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MASERU, LESOTHO

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# Retired Judge Fights Chief Justice Over Withheld Benefits

BY: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

Three foreign acting judges have been appointed to hear a constitutional case brought by retired Justice Tšeliso Monapathi against Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane over the withholding of his terminal benefits.

The judges are Justice Mankhambira Mkandiwire of Malawi, Justice Sylvester Salufu Mainga of Namibia, and Justice David Mangota of Zimbabwe. They were sworn in at the High Court on Wednesday, and the case proceeded on Thursday. Justice Monapathi, who retired in 2024, argues that the Chief Justice acted unlawfully and unconstitutionally by ordering that his retirement benefits be withheld until he finishes cases that were still pending when he left office. He is asking the court to restore his judicial privileges so that he can complete the outstanding matters, and to declare the decision to block his benefits unconstitutional.

“Unfinished work is not his fault” – Lawyer



Representing Justice Monapathi, Advocate Mocheta Makara told the Constitutional Court that it was not the applicant's fault that some cases were still incomplete at the time of his retirement.

He said the courts were seriously understaffed, judges were overworked, and there were not enough resources. Because of this, it was impossible for the applicant to finalise all matters before reaching retirement age.

Advocate Makara added that the Chief Justice had refused to provide Justice Monapathi with the necessary support to continue working, even though Section 121 of the Constitution allows a judge to remain in office

after retirement age in order to conclude pending cases.

“Section 121 says a judge may continue after retirement if there are unfinished cases,”

he said. “It is not compulsory.”

He stressed that Justice Monapathi had reached the mandatory retirement age and therefore fully qualifies for his terminal benefits.

“You cannot force a judge to work without pay” Advocate Makara further argued that the Constitution protects people from forced labour. He said the Chief Justice could not demand that the applicant finish cases without pay, benefits, or proper resources. He told the court that if the Chief Justice believed

Justice Monapathi had failed in his duties, he should have taken disciplinary steps or initiated impeachment proceedings, instead of withholding his benefits.

He also argued that Section 151 of the Constitution, which deals with withholding a judge's pension, was not followed, and that the Chief Justice has no legal power to block a judge's terminal benefits.

“A judge is paid to protect the independence of the courts,” Advocate Makara said. “The Chief Justice or any other person has no right to interfere with a judge's terminal benefits.”

The court is expected to hear further arguments as the case continues.

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# Council of State Moves at Last...Secret Meeting to Select IEC Commissioners?

By: Staff Reporter

## Maseru

Lesotho Tribune has been reliably informed that the Council of State will convene on Wednesday, 21 January 2026, to select three commissioners for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), a move that could finally bring an end to months of constitutional uncertainty that has left the country without a lawfully constituted electoral body. Confirming the impending sitting, Lesotho's Attorney General, Advocate Rapelang Motsieloa, told Lesotho Tribune: "Let's



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# Kamoli Did Not Give the Order, Defence Points Finger at Motšomotšo in Mahao Murder Trial

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

One of the defence lawyers in the Maaparankoe Mahao murder trial has told the court that the 2015 military operation to suppress alleged mutiny was ordered by the late Major General Khoantle Motšomotšo, not former army commander Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli. Advocate Letuka Molati made this statement while cross-examining Captain Litekanyo Nyakane, who testified as the first defence witness after the court dismissed an application by the accused for their discharge.

Adv. Molati told the court that when the military operation began, the Lesotho Defence Force was under the command of Maj. Gen. Motšomotšo, and not Kamoli.

He said at the time the deceased was due to be arrested, Kamoli had only just returned to office after being away for some days. According to the de-



fence, when Kamoli resumed duty, he addressed officers and made it clear that he would not interfere with the operation that had already been launched by Motšomotšo. Adv. Molati said Kamoli announced that Motšomotšo would continue to lead the operation until its completion. He added that this address was made publicly and was recorded by the

army's Public Affairs office.

Adv. Molati further told the court that in both 2015 and 2016, affidavits filed by the army in cases involving arrested and detained soldiers were signed by Motšomotšo, showing that he had full control and knowledge of the operations at the time. The accused, nine members of the Lesotho Defence Force and retired army commander Lt.

Gen. Tlali Kamoli, are charged with the murder of former army commander Maaparankoe Mahao.

