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MPs uncover crisis at Maseru District Hospital

Ntsoaki Motaung

Overflowing medical waste, rusted water tanks, and weak security systems for medicines have been uncovered at Maseru District Hospital during a parliamentary inspection, deepening fears that systemic failures previously exposed by Newsday are now evolving into a dangerous public health threat.

The alarming findings were uncovered during an oversight visit by Parliament's Social Cluster Portfolio Committee, led by Chairperson MokhotuMakhalanyane, to assess service delivery at the country's largest district hospital.

Instead, MPs encountered what they described as deeply concerning sanitation, infrastructure and security failures with direct implications for patient safety.

The discoveries revive concerns first raised in October 2025, when a Newsday investigation exposed a growing crisis at the hospital, including operational breakdowns, strained services, management challenges, staff frustrations and mounting concerns over patient care standards.

That investigation painted a picture of a facility under severe pressure, where systemic weaknesses were steadily eroding the hospital's ability to function effectively as a public health institution.

The latest parliamentary findings suggest those failures are now visible in the hospital's physical environment.

Among the most disturbing discoveries was the condition of the medical waste disposal area, where



Bright red and yellow biohazard bags overflow from a cramped storage cage at Maseru District Hospital.

hazardous waste, including used needles, contaminated bandages and biological material, was found overflowing from storage areas.

"The area where medical waste is kept is very full, and some of it is spilling out of the storage," Makhalanyane reported.

"There is a foul smell, and I foresee that if action is not taken, we will have rats. There are already insects, and soon there will be worms."

Makhalanyane warned that poor handling of hazardous waste creates conditions for potential disease outbreaks within the hospital environment, exposing already vulnerable patients to further health risks.

The committee also raised an alarm about the

hospital's water storage infrastructure after observing visible rust on some tanks supplying water to the facility.

Makhalanyane cautioned that neglected water systems can encourage the growth of mould and larvae, conditions associated with water contamination and diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

He stressed that hospitals carry a responsibility to routinely test both water and food supplied to patients to ensure minimum health standards are maintained.

Security failures within the pharmacy department also came under scrutiny following previous reports of medication theft.

Although hospital surveillance systems had re-

portedly helped identify and suspend at least one suspect in the past, MPs found the current camera coverage inadequate.

"We found that the cameras do not cover all the spots," Makhalanyane noted.

He urged hospital management to urgently address surveillance blind spots to prevent further losses of essential medicines, many of which are already difficult to access in the public health sector.

The committee further questioned whether patients could freely express concerns about hospital conditions without fear of retaliation.

While some patients interviewed during the visit expressed satisfaction with services, Makhalanyane suggested that the responses may not fully reflect the realities within the facility.

"Maybe it is because they are afraid of telling the truth with the fear of being victimised afterwards," he said.

The committee said there is a need for safer and more transparent systems that allow patients to report grievances without fear that their treatment may later be compromised.

The Social Cluster Portfolio Committee has since called for immediate intervention to address the deteriorating conditions, warning that continued neglect could place both patients and healthcare workers at serious risk.

Pressure is now mounting on the Ministry of Health to respond decisively to what is increasingly emerging as a broader institutional crisis at Maseru District Hospital.

Taken together with the issues previously uncovered by Newsday, the parliamentary findings point to a public health facility facing not only operational strain but also deepening structural and safety failures at the heart of patient care.

Attempts to get comments from both the Ministry of Health and the hospital's public relations office were not successful at the time of publication, as calls and text messages were not responded to.

Thoboloko Ntšonyane

Thousands of Basotho workers and school children who rely on public transport are expected to feel the financial strain next week as new transport fares officially come into effect.

The increase is expected to further worsen the cost of living at a time when households are already struggling with rising food and fuel prices.

The Road Transport Board (RTB) yesterday confirmed that local transport fares will increase by as much as 31%, with the new prices becoming effective from May 11, 2026.

The fare hikes are likely to hit factory workers, retail employees, domestic workers and school-going children the hardest, as many depend on taxis and minibuses every day to travel to work and school.

RTB Chairperson Mothabeng Lechalaba announced the revised fares yesterday.

He said local fares for 4+1 taxis will increase from M13.00 to M17.00. Minibuses will now charge M15.00, up from M12.00, while buses and sprinters will charge M10.00.

The increases come amid growing fears that transport costs will trigger further increases in the prices of goods and services as transport operators pass the costs onto consumers.

For many workers already earning low wages, the higher fares will take a significant portion of their salaries.

Many factory and retail workers rely entirely on public transport to travel daily between home and work.

With the recently gazetted minimum wages, a textile general worker now earns M2,833.96 per month. If such a worker spends M340.00 on transport over 20 working days, they will be left with only M2,493.96 for rent, food, electricity, school fees and other household expenses.

A retail employee earning M2,917.64 monthly who spends the same amount on transport would remain with M2,577.64.

The impact is also expected to extend to school children, as parents will now have to spend more money on daily transport for learners travelling to and from school.

Families with several children using public transport are likely to experience even greater financial pressure.

Transport fare hike to squeeze workers and families



Chairperson of the Road Transport Board Mothabeng Lechalaba

The fare hikes come at a difficult time for consumers as Lesotho continues to experience a sharp rise in the cost of living driven largely by global fuel price increases.

The latest fuel hikes announced this week are expected to worsen the situation further.

On Wednesday, the Petroleum Fund published revised fuel prices showing steep increases across all fuel products.

Petrol 93 increased by M2.90 and now costs M25.40 per litre, while Petrol 95 rose by M2.60 to M25.90.

Diesel 50 recorded the sharpest jump, increasing by M4.25 to M34.75 per litre. Paraffin also increased by M1.20 and now costs M22.50 per litre.

The fuel price increases have largely been linked to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East involving Iran, Israel and the United States.

There are growing fears globally that tensions around the strategically important Strait of Hormuz could further disrupt oil supply routes and push fuel prices even higher.

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's busiest oil shipping routes and plays a critical role in global energy supply chains.

The rising fuel costs are already having a ripple

effect on transport operators, food prices and other commodities.

In April, the government announced austerity measures aimed at cushioning consumers from the rising cost of living.

The measures included zero-rating bread, sunflower oil, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit.

Government also announced the temporary removal of the fuel levy for three months in an attempt to ease pressure on motorists and commuters.

However, concerns remain over the implementation of these measures because the gazette notices needed to formalise them have not yet been published.

Meanwhile, transport operators have argued that fare increases were unavoidable due to rising operational costs.

The RTB said the latest fare adjustments were informed by recommendations from a consultant as well as inflation figures from the Bureau of Statistics (BOS).

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport's Public Relations Manager, Ntumeleng Ntšekhe Moloinyane, explained that while fare reviews were previously based mainly on inflation, authorities are now using a new pricing model proposed by consultants.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which tracks the average cost of goods and services purchased by households, also informed the adjustments.

Before the RTB announcement, the Maseru Regional Transport Operators had already expressed frustration over delays in announcing the new fares.

At a press conference earlier this month, the association proposed even steeper increases.

MRTO announced that local fares should rise from M13.00 to M23.00, while long-distance fares should increase by M9.00 for every 10 kilometres travelled.

Transport operators argued that increasing fuel prices, annual operational costs and new vehicle registration fees had made business unsustainable under the old fare structure.

According to the RTB, long-distance fares are still being finalised and will be announced later.

The board said the fare adjustments are necessary to help transport operators cope with rising costs of fuel, maintenance and vehicle operations.

RTB was established under the Road Transport Act of 1981 and is responsible for regulating public transport fares and operations in the country.

The board includes representatives from the transport sector, technical advisers and government officials.

Public transport fares were last reviewed during the 2022/2023 financial year.

Meanwhile, there is growing public concern that the increases will deepen financial hardship for ordinary Basotho.

Many commuters fear that transport costs will now consume a larger share of already strained household incomes.

Others worry that the increases will eventually push up prices of food and other basic commodities as businesses adjust transport and delivery costs.

Some commuters have also questioned whether salary increases in both the public and private sectors are keeping pace with the rapidly rising cost of living.

Commuters have since been advised to check updated fare charts displayed inside public transport vehicles before travelling next week.

Newsday (+266) 2231 4267 / 5945 8983

Carlton Centre
3rd Floor
Room 302
Kingsway
Maseru

MANAGING EDITOR
Lerato Matheka
managingeditor@newsdayonline.co.ls

NEWS EDITOR
Kananelo Boloetse
editor@newsdayonline.co.ls

SUB EDITOR
Bereng Mpaki

NEWS ROOM
Ntsoaki Motaung
Seabata Mahao
Thoboloko Ntšonyane

INTERNS
Mamello Rakotsoane
Refloee Molise
Kananelo Mokhele

CONTRIBUTORS
Theko Tlebere
Motsamai Mokotjo

PRODUCTION
Bataung Monaheng
Khosi Matheka

VIDEOGRAPHER
Tumelo Taole

DISTRIBUTION
Lehlohonolo Mantsoe

MARKETING
Tefah Sello
Tumelo Ramotsoane
marketing@newsdayonline.co.ls

WEBSITE
www.newsdayonline.co.ls

FACEBOOK
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Justice priced out of reach as public loses faith in courts

Thoboloko Nfšonyane

Public trust in Lesotho's justice system continues to decline as many Basotho increasingly feel that the courts are too expensive, too slow and unfairly influenced by powerful people.

A new Afrobarometer survey has painted a worrying picture of a justice system that many citizens no longer fully trust to deliver fair outcomes. The findings show that while Basotho still strongly believe in the rule of law, confidence in the courts has steadily weakened over the past decade.

Only 48% of citizens said they are confident that ordinary people can obtain justice through the courts. Of these, only 16% said they are "very confident" while 32% said they are "somewhat confident".

On the other hand, 19% said they are "not very confident" and 31% said they are "not confident at all".

The findings suggest that nearly half of the population has little or no faith in the courts' ability to provide justice.

The survey points to several reasons behind the declining trust, including the high cost of litigation, perceptions of corruption among judges and magistrates, delays in court processes and the belief that the law favours the rich and politically connected.

For many people, the biggest obstacle is affordability. Only 33% of respondents said they believe they could afford to take a matter to court if necessary. Although 56% believe a case could be resolved fairly and 42% believe it could be resolved within a reasonable time, the costs involved remain a major barrier.

Opening a file at a private law firm costs an average of M2,500, although prices differ between lawyers. Beyond that, clients are often required to pay consultation fees, retainers, court appearance fees, drafting costs, filing fees and transport expenses for witnesses or experts.

For many households already struggling with poverty and unemployment, these expenses make the formal justice system almost impossible to access.

The survey found that while 56% of Basotho believe they could access legal advice or support, only 30% believe they could actually afford such services. About 64% said they cannot afford legal assistance.

The burden falls hardest on poor and rural communities.

Among people experiencing high levels of poverty, 70% said they cannot afford court costs while 67% said they cannot afford legal support. Women were also more likely to report financial difficulties in accessing justice, with 67% saying court processes are unaffordable compared to 56%



A gavel at the High Court Main Division

of men.

About 65% of rural residents also said court costs are beyond their reach. Although legal aid services exist to help poor citizens, the programme continues to face criticism for being underfunded and overstretched.

Depending on one's financial circumstances, some legal aid beneficiaries pay M600 while others pay up to M3,000 through instalments. However, public awareness about the programme remains very low.

Only 23% of Basotho said they are aware of legal aid services in their communities. Awareness is even lower among rural residents at 20% and citizens above the age of 55 at 19%.

This lack of awareness means many people who qualify for legal aid may never benefit from it. As confidence in formal courts weakens, many Basotho are instead turning to traditional leaders and customary courts to settle disputes.

The survey found that 66% of respondents would prefer to resolve a legal dispute through a chief or traditional court. Only 19% said they would go to the police while a mere 2% would choose a local court.

