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**MOHAHLAULA
AIRLINES**

Malebaleba Fingered in M2 Million Cannabis Smuggling Scandal...Again

By: Staff Reporter

Lesotho Tribune can exclusively report that Anwar Maqsood was arrested at Maseru Bridge while attempting to cross into South Africa with cannabis worth an estimated M2 million has been quietly processed through the courts under circumstances raising more questions than answers. Court documents presented on Friday 29 August, suggest the accused was fined after being charged for possession of only M100,000 worth of cannabis, just a fraction of the haul he was allegedly caught with. Insiders told Lesotho Tribune that the drastic reduction in the official quantity of the contraband is no accident. The suspect is said to have been smuggling on behalf of none other than Member of Parliament Isaac Joseph Malebaleba, whose name has long been dogged by allegations of involvement in the illicit cannabis trade. What fuelled suspicion of a cover-up, border officers on duty at Maseru Bridge were allegedly instructed not to photograph the suspect, breaking from the Lesotho Mounted Police Service's routine practice of recording drug busts for evidence. "They were told to keep the cameras away," one source said.

"And that alone tells you how high up the chain this matter goes."

Malebaleba responds

When contacted by Lesotho Tribune, Malebaleba rejected suggestions that he was linked to the smuggling attempt. Asked about his alleged acquaintance with the arrested man, who has been identified as Pakistani national Anwar Maqsood, Malebaleba was



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Lesotho Tribune
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Law Society President Questions Denial of Bail for Lipholo

By: Staff Reporter

Lesotho Tribune can report that Advocate Lintle Tuke, the President of the Law Society of Lesotho, has weighed in on the ongoing debate surrounding the denial of bail for Basotho Covenant Movement leader, Dr Tsepo Lipholo. In a strongly worded opinion shared on social media, Tuke argued that the High Court may have missed an opportunity to balance the liberty of the accused with the integrity of the trial process. He noted that bail is not meant to be punishment but a mechanism to ensure that an accused person stands trial to finality. Tuke drew comparisons with a past case involving Tumo Lekhooa, who fled justice for seven years. Despite evading the courts, Lekhooa was later granted bail, while Lipholo, who was arrested at his home in Qoaling, has been denied. "How then do we reconcile that precedent with the current situation?" Tuke asked. He also suggested that the High Court could have attached strict conditions to bail, such as limiting travel, surrendering passports, regular reporting to police, or even sureties. These, he argued, are standard tools available to courts to prevent risks of flight or interference with witnesses.



According to Tuke, the matter could set an important precedent if challenged before the Court of Appeal. He stressed that the eventual ruling

would not only clarify the boundaries of judicial discretion in bail matters but also shape public confidence in the fairness of the justice system.

Tuke was careful to note that his commentary was personal and does not represent the official views of the Law Society of Lesotho.

High Court grants postponement in high-profile case against lawyers

By: Tholoana Lesenya

Maseru

The High Court, presided over by Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane, has granted a postponement in the ongoing criminal trial of two prominent lawyers who are facing serious charges of theft, money laundering, abuse of power and contravening the Companies Act of 2011.

The case involves attorneys Moroesi Tau Thabane and John Mosuoe, who were appointed as co-liquidators of Presitex, a company that was under liquidation. The prosecution alleges that during the liquidation process, the two lawyers acted unlawfully by assisting Presitex Director Madhav Visant Delvi to devalue the company and later purchase it at a significantly reduced price.

During Thursday's proceedings, lead prosecutor Advocate Jay Naidoo requested that the matter be postponed, arguing that the prosecution urgently requires a full transcribed record of the evidence given by the first witness in the trial. He explained that the evidence of this witness is crucial and may influence the entire direction of the case.



Adv. Naidoo told the court that when the trial first started, it was handled by junior prosecutors who took down notes during the testimony of the first witness. However, he said those notes are not comprehensive enough to assist him in making informed decisions. For that reason, he requires a complete official record. He emphasised that his intention is not to delay the case unnecessarily, but rather to ensure that the prosecution proceeds carefully and fairly. He further revealed that once the record is obtained, he will consider filing a formal application to have the first witness recalled to the stand for further questioning. "The first witness is pivotal to the prosecution's case. His testimony has a direct impact on the evidence that is yet to be presented," said Naidoo.

"We need the transcribed record so that we can make an informed decision about how to proceed. The application to recall this witness, if granted, will have a profound effect on the future of this case."

Adv. Naidoo further argued that it is important for the court to deal with the first witness's evidence before calling any other witnesses. He reminded the court that while the accused has a constitutional right to a fair trial, the prosecution also has an equal right to properly prepare and present its case.

He dismissed the suggestion that the request for postponement was merely a delaying tactic, stressing that the seriousness of the charges warrants careful handling. "These charges are not minor. They involve allegations of theft, money laundering, and

abuse of power. It is in the interest of justice that the matter is thoroughly examined," he said.

Naidoo also assured the court that there is minimal prejudice to the accused since they are currently out on bail. Unlike other long-standing matters on the court roll, he said, this case has not been pending for an unreasonably long period.

After considering the arguments, Chief Justice Sakoane granted the postponement, paving the way for the prosecution to obtain the necessary records before deciding on the next steps. The case, which has attracted public interest due to the profile of the accused and the serious nature of the charges, is expected to resume once the record of proceedings has been prepared and submitted.