They are accused of shooting and killing Mahao on 25 June 2015 at Ha Lekete in Mokema. They are also facing additional charges, including attempted murder and malicious damage to property. The trial is continuing before Justice Charles Hungwe.

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# We Followed the Rules, Nyakane Denies Any Wrongdoing in Mahao Killing

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

**C**aptain Litekan-  
yo Nyakane has  
told the High  
Court that soldiers did  
not break any rules of  
engagement during the  
2015 operation in which  
former army Commander  
Maaparankoe Mahao was  
shot and killed.

Nyakane is one of nine  
Lesotho Defence Force  
members, together with  
retired army commander  
Lieutenant General Tlali  
Kamoli, who are charged  
with Mahao's murder.

Testifying under cross-examination by prosecutor Advocate Lehlohonolo Phooko, Nyakane denied that soldiers caused unnecessary damage or casualties at the scene. He rejected claims that the army used excessive force when the truck carrying Mahao was shot and damaged. He also denied that Mahao and two others in the vehicle, Mahao Mahao and Mabilikoe, were unnecessarily endangered. The accused are facing attempted murder charges in connection with the two.

Nyakane confirmed that the rules of engagement required soldiers to use firearms only as a last resort and to fire aimed



shots to avoid unnecessary casualties and damage.

However, he insisted these rules were followed. Nyakane also denied that the late Captain Tefo Hashatsi, who was leading the arrest team, violated procedure by failing to introduce himself before attempting to arrest Mahao.

He told the court that Hashatsi and Mahao knew each other well because they both served in the Special Forces, and that the incident happened in broad daylight, making formal identification unnecessary.

Nyakane further rejected

claims that excessive force was used, despite Mahao being shot three times. He said the team did not breach the rule that arrests must be carried out using minimum force.

During questioning, the prosecutor accused Nyakane of playing a key role in events that led to Mahao's death.

Advocate Lehlohonolo told the court that if Nyakane had not blocked the truck Mahao was traveling in, Mahao would not have been shot.

Nyakane responded that if Mahao had obeyed Captain Hashatsi's instruction to get out of the vehicle, he would

have been arrested and not killed. Adv. Phooko insisted that had Captain Nyakane not showed the teams the maternal home of Mahao because team members did not of that place, Mahao would have not been killed.

Captain Nyakane replied that, that is not true because some team members already knew of that place as they had worked closely with Mahao. Mahao was shot dead on 25 June 2015 at Ha Lekete in Mokema. The accused are also facing additional charges including attempted murder and malicious damage to property.

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# ESG Lens

## Why This DCEO-Naledi Funeral Planners Dispute Matters for ESG in Lesotho



# 9

Lesotho Tribune

By: Staff writers

At first glance, the letter exchanged between lawyers representing shareholders of Naledi Funeral Planners and the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) appears to be a narrow procedural dispute. It concerns the timing of interviews, a requested postponement and the threat of urgent court action. But viewed through an environmental, social and governance (ESG) lens, the document points to deeper structural questions about how institutions, companies and regulators interact in Lesotho.

ESG is often discussed in abstract terms, as something imposed by foreign investors or multinational standards. In reality, ESG lives in everyday governance decisions. It shows up in how investigations are conducted, how corporate meetings are protected, how conflicts of interest are managed and how power is exercised.

The letter reveals a governance tension at the centre of a private company operating in a socially sensi-

tive sector. Naledi Funeral Planners is not just another commercial enterprise. Funeral services sit at the intersection of culture, dignity, community trust and economic necessity. Stability and legitimacy in such a business are social goods in their own right. From a governance perspective, the issue raised is not resistance to investigation. The shareholders explicitly state their willingness to cooperate with the DCEO and even offer an alternative interview time on the same day. What they object to is the scheduling of interviews at the exact time of the company's Annual General Meeting, a core governance mechanism through which shareholders exercise oversight, vote on resolutions and shape corporate direction. In ESG terms, AGMs are not optional events. They are foundational to governance. Anything that materially disrupts shareholder participation, particularly where those shareholders hold a controlling stake, raises red flags about procedural fairness and institutional sensitivity to corporate governance

norms.

