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MASERU, LESOTHO

Sunday, 12 October 2025

Lesotho Tribune

www.lesothotribune.co.ls

Information Liberates

ISSN 2453-5419



VOL 5, ISSUE 6

M 22.00

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pocketed over M889,000 in bonus

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MOHAHLAULA AIRLINES

LCA Warns Against Unlicensed Courier Operators as Lesotho Marks World Post Day 2025

By: Seipati Matobo

MASERU

As the world celebrates World Post Day 2025 under the theme “Empowering Communities through Reliable Postal Services”, the Lesotho Communications Authority (LCA) has issued a stern warning to unlicensed courier operators that continue to flout national regulations. In a statement released on Thursday, the LCA said the rise in unregistered courier services poses serious risks to consumers and undermines fair competition in the postal and logistics industry. The Authority said it has received numerous complaints about such operators who have been conducting business without oversight, thereby gaining unfair market advantages and jeopardizing public trust. World Post Day, which commemorates the founding of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 1874, serves as a reminder of the critical role postal and courier services play in connecting communities, facilitating trade, and driving development. This year’s celebration focuses on building trust, accountability, and inclusivity within the postal ecosystem—values that the LCA says are central to its mandate.

“The Authority has noted the proliferation of un-



licensed courier service providers operating within the country. These unregistered entities have been engaging in predatory practices that distort the marketplace and expose consumers to risks such as loss or theft of parcels,” the statement reads.

The LCA cautioned that customers who choose to use unlicensed couriers have no recourse under the Consumer Complaints Procedure and Guidelines 2022, meaning they cannot be compensated for losses or damages.

Currently, over 200 unlicensed courier operators are believed to be operating illegally across the country. The Authority said it is working closely with law enforcement, the

One Stop Business Facilitation Centre, and Revenue Services Lesotho to identify and clamp down on such operators.

“These illegal providers are subject to arrest and possible closure by law enforcement agencies,” the LCA said.

To help protect consumers, the LCA released a list of companies that are currently licensed and legally authorized to operate courier services in Lesotho. These are:

- **Lesotho Postal Services**
- **DHL Lesotho**
- **Kayhil Freight**
- **RCJ Express**
- **Skynet Worldwide Express**
- **Leseho Logistics**
- **Skyberg**

The Authority urged the

public to verify the licensing status of courier companies before using their services.

“Consumers are strongly advised to avoid engaging unlicensed providers, as doing so exposes them to substantial financial and personal risk,” the LCA reiterated.

The celebration of World Post Day, marked annually on 9 October, continues to highlight the importance of postal services in global and local development. For Lesotho, this year’s commemoration also serves as a call to action—to protect the integrity of the postal industry, ensure consumer safety, and reaffirm the role of reliable postal services in empowering communities.

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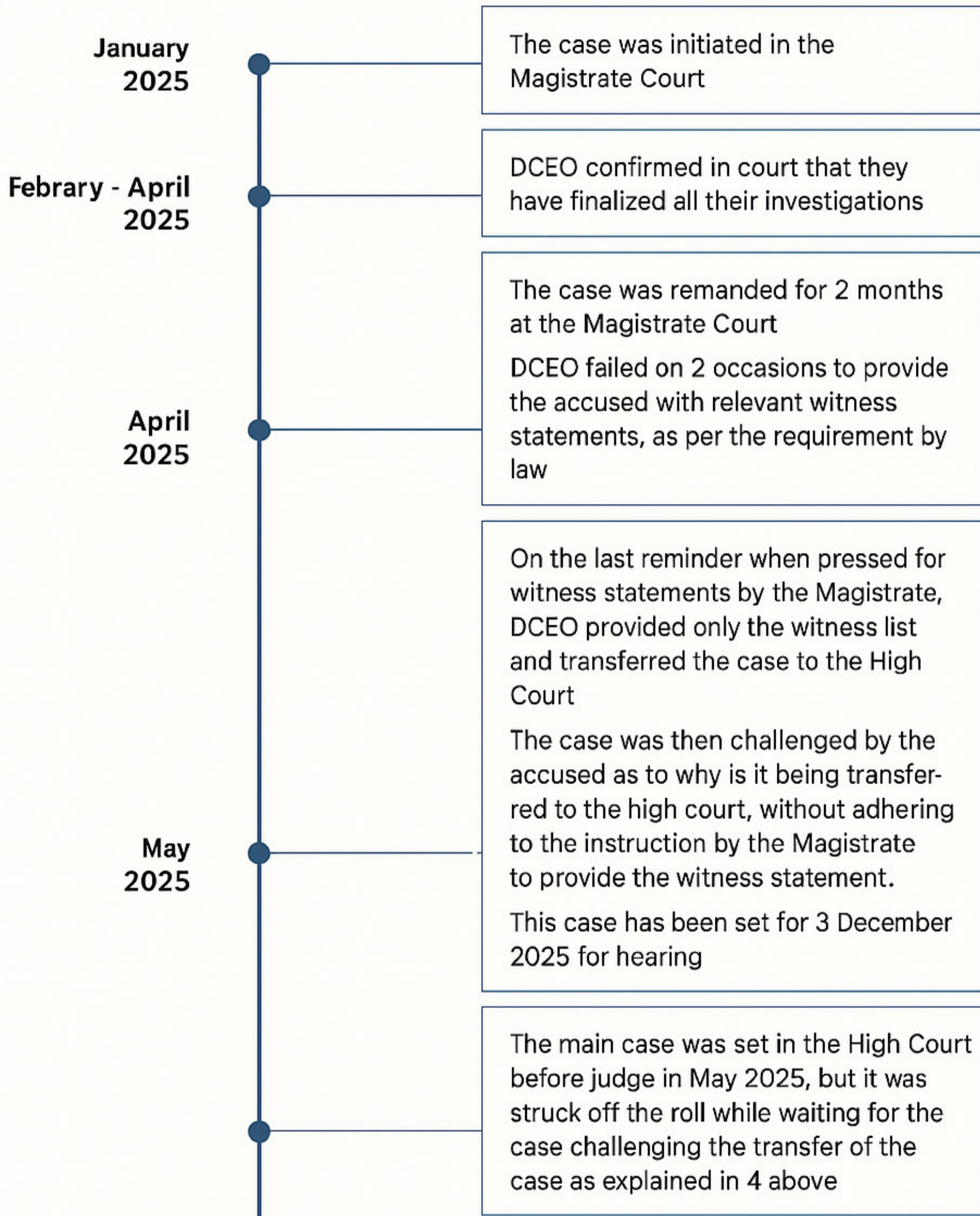
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Ha Belo Project Case Summary