The High Court stands on women's protection from violence

By Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

The High Court of Lesotho has declared that it has a duty to protect women, especially the elderly, who continue to suffer and die at the hands of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the country.

This powerful statement was made on Friday by Justice Tšeliso Mokoko during the sentencing of 41-year-old Mpho Teetsa of Ha Ralintši, Mafeteng. Teetsa was found guilty of the brutal killing of 79-year-old 'Malebohang Motene, whom he accused of witchcraft. The court sentenced him to 40 years in prison for the crime.

Before passing the sentence, Justice Mokoko strongly condemned the continued violence against women in Lesotho. He said the courts have a duty to send a clear message that such acts will not be tolerated. "Women are crying out for protection," he said. "The court has the responsibility to ensure that women, especially the elderly, are protected from senseless violence. The killing of women is becoming far too common, and society is rightly raising its voice against this."



The judge said he was particularly disturbed by the increasing number of elderly women who are killed on accusations of witchcraft. He explained that instead of being respected, loved, and cared for, elderly women are often abused, abandoned, or murdered by younger men who should be their protectors.

"There is a public outcry about these killings. The elderly should be loved and cared for, but unfortunately, we are seeing the opposite. The court must stand firmly against such cruel behaviour," Justice Mokoko added.

The case before the court shocked many in the community. Teetsa had accused Motene, a 79-year-old grandmother, of witchcraft.

Instead of seeking lawful solutions or guidance, he took the law into his own hands and ended her life.

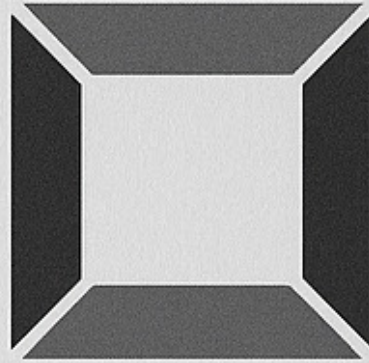
In delivering his judgment, Justice Mokoko described the act as cruel, unjustified, and inhumane. He said that violence against women not only destroys families but also shakes the very foundation of society. He emphasised that punishing perpetrators of GBV is necessary to send a message of deterrence to others.

"Courts cannot ignore the suffering of women in this country. Every time a woman is killed, a family is destroyed, and the community is left in fear. Strong sentences are the only way to show that the justice system takes these crimes seriously," he said.

Gender-based violence remains one of the biggest challenges in Lesotho. Human rights groups and community activists have repeatedly called on the government and the courts to do more to protect women and to ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

The sentencing of Teetsa has been welcomed as a step in the right direction, but campaigners say there is still much more to be done to address the root causes of GBV, including harmful cultural beliefs, poverty, and lack of education. As Teetsa begins his 40-year sentence, the case serves as another reminder of the urgent need for society to protect its most vulnerable members, women and the elderly.

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Lipholo Denied Bail

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

The High Court of Lesotho, presided over by Justice Fumane Khabo, has refused to grant bail to Dr. Tšepo Lipholo, the leader of the Basotho Covenant Movement (BCM).

Lipholo faces serious charges linked to allegations that he misused his political position to confuse and divide the Basotho nation and to undermine the dignity and reputation of the royal family and His Majesty the King. Delivering the ruling today, Justice Khabo explained that the court was not convinced that Lipholo would stand trial if released on bail. She said evidence before the court showed that the accused spends most of his time in the Republic of South Africa, where he frequently travels. According to the judge, even on the day of his arrest, Lipholo was returning from South Africa. His repeated movements between Lesotho and South Africa raised concerns about whether he would respect bail



conditions if allowed his freedom.

“The applicant has demonstrated a pattern of frequent travel outside the borders of Lesotho. This raises a strong likelihood that, if released, he may not return to face trial,” Justice Khabo said. The court also took note of the fact that Lipholo possesses two diplomatic passports. Justice Khabo said this was significant because it meant he could easily use either of the passports to cross borders without difficulty. “The existence of two valid diplomatic passports provides the accused with the means to abscond should he wish to evade trial,” she remarked.

The Crown argued that Lipholo’s frequent travels and the possession of multiple passports were clear indicators that granting him bail would pose a serious risk. The prosecution also stressed that his conduct in recent months showed little respect for state institutions and suggested he might not comply with court orders if released. In its case, the Crown further accused the BCM leader of intentionally causing divisions among Basotho citizens through misleading political campaigns. It also alleged that he attempted to undermine the authority of the monarchy, which the Constitution protects as a central pillar of

Lesotho’s democracy and culture.

Justice Khabo said the seriousness of the allegations added weight to the Crown’s argument. She explained that courts must always balance the rights of the accused with the interests of justice. In this case, the possibility of Lipholo absconding was too high to ignore.

“Bail is not a right but a privilege granted by the court when it is satisfied that the accused will not interfere with witnesses or abscond trial,” she said. “In this matter, the Crown has established strong reasons to believe that releasing the applicant would compromise the trial process.”

The court concluded that it was in the interests of justice to keep Lipholo in custody until the trial begins.

The decision has sparked debate across political circles, with some of Lipholo’s supporters expressing disappointment, saying he is being politically targeted, while others argue that the court made the right call given the seriousness of the charges and the risk of him fleeing the country. Dr. Lipholo will therefore remain in custody as he awaits his trial, which is expected to proceed later this year.