Support for traditional dispute resolution is particularly strong in rural areas, where 71% of respondents preferred chiefs over formal courts.

The findings suggest that traditional leaders are increasingly filling the gap left by a justice system that many people see as expensive and inaccessible.

At the same time, public trust in the judiciary has continued to decline since 2014.

According to the survey, only 49% of Basotho now trust the courts "somewhat" or "a lot", while 47% express little or

no trust in the judiciary. This represents a 17% decline in trust over the past decade.

Interestingly, trust levels differ across groups.

Rural residents appear to have more trust in the courts, standing at 56%, compared to urban residents at only 39%. Citizens with higher education levels are also more skeptical. Only 26% of respondents with post-secondary education said they trust the judiciary.

The survey also highlights growing fears about corruption within the justice system.

About 28% of Basotho believe that most or all judges and magistrates are corrupt, while 46% believe at least some are corrupt. Only 14% said they believe there is no corruption in the judiciary.

Even more concerning is that perceptions of widespread corruption among judges and magistrates have increased by 12% since 2014.

Urban residents and highly educated citizens were more likely to believe that corruption exists within the courts.

Many respondents also believe the law is not applied equally.

About 65% said people are often or always treated unequally under the law. Meanwhile, 67% said officials who commit crimes frequently escape punishment while only 36% said ordinary citizens who commit crimes go unpunished.

The findings reinforce a growing public perception that powerful individuals are protected while ordinary citizens face harsher treatment.

About 58% of respondents believe judges and magistrates often decide cases based on the wishes of influential

people rather than the law itself.

Many Basotho also believe punishments differ depending on a person's social status.

Around 75% said punishments for powerful people are too lenient, while only 14% said ordinary citizens receive lenient punishment. About 51% believe punishments for ordinary citizens are too harsh.

Despite these frustrations, Basotho still strongly support the principle of the rule of law.

About 82% said the prime minister must obey the law and court decisions even if he disagrees with them. The same percentage strongly supported the broader principle of the rule of law, while 62% said Parliament should hold the prime minister accountable for public funds.

However, many citizens doubt whether these principles are respected in practice.

The survey also explored public views on capital punishment.

About 58% of respondents supported the death penalty for serious crimes such as murder while 40% said it can never be justified.

Support for capital punishment was strongest among women, urban residents and senior citizens.

Although the death penalty remains legal in Lesotho, the last execution took place in 1995.

The findings come at a time when justice sector reforms remain slow.

Parliament passed the 10th Amendment last year as part of broader institutional reforms aimed at strengthening the independence and credibility of public institutions. However, regulations needed to implement the reforms have still not been drafted by the responsible ministries.

The reforms are intended to improve accountability and reduce political interference in institutions, including the judiciary.

Concerns over judicial independence have become more pronounced in recent years, especially regarding how senior officials in public institutions are appointed.

Observers say meaningful reforms will require strong political commitment if public trust is to be restored.

While opening the judicial year in February this year, Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane acknowledged the importance of protecting the judiciary's integrity.

"Judicial independence and accountability are non-negotiable."

He stressed that judges must be free to decide cases without political pressure, economic influence or pressure from public opinion.

Although he did not directly address the growing cost of litigation, his remarks highlighted the need for a justice system that is independent, efficient and accountable to the public.

The Chief Justice also warned that delays in delivering judgments damage public confidence in the courts.

He said accountability must go hand in hand with judicial independence and that litigants deserve judgments that are clear, timely and well reasoned. According to him, disciplinary measures are sometimes necessary to protect the integrity and reputation of the judiciary.

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Opposition tears into govt over half-hearted austerity measures

Thoboloko Nfšonyane

Opposition parties in parliament have sharply criticised the government's attempted austerity measures, saying they are too weak to shield Basotho from rising fuel and commodity prices triggered by growing tensions in the Middle East.

The opposition this week said the government should have fully absorbed the increases instead of introducing what it describes as limited and delayed relief measures.

The criticism comes as Lesotho, like many countries around the world, faces mounting pressure from global fuel price instability caused by the ongoing conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States.

The opposition bloc, made up of the Democratic Congress, All Basotho Convention, Popular Front for Democracy, Basotho Action Party, Basotho National Party and African Transformation, accused Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane of poor leadership and failing to respond decisively to the worsening economic pressure facing ordinary citizens.

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Mathibeli Mokhothu, said the current administration has failed to govern effectively.

Mokhothu, who previously served as deputy prime minister, argued that the current government's response to the economic crisis is weaker than measures introduced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic under former Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro.

"Politics has caught up with these guys," said Mokhothu.

He argued that the government should have introduced full subsidies to cushion citizens from soaring prices instead of partial interventions.

The criticism follows government announcements made in April aimed at easing the burden on consumers.

These included the zero-rating of bread, sunflower oil, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit, as well as the temporary removal of the fuel levy for three months.

Government said the measures were intended to reduce pressure on households as fuel prices continue to rise globally.



Members of opposition parties during a press conference

However, the opposition says the interventions are inadequate and have not yet taken practical effect because the gazettes needed to formalise them have still not been published.

The latest economic fears stem largely from instability in the Middle East, particularly around the strategically important Strait of Hormuz.

Iran has reportedly threatened to shut down the strait, one of the world's busiest oil shipping routes, amid escalating conflict involving Israel and the United States.

The passage is critical for the transportation of oil, liquefied natural gas and fertilisers. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has already warned that continued instability in the region could drive up prices of fuel, food and other essential commodities.

"Higher energy, fertilizer and transport costs including freight rates, bunker fuel prices and insurance premiums may increase food costs and intensify cost-of-living pressures, particularly for the most vulnerable."

The opposition said Basotho are already struggling with unemployment, poverty and rising living costs, making stronger government intervention necessary.

Besides attacking the austerity measures, opposition parties also criticised Prime Minister Matekane's recent cabinet reshuffle, saying it contradicts the government's earlier promises of a

lean administration.

The reshuffle introduced several new appointments, including 'Mamokete Ntšekhe as Minister of Health, Voeswa Tshaka as minister in the newly created Ministry of Home Affairs and Police, 'Makatheho Motsoasele as minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Nkhethoa Seetsa in the newly established Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship.

Mokhothu mocked the government for previously boasting that it had reduced the number of ministers to 15, only for the cabinet to now grow to 22 ministers with just 18 months remaining before the end of the 11th Parliament.

He said while some of the newly appointed ministers may represent "fresh blood", they have been assigned demanding portfolios that require experienced leadership.

He stressed that ministerial appointments should not only be based on political considerations but also on qualifications and competence.

The opposition also turned its attention to allegations of corruption and conflicts of interest within government. BAP leader Nqosa Mahao accused ministers and members of parliament from the ruling party of doing business with the government while holding public office.

Mahao said such practices create serious conflicts of interest and undermine public confidence in government.

His comments were echoed by former Revolution for Prosperity member and current leader of the African Transformation, Mahali Phamotse.

Dr Phamotse alleged that some members of the ruling party entered politics primarily to enrich themselves.

She claimed that party loyalists are rewarded with government tenders while those who oppose the leadership are sidelined.

Dr Phamotse further alleged that some individuals are attempting to "recover" money spent during election campaigns through government contracts.

Meanwhile, Mokhethi Shelile declined to directly respond to questions sent by this publication. Instead, he said the ruling party would address the issues during a planned press conference.

"We are going to call for a press conference tomorrow [Friday] Sir. [The] media will be advised on the time and venue early tomorrow or this evening [Thursday] (sic)."

The opposition parties said they have since formed a task team to investigate allegations involving ministers and MPs accused of trading with government.

They say the task team will also pursue legal action where necessary. According to the opposition, such conduct violates both ethical standards and constitutional provisions governing public office.

Mokhothu cited Section 59 of the Constitution, which provides for the disqualification of members of parliament under certain circumstances.

"Corruption has worsened, as the Corruption Perceptions Index shows, and this is due to conflicts of interest," said Prof. Mahao.

In the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, Lesotho scored 37 out of 100 and ranked 99th out of 182 countries.

The opposition said it would not publicly reveal the identities of members of the task force because they could become targets.

The allegations come against the backdrop of a recent Constitutional Court ruling involving efforts to tighten rules on conflicts of interest among politicians.

The court ruled that the National Assembly acted unconstitutionally when it rejected a private member's bill sponsored by Advocates Lekhetho Rakuoane and Teboho Mojapela.

The bill sought to prohibit ministers and members of parliament from holding government contracts while serving in public office.

The opposition now argues that unless strong measures are taken against corruption and conflicts of interest, public trust in government will continue to decline while ordinary Basotho bear the growing burden of rising living costs.

Govt under fire over railway repair lethargy

Seabata Mahao

Questions are mounting over the government's commitment to maintaining Lesotho's only railway line as prolonged delays in rehabilitating the track continue to push up food transport costs and deepen pressure on struggling households.

More than two years after authorities announced plans to repair part of the 2.5-kilometre railway stretch linking the Maseru Border Gate to Maseru Railway Station, there is still no visible construction activity on the ground.

The continued deterioration of the line has disrupted grain deliveries into the country, forcing major companies to shift from rail to more expensive road transport, costs that are increasingly filtering down to consumers through higher food prices.

The delays are especially affecting users like Lesotho Flour Mills (LFM), one of the country's key suppliers of staple foods.

Since late 2023, rail operators have struggled to transport grain to the company due to the broken line.

In an exclusive interview, LFM's Chief Executive Officer Fourie Du Plessis confirmed that the railway collapse has had direct financial consequences for the company.

"We are currently working together with the Ministry on the rail breakdown maintenance. It is true that this has significantly impacted our commodity prices," he said.

Du Plessis said LFM initially worked closely with authorities on the rehabilitation plans, but responsibility for the project now lies with the Roads Directorate. However, he said the company has not received recent updates on progress.

According to him, a tender issued in September 2025 had still not been awarded by the time it closed



The 2.5-kilometre stretch linking Maseru Border Gate to Maseru Station

in February 2026.

"Road transport is quite expensive compared to rail transport," he said.

He warned that the prolonged delays are eroding the company's profitability at a time when it cannot freely increase prices because of competition from South African imports.

"Imports of food products into the country are based on a free market principle... Increasing food prices will therefore not be an option," "We are experiencing pressure on gross margins due to the railway line not being repaired," Du Plessis explained.

The situation has intensified concerns about whether government fully appreciates the strategic importance of the railway line to Lesotho's food security. Lesotho imports most of its grain and other basic food commodities from South Africa, making efficient freight systems critical for keeping food prices stable.

Economists warn that when transport costs rise, the increases are eventually passed on to consumers through higher prices for bread, maize meal and other essentials.

The country is already grappling with a rising cost of living fuelled by soaring transport and fuel prices.

Many Basotho households are struggling to cope with increasing expenses for food, electricity and public transport.

Against this background, the failure to urgently rehabilitate a railway that supports bulk grain imports is likely to place even more pressure on vulnerable consumers.

The Roads Directorate, which is responsible for railway infrastructure, has blamed procurement difficulties and limited technical capacity for the delays.

In a statement to Newsday, the Directorate said M10 million had been allocated for the rehabilitation project during the 2025/26 financial year.

It said a detailed railway assessment was carried out in April 2025 together with LFM and a South African engineering company called Flint.

According to the Directorate, the findings formed the basis for tender documents issued later. However, the procurement process reportedly failed after no contractor qualified for the work.

"The works were advertised and bids received. However, there was no successful bidder," the Directorate said.

Authorities said the tender will now be re-advertised regionally because of limited local expertise.

Still, critics argue that government's slow response reflects a broader lack of urgency around rail infrastructure despite its economic importance.

The railway line, although short, remains strategically significant because it is Lesotho's only rail connection to South Africa and regional freight networks.

Established in 1905, the railway historically served as a key transport corridor for bulk imports into the country.

Although passenger train services stopped in 1989 following years of decline, freight operations have continued to support industries importing grain, cement and fuel.