October 2025

Points of interest — notes (or for morts winness statements

To date (October 2025) no single witness statement has been provided to the accused by DCEO and the case remain in limbo.

45 Basotho Apply for Three IEC Commissioner Posts

By: Tholoana Lesenya

Maseru

Parliament's Office of the Clerk has confirmed receiving 45 applications from Basotho vying to fill the vacant positions of Commissioners at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The confirmation comes through a letter dated 3 October 2025, addressed to Adv. Lekhetho Rakuoane, Secretary of Registered Political Parties.

According to the correspondence signed by Adv. Lebohang Maema KC, Clerk to the National Assembly, the applications were submitted following a public notice inviting suitably qualified Basotho to serve as IEC Commissioners. The deadline for submission was Thursday, 2 October 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

The Clerk's letter indicates that the full list of applicants, along with their curriculum vitae and supporting documents, has been enclosed and forwarded to the Secretary of Political Parties "for action." This

marks the beginning of a vetting process expected to determine the next cohort of IEC Commissioners who will oversee the country's electoral management.

A register of submissions seen by Lesotho Tribune shows a diverse list of applicants drawn from academia, civil service, law, and the private sector.

The Independent Elec-

toral Commission plays a pivotal role in maintaining Lesotho's democratic processes by managing national elections, voter registration, and political party financing. The appointment of new Commissioners follows the end of the tenure of the previous team, which guided the country through the last general elections.

Ramahooana Matlosa,

Political analysts told Lesotho Tribune that the composition of the incoming IEC will be critical ahead of the next electoral cycle, especially as the country continues to navigate reforms and restore public confidence in its institutions. The list will now be reviewed by the relevant authorities before recommendations are made for final appointments.



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M40m water project handed to Lekokoaneng community

By: Lemohang Botsane

Berea

The Lesotho Lowlands Water Supply Scheme (LLWSS) is a comprehensive water delivery project providing treated water to various lowlands regions. Spanning eight distinct zones from Butha-Buthe to Quthing district, the scheme will supply water to settlements over 2500, encompassing urban, peri-urban and rural areas. The project aims to meet the growing demands for domestic and industrial water needs by connecting bulk water supply zones.

Before this week's project handover in Ha Maritins'i, Lekokoaneng, Berea, the Minister of Natural Resources, Honourable Mohlomi Moleko, had launched this project earlier in January, while a major milestone was marked last year with the sod-turning ceremony of the M40 million water supply project. This week, the Right Honourable Prime Minister Sam Matekane officially handed over the water supply to the Lekokoaneng community after years of struggling with water. Finally, 17 villages of Lekokoaneng, including Ha Maope, Ha Sakoane and Ha Maritins'i, will now have access to clean wa-



ter. At this event, the project coordinator, Thabiso Ts'asane, highlighted that this project is not only officiated at Lekokoaneng but also in other parts of the country. He said in March this year, the phase was officially closed, having noticed that the government's goal had been reached. The government of Lesotho was aided by the African Development Bank to assist about 60,500 people to have access to clean water, and the tender was entrusted to Mango Tree Construction.

Minister of Natural Resources, Mohlomi Moleko said he was working tirelessly to ensure that health centres, schools and churches have electricity and water too. He said they aim to provide more than 1 million people in the lowlands with water before 2030, with phases 1, 2 and 3 of the project, emphasising that the work is already being done in Butha Buthe and Leribe districts. In Mohale's Hoek and Mafeteng, the project is expected to commence this year. Matekane said the scheme will benefit everyone in Le-

kokoaneng, including government offices, schools, churches as well as health centres, a total of about 8,900 people. The project will be implemented to curb the need for water while the ministry prepares for individual tap installation. The Prime Minister urged the community to take care of their water source and make good use of this supply. He said the government's aim is to provide the nation with clean water to improve sanity within the country. The project is already working in Maputsoe and Hlotse.

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Lipholo's Basic Rights Denied

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

In a dramatic courtroom turn, the leader of the Basotho Covenant Movement (BCM), Dr Tšepo Lipholo, told the Maseru Magistrate's Court that prison officers denied him access to the toilet while in court, a revelation that left the courtroom shocked for a moment.

Appearing before Magistrate Thamae Thamae, Lipholo made the startling claim during proceedings in which his legal team was set to argue for the magistrate's recusal.

The application seeks Magistrate Thamae's withdrawal from a matter in which Lipholo is fighting for his release from custody, claiming that his case has stalled unfairly.

According to Lipholo's explanation, the incident unfolded shortly after a short health break, which was granted because one of the correctional service officers had indicated that the accused (Lipholo) was asking for a health break. He told the court that while he was supposed to leave the courtroom to the toilet, one of the senior correctional service officials, Mafatle, approached him together with others, blocking his way, indicating that he should not do



that. Lipholo said he told the correctional service officers that he had a right to a health break, but one official said Lipholo seemed to be taking advantage of the situation.

