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THARI

MASERU, LESOTHO

Sunday, 28 April 2024

# Lesotho Tribune

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*Information Liberates*

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M 22. 50

Alliance Insurance and Hill Buster Partner for Comrades Marathon Preparation

*...Page 9*

Minister of Finance at crosshairs with Petroleum Fund CEO

*...Page 6*

## LDF Soldiers Stuck In Mozambique

- SANDF asked to assist...
- Government mum on efforts to bring them home

**Page 4**



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# Lesotho Hosts its first Mining Indaba Khotla



Hon. Mohlomi Moleko

By Tebello Kokome

## Maseru

History was made in the Mountain Kingdom when it held its very first dialogue in recognition of the growing importance of the mining sector in the national economy. The colloquy was also intended to promote and encourage the involvement of women in the mining sector, which was followed by the launch of

LEWIMA (Lesotho Women in Mining). The Indaba was a two-day event that took place from the 25th to the 26th of April 2024 at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre. Under the theme "The Future of Mining in the Global Landscape" the conversation featured various speakers, some from South Africa who delved deep into mining and its contribution in boosting the country's economy. Various panel discus-

sions were conducted that probed a lot of questions and somewhat strategies on how Lesotho can use its mineral resources for its benefit. Although there are other minerals, most focus is on diamond mining. Speaking on behalf of the chamber of mines, Motooane Thinyane gave a debrief indicating that the chamber of mines was established in 2016 as a non-profit organization. It was in-

tended to promote learning, growth, and research. He mentioned that Lesotho's production of diamonds is low when compared to that of other countries. For instance, when Botswana produces about 15.9 million carats, Lesotho only produces roughly less than a million which is a great difference, and it has since been discovered that South Africa and Botswana rank higher in the

*Continues in page 3*



*Continued from page 2*

investment ratings. Currently, it has been estimated that approximately 560 million USD is a prerequisite as capital when investing in a mine and as it stands mines in Lesotho are contributing 35% to the country's economy and this is considered a significant portion. It is also important to note that 98% of mine employees are Basotho nationals.

An invitation has been made to potential investors to invest in Lesotho's mining industry. It is said that this industry contributes only 10% to the GDP and the hope is to triple that percentage in the years to come. The idea is also to engage with local suppliers to come up with community solutions on how best to go about making mining beneficial to the country's growth. There are some challenges that were addressed, that include exposure to global fluctuations, cost of operating is rapidly increasing because the deeper you dig, the more expensive it becomes, there are energy challenges and extending the life of the mine such that it remains profitable for an extended period. There are of course prospects and opportunities of new mines and the questions asked are what else can

be mined? Who can come on board?

In a panel discussion moderated by Peter Ndoro whereby they "explored the wealth of mining and investment opportunities in Lesotho. Gain insights into Lesotho's unique landscape and discover why hosting the Indaba Khotla in this picturesque country is significant. The session sets the scene by outlining the value proposition for the Indaba Khotla and emphasizes the importance of collaboration with industry leaders offering unparalleled networking prospects." It is in this discussion that Pius Ngakane spoke on where deposits are found. He revealed that over 405 kimberlite deposits are found in Lesotho which are called commercial mines. He also added that the occurrence of diamonds is mostly found in the riverbanks, occurrence of sandstone in Teyateyaneng, Phoqoane and Tsikoane. Coal deposits have been found in Mohale's Hoek and there is suspicion of base metals i.e. Copper and cobalt but these would require detailed investigations. He also said there are indications of uranium, it has not been confirmed yet but if it really is there it could prove quite beneficial to the country's economy.

Overall, he said he noticed that there are gaps in knowledge because even the maps used are not detailed enough and they need to be updated with information that is being acquired. There are also prominent gaps in the geo-physical surveys as they have only been conducted in the northern part of the country whence there are no other reports present and these surveys should be completed nationwide. He also highlighted that about 200 samples of minerals must be tested in South Africa due to budget constraints in this country. We lack advanced technology to study and to inject capital into finding these deposits because they are found in regions of the country that are not easily accessible. A call was made for significant investments in such ventures. This conversation ended with some food for thought- How do we switch from potential to actualization? Mashudu Ramano shared his powerful insights about how the Paradigms of mining can be changed and the take home was that we need not only to rely on traditional mining where the ground is dug but we can also consider venturing in Phyto mining which is essentially the concept of mining met-

als using plants. He made an illustration showing the number of minerals that are used for a house to be built or a car to be assembled all these are mined in African countries and are exported then bought expensive and these are skills that we could equip ourselves with without having to rely on other countries such as China or Japan. He implored that we need to start learning how to manipulate these minerals on our own so that they can benefit us and our economy.