The railway infrastructure also includes a government-owned grain depot and container handling facility leased to South African freight company Transnet.

Transport experts say neglecting rail infrastructure often leads to greater dependence on trucks, which increase road damage, transport costs and congestion.

The World Bank notes that efficient rail systems help countries lower logistics costs, strengthen trade competitiveness and improve economic resilience.

The institution also warns that overreliance on road freight increases infrastructure wear and raises transport expenses.

In Lesotho's case, the deteriorating railway line has already forced more heavy freight trucks onto roads between the border and Maseru, further straining road infrastructure.

For ordinary Basotho consumers, however, the bigger concern remains the cost of food. With grain deliveries now relying heavily on expensive trucking, fears are growing that the continued railway delays could eventually push staple food prices even higher.

The prolonged inactivity has now left many questioning whether government is truly serious about protecting critical infrastructure that directly affects food security, business competitiveness and the cost of living.



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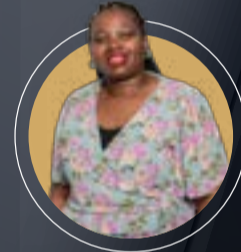
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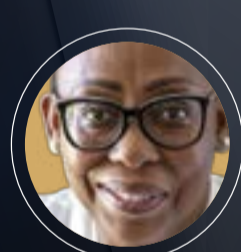
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Corporate & Commercial
Lawyer



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Newsday Business

'Limited exports, narrow industrial base choking economy'

Staff Reporter

Lesotho's economic growth is being constrained by deep-rooted structural weaknesses, with limited export capacity, excessive dependence on imports and a narrow industrial base emerging as major barriers to sustainable economic expansion, job creation and long-term economic resilience.

According to the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC), the country faces a persistent balance-of-payments constraint in which import spending consistently exceeds export earnings, leaving the economy vulnerable to recurring slowdowns and external shocks.

In its recently launched Letsema Strategy 2026-2031, the corporation states that as income rise, demand for imported goods such as food, fuel, machinery and industrial inputs grows rapidly, while export growth remains weak and unable to keep pace.

"Exports do not expand at the same pace," the LNDC said.

The strategy warns that this imbalance continues to place pressure on foreign exchange reserves and weakens the country's ability to sustain growth over long periods, and as a result, the economy experiences repeated boom-and-slowdown cycles that prevent meaningful structural transformation.

"The economy repeatedly experiences short bursts of expansion followed by periods of slowdown," the strategy notes.

The corporation argues that Lesotho's inability to consistently grow beyond the five-to-six percent range reflects what it describes as a "structural speed limit" on economic growth.

The report identifies over-dependence on imports and weak economic diversification as central drivers of the problem.

According to the LNDC, Lesotho's production base remains limited both in diversity and sophistication, restricting the country's ability to produce competi-

tive, high-value goods capable of strengthening exports and generating quality employment.

"Lesotho's export basket is characterised by limited diversification

and a dominance of low value-added goods, which undermines its potential for export-led economic growth," the strategy states.

Currently, Lesotho's exports are concentrated largely in basic apparel, rough diamonds, unprocessed wool and mohair, and water exports, sectors that provide limited value addition and weaker industrial linkages within the domestic economy.

The strategy suggests that this reliance on largely raw or low-value exports effectively results in the export of potential jobs and industrial opportunities that could otherwise stimulate broader economic activity.

In contrast, advanced economies export complex products such as pharmaceuticals, precision equipment and specialised machinery, industries that depend on advanced industrial capabilities, skilled labour, research capacity and technological innovation, areas where Lesotho remains underdeveloped.

The LNDC further warns that without stronger industrialisation and diversification, Lesotho will continue struggling to generate sufficient foreign exchange, deepen domestic production capacity and reduce vulnerability to external economic pressures.

Against this backdrop, the corporation has launched the Letsema Strategy, anchored on four mutually reinforcing pillars: driving industrial trans-



formation, unlocking capital for growth, orchestrating the national industrial ecosystem, and building the capabilities required to deliver results.

The strategy positions the LNDC as a central coordinator of industrial development through partnerships with government, the private sector and development institutions.

At the centre of the strategy is an ambition to transform Lesotho's economy by 2031 through five major outcomes aimed at expanding employment, diversifying production, strengthening industrial capacity and improving economic resilience.

One of the headline targets is the creation of 50,000 new jobs and the development of at least 100 new industrialists during the strategy period.

"The first defining outcome of the strategy is the creation of 50,000 new net jobs facilitated by LNDC by March 2031. Employment creation is the most direct channel through which industrial development raises income and improves livelihoods. Expanding productive employment opportunities is therefore central to fulfilling LNDC's mandate."

The corporation also plans to establish five new industrial sectors as part of efforts to broaden the country's productive base and reduce dependence on a narrow range of industries.

"This objective reflects a deliberate effort to di-

versify Lesotho's productive and export base, which currently remains concentrated in a narrow range of industries," the strategy states.

"Together with the deepening of product sophistication and industrial capabilities, it seeks to transform Lesotho's economy from: a narrow and low value-added industrial structure, into, a diversified and higher value-added industrial economy."

The strategy further seeks to help Lesotho break its historical growth ceiling by targeting an annual GDP per capita growth rate of seven percent by March 2031.

"By the end of the strategic period, which is March 2031, the strategy targets an annual nominal exit GDP per capita growth rate of 7 percent. The trajectory toward this growth target is expected to progress gradually as industrial investments translate into expanded productive capacity."

Another key concern raised in the strategy is Lesotho's weak standing in global measures of economic sophistication.

The LNDC identified improving Lesotho's Economic Complexity Index (ECI) ranking as one of the defining outcomes of the strategy.

The ECI measures the diversity and sophistication of products a country is capable of producing and exporting, with higher complexity levels generally associated with stronger productivity, higher incomes, greater export competitiveness and improved economic resilience.

"At present, Lesotho is the only country within the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) whose ECI score is not reported in the Atlas of Economic Complexity, largely due to export data quality limitations," the strategy states.

"The strategy therefore sets a phased trajectory for improving Lesotho's position within the global economic complexity framework."

The LNDC argues that addressing Lesotho's structural economic constraints will require strengthening export competitiveness, reducing excessive dependence on imports, improving industrial capabilities, upgrading skills development and building stronger linkages within the domestic economy.

The corporation also acknowledged the need to improve institutional effectiveness and strategic coordination to ensure that investments and programmes are aligned with clearly defined national priorities.

Without stronger coordination and implementation capacity, the strategy warns, efforts aimed at transforming the economy risk remaining fragmented and ineffective.

PostBank deepens financial solutions drive with new funeral plan

Refloe Molise

Lesotho Post Bank (LPB) has expanded its suite of financial services with the launch of a new insurance product, the Ntšelise Funeral Plan, as it moves to strengthen its promise of delivering inclusive and relevant financial solutions to Basotho.

Unveiled this week at Lancers Inn, the funeral cover product marks the bank's latest step in diversifying beyond traditional banking, positioning itself as a holistic financial services provider that responds to both the economic realities and social needs of its customers.

Implemented in partnership with LNIG Hollard Life, the introduction of the Ntšelise Funeral Plan comes as part of the bank's broader strategy to deepen financial inclusion while helping customers better manage life's uncertainties, particularly the high and often sudden costs associated with bereavement.

Speaking at the launch, LPB's Chief Sales Officer, Lineo Masupha said the product was developed after the bank identified a growing demand for fu-

neral cover among its customer base.

"We engage with our customers through our branches and call centre and we discovered a strong need for a funeral cover, and as a bank that listens, we developed Ntšelise to meet those needs," she said.

Masupha noted that the plan is available to Post Bank customers with active accounts, offering cover ranging from M10,000 to M70,000.

She further explained that the cover extends to family members, including children and parents, and can also be adopted by businesses seeking to provide cover for employees.

She explained that the product was structured with flexibility and inclusivity at its core, allowing customers to choose premium payment options aligned with their financial capacity.

"One of the key features of the product is a cash-back benefit after every five years, regardless of whether a claim has been made," she said.

This feature, she said, positions the Ntšelise Funeral Plan as more than just a safety net, but also a

long-term financial tool that rewards consistency.

Masupha further highlighted that in cases of accidental death, the policy provides a double payout, offering additional financial relief to grieving families.

Children are covered up to the age of 21, or 25 if still in school, while adults must present valid identification documents to enroll.

She added that while individuals cannot join the plan after the age of 85, those who enroll earlier remain covered for life, ensuring long-term security.

Masupha added that members who consistently pay their premiums will receive a six-month premium benefit after every five years, further encouraging commitment and consistency among policyholders.

LPB's Managing Director, Mokhachane Mopeli, said the product reflects the institution's enduring mission to improve the livelihoods of Basotho through accessible and practical financial solutions.

"Lesotho Post Bank is a bank for Basotho. We have always looked out for our people, and this product is part of our continued effort to improve their lives,"



Mokhachane Mopeli, Lesotho Post Bank Managing Director delivering his speech during the launch of the Ntšelise Funeral Cover

he said.

Mopeli emphasised that the bank is building on its prior experience in insurance, particularly in credit life products, to broaden its offering into funeral cover.

"This is not something entirely new to us. We have been offering credit life insurance for a long time, and this product builds on that experience to provide even more comprehensive support," he said.

He noted that funeral expenses often place significant financial pressure on families, particularly when death occurs unexpectedly.

"When death occurs, families often face both emotional and financial challenges. Through Ntšelise, we aim to provide support during those difficult times and ensure that families are not left struggling," he said.



Newsday Health

Ntsoaki Motaung

New evidence has made Lesotho's fight against viral hepatitis more urgent. The disease is more complicated and uneven than experts thought, and thousands may be living with it undiagnosed until they develop serious liver problems.

Health experts have called hepatitis B a "silent killer" because it spreads quietly and often shows no symptoms for years, sometimes decades, before causing liver failure or cancer. New research from BMJ Public Health and the World Health Organization is changing how the country sees the size of the problem and the gaps in its response.

The WHO Global Hepatitis Report 2026 says Africa is still one of the regions most affected by hepatitis B, with about 24 deaths per 100,000 people. Lesotho is part of this high-burden area, where deaths from hepatitis B continue even as other infectious diseases are starting to stabilise.

The report points out that the disease's long delay before symptoms appear is a big reason for late diagnosis. Up to 95 per cent of babies infected with hepatitis B develop a long-term infection and often have no symptoms for 20 to 40 years before serious problems show up.

By the time symptoms show, many patients already have cirrhosis or liver cancer.

"Those infected in early childhood often show no symptoms until their 40s or 50s," the report notes.

However, local research shows a more detailed picture. A survey of over 6,700 people in two districts found that 1.2 per cent of those aged 10 and older have hepatitis B. This is below the 5 per cent level usually used to define high-burden countries.

Even with this lower national rate, the reports warn against being complacent. The data show clear hotspots, especially among people in cities, adult men, people living with HIV, and tobacco users.

Lesotho's silent hepatitis burden exposed

...as data reveals hidden gaps in detection and care



People living with HIV made up over 40 per cent of hepatitis B cases found in the study, showing a strong link between the two diseases.

The reports indicated that the biggest problem is finding cases early.

The health system does a good job of finding hepatitis B in patients who are already in HIV care. About 92 per cent of people with both infections get treatment because they use the same drugs. But many people are not in the system at all.

These people are called "mono-infected" patients. They have hepatitis B but not HIV, so they often miss out on regular screening.

The BMJ study found that almost one-third of these patients already needed antiviral treatment because of liver damage, but they were only found through special research screening.

These findings reveal a major blind spot in the health system: late diagnosis occurs because there is insufficient screening for everyone.

Prevention is also limited by problems in the health system, even though an effective vaccine is available.

The hepatitis B vaccine is 95 per cent effective, but it must be given within 24 hours of birth to prevent mother-to-child transmission. In Africa, only 17 per cent of babies got the vaccine on time in 2024.

