes longest-serving PM since 2012

Matekane on Inauguration day

Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Ntsokoane Samuel Matekane has become Lesotho's longest-serving consecutive Prime Minister since the 2012 general election, surpassing the turbulent tenures of Pakalitha Mosisili and Thomas Thabane.

As of today, October 3, 2025, Matekane has served 1,072 days in office as prime minister. This calculation includes his inauguration on October 28, 2022, up to and including October 3, 2025, and accounting for the leap day in 2024.

This places him ahead of Thabane's first term of 1,013 days (2012–2015), Mosisili's 823 days (2015–2017), Thabane's second term of 1,069 days (2017–2020), and Moeketsi Majoro's 892 days (2020–2022).

It is the first time since 2012 that a prime minister has managed to stay in power for this long.

This milestone underscores Matekane's rare stability in office compared to his predecessors. Since the return to democracy in 1993, Lesotho's leaders have been repeatedly rattled by coups, riots, and early exits. Ntsu Mokhehle was toppled by soldiers in 1994 before being reinstated.

Mosisili, who succeeded Mokhehle in 1998, faced riots within six months, prompting a plea for military intervention from South Africa and Botswana. Despite foreign troops' presence, widespread arson and looting destroyed Maseru's CBD and several towns, leaving scars that took years to rebuild.

Thabane, who followed Mosisili, less than two and a half years before fleeing to South Africa in 2014, claiming an attempted coup.

But stability alone will not guarantee Matekane's legacy.

Now with just over two years left, barely more than he has already invested, he has a tight window to deliver on the bold new Lesotho vision he sold during his whirlwind 2022 campaign, where he positioned himself as the anti-corruption tycoon who would rescue the economy from recession, create jobs, and stabilise a country plagued by coalitions that never lasted a full term.

As a self-made billionaire from diamonds and construction, he promised to transplant that business savvy to governance; private-sector-led growth, anti-graft crackdowns, infrastructure booms, and youth empowerment to tackle unemployment rates.

Yet the challenges remain stark. In a report released last week, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) painted a bleak picture of Lesotho's business climate.

It said Lesotho's overall business environment is unfavourable and mentioned that it takes an average of 15 days to obtain an operating license, 73 days to obtain an import license and 78 days to obtain a construction-related permit, all well above the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) average.

It further mentioned that export-oriented firms have also identified the difficulties in obtaining employment visas and exchange restrictions.

"Many firms in the B-READY survey report having to pay unofficial 'compliance fees' to receive permits and services. Transparency International scores Lesotho at 37 out of 100 on the Corruptions Perception index in 2024, a score that has steadily declined since 2012," IMF said.

"Moreover, given the dominance of the public sector, inefficiencies in government tendering, from a lack of competition and delayed payment, also shape the business environment," it added.

It further indicated that firms in the B-READY survey also perceive that government tender requirements are difficult to comply with.

Even in cases where firms successfully win the tender, it said it takes 152 days for firms to receive payment under government contract (more than twice the sub- Saharan African average).

"B-READY also assesses market competition as weak, perhaps reflecting the small size of the economy. Streamlining the tax and licensing systems, and leveraging digital tools can be effective at unburdening administrative procedures and tracking compliance," IMF said.

It also said that despite Lesotho having one of the lowest electricity prices for businesses in the region, operational inefficiencies and financial shortcomings of the Lesotho Electric Company (LEC) have undermined reliability and accessibility.

It indicated that about 65 percent of businesses experience electricity outages.

"The effects on operations are exacerbated because only about a quarter of Lesotho's businesses have access to a back-up electricity generator, compared to nearly half of sub-Saharan African firms," it said.

"Furthermore, is takes a long time for business owners in Lesotho to obtain an electrical connection: 52 days versus the SACU average of 38 days. Consequently, about 30 percent of businesses identified electricity as a major to severe obstacle," it added.

Court rejects Kamoli's discharge bid

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The High Court yesterday dismissed an application by former Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) Commander, Tlali Kamoli, and eight co-accused soldiers to be discharged in the long-running murder trial of the late Lieutenant General Maaparankoe Mahao.

The group had petitioned the court to release them under Section 175(3) of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act (CP&E Act), which allows an accused to be discharged if the prosecution fails to establish sufficient evidence at the close of its case.

Kamoli and his co-accused — Litekanyo Nyakane, Lekhooa Moepi, Motsamai Fako, Marasi 'Moleli, Motšoane Macheli, Mohlalefi Seitlheko, and Tšitso Ramoholi — face charges including murder, attempted murder, unlawful damage to property, theft, obstruction of justice, and superior orders.

Accused number two, Haleo Makara, was not part of the discharge application.

Mahao was killed on 25 June 2015, allegedly by fellow soldiers during a controversial operation to arrest him.

The defence team argued that the prosecution's evidence failed to directly implicate the accused. However, the crown, led by Advocate Rethabile Setlojoane, countered that testimony from 41 witnesses presented a strong case that warranted the continuation of the trial.

Delivering his ruling, Judge Charles Hungwe said there was sufficient prima facie evidence for the trial to proceed. He explained that at this stage, the court is not required to determine guilt beyond reasonable doubt, but rather whether there is a reasonable case for the accused to answer.

"The court at this stage should leave the matter of credibility in abeyance until the defence has closed its case, then weigh the two together," he said.

He added that in Lesotho's system, although a judge sits with assessors, he is the final arbiter of both law and fact. Thus, a judge may still acquit if he finds the credibility of the crown witnesses "irretrievably shattered," regardless of what the accused might later say in their defence, short of admitting guilt.

Quoting Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane's 2025 ruling in Rex v Sebolai and Another, Judge Hungwe emphasized that at this point in a trial, "the prosecution's evidence must only meet the threshold of possibility, not certainty."

"Following an objective reflection on the evidence led in this case, I am satisfied that the threshold for a criminal prima facie case has been met," Judge Hungwe said. "Unless the prosecution's evidence has been so utterly dismantled in cross-examination that no reasonable person might convict on it, an application for discharge must fail."

After hearing testimony from 41 witnesses, the court concluded that there was indeed a prima facie case to answer.

The case, ongoing since 2018, is Lesotho's only high-profile trial currently overseen by a foreign judge. Judge Hungwe of Zimbabwe took over after Botswana judges Kabelo Lebotse and Onkemetse Tshosa resigned, citing poor working conditions.

The prosecution is led by Advocate Rethabile Setlojoane, while the defence team includes Attorney Qhalehang Letsika and Advocates Silas Ratau, Napo Mafaesa, Kabelo Letuka, and Letuka Molati. Advocate Machaduka Mukhawana appears as a watching brief.

The matter has been adjourned to January 12–30, 2026, to allow the accused to consult and subpoena their witnesses.

Judge Charles Hungwe

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Mofomobe demands arrest of Matlanyane, Shelile

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Leader of the opposition Basotho National Party (BNP), Machesetsa Mofomobe, has called for the arrest of Finance and Development Planning Minister Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane and Trade, Industry and Business Development Minister Mokhethi Shelile for allegedly violating financial laws.

Speaking at a joint opposition press conference on Wednesday, Mofomobe challenged fellow opposition leaders to open a criminal case against the two ministers, accusing them of failing to table critical audit reports in Parliament within the seven days required by law.

According to the Audit Act of 2016: "The Auditor-General shall submit a report on the consolidated financial statements… to the Minister responsible for finance, who shall, not later than seven days after the first meeting of each House of Parliament, table the report."

The Constitution of Lesotho further provides that the Auditor-General must, at least once every year, audit and report on the public accounts of government, the accounts of all officers, authorities, courts, constitutional commissions, and the Clerk of each House of Parliament. It directs that such reports be submitted to the Minister of Finance, who must lay them before Parliament within seven days of receipt.

"The Auditor-General shall submit every report made by him in pursuance of subsection (2) to the Minister for the time being responsible for finance who shall, not later than seven days after each House of Parliament first meets after he has received the report, lay it before that House," it reads.

Machesetsa Mofomobe

However, neither the Constitution nor the Audit Act sets out penalties for failing to comply.

Mofomobe this week claimed Minister Shelile failed to submit the audit report for the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC), while Finance Minister Matlanyane has yet to present the 2022/2023 government audit report, despite reportedly receiving it in May.

Before Parliament adjourned for the independence break, Chair of Chairs Mokhothu Makhalanyane raised a point of order, warning that the delay makes it impossible for portfolio committees to scrutinise the report as mandated.

The 2022/2023 report is significant as it is the first audit of the Matekane administration's financial performance since it assumed office on October 28, 2022. Once tabled, such reports are referred to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which examines public spending and summons officials implicated in misuse of funds.

Mofomobe, a former minister, escalated his criticism by accusing the current government of being "good at stealing," suggesting entrenched corruption and mismanagement.

His attack was echoed by United Africans Transformation (UAT) leader Dr Mahali Phamotse, a defector from the ruling Revolution for Prosperity (RFP), who accused ministers of being "perpetual liars" in Parliament and displaying "pomposity." She argued that the government has abandoned its campaign promise of meritocracy.

Main opposition leader Mathibeli Mokhothu also voiced concern, blasting the government for attempting to table the Supplementary Appropriation Bill for 2024/2025 unlawfully. He argued that the bill, covering the government's use of M3.4 billion, should have been presented in the previous financial year to allow scrutiny.

Mofomobe vowed to intensify pressure, warning that opposition parties had been "too soft" on the government.

Attempts to obtain comment from the Auditor-General's office were unsuccessful at the time of going to press.

Opposition pushes for Lesotho–SA federal state

Opposition leaders at a press conference

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

The opposition parties have revived calls for Lesotho to become part of a federal state with South Africa, as debates about Basotho's "conquered territory" and the plight of migrants across the border continue to dominate public discourse.

Speaking for opposition parties this week, Leader of Opposition Mathibeli Mokhothu said that federating Lesotho with South Africa could be an option worth exploring. He argued that such a move could not only strengthen Lesotho's claim to its historic territories but also provide protection for Basotho living and working in South Africa.

The issue has gained traction in recent months, largely driven by incarcerated Basotho Covenant Movement (BCM) leader Tšepo Lipholo, who has been vocal on the demand for Lesotho's lost territory to be restored.

Mokhothu said Basotho continue to face daily humiliation across the border, citing xenophobic attacks, denial of healthcare services, and harassment from groups such as Operation Dudula. He accused Prime Minister Sam Matekane government of "neglecting" Basotho in South Africa, warning that opposition parties would petition the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the United Nations (UN) if both Matekane and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa continue to fail in protecting Basotho citizens.

"We will push this government to intervene. The suffering of Basotho in South Africa cannot be ignored any longer," Mokhothu said, also demanding free movement between the two countries and special identification documents to ease travel.