The BCM leader further told the court that his stay in prison has been marked by humiliation and mistreatment. He alleged that even though the Deputy Commissioner of the Lesotho Correctional Service had told the public that he was not abused in any way in the facility, he had lost his tooth in the hands of some of the correctional service officers. "Even my food has been tampered with," he continued, alleging that on one occasion, his meal was mixed with powdered soap.

"These acts are a clear vio-

lation of my rights," Lipholo declared, insisting that the inhumane treatment was not only degrading but also part of a pattern of intimidation designed to silence him.

Magistrate Thamae appeared visibly disturbed by the allegations. He emphasised that accused persons are under the protection of the law while before the court.

"When accused individuals are in this courtroom, they are under the authority of the court," he said firmly. "No one has the right to infringe upon their basic rights or dignity."

But what left many observers surprised was that the magistrate did not summon the officers accused of the misconduct to respond to the claims, nor did he launch an immediate

inquiry to verify the allegations. Instead, he advised that matters concerning the accused's treatment in custody should be discussed with his legal representatives.

The courtroom murmured with unease as Lipholo was led back into custody, visibly unsettled.

His supporters, seated quietly in the gallery, exchanged worried glances. To them, the testimony confirmed their long-standing fears that their leader had been deliberately mistreated since his arrest. As the court adjourned for the day, the atmosphere remained tense. The magistrate did not immediately deliver a ruling on the recusal application, leaving uncertainty hanging over the proceedings.

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ESG Lens

The Revolving Door of Governance at LEC



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Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff Reporter

When a company fires its acting Managing Director in the morning and re-appoints him to the Board by evening, one must wonder if Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) is running a power utility or a circus.

Corporate governance, at its core, is meant to enforce accountability, clarity of roles, and separation of powers. Yet, in LEC's latest episode, those principles appear to have been tripped, electrocuted and left smoking. The absurdity of dismissing an individual for alleged misconduct while simultaneously entrusting him with board-level oversight responsibilities is not just poor optics...it's governance malpractice.

Governance Gone Rogue
Under standard corporate governance norms, the Board is the ultimate custodian of oversight and is supposed to hold executives accountable. But how can one credibly dismiss an executive for alleged misdeeds and then vest

him with direct oversight powers as a director? This is not just bad optics. It undermines the logic of separation of power, checks and balances, and accountability.

King IV is instructive here. Principle 10 of King IV holds that "the appointment of, and delegation to, management contribute to role clarity and the effective exercise of authority and responsibilities." If one is dismissed for mismanagement, appointing that same person to the Board collapses role clarity entirely.

Moreover, Principle 7 demands that the governing body comprise "the appropriate balance of knowledge, skills, experience, diversity and independence" to discharge its role objectively and effectively. By folding a dismissed execu-

tive back into the oversight body, LEC undermines that balance and injects a conflict of interest into the very structure meant to supervise him.

ESG Implications Governance:

If governance is powerless to enforce its own standards, investors and stakeholders must question whether the "G" in ESG is just window dressing. This move signals that balance and accountability are fungible, subject to internal politics.

Social:

Public trust is not unlimited. When state institutions behave as though their leadership is above reproach, the social contract frays. LEC's customers, employees, and civil society observers will see a utility that protects insiders rather than serving the public

interest.

Environmental:

While this is not an environmental scandal per se, weak governance infects everything. The utility charged with advancing energy access, grid expansion, renewable integration, and climate resilience will lose credibility and may falter in delivering on those environmental objectives.

Final Irony

Let's call it for what it is: a governance farce masquerading as institutional continuity. If King IV means anything, it demands clear accountability, role distinction, independent oversight, and ethical leadership. By firing and then elevating the same individual into oversight, LEC betrays those principles. If governance were electricity, LEC would be in total blackout.





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Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff Reporter

Maseru

The Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) has confirmed the appointment of Tšeliso 'Mokela as Acting Managing Director, a move that has stirred disbelief and outrage among majority of Basotho who see it as yet another chapter in the revolving door of controversial state appointments.

The announcement, made through an official notice on Friday, comes just a day after the abrupt removal of Acting MD Nathaniel Maphathe. Sources within the utility say Maphathe's exit followed internal tensions with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Board over disciplinary processes and governance failures.

But the replacement has raised more eyebrows than the dismissal itself. 'Tšeliso 'Mokela, who currently heads the Lesotho Electricity Company Communications

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

LEC's New Acting MD Once Charged for Abuse of Office Now Heads Two State Power Companies



(LECC), will now hold two critical leadership posts within the country's power sector, a concentration of authority that analysts describe as bizarre and reckless, particularly in an environment already marred by governance scandals and public distrust.

What further complicates the appointment is the political proximity. 'Mokela's wife, Teboho Mokela, is the current Government Secretary, the most powerful civil service position in Lesotho. The pair now effectively straddle both the bureaucratic and operational arms of the state, a situation critics say represents the very definition of conflict of interest.

This is not the first time Tšeliso 'Mokela's name has appeared in controversy. Records show that in September 2020, as Chief Executive Officer of the Lesotho Com-

munications Authority (LCA), he was charged alongside several board members for abusing the functions of their offices. The charges related to his failure to disclose personal interests during meetings where his own remuneration was discussed.

Investigations at the time revealed that under his leadership, the LCA Board approved a 57 percent bonus for him without any performance assessment, in violation of internal policy that capped bonuses at 20 percent. As a result, he pocketed over M889,000 in bonuses and salary adjustments for the 2016 to 2018 financial years, an act later flagged as irregular and corrupt.

A senior governance expert who spoke to Lesotho Tribune described the LEC Board's decision as a slap in the face to accountability.