Because of this, 1.4 per cent of children under five have chronic hepatitis B, which is much higher than the global goal of 0.1 per cent by 2030.

Hepatitis C is less common than hepatitis B, but it is still a public health concern. It is mainly spread through unsafe medical injections and sharing needles.

Health experts believe hepatitis can be eliminated, but only if screening is quickly expanded beyond HIV clinics to general primary healthcare.

Local health specialist Molumaela Lepeli, a PhD candidate and public health worker, said hepatitis is often underestimated because it develops quietly.

"I would say Hepatitis B is a rare disease in Lesotho. However, even if one case calls for public concern, it has to be taken seriously, and investigations have to be conducted to find out about the cause," he said.

He also said that ongoing misunderstandings in communities, such as confusing hepatitis with "Sebete se se soeu," still delay diagnosis and treatment.

"Every missed diagnosis is a preventable death," the WHO report warns.

Health authorities say the tools to eliminate hepatitis are already available, including vaccines, tests, and effective treatments. The main challenge is making sure people are diagnosed early and have equal access to care.

Lepeli warned that if screening is not expanded quickly and better integrated into primary healthcare, hepatitis would keep causing deaths quietly, long before it shows up in national statistics.

The dark side of skin bleaching

...Experts warn of health risks tied to misuse of steroid-based creams

Ntsoaki Motaung

A growing and largely unregulated trend in skin bleaching practices has raised serious concern among health authorities in Lesotho, with experts warning that the misuse of steroid-based creams is exposing users to severe health complications, including irreversible skin damage and potential organ failure.

The concern comes as the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization intensify World Health Day 2026 activities, amid increasing reports of widespread abuse of topical steroids sold openly and unsupervised in shops, salons and informal markets across the country.

Health professionals say what was once strictly medical treatment for conditions such as eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis has increasingly been diverted into cosmetic use, driven by a desire for lighter skin, and this is reinforced by social media beauty standards.

At a recent World Health Day media workshop, officials warned that the normalisation of skin-lightening practices is fuelling dangerous self-medication, particularly among young people.

Julia Matsanya, a senior pharmacist from the Ministry of Health's Pharmaceutical Department, said topical steroids remain potent medicines that must be handled under strict medical supervision.

"Topical steroids, available in various formulations such as creams, ointments, gels, and lotions, are designed to suppress the immune response, to reduce inflammation, redness, and intense itching and are supposed to be used under medical supervision," she said; however, she cautioned that easy access has contributed to widespread misuse.

"Because these potent medical supplies are often easily accessible in local shops and over the counter without a doctor's prescription, many individuals have begun using them for non-medical purposes. They have gained popularity and are now being used for cosmetic purposes," she said.

Matsanya stressed that misinformation around these products is worsening the problem.

"People use them as skin-lighteners to change their complexion, and with the outcome being fairer and fairer, users do not realise they are damaging

their spirit and their health in the process, causing irreparable damage," Matsanya warned.

Matsanya said many of the creams circulating in informal markets contain high-potency steroids that are not intended for long-term facial use. While they may initially appear to improve skin texture and tone, the effects are often temporary and misleading.

A key concern, she said, is the misconception that these products treat skin conditions.

"When used without a diagnosis, they can mask serious infections or lead to a worsening of the original condition," Matsanya said.

Medical practitioners at the workshop outlined a disturbing range of side effects linked to prolonged, unsupervised use of the products, particularly in sensitive areas such as the face and skin folds.

These include skin peeling, painful acne eruptions, abnormal hair growth, thinning of the skin, a condition called atrophy, visible broken blood vessels and deep stretch marks.

Matsanya also highlighted a dangerous dependency cycle in which users experience initial improvement followed by severe rebound symptoms upon stopping use.

"This forces the user into a state of dependency to avoid the intense burning, itching, and flare-ups that follow withdrawal," Matsanya explained.

The medical practitioners disclosed that this cycle is increasingly common, driven by social pressure, peer influence and beauty ideals promoted by social media.

Beyond visible damage, Matsanya warned that prolonged absorption of these chemicals through the skin may also affect internal organs.

"High absorption through the skin into the bloodstream can lead to systemic organ failure, among other risks. This includes a heightened risk of kidney failure and adrenal suppression, posing a particular threat to vulnerable groups such as children, whose skin is thinner and pregnant women," Matsanya said.

The Acting Director General of Health Services, Dr Llang Maama, stressed that public health decisions must be guided by science rather than social trends or unverified advice.

"This message aligns directly with the World Health Day 2026 global theme: Together for health. Stand with science."

World Health Organization representative in Lesotho, Dr Innocent Nuwagira, echoed the concern,

warning against the dangers of misinformation in health choices.

"Science transforms uncertainty into understanding. Without the clarity provided by rigorous scientific inquiry, we risk being led by bias and misconception and too often toward treatments that fail us or even place us in harm's way," he said.

Health Ministry's Principal Secretary Mantsoanelo Monyobi also called for stronger public awareness campaigns and stricter enforcement against the sale

of unregulated steroid products in cosmetic markets.

She urged the media to play a stronger watchdog role in exposing health misinformation and protecting communities from harmful beauty practices.

Health authorities caution that unless regulation is tightened and public awareness significantly improved, the growing culture of skin bleaching could escalate into a broader public health crisis, particularly among young people increasingly exposed to unrealistic beauty standards.

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Theko Tlebere

Common Concern

Lesotho Ambassador Visits Peking University as ISSCAD Celebrates a Decade of Leadership in South-South Development

On April 29, 2026, Peking University transitioned from a historic academic institution into a vibrant diplomatic and developmental center for African students especially those from Lesotho. This transformation coincided with the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development (ISSCAD) commemorating its tenth anniversary during the Global South Sustainable Development Forum. Among the esteemed attendees was Her Excellency Ambassador 'Mapaballo Mile, Lesotho's Ambassador to China, whose participation underscored Lesotho's engagement in critical dialogues surrounding development, governance, and South-South cooperation.

The event was hosted at Peking University (PKU), also referred to as Beida, one of China's preeminent educational institutions. Established in 1898 as the Imperial University of Peking, PKU was China's inaugural national comprehensive university and has played a crucial role in the nation's intellectual, political, scientific, and social modernization. It is recognized as a leading institution within Chinese higher education, consistently ranked among the world's top universities. As of 2026, Peking University was positioned 14th globally by QS and 13th globally by Times Higher Education, reinforcing its esteemed status both domestically and within the international academic community.

Ambassador Mile's attendance was significant not only for representation but also for the opportunity to engage with an institution that has educated generations of scholars, policymakers, innovators, and leaders. The afternoon Think Tank Forum transitioned from celebration to substantive policy discussions. Under the theme "New Landscape of South-South Cooperation," Ambassador Mile participated in a panel alongside scholars, diplomats, researchers, and representatives from countries such as China, Egypt, South Africa and Malawi. Her involvement was both symbolic representing Lesotho at this significant ISSCAD milestone, and strategic, as the discussions centered on key issues pertinent to Lesotho's development: human capital, governance, economic transformation, international cooperation, and the future of developing nations.

ISSCAD boasts a brief yet impactful history. President Xi Jinping announced its establishment during the High-Level Roundtable on South-South Cooperation at the United Nations' 70th anniversary in September 2015. It was officially launched at Peking University on April 29, 2016, with support from China's Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Finance. Its mission is to facilitate national development research, cultivate high-level talent from developing countries, and promote governance exchange

and developmental learning among Global South nations.

For Lesotho, this mission holds particular significance. Ambassador Mile articulated the importance of the partnership, asserting that, "Our partnership in human resource development is a cornerstone of the Basotho development agenda." Her statement emphasized that education is central to diplomacy and highlighted that China-Lesotho cooperation transcends infrastructure and traditional assistance, encompassing leadership development, policy learning, research capacity, and professional training tailored to Lesotho's specific needs.

Ambassador Mile further noted the tangible outcomes of Lesotho's involvement at ISSCAD, stating that "Young leaders and civil servants from Lesotho have indeed walked the halls of the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development at Peking University." This assertion underscores that ISSCAD is not merely an academic program; it is a platform for cultivating leadership that connects officials, researchers, and professionals from developing countries to study national development, governance, public administration, and policy transformation.

To date, seven Basotho individuals have participated in ISSCAD, pursuing either a Master of Public Administration or doctoral studies in Na-

tional Development. Among them is Dr Leseko Makhetha from the National University of Lesotho, Dr Fusi Talasi who works in the security forces and Mr. Theko Tlebere, who is expected to graduate in June 2026 with his PhD in Theoretical Economics, majoring in National Development. His forthcoming graduation will enhance Lesotho's cadre of China-trained development scholars, illustrating that Lesotho's engagement with ISSCAD is not merely symbolic; it fosters human capital critical for policy analysis, governance reform, public administration, and national development planning.

Ambassador Mile's remarks during sideline interviews with the media also hinted at future aspirations, as she stated: "Following today's event, I absolutely commit to encouraging even more of our youth to apply. ISSCAD's focus on governance and developmental best practices is exactly what Lesotho needs to transform our economy." This commitment is vital, as Lesotho's developmental challenges necessitate more than financial assistance; they require individuals equipped with skills in public policy, economic transformation, institutional coordination, project implementation, and the complexities of development in small states.

The tenth anniversary celebration thus embodied three significant aspects. Firstly, it marked a decade of ISSCAD as a vital institution for Global South development. Secondly, it showcased Peking University as a premier center for policy learning and leadership training. Lastly, it provided Lesotho with a platform to assert that human resource development is central to its diplomatic relations with China. In this context, Ambassador Mile's visit to Peking University was more than mere attendance at an anniversary, it represented a strategic act of national positioning. By participating in the forum, she aligned Lesotho with a broader Global South discourse on development models, governance capacity, and the future of international cooperation. She also reminded Basotho students in China that their academic endeavors contribute to a larger national agenda.

As ISSCAD embarks on its second decade, Lesotho faces the challenge of translating educational opportunities into national capacity. Ambassador 'Mapaballo Mile's presence at Peking University was very significant, intertwining diplomacy, scholarship, youth development, and national transformation. At Beida, one of the world's leading universities, Lesotho's voice was amplified, its flag was displayed, and its development aspirations were articulated with clarity. The future is NOW!

The recent unveiling of the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) five-year strategy was accompanied by all the signs of a major national moment, dignitaries, speeches, applause and ambitious promises about transforming Lesotho's economy.

On paper, the targets are ambitious and exactly what a struggling country like Lesotho wants to hear. The strategy promises to facilitate 50,000 new jobs, develop 100 Basotho industrialists, establish five new industrial sectors, and contribute towards 7% GDP per capita growth by 2031.

At face value, there is nothing wrong with ambition. In fact, Lesotho desperately needs bold economic thinking at a time when unemployment continues to rise, factories continue to close and young people are losing hope of ever finding decent work.

The real issue is whether Basotho should genuinely believe these targets are achievable based on the realities currently on the ground.

For years, the LNDC has talked industrialisation, investment attraction and economic diversification. But many industrial sites under its control remain underutilised or completely empty.

Anyone driving through industrial areas in Tikoe, Thetsane, Maputsoe or Ha Nyenye can see many factory shells standing idle. Some have remained empty since the economic shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic devastated the textile sector.

Others were affected by global supply chain disruptions and rising operating costs linked to geopolitical tensions around the world. Still, there are others that have never been used since completion of their construction!

These empty factories are not just buildings; they represent lost jobs, lost income and broken hopes for thousands of Basotho families. Many workers who once depended on these factories are still unemployed today.

LNDC's big promises must translate into real jobs

That is why the new strategy cannot simply rely on polished presentations and ambitious figures. Basotho have heard ambitious promises before. What they now want to see is practical action that delivers visible results.