Another panel sat and discussed issues of harnessing hydrogen from the water that we already possess, and a member of the crowd also added that it would also be important to harness oxygen too that can be stored and used at a later stage, for example hospital oxygen tanks. The Indaba Khotla was aimed at engaging people, and it was a brainstorming session that probed people's input to see what can be done to grow mining of all minerals in the country. This also allowed people to share suggestions regarding operations and how they can feature in them. There is so much potential in Lesotho's growth and the mining industry is dedicated to contributing immensely to that growth





# LDF Soldiers Stuck In Mozambique

**- Government mum on efforts to bring them home**  
**- SANDF asked to assist...**



Lesotho Tribune can exclusively report that Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) Contingent deployed in Nangade district of Cabo Delgado Province in Mozambique, left their Forward Operating Base (FOB) and traveled over 900km to Pemba where they're cur-

rently stuck in due to lack of airlifting equipment. Angola provided the airlift for the military equipment that was used in Mozambique. In 2021 LDF spokesman Captain Sakeng Lekola was quoted as saying Angola is not assisting LDF like most of Basotho believe,

stressing that Angola was implementing its pledge to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) of providing the airlift in this mission.

Sources with intimate knowledge exclusively told Lesotho Tribune that, the LDF Contingent is stuck, camp-

ing out in Pemba using torn tents, broken equipment and limited food supplies.

“Our contingent is stuck, it’s a logistical nightmare, we (LDF) was airlifted by Angola, and Angola has left! Imagine travelling 900kms in harsh environments only to be stuck in Pemba,” our

*Continues in page 5*









# 6

Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff Reporter

In this week's analysis we zoom in on the study commissioned by Lesotho Water and Electricity Authority (LEWA). The study was intended to establish the impact of the lifeline tariffs for electricity and water supplies in Lesotho. Our analysis will be divided in three parts, Part 1: how lifeline tariff is bankrupting LEC, Part 2: diagnosis of LEC's real problems and Part 3: A 2002 act will sink LEC in couple of years

The report focused on the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) while a second report focuses on the Urban Water and Sewerage Services (UWSS).

In today's issue we zero-in on what REAL issues are in relation to LEC and its ability to fully meet its mandate. We believe the political noise surrounding LEC challenges are not real...rather a short-term reactionary views, synonymous with our political environment.

### Part 2: diagnosis of LEC's real problems

The real challenges facing Lesotho Electricity Company can be summarised by the below:

- Incorrect application of lifeline tariff by LEWA
- Government of Leso-

# BUSINESS & ECONOMY

## Government And LEWA Setting LEC Up For Failure? Part II



tho policies

- Bulk power imports
- **Incorrect application of lifeline tariff by LEWA**

The Cost of Service Study (CoSS) that recommended the introduction of a lifeline tariff included the recommendation to recover the income lost through higher tariffs at higher levels of consumption.

The negative impact of the lifeline tariff on LEC financial performance took place because this cross-subsidy was not implemented. The failure to implement the cross-subsidy also leads to errors of inclusion for higher-consumption domestic customers who benefited even though the majority do not fall under the 'poor and vulnerable' category.

This support needed to be targeted and limited to avoid subsidising users who are able to pay (i.e., not electricity or energy poor). The CoSS, based on the poverty line, recommended a lifeline tariff of 0.5 to 0.6 M/kWh (2017/18 tariffs) for a threshold of up to 30 kWh/month, which was 35%-42% lower than the existing domestic tariff of 1.37 M/kWh.

To cross-subsidize the lifeline consumption and hence maintain the financial standing of the utility company, the CoSS recommended that other tariffs would need to increase. The recommended standard domestic tariff would need to increase to 1.79 M/kWh with subsequent inflationary adjustments as demonstrated by

Figure 46. Tariffs for all other customer categories would require an uplift of 4.5%, as shown in Figure 47. Comparing both Figure 46 and Figure 47, it is evident that the biggest discrepancy for cross-subsidizing the lifeline tariff has been in the domestic customer category, with the implemented standard domestic tariff falling short of the recommended values by around 25% to 30%

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Lesotho National Development Corporation

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The Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) was established by an Act of Parliament as a parastatal. The LNDC Act No. 20 of 1967, as amended by LNDC Act No. 13 of 1990 and LNDC Act No. 7 of 2000, mandates the Corporation to: "initiate, promote and facilitate the development of manufacturing and processing industries, mining and commerce in a manner calculated to raise the level of income and employment in Lesotho. The LNDC invites applications from suitably qualified and experienced candidates for the following position:

**PROPERTY ACCOUNTING OFFICER (PATERSON C5)**

**PURPOSE**  
 To support the Property Accountant in contributing to the Lesotho National Development Corporation's (LNDC) liquidity position and bottom line, through the collection of rental revenue to cover operations and the mandate of LNDC. To manage the LNDC property debtors, by billing and collecting revenue from the tenants to help the Corporation to finance its projects, investments, and day to day transactions. **The position reports to the Property Accountant.**

**MAIN OUTPUTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Resource Management
2. Stakeholder Relations
3. Property Payment Control
4. Reconciliations
5. Accounting Systems Maintenance

**QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

- Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Accounting
- 3 – 5 years demonstrable experience in Credit/Debt control
- Must be registered with The Lesotho Institute of Accountants

**TERM OF CONTRACT**  
 Permanent and Pensionable

**HOW TO APPLY**  
 Interested, suitably qualified and experienced candidates should email their applications accompanied by educational certificates and transcripts in **PDF FORMAT ONLY** to [recruitment@lndc.org](mailto:recruitment@lndc.org). **Job title must be used as email subject.** Closing date is **Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2024 at 17:00.**

To apply, candidates **MUST** download and fill an application form accessible on the Corporation's website: [www.lndc.org](http://www.lndc.org). Detailed advert is also available on the website.