"It is almost surreal," he said. "You have a man who was charged for corruption now heading two of the country's most strategic state-owned enterprises, while his wife sits as the Government Secretary. It makes a mockery of the government's own anti-corruption rhetoric."

At LEC, insiders say morale has plummeted as staff view the appointment as politically motivated rather than based on merit. One employee, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the decision "feels like punishment for those who believed reform was finally possible."

'Mokela's dual role will also stretch the corporate governance boundaries between LEC and its subsidiary LECC, both of which are integral to Lesotho's energy infrastructure and already under scrutiny for inefficiencies, procurement irregularities, and mismanagement of public funds.

What remains unclear is whether the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which has recently been investigating SOE governance failures, will summon the new Acting MD to explain his past conduct and potential conflict of interest. For now, the lights at LEC may stay on, but the moral circuit seems dimmer than ever.

Sub-Saharan Africa Maintains Resilient Growth but Faces Urgent Jobs Challenge

By World Bank Group

Sub-Saharan Africa's economy remains resilient, with growth projected to reach 3.8 percent in 2025, up from 3.5 percent in 2024. This acceleration reflects easing inflationary pressures and a modest recovery of investment despite persistent global economic uncertainty. The number of countries experiencing double-digit inflation has fallen sharply—from 23 in October 2022 to 10 in July 2025—signalling progress in stabilising prices. Yet, downside risks loom large, including the indirect effects of global trade policy uncertainty, declining investor appetite and a shrinking pool of external finance, including declining official development assistance. External debt service has more than doubled over the past decade, reaching 2 percent of GDP in 2024. The number of Sub-Saharan African countries in or at high risk of debt distress has nearly tripled, rising from eight in 2014 to 23 in 2025—nearly half of the region. The pace of growth



remains insufficient to meaningfully reduce extreme poverty or create the quantity and quality of jobs needed to meet the demands of a rapidly growing labour force. Africa is experiencing the world's largest and fastest demographic shift. To harness this opportunity, countries must accelerate growth that delivers high-quality jobs—a central theme of the 32nd edition of Africa's Pulse, the World Bank's biannual economic update for the region, which this year focuses on Pathways to Job Creation in Africa. "Over the next quarter century, Sub-Saharan Africa's working-age population will grow by more than 600 million," said Andrew Dabalen, World Bank Chief Economist for the

Africa Region.

"The challenge will be matching this growing population with better jobs, given that only 24 percent of new workers today land wage-paying jobs. A structural shift toward more medium and large firms is essential to generate wage jobs at scale." The report outlines a set of policy priorities to help countries stimulate large-scale job creation. Reducing the cost of doing business is critical to enable businesses to expand and new high-growth firms to enter the market. Policies that target the provision of better infrastructure – energy, digital, transport – and human capital development are essential for creating an ecosystem for people and

businesses to thrive. Strengthening institutions and governance can ensure stability, curb corruption, and create a predictable business environment that attracts private sector investment. Stimulating private sector development in sectors such as agribusiness, mining, tourism, healthcare and housing and construction will also be key. For example, for every job created in tourism, an additional 1.5 jobs are generated in related sectors. With the right reforms and investments, Sub-Saharan Africa can unlock its vast employment potential and chart a path toward inclusive and sustainable growth. News Source: World Bank Group

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A 50-year-long plan for a prosperous Africa: Agenda 2063: Agenda 2063

By: Tholoana Lesenya

Agenda 2063 is a 50-year development blueprint created by the African Union (AU) for transforming Africa into an “integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena”.

The agenda was adopted in 2015, providing a strategic framework for Africa’s socioeconomic transformation from 2013 to 2063, building on prior initiatives like the Lagos Plan of Action and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

From initiation, the agenda was intended to be a comprehensive plan for Africa’s transformation into a significant global entity, carefully structured around seven core aspirations for the continent’s future: achieving prosperity through inclusive growth and sustainable development, creating an integrated and politically unified continent rooted in Pan-African ideals, establishing good governance, democracy, human rights, justice and the rule of law, ensuring a peaceful and secure Africa, fostering a strong cultural identity, shared heritage, values, and ethics, driving people-centered development that empowers women and youth and becoming a strong, united, resilient and influential global actor.

It also includes 15 flagship projects which have been identified as being key to enabling and accelerating progress in all areas of development including a high-speed train network that will connect all African



capitals and commercial centres, formulation of a strategy for transforming the African economy from a supplier of raw materials to one that actively uses its own resources, establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area, introduction of the African Union Passport and construction of a third Inga Dam among others. With the world now doing things technologically and African countries slowly shifting from traditional ways of doing things including acquiring education, an ICT-based programme is part of the Agenda 2063 to increase access to tertiary and continuing education for all Africans. The agenda is being implemented through a series of 10-year plans, with the First-Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP) that started in 2013 and was concluded in 2023 focusing on laying the groundwork for the agenda.

The agenda is undergoing its Second-Ten-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP), which ran from 2024 and will be completed in 2033. This phase emphasises accelerating implementation based on lessons learned from the first 10 years.

Despite progress on other projects including the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA), implementation of other projects including the high-speed train network and the Inga Dam has been hampered by various challenges, including a lack of funding, slow ratification of treaties by member states, inadequate skills and capacities in some areas and external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020.

The first call for the agenda was made around May 2013 at the 21st Ordinary Assembly of the African Union, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the predecessor of the AU, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The framework was, however, formally adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on January 31, 2015, during the 24th Ordinary Assembly of the AU.

The call was a realisation by African leaders that there was a need to refocus and reprioritise Africa’s agenda from the struggle against apartheid and the attainment of political independence for the continent which had been the focus of the OAU and instead to prioritise inclu-

sive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governance and peace and security among other issues aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena. And so the African heads of state and government signed the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration during the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the formation of the OAU / AU.