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ESG Lens

TY Taxi Terminal Project Marred by Conflict of Interest



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Lesotho Tribune

By: Lesotho Tribune
Reporters

The construction of the Teyateyaneng Taxi Terminal, a project expected to modernise public transport infrastructure in Lesotho, has now become a test case for governance and ethical accountability. Evidence obtained by Lesotho Tribune suggests that Minister of Local Government, Lebona Lephema, is not merely an overseer of the project but a direct beneficiary through his private companies.

Governance Failure: Conflict of Interest at the Core
The Ministry of Local Government awarded the contract for the terminal to a little-known Chinese construction firm. Yet images from the site show yellow plant equipment, cement bags branded Maluti Mountain Cement, and pallets of bricks all tied to Lephema's business interests. Even a van carrying the logo of Executive



Transport, another company linked to the minister, is visibly parked at the construction zone.

These images raise a critical governance question: is the Chinese contractor essentially outsourcing the bulk of the project's requirements to Lephema's private ventures? If so, then a minister, entrusted with safeguarding public resources and ensuring fair competition, appears to be leveraging his position for private commercial gain. This is not the first cloud over Lephema. Lesotho Tribune has previously reported his attempts to secure a M108 million bailout from the Lesotho National Development Corporation to rescue his struggling mining compa-

ny. The recurring theme is one of state opportunities circling back into his personal business orbit.

Social Impact: Excluding Local Contractors
Beyond governance concerns, the social impact of this arrangement is troubling. Infrastructure projects like the TY Taxi Terminal are often touted as vehicles for job creation and skills transfer to local contractors. Instead, what the public sees is a politically connected elite monopolising supply chains while local builders and suppliers are sidelined.

Taxi operators and commuters in Teyateyaneng may eventually benefit from a modern terminal, but the broader promise of inclusive development

is undermined. If local small and medium-sized enterprises cannot access contracts without political connections, then the project reinforces inequality rather than alleviating it. A Test for Accountability
ESG principles are not abstract ideals; they represent the global standard by which responsible investments and public projects are judged. By intertwining public authority with private gain, the TY Taxi Terminal case risks becoming another symbol of Lesotho's governance challenges.

Minister Lephema has so far remained unavailable to comment on the matter. Yet the questions persist: how can a sitting minister's companies be so visibly embedded in a project his ministry awarded? What safeguards exist to protect public resources from political capture? And when will ordinary Basotho contractors be given the opportunity to compete fairly? Until these questions are addressed, the TY Taxi Terminal will stand not only as a transport hub but also as a monument to how environmental, social, and governance standards can be compromised in plain sight.

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Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff Reporter

MASERU

Lesotho Tribune has been reliably informed that the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) Board of Directors has increased the salaries of four acting senior officers, effectively granting them permanent-level pay without due process. The decision, taken while substantive executives remain suspended under an ongoing forensic audit, has sparked concern among staff and governance observers.

The four officers are acting in key positions left vacant after senior managers were suspended to allow the forensic investigation to proceed. Instead of limiting their allowances to the 10 percent cap introduced by LEC's 2021 acting allowance policy, the board is said to have

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

LEC Board Quietly Hike Salaries of Four Acting Officers



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Lehae Funerals sets the bar high for funeral services

By Pheello Mosesi

Lewest of the Alliance Group Investments Holding Company (AGIHC) subsidiaries, Lehae Funerals, officially launched its morgue at Likotsi on August 27. AGIHC was founded in 1993 and is the umbrella company to subsidiaries including AIC, Alliance General Insurance (AGI), Alliance Legal, SALEM Properties, FINCLUDE, HOLA, New Dawn and Lehae Funerals.

The COO of Lehae Funerals, Lipuo Sehlooho, in giving the background of the company, cited that the company was founded and came into operation in 2023.

“As the AGIHC, we have always taken pride in the quality of our service delivery and we continue to seek out innovative ways to keep answering to Basotho’s needs. One of these innovative ideas that we have has resulted in Lehae Funerals,” he said.

“As Lehae Funerals, what we strive to accomplish is to offer funeral services that display class, dignity and honour,” Lehae Funerals CEO, Motjope Mokhathi said, adding that the company goes an extra mile to see this happen as they also collect bodies from around the globe and bring them into the country for their burials.

He further indicated that the company offers its

services to both its clients who have policies with the company and those who do not.

Despite being operational from 2023, admittedly, Lehae Funerals rose to fame and to the public’s eye in a different light during the funeral of Lesotho rapper and songwriter Bokang ‘Moleli, popularly known as Malome Vector.

The funeral, held in Roma in August of 2024, caught the attention of both Basotho and others alike played as testimony, portraying the quality that the company offers to comfort Basotho in their darkest hours of sorrow.

In December of 2024, the policies of the funeral

services company started to be sold. The company, in response to the demand, took the opportunity and penetrated the market, opening its first mortuary in June 2025.

Aiming to be an unquestionable trend setter in the burial business, Lehae is eyeing to be the first choice funeral services company nationwide to ever offer a crematorium which is anticipated to operate from 1st of October 2025.

Lehae offers a variety of funeral and burial services, offering convenience for those mourning the loss of their loved ones with embedded benefits including burial services, free repatriation, cash back every

half a decade and optional riders including cash top-up, educator and utility vehicles.

Despite a short span of the company’s existence in the insurance field, it has already branched out its offices in nine districts including Mafeteng, Quthing and Mokhotlong.