The social dimension becomes sharper when the letter raises concerns about dual roles. The allegation that the company secretary of Naledi Funeral Planners is also an employee of the DCEO introduces a risk that goes beyond legality. ESG frameworks emphasise the management of perceived conflicts because perception shapes trust. Even where no improper conduct exists, overlapping institutional roles can undermine confidence in both regulatory processes and corporate outcomes. Social trust is fragile in sectors tied to grief, death and communal obligation. Any suggestion that governance processes can be influenced indirectly by state power risks damaging not only the company but public confidence in regulatory neutrality.

The environmental pillar of ESG may seem distant here, but it is not absent. Funeral services intersect with land use, burial practices, transport, waste management and sustainability norms. Strong governance is the gateway through which environmental responsibility is

enforced and monitored. Where governance is contested or weakened, environmental compliance is often one of the first casualties.

What this dispute illustrates is the need for ESG thinking to move from policy documents into operational decision-making. Regulators must pursue accountability without appearing to interfere with lawful corporate governance. Companies must protect shareholder rights while remaining transparent and cooperative with investigations. Institutions must recognise that timing, process and optics matter as much as formal authority.

The threat of urgent court intervention underscores the stakes. Litigation is not just a legal escalation; it is a signal that institutional trust has already frayed. ESG principles are meant to prevent exactly this kind of breakdown by embedding fairness, clarity and proportionality before disputes reach the courtroom. This episode is a reminder that ESG is not about branding or compliance checklists. It is about how power is exercised, how decisions ripple through communities and how institutions earn legitimacy day by day.

In Lesotho, where public institutions and private companies are closely intertwined, ESG is not a luxury framework. It is a necessary lens for safeguarding trust, stability and long-term value in both the public and private sphere.



# Ramoeletsi Sets the Record Straight

By: Staff Reporters

Last week Lesotho social media went ablaze with news that “Mohale’s Hoek prison inmates were spotted working in the fields of the Minister of Law and Justice, Richard Ramoeletsi”.

According to social media news pages and legally, this was against the law.

The Lesotho Tribune had made efforts to contact the minister to hear his comments on the allegations made against him but to no avail.

However, this week we got the opportunity to talk to the minister who shed light on the issue that saw some Basotho applaud the act while some said it was pure political exploitation, calling it abuse of power without investigating the facts at hand.

In our interview with Richard Ramoeletsi, he addressed the allegations that Mohale’s Hoek prison inmates were working in his personal fields in Mekaling. While confirming that inmates were indeed working in fields in his constituency, Ramoeletsi clarified that the fields are part of a Ministry of Law and Justice and Lesotho Correctional Services (LCS) Food Sufficiency Project, not his private property.

Some three years ago, the Ministry of Law and Justice, in collaboration with

the Lesotho Correctional Services (LCS), implemented a Food Sufficiency Project, which became active in the F/Y 2025/26.

The project was awarded a staggering M7.2 million in the same year, which the two parties spent towards securing, among others, farming equipment, including a tractor and some farming inputs and other equipment which would contribute towards other projects within the initiative. The project now has a total of three tractors.

The aim of the whole initiative was to boost agricultural self-sufficiency and inmate rehabilitation and enhance food production while also teaching vocational skills to inmates to reduce reliance on external food, improve nutrition and support reintegration

into society.

The project would transform Correctional Centres countrywide into hubs for sustainable food production and skills development, improving inmate welfare and institutional food security.

The plan was to plough fields in the constituencies of Peka, Ha-Makhoathi and Maphutts’ing; areas that were independently selected by the LCS with the plan to involve the inmates in the day-to-day activities of the project.

This project involved agreements with field owners in these constituencies, including Mekaling, for an 80/20 yield share deal with the ministry and LCS. Ramoeletsi went on to reveal that in the past, the project had ploughed

840 acres of land in Maphutts’ing, where the yield was very bad due to drought.

At the Makhoathi constituency, 227 acres of beans and maize were sown and the results were also very bad due to unpleasant weather conditions.

In Peka, they ploughed 122 acres of maize and 150 in Maphutts’ing and the ministry and the LCS are hopeful the turnover this time will be positive. Positive results of the initiative include dressing 700 inmates in new uniforms, courtesy of the inmates who had taken fashion design training skills. The dream is to be able to produce uniforms for all inmates countrywide, about 3000 of them and also produce uniforms for the LCS members.