A federal state is a system in which two levels of government share power: a central authority and individual states. Each level has its own powers to make laws, enforce them, and manage certain affairs independently. Examples in Africa include Nigeria, Ethiopia, among others, while overseas examples include the United States, Canada, Germany, and India.

Advocates argue that federalism balances unity and diversity, and allows states to maintain local autonomy while benefiting from a stronger central framework.

Critics, however, warn it can create tensions over resource control and governance.

The idea of Lesotho joining South Africa in a federal arrangement is not new. Former South African Finance Minister Tito Mboweni has previously stirred public debate by suggesting Lesotho, Eswatini, and Botswana should be federated with South Africa to build a stronger economic bloc.

Similarly, in Lesotho, different political voices over the years have toyed with the idea of federation, often linking it to calls for reclaiming Basotho land annexed under colonial treaties.

Some commentators argue that the idea of a regional federation involving South Africa and its smaller neighbours is not new. They point to the 1955 Freedom Charter, a cornerstone of South Africa's liberation struggle, which anticipated that the people of Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini would one day be faced with the choice of whether to unite with a democratic South Africa or pursue their own separate paths.

The charter explicitly declared: "The people of the protectorates—Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland—shall be free to decide for themselves their own future."

According to these commentators, this vision has never been realised. When South Africa achieved democracy in 1994, no structured process was initiated to consult the people of Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini on whether they wished to form some kind of federation, confederation, or remain entirely independent. Instead, the status quo was maintained, and the question of regional integration was left hanging.

They argue that this unfulfilled aspiration resurfaces repeatedly in public debates, particularly in Lesotho, where issues of sovereignty, migration, and deep economic dependence on South Africa remain pressing. The high levels of cross-border movement for work, trade, and education, alongside Lesotho's reliance on the South African economy and infrastructure, keep the federation debate alive.

Critics say the question is not just historical but is tied to present realities: whether deeper political and economic integration could offer solutions to chronic instability, unemployment, and poverty in Lesotho, and by extension, in the wider region.

Currently, thousands of Basotho face uncertainty as their South African work permits near expiry. In 2023, South Africa granted exemptions to 54,653 Lesotho nationals, but those permits lapse on 29 November 2025. Earlier arrangements like the Lesotho Special Permit (LSP) and the Lesotho Exemption Permit (LEP) have also expired or been phased out, leaving migrants vulnerable.

Mokhothu accused Matekane's government of failing to secure a lasting migration framework with Pretoria, even after the two countries held Bi-National Commission (BNC) meetings in 2023 and 2025. While temporary visa relaxations were introduced, including a 90-day stay arrangement, many Basotho still face hostility. Recently, South African transport operators clashed with their Lesotho counterparts, barring them from ferrying passengers across the border.

"This government has failed to build strong ties with South Africa," Mokhothu charged. "We will engage with this matter deeply and from every angle. We are knocking at the heart of Prime Minister Matekane."

How child marriage and early pregnancies steal girls' futures

Ntsoaki Motaung

A silent crisis is unfolding in Lesotho, one that is robbing countless girls of their childhood, their education, and their chance to dream freely about the future.

This crisis wears many faces, but its most visible scars are the rising rates of child marriage and Early and Unintended Pregnancies (EUP).

These are not just numbers buried in government reports. They are real, lived experiences of girls like 'Matumelo and Rethabile (not their real names) from the rugged mountains of Thaba-Tseka.

These stories are not isolated tragedies. They reflect a devastating national trend shaped by forces bigger than any single girl: economic hardship that pushes families to see child marriage as a way of survival, Gender-based violence (GBV) that normalises power imbalances and strips girls of agency, and the lack of sexual and reproductive health information and services that leaves young people unprepared to protect themselves.

When a girl is married off too soon or forced into motherhood before she is ready, her fundamental human rights are violated. She loses her right to education, her right to health, her right to choose when and whom to marry, and ultimately, her right to a childhood.

Dreams deferred: The escape and the stress

For 'Matumelo (not her real name), now 21, marriage was not a celebration of love, but a desperate flight from abuse. Married at just 15 in 2021 to a man eight years her senior, her journey began with brutal corporal punishment.

She recounted the night her aunt and uncle found her missing: "They beat me so much, even in the face. They used sjambok, even insulted and asked me dehumanising questions like, how many times did I have sex with my then boyfriend, who is my husband today," she narrated, her voice shaking with residual trauma.

After the brutal beating and expulsion from her aunt's home, 'Matumelo was left with nowhere to go. She told her then-boyfriend (now husband) about her situation, who, despite recognising her young age, decided he "had no choice but to marry her." 'Matumelo agreed, believing it was the only solution.

She was forced to abandon her education, despite the government paying her fees for Form C. After failing the exams, a failure she attributes to the stress imposed by her new life, her husband refused to allow her to return to school.

"I think I failed Form C because I am married now, and the person who was stressing me out was my husband. I could not enjoy being me anymore. I had to forget about my swimming hobby because my husband did not like that, saying I am adulterous," she recounted.

Now a mother to a one-and-a-half-year-old child, her dream of becoming a nurse remains stalled.

"If it were according to my choice, I would not have gotten married, and even now, I would have never even thought of having a baby. I would be in school working hard to become a nurse," she lamented.

The regret: Economic hardship and disillusionment

Just two years later, Rethabile (not her real name), 17, finds herself trapped in a similar spiral of regret.

Having dropped out of high school in Grade 8 because her parents, her mother being the sole breadwinner, could not afford the fees, she sought escape through an early relationship.

She married her 27-year-old boyfriend in January. "I got married because I just wanted to leave with my boyfriend, who is 27 years old," she explained.

Now four months pregnant, she is back home while her husband is in South Africa seeking employment. The reality of adult responsibility has hit hard.

"I am no longer happy being married. It is only now that I realise that the decision to get married was wrong. I wish I had someone who had talked about getting married at a young age, as well as having children."

Rethabile expressed deep boredom and disappointment that her husband is not supporting her or preparing for the new baby.

She relies on her father's irregular income from selling wool and mohair. The burden of motherhood is already weighing on her.

"My advice to other girls would be that they should not get married because marriage takes away their rights as children," she advises, "They now have to behave like adults and think for the family, like what is going to be for dinner. I do not even have that time to play."

The data behind the distress

These personal disasters are reflected in sobering national statistics compiled by the Lesotho Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS) 2023–24.

According to the survey, 19 percent of girls in Lesotho are affected by child marriage. A staggering 16 percent of women aged 25–49 were married by their 18th birthday.

The study shows, 17 percent of adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 have already begun childbearing.

This includes alarming cases of girls under 15, which UNFPA's former representative, Mr Innocent Modisaotsile, noted as a "significant number."

A Nurse Midwife in Linakeng Karabelo Mpiti reported 20 EUP cases since January, including two 13-year-olds.

According to LDHS, early pregnancy and child marriage account for a staggering 37 percent of school dropouts, cementing a vicious cycle of poverty.

A call for bold institutional action

The UNFPA is actively supporting multiple initiatives to combat this crisis, including financial support to organisations like Help Lesotho.

Critically, the organisation is also backing the Ministry of Education and Training in developing the crucial Prevention and Management Learner Pregnancy Policy, a direct response to the data confirming that EUP and child marriage are key factors driving girls out of school.

UNFPA Representative John Mosoti passionately argues that the crisis is fundamentally one of violence and institutional failure.

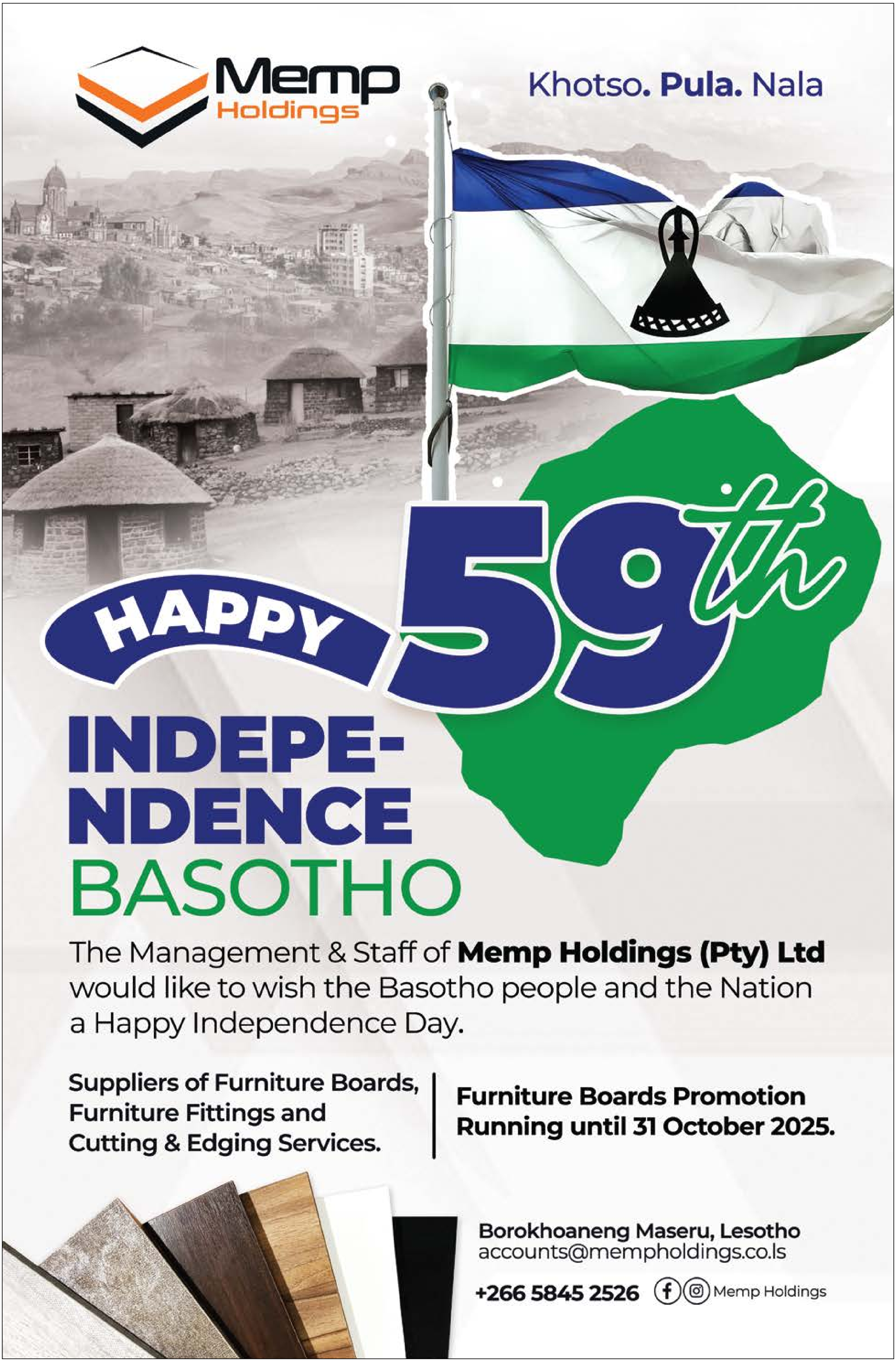
He emphasises that addressing the issue requires a multi-pronged approach that goes beyond simply trying to prevent child marriage and early and unintended pregnancies.