The strategy correctly speaks about diversification away from overdependence on the apparel industry. Lesotho's economy has for too long relied heavily on textile exports under trade agreements such as African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

And the textile industry has become increasingly fragile due to global competition, rising production costs and uncertainty over international trade arrangements. Diversification now rather later, is therefore more than necessary.

Diversification should begin with what Lesotho already has instead of always waiting for completely new mega-investments that may never arrive.

The empty factory shells across the country are low-hanging fruits that LNDC can immediately use to test its strategy.

Why can't these facilities be repurposed into agro-processing centres? Lesotho imports large amounts of poultry products, pork, vegetables and processed foods from South Africa every year. Yet the country already has infrastructure sitting unused.

Some factory shells could probably be converted into poultry production and processing

centres. Others could support piggery projects or food packaging operations for local and regional markets.

There is also a growing global interest in indoor farming technologies where crops are grown inside controlled environments. While such projects may sound ambitious, they are not impossible if approached gradually and strategically.

Even small pilot projects could help create jobs while reducing dependence on imports. More importantly, these kinds of projects would directly support food security while stimulating local production chains.

The LNDC strategy speaks strongly about creating Basotho industrialists. But industrialists do not emerge from speeches alone. They emerge when institutions deliberately support local entrepreneurs with affordable factory space, financing access, mentorship and market linkages.

Many young local entrepreneurs still struggle to access industrial space or capital despite years of hearing about empowerment programmes.

The danger with overly ambitious targets is that they can quickly become public relations exercises rather than measurable development plans.

Creating 50,000 jobs within five years is a massive undertaking for an economy as small and constrained as Lesotho's. It will require far

more than conferences and strategy launches.

It will require aggressive implementation, accountability and a willingness to make difficult decisions.

The LNDC also needs to improve public confidence through regular progress reporting. Basotho should not have to wait five years to discover whether the strategy succeeded or failed.

Quarterly or annual updates showing how many factories have been occupied, how many jobs have been created and how many Basotho businesses have been supported would help build trust.

To his credit, LNDC's Chief Executive Officer Thabo Khasipe appears to understand the scale of the challenge. He is widely regarded as intelligent and capable. But intelligence alone will not solve Lesotho's unemployment crisis.

The institution he leads must now move beyond broad ambitions and focus on practical, visible interventions that ordinary Basotho can feel in their daily lives.

The truth is simple: if the empty factory shells remain empty five years from now, then this strategy will have failed regardless of how impressive it sounds on paper. Lesotho's job-seeking public cannot afford another strategy that produces headlines without producing jobs.

Matekane throws weight behind Mohlomi Code to strengthen governance



Seabata Mahao & Refiloe Molise

Prime Minister Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane has formally endorsed the Mohlomi Code of Corporate Governance, describing it as a critical framework that could strengthen accountability, ethical leadership and economic resilience across both the public and private sectors.

Speaking during the opening of the two-day second Annual Intergenerational Value Creation Conference 2026 – Khotla held at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre yesterday, Matekane said good governance will determine whether Lesotho succeeds or struggles in the face of mounting global economic and political pressures.

The conference, organised by Institute of Directors (IoD) Lesotho under the theme "Corporate Governance, EESG and Policy Reforms: Building Intergenerational Value and Economic Resilience," brought together government leaders, corporate executives, academics, development partners and governance experts.

Among discussions was the official adoption of the Mohlomi Code of Corporate Governance as the country's reference standard for corporate governance conduct.

"The Government of Lesotho through Cabinet formally endorses the Mohlomi Code of Corporate Governance as the reference standard for governance conduct across public institutions, State-Owned Enterprises, Government-linked entities and the broader corporate sector," Matekane said.

The Prime Minister said the code would play an important role in promoting accountability, transparency and responsible leadership in many sectors of society, particularly within public institutions and state-owned entities where governance concerns have often been raised.

He further committed government to integrating the principles of the Mohlomi Code into governance mandates and performance frameworks of public entities.

Matekane said the principles contained in the code would also shape the conduct frameworks of public servants.

"We live in a world of continuing disruptions, geopolitical realignments, climate shocks, technological transformation and demographic shifts that are rewriting the rules of economic engagement," Matekane said.

He stressed that Lesotho needs strong governance systems capable of responding to these global pressures while also creating long-term economic stability.

The Prime Minister said governance should no longer be viewed merely as a compliance issue, but as a strategic tool for national development and institutional credibility.

He also highlighted the importance of involving young people in leadership and governance processes.

According to Matekane, more than 60 percent of Lesotho's population is below the age of 35, making youth participation critical for the country's future.

"I call upon the corporate sector to open its boardrooms and leadership pipelines to the next generation of Basotho leaders," he said.

The Mohlomi Code, developed by the Institute of Directors Lesotho, is inspired by the leadership philosophy of Chief Mohlomi and values later embraced by King Moshoeshoe I.

The framework seeks to move beyond basic legal compliance by encouraging ethical leadership, stakeholder inclusiveness and intergenerational value creation.

The code combines international corporate governance standards with African values and Basotho traditions.

Speaking at the conference, IoD Lesotho Chief Executive Officer Malehlohonolo Mahase said Lesotho has an opportunity to position itself as a leader in corporate governance in the region.

Mahase said governance should not only focus on rules and procedures but also on moral responsibility and accountability.

"The time to put into practice the intergenerational value creation principle was yesterday and the next best time is now," she said.

She added that the conference aimed to promote transformational leadership, sustainable development and economic resilience. Mahase further explained that the Mohlomi Code seeks to build institutions that are resilient, adaptive and forward-looking.

"We envision institutions that are resilient, adaptive and forward-thinking, leaders who embrace EESG

principles as core to strategy and an economy that creates sustainable value across generations," she said.

Chairperson of the Mohlomi Committee, Robert Likhang, said the world's growing economic uncertainty has made resilience and sound governance more important than ever.

He noted that recent geopolitical conflicts and global economic shocks have exposed weaknesses in many economies across the world.

Likhang said the Mohlomi Code was designed with these realities in mind through its emphasis on long-term sustainability and institutional resilience.

"At its core, this outcome seeks to institutionalise economic resilience as a national imperative," he said.

He called on government, investors, business leaders and development partners to work together in strengthening governance systems and building a more stable economy.

IoD Lesotho Chairperson Advocate Selebalo Ntepe also urged institutions in both the public and private sectors to fully embrace the implementation of the code.

Ntepe said Basotho traditional systems such as the khotla continue to offer important lessons on accountability, consultation and collective leadership.

The conference highlighted several key principles contained in the Mohlomi Code, including ethical leadership, transparency, accountability, stakeholder inclusiveness and integrated thinking.

The framework is organised into six major governance clusters covering board leadership, board conduct, board composition, audit systems, risk management, digital governance and sustainability reporting.

Delegates also discussed the concept of Economic, Environmental, Social and Governance (EESG), which expands on the widely recognised ESG governance model.

The discussions further focused on the role young people must play in shaping Lesotho's governance and economic future.

Khotla 2026 is expected to provide momentum for future governance reforms and policy discussions aimed at strengthening institutional integrity, improving leadership standards and promoting sustainable development across generations in Lesotho.


DIRECTORATE ON CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES
**Invitation for Bids (IFB):
PROVISION OF SECURITY SERVICES**
Tender No.: DCEO/PROC/2026/2027-1

1. **Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO)** has received financing from the Government of Lesotho and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the **Provision of Security Services**. The Directorate now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders clearly marked "**Bid for Provision of Security Services**."

2. Bidding will be conducted through Open National Competitive Tendering procedures as specified in the Public Procurement Act 2023 and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Act mentioned.

3. The services to be procured are as follows:

Item	Description	Quantity	Specifications
1	Security Guard	3	Unarmed security guards at DCEO Headquarters during the day
2	Security Guard	2	Armed with firearm security guards at DCEO Headquarters during the night
3	Security Guard	2	Unarmed security guards at Maseru Tourist Information and Crafts Centre (DCEO Offices) during the day
4	Security Guard	1	Armed with firearm security guard at Maseru Tourist Information and Crafts Centre (DCEO Offices) during the night
5	Security Guard	1	Armed with firearm security guard at DCEO Post Office Building
6	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO North Regional office Butha-Butha during the day
7	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO North Regional office Butha-Butha during the night
8	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO South Regional office Mophale's Hoek during the day

9	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO South Regional office Mophale's Hoek during the night
10	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO house (Masowe 1) during the day
11	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO house (Masowe 1) during the night
12	Security Guard	1	Unarmed security guard at DCEO house (Motho) during the day
13	Security Guard	1	Armed security guard at DCEO house (Motho) during the night

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the **DCEO Procurement Unit** during office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Friday at the address given under paragraph 6 below.

5. A complete set of bidding document in **English** may be purchased by interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LSL2, 000.00 (Two Thousand Maloti only)**. The method of payment **shall be cash, payable to the DCEO Finance Office**. Bids must be delivered to the address indicated under paragraph 6 below on or before **26th May 2026 at 10:00 a.m.** Electronic bidding **will not** be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of bidders' designated representatives who may choose to attend at the address indicated below on the same date (**26th May 2026**) at **10:05 a.m.**

6. All bids must be deposited in the tender box situated at the address below:

Ground Floor,
Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences,
Old Parliament Road,
Opposite Police Headquarters,
P.O. Box 16060,
Maseru, 100,
Lesotho.

For enquiries:
Tel: (+266) 2221 9200
Email: mathias@dceo.org.ls
Attention: Tsele Mathias (Mr.)


Road Fund
INVITATION FOR BIDS
TENDER FOR CLEANING SERVICES FOR ROAD FUND OFFICES
(IFB Number: RF/2026/S01)
1. Background and requirements:

The Road Fund Secretariat (RFS) is mandated to collect revenue and disburse funds for maintenance of roads in the country. RFS now invites interested locally registered Cleaning Companies to submit their most favourable bids for the provision of Cleaning Services.

2. Interested eligible service providers may obtain a complete set of Tender Documents in English from the Road Fund Secretariat website: www.roadfund.org.ls.

3. Request for clarifications may be send in writing to this email address procurement@roadfund.org.ls not later than **18th May 2026**.

4. Bids must be delivered to the address (8) below; on or before **3rd June 2026 at 10:30hrs**. Late bids will be rejected. Tenders will be opened in the presence of the Tenderers and/or their representatives who choose to attend in person at Road Fund Secretariat Boardroom on the same date, **3rd June 2026 at 11:00hrs**. Telefax and Email Tenders **will not be accepted**.

5. It is mandatory for bidders to submit the following valid documents: (a) Tax Clearance Certificates; (b) Business Identity Card/Trader's License, (c) Certificate of Bona Fide Bidding. **Non-compliance with these requirements shall invalidate a bid.**

6. Qualifications requirements for award include amongst others: (a) **Business experience in similar jobs**, (b) **Similar contracts of not less than a total of M100, 000.00 in the past Five years**, (c) **Evidence of satisfactory service from 3 referees (3 reference letters) and (d) Other requirements of the tender document**. The margin of preference for local companies shall be applied during evaluation. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.

7. A **mandatory site visit** will be held on the **12th May 2026** at Road Fund Head Office, at **10:30 hours**.

8. The address referred to above for Bid Submission and Bid Opening is: Road Fund Secretariat,

**Former Department of Rural Roads Building,
P.O. Box 14644,
Cnr Moshoeshe and Senate Roads,
Industrial Area, Maseru, Lesotho**

Bidders shall ensure that the envelopes/packages containing their bids are properly addressed as indicated under 8 above and are CLEARLY MARKED "Cleaning Services for Road Fund offices - IFB No.: RF/2026/S01".