The launch took place at Likotsi, where a few of the company’s partners and media practitioners were given a tour, perusing through the newly built establishment that has three chapels, a mortuary, a showroom displaying a variety of caskets and coffins, as well as a crematorium facility, which is still a work in progress.



Econet Expo 3rd Edition

By Pheello Mosesi

Telecommunications Company, Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) set Maseru Mall alight in hosting the third edition of Econet Expo. It was declared open on Wednesday.

The Econet expo, where Econet invites other partners, showcases the services and products tied to the company's service and goods provision.

This year one of the focus areas of the expo was to help the country excel in the digital space through incorporating technological advancements with traditional educational practices.

"As ETL, we are the leaders in enabling the digital transformation in the country and with this event, we are showcasing that commitment. This year's expo comes at a very pivotal time for Lesotho as we have been witnessing across the globe the rapid shift of economies towards the digital era," said ETL General Sales and Services Manager Lebohang Ramaisa.

He additionally reiterated that this mission statement of keeping tabs on digital advancements in the country aligns precisely with the current shift that Lesotho is in the process of installing. "For Lesotho, this movement is also driven by the government, where we collaborate with other stakeholders to complete



the national digital transformation strategy and several achievements have been met, including the development of key assets such as the cyber security bill, data management assets, AI and others," he said.

The Expo comes just three weeks after the company has successfully implemented the rollout of fibre and 5G connection in all 10 districts. He further indicated that the protection and security of the clients is of high priority to the company, while they also strive to offer them the best connection. In addition, some of the upgrades ETL has made in the digital space include the Wi-Fi Plus, which not only allows users to access unlimited internet connections from the comfort of their homes and offices but also offers connection for mobile devices.

Speaking at the event, Tlohang Palama, Business Solutions Manager at ETL, described that the company had focused on some aspects which they hoped to enlighten the public about, covering eight thematic areas,

including cloud technology, Artificial Intelligence, cyber security, robotics, Fintech, conventions of technology, eco-ticket digital platform and IOT.

It was also revealed that the Ministry of Science, Technology, Communication and Innovation is currently at work to

make it accessible for monetisation of content for users. The event ran for four days, starting on Tuesday and ending on Friday. It featured partners from various companies as well as students who showcased robotics. The expo, held in an open wide space, gave opportunity for the company's customers to peruse through a wide range of services from different establishments which had stalls set up. These stalls offered services and goods including business solutions, smart homes, innovation, artificial Intelligence, cloud solutions and cybersecurity.

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Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff Reporter



Overview

Building on the last period (18 July – 14 August), this updated snapshot reflects continued price trends in key vegetables across Lesotho's markets, especially Maseru. The prices are based on prevailing wholesale and landed retail rates consistent with recent data from the Lesotho Tribune, with context from ongoing supply dynamics.

Latest Average Prices (LSL per kilogram)		
Commodity	Latest Price (15–29 Aug)	Previous Period (10 Jul–14 Aug)
Tomatoes	8.80 (+10%)	8.00
Potatoes	5.50 (-15%)	6.50
Onions	5.50 (±0%)	5.50
Green Peppers	14.40 (+20%)	12.00

Notes:

- Tomatoes have risen about 10 percent (from LSL 8.00 to about LSL 8.80), reflecting colder conditions and tight supply.
- Potatoes dipped about 15 percent from LSL 6.50 to about LSL 5.50. The lower prices are mainly the result of

FARMERS CORNER

Lesotho Vegetable Market Report (18 July – 29 August 2025)



oversupply by local farmers.

- Onions held steady at LSL 5.50.

- Green peppers saw a sharp 20 percent increase from LSL 12.00 to about LSL 14.40, consistent with winter scarcity and rising costs.

Market Dynamics

- Tomatoes: Rising demand amid colder weather is slowly tightening supply, nudging prices upward.

- Potatoes: Lower prices reflect oversupply by local farmers, who have been harvesting in larger volumes than the market can absorb.

- Onions: Prices remain stable, possibly supported by consistent imports or buffer stocks.

- Green peppers: Scarcity and increased logistics costs continue to pressure prices upward.

Summary

As of late August, tomatoes and green peppers

are trending upward, with green peppers particularly notable for their steep rise. Potatoes are moving in the opposite direction, as oversupply from local farmers has pushed prices down. Onions remain stable. Overall, winter pressures are felt most in high-cost items like peppers, while the surge of local potato harvests is cushioning



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By: Staff Reporter

The decision to remove Lesotho on the SADAC agenda, albeit not entirely unexpected given the country's internal political struggles, has profound implications for Lesotho's future—its economic stance, foreign investments, and, most crucially, its political stability going forward. Lesotho has long been marked by political instability, with frequent changes in leadership, tensions between political factions and allegations of corruption. For decades, we have witnessed political unrest that has undermined governance structures and eroded public trust. However, the removal from the SADC agenda, which is viewed as a response to these ongoing issues, could be a pivotal moment for Lesotho. Historically, SADC has

EDITORIAL

Navigating Future Developments Amidst Shifting Regional Dynamics ...raising critical questions about the country's future trajectory

"While this development may appear challenging on the surface, it also provides an opportunity for Lesotho to reassess its strategies and reinforce its stability and growth prospects"



played a significant role in providing a framework for political and economic cooperation across African countries and its removal of Lesotho from its agenda could be seen as a signal of concern regarding the country's governance.

However, this exclusion could also be an opportunity for the nation to recalibrate its political strategies and institutions.