"If they're having sex, we need to have that information out there," Mosoti stated, underscoring the necessity of providing comprehensive sexuality education, easy access to contraceptives and condoms, and psychosocial support for those who become pregnant.

The evidence is clear: when girls are given the power of informed choice and kept in school, they marry later.

The consensus among experts and activists is that communities, families, and leaders must take bold steps to protect girls' rights and ensure access to education and support services.

A shared, enduring desire to return to school is a powerful testament to the potential being lost. Their survival story is a final call for bold action to protect every girl in Lesotho.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Newsday Business

Lesotho cautioned over reliance on foreign aid

Commissioner General of Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL), 'Mathabo Mokoko

Seabata Mahao

As Lesotho continues to navigate a complex economic landscape, the Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) has issued a strong warning: the country must reduce its long-standing dependence on foreign aid, loans, and donations and focus on building its own financial resilience.

These sentiments were expressed by the Commissioner General of RSL, 'Mathabo Mokoko, at the recent Taxpayer Appreciation Day in Maseru.

Mokoko noted that while external assistance has supported Lesotho's development over the years, the future depends on the Kingdom's ability to mobilise and manage its own resources.

"Domestic resource mobilisation is no longer optional it is a necessity," she stressed.

"The true future of Lesotho's development rests in our ability to generate and mobilise our own resources to drive progress."

Although foreign aid often provides temporary relief, it typically comes with strict conditions that expose the country to external pressures and undermine fiscal independence. Mokoko's remarks signalled a clear shift in emphasis toward sustainable, home-grown development strategies, supported by efficient tax systems and responsible governance.

At the heart of this approach is the role of tax revenue, which Mokoko described as a "vital barometer" of Lesotho's capacity to sustain economic growth, attract investment, and improve public services.

"Paying taxes is more than a legal obligation. It is an act of loyalty to our nation," she said.

Highlighting the 2024/2025 fiscal year performance, Mokoko revealed that the RSL collected M9.74 billion, surpassing the revenue target by M261.2 million. Lesotho's tax-to-GDP ratio increased from 22.5% to 23.5%, while annual remittances grew by 4.8%.

She said these results reflect growing trust between taxpayers and the administration, alongside improved fiscal discipline.

"Taxes are not simply figures on a form. They are classrooms filled with eager learners, hospitals that save lives, roads that connect our communities, pensions that provide dignity to our elders, and programmes that empower the vulnerable and the youth." Mokoko emphasised.

However, she cautioned that as government responsibilities expand, so does the need for consistent tax compliance. Mokoko urged citizens to honour their obligations, warning that tax evasion places an unfair burden on compliant taxpayers.

"Compliance is not only about the law; it is about fairness and shared responsibility. Let us build a culture where compliance is the rule, not the exception," she urged.

To strengthen compliance and boost efficiency, the RSL has identified several strategic priorities. These include expanding digital platforms to reduce bureaucracy, using data analytics to improve risk management and decision-making, enhancing taxpayer education to encourage voluntary compliance, deepening public-private partnerships to build trust, and improving taxpayer services to ensure citizens feel respected and valued.

Progress on the digital front is already evident. The RSL's e-Tax platform now enables online registration, electronic payments, and near-instant issuance of Tax Clearance Certificates. Upcoming innovations include electronic invoicing and automated PAYE compliance systems.

In addition, the RSL has incorporated artificial intelligence into its customer service operations, improving feedback channels and allowing for more personalised taxpayer engagement.

"These innovations are bringing us closer to a modern, trusted tax administration," Mokoko said, adding that continued investment in digital tools is crucial for sustaining efficiency and transparency in public finance management.

Lesotho now stands at a critical juncture. Reducing reliance on foreign aid is not just a matter of national pride, it is essential for positioning the country as a resilient, self-sustaining economy in an increasingly competitive global environment.

As Mokoko concluded, "Government cannot provide without the resources that only you, the taxpayers, make possible."

Honouring Lesotho's tax champions

Seabata Mahao

The Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) recently hosted the 2025 Taxpayer Appreciation Day, celebrating individuals and institutions that have consistently met their tax obligations and contributed to the country's socio-economic development.

Held under the theme "Partnership and Progress," the event reflected a shift in RSL's image, from a tax enforcer to a trusted partner in nation-building.

Opening the ceremony, RSL's Commissioner General 'Mathabo Mokoko highlighted the crucial role taxpayers play in financing national development.

"Every contribution, no matter how small, is a brick in the foundation of Lesotho's development," she said.

"We want taxpayers to feel that paying taxes is not a punishment, but a partnership."

Mokoko emphasised that improving the taxpayer experience is key to compliance. She outlined RSL's ongoing digital transformation, aimed at making filing simpler, faster, and more transparent.

"We are investing heavily in modern IT systems that simplify filing, payments, and access to information. Our goal is auto-compliance a future where tax obligations are met seamlessly without bureaucratic delays," she added.

Stephen Mputi, the Minister of Public Service praised taxpayers for their role in financing essential services.

"The taxes that you pay are the lifeblood of our nation. It is through such taxes that Government is able to invest in critical areas such as education, healthcare, and public safety," he said.

Mputi stressed that voluntary compliance is only achievable through efficient systems and partnerships.

"Systems integration and strategic partnerships are no longer optional; they are a prerequisite for building a compliant and modern tax administration," he added, calling on the private sector and development partners to collaborate with RSL to keep pace with global best practices.

Eleven companies and individuals were honoured for outstanding compliance over the past three years. The top award went to small business operator Teboho Ralikhomo in the Simplified Business Taxation category.

According to Market Insider, Ralikhomo had imported goods worth over US$43,000 (approximately M740, 000) by the end of 2022, signaling growing formalisation among small businesses.

Other notable awardees included Industrial and Mining Solution (Pty) Ltd in the agriculture and mining sector; BME Lesotho (Pty) Ltd in manufacturing and energy; Zutary Lesotho (Pty) Ltd and Goldrush Lesotho (Pty) Ltd in services; and Moores Roland (Pty) Ltd alongside Mascon Freight (Pty) Ltd for consistent revenue growth.

RSL leadership acknowledged that tax reform requires broad collaboration. Mokoko highlighted partnerships with ministries, financial institutions, law enforcement, civil society, and international bodies to streamline processes, share data, and enhance enforcement.

Among these initiatives is the RSL Cadet Programme, designed to instill ethics and professionalism among future tax professionals.

"Through these partnerships, we are able to build trust, strengthen compliance, and safeguard the revenue that finances our nation's future," Mokoko said.

Looking ahead, RSL aims to achieve auto-compliance supported by continued digital innovation, staff development, and a focus on fair treatment of taxpayers.

"We want compliance to be the default option simple, automatic, and beneficial," Mokoko concluded.

TSEBISO ! TSEBISO! TSEBISO!

Mona ke tsebiso ea hore re le litho tsa mokhatlo oa The Third World Evangelical Movement for Human Rights and Democracy, re lahlehetsoe ke tokomane ea molao oa motheo oa mokhatlo. Nomoro ea ngoliso ke 1999/42.
'Me re kopa mang kapa mang ea ka tholang molao theo kapa a ka bang le khanyetso ea taba tsena a itlalehe liatereseng tsena, nakong ea libeke tse tharo ka mora phatlalatso ena:

Ofisi ea Mongolisi Kakaretso
Government Complex
Pela Queen II ea khale
P.O Box 33
Maseru 100
Lesotho

Carlton Centre
Kingsway road
2nd Floor, Room 216
Maseru 100
Lesotho

Tlaleho ka : Morena Mokholoane

NOTICE OF THE LOST CONSTITUTION OF THE THIRD WORLD EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY AND THE NOTICE TO AMEND THE OLD CONSTITUTION.

Notice is hereby given that we intend to apply for a new copy of the lost constitution of The Third World Evangelical Movement for Human Rights and Democracy. The said constitution was registered in 1999 under Registration No.1999/42.
The public is further informed that we intend to amend the old constitution of The Third World Evangelical Movement for Human Rights and Democracy in Lesotho.
All persons having objection to the issue of the said copy of the constitution and to the amendment of the old constitution are hereby requested to lodge such objection in writing with the registrar within Three weeks (3) from the last publication of this Notice at the following address:

Registrar General
Ministry of Law and Constitutional Affairs
Government Complex
Next to old Queen II
P.O Box 33

Carlton centre
Kingsway road
2nd Floor, room 216
Maseru 100
Lesotho

Maseru 100
Lesotho

Notice by: Mokholoane Ramainoane
Applicant

ESTATE NOTICE

Notice in terms of section 44 of the Administration Estate and Inheritance Act No.2 of the 2024;
ESTATE LATE Tumisang Latislas Fesi E 890/2025
Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 44 of the Administration of Estates and Inheritance Act No.2 of 2024 calling upon all creditors of the deceased to lodge their claims with executrix of the deceased's estate within thirty (30) days of this publication.
The address at which the said claims can be lodged is mentioned hereunder;
(Address)
Mangopeng **Maseru** **Makhotso Fesi**
Roma, **+26656674767** **Excecutrix**

ESTATE NOTICE

ESTATE LATE MAKABE SABASTIAN MALIBO B110/25.

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 21st OCTOBER 2025 at 11AM.
Proposing some person/persons to be appointed by the Master as the executor dative.
DATED AT BUTHA-BUTHE ON THIS 22nd SEPTEMBER 2025
MASTER OF THE HIGH COURT OFFICES
BUTHA-BUTHE

BEHIND PASSPORT OFFICE BUILDING
OPPOSITE POST OFFICE, BUTHA-BUTHE

Newsday Health

Frightening delivery on the mountainside

Ntsoaki Motaung

Village Health Worker (VHW) 'Mapelaelo Nchoba, 67, says she will "never forget" the night she helped deliver a baby on the roadside after a woman from Pitsaneng, in Thaba Tseka, went into labour on the way to the clinic.