THE WORLD BANK
Specific Procurement Notice
**Request for Bids
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)**
Country: Kingdom of Lesotho

Name of Project: Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project (P174171)

Contract Title: Supply and Delivery of Office Furniture and Equipment for Lesotho Public Procurement Authority

Loan No.: 07492-LS

FB Reference No.: LS-MOFDP-436382-GO-RFB

Publication date: April 02, 2026 (Extended)

- The **Kingdom of Lesotho** has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the **Lesotho Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project** and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for **Supply and Delivery of Office Furniture And Equipment For Lesotho Public Procurement Authority** "For this contract, the Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the World Bank's Disbursement Guidelines for Investment Project Financing, except for those payments, which the contract provides to be made through letter of credit."
- The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of the following Office Furniture and Equipment**:

Items	Quantity
Lot I	
Director General	
Presidential Desk	1
Presidential Chair	1
Cabinetry	
a) Server	1
b) Wall Unit with hinged glass doors	2
c) Wall Unit with hinged solid doors	2

Conference Table	1
Conference Chairs	6
Coat Hanger	1
Visitors Chairs	2
Directors	
Executive Desk	5
Executive Chair	5
Storage Cabinetry	5
4 Seater Round Conference Table	5
Conference chairs	20
Coat Hanger	5
Visitors Chair	10
Managers	
Executive Desk	5
Executive Chair	5
Storage Cabinetry	5
Coat Hanger	5
Visitors Chair	10
Staff	
4-Way Cluster Desk	5
High Back Chair	20
Cabinetry	5
Lot II	
Conference Room	
Conference room Table	1
Conference Room Chair	22

- Bidding will be conducted through national competitive procurement using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement



Regulations for IPF Borrowers" September 2023 ("Procurement Regulations") and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.

- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Contact Kamohelo Nthafa at kamohelo.nthafa@gov.ls; copy 'Mamaseko Lefothane at mamaseko.lefothane@gov.ls and inspect the bidding document during office hours from **0900 to 1600 hours** at the address provided below.
- The bidding document in **English** may be purchased by interested Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **M2000.00**. The method of payment is cash and will be receipted by the Financial Management Specialist at Planning Office No. 263, Second Floor.
- The document will be shared by email or collected in hard copy from the Project Administrator's Office, Finance House, First Floor, Office no: 1002. from **0800hrs to 1600hrs**.
- Bids must be delivered in **hard copies (1 original and 5 hard copies)** to the address below on or before **May 26, 2026. at 2:00 pm (SAST)**. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address below.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of **Ten-Thousand Maloti (M10,000.00)**.
- Attention is drawn to the Procurement Regulations requiring the Borrower to disclose information on the successful bidder's Beneficial Ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the **Beneficial Ownership** Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.
- The address referred to above is:

Public Sector Foundations for Service Delivery Project
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Tender Box
Finance House, Third Floor
E-mail: kamohelo.nthafa@gov.ls
Tel: +266 2231 6730



Kingdom of Lesotho

POSITION ADVERTISEMENT

The Ministry of Health has received support from Center for Disease Control (CDC) under the project title “**Strengthening Ministry of Health’s Capacity (MOH-Cap) for HIV Diagnosis, Treatment and Monitoring in the Kingdom of Lesotho**”. The Ministry is looking for suitable candidate for the position of **Procurement Officer**

Position title: Procurement Officer
Program: Ministry of Health – CDC Cooperative Agreement
Duty station: Ministry of Health Headquarters – Procurement Unit
Level of effort: Full-time
Duration: Four months; renewable subject to performance and availability of funding
Reporting to: The Officer will report functionally to the Procurement Manager and operationally to the Project Coordinator.

Background:
 A procurement officer is responsible for the acquisition of goods, services, or materials, ensuring cost-efficiency, quality, and compliance. Key duties include identifying supplier sources, negotiating contracts, managing vendor relationships, maintaining inventory records, and ensuring all purchasing processes comply with Donor’s procurement rules and the Government of Lesotho’s policies and regulations. Work closely with other Procurement unit staff to carry out day-to-day procurement duties.

JOB SUMMARY
 To reinforce the Procurement Unit of the Ministry of Health in discharging its duties in accordance with the Donor’s procurement rules and the Government of Lesotho regulations.

- MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- Liaise with the program managers to establish the requirements in relation to procurement.
 - Assist program manager in preparing the specifications and selection criteria for the goods needed.
 - Prepare Request for Quotations (RFQs) clearly indicating the specifications & the quantities of the goods required as well as expected delivery schedules.
 - Solicit quotations from suppliers in connection with international and/or national shopping methods of procurement.
 - Lead the evaluation process of the received quotations for selecting the appropriate supplier.
 - Prepare purchase orders to commence contractual relationship with the selected supplier.
 - Draft contract conditions in consultation with the Procurement Manager to ensure that the Employer/Client are adequately catered for before entering into a contract with any supplier.
 - Inspect the goods delivered in consultation with the beneficiary program manager to ensure that the supplier has satisfied his contractual obligations and goods delivered are in accordance with the agreed specifications.
 - Review invoices submitted by the suppliers and ensure that the contractual terms and conditions are met and recommend them for payment to the authorities accordingly.
 - Prepare and issue Acceptance Certificates to the suppliers in relation to the delivered and accepted goods.
 - Prepare bidding documents in accordance with the agreed procedures between the Government of Lesotho and Donor Agencies for procurement of goods using National

- Competitive Bidding and/or International Competitive Bidding methods.
- Assist program managers to prepare sound Terms of References (TORs) matching the selection criteria.
- Prepare Request for Proposals (RFPs) for consulting services ensuring that the documents are detailed enough to enable the prospective consultants to prepare their proposals on the same footing.
- Lead the evaluation process and prepare evaluation reports to be forwarded to the Tender Panel and the Donor Agencies for approval.
- Compile contract documents for signing by the Employer and the selected supplier/contractor.
- Safe-keep all the documents leading to the award of contract and as well as the signed contract for the purpose of post review and auditing.
- Update the purchase order register and contract registers to ensure that all the necessary information is properly recorded.
- Record all the information regarding the vendors providing the goods normally procured under the Ministry of Health.

Qualifications and Experience:
Bachelor’s degree: Preferred in Business Management/ Administration, Finance, Accounting and Logistics, along with strong negotiation and analytical skills, plus a minimum of two (2) years’ working experience in Procurement. A Professional Diploma in Supply Chain Management (CIPS Level 6) will be an added advantage.

- Experience in donor funded projects will be an advantage.

Required skills:

- Proficiency in Microsoft office suite packages,
- Hard working and ability to work under pressure to meet strict deadlines,
- Good communication skills,
- Has integrity and upholds highest ethical standards.

Duration and Remuneration:
 This position is performance based and is for four (4) months period, with a possibility of an extension based on performance and availability of funding.
 The salary for this position is market related, but will also be commensurate with requisite qualifications and experience.

How to Apply
 Written applications, CVs and certified copies of educational certificates should be hand delivered to: **Ministry of Health Headquarters, 3rd Floor, Corner Constitution and Linare Road**, to the attention of: **Human Resources & Administration Officer**, Ministry of Health Headquarters, 3rd Floor, Corner Constitution and Linare Road, P.O. Box 514, Maseru. 100. For more information Contact number: (+266) 63969777 or Email: malisebo.lesitsi@gov.ls

Closing Date for the applications is Friday the 22nd May 2026 at 12:00 noon
ONLY HAND DELIVERED APPLICATIONS SHALL BE CONSIDERED.



CORRIGENDUM/ EXTENSION TO THE BID SUBMISSION DEADLINE.

04th May 2026

Dear Bidders,

We hereby notify you of an extension to the bid submission date for the following bidding pro-cess:

Bid Number:	ADF/e-Gov/G/013
Subject of Procurement:	Supply, Delivery and installation of Digital Studio equipment at Makoanyane Square Studio.
Original Submission Dead-line:	07 May 2026 at 10:00 hrs.
Revised Submission Dead-line:	18 May 2026 at 10:00 hrs.
Revised Public Opening date and time:	18 May 2026 at 10:05 hrs.
Submission address:	Ministry of Information Communications, Science Technology and Innovation, Level 3 Moposo Build-ing and Deposited in the Tender Box at reception area on or before 18th May 2026 at 10:00 hrs. Elec-tronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be re-ject-ed. Bids will be publicly opened the same day at 10:05 hrs, in the presence of Bidder’s designated representa-tives and anyone who chooses to attend

Yours sincerely

Kori Lenyatsa (Mr.)
 Project Coordinator



Kingdom of Lesotho
 Lesotho Public Procurement Authority
 5th Floor, Right Wing Post Office Building
 Kingsway Road

Standard Invitation to Bidders
BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

8th May 2026
 Provision of Cleaning Services - LPPA/NCS/L0001

1. The **Lesotho Public Procurement Authority (LPPA)** has received funds from the Government to be used for the acquisition of **Cleaning Services at Corporate Offices of the LPPA.**
2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above non consultancy services.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open **National Competitive bidding** procedures contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all eligible bidders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from **0830 Hrs – 1630 Hrs**
5. The Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below at 8(b) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LsL 500.00.**
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before **1015 Hrs 19th June 2026 All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 1 % bid price Bid must be valid until 15th May 2026.** Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders’ representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 8(d) at **1030 Hrs 19th June 2026**
7. There shall be a pre – bid meeting/ site visit at **LPPA Corporate Offices** on the dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
8. (a) Documents may be inspected at: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (b) Documents will be issued from: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (c) Bids must be delivered to: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (d) Address of Bid Opening: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
9. The planned procurement schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

Activity	Date
a. Publish bid notice	8th May 2026
b. Pre-bid meeting/ Site visits where applicable	15th May 2026
c. Request for Clarifications	11th June 2026
d. Bid closing date	19th June 2026
e. Evaluation process	3rd July 2026
f. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	6th July 2026
g. Contract Signature	21st July 2026

Lebekoane Ntoi
 Director General



Kingdom of Lesotho
 Lesotho Public Procurement Authority
 5th Floor, Right Wing Post Office Building
 Kingsway Road

SStandard Invitation to Bidders
BID NOTICE UNDER OPEN COMPETITIVE TENDERING

8th May 2026
 Provision of Security Services - LPPA/NCS/L0002

1. The **Lesotho Public Procurement Authority (LPPA)** has received funds from the Government to be used for the acquisition of **Security Services at Corporate Offices of the LPPA.**
2. The Entity invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the provision of the above non consultancy services.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open **National Competitive bidding** procedures contained in the Public Procurement Act and is open to all eligible bidders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below at 8(a) from **0830 Hrs – 1630 Hrs**
5. The Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below at 8(b) and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **LsL 500.00.**
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at 8(c) at or before **1515 Hrs 19th June 2026 All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 1 % bid price Bid must be valid until 15th May 2026.** Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders’ representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 8(d) at **1530 Hrs 19th June 2026**
7. There shall be a pre – bid meeting/ site visit at **LPPA Corporate Offices** on the dates indicated in the proposed schedule in this notice.
8. (a) Documents may be inspected at: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (b) Documents will be issued from: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (c) Bids must be delivered to: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
 (d) Address of Bid Opening: **5th Floor, Post Office Building Kingsway Road**
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f. Display and communication of best evaluated bidder notice	6th July 2026
g. Contract Signature	21st July 2026

Lebekoane Ntoi
 Director General

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Into the international waters: Mokala's lifesaving goes global

Chris Theko

In a country without oceans, it is easy to assume that water would never shape a person's destiny.

But for Motlatsi Mokala, a young man from Matelile in Mafeteng, water became both a calling and a passport to the world. Today, Mokala works across international waters, having built a career that has taken him from Lesotho to the Middle East and the United States.

Yet his journey did not begin with ambition, it began with limitation.

"I was not good at sports like soccer," he recalled.

"But my school had a swimming pool, and I could float. No one taught me how to swim, I later realised I was doing everything wrong."

It was at Moshoeshoe II High School where things began to change. What started as an extracurricular activity in the swimming club evolved into something far more meaningful when Peace Corps volunteers introduced structured swimming lessons, and eventually, lifesaving training.