It remains to be seen whether the current gov-

ernment will rise to the occasion and strengthen its political systems or whether instability will continue to permeate the nation's leadership. The lack of an active partnership with SADC could open the door for a more isolated approach, but one that might allow Lesotho to recalibrate its political structures and seek new avenues for cooperation and development.

The political uncertainties in Lesotho have undoubtedly hindered its

economic growth. Historically, the country has faced economic challenges, relying heavily on remittances from Basotho working in South Africa, textile exports and agriculture (an industry that has been seen to be facing challenges in recent years).

However, despite these constraints, Lesotho has immense potential due to its natural resources such as diamonds and its position as a gateway

Continues in Page 17



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Lesotho Tribune

by Relebohile Kabelo

The ubiquity of mobile phones has transformed contemporary patterns of communication. Both basic phones and smartphones facilitate immediate contact, whether for maintaining social relationships or exchanging information. Smartphones, in particular, extend these functions through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, which offer cost-effective and efficient means of interaction. A prevailing expectation among users is the immediacy of response, calls are anticipated to be answered promptly, and messages replied to without delay. This expectation illustrates the degree to which mobile technologies have become embedded in everyday life. The expression “glued to phones,” though colloquial, encapsulates the phenomenon often described as smartphone dependency or addiction. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that individuals continue to negotiate responsibilities and experiences beyond digital communication. The central challenge lies in the widespread expecta-



tion of immediate responses in digital communication. For business owners, this expectation places their digital accounts at risk, as buyers rarely consider that the owner may be occupied with other clients. As a result, dissatisfied customers often turn to competing businesses or publicly criticize the delayed response on social platforms. This issue is particularly pronounced in the telecommunication sector. Clients seldom acknowledge the scale of such services, for instance, a provider may serve over 500,000 subscribers, among whom tens of thousands may simultaneously encounter network difficulties. Consequently, callers are frequently placed in queues, waiting several minutes before reaching a service officer. To mitigate dissatisfaction, telecommunication companies employ strategies such as automated music during waiting periods. Although some clients abandon calls due to impatience, the widespread provision of toll-free services helps reduce backlash. By contrast, industries such as banking often charge customers while they wait, which leads to greater frustration. Small businesses, which lack the resources for such innovations, are especially vulnerable to reputational

harm when they cannot respond promptly. Users of mobile phones, regardless of type, are accustomed to a culture of constant availability. Any individual who fails to respond promptly to calls or text messages is often perceived as unreliable or socially inconsiderate. This expectation is intensified by phone addiction, which normalizes the assumption that everyone is perpetually accessible and will respond immediately. In practice, however, senders rarely consider that the recipient may be occupied with daily responsibilities or personal events. In urgent situations, frustrated callers often expect immediate reception, as though communication technologies guarantee constant responsiveness. While mobile phones have undeniably facilitated assistance in emergencies, they cannot account for the personal circumstances of recipients, who may be in vulnerable situations such as attending significant family obligations (e.g. funerals). Ultimately, the expectation of instant communication overlooks the reality that individuals' availability is shaped by broader social and personal contexts. Living life nowadays feels as if no one truly has a life to live. Almost all communities are shaped by this culture, or more precisely, by screen culture. The emergence of smartphones has turned people into virtual automatons. Terms like “social detox” have become popular because many have recognized the darker side of smartphone use. When two people are talking and one is texting

on their phone, it can feel as though a third person is present, since one individual is communicating simultaneously through multiple channels. Memes reflecting this phenomenon are trending, such as: “We’ve normalized overconsumption (and it’s killing your creativity); we can’t even eat without watching YouTube; we can’t go for a walk without listening to music; we can’t go to the toilet without scrolling reels; there’s no breathing room for your mind, just a never-ending stream of dopamine; how do you expect to create something great when all you ever do is consume? Give yourself a little space.” This illustrates that nearly everyone is constantly engaged with their phones, attending to one activity or another, hence almost everyone thinks there should be an instant response. To support the idea that everyone has a life to live, individuals must manage their screen time and respect others' availability by not expecting immediate responses. This entails accepting that the recipient may be unavailable at a given moment and allowing sufficient time for them to reply. Technical issues, such as a lost or malfunctioning phone, may also prevent instant communication, so senders should not become frustrated when responses are delayed. Ultimately, the principle is that phones should function more like postal mail, which promote mutual respect between users and recognizing that everyone's time is valuable.

Continued from Page 15

for trade between South Africa and the rest of Southern Africa.

Now, with the country removed from the SADC agenda, Lesotho may face new challenges in attracting foreign investment. Traditionally, the SADC bloc has offered a platform for economic integration and growth and Lesotho's exclusion might discourage potential investors who fear the implications of political instability.

Foreign businesses are drawn to politically stable environments and with SADC's removal of Lesotho from the regional agenda, it may struggle to project the type of stability that international investors crave.

However, there is a silver lining. Lesotho's unique position could attract investment in niche sectors like tourism, mining and hydropower if the government can implement sound policies and foster stability.

Strategic reforms aimed at improving governance, tackling corruption and building investor confidence could, over time, create a more attractive investment climate.

The country's exclusion from the SADC agenda presents a complicated diplomatic situation. Being part of SADC allowed the kingdom to engage in a wider regional dialogue on trade, peacekeeping, and regional development.

Its removal signals a withdrawal of regional support, but it also presents the opportunity for the kingdom to pursue bilateral agreements with countries and organizations outside the SADC framework.