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Lesotho Tribune

By: Seipati Matobo

### Maseru

Lesotho is facing a rapidly escalating outbreak of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), with hundreds of cattle now infected and at least 19 deaths recorded so far, raising serious concerns about livestock health, farmer livelihoods and the State's preparedness to contain the disease.

Agriculture Minister Thabo Mofosi confirmed that 448 cattle have been diagnosed with LSD to date, warning that the figure is likely to rise as surveillance continues across the country. The most affected districts are Maseru with 163 cases, Leribe with 142, Mafeteng with 45, Butha-Buthe with 36, Bera with 33 and Mochale's Hoek with 28. Thaba-Tseka has reported a single case, while the remaining districts have not yet recorded infections. LSD is a highly contagious viral disease that affects cattle and water buffalo. It is caused by the Neethling virus and is transmitted mainly through biting

# FARMERS CORNER

## Lumpy Skin Disease Threatens Livestock Economy as Infections Surge



insects, particularly mosquitoes and flies. Direct contact between animals is possible but occurs less frequently.

Mofosi attributed the rapid spread of the disease to the current hot and humid conditions, which have led to a surge in insect populations and accelerated the transmission of insect-borne livestock diseases.

The disease is characterised by widespread skin nodules, excessive salivation, lameness, high fever and swollen lymph nodes. Mofosi cautioned that LSD has no cure, as it is viral in nature, but stressed that it can be managed through supportive treatment aimed at strengthening the animal's immune system and preventing secondary infections.

He urged farmers to immediately isolate infected cattle from healthy animals and to ensure that affected livestock are kept under shade with adequate water and feed. Sick animals, he warned, should not be used for work, including ploughing or pulling loads. Farmers have also been advised to move cattle away from swamps, wetlands and

riverbanks, where insect breeding is common. Areas close to rivers, wetlands, lowland regions and zones along the South African border have been identified as the most affected, with illegal cross-border grazing cited as a contributing factor.

Mofosi appealed to farmers who observe signs of the disease to report cases promptly to agricultural offices or veterinary clinics for professional assistance. He emphasised that only trained and authorised veterinary personnel are permitted to administer medication used in managing the disease.

"Self-treatment or administering medication without veterinary guidance is dangerous and strongly discouraged," Mofosi said, reminding farmers that the loss of a cow has serious economic consequences. Although LSD is not among the diseases officially gazetted for annual vaccination, the minister said procurement processes for supportive medication have been completed and that the ministry will provide treatment free of charge. Medical outlets, which closed over the Christmas holidays, are expected to reopen next week.

Mofosi added that medicines will be reallocated from districts that have not yet reported cases to affected areas to speed up treatment. Public awareness

campaigns will continue through radio broadcasts, community gatherings, digital platforms and print media.

He further noted that climate change has contributed to an increase in unexpected and rapidly spreading livestock diseases. As a result, funds have been allocated in the 2026/27 financial year to address such outbreaks. The procurement of 21 vehicles is also at an advanced stage to enable veterinary teams to reach remote areas. Where vehicles cannot access affected communities, traditional leaders and residents have been asked to assist veterinary staff.

Meanwhile, the Director for Veterinary Field Operations in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Dr Mookho Ntiea, urged farmers to strictly separate infected cattle from the rest of their herds and warned against the use of medication without proper veterinary knowledge.

"Farmers should first seek advice from veterinarians to understand how the medication works," Dr Ntiea said. "Ignoring veterinary guidelines is a serious mistake and may put the animal's life at risk, as treatment should only be administered by trained professionals."

Authorities have warned that without strict adherence to veterinary guidance and movement controls,

# Shop Managers Granted Bail After Allegedly Selling Rotten Meat and Locking Inspectors in a Cold Room

By: Tholoana Lesenya

MASERU

The management and a worker at Blessing Khomojoo's Fruits and Vegetables Store have been released on bail after being charged with selling rotten meat and unlawfully locking Maseru City Council inspectors inside a cold room.

According to a statement issued by the Maseru City Council (MCC), the incident occurred on 13 December 2025, when health and environmental inspectors were carrying out their routine food safety inspections at the shop along Kingsway Road.