**Disclaimer: Only applicants who have used the LNDC application form and used the appropriate email subject will be considered. Only shortlisted applicants will be responded to.**



**LNDC**  
LESOTHO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
Regulator with the 2017 Sustainable Industry





# Minister of Finance at crosshairs with Petroleum Fund CEO

By: Tebello Kokome

A Notice of Motion filed by Petroleum Fund Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Thato Mohasoa caused a stir that involved the Minister of Finance and Development Planning- Dr. Retselisitsoe Matlanyane and board of directors of Petroleum Fund. In the founding affidavit that was written on 6 March 2024, Mohasoa gave a brief account of his background where he stated that he received his letter of employment on 26 April 2019 which was meant to come into effect on 1 May 2019. The terms of the letter stipulated that the offer was made in compliance with Section 13(1) of the Lesotho Petroleum Regulations, 2009. Apart from the duration (5years) of the contract, the letter included details of his direct cash remuneration, indirect remuneration (fringe benefits) and an indication to accept or decline the offer. The contract was dated to expire on 30 April 2024.

Mohasoa went on to declare that on 30 January 2024, he received formal correspondence communicating the Board's intention to recommend renewal of his appointment to the Minister of Finance and Development Planning to which he duly

responded that he accepts this renewal of contract. As communicated, on 31 January 2024, the chairperson of the Board put down in writing their decision as the Board including their motivating factors and justifications thereof.

The decision was reached in accordance with Section 13 of the Lesotho Petroleum Fund Regulations, 2021 read together with clause 2.4 of the Fixed Contract entered between the Chief Executive Officer and the Fund. "According to Section 13(2) of the Regulations, the renewal of the CEO's contract is subject to a good performance. One of the key expectations in the appointment of the current CEO was an assurance that he would provide the necessary transformative leadership to the organization and assist in graduating it from an otherwise moribund institution, to the one that would be impactful on achieving its core mandate of ensuring that there is adequate security of supply of petroleum product in the country.

In all fair assessment, the CEO achieved that feat and has provided a leadership that has transformed the Petroleum Fund into one of the key strategic State-Owned Enterprises, whose corporate presence and institutional impact is felt, both locally and internationally..." The Petroleum Fund board chairperson went on to give detailed explanations on how the CEO achieved these as well as the commendable goals he has attained thus the board felt he was worthy of another run.

On 15 February 2024 addendum

to the fixed contract that was signed during the month of July 2019 which was amended such that the contract is valid until 20 April 2024. It was a let-down on 16 February 2024, when the Minister of Finance penned down a letter declaring denial of the renewal of contract of the CEO and further instructing that the Board advertise the said position.

Section 4.4 of the affidavit stated the following: "I wish to take the court into my confidence and assert that the response is glaringly framed in the tersest of terms to the effect that the renewal of my appointment is not approved without more. This is quite surprising when being juxtaposed against the motivation made by the Board in motivation of renewal of my contract. I have been advised and believe the same to be true that this is a grave administrative malady on the part of the Minister of Finance and Development Planning for the following reasons:

a. No reasons have been provided for the rejection of my proposed engagement and renewed contract.  
b. Regulation 13 is framed in the preemptory terms to the effect that the Minister 'shall' on the advice of the Board, appoint Chief Executive Officer (CEO)...  
c. The Minister of Finance and Development Planning bore no discretion to reject the recommendation and to further direct re-advertisement without a firm legal basis and there is such basis justifying the refusal to yield to the recommendation made by the Board of Petroleum Fund in the context of the case on the radar."

The nature of the application was as thus, wants the Minister

of Finance (1st Respondent) to be instructed to provide the court with the record of proceedings, deliberations and or resolutions that prompted her to negate the recommendation of the Board of Petroleum Fund (3rd Respondent).

Upon waiting for these proceedings, Mohasoa wants the Minister of Finance, and the Petroleum Fund (2nd Respondent) to be prohibited from re-advertising the position of Chief Executive Officer of Petroleum Fund. He also wants The Board of Petroleum Fund to be restricted from initiating any meetings which are meant to deliberate on matters involving the re-advertisement of Petroleum Fund's Chief Executive Officer position which was set to take place on 19 March 2024.