Lesotho may seek stronger ties with countries beyond Southern Africa, particularly those in Europe and Asia. This would allow the country to diversify its foreign relationships and secure trade partnerships outside of the regional bloc. However, the challenge remains that without a stable political environment, Lesotho may struggle to capitalize on these opportunities.

In the wake of this political shift, the key to Lesotho's success will lie in its ability to navigate the

post-SADC landscape. This can be achieved by fostering greater political stability through reforms, strengthening the rule of law and creating a conducive environment for both local and foreign investors. Without these foundational changes, the country risks further alienating itself from regional and international partners, which could ultimately stunt its economic growth and political maturation.

Moreover, a redefined political vision that aligns with the needs of Basotho, addresses issues of governance and reduces corruption will be crucial for long-term stability. Without these reforms, Lesotho may continue to face the challenges of economic

stagnation, political instability, and diminished foreign interest.

The removal of Lesotho from the SADC agenda is undoubtedly a turning point. It is a moment for introspection and potentially, renewal. Basotho must demand better leadership, demand accountability from their elected officials and demand a stable environment that can attract the development the country so desperately needs.

While the challenges are numerous, the potential for a more independent, self-reliant Lesotho—one that can secure its future beyond the SADC framework—is within reach. It will require vision, commitment and a collective national will to seize the opportunities that lie ahead.



800 households electrified in Mohale's Hoek

BY:Pheello Mosesi

The right honorable Prime Minister Sam Matekane and the Minister of Energy Mhlomi Moleko spearheaded the electricity handover ceremony at Ha Tlali and 'Mapotsane communities in the district of Mohale's Hoek this Friday 29 August. The Ministry of Energy has supplied electricity to upto 450 households in the villages of Ha Tlali and 'Mapotsane plus Makhetheng Primary School.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Prime Minister hinted that electricity supply is one of the cornerstones of Basotho growth and development, hence the government's target is to ensure that by the year 2030, every Mosotho has access to the service.

"We will reach this target by supporting the Ministry of Energy with the financial muscle boost originating from the national budget as well as the support from the country's development partners," he reiterated. "Electricity is a very vital model of infrastructure as we are able to boost the economy through the growth of businesses, fight crime as well as performing other daily duties at our households," the Prime Minister said, adding that they are proud to announce that a similar job has reached completion at Ha Kobo-Tšoeu where 350 households have had electricity installed.

"The project cost to a

tune of M10 500 000," Matekane announced. The project of electrifying the two villages alone has been valued to a tune of M21 547 000 with each family taking a cut of over M47 000 in average. The contractors entrusted to carry the duties of this supply fell on the shoulders of locally owned companies; Lesehe Constructions and Powertech. Matekane expressed his joy in receiving a report that these constructions had also offered temporary jobs to the locals during the course of the project. He further urged the contractors to always strive to excel in service delivery and be punctual, pleading with them to return to the drawing board and have an open communication with the ministry should they meet hindrances along the course of the job.

Likewise, he insisted to

the government ministries to be swift in paying tenderers as soon as they complete the tasks they have tendered for, noting that delayed payments result in the foreclosure of Basotho companies hence the country's economy gets knocked in the process.

Matekane announced that as the government working alongside the Disaster Management Authority (DMA), they have also handed over 21 newly built houses which were crumbled down due to heavy rains and winds.

"These houses are not just walls and roofing but act as a beacon of hope for a better future and dignity restoration," he said. Moleko expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister for fulfilling the promises he made to the nation when he entered his office of being invested in service delivery.

Sizakele Cloete Mdlokovana, a member of parliament and MP for Mohale's Hoalso #61, expressed his gratitude for the people of Mohale's Hoek, saying they are filled with joy to see the day.

"I have personally spoken with Minister Mhlomi persisting to see this day become a reality. I therefore wish to express my gratitude to him."

The government has also build towers in various places that were in dire demand of communication access; Ha Liphapano, Mahloala Valley, Ha Thetsinyane and Ketane Valley. Other beneficiaries of this year's infrastructure implementations include schools which have had computer labs build; Bonhomme Commercial High School, Saint Patrick High School, Mohale's Hoek English Medium, Mohale's Hoek High School and Holy Cross High School.



LESOTHO ENGAGES IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AT TICAD, SADC SUMMIT

BY: Lemohang Botsane

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations this week held a media briefing where it provided an update on recent international engagements by the Prime Minister which was inclusive of the Turkmenistan LLDCs Conference, the SADC Summit and the TICAD meeting in Japan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honourable Lejone Mpotjoane, declared that the objective of the conference was to report the details of the United Nations summit on Landlocked and developing countries where the Prime Minister participated on behalf of Lesotho.

Touching on the issue of LLDCs, Mpotjoane said with the government's knowledge and approval he led a delegation of authority to the 3rd Meeting of the United Nations LLDCs which was held at Awaza in Turkmenistan from the 5th-8th August 2025.

"This conference was important to these countries, the objective being to work on strategies to eradicate hurdles that disturb these countries from growing and maintaining their stability," he said.

"Lesotho was chosen to be a Deputy President of this conference. We were also granted an opportunity to take part and lead other parts of such summits", added Mpotjoane.

The conference was concluded with the award of two documents; the Awaza political declaration



and the Awaza program of action (APOA) for the upcoming 10 years (2024-2034), highlighting that the hurdles hindering economic growth in these countries include; high cost deliveries, climate changes and lack of infrastructure.