The ordeal not only highlighted the extreme risks frontline healthcare workers face in Lesotho's remote areas but also left Nchoba with a heavy penalty, an M500 fine.

It was past midnight when Nchoba was called to assist a woman in labour. The mother, pregnant with her fourth child, had not attended antenatal care and had been "counting her months by herself."

Nchoba, despite being "frustrated" that the woman had not gone to the clinic in time for the waiting mothers' rooms, knew she needed immediate help.

Since Pitsaneng is a village "where there is no road and care could not reach us," Nchoba reported the matter to the chief. The chief mobilised a large number of men from the village to carry the pregnant woman on their shoulders using a "Lempara", a makeshift stretcher.

The family also organised a rented car to meet them at the nearest accessible stop, a trek that usually takes about two hours of walking from the village.

They had left Pitsaneng around 01:00 am. However, as soon as the men put the 'Lempara' down at the stop, the woman gave birth.

Nchoba was horrified to realise the baby was about to be born, especially because they were entirely unprepared. They had not thought to bring anything, not "surgical cloves" or even soft blankets. "It was really a bad experience because we did not even have enough cotton or water," she recounted.

To receive the baby and keep it off the soil, they had to use their small blankets, "tjale."

Nchoba and her companion relied on the signs they had been taught at the clinic to confirm the imminent delivery. They instructed the men to stand far away so they would not witness the birth.

Despite the terrifying circumstances, the woman delivered a healthy baby boy, who is still alive and is about two years old now.

Nchoba's primary fear was the authorities. "My prayer was just that God make sure that the baby and the mother make it alive," she said, fearing she would be "in hot soup" with clinic authorities for not ensuring the woman made it to the health center earlier.

After successfully getting the mother and child to the Linakeng Health Center, Nchoba faced the final challenge; blame.

She was "blamed for assisting the women in giving birth." According to clinic policy, a Village Health Worker who assists in a delivery outside of the health center will be fined M500.

Nchoba had to ask the new mother to help her pay the fine. While the policy is meant to discourage home births, she stresses that sometimes it is an emergency, and "one cannot just look away when someone really needs help."

The incident underscores the extreme difficulties VHWs face, having to walk up to five hours from Pitsaneng to the clinic, all while knowing that a roadside emergency could result in both professional reprimand and a significant financial penalty.

Since 2005, Nchoba has been on the front lines of health care, tending to the sick, monitoring the nutritional status and growth of children, and providing crucial information to pregnant women and families.

'Mapelaelo Nchoba (right) with 'Mantsenya Shao - Village Health Workers from Linakeng Health Center in Pitsaneng, Thaba Tseka.

Yet, the rugged terrain and logistical hurdles of her job, especially the long journey to the nearest facility, Linakeng Health Center, highlight the immense challenges facing these vital community workers.

Nchoba's work is multifaceted and crucial. She looks after patients and pregnant women at the village level, striving to "rectify misinformation" and promote healthy practices.

A key part of her role involves community gatherings where she discusses important health issues, including family planning, with women.

"We also do gatherings where we talk about family planning so that women can have information and make informed decisions regarding the spacing of their children," she explained.

She noted that many women prefer injectables over pills, citing a tendency to forget to take the latter.

Despite the challenges, people in Pitsaneng value these services. "Our main challenge is the long distances people have to walk to the clinic, Linakeng Health Center, from Pitsaneng, but they still make time to come because they understand the advantages of using family planning," she states.

From Pitsaneng, residents must walk at least five hours to the clinic or walk two hours to the nearest stop to catch a taxi to Linakeng.

Despite her dedication, Nchoba and her community still grapple with fundamental infrastructure deficits.

The village's mountainous location makes "movement almost impossible." Furthermore, they also face other quality-of-life challenges, including a limited water supply and no toilets in the village.

Her story reflects the heart of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)'s mandate to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

To achieve this, UNFPA works to guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services, promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and combat issues like unwanted pregnancies, maternal deaths, and violence against women and girls.

Lesotho steps up fight against NCDs, mental health crisis

Ntsoaki Motaung

Minister of Health, Selibe Mochoboroane, has called for stronger global support in the fight against non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health challenges, warning that these conditions are weakening families, straining the economy, and robbing young people of their future.

Speaking at a high-level United Nations meeting, Mochoboroane noted that Lesotho continues to face alarming health challenges, including one of the highest suicide rates in the world.

To respond, the government has adopted a new mental health policy and strategic plan in 2024 and is finalising a national plan for NCDs. The Minister said mental health and NCD services are being integrated into primary healthcare, supported by digital tools such as telemedicine to extend access to remote communities.

Health workers are also being trained to provide psychological first aid and early support for mental health conditions, while schools and communities are running programmes to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce stigma, the minister said.

Mochoboroane further announced new infrastructure developments, including the construction of a national cancer centre and Lesotho's first palliative care facility. Plans have also been approved for a modern psychiatric hospital and a rehabilitation centre for substance abuse.

Minister of Health Selibe Mochoboroane

To ensure a coordinated response, he said, the country has established a national system that brings together government institutions, civil society, and people with lived experience of NCDs and mental illness.

Mochoboroane urged the UN and international partners to provide more financial and technical assistance, calling for expanded access to essential medicines, digital solutions, and greater prioritisation of NCD and mental health prevention on the global agenda.

Matekane's peaceful tenure must deliver development

Prime Minister Ntsokoane Samuel Matekane has officially become Lesotho's longest-serving consecutive prime minister since the 2012 elections, surpassing the turbulent tenures of Pakalitha Mosisili and Thomas Thabane.

As of October 3, 2025, Matekane has served 1,072 days in office, eclipsing Thabane's first term of 1,013 days (2012–2015), Mosisili's 823 days (2015–2017), Thabane's second term of 1,069 days (2017–2020), and Moeketsi Majoro's 892 days (2020–2022).

This milestone is noteworthy. Since the return to democracy in 1993, Lesotho's leaders have been trapped in cycles of instability. Ntsu Mokhehle was toppled by soldiers in 1994, only to be reinstated. Mosisili faced widespread riots within six months of office, prompting calls for military intervention from South Africa and Botswana.

Thabane fled the country in 2014, claiming an attempted coup. Against this backdrop, Matekane's tenure has been peaceful—a rare gift for a country long accustomed to political turbulence.

However, peace alone does not define leadership. Stability is a prerequisite for progress, not its substitute. In fact, peacetime leadership carries a unique responsibility to deliver tangible development, to improve livelihoods, and to ensure that citizens feel the benefits of calm governance. Unfortunately, three years into office, Matekane's record falls short.

The recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on Lesotho paints a sobering picture. Lesotho's business environment is unfavourable, with bureaucratic inefficiencies strangling entrepreneurship. Operating licenses take 15 days on average, import permits 73 days, and construction permits 78 days, far above the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) average.

Firms report paying unofficial compliance fees, while Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Lesotho at 37 out of 100 in 2024, declining steadily since 2012. Government tenders are slow and inefficient.

Even after winning contracts, businesses wait 152 days for payment, more than twice the Sub-Saharan African average. Electricity, despite being one of the cheapest in the region, is unreliable, with outages affecting 65 percent of businesses. Only a quarter of firms have backup generators, leaving operations vulnerable.

These challenges highlight a fundamental truth; that peace is wasted if it is not harnessed to produce prosperity. Matekane campaigned as an anti-corruption tycoon promising private-sector-led growth, infrastructure expansion, youth empowerment, and economic revitalisation. But the IMF report indicates that bureaucracy, inefficiency, and weak governance remain entrenched. Government processes remain cumbersome, and youth unemployment persists.

Matekane now faces a critical juncture. With just over two years left in office, he has a window to translate peace into tangible progress. Lesotho deserves leadership that does more than maintain calm, it deserves leadership that modernises infrastructure, strengthens governance, empowers youth, stimulates the economy, and makes everyday life better for citizens.

Peace-time governance is a rare gift. Matekane has it. But unless he turns stability into development, his long tenure will be remembered not for what Lesotho gained, but for what it failed to achieve. Basotho need more than a calm prime minister, they need a visionary who delivers results.

No Comment

Theko Tlebere

Common Concern

Open letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations

Honourable Minister,

I write to you in response to a heartfelt plea from a reader of my weekly column in Newsday newspaper. This reader, like many Basotho, hopes that their voices and aspirations resonate with those in authority. They share my belief that, under your capable leadership, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations can take decisive action to create opportunities that will transform the lives of countless Basotho, enabling them to pursue their dreams and contribute meaningfully to our society. It is this faith in leadership and hope for a brighter tomorrow that compels me to bring this matter to your attention.

The issue at hand is both urgent and compelling; Lesotho has yet to sign formal agreements that would allow its citizens to work abroad as English language teachers. To be frank, Lesotho has a stronger claim than South Africa to be recognised as an English native-speaking country. Our colonial history with Britain has embedded English into the very fabric of our nation, our education system, legal framework, and public administration. For generations, English has served not only as the language of instruction in schools but also as the medium of governance and business. It is therefore unjustifiable that Basotho who grow up (being beaten for appearing on a Sesotho speakers list), study, and work using English as their primary language are excluded from opportunities readily available to South Africans and Batswana. This exclusion unfairly disadvantages our people, limiting their potential and stifling the overall progress of our nation.

Honourable Minister, countries like China and Japan are among the world's most prominent economic hot-spots for English teaching. Their societies are experiencing a high demand for English teachers, and their programs have absorbed thousands of young people from across Africa, particularly from South Africa and Botswana. These opportunities have proven to be life-changing, allowing individuals to secure stable livelihoods and send remittances home. For many families, these remittances are not just helpful; they are the difference between poverty and dignity, between despair and opportunity. They also significantly contribute to the economies of those countries whose citizens have access to these programs. Yet Lesotho has not tapped into these promising avenues, leaving Basotho locked out of a market where they are qualified and capable.

Beyond China and Japan, numerous other countries are also open to English teachers. Thailand, South Korea, Vietnam, and even Middle Eastern nations have expanded opportunities for qualified foreign English teachers in recent years. Your Ministry must adopt a proactive approach to explore these agreements more broadly. By doing so, Lesotho can secure pathways for its people to enter these international job markets, ensuring that Basotho are not left behind in a competitive global economy. Such foresight would not only open new doors for employment but also enhance our citizens' skills, exposure to global standards, and long-term competitiveness.

The potential impact of accessing foreign teaching jobs is immense. At home, unemployment remains one of our greatest national challenges, evidenced by the Prime Minister's declaration of unemployment as a National crisis. By enabling Basotho to teach abroad, we would directly address this crisis. Every Mosotho who finds meaningful employment abroad becomes a source of strength for their family, a contributor to our economy through remittances, and an ambassador of Lesotho's culture and values to the world.