Mohasoa exercised his prima facie right, citing the prejudice that has been bestowed upon him. He further alluded that that the decision made by the Minister may have been influenced by underlying political factors. The intervention of the court was sought as he believed that this decision was contemptuous. Moreover, "... Her letter of refusal does not even mention the basis of her decision..."

Mohasoa wants his full rights to continue with his duties as Chief Executive Officer during this period. According to his court papers, grounds for which the Minister declined the renewal of his contract should be regarded as 'unlawful and or illegal', so was dismissing the recommendation made by the Board of Petroleum Fund. Therein, he wants the court to instruct the Minister of Finance to renew the Applicant's contract just as the Board of Petroleum Fund had recommended on 30 January 2024.





# Alliance Insurance and Hill Buster Partner for Comrades Marathon Preparation

By: Mamello Mochesane

In an exciting development for the running community, Alliance Insurance has joined forces with Hill Busters for an intensive training session aimed at preparing athletes for the 97th Comrades Marathon. The partnership is named "Alliance Hill Buster's Last Long Run," kicked off on Tuesday morning with determination.

Scheduled for the 4th of May 2024 for Comrades Marathon, Ultra Marathon promises to be a test of endurance and resilience. Stretching from Durban to Pietermaritzburg in South Africa, this iconic race draws athletes from around the globe. According to Limakatso Mokobocho, Alliance's Public Relations and Corporate Communications Manager, the collaboration with Hill Busters is a strategic move to support local talent. With only two marathons planned under this partnership, Alliance has contributed M100,000.00 towards essential logistics, including attire, vehicles, and medical support.

Notably, the Ultra Marathon is not exclusive to seasoned athletes; it welcomes all interested Basotho runners. The registration fee stands at a modest M100.00, making it accessible to a wide range of participants. Furthermore, Alliance will commend those who conquer the challenging 65km course with well-deserved medals. Hillbusters' Club Manager, Hlomphang Nkalai, outlined the rigorous selection process for the Comrades Marathon. "Only athletes who complete the Ultra Marathon within a time of 5:50 will qualify for the prestigious event. These quali-

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HILLBUSTERZ  
COMRADES 2024  
LAST LONG RUN

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fiers will then have four weeks to recuperate before taking on the ultimate test of endurance." Said Nkalai.

Traditionally held in Mafeteng, this year's Ultra Marathon will commence from Masowe 3 to Mants'ebo, passing through routes of Koro-Koro, Mahla-

batheng, and then Bypass before returning to Masowe 3. Remarkably, this marks the fifth consecutive year of the event, driven by the collective efforts of Hill Busters' members and generous donations. Among the athletes gearing up for the challenge is Paul Macha-

chamise, whose 20 decade-long journey in the Comrades Marathon underscores the significance of rigorous preparation. Machachamise emphasized the importance of adequate training to mitigate any potential complications during the marathon.





# 10

Lesotho Tribune

By: Editorial

The decision by United States (US) lawmakers to pass a bill targeting TikTok, a popular short-form video app owned by China-based ByteDance, is a direct assault on the fundamental values enshrined in the US Constitution. The bill, which passed by a wide margin in both the Senate and the House, gives ByteDance up to one year to sell TikTok to a US-based company or face a ban from American app stores.

This move, ostensibly motivated by concerns over data privacy and censorship, sets a dangerous precedent that undermines the First Amendment rights of millions of Americans who use TikTok as a platform for creative expression. By forcing TikTok to sell or face deletion, lawmakers are effectively stifling free speech and limiting access to a popular form of social media. TikTok's head of public policy for the Americas, Michael Beckerman, has rightly pointed out that the bill violates the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech. Beckerman has indicated that TikTok will challenge the legislation in court, a move that is supported by precedent. In 2023, a federal judge in Mon-

tana blocked a state ban on TikTok, ruling that it violated users' free speech rights.

The concerns raised about TikTok's data privacy practices and its potential to censor content are not legitimate, they should be addressed through transparent and accountable means, not by trampling on the constitutional rights of American citizens. The passage of this bill is a troubling indication of the erosion of democratic values in the United States...

It is worth noting that similar bans on TikTok have been implemented in other countries, such as India, where the app was banned in 2020 following safety concerns. However, these bans do not justify a blanket restriction on TikTok in the United States, where freedom of speech is a foundational principle.

It's shocking that the land of the free and brave wants to dictate to Americans where their source of information and entertainment should be, this sounds like a move from a third world country, it's appalling!

# EDITORIAL

## How Un-American!



Lesotho National Development Corporation

### Job advertisement

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#### MULTIMEDIA MARKETING OFFICER (PATERSON C5)

##### PURPOSE

To design and create information technology-based multimedia products by understanding LNDC's strategic communication direction and aligning the design of marketing collateral and all media-based content to help achieve the strategy of the organization by maintaining and expanding brand awareness. The position reports to the Corporate Communications Manager.