As a member of the AU, Lesotho is also a part of African Agenda 2063 and has aligned its national development plans such as the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), with the goals of Agenda 2063. The country has also committed to key initiatives within the agenda, including the AfCFTA; a March 2018 agreement that commenced in January 2021.

Agenda 2063 was developed through a broad, consultative process involving various stakeholders across Africa, including the African Union leadership, with Heads of State and Government of the African Union leading the process, the Chairperson of the AU Commission of the time, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who presented the initial vision for the 50-year plan.

Its framework incorporated discussions with African policy makers, ministers, national experts, academia, civil society, the private sector and the African Union

Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), then the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) agency, which was tasked with drafting the agenda.





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PAC Orders LNDC to Fire Internal Auditor

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

In a stunning revelation that has rocked one of Lesotho's most noticeable public institutions, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has demanded that the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) immediately fire its Internal Auditor, 'Mapaballo Rantsane, over hotheaded allegations that her appointment was driven by corruption and nepotism. The heated confrontation unfolded this week in Parliament, where LNDC officials faced a tough grilling from PAC members over irregularities revealed in the Auditor General's report. What began as a standard inquiry quickly exploded into a scandal that has left the corporation's credibility hanging by a thread. PAC Chairperson, Honourable 'Machabana Lemphane-Letsie, dropped the bombshell early in the hearing, accusing LNDC of appointing Rantsane as a "reward" for giving the corporation a clean audit report in her previous role. The Chairperson said the sudden shift from a disclaimer-filled audit history to a perfect report under Rantsane's hand was "too



convenient to ignore." "She gave LNDC a clean bill of health when no one else could," Lemphane-Letsie declared. "And not long after that, she was hired as their Internal Auditor. That is not a coincidence but it's a payback." Her statement sent shockwaves through the room. The committee demanded to know how Rantsane, who allegedly lacks the minimum qualifications for the position, could have been approved by LNDC's recruitment board. It later appeared that one of the four board members who handled the hiring process is directly related to her, a revela-

tion that fueled a scandal among committee members and confirmed their suspicions of nepotism. Interim Chief Executive Officer of LNDC, Molise Ramaili, tried to distance himself from the scandal, telling the committee that he was not involved in Rantsane's recruitment. "The hiring was managed by a four-member board," Ramaili explained, adding that he only learned later that questions had been raised about her qualifications. But PAC members were not convinced. They accused LNDC's leadership of turning a blind eye to corrupt hiring practices

that have become all too common in state institutions. "When unqualified people are put in charge of financial oversight, corruption becomes a permanent feature," Lemphane-Letsie said coldly. The PAC's findings have left LNDC scrambling to manage the fallout. The corporation, which plays a central role in attracting investment and promoting industrial growth in Lesotho, now faces a public relations disaster. The committee has ordered the immediate dismissal of Rantsane and called for disciplinary action against any officials who may have connived in her hiring.

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EDITORIAL

Mkhwanazi's War on the Press Is a Fool's Errand...



or silence scrutiny. Oversight is not an enemy of the state. It is its lifeblood. When a senior law enforcement official advocates for spying on journalists, he undermines the very legitimacy of the institutions he leads.

If he genuinely wants to clean up the image of journalism, he should start by respecting due process. He should report unethical conduct through existing structures. He should encourage transparency in policing and ensure that his own house is in order before turning the state's intelligence machinery on the media.

South Africa has travelled a painful road to earn its freedoms. Journalists were once harassed, jailed, and killed for telling the truth. To hear a high-ranking police official echoing that dark history is deeply unsettling.

Lieutenant General Mkhwanazi must be reminded that his oath is to protect the Constitution, not to weaken it. A nation that allows its police to decide what journalists may or may not write is not a democracy. It is a warning sign.

The right thing for him to do is simple. Retract the call. Respect the press. Strengthen accountability within the law. Anything less is a betrayal of South Africa's democratic promise.

We don't want to have his incompetent colleagues here in Lesotho having similar ideas!

just an opinion. They are an abuse of authority. What makes his position even more troubling is that it betrays a deep misunderstanding of how media accountability already works. South Africa's Press Council exists to deal with ethical breaches. It is a forum where the public can lodge complaints, and where journalists are held to account through a transparent and independent process. By ignoring that, Mkhwanazi is not calling for ethics. He is calling for control.

During his testimony, he accused journalists of being "handled" by rogue intelligence officers and spreading misinformation. Yet he offered no proof. Accusations made under parliamentary privilege, without evidence, are nothing but character assassination. If he truly believes certain reporters are corrupt, he

should present credible evidence to their editors or to the Press Council. What he should not do is demand that intelligence agencies monitor newsrooms or threaten imprisonment for mistakes.

When state officials begin to decide which journalists are "ethical" and which are not, democracy begins to die quietly. Fear replaces inquiry. Self-censorship takes root. Whistleblowers stop talking. It becomes easier for corruption and abuse to thrive because those who might expose it are afraid of being watched or jailed. This is precisely the playbook of repressive governments that see truth as a threat rather than a tool for reform.