During the inspection, inspectors allegedly discovered beef that was unfit for human consumption. The meat was seized because it did not meet hygiene and safety standards, including concerns over how and where it had been slaughtered. When inspectors entered the cold room to continue with their work, shop employees allegedly locked them inside. The inspectors were later rescued by the Lesotho



Mounted Police Service. Following the incident, Maseru City Council opened a criminal case against the shop's management and staff. They are charged under Section 47(1) of the Penal Code Act of 2012, which criminalises unlawful detention. The Council says this section applies because inspectors were allegedly locked inside the cold room against their will. They are also charged under the Public Health Order of 1970, read together with Section 70, which makes it an offence to sell or expose food that is dangerous or unfit

for human consumption. This charge arises from allegations that the shop was selling rotten meat. In addition, the accused are charged under the Abattoir Regulations of 1972 (Legal Notice No. 27, Section 6(1)), which require that meat sold to the public must come from approved slaughter facilities and be handled in a hygienic manner. Authorities say the meat found at the shop did not meet these legal requirements. The accused appeared before the Maseru Magistrate's Court on 14 January 2026, where a manager and one employee were formally charged.

They were each granted bail of M2, 000 and are expected to return to court on 27 January 2026. Maseru City Council further stated that the same shop had previously been cautioned over a similar health-related incident. This followed a social media post allegedly inviting members of the public to collect free chicken that had started going bad after a freezer malfunctioned. The post reportedly advised people to wash the chicken and use strong spices to remove the smell, a move MCC says posed a serious risk to public health.

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# High Court Asked to Intervene in Sekola Estate Dispute

By: Tholoana Lesenya

Maseru

The former spouse of the late Minister of Police and Public Safety, Lepota Sekola, has instituted High Court proceedings against his widow and several State actors in a dispute over the administration and distribution of his deceased estate. Khasiane Ramathe, who was married to the late Sekola from February 2014 until the dissolution of their marriage by divorce in April 2022, contends that she is legally entitled to a 50 percent share of the deceased estate. She maintains that the administration of the estate cannot lawfully proceed unless and until her alleged entitlement has been determined and satisfied. In her application, Ramathe challenges the conduct of the Master of the High Court, arguing that the Master acted improperly by insisting on continuing with the administration of the estate despite her formal objections. She states that these objections were raised during a



meeting held on 5 January 2026 at the offices of the Master of the High Court in Maseru, where she expressly placed her opposition to the administration on record. Ramathe avers that the Master's decision to proceed notwithstanding her objections compelled her to seek judicial intervention. She argues that any further steps taken in the administration of the estate prior to the resolution of her claim would be premature, unlawful and prejudicial

to her rights. Cited as first respondent in the matter is Mathabang Sekola, the widow of the deceased and the appointed Executor of the Estate of the late Lepota Sekola. The Master of the High Court is cited as the second respondent, while the Attorney General, Advocate Rapelang Motsieloa KC, is cited as the fourth respondent in his official capacity as the principal legal adviser to the State. The respondents appeared before the High

Court on Friday, 16 January 2026, where the matter was placed before the court for consideration. The application raises substantive questions regarding the powers and obligations of the Master of the High Court in circumstances where competing claims to a deceased estate exist, as well as the legal effect of divorce on spousal entitlements in estate administration. The matter remains pending before the court.

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# EDITORIAL

## The New Luxury Is Feeling Well Together



# 15

Lesotho Tribune

By: Editorial



Wellness used to be private. A solo jog at dawn. A quiet promise to eat better. A gym membership renewed in January and forgotten by March. It was something squeezed into the margins of adult life, often framed as discipline, sacrifice, or self correction.

That is changing. As 2026 takes shape, wellness is no longer something we do alone. It is becoming shared. A family rhythm. A collective habit. And in many homes, it is slowly turning into something joyful rather than exhausting. Across Lesotho and beyond, families are reimagining what it means to feel well. Not as an individual project, but as a way of living together. Weekend walks instead of rushed errands. Morning stretches before school. Cooking meals that nourish without turning dinner into a lecture. Simple routines that everyone understands and no one resents.

This shift matters because wellness has long suffered from bad branding. It has been marketed as extreme. Perfect bodies. Punishing routines. All or nothing

commitments that leave most people feeling like they have already failed. That model never worked for families, and it rarely worked for individuals either.

What is emerging now feels different. Lighter. More humane.