Furthermore, foreign teaching experiences often enrich individuals with new skills, perspectives, and connections that they bring back home. This not only benefits their personal growth but also contributes to Lesotho's development when these skills are reinvested into our institutions and communities.

Encouraging Basotho to participate in international teaching programs would strengthen people-to-people exchanges, fostering goodwill and understanding between Lesotho and its partners. It would project Lesotho as a nation that values education and shares its human capital with the world. Such engagement elevates our international profile and deepens diplomatic ties with countries that play a crucial role in our development flight.

Honourable Minister, it is in this spirit that I respectfully appeal to your office to act with urgency. I humbly ask that you prioritize bilateral negotiations with China and Japan, given their prominence as destinations for English teaching. These two countries represent immediate and high-demand markets, and their acceptance of Basotho would mark a transformative shift for our youth. At the same time, I implore you to expand these efforts to include other countries where similar opportunities exist, ensuring that Basotho have multiple pathways to pursue.

Above all, I request that you provide clear timelines or at the very least, make a public pledge on when the memorandum of understanding with China and Japan can be expected to be signed and ratified. Such a commitment would serve as a beacon of hope to thousands of Basotho, assuring them that their government is actively and visibly working to secure opportunities for them.

Honourable Minister, our youth and families are waiting with hope for a brighter future. They long for action that demonstrates their government hears them, values them, and is ready to help them thrive in a world full of possibilities. By taking decisive steps on this issue and making a public pledge, you would restore confidence and inspire belief that change is not only possible but imminent and that Lesotho shall never be the same.

Let us not delay in seizing opportunities that can lift our people out of poverty, reduce unemployment, and strengthen our nation's place in the global community. Your decisive action today will be remembered as a turning point in Lesotho's pursuit of opportunity, dignity, and prosperity. The future is **NOW.**

Lesotho at 59: Free from Britain, but captive to our own privileged few

Kananelo Boloetse

On 4 October 2025, Basotho will gather once again to commemorate a milestone: 59 years since Lesotho freed itself from the grip of colonial rule. Independence Day is always a proud reminder of the courage of our ancestors, who resisted dispossession and fought to preserve our dignity as a nation. In 1966, when the Union Jack was lowered and our own flag was raised, the hope was that this small kingdom would finally chart its own destiny, free from foreign control.

But nearly six decades later, we must pause and ask a sobering question: what has this independence truly delivered to the ordinary Mosotho?

Yes, the colonial masters left. But the spirit of colonialism, the domination of the many by a privileged few, did not. It simply changed hands. Instead of foreign rulers, it is now Basotho elites who hold the power, wealth, and opportunities of the nation in their grip.

In every era since independence, Basotho have been promised progress and prosperity. Leaders have spoken the language of development, of service, of lifting the nation out of poverty. But, for the majority, life has remained stubbornly the same.

The privileged few present themselves as trustees of the people's welfare. They claim to be caretakers of the poor, to know what is best for the suffering, to hold the solutions to the nation's challenges. But this so-called trusteeship has never been about the people. It has been about consolidating their own power, securing their dominance, and building systems that protect their privilege.

When the ordinary Mosotho looks around, at the state of our schools, our hospitals, our roads, our fields, the evidence is clear. Trusteeship is a bluff. It is a mask that hides greed and selfishness.

Fifty-nine years of independence should have meant progress, dignity, and opportunity for all. Instead, it has meant disappointment for many.

Economically, Lesotho remains fragile, its people are trapped in cycles of poverty. Families survive on remittances from South Africa or scrape by on subsistence farming. Youth unemployment continues to rise and robs an entire generation of hope.

Socially, inequality is stark. A small group lives comfortably while the majority endure water shortages, hunger, and dilapidated services. Women and girls, in particular, remain disproportionately burdened by poverty and gender-based violence.

Politically, power has been treated as personal property. Leaders have focused on enriching themselves rather than transforming lives. Corruption, nepotism, and waste have become normalised, defended as "politics as usual" while communities are left behind.

Independence was meant to liberate the people. Instead, it has given freedom only to a select few, freedom to enrich themselves, freedom to resist accountability, and freedom to perpetuate inequality.

The greatest tragedy is not only the behaviour of the privileged few, but also the silence of the majority. For too long, Basotho have been misled into celebrating symbols of independence while ignoring its substance. Flags are raised, speeches delivered, parades held, yet the lives of ordinary people remain shackled.

But awakening is possible. It begins with seeing the trusteeship for what it is: not service, but domination. It begins with demanding accountability, refusing to be placated by empty promises, and recognising that democracy means participation, not blind loyalty to politicians.

The independence struggle was never meant to end in 1966. It was meant to continue, from resisting colonialism to resisting inequality, from fighting foreign domination to fighting domestic exploitation.

If Lesotho is to claim true freedom, a new chapter must be written. That chapter must focus on dismantling privilege and creating a nation where every Mosotho has an equal stake in the country's future.

It begins with justice in the economy, by building industries that create decent jobs, supporting farmers who sustain our people, and ensuring that the nation's resources are used for the public good rather than private enrichment. It also demands accountable leadership, where the culture of impunity is ended and leaders are held answerable for corruption, failure, and betrayal of public trust.

True independence further requires active citizenship, where Basotho no longer see themselves as passive bystanders but as participants in shaping the destiny of their country. It calls for equality and dignity, so that women, young people, and marginalised groups are not left behind, but enjoy the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

Above all, it requires a moral renewal, a rejection of greed, nepotism, and waste, and the embrace of service, solidarity, and integrity as the foundation of leadership and nationhood.

Independence is not a date we mark once a year. It is not secured by speeches or national ceremonies. Independence is a living struggle, fought every day in the choices we make as a nation.

We are independent only if the child in Mokhotlong has the same chance of education as the child in Maseru. We are independent only if a farmer in Quthing can sell produce without being cheated. We are independent only if a young woman can dream freely, unburdened by poverty, violence, or exclusion.

Until then, we remain trapped in a false independence, free from Britain, but captive to our own privileged few.

As Basotho celebrate 59 years of independence, let us honour the past with pride but confront the present with courage. The colonial masters are gone, but their place has been taken by elites who have betrayed the promise of freedom. The task of our generation is to reclaim independence from the privileged few, and to build a Lesotho where sovereignty is not just a flag, but a lived reality of dignity, opportunity, and justice for all.

Only then will Lesotho be truly free.

Why space technology matters for Africa's sustainable future

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

As Ghana prepares to host the maiden Ghana Space Conference 2025 in Accra this October, one may ask themselves, why should a developing country like Ghana invest time, energy, and resources into space science and technology?

The answer lies not in rockets or distant planets, but right here in Ghana, in the needs of our farmers, coastal communities, policymakers, and young innovators.

Space technology, everyday solutions

For too long, space has been seen as a distant frontier for many countries in the Global South, more so in Africa. In reality, however, space technology already shapes our daily lives. From the satellite data which presenters use to report on weather information, to that same data helping over 14 million farmers in Ghana decide when to plant and coastal communities when to be wary of storms. Space-based solutions are embedded in our economy and well-being.

Ghana is no stranger to this progress. Our scientists and engineers launched GhanaSat-1, sub-Saharan Africa's first educational satellite in 2017 perpetuating the pioneering tradition Ghana is known for since leading sub-Saharan African nations to gain independence from colonialism. Since GhanaSat-1, Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Morocco, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Angola, Kenya, and Mauritius have launched satellites into orbit.

At Kuntunse, our 32-metre radio telescope now contributes to the world's largest astronomy project, the Square Kilometre Array, whose contribution to the economy of the country continues to be felt in technological and engineering advancements in areas like data processing and computing, offers substantial educational and capacity building, and thus stimulating economic development and local employment.

Institutions like the University of Ghana, the Ghana Meteorological Agency, and All Nations University continue to apply space science in climate monitoring, marine research, and disaster preparedness.

Driving inclusive growth

As the world faces climate change, which is hitting sub–Saharan Africa hard and compromising our food security in the midst of the problems brought about by rising urbanisation, space technologies offer scalable and efficient tools.

For example, Earth Observation helps us to monitor deforestation due to 'Galamsey'. Illegal gold mining causes deforestation and produces mercury pollution in the environment and waters. Tracking these changes can support stakeholders to take action and document the exact scale of devastation. Remote sensing technology has also become useful tool in providing data for precision agriculture.

Farmers are able to get timely and accurate data about soil quality and rainfall, helping them to take informed decisions and post productivity. Satellite communication on the other hand has brought about increased internet access to rural communities, unlocking opportunities for online education and entrepreneurship.

This is not just about science; it is about inclusive development. The Ghana Space Conference set for October 6-8 will highlight the importance of engaging youth and women in Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and space fields, ensuring that the benefits of innovation reach everyone in Ghana and beyond.

Linking to policy and Africa's growth

The timing of this conference is strategic. Ghana recently launched its National Space Policy (2024), setting a clear vision for regulation, capacity building, private sector engagement, and international partnerships. The Policy aims to harness space technology for economic growth, national security, and sustainable development by improving resource management and coordinating public and private sector efforts.

Key goals include better environmental monitoring, fostering international cooperation, and creating investment and job opportunities in satellite communications, Earth observation, and other space sectors.

With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) headquartered in Accra, Ghana has a unique opportunity to explore how space technologies can support trade efficiency, cross-border collaboration, and industrial growth.

Space is no longer a luxury—it is an economic and developmental necessity.

A call to action

The Ghana Space Conference 2025 at the University of Ghana, Accra will bring together government leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, and international experts to deliberate on these opportunities.

This is not just Ghana's event; it is Africa's moment to continue demonstrating that the continent is ready to harness the space economy, projected to reach $22.64 billion by 2026.

Policymakers, private sector leaders, academics, students, and the media will all have space at the conference. Together, let us shape a future where space technology empowers every Ghanaian, every African, to live in a safer, more prosperous, and more sustainable world.

The writer is the Managing Director of Spacehubs Africa

Revenue Services Lesotho

CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT: A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS

At Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL), we believe that true success is measured not only in revenue collected but also in the lives touched and communities uplifted. Our Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programme is at the heart of this belief, driving meaningful change across the nation. By investing in education, entrepreneurship, health, environmental conservation, and community development, RSL continues to play its part in shaping a more inclusive and sustainable Lesotho.

Empowering Youth Through Entrepreneurship

For young Basotho, the dream of owning a business is often met with the harsh reality of unemployment and limited opportunities. The Bacha Entrepreneurship Project, RSL's flagship initiative in partnership with BEDCO and Standard Lesotho Bank, is changing this story.