"That's when everything clicked. Lifesaving showed me that I could rescue someone in their time of need," Mokala said.

The calling was also deeply personal. As a child, Mokala survived a near-drowning incident after being thrown into a river. Instinct kept him alive, but the experience left a lasting impression.

"That moment stayed with me. It made me realise how important it is to know what to do in water."

Working as a lifesaver in Lesotho came with its own challenges, many of them structural. People often expected lifesaving services for free, with little awareness of the skill, risk and training involved.

"People often expect you to save lives for free. There's still a lack of awareness that this work comes at a cost."

Inconsistent deployment also meant that lifesavers were sometimes assigned to unrelated duties, at times placing them in risky situations. Despite this, Mokala remained committed, even as he recognised that the issue extended beyond Lesotho.

"Even internationally, lifesavers are underpaid, but that is slowly starting to change."

His breakthrough came through professional networks. An unexpected opportunity in the Gulf region emerged after a former instructor noticed his involvement in a programme with the Lesotho Defence Force.

While initially presented with an option in Dubai, Mokala instead pursued an opportunity in Qatar, where his former instructor was working.

"He told me, 'At least now lifesaving pays. But I had to explain that back home, it was still mostly voluntary. That's when he connected me to the opportunity,'" Mokala recalled.

In Qatar, Mokala spent over a year refining his skills in a more structured and demanding environment.



"There wasn't much culture shock. I found it interesting more than anything. I was focused, I was there to work and build a life."

That experience opened the door to even greater opportunities. Mokala transitioned into working

on cruise ships, a move that has taken him across multiple continents and into some of the world's busiest maritime environments, including the United States.

"I have worked across different places like New Orleans and Los Angeles, with Florida being one of the main docking points," he explained.

The role requires rigorous training, including certifications in first aid, rescue techniques, emergency response scenarios, and strict adherence to chain-of-command systems. Yet, despite the scale and intensity of the work, Mokala says the core purpose has never changed.

"It's always fulfilling to identify someone in distress and step in to help."

One of his most defining moments involved performing CPR on a passenger who had suffered a heart attack.

"I had to resuscitate them. Moments like that stay with you."

In a profession defined by urgency, Mokala's approach is grounded in composure.

"I never feel pressure during a rescue," he says. "Everyone plays their role, the rescue team, medical staff, law enforcement. You focus on what needs to be done."

So far, he is proud to say that none of his rescue experiences have resulted in a fatality.

Beyond the technical demands of the job, Mokala has also found himself becoming an informal ambassador for Lesotho. His story often sparks curiosity among those he meets.

"People always ask how I can swim when I come from a landlocked country," he says. "It surprises them."

These moments have become opportunities to share more about his home country.

"It gives me pride. It keeps me on my toes because I know I'm representing my country."

Mokala describes his journey as the fulfilment of a long-held dream. As a young boy, he once told his father he wanted to become a pilot. His father's response has stayed with him ever since.

"He said, 'If you don't make it, at least be a passenger.' Today, I'm living that life, I travel the world, and I'm paid for it."

From Mafeteng to international waters, his story challenges the limits often placed on young Basotho.

"I never allowed myself to think that where I come from defines where I can go."

While he remains deeply connected to Lesotho, his future is still unfolding abroad.

"I love Lesotho, but I'm not sure about returning permanently right now. I visit whenever I can."

For those who hope to follow a similar path, his advice is clear.

"It is not easy, especially the application process. But stay focused, seek the right information, and don't limit yourself. Opportunities are there, you just have to be ready."

Ntate Stunna expands his storytelling through film

Chris Theko

Fresh off his appearance in *Asipheli Moya*, musician and cultural icon Ntate Stunna says his move into film is not a reinvention, but a return to something that has always been part of him.

The artist, known for championing Sesotho identity through music and fashion, recently opened up about his growing passion for film production and acting, describing the project as the first time audiences are seeing all sides of his creativity come together publicly.

"Yes - and not just acting," he said.

"I have always had love for film, front and back of the camera. Acting and producing both. This is just the first time it is all visible in one project."

The feature film *Asipheli Moya*, written by Frank Buntu, explores themes of love, music and crime in Johannesburg. For Ntate Stunna, the role felt deeply familiar because it reflected environments he already understands.

"The music, and the drama that comes with

it. I know that world. I was happy to play the role because I didn't have to imagine any of it."

While many fans may see his acting debut as a new chapter, the rapper says performance has been part of his life since childhood. Before becoming one of Lesotho's most recognisable music stars, he was already active in drama during his school years.

"Before I was a musician, I was a very talented young actor. Back in high school, that was my first thing. So this isn't new, it's me unleashing what was already there," he said.

In a humorous reflection, he revealed that the last formal acting lessons he took were during primary school under the guidance of Lilaphalapha, now widely known as a comedian.

"The foundation goes back," he laughed.

Ntate Stunna says his approach to acting mirrors the authenticity that defines his music career. Rather than simply performing, he believes in fully embodying the message and

emotion behind the work.

"In acting, I become the role, fully. Same with music: I only say what I'd want to hear on a song. Either way, I'm not performing at the work. I'm in it."

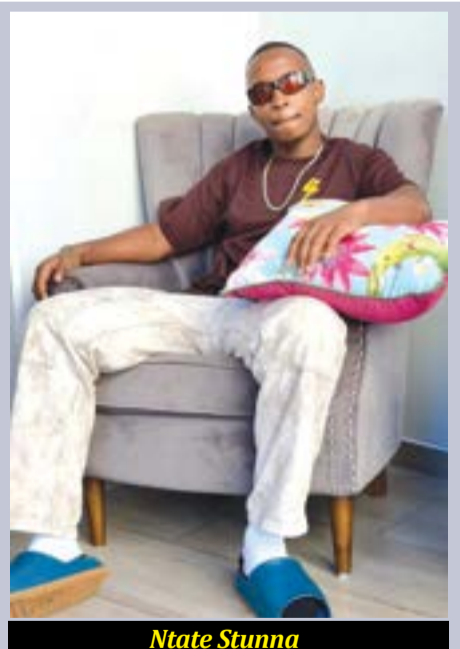
Beyond entertainment, the artist sees film as another tool in a much larger mission, elevating Sesotho culture onto international platforms.

"The big story continues, re kenya Sesotho Fashioneng kahohle. It's bigger than music. We're taking Sesotho to the world. Music, fashion, film, different mediums, same mission."

He credits writer Frank Buntu for bringing the opportunity at the right time, saying the shared passion for film production made the collaboration natural.

"He sold me the idea, and I loved it on the spot. We share the same interest in film production, and it landed at the right time," said Ntate Stunna.

Looking ahead, the artist hinted that even



Ntate Stunna

bigger stories may still be waiting to be told, including one inspired by his own journey from a small village to national and regional stardom.

"It would be inspired by my own life. The journey of a young talent from a small village to the big stages, Idols, the award shows, all of it. There's a story in that walk that hasn't been told properly yet," he said.

Fusi Hlaoli

At a time when global fashion trends dominate the wardrobes of many young Africans, 22-year-old Khotso Seeko is betting on something different, identity.

Known to many simply as “Professor”, the young creative is quietly building a fashion brand that is beginning to challenge perceptions around what local streetwear can look and feel like in Lesotho.

Through his clothing label, Rondavel Attire, Seeko is attempting to bridge two worlds often treated as separate, African cultural identity and modern street fashion.

For him, fashion is not merely about clothing. It is about storytelling, belonging and creating something young people can emotionally connect with.

“Rondavel Attire was born from a simple but powerful idea, to create something that represents where we come from but still fits into modern street culture,” he explained.

That idea may sound simple, but within Lesotho’s fashion landscape, it touches on a deeper reality.

Much of the fashion consumed by young people is heavily shaped by international aesthetics, global celebrity culture and imported trends. Local identity, particularly in urban youth fashion, is often pushed to the margins or treated as outdated.

Seeko saw that gap early. Rather than rejecting global streetwear culture, he chose to reinterpret it through an African lens and creates clothing that feels contemporary while still carrying cultural memory and meaning.

The brand’s name itself reflects that philosophy.

Inspired by the traditional African rondavel, — the round house associated with family, home and unity, the label represents more than style, it embodies all elements of what a rondavel house is in Africa. The brand represents rootedness.

In many ways, Seeko’s work speaks to a growing generation of young Africans trying to modernise without disconnecting from who they are, and that balancing act, the designer said has become the niche element setting Rondavel Attire apart.

While many emerging brands compete through loud graphics and fast-moving trends, Seeko’s approach leans into intentionality. His designs are deliberately minimal, but layered with symbolism tied to confidence, creativity and African identity.

Each piece is designed to feel familiar to modern youth culture while quietly carrying echoes of home.

“The focus has always been on authenticity, creativity and building something that can grow beyond just a brand into a movement,” he explained.

His vision has not come without obstacles. He recounted that building a fashion brand in Lesotho presents realities many young creatives rarely speak openly about which include limited access to quality materials, high production costs, small-scale manufacturing challenges and the constant pressure of balancing artistic vision with financial survival.

For Seeko, those difficulties became part of his journey, they represented an atmosphere of learning rather than reasons for him to stop.

Like many young entrepreneurs, he started small, relying heavily on persistence, experimentation and belief in the idea behind the brand.

What kept him going, however, he said was seeing people connect with the clothing on a deeper level.

“The turning point was seeing people connect with the brand without me having to explain the vision behind the creation. From first contact, to purchase decision, to wearing the designs, they clearly understood the message,” he said, noting the feedback was confirmation of a growing hunger among young Basotho for representation, for clothing and creative spaces that reflect their realities, culture and identity in ways that feel modern rather than performative.

“In many ways, Rondavel Attire represents a quiet cultural rebellion against the idea that African-inspired fashion must either look traditional or imitate Western trends to be relevant. I am positioning local identity as something stylish, youthful and globally adaptable,” he said.

Now focused on improving product quality and expanding the brand’s reach, the young designer hopes Rondavel Attire would eventually become part of the broader African streetwear movement.

Yet even as the brand grows, he remains determined to keep its cultural foundation intact.

Young Seeko redefines Basotho streetwear



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Seabata Mahao

Lesotho's second tier football scene is set for another thrilling chapter as the A Division Management Committee (ADMACO), in partnership with Nedbank Lesotho officially launched the 2026 Nedbank 8 Tournament.

The competition, one of the most anticipated fixtures on the local football calendar, will kick off this weekend with quarterfinal matches played across Saturday and Sunday.

The semi-finals are scheduled for May 16 and 17 at BambathaTšita Stadium, where the remaining teams will battle for a place in the final.

In a major boost to the tournament, Nedbank Lesotho has committed a sponsorship package worth M350,000, reaffirming its long-standing support for grassroots football development in the country.

Speaking during the official draw, SekonyelaMatamane, representing the bank, said this is a reflection of Nedbank's continued commitment to supporting sports development and empowering Basotho talent to thrive on and off the field.

"Our bank's longstanding partnership with the A-Division Management Committee (ADMACO) is true testament to how we ensure that a solid foundation is supported to enhance the quality at the top tier leagues," Matamane said.

"We are always proud to see how competitive the A-Division products, teams and players promoted to the premier, hold their own against the best in the land. It remains important to invite other partners to give due consideration in the development phase across all sporting codes, as all stakeholders also do their bit to optimise the broader ecosystem including sustainably managed facilities."

He further highlighted Nedbank's broader regional footprint across sub-Saharan Africa, including operations in South Africa, Mozambique, eSwatini, and Zimbabwe, noting that such partnerships are key to building sustainable sports ecosystems.

"We recognise that football plays a critical role in society. Sponsorship is just one component of a larger ecosystem that includes infrastructure, media growth, and player training," he said.

"Our goal is to see the sport professionalized

Second tier football boost with Nedbank 8 return

to a level where all stakeholders—from players to officials, can benefit economically."