Mkhwanazi's justification that "national security" requires secrecy is equally hollow. National security cannot be used as a blanket excuse to hide misconduct



By: Staff Reporter

Lieutenant General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi's remarks before South African Parliament this week were more than reckless [Yes before you wonder why we have an opinion on South African issues...more than half of Lesotho's ruling party MPs are "South Africans"... not that we need justification to have opinion!]. They were dangerous. His call for journalists to be spied on by the State Security Agency and for reporters to be jailed for so-called misinformation is an assault on the very foundation of South Africa's democracy. As a senior police officer, Mkhwanazi carries the weight of public trust and the responsibility to uphold the Constitution. That same Constitution guarantees freedom of the press and the right to receive and impart information. His words, therefore, are not

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Lesotho Tribune

by:Hlalele 'Neko

It is a bitter irony: the United States, self-styled as the beacon of democracy, is now experimenting with the very tools long associated with repressive regimes... There was a time when America preached restraint, lectured the world on democracy, and wagged its finger at every government that used the military to settle domestic scores. Today, that same country has deployed soldiers into its own streets. President Trump's decision to send the National Guard into cities like Chicago, Washington, and Los Angeles is not just political theatre. It is the slow cracking of a system that once claimed to be unbreakable. For decades, African nations have been told that only weak states unleash the army on their people. Yet here we are, watching the supposed guardian of democracy resort to the very "third world" practices it condemns. It feels strange to see the stars and stripes flutter above military convoys patrolling civilian neighbourhoods.

OPINION

When the Land of the Free Turns Its Guns Inward



The land of the free has started to look like the land of fear. Trump's justification sounds familiar. He says cities are unsafe, governors are failing, and the federal government must restore order. That script has been used by many leaders across Africa who wished to appear strong while silencing discontent. The difference is that when those leaders acted, Washington called them tyrants. Now, the White House has decided that the same formula, soldiers in the streets, can cure a democracy's growing unease. In Illinois, a federal judge has already blocked the deployment. In Oregon, another has done the same, warning that the use of troops would inflame tensions rather than ease them. Even so, the message has already spread far beyond America's borders: when power feels threatened, it reaches for the gun. This is what makes the move dangerous. Other leaders are watching. If Washington can militarise dissent, then anyone can. It erases the last moral barrier that separates demo-

cratic authority from brute force. The African strongmen who once trembled under Western lectures now have a convenient reply: "We are only doing what the United States does." America has always served as both teacher and mirror. When it turns its back on its own principles, it gives license to every opportunist who believes power should never be questioned. In Lesotho, we have lived through this before. The army was sent into communities under the banner of "disarming criminals." Instead, civilians were beaten, tortured, and in some cases, killed. Reports from Amnesty International described people stripped, assaulted, and left to rot in detention. Nobody was held accountable. The government's silence was telling. The Biden administration, said nothing. Not a word condemning the torture. Not a statement demanding justice. It taught our leaders that the world does not care, so long as you wear the label "ally." That silence has cost lives. And now, with the Unit-

ed States flirting with the same militarised instinct, it becomes almost impossible for Washington to call anyone else out. The preacher has joined the sinners. What we are witnessing is not a momentary lapse but a shift in how power justifies itself. Soldiers are being rebranded as peacekeepers, and dissenters as threats to national unity. It is a dangerous vocabulary. Once a nation convinces itself that order must come before freedom, the rest is predictable: arrests, intimidation, and silence. The United States may recover from this. Its institutions are stronger than ours. Its courts are still willing to say no. But even if it does recover, the damage is done. The world has seen the mask slip. America's moral authority was never in its might but in its example. If that example fades, it leaves the world darker. Lesotho's weak leadership, already prone to abuse, now has cover. Other fragile democracies will follow. Every soldier deployed on a city street will trace their justification to the country that once claimed to be the world's conscience. The lesson is brutal but clear. Democracy dies not in coups, but in small compromises that feel reasonable at the time. Today it is "restoring order." Tomorrow it is "ensuring stability." Before long, the citizen becomes the suspect. America should know better. And so should we.

Africa Without Borders: A Journey of 40,000 Kilometres

By: Staff Reporter

Maseru

In an inspiring push for change, Ras Mubarak is leading the charge with the Trans Africa Campaign, a groundbreaking initiative that is transforming travel across the continent. Advocating for visa-free borders and sustainable tourism, the campaign is undertaking an ambitious 40,000-kilometre road trip through Africa. This week marked an exciting milestone as the team, comprised of eight passionate Ghanaians, arrived in Lesotho—the 13th country on their extensive journey through 39 African nations over a total of 163 days. But this campaign is about much more than just travel; it's a powerful call for a united Africa. Mubarak and his team envision a continent where African nationals can move freely, a change critical for fostering unity and propelling intra-African tourism and trade. "This dream is not only achievable but vital for our continent's economic and cultural integration," he emphasised. A borderless Africa could unlock tremendous tourism potential and cul-



tivate a shared identity among its people. Throughout their journey, Mubarak and his team have gained remarkable support, receiving endorsements from diverse nations like Botswana, the DRC and Benin, reflecting a growing enthusiasm for the idea of an interconnected continent. During their stay in Lesotho, they engaged with His Majesty King Letsie III, marking an essential step towards involving traditional leadership in their vision for African unity. Their welcome at the Office of the Prime Minister by Chief of Staff Honourable Shale Sofonea further solidified Lesotho's commitment to this transformative initiative. "We strongly believe that a borderless Africa will

open up opportunities, boost trade and significantly enhance intra-African tourism," Mubarak stated, highlighting the continent's current annual tourism revenue of about \$1.9 billion, with hopes that a seamless Africa could drive this figure to new heights. The campaign not only champions unrestricted travel within Africa but also advocates for an Africa-first agenda, prioritising the best interests of Africans. Mubarak believes that every dollar spent outside the continent is a dollar that impoverishes its people. The vision of a seamless Africa harks back to the dreams of Ghana's founder, Kwame Nkrumah and his contemporaries in the 1960s an Africa where all nations are connected not just through travel but also

through business. "Imagine the accomplishments we could have realised if we had embraced a single passport and currency in 1960," Mubarak posed, challenging listeners to visualise the potential. The Trans-Africa Tourism and Unity Campaign aligns closely with the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims for a connected, borderless continent. However, the campaign argues that 38 years is too long for the African youth to wait. They are determined to work tirelessly to make this dream a reality within the next five years. Launched from Accra, Ghana and backed by the Ghanaian government, this initiative transcends mere symbolism; it's a genuine call to action for policy reform. The campaign urges African nations to tear down barriers, unlocking the full potential of the continent's tourism industry, creating jobs and bolstering economic growth. By removing visa restrictions, the initiative invites African leaders to open the door to new markets, attract investments and deepen regional integration. Together, they aim to pave the way for a vibrant, interconnected Africa where every citizen can thrive.