In 2025, fifty young entrepreneurs were equipped with vital skills in business planning and pitching. From this pool, the most promising candidates will emerge as winners, each receiving financial and technical support to bring their innovative ideas to life. Since its inception in 2014, the project has invested over M10 million, supported 33 youth-owned enterprises, and created 184 jobs. For the current cycle, a further M1 million has been allocated to fund five youth-led businesses. These are not just numbers they represent livelihoods, hope, and the promise of a brighter future.

Greening the Nation, One Tree at a Time

Lesotho's beauty lies in its natural landscapes, and protecting this heritage is central to RSL's environmental stewardship. The RSL Tree Planting Initiative, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, has already seen tens of thousands of trees planted across the country.

In 2023, we planted 20,000 trees, followed by 21,000 in 2024. This year, the target has grown to 22,000. At Ha Leutsoa, Maseru alone, 4,500 trees have already taken root. Each tree represents our commitment to fighting climate change, conserving the environment, and leaving a greener legacy for future generations.

Preserving our environment

Beyond trees, RSL proudly supports the Operation Hloekisa Lesotho national clean-up campaign, relaunched in 2023 by the Right Honourable Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane. RSL has adopted the Maseru Bridge – Lesotho Tractor Traffic lights area, a symbolic gateway into the country. Its cleanliness reflects not only national pride but also our values as an organisation. By working hand in hand with government and communities, we are nurturing a culture of responsibility and care for our shared environment.

Investing in Education and Health

RSL understands that education is the foundation of national progress. At the 50th Convocation of the National University of Lesotho (NUL), we proudly presented Academic

Excellence Awards to top graduates:
- Lehooana Morriee (Best Student in Information Technology)
- Liako Posholi and Nthabeleng Tseleli (Best Students in Economics)
- Mathabelo Ntja (Best Student in Accounting)

By celebrating these achievers, RSL affirms its commitment to investing in knowledge, technology, and innovation as pillars of future development.

Continuing our commitment to empowering young girls

Equally important is health and dignity. Through our partnership with Hlokomela Banana, RSL distributed sanitary towels to 324 learners at Hermitage High School in Qacha's Nek. This initiative is part of a broader pledge to support 14 schools and 824 learners nationwide in 2025. By helping young girls stay in school, we are investing in their confidence, education, and future.

A Shared Journey of Progress

Whether it is through creating jobs for young entrepreneurs, planting trees for sustainability, rewarding academic excellence, or supporting vulnerable learners, RSL's CSI programme is about more than projects, it is about people.

Every initiative reflects our belief that when business and society move forward together, lasting progress is achieved. As we continue on this journey, RSL remains steadfast in its mission to not only enable government funding but also to uplift Basotho, build resilient communities, and create a sustainable future for all.

TENDER NOTICE

OPEN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE TENDER
LES/ IEC/TEN/PAN/ 2025-2026/04

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) invites tenders from interested companies for the Supply, Delivery and Assembling of Two Hardware Servers.

DESCIPTION

Supply, Delivery and Assembly of Two Hardware Servers.

Number	Description	Quantity
1	**Database Server**	1
2	**User Acceptance Testing (UAT)/Test Server**	1

BIDDING DOCUMENT

Tender document is obtainable from Election House Procurement Unit 2nd Floor, Corner Maluti and Caledon Road, Maseru West during working hours from 09:00am to 16:00 hours. Bidders must purchase a copy of tender document at a **NON-Refundable fee of M2 200.00 (Two Thousand and Two Hundred Maloti only])**. The procedure for obtaining the Tender document is as follows: **Payment of bid document must be made at 2nd Floor Election House, Finance Department. The receipt issued must be taken to the office of Procurement where document will be issued.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation criteria have two weights Technical and Financial Weights. The pass mark for Technical Evaluation is 70% points. The Technical weight is 70% and Financial weight is 30%.

Technical weight 70%	Financial weight 30%
Specifications.	Price.
Experience Lead time.	**Financial Capability:** Current bank statement for three months and a valuation letter from the bank as an assurance that the suppliers will be financed for incapable supplier. **OR** Tenderers own current financial statements with an audit opinion from a qualified independent Auditor.

Category	Description	Weight
Hardware Compliance	Conformance to the specifications above	40%
Licensing & Software Compatibility	OS and hypervisor support and clarity on licensing	10%
Supplier Experience & Past Similar Work	Years in operation, similar project references (2024-2023,2023-2022)	10%
Certifications & Technical Expertise	Manufacturing Authorization Letter certifications, engineer CVs, certified technical staff	10%
Support and Warranty Provisions	Type of warranty, local support, response time, guarantees	10%
Implementation Plan	Delivery timeline, installation process, setup assistance	10%
Documentation & Training	Handover plan, training quality, and documentation completeness	5%
SLAs & Uptime Guarantees	Uptime commitments, escalation processes, and service penalties	5%

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Attach valid and relevant Traders License/ Business Identity Card.
- Attach valid copy of Tax Clearance certificate.
- The bonafide certificate should be filled, signed and the total cost should be written on the certificate.
- Provide **Bid Security of M 260,000.00** from the bank and be valid for three months.
- Manufacturing Authorisation letter must be filled, signed and stamped; it must be on letter head.
- Manufacturing Authorisation letter must be filled, signed and stamped, it must be on Business's letterhead.

N.B

- Bidders are informed that 5% source tax will be deducted from payments for local companies.
- Electronic bidding shall not be permitted.
- Payment will be done after delivery of goods / provision of service.
- Unavailability of mandatory documents will lead to disqualification of the bid.
- The price should be VAT inclusive for suppliers who qualify to collect VAT (attach VAT registration certificate).
- Provide recent two reference letters in a form of Purchase Orders or Contracts of similar work done within the last two financial years (2024-2023, 2023-2022).
- Provide original bidding document and four copies.
- Price should be quoted in Maloti currency.
- Provide three envelopes, the outer envelope clearly marked **"Supply, Delivery and Assembling of Hardware Servers"** the two inner envelopes, one clearly marked **"technical bid"** containing original and four copies and the other one clearly marked **"financial bid"** containing original and four copies.
- Provide access to credit facilities of 70% of the quoted price (Strictly form the bank).
- The price should be VAT inclusive for suppliers who qualify to collect VAT (attach VAT registration certificate).

Sealed bids bearing no identification of the suppliers should be deposited in the tender box at the Election House Ground Floor near security office **On or before 12:30pm Tuesday 4th November 2025** and will be opened on the same date at **14:30hours at 1st Floor Boardroom**. Envelopes should be clearly marked: **"Supply, Delivery and Assembling of Servers"**.
For further information, relating to the above information please contact,

The Procurement Unit
Independent Electoral Commission
Election House Maseru West
Maseru, Lesotho
Tel: +266 – 22 314991 / 59019086
E-mail: tenders@iec.org.ls

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

Procurement Unit-IEC

THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (MOE)

INVITATION TO TENDER (ITT)

FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY, AND INSTALLATION OF HEAVY-DUTY PHOTOCOPIER MACHINE
ITT NO: MOE/ADMIN/1-2025/2026
DATE:4 SEPTEMBER,2025

1. The Ministry of Energy hereby invites tenders from eligible and qualified Bidders for the supply and delivery of one Heavy Duty Photocopier Machine. The specifications are provided in the bidding document.

2. A complete set of bidding documents, in English, may be purchased on the submission of a non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand (2000.00)** Maloti or its equivalent in any convertible currency, net of all bank charges from the **Procurement Unit, Ministry of Energy (MOE) Government Complex, Africa House 3rd Floor**. The method of payment will be by bank transfer/deposit only, payable at Central Bank of Lesotho, Account Name Main Revenue Epicor 10, Account Number 0101403715016, Reference Ministry of Energy sale of Tender document. The proof of payment must be taken to MOE Accounts Office at **Sekhametsi Building, 2nd Floor, Kingsway Maseru** where a receipt will be issued. The receipt should then be submitted to the Procurement Office where the bidding documents shall be obtained.

The Tender documents will be obtainable from the 15th September 2025 to 9th October, 2025

3. **Mandatory Documents**
   - Copy of valid Tax Clearance Certificate (certified at source).
   - Copy of Value Added Tax (VAT) Registration Certificate (certified at source).
   - Copy of valid Trader's License.
   - Company/Business Profile.
   - Reference letters from recent institutions served in the past two (2years)
   - Bid Security
   - Minimum experience of contracts of a similar nature and magnitude executed within the last two (2) years) support with one (1) copy of contract or purchase order).
   - Evidence of financial capacity (credit line from registered financial institution and audited accounts statement from registered Institution)
   - Completed certificate of bona fide tendering.

4. Sealed tenders bearing no identification of the tenderers and marked as follows **"SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF HEAVY-DUTY PHOTOCOPIER MACHINE"** must be deposited in the tender box situated at the Foyer at the Ministry's Head Quarters, Government Complex, Africa House 3rd Floor. The closing date for submission of tenders is on/before the **23rd October 2025**. Electronic bidding shall not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected.

5. Tenders will be opened in the presence of the tenderers' representatives who may choose to attend in person on the **23th October,2025 at 14:30hrs**. Tenders shall be submitted in one **(1) original and four (4) copies** in a sealed envelope.

EXPRESSSIONS OF INTEREST

CALL FOR EXPRESSSIONS OF INTEREST

ROADS DIRECTORATE (RD) is seeking expressions of interest from qualified companies and consultants to provide goods and services in the categories as shown below. This exercise is intended to assist Roads Directorate to get a better appreciation of registered companies that are operating in these areas of expertise and to update its vendor database.

Areas of services include:
- Road construction material such as asphalt, prime mix, cement, paint
- Road construction tools such as pickaxes, wheelbarrows, shovels, spades
- Road construction equipment such as rollers, compactors, waterbowsers, road marking equipment, concrete mixers
- Building Material such as crushed stone, meshwire, reinforcement
- Fuel and Lubricants such as coal, wood, paraffin, petrol, diesel
- Hardware (e.g. for electrical works, plumbing)
- Road construction laboratory equipment
- Air travel including, air tickets and related packages
- Management consulting services
- Corporate image consulting and promotional items
- Logistics services including customs clearance, freight forwarding etc
- Commercial security services
- Cleaning and Landscaping services
- ICT equipment, network cabling, ICT supplies and consumables
- Air conditioning and refrigeration
- Catering, events management and hotel and conferencing services
- Vehicle and property insurance
- Office equipment, furniture, stationery and other office supplies
- Water purification services
- Corporate wear and protective gear
- Maintenance of Motor and Plant Vehicle (eg Graders, Excavators, Rollers,Tipper trucks(Different Sizes) Water Tankers etc.
- Maintenance of Office Equipment
- Printing and Branding Services (for ID cards, flyers, posters, office documents etcetera)
- Advertising Agencies
- Road and Office Signage
- Stationery
- Sound System and PA System
- Supply and fitting of Carpets and Blinds
- Motor Towing Services
- Motor Panel Beating and Spray Painting
- Office Partitioning
- Electronics and Electrical Appliances
- Durable Tents (Hiring and/ selling)
- Supply and Maintenance of Fire Extinguishers
- Any other categories which not have been included here

For companies to qualify they must meet the following criteria (by proof of submissons):
- Must have a proven track record of service provision in Lesotho in their areas of expertise. A full company profile on a letter head detailing the registration, current physical address, services provided, similar assignments, references of previous assignments with contact details must be submitted.
- Must show financial viability of their businesses
- Registration licence/Business Identity and TAX Clearance certificate certified at source

If applicable, the Roads Directorate reserves the right to visit your facilities as part of the pre-qualification process to verify factors such as (but no limited to) existence of organisation, availablility of goods on hand and operational framework.