He further stressed the importance of football as a driver of economic activity, noting that improved facilities and structured competitions can open opportunities for businesses and contribute to national growth.

ADMACO Chairman KatisoLebitsa praised Nedbank for its unwavering commitment since the inception of the partnership eight years ago.

"From the very beginning, they have stood with us, showing consistent dedication to grassroots football," Lebitsa said.

"It has not been an easy journey, but with partners like Nedbank, we continue to push forward."



Speaking during the official draw, Sekonyela Matamane, representing the bank
Picture Courtesy - Lesotho Football Association



Lebitsa also acknowledged the challenges facing local football, particularly the lack of adequate sponsorship and infrastructure, which often hampers talent development.

"Lesotho has talent, but without financial support, it becomes difficult to fully develop it. We are engaging with the government to improve facilities and ensure long-term growth," he added.

A D M A C O Vice Chairman LehlohonoloMakatjane echoed similar

sentiments, urging participating teams to raise their level of competition.

"We congratulate the teams that have qualified and encourage them to showcase the strength and vibrancy of A Division football," he said.

This year's tournament comes with a notable twist, as defending champions Quthing LMPS will not be part of the competition, leaving the field wide open for a new winner.

Among the frontrunners is Kick4Life Juventude FC, who are determined to break their streak of near misses after losing two consecutive Nedbank Top 8 finals.

The club's Marketing and Communications Officer, LerotholiPhatela, expressed confidence in their chances.

"We are aiming to win the cup this year and follow it up with the Champions of Champions title. Winning this competition will boost morale and strengthen our ambitions after already securing the league." Phatela said

Nthunya vies for COSAFA position

Refiloe Molise

Building up on his meteoric rise to the summit of Lesotho Football Association's (LeFA) management structures, President Lijane Nthunya has now set his sights on a position on the Executive Committee of the Council of Southern African Football Associations (COSAFA) during the upcoming elective congress.

The election is scheduled to take place on May 17, during the COSAFA's Annual General Meeting to be held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Nthunya, who is on the official list of candidates confirmed by COSAFA, will compete against four others for four available positions on the COSAFA Executive Committee.

The other contenders include Nqobile Magwizi of Zimbabwe, Robert Shimooshili of Namibia, Linda Zwane of South Africa, and Peter Simelane of eSwatini.



Lesotho Football Association, Lijane Nthunya

According to the above-mentioned COSAFA statement, all candidates successfully met the required eligibility and integrity standards following assessments conducted by the Governance and

Compliance Committee.

The race for these positions is expected to be vicious, as it is one of the few categories that will be decided through a vote. The election will be conducted by secret ballot

under the supervision of the COSAFA Electoral Committee, in line with the organisation's electoral code.

In contrast, several key leadership positions have already been decided, as they are uncontested. Botswana's Oabile Thona Tariq Babitseng is set to take over as COSAFA President, while Alfred Randriamanampisoa of Madagascar will assume the role of Vice-President. Brenda Kunda of Zambia will fill the Executive Committee's reserved seat for women.

Nthunya's candidature represents a significant opportunity for Lesotho to strengthen its voice in regional football governance. His potential election could enhance the country's influence in decision-making processes that shape the development, administration, and growth of football across Southern Africa.

COSAFA plays a central role in coordinating competitions and development programmes among member associations, making its Executive Committee a key decision-making body within the region.

The outcome of the elections is expected to have an impact on the direction of football administration in the region, particularly at a time when member associations continue to push for growth, professionalism and increased competitiveness in the sport.



A title race for the ages

compared to Bantu's +21 and Matlama's +15.

Recent results have not favoured the chasing pack. Bantu were held to a 1-1 draw by Lifofane FC, while Matlama played to a goalless stalemate against LDF. These missed opportunities have allowed Lijabatho to maintain their four-point cushion at the top.

Matlama's head coach Thabile Secker remains composed despite the pressure. Speaking after the draw with LDF, he emphasised a focus on one match at a time.

"We are not under pressure. We prefer to concentrate on the task at hand rather than external factors," said Secker. He also acknowledged the physical strength and experience of LDF FC, noting that his youthful squad competed well under the circumstances.

Matlama's next assignment is against bottom-placed Maroala FC, a must-win fixture before their decisive clash with Lijabatho. That final match could offer Matlama a direct shot at disrupting the title race rather than relying on other results.

Beyond the title battle, competition for top-four positions remains intense. LDF, currently seventh, have seen their title ambitions fade. Head coach Malefetsane Phoko admitted as much following their draw with Matlama.

"The title race is beyond us now, but we are still pushing for a top-four finish and to remain in the top eight," he said.

Mathematically, LDF face an uphill battle, requiring eight points to catch fourth-placed Lifofane, an impossible target with only six points left to play for. However, they appear safe in the top eight, holding a four-point advantage over Linare FC and LCS FC.

At the bottom of the table, the relegation fight is equally gripping. Liphakoe, currently 15th with 17 points, are battling to avoid the drop alongside Maroala, who sit last with 14 points.

Liphakoe head coach Dumane Lethakha remains hopeful despite the precarious position.

"I have always believed we will survive," he said after their goalless draw against Limkokwing. "The players gave everything, but we continue to miss too many chances."

Lethakha revealed that his side had prepared tactically for Limkokwing, switching to a 3-5-2 formation to counter their opponent's 4-2-4 system, a plan that yielded defensive stability but lacked attacking finish.

As the league enters its final weekend phase, all eyes turn to a packed fixture schedule. Saturday will feature a quadruple header at Setsoto Stadium, with key matches including Bantu vs. LCS and Lijabatho vs. Lioli. Matlama will take on Maroala later in the day.

Sunday's action will see Lifofane face LU FC, while Linare host LDF. Elsewhere, Members FC will play LMPs, and Manonyane FC meet Machokha FC.

Vodacom Premier League 2025/26 Season

Log Standing as per Week 28

POS	CLUB	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	LIJABATHO FC	28	17	8	3	57	18	39	59
2	BANTU FC	28	16	7	5	45	24	21	55
3	MATLAMA FC	28	15	10	3	36	21	15	55
4	LIFOFA NE FC	28	16	6	6	40	23	17	54
5	MAJANTJA FC	28	15	8	5	40	25	15	53
6	LIOLI FC	28	13	10	5	37	20	17	49
7	LDF FC	28	12	10	6	37	24	13	46
8	LINARE FC	28	12	6	10	40	30	10	42
9	LCS FC	28	11	9	8	27	21	6	42
10	LMPS FC	28	6	14	8	27	27	0	32
11	MACHOKHA FC	28	6	6	16	16	34	-18	24
12	LIMKOKWING FC	28	5	8	15	23	43	-20	23
13	MANONYANE FC	28	4	10	14	32	50	-18	22
14	MEMBERS FC	28	4	6	18	20	54	-34	18
15	LIPHAKOE FC	28	2	11	15	12	39	-27	17
16	MAROALA FC	28	3	5	20	16	52	-36	14

Seabata Mahao

The 2025/26 Vodacom Premier League (VPL) season is heading for a dramatic conclusion, with just two matches remaining and the championship race tightening among three top contenders Lijabatho, Bantu, and Matlama FC.

Lijabatho currently sit at the summit of the standings with 59 points, needing just three more to reach 62 and secure their maiden league title. However, their path to glory is anything but straightforward.

They face two of the league's heavyweights, Lioli and Matlama, in their final fixtures

encounters that could either cement their dominance or derail their campaign at the final hurdle.

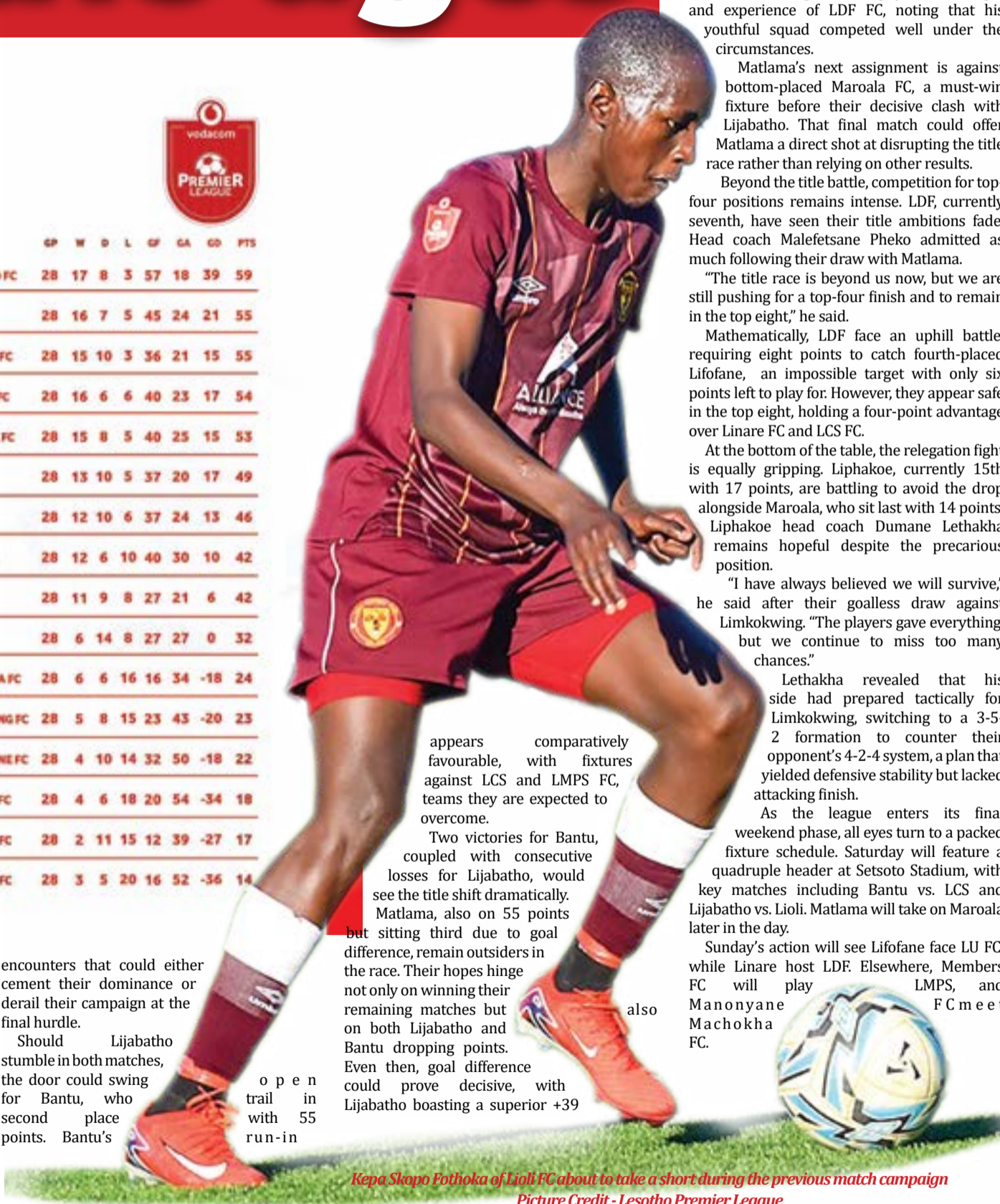
Should Lijabatho stumble in both matches, the door could swing for Bantu, who second place points. Bantu's

appears comparatively favourable, with fixtures against LCS and LMPS FC, teams they are expected to overcome.

Two victories for Bantu, coupled with consecutive losses for Lijabatho, would see the title shift dramatically.

Matlama, also on 55 points but sitting third due to goal difference, remain outsiders in the race. Their hopes hinge not only on winning their remaining matches but on both Lijabatho and Bantu dropping points. Even then, goal difference could prove decisive, with Lijabatho boasting a superior +39

open trail in with 55 run-in



Kepa Skopo Fothoka of Lioli FC about to take a short during the previous match campaign
Picture Credit - Lesotho Premier League



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