Mpotjoane continued to say Lesotho bid for a chance for the United Nations Agricultural regional research hub to be in Lesotho and pledged other countries to back Lesotho. "I invite you all to work together in this as a country to win", exclaimed Mpotjoane.

Moving on to the alliance between Lesotho and Japan, under TICAD, Lesotho has been in good relations with Japan since 1971. From then, these two countries have been working harmoniously together in different departments like the building of primary and secondary

schools, computer labs and classrooms, providing student aid for Basotho students studying in Japan, food aids and more.

"TICAD was established in 1983 and holds meetings every 5 years in Japan. But lately it happens in 3 years between Japan and African countries. The first summit of TICAD was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2016, followed by a meeting in Japan in 2019, Tunisia 2022, in 2024 the Ministers of International affairs from different African countries met to prepare for the 2025 TICAD," Mpotjoane said. The right honourable the Prime Minister, Sam Matekane mentioned at TICAD that major problems faced in Lesotho include youth unemployment and a fall in the country's economy which relies on the global economy," in this regard, Lesotho asking Japan to aid

with money for inclusive growth.

Japan will train 30,000 Artificial Intelligence (AI) experts across Africa for the next 3 years to speed up digital change and thus create employment.

Mpotjoane also weighed in on SADC Summit issues, saying it was in this Conference where Madagascar took lead for the 2025/26 summit, South Africa being chosen as the Deputy President of SADC and Malawi being Chairman of the SADC Organ Troika, Security and Defence.

"This conference made a decision to remove Lesotho from the organ Troika Agenda following Smooth political process and stability in Lesotho. They also commended a group of elders who usually mentor and guide Lesotho. Their reports proved that indeed Lesotho is politically stable", concluded Mpotjoane.

Lesotho Welcomes PM Back Home

By: Staff Reporter

The Right Honourable Prime Minister Sam Matekane arrived from Madagascar this week where the 45th Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit was held and was welcomed in a style by Basotho.

The nation and friends of Lesotho gathered together on this momentous occasion to celebrate the new positive status of the country.

The United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator, Amanda Mukwashi congratulated Lesotho for being removed from the SADC agenda, saying “In December last year, the secretary general of the United Nations stood before the parliament of Lesotho and paid tribute to the enduring legacy of king Moshoeshoe I, the legacy that is rooted in peace and unity. Today we gather to honour the people of Lesotho for continuing that legacy through one of the most inclusive national reforms.”

“On behalf of the United Nations, I commend the government, civil society and all Basotho who have contributed to this national milestone” she concluded.

Lesotho’s engagement in the recent SADC summit has resulted positively,

with the country securing recognition and respect from other nations. The conference offered a medium for Lesotho to engage with other SADC member states and reinforce regional ties. The country’s leadership has been applauded for its initiatives in progressing its development and fostering international cooperation.

The right honourable, the Prime Minister, Sam Matekane reasserted his devotion to leading Lesotho to success and removing the country from the list of the least developed countries. In a press statement, Matekane stressed the significance of peace and stability, especially in the electoral process. He vowed to work intimately with Basotho to achieve this objective, recognising the hurdles that lie ahead.

“As we manage the com-

plications of the electoral process, I urge Basotho to prefer communication and peaceful settlement of conflicts. Where there are hurdles, let us sit down and conclude them harmoniously for the sake of our nation. And where we have achieved success, let us rejoice and thank God for guiding us,” Matekane

“I would like to grant my profound gratitude to our international and development partners who stood firm with Lesotho during difficult times.

Your steady aid and mentorship have been priceless as we navigate the reforms path. We truly cherish having partners and Friends of your nature”, said Matekane. Matekane concluded by commending Basotho who won competitions in Madagascar at the Summit, namely; Thabo Rakhomo(Media) who won 1st prize, Ntsoaki Kholumo(Essay Competition) 1st Prize as well as Boitumelo Khotlele having won a 3rd prize in an essay competition.





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Matekane's dubious celebration says a lot about his character!

RFP SOLD ITSELF AS A REVOLUTION OF MERITOCRACY. WHAT WE GOT INSTEAD IS A THEATRE OF EASY WINS AND APPLAUSE.

By: Hlalele 'Neko

Sometimes it feels as if this country is lighting fireworks for a battle that was never fought. You hear the noise, see the flashes, and for a moment it feels like victory. Then you pause and realize nothing actually happened. That is exactly what comes to mind watching RFP these days. The fireworks are loud, but the field is empty...just like their promises!

I still remember the campaign trail. Perhaps you do as well. There was a sense of freshness in the air. RFP promised a revolution, and it was not shy about the word. The talk was of meritocracy, clean governance, accountability, a new way of doing things. It was meant to be the break from corruption and mediocrity that people had been craving for years. And many of us believed it. Some of us desperately wanted to believe it...man we believed crooks!

Fast forward to the present and the picture is entirely different. What we have is a government more concerned with being seen than with actually delivering. Every minor gesture is stretched into a grand moment. A pothole patched suddenly becomes an achievement to be broadcast.

This is not the revolution that was promised. It is a scam. And not the kind of scam that leaves you moved or enlightened. It is the kind where the cabinet members exaggerate every line because they know the script is weak. The applause



is sought more than the substance.