Submissions through email with sebject **"Expression of Interest for Supply of Goods, Works and Services"** should be addressed to Procurement Specialist, Roads Directorate. Submissions should be sent to the following emails manoelin@rd.org.ls cc: molefimt@rd.org.ls on or before **31st October 2025 at 12:00 noon**
Attention to: Procurement Specialist

Roads Directorate @Roads_LS Road Directorate Lesotho

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BLUE RIBBON

TRANSPORT SERVICE PROVIDER REQUIRED

Lesotho Bakery is seeking the services of a reliable and professional **staff transport provider** to operate within a 15km radius for night shifts.

Requirements:
- **3 x 15-seater vehicles** (roadworthy, fitted with heaters, comfortable seats, operational windows)
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- Vehicles must be **kept clean and well-maintained**, and will undergo:
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- Up to **6 trips per night**
- Service includes **pick-up and drop-off aligned** with staff shift times
- **Punctuality is essential Driver Requirements:**
- Qualified, licensed, and **professional drivers**
- **Customer-centric** and well-presented
- Must comply with all **road safety regulations**
- Subject to **alcohol testing** upon entry to site

If you are an experienced and compliant transporter committed to safety, punctuality, and quality service, we invite you to submit your proposal.

Submit proposals to: hr.lesotho@PremierFMCG.com
Deadline: 24 October 2025
Contact: +266 52505200


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LESCOSAA struggle for trust and compliance

...Only has 237 registered members

Lerato Matheka

The Lesotho Spring Music Conference has, for the past decade, been a melting pot of creativity, collaboration and cultural exchange.

It has gathered musicians, industry professionals and thought leaders from across the region to debate the pressing issues facing the arts. Yet, at its 10th anniversary, one subject towered above all others: the crisis of compliance at the Lesotho Copyright Society of Authors and Artists (LESCOSAA).

Established under the Copyright Order of 1989 to protect the interests of authors, artists and performers, LESCOSA is meant to ensure that Basotho creators earn from their work.

But according to Advocate Chaka Maema, the organisation is struggling with both credibility and compliance.

"We only have 237 registered members," he revealed, highlighting the mistrust that continues to plague the institution.

Although royalties are collected on behalf of all artists, whether registered or not, Maema stressed that registration is critical because pay-out is done only to members.

"Artists are encouraged to register because, within three years of collection on their behalf, the law allows us to redirect the fund to other operations. The mandate is that we pay those who have registered with us, while we collect for everyone who is a Mosotho," he said.

Without greater participation, royalties meant for creators risk being lost.

But the compliance crisis goes beyond artists.

Lesotho's largest broadcaster, Lesotho National Broadcasting Service (LNBS), operator of two radio stations and Lesotho Television (LTV), has not yet started paying royalties.

"We are still in talks with them. They have not understood properly how we operate," Maema admitted, underscoring a lack of accountability in a government-owned institution.

Advocate Ntsietso Mokitimi of the South African Music Performance Rights Association (SAMPRA) minced no words about the root cause.

"There is infrastructure available that was built during the three governments back. Lesotho's problem is political will, and it starts with the unwillingness of LNBS to comply," she said.

Mokitimi explained that Lesotho's regulatory structure could easily enforce compliance if ministries worked together.

"Restaurants and clubs are registered by the Ministry of Tourism, retail stores and supermarkets by trade, while the taxis' industry is under the Ministry of Transport. All could integrate music licensing into their licensing fees. But ministries work in silos, and what should be a simple solution has become a far-fetched idea."

From South Africa, Nishal Lalla of Recording Industry of South Africa (RiSA) warned that the lack of a collective voice also hampers progress.

"For Lesotho to adequately win this war, it needs unionism that will speak in one voice. There is a need for an organisation similar to RiSA if all parties are to benefit," he urged.

At the heart of the crisis lies a contradiction. Maema painted a sad picture; music is everywhere in Lesotho, blaring in taxis, spinning in clubs, echoing from radios, and fuelling weddings, yet its creators remain unpaid.

LESCOSAA's recent interviews with Newsday confirmed that misuse of music in public spaces often happens without awareness that licenses are required.

"You cannot expect to earn royalties if you have not registered your music or reported its use. Artists need to see themselves as entrepreneurs," said Tsoamotse Relebohile, Membership and Documentation Manager with LESCOSAA, stressing that unless songs with multiple contributors are properly registered, fair distribution remains impossible, sentiments shared by Lalla from RiSA, who stressed that while music is being made, clear contracts binding all members simplify distribution of royalties for all involved.

This long-standing impasse has left creators asking whether royalties are a dream or an achievable reality, which is why the recent government gazette on music tariffs marks a potential breakthrough.

In November 2024, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, led by Minister Motlatsi Maqelepo, formalised tariffs for the commercial use of Basotho music.

"The government has embraced the arts as a vital sector within our national strategic development plan, recognising its potential to drive economic growth. We're proud to have taken this important step toward giving value to creative work," Maqelepo declared at a press briefing.

Under the gazette, users of music for commercial gain, from taxis and restaurants to radio stations, are now legally required to pay.

A five-seater taxi will pay M400 per year, while an 18-seater taxi will pay M1,400. Restaurants with 50-person capacity will pay M2,200 annually, while multi-roomed establishments will pay M240 for radios and televisions playing music. Broadcasters will be charged based on airplay, annual turnover, and content consumption.

LESCOSAA is expected to collect these tariffs annually and distribute them to registered artists. If implemented, this system could finally bring Basotho artists closer to being compensated for the soundtrack they provide to the nation.

Minister Spokes steals the show on a magical music night

Chris Theko

The red carpet was rolled out and Maseru's music lovers filled the Manthabiseng Convention Centre on Saturday evening as the 2nd edition of the National Music Awards (NMA's) brought together the crème of Lesotho's creative industry for a night of celebration, glamour, and unforgettable performances.

The spotlight of the evening belonged to gospel music sensation Minister Spokes, who emerged as the night's biggest winner. He scooped two of the most coveted awards, Song of the Year for his powerful hit Taba eaka and Record of the Year for the soul-stirring Lifela tsa Chache.

Taking to the stage to a standing ovation, Spokes was visibly emotional as he acknowledged the support behind his journey.

"Thank you Baheso ba ratehang ka tšehetso ea lona towards my ministry," he said warmly, drawing loud cheers from the audience.

He went on to thank his family, his mentor Bishop Kgabe, and the Anglican Church of Lesotho for "opening doors for me and allowing me to sing their hymns," which have become a cornerstone of his music ministry.

Organised under the theme Celebrating Lesotho's Creative Spirit, the awards ceremony featured a vibrant mix of live performances, tribute segments, and moving acceptance speeches that reflected the resilience and growth of the local music industry.

One of the most emotional moments of the night came when legendary famo singer Apollo Ntabanyane was honoured with the Queen 'Mamohato Lifetime Achievement Award.

The room erupted in applause as the veteran artist, who has shaped Lesotho's musical identity for decades, took to the stage. The award celebrated not only his longevity but also his ability to evolve and remain relevant in a constantly changing industry.

Another major highlight was the presentation of the Artist of the Decade Award to none other than Ntate Stunna. Known for putting Lesotho hip hop on the map, his consistency, international collaborations, and dominance over the past ten years earned him this special recognition.

True to his charismatic nature, Stunna thanked his fans, affectionately known as "Stunna Nation", for supporting him from underground stages to the global spotlight.

A wide range of artists were also honoured across various categories. Cityzeen LS took home the Best Sothohop Artist award, while Lady Ray was named Best Upcoming Artist. Lekope FM presenter, 'Mapaseka Sekantsi, won the Best Music Radio Program Presenter award, and Sannere was recognised as the Most Played Artist on Radio.

Mega Ntsihlele walked away with the Best Producer award, while Target claimed Best Famo Artist. The Best Hip Hop Artist award went to Sekani, and the Best Clap and Tap Album was awarded to Lerato La Bolumeli.

The Best Newcomer award was taken by Pelo E Tlotlehang Ea Jeso, while Koenas scooped Best Gospel Album. Jerry Ramanemane won Best Afro Soul, and Masterpiece took home Best Amapiano Album. The Best Jazz Album award went to Sipho Lukhele, while Nthabiseng Mohanele was named Best International Artist. BASA walked away with the Best Choral Group award, and the Best Political Album accolade went to Laere Oa DC.

The NMAs also provided a platform for emerging artists and young talents who are shaping the future of Lesotho's music industry. With dazzling fashion on the red carpet, energetic performances, and heartfelt speeches, the night served as a powerful reminder of the vibrancy and potential of the country's creative sector.

In his remarks, the Minister of Tourism, Sports, Arts and Culture, Motlatsi Maqelepo, reflected on the progress made since the awards were launched last year. He praised the decision to establish the NMAs as a way to celebrate and recognise local talent.

"Musicians have always been part of who we are as Basotho over generations; our talent and creativity have been entrenched and overflowing like the rivers that cut through our mountains but for too long government and the private sector and society had not come together to raise music high enough to the level it deserves, tonight we correct that mistake, we further declare that music will never play in the background of our nations' history and will take its place at the center," Minister Maqelepo said.

"Music is not just entertainment, it is the heartbeat of our culture, the echo of our heritage and the voice of our people when words are not enough, it builds bridges where divisions stand, it reconciles where pain lingers, it speaks and conveys what no ordinary speech ever could. Our artists are not merely performers but vessels of the nation's soul and we must protect them, uplift and make sure they thrive," he added.

FIFA ruling keeps Likuena's World Cup dream alive

Seabata Mahao

In an extraordinary turn of events that has thrown the CAF Group C wide open, the national team, Likuena have been handed a lifeline after FIFA's Disciplinary Committee sanctioned South Africa for fielding an ineligible player in a March 2025 qualifier.