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Navigating Dual Allegiances: The Constitutional, Security Challenges of Dual Citizenship Among Lesotho's Leaders

By: Staff Reporter

The question of dual citizenship for Lesotho's political and traditional leaders has sparked intense debate, shining a light on critical issues of national security, potential conflicts of interest and the overall erosion of public trust.

This came after the leader of the Basotho National Party (BNP) last week ignited this discussion by proposing a motion that mandates all Members of the National Assembly holding South African citizenship, whether through identity documents, passports or other official means, to declare their status publicly.

This call for transparency seeks to safeguard Lesotho's sovereignty and integrity—a topic that resonates deeply in today's political climate.

In 2018, a significant shift in Lesotho's constitutional landscape permitted dual citizenship, yet the legal and ethical ramifications for those in power remain hotly contested. This ongoing debate pits individual freedoms against the essential need for unwavering loyalty from those who shape our nation's future. A Constitutional Framework: A Conditional Green Light Historically, Lesotho's constitution strictly prohibited dual citizenship, compelling citizens to forfeit their original nationality upon acquiring a second.

However, the Eighth Amendment in 2018 flipped this narrative, allowing dual citizenship and even restoring it to



those who had previously surrendered it. While many viewed this change as a necessary step to combat brain drain and reinforce connections with the diaspora, it came with caveats, particularly for leaders.

The amendment explicitly states that a naturalised or registered citizen of Lesotho "shall not hold specified positions as provided for by an Act of Parliament." This means that while dual citizenship is now possible for most, key governmental roles remain off-limits to those with dual allegiances. However, ambiguity lingers, as specific positions have yet to be definitively outlined in law, opening the door for political interpretation and contention.

Risks of Dual Allegiance in Leadership The debate over dual citizenship among leaders revolves around the potential dangers that such divided loyalties pose across various governance aspects.

1. National Security and Sovereignty Divided Loyalties- A leader holding citizenship in another nation may grapple with conflicting priorities between Lesotho and their other country.

Espionage and Information Leaks- When it comes to

classified information, dual citizenship raises red flags about the possibility of espionage and the leaking of sensitive information.

Many nations impose strict limitations on dual citizens in governmental positions for this reason, yet Lesotho's Eighth Amendment has surprisingly left these necessary safeguards out of the conversation.

2. Personal and Political Interests Conflict of Interest- Leaders with citizenship in another country might prioritise their foreign financial or political gains over the well-being of Lesotho. A leader with significant assets in South Africa, for example, could be tempted to favour policies that enrich their investments rather than serve the wider Basotho population.

Accountability Issues- If a leader were to commit a crime or face investigation, dual citizenship offers a convenient escape route, undermining the justice system and the very principle of accountability in public service.

3. Erosion of National Identity and Trust Loss of Public Trust- The perception that leaders have one foot out of the door can erode public trust and breed cynicism, particularly

among traditional leaders whose authority rests on deep-rooted ancestral ties to the land. Critics argue that dual citizens may exhibit a weakened sense of patriotism, opting for the convenience of multiple passports instead of a steadfast commitment to the nation's needs.

Historical Context: A Shifting Framework

The evolution of citizenship laws in Lesotho shows a significant pivot in national policy.

The early framework from the 1966 Independence Constitution to the 1971 Citizenship Order were designed to promote a clear, singular national identity for the newly independent nation.

The message was straightforward: embrace Basotho citizenship and renounce any competing allegiances. However, the realities of the 21st century, including a prominent diaspora largely based in neighbouring South Africa, intensified calls for reform. Advocates for change argued that enabling skilled Basotho abroad to contribute to their homeland while retaining their foreign nationality was imperative.

The 2018 amendment aimed to address these complexities but left lingering questions about how dual citizenship could coexist within a framework demanding exclusive loyalty from its leaders. As the debate over who is eligible to be granted dual citizenship continues, understanding the stakes involved among leaders becomes crucial for safeguarding the nation's future.

A Journey of Self-Discovery: LHDA Keen on Rebuilding Trust

By: Staff Reporter

Maseru

After facing criticism over claims of neglecting the needs of its people, the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) is finally speaking out about the real hurdles that have been delaying compensation for those who have been resettled.

The two primary culprits? “Lack of paperwork and family disputes,” issues that have plagued the compensation process for years.

In a recent Press Club meeting at the LHDA headquarters in Maseru, the authority reassured the public that all outstanding compensations would soon be resolved.

This gathering wasn't just about addressing concerns; it marked a new chapter in their relationship with the media—an opportunity to celebrate milestones and share progress on crucial projects that underpin the country's economy.