The reliance on easy wins has become the pattern. They are convenient. They look good in photographs, they "trend" online, they create the sense of movement. But they are hollow. Patching roads here and there is an easy win. Reforming procurement so that contracts are fair and transparent is the hard work. Opening a computer lab is easy. Reforming education so that deployment of teachers is fair and the curriculum makes sense is the hard work. Announcing reforms in speeches is easy. Building the systems to actually enforce accountability is the hard work. RFP has chosen the easy path because it provides instant applause. Yet applause without delivery is a poor substitute for progress. And if we are honest, the crowd plays its part too. Basotho reward the performances. The cheering often drowns out scrutiny. Opposition parties, even when they raise points that are plainly correct, are jeered down. Their arguments are dismissed not on merit, but because of who they are. I find myself doing it as well at times, shaking my head at the opposition out of habit rather than engaging with the substance of what

is being said. It is easier to clap than to ask questions. Easier to laugh than to pause and reflect.

That is how standards slip. When governments are rewarded for gestures rather than results, mediocrity becomes the national benchmark. We start calling the bare minimum a breakthrough. We applaud promises rather than delivery. We adjust our expectations downward without even noticing. Over time, the very idea of demanding better begins to feel unrealistic.

Meritocracy was supposed to be the cornerstone of this revolution. Yet meritocracy is not a speech. It is an operating principle. It shows itself in how people are appointed to boards, how tenders are decided, how performance is evaluated, and how non-performers are dealt with. It means competence over proximity. It means impartial rules instead of personal loyalty. What we see now is the opposite. Proximity to power carries more weight than ability. Contracts resemble rewards for friends. Appointments look like favors. People do not need a forensic investigation to notice this. You can sense it in the air.

The obsession with optics is not free of cost. It drains energy, money, and political capital that could be used on reforms with real impact. It lowers the standard by which success is measured. If a government can celebrate for doing what should be its routine duty, or even for things it never actually delivered, then the whole society be-

gins to settle for less. That is how decline sets in quietly. Not with a collapse, but with a gradual acceptance of mediocrity.

It is deeply offensive to think back on the promises and compare them to what we have now. Offensive that those who championed revolution and meritocracy have handed us kleptocracy instead. Offensive that people who once demanded accountability now want us to clap for shadows. Offensive that serious people who know exactly what is happening are willing to play along and exaggerate the significance of the smallest gestures.

Governance was supposed to be different. Instead it has become a show, with the loudest cheers reserved for the emptiest acts. The revolution that was promised has been traded for pageantry. The vision of meritocracy has been abandoned for the convenience of proximity. And the people, whether out of fatigue or habit, continue to clap for the fireworks even though the battle never happened.

A government that promised to fight corruption should not be in the business of celebrating illusions. It should be in the trenches, fixing the problems it swore it would fix, and allowing results to speak for themselves. Until that day comes, perhaps the best service we can render as citizens is to withhold our applause. Let us save our cheers for the moment something real arrives, because a country cannot build its future on noise and smoke.



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Lesotho Tribune

By Litšitso Letsunyane

The Lesotho Lawn Tennis Association officially launched wheelchair tennis on Friday at the Maseru Tennis Courts, marking a historic milestone for sports inclusivity in the country. The ceremony was graced by the Minister of Sports, Hon. Motlatsi Maqelepo, LSRC President Mr. Baba Malephane, LNOC CEO Mr. Morake Raleaka, Lesotho Lawn Tennis Association President Mr. Kamohelo Hlomisi, and other high-ranking officials. This initiative by the Association aims to make the sport more accessible to people with disabilities, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to take part in tennis regardless of physical challenges. Beyond promoting excellence in the sport, the Association is working towards

fostering a more inclusive and diverse tennis community. Officials at the launch emphasized that this step will have a transformative impact on the lives of many individuals with disabilities, by opening doors to active participation in tennis, it will not only promote physical activity but also help players develop their skills, build confidence, and find empowerment through sport. What is Wheelchair Tennis? Wheelchair tennis is an adapted form of tennis for athletes with physical disabilities that affect their lower limbs. It is one of the most popular para-sports globally and has been part of the Paralympic Games since 1992. In wheelchair tennis, athletes with mobility impairments such as spinal cord injuries, ampu-

tations, or other conditions compete using specially designed sports wheelchairs. These wheelchairs are lightweight, highly maneuverable, and equipped with slanted wheels that provide speed, stability, and quick turning ability. Players use one hand to control the wheelchair while using the other to hit the ball. The rackets and balls are the same as in regular tennis; no special equipment is required beyond the wheelchair. However, the sport demands exceptional upper-body strength, coordination, and precision for effective movement and powerful shots. Wheelchair tennis largely follows the same rules as traditional tennis, with just one major exception: the ball is allowed to bounce twice before it must be



returned. Remarkably, the second bounce can even occur outside the court boundaries, which evidently gives players greater room for play.

The sport is divided into two main categories:

- * Open Division – for athletes with permanent lower-limb disabilities who have full use of their arms.
 - * Quad Division – for athletes with impairments in both the upper and lower limbs, often requiring straps or specialized grips to hold the racket.
- What makes wheelchair tennis especially unique is its integration into the professional tennis circuit. Athletes compete in major international tournaments, including the Grand Slams; the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open, sharing the same stage as the world's top able-bodied tennis players. The launch of wheelchair tennis in Lesotho is therefore not just a sporting development but a social one. It shows a growing recognition of the importance of inclusivity in sports and promises to inspire a new generation of athletes with disabilities to pursue tennis at both national and international levels.

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