##### MAIN OUTPUTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Resource Management
2. Brand Management
3. Stakeholder Relations
4. Multimedia Production
5. Events Management

##### QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- Degree in Multimedia Studies, Graphic Design or relevant field
- 2 – 4 years demonstrable experience in Graphic Designing, Marketing or Brand positioning.

##### TERM OF CONTRACT

Permanent and Pensionable

##### HOW TO APPLY:

Interested, suitably qualified and experienced candidates should email their applications accompanied by educational certificates and transcripts in PDF FORMAT ONLY to [recruitment@lndc.org.ls](mailto:recruitment@lndc.org.ls). Job title must be used as email subject. Closing date is Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2024 at 17:00.

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# The mining indaba, a slap in the face

**R**ews have been making rounds about the recently held Lesotho's mining sector indaba. Indeed Lesotho is a country known for its production of Diamonds, and Basotho must have conversations around how these minerals are managed in a manner that is economically sustainable and environmentally safe.

Critical as it is that we must have these crucial conversations, this article will endeavour to sway the opinion of the reader to the reality that this "mining Indaba" is nothing but a slap in the face for Basotho.

It is necessary that a brief historical analysis of how the position of Lesotho has evolved over the years, mainly driven by changes in the political landscape, regarding the management of mineral resources and particularly the diamond mining sector, perhaps the most significant. King Moshoe-shoe the First was very clear, the question of the Land was non-negotiable, foreigners were not even allowed to have an inch of our land, so the question of westerners having access to the minerals under our land was almost unfathomable. And that remained the case for the most time the Kingdom was under the rule of the Chiefs, albeit under colonial arrangements.

The realities of the evolving and unfolding world order that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the Bretton wood institutions ushered in a new global economic order, one where exploration of mineral resources was necessary for government liquidity and to respond to social pressures like unemployment, all this happening in an economic set up that discouraged nationalisation and promoted privatisation. These global and domestic realities necessitated the changing of the posture of subsequent administrators. Slowly but surely the government opened its doors for foreign companies to explore diamond mining in Lesotho.



The current reality is that in the exploration Diamonds, Lesotho benefits very little if anything at all. The current legal and political posture effectively favours foreign interests above the interests of native Basotho.

Firstly in Lesotho it is a criminal offence for a native Mosotho who finds a diamond to keep it, he must surrender it to the state, otherwise it is a criminal offence, that is where we must begin the discussion, anything discussed which does not deal with this original sin is a slap in the face. This happens in an environment where foreign Companies literally dig up the diamonds with earth moving machines, and foreigner are criminalised for even accidentally finding a diamond. This is the legislative reality in which the indaba will be held. The Lesotho mining Indaba is being hosted in interesting times indeed, on the hills of a statement that was made by Minister Moleko to the effect that mining companies are effectively doing Basotho a favour by operating in Lesotho. The political leadership of the country already holds a view that Basotho are getting more than their fair share, effectively for Basotho there is nothing more to negotiate in the indaba, because according to those who are representing us, we are already getting our fair share, this is why this indaba is nothing but a slap in the face. The indaba, is being held in the wake of one of the biggest mining companies terminating its contract with a company owned

by the Prime Minister Samuel Matekane. The Contract was for the supply of earth moving equipment by the Company, the Mine has effectively paid the Prime Minister so that it owns the machines and removes beneficiation from native Basotho. The indaba being presided over by a government that is overseeing such actions is nothing but a slap in the face.

The indaba is being hosted in an environment where the Government of the day is locked in a legal case involving mohahlau-la airlines, a company that has approached the courts of law to force the current government of Lesotho to give it and another Basotho owned company's preference when it comes to transporting diamonds from Lesotho. The Government of Lesotho is opposing the application, the position of the Government is that Basotho businesses should not be given first priority when mining companies procure resources, something that is provided for by the Mining and Minerals Act. Minister Moleko even went as far as stating that they would rather change the law that says Basotho businesses should be given preference. This ladies and gentlemen is nothing but a slap in the face.

This indaba is being held at a time when the recently retired former Director of Civil Aviation Motsoale Lesupi was suspended but never charged, for simply refusing to grant permits to foreign airlines to fly Lesotho diamonds, he stood on the side

of the law and on the side of ensuring that Basotho benefit from their mineral resources. He was punished for taking that position by this government. This is the climate within which the indaba is being held, and those in the front seat making these shameful decisions are hosting it, it must be obvious now that it is nothing but a slap in the face.

The foregoing analysis is evidence that the current legal framework exacerbated by the excessively friendly posture of the Government towards the foreign investors, is a barrier towards Basotho attaining and extracting maximum benefit from mineral exploration.