Movement is becoming playful again. Families are choosing activities that invite participation rather than performance. A hike that ends with laughter. Dancing in the living room. Cycling without tracking every kilometre. The goal is not optimisation. It is presence.

Food, too, is being re-framed. Less obsession, more intention. More conversations about energy and mood, fewer arguments about restriction. Families are learning that nourishment is not about denying pleasure but about sustaining it. Eating well so that everyone has the strength to show up for school, work, play and rest.

Even the growing interest in daily supplements reflects this shift. Instead of targeting one stressed adult, families are choosing gentle, supportive options that

help with energy, immunity and resilience across ages. Not as a miracle cure, but as part of a broader commitment to feeling steady and supported together. The deeper change is emotional.

When wellness becomes shared, it stops feeling like pressure. There is accountability, yes, but it is soft accountability. Encouragement instead of guilt. Children learn habits by watching, not being instructed. Adults rediscover motivation because they are no longer doing it in isolation.

There is also something quietly radical about this approach in a society under strain. Families are dealing with economic pressure, digital overload, uncertainty and fatigue. Choosing to care for collective wellbeing is not indulgent. It is adaptive. It is a way of building resilience where institutions often fall short.

Wellness as a shared experience also restores joy to the idea of health. It becomes something you look forward to, not something you endure. A morning routine that grounds the household. An evening walk that closes

the day. Small rituals that signal care without requiring perfection.

And when the people around you feel better, everything shifts. Moods soften. Conflict eases. Energy changes the tone of a home. Wellness stops being abstract and becomes visible in how families speak, rest, move and connect.

This is why the trend matters. Not because it promises longer life or better productivity, but because it changes how life feels right now.

Wellness that feels like a reward has staying power. Wellness that belongs to everyone creates momentum. And wellness that is shared has the potential to reshape not just bodies, but relationships.

In 2026, the most powerful wellness movement may not be found in gyms or apps. It may be unfolding quietly at home, in routines built together, in choices made with care, and in the simple decision to feel good as a family, not alone.

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Lesotho Tribune

By: Ramahooana Matlosa

The recent appointment of Mpopo Tsoele as Principal Secretary for Local Government has sparked celebration and enthusiasm in certain circles. It is noteworthy that Tsoele is married to Minister Nthathi Moorosi. While one would typically expect appointments to high-ranking public roles to foster confidence and optimism, this specific instance has left me quite worried. My concerns stem not only from Tsoele's marital connection but also from how effortlessly the Basotho overlook principles when political loyalties are at stake. Once more, we must face the uncomfortable reality of our country's inconsistent standards. First, the appointment itself presents significant legal and constitutional issues. The Constitution

# OPINION

## Constitutionality of Mpopo Tsoele's appointment under scrutiny



of Lesotho was revised by removing section 97 and replacing it with a new provision that governs the appointment of Permanent Secretaries. The reformed section clearly stipulates that a Permanent Secretary must be appointed by the Public Service Commission through a transparent, meritocratic, fair, and competitive method, as specified in an Act of Parliament. This amendment was substantial, it aimed to

professionalise the public service, limit favouritism, and restore public trust in government appointments. In the case of Tsoele's appointment, there is no evidence available to the public indicating that such a transparent and competitive process was undertaken. There was no public announcement, no shortlist created, no open interviews, and no clear communication from the Public Service Commission

clarifying how the constitutional requirements were met. Whether or not Tsoele is qualified is irrelevant. The key issue is that the law seems to have been breached in both its spirit and application. When constitutional provisions are enforced selectively, they no longer act as safeguards and instead become mere decorative elements. Moreover, the public's reaction is even more con-