The decision awarded Lesotho a 3-0 windfall win and moved it up to nine points, leaving the prospect of a first-ever World Cup appearance remotely alive.

FIFA's ruling, which was made earlier this week revived Lesotho's World Cup hopes while dashing those of the neighbouring South Africa, which was leading the group with 17 points before being punished.

"The FIFA Disciplinary Committee has sanctioned the South African Football Association (SAFA) for having fielded an ineligible player, Teboho Mokoena," an extract from the FIFA statement reads.

FIFA said Mokoena should have been suspended after accumulating two cautions in earlier group matches, and therefore South Africa breached Article 19 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code and Article 14 of the World Cup preliminary competition regulations.

As a result that match played on 21 March 2025, where South Africa emerged 2-0 victors, has been declared forfeited by South Africa (3-0), and SAFA fined CHF 10,000 (about M215 000). On his part, Mokoena has received a warning from the global football governing body.

In response, the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) has welcomed FIFA's decision. LeFA's Secretary General Mokhosi Mohapi is on record saying that the ruling has vindicated their insistence on upholding the rules, remarking that "the integrity of the game has been preserved."

He added that Lesotho had always maintained that the protest was about respect for regulations rather than malice towards South Africa.

Reacting to their sanction, the South African Football Association has questioned the procedure that FIFA followed in arriving at its conclusion. SAFA further said they were not afforded an opportunity to present their side of the story before FIFA handed down its ruling.

"As SAFA we are deeply disappointed with this unprecedented outcome noting that it was delivered by a single-member panel without reasons, and without affording the Association an opportunity to present legal arguments. The Association confirms that we have requested written reasons for the judgment and intend to lodge a formal appeal with the FIFA Appeals Committee within the prescribed 10-day period under FIFA's disciplinary rules.

SAFA has emphasised its commitment to supporting Bafana Bafana in the remainder of qualification campaign, saying the players and the technical team have worked extremely hard to get this far, and will press on to secure maximum points in the matches ahead.

"We apologise to the nation for this administrative oversight and will reflect on the steps to take at the conclusion of our qualifying campaign. Finally, we call on all South Africans to rally behind the team during this final and crucial stage of the qualifiers," SAFA concluded.

The mathematical permutations that follow the ruling are dramatic, although very unlikely. With two sets of games left, Lesotho sit on nine points and could finish with a maximum of 15, but only if everything else goes their way.

Current group leaders Benin and South Africa are on 14 points and would need to lose both of their remaining matches to leave room at the top. Nigeria, on 11 points, would also have to lose its final two fixtures for Lesotho to overtake them.

In short, Likuena's path to topping the group requires a near-perfect storm of results. Lesotho host Nigeria in one of the penultimate-round fixtures on October 10 in a match to be played in South Africa, a result that could prove decisive, while the final round on October 14 features matching fixtures that will determine who claims the automatic berth to North America.

Only group winners qualify directly for the 2026 finals, although runners-up face an arduous secondary route.

For a nation that has never reached the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) finals, let alone the World Cup, even a mathematical chance signals a historic moment. Likuena's fans know the odds are long, but the renewed hope has rekindled belief that Lesotho football can punch above its weight.

Matlama taste first victory

Seabata Mahao

Matlama Football Club recorded their first win of the season following a hard-fought 2–1 victory over LDF FC last Sunday at Ratjomose Stadium, bringing an end to their run of two consecutive draws in the 2025/26 Vodacom Premier League campaign.

Coming off a goalless stalemate against Maroala, Matlama needed a strong response, and they delivered, though not without struggle. LDF, still reeling from a narrow 2–1 loss to Linare, were once again left to rue missed opportunities and late lapses in concentration.

Coach Shalane Lehohla was visibly relieved with the result but remained realistic about his team's form.

"Playing against an experienced team like LDF is never easy, especially when fielding mostly young and relatively inexperienced players," said Lehohla.

"I'm satisfied with the result, though it is not enough to say we have solved all our problems."

The win came at a crucial time for Lehohla, whose side had failed to score in their opening fixtures. He attributed some of the early struggles to off-field challenges, with several players balancing football with their jobs.

"Around four players missed the last match due to work commitments. Although they returned for this game, it was clear that their lack of preparation took a toll," he revealed.

Despite those setbacks, Matlama showed improvement in their attacking build-up. The return of key players such as Jane Thabantšo, Phafa Tšosane and Charlie Hlalele added valuable experience and composure to the young squad.

"I am proud of my performance after some time away. I am still working to reach my best form. Our squad has a lot of young talent, and it is up to us experienced players to guide and support them," Hlalele said.

The match itself was tightly contested, with both sides creating chances. Matlama opened the scoring, but LDF equalised midway through the second half. A defensive lapse from LDF late in the game allowed Matlama to seal all three points, sending their fans into jubilation.

Despite their rocky start, Matlama will hope to carry this momentum into the tournament and stake an early claim for silverware.

"We are far from where we want to be, but I believe we're moving in the right direction. We ask our supporters to be patient and continue backing the boys," Lehohla added.

It was a case of déjà vu for LDF. Once again, they conceded a decisive goal in the dying minutes, a frustrating pattern that head coach Malefetsane Pheko was quick to address.

"This is the second game we've lost late. It's extremely painful. Our players are failing to manage games. The midfield isn't linking up properly, and we sat back too much in the first half." Pheko said.

With back-to-back defeats, Pheko admitted that morale is low but vowed to address the team's mental lapses during training.

"I need to instill belief and focus in the players. We cannot let this become a pattern," Pheko added.

Weekend League Results:

Manonyane FC 1–1 Majantja FC, Lijabatho FC 1–1 LMPS FC, LCS FC 3–0 Members FC, Matlama FC 2–1 LDF FC, Linare FC 0–0 Machokha FC, Liphakoe FC 2–1 LU FC.

The league will pause for the much-anticipated Top 4 Tournament, which kicks off on October 5. It will feature last season's top teams: Matlama, Lioli, Bantu, and LDF.

Lioli handed CAF reality check

Seabata Mahao

Lioli Football Club's return to continental football ended in disappointment as the Teyateyaneng giants were handed a harsh lesson by South Africa's Orlando Pirates, underscoring the gulf in class between the two sides.

The humbling experience now leaves Lioli with no choice but to regroup and chart a stronger path for another shot at CAF competition next season.

Lioli arrived home on Sunday nursing the wounds of a 4-0 defeat in the second leg of their CAF Champions League clash at Orlando Stadium.

Coupled with a 3-0 loss in the first leg played at Toyota Stadium in Bloemfontein, the result sealed a 7-0 aggregate exit for the reigning Vodacom Premier League (VPL) champions at the tournament's round of 32 stage.

Head coach Bongani Maseko admitted that his side struggled to cope with the quality and experience of the Pirates outfit.

"In the first leg, we tried a defensive approach, aiming to hold the midfield and then counterattack after 15 minutes, but it did not go as planned," Maseko explained.

He acknowledged that his team was exposed defensively by the Buccaneers' relentless attacking play.

"Their aggressive attack left defensive gaps that we struggled to cover, which unfortunately cost us goals," he added.

While the gulf in quality was evident over both legs, Maseko maintained that the experience will serve as a valuable learning curve for his squad.

"We will take these lessons and work hard to come back stronger. Lioli is a strong team with talented and hardworking players. Our goal now is to focus on the 2025/26 season and aim for a top-four finish," he concluded.

On the Pirates' side, coach Abdeslam Ouaddou praised his team's patience and tactical discipline.

"We knew Lioli would set up defensively, so it was a matter of time to find the right moment to score and force them to open up. He pointed to the opening goal, scored before halftime, as the turning point. "We encouraged the players to take every chance to score, and they delivered," Ouaddou said.

The focus now turns to the upcoming domestic season, where Lioli will need to re-establish their dominance in the Vodacom Premier League and secure qualification for CAF competitions once again.

This will demand not only consistent performances but also improved preparation to avoid another humbling experience on the African stage. For Orlando Pirates, the emphatic win propels them deeper into the Champions League as they set their sights on continental glory.

Newsday
...pacing standards

Sports

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LeFA honours late football icons

Seabata Mahao

Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) will rename DIFA Mohale's Hoek and DIFA Maputsoe stadiums after two late football heavy weights Sebatana Russell and Tšeliso 'Saxophone' Thejane respectively in recognition of their immense contribution in local football.

Russell is the former chairman of Majantja FC, Thejane, was a celebrated former Linare and national team player.

Speaking at a press conference at LeFA headquarters this week, LeFA's President Advocate Salemane Phafane announced that stadiums in Mohale's Hoek and Leribe will now bear the names of two revered figures in local football history.

"These names were not chosen lightly," Phafane said.

"We undertook broad consultations with stakeholders and the public to ensure that our heroes are given the recognition they deserve."

Other reforms that Phafane revealed include strengthening grassroots structures by increasing financial support for district football development. As part of its commitment to grassroots football, LeFA will provide each district with M200, 000 through its development fund.

The support falls under the 'Eyes On the Ball' initiative, which aims to professionalise and strengthen district football operations.

"We are aware of the challenges our district structures face especially financial limitations. This funding will help administrators run their programmes more effectively and ultimately grow the talent pipeline," Phafane acknowledged.

He added that youth development remains a key focus, revealing that a new school-based football programme has already been launched in Leribe.

"We are not just looking at the present. We are investing in the next generation of national team players."

LeFA also announced a change to its B Division League sponsorship. "This change clarifies that Dr. Phamotse's generous sponsorship is focused specifically on the top eight B Division teams nationally," said Phafane.

Likuena's home games moved to Limpopo

In other developments, LeFA's Secretary General Mokhosi Mohapi confirmed that the national team, Likuena, will no longer play its home fixtures at Toyota Stadium in Free State, South Africa. FIFA and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) inexplicably deemed the facility unfit for international matches, despite having hosted a number of Likuena games this year.

Likuena will now use the New Peter Mokaba Stadium in Limpopo, South Africa, as its home ground. The team faces a challenging October schedule, with World Cup qualifiers against Nigeria on October 10 and Zimbabwe on October 13.

Likuena currently sits fifth in its group with nine points. This follows a FIFA ruling against South Africa for fielding an ineligible player, resulting in a points deduction. South Africa now sits on 14 points, level with group leaders Benin.

Advocate Phafane ended the briefing on a hopeful note. "We are building a foundation that will carry Lesotho football forward starting with honouring our past heroes, supporting our present structures, and preparing our youth for the future."

With these developments, attention now turns to both the grassroots level and the national stage to see how these reforms will impact football in the country.