The mining Indaba is nothing but a show meant to brainwash the population to thinking they have a stake in the mines of Lesotho. The reality is that Basotho, whether privately through provision of resources or direct and indirect employment are getting peanuts compared to the share of money that goes towards foreign owned businesses, and therein lies the problem. Further, even the Government itself in terms of revenue generated through dividends is meagre compared to the value of diamonds that leave the Land. The diamonds are still being auctioned outside Lesotho. The Diamonds are still being processed in foreign shores, the jewellery is still made in foreign lands, we are not developing any state capacity at all to explore independently as a state and process, market and sell, all our government are doing is to manage an arrangement that was never set up to benefit Basotho from the onset.

Unless something drastic happens towards dismantling the current legal and political infrastructure that informs and underpins our approach to the exploration of our resources, any indaba is but a feel-good exercise for those in power and a dose of anaesthesia for the public to numb the pain of being robbed in day light.





12

Lesotho Tribune

By : UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

The effects of human activities like greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation on the surface of Earth are well-documented. Recently, hydrology researchers at the University of Arizona have explored the influence of humans on the deep subsurface of Earth, which extends from hundreds of meters to several kilometers below the surface.

“We looked at how the rates of fluid production with oil and gas compare to natural background circulation of water and showed how humans have made a big impact on the circulation of fluids in the subsurface,” said Jennifer McIntosh, a professor in the UArizona Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences and senior author of a paper in the journal *Earth’s Future* detailing the findings. “The deep subsurface is out of sight and out of mind for most people, and we thought it was important to provide some context to these proposed activities, especially when it comes to our environmental impacts,” said lead study author Grant Ferguson, an adjunct professor in the UArizona Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences and a professor in the University of Saskatchewan’s School of Environment and Sustainability.

Future Projections and Collaborative Research

In the future, these human-induced fluid fluxes are projected to increase with strategies that

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



University of Arizona researchers have shown that human activities significantly affect Earth’s deep subsurface by altering fluid movements and impacting microbial ecosystems, underscoring the need for responsible management and further research in these deep environments to aid in climate change mitigation

## Disturbing the Deep: New Research Reveals That Humans Have Intensely Impacted Earth’s Hidden Depths

are proposed as solutions for climate change, according to the study. Such strategies include: geologic carbon sequestration, which is capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide in underground porous rocks; geothermal energy production, which involves circulating water through hot rocks for generating electricity; and lithium extraction from underground mineral-rich brine for powering electric vehicles. The study was done in collaboration with researchers from the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, Harvard University, Northwestern University, the Korea Institute of Geosciences and Mineral Resources, and Linnaeus University in Sweden. “Responsible management of the subsurface is central to any hope for a green transition, sustainable future, and keeping warming below a few degrees,” said Peter Reiners, a professor in the UArizona Department of Geosciences and a co-author of the study.

Human Activities and Subsurface Water Cycle

With oil and natural gas pro-

duction, there is always some amount of water, typically saline, that comes from the deep subsurface, McIntosh said.

The underground water is often millions of years old and acquires its salinity either from evaporation of ancient seawater or from reaction with rocks and minerals. For more efficient oil recovery, more water from near-surface sources is added to the salt water to make up for the amount of oil removed and to maintain reservoir pressures. The blended saline water then gets reinjected into the subsurface. This becomes a cycle of producing fluid and reinjecting it to the deep subsurface.

The same process happens in lithium extraction, geothermal energy production, and geologic carbon sequestration, the operations of which involve leftover saline water from the underground that is reinjected.

“We show that the fluid injection rates or recharge rates from those oil and gas activities is greater than what naturally occurs,” McIntosh said.

Using existing data from various

sources, including measurements of fluid movements related to oil and gas extraction and water injections for geothermal energy, the team found that the current fluid movement rates induced by human activities are higher compared to how fluids moved before human intervention.

As human activities like carbon capture and sequestration and lithium extraction ramp up, the researchers also predicted how these activities might be recorded in the geological record, which is the history of Earth as recorded in the rocks that make up its crust.

Impact on Microbial Life and Future Research Needs  
Human activities have the potential to alter not just the deep subsurface fluids but also the microbes that live down there, McIntosh said. As fluids move around, microbial environments may be altered by changes in water chemistry or by bringing new microbial communities from Earth’s surface to the underground.

For example, with hydraulic fracturing, a technique that is used to break underground rocks with pressurized liquids for extracting oil and gas, a deep rock formation that previously didn’t have any detectable number of microbes might have a sudden bloom of microbial activity.

There remain a lot of unknowns about Earth’s deep subsurface and how it is impacted by human activities, and it’s important to continue working on those questions, McIntosh said.

“We need to use the deep subsurface as part of the solution for the climate crisis,” McIntosh said. “Yet, we know more about the surface of Mars than we do about water, rocks, and life deep beneath our feet.”