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II, although once stalled, is now making strides, currently sitting at 48 percent completion. Though the bridges were expected to be nearly finished at 97 percent, they are now at 91 percent. The all-important transfer tunnel, which caused quite a stir last year, is now progressing steadily at 53 percent, while the dam is



approaching the 50 percent mark. The LHDA proudly reports a workforce of 16,400, consisting of 12,226 skilled workers and 4,154 unskilled labourers. Despite rumours suggesting that the majority of its workforce comprised foreigners, LHDA management clarified that an impressive 14,953 Basotho—91 percent of their total workforce—are employed by the authority. However, not all is smooth sailing in the project area. Voices from Mokhotlong have expressed frustration, claiming that the LHDA has overlooked their needs. Ironically, about 7,583

employees hail from Mokhotlong, making up around 41 percent of the workforce. Still, local dissatisfaction remains. LHDA Chief Executive Tente Tente acknowledged the unease surrounding compensation for Phase II, reflecting on the delays and disappointments faced during Phase I. He assured attendees that systems have been improved to ensure better record-keeping and a smoother compensation process this time around. Recent updates indicate that approximately 12,833 verification forms have been uploaded for compensation purposes, with 4,574 properties (97

percent) already compensated. Additionally, the authority has removed around 400 graves to facilitate project development and has tackled 36 percent of the houses within the project area. A tender for the removal of another 1,000 graves has already been advertised and awaits approval. With this newfound transparency, the LHDA is keen on rebuilding trust with those who may have begun to lose faith in their mission. As they share their progress, it's clear that stakeholder involvement and open communication will be key to moving forward together.



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Lesotho Tribune

By: Lemohang Botsane

Mafeteng

Beleme Lebajoa, a Smallholders Agriculture Development Project II (SADP II) beneficiary, hosted a field day in Mafeteng this week to showcase his success since joining the project. Lebajoa, a famous sheep farmer, specialising in ram breeding and founder of Matelile Agri Business from Ha-Seeiso, said growing up, he had a dream of owning his flock.

His small dream has now grown into a thriving wool production business which started with just 10 sheep in 2019.

Despite the initial limitations, Lebajoa's ambition and potential saw the business flourish. With simple goals and a strong work ethic, his business is now a testament to the power of determination and innovation, thanks to his dedication. Although the journey was not without its challenges, his vision for a successful wool production

FARMERS CORNER

A Sheep Farmer's Success Journey



business has become a reality. A chance visit from an agricultural extension officer proved to be a game-changer for Lebajoa. The officer introduced him to the SADP and explained how to qualify for its matching grant. Lebajoa made a bold decision to sell most of his flock to attain the M100,000 contribution required. This strategic move unlocked transformative support, enabling his business to access additional funding and expertise. His business also got a major boost from the project, receiving a borehole for a reliable water supply, a new sheep shed that can hold 100 animals, 40 high-quality ewes and two rams to upgrade their flock. To keep feed costs down, Lebajoa's farm cultivates 88.4 hectares of maize enriched with minerals for sustainable livestock feeds. He's also adopted an innovative approach,

tilling neighbours'; fields and growing hay on their yards in exchange for a certain percentage of yields. This plan not only reduces costs but also ensures quality control.

His determination to build a fully independent wool production hub shows how powerful dedication and strategic support are. With the aid of the SADP, he's turned his vision into a reality, proving that even the most ambitious goals can be achieved.

He noted that breeding takes time but with the right support, the path becomes clearer and the results are seen.

Lebajoa's journey indeed serves as an example of how vision, hard work and targeted support can transform not just individual lives but the entire community.

His story is a powerful reminder that one person can indeed make a difference. By pursuing his passion for wool production, he's creating opportunities for others and leaving a lasting legacy in his community.

The SADP II project, implemented by the government of Lesotho with financial support from the World Bank, the government of Japan and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to aid small farmers and this project covers all 10 districts of Lesotho, providing matching grants to eligible applicants and covering a huge portion of project costs.





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Lesotho Tribune

By Litšitso Letsunyane

Nigeria claimed their crucial 2-1 win over Likuena in Friday's 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifying clash at the Peter Moka-ba Stadium, maintaining their push for a spot in the tournament. Despite being heavy favourites, the Super Eagles were made to work hard for all three points by determined Likuena. The first half ended goalless, despite both teams creating chances. Likuena showed resilience in defence, while Nigeria's talented attacking line-up struggled to find the breakthrough and capitalise on their chances. The deadlock was finally broken early in the second half when Moses Simon's goal-bound effort was blocked by Likuena's wing-back, Thabang Ma-

lane's arm in the box. The referee pointed to the spot, and Nigerian captain William Troost-Ekong calmly converted the penalty in the 55th minute to give the Nigerian visitors the lead.

Nigeria doubled their advantage shortly after when substitute Akor Adams marked his senior debut with a composed finish. The goal came from a well-executed pass by star striker Victor Osimhen, showing Nigeria's true attacking depth and quality. Likuena, however, refused to go down without a fight. A late error by Nigerian goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali gifted the Lesotho a goal, sparking a tense finale. But despite the pressure, Nigeria held on

to secure their third win of the qualifying campaign. The Super Eagles dominated much of the match, with their quality on full display. Nigeria's squad boasted a wealth of international experience, with many of their players featuring for top clubs across Europe. Captain William Troost-Ekong currently plays in the Saudi Pro League, while centre-back Calvin Bassey and midfielder Alex Iwobi both feature for Fulham FC in the English Premier League. Right winger Tolu Arokodare plies his trade at Wolverhampton FC, left winger Ademola Lookman is a key player for Serie A side Atalanta FC, and super striker Victor Osimhen stars for Gal-

ataray S.K. in Turkey. In contrast, most of Lesotho's players are domestically based, with limited exposure to top-tier international football. The disparity in experience and talent was evident throughout the match, but credit must go to Likuena, who managed to keep the scoreline close and displayed admirable grit and determination. This result continues Nigeria's strong run against Lesotho, having now won three of their last four meetings in the past six years, with the remaining match ending in a draw. Although Lesotho have often proven to be stubborn opponents, the Super Eagles once again found a way to prevail.



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