Reference: “Acceleration of Deep Subsurface Fluid Fluxes in the Anthropocene” by Grant Ferguson, Lydia R. Bailey, Ji-Hyun Kim, Magdalena R. Osburn, Peter W. Reiners, Henrik Drake, Bradley S. Stevenson and Jennifer C. McIntosh, 05 April 2024, *Earth’s Future*. DOI: 10.1029/2024EF004496

The study was funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the National Science Foundation





13

Lesotho Tribune

By Staff Reporter

London, UK - De Beers Group announced on the 25 April, its decision to relocate the De Beers Group Auctions business headquarters from Singapore to Botswana. According to De Beers this strategic move is part of De Beers' efforts to streamline operations, enhance efficiency, and further develop the diamond sector in Botswana.

"The relocation of the Auctions headquarters to Gaborone reaffirms De Beers Group's commitment to the development of Botswana's diamond industry," De Beers statement read.

It demonstrates confidence in the country's capabilities and growth agenda. De Beers Global Sightholder Sales successfully moved from the United Kingdom to Botswana in 2013 and has been operating in Gaborone for over a decade. The move of the Auctions business headquarters is expected to improve efficiency, strengthen partnerships, and support the development of key diamond industry skills in Botswana.

During the relocation pro-

cess, De Beers Group Auctions will temporarily pause operations and sales events to facilitate a smooth transition and ensure uninterrupted high-level service for customers.

Al Cook, Chief Executive Officer for De Beers Group, expressed his satisfaction with consolidating the global diamond trading business under one roof. He noted the successful operation of the Global Sightholder Sales business in Botswana for 11 years, making the transfer of the Auctions business a logical and positive step. Cook expects the move to drive cost efficiencies, meet customers' needs, and further

develop Botswana's diamond sector.

Emma Peloetletse, speaking on behalf of the Government of Botswana, emphasized the significance of De Beers' Auctions business relocation to Botswana. She highlighted Botswana's growing role as a global hub for the diamond industry and the positive impact on

the economy and skills development in the sector.

The relocation of De Beers' Auctions headquarters from Singapore to Botswana signifies a milestone in the development of Botswana's diamond industry and strengthens the country's position as a key player in the global diamond trade.

# AFRICA

## De Beers Moving Auctions Head Office to Botswana



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**AGRONOMIST**

**Agronomist Lesotho**  
**Mokema/Koro - Koro, Maseru**



**Mokema/ Koro - Koro, Maseru:** Our client is looking for an Agronomist to join the team.

The successful candidate will be responsible for developing better planting, cultivation, and operational techniques, improving crop yield and Quality, and solving problems in the production department. Implementing strategies, maintaining outputs in operations through engaging and Managing stakeholders while ensuring that Quality and Execution is Upheld.

Only candidates with the relevant experience will be considered.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- \* BSc degree and a minimum of 3 years' experience in agriculture, agronomy, or related field or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- \* Experience in Managing a team
- \* Experience working for or with agricultural retailers and sales agronomists.
- \* Experience building, working in, or leading and interacting with multi-disciplinary teams including, farm managers, operators, agronomy technicians, business managers, and External scientists.
- \* Experience in training farmers and agricultural industry professionals.
- \* Experience managing projects, including managing finances, with diverse partners, both internal and external.
- \* Valid drivers license

**SKILLS/ABILITIES REQUIRED**

- \* Leading and managing a team of Agronomists and Technicians
- \* Planning, co ordinating, organizing and controlling
- \* Ability to interpret field data and communicate to non-scientific stakeholders.
- \* Ability and willingness to apply science to decision-making and guide activities.
- \* Ability to use applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and Web Browsers, together with Business Management Systems
- \* Ability to Develop Reporting from Data and Communicate clearly with the team.
- \* Excellent communication skills via written, spoken and graphical means.
- \* Ability to work independently with respect to timelines and objectives.
- \* High Ability for Critical thinking and Problem solving
- \* Self-Disciplined and Motivated

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

- \* Required to Travel
- \* Required to work outside and be in the field
- \* May work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult and hazardous terrain and under physically demanding circumstances.
- \* Sitting at desk for prolonged hours

**RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO**

- \* Develop improvement plans and efficiency strategies for the Production department that result and relate to improved yields, and Quality
- \* Planning, co ordinating, organising and controlling agronomic aspects of the production department.
- \* Perform the best processes that lead to sustainable soil health and nutrient load reduction management.
- \* Analysis and recommendations based on Soil and leaf samples, to make the best-informed decisions for the business and the Crops
- \* Develop and maintain production schedule. Develop growing and fertilizer programmes. Improve the Operations Standards and Outputs
- \* Research and Development, for agrochemical/ biological products, Seed varieties, disease and pest control management.
- \* Implement and uphold the Global GAP standard and requirement for the Business, Ensures program compliance with internal policies and external requirements.
- \* Serve as a resource for farmer manager and Senior production manager relating to implementation of nutrient management, crop health and soil health practices.
- \* Develop and implement agronomic production performance reporting to uphold the standards of the Production department
- \* Facilitate meetings, trainings, and the development of quality operators with the knowledge of pest control and how to manage Plant protection products. Looking at all indicators that result in good outcome of inputs
- \* Help design, implement and direct multiple complex production Schedules, set and meet deadlines, and ensure schedule accountability is flagged and managed.
- \* Financial responsibility may include working within and managing a budget for planned schedules, negotiating and contracting with vendors or suppliers, assisting with budget development, and meeting financial efficiency targets.
- \* Land performance reporting, such as but not limited too; land costing, quality and yield evaluations
- \* Leading and managing a team of Agronomists and Technicians
- \* Performs tasks with minimal supervision and makes independent decisions based on analysis, experience and context.

ONLY short-listed candidates will be contacted

To apply email your **cover letter, CV and certified educational certificates** to **clients@datamatrix.co.ls**

**Deadline 10 May 2024.**



# CMM suspension threatens club's stability

By Mamello Mochesane

**B**antu Football Club's Chief Marketing Manager (CMM), Pule Mosoatsi has been suspended from all club activities by the League Management Committee. The suspension, effective for the remainder of the 2023/24 season and the entirety of the 2024/25 season, follows a significant dispute with the league committee.

The saga began when Mosoatsi, serving as one of the 28 members on the Workers Committee responsible for People's Cup activities, witnessed two members of LCS

Football Club allegedly selling tickets despite LCS's non-involvement in the tournament. He was suspended for allegedly failing to disclose the identities of the LCS members.

In a move of transparency, Mosoatsi relayed this information to the league committee, highlighting the discrepancy between the club's actions and its official participation status. This comes after Mosoatsi's reply to the one of the media houses' social media post where the league accused the workers' committee for misappropriation of funds.

However, instead of being commended for his honest

ty, Mosoatsi found himself at odds with the league committee, leading to his suspension without a disciplinary hearing. The decision, made without following proper procedures, has raised eyebrows and speculation of ulterior motives within the league.

Bantu General Manager Poosela Pule expressed dismay at the handling of the situation, emphasizing that Mosoatsi's suspension undermines the club's operations and casts a shadow over its integrity.

He further portrayed that the issue should have been handled by the committee and

not directed at Mosoatsi personally, since he was given a go ahead to attend such claims by the committee.

"He was not given the chance to defend himself or clarify the situation through due process of not being called for hearing," said Pule, highlighting the unfairness of the league's actions.

Furthermore, Mosoatsi's absence poses practical challenges for Bantu FC, as he played a pivotal role in marketing the club and managing sponsor relationships. Without his expertise and dedication, the club and its sponsors stand to suffer significant setbacks.

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16

Lesotho Tribune

By Litsitso Letsunyane

The 2024 edition of the Nedbank 8 tournament nears its kick off dates. This football event, is hosted by Nedbank Lesotho in collaboration with the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA).

A press conference was held on Friday, April 26th, where LeFA extended invitations to A Division club-members and members of the media for the official launch and draw of the Nedbank 8 tournament. Among the topics of discussion was the notable increase in sponsorship, with Nedbank raising the stakes from M250,000 to an impressive M350,000 for this year's edition. The Nedbank 8 tournament stands as a cornerstone of football excellence in Lesotho, bringing together eight top-tier A Division teams from the North and South streams in a battle for supremacy. These teams represent the crème de la crème of both the North and South Streams of the A Division, with each side eager to claim the coveted title.

Tšelis Ramatla, Chairman of the A Division Management Committee, expressed his admiration for the tournament during the press conference, emphasizing the rare opportunity it provides for these teams to compete against each other as they come from different cor-

# ARTS & SPORTS

## M350k Up For Grabs for 8 A Division Teams



ners of the country. Indeed, the Nedbank 8 serves as a platform for these elite teams to showcase their skills and forge lasting rivalries on the pitch.

The lineup of participating teams is nothing short of formidable. From the North Stream, powerhouse clubs such as Mzamane FC, Maroala FC, Kick4Life, Juventude, and Lilemela FC are primed for battle. Meanwhile, the South Stream boasts its own array of talent, including Majantja FC, Qoaling Highlanders, Members FC, and

Swallows FC. All matches are slated to take place at the LeFA headquarters, Bambatha Tšita Sports Arena,

setting the stage for an unforgettable football spectacle. The action kicks off on Saturday, May 4th, with Maroala FC facing off against Qoaling Highlanders FC at 1pm, followed by Kick4Life Juventude's clash with Swallows FC at 3pm.

The excitement continues on Sunday, May 5th, as Mzamane FC goes head-to-head with Members FC at 1pm, followed by Lilemela FC facing off with Majantja FC at 3pm. The intensity is set to rise as all these teams will do what it takes to secure a spot in the semi-finals scheduled for May 11th and 12th, leading up to the Champs of Champs finale on May 19th. Sekonyela Matamane, Head of Marketing and Communications at Nedbank Lesotho, underscored the company's commitment to grassroots football and community development with their increased sponsorship. This investment reflects Nedbank's dedication to giving back to the Basotho community through various community-centered initiatives.

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