**Continues in Page 17**

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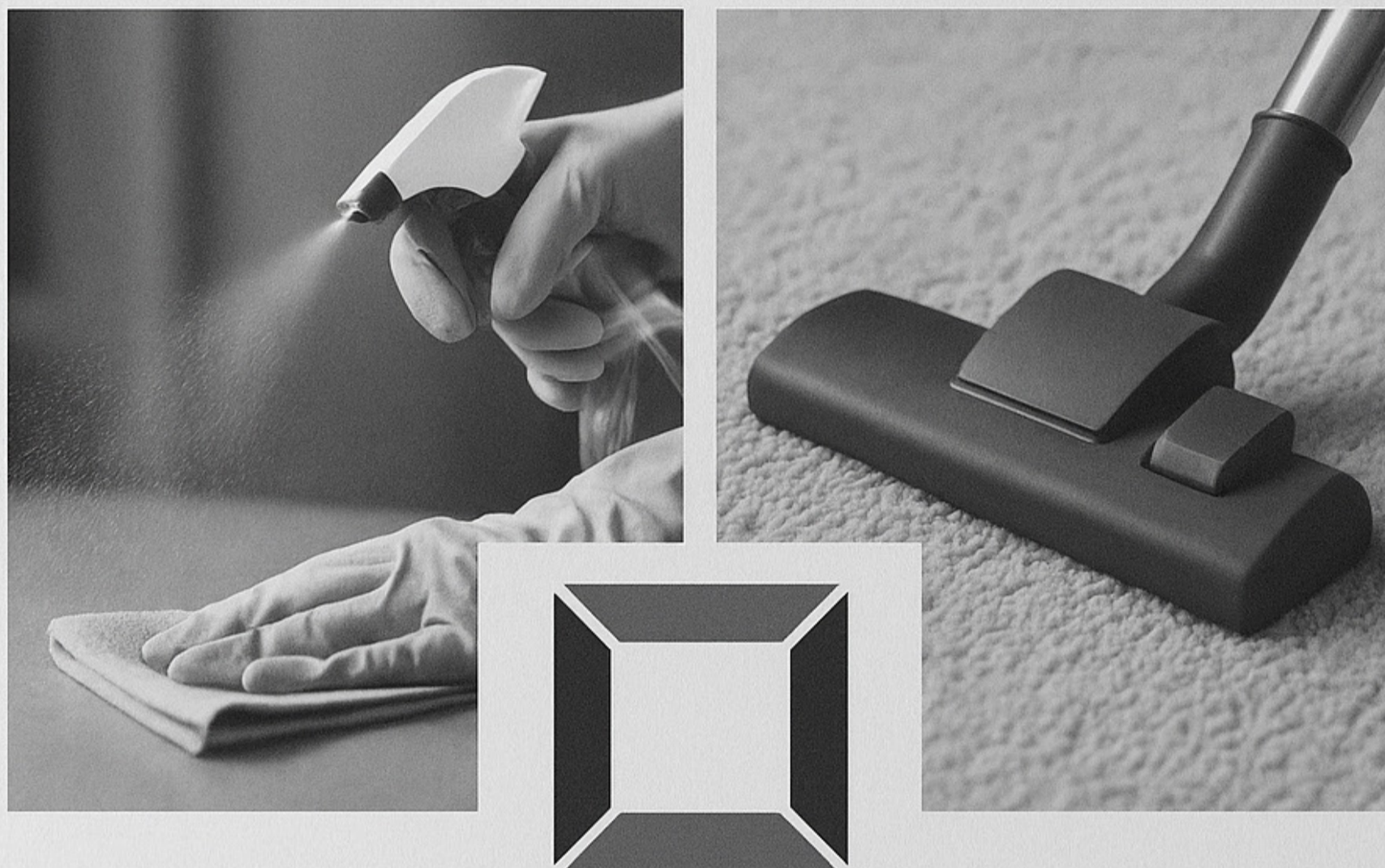
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cerning. The Basotho have demonstrated considerable inconsistency in their judgments of similar scenarios based on who holds power. During former Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili's administration, the appointments of Semano Sekatle and Pontso Sekatle, a husband and wife, elicited public outrage. One served as a Minister, while the other was a Principal Secretary.

The nation erupted in response. Protests erupted, media campaigns were launched, insults disseminated, and political pressure intensified. Mosisili was depicted as the personification of nepotism and misconduct while in office. The Sekatles faced humiliation, and their appointments were used as evidence of moral and political failure.

They both eventually served as Ministers in Mosisili's administration, with him seen as insensitive to the public's concerns. Ironically, over time, Semano became Minister while Pontso was appointed Ambassador during Prime Minister Motsoahae Thabane's government, and this was never challenged. Nevertheless, the criticism regarding their early appointments remains deeply rooted in our political memory, at least when it suits us.

Now, looking at the present, we have Tšelisio 'Mokela acting as Managing Director of the Lesotho Electricity Company, a position appointed by Prime

Minister Ntsokoane Matekane's administration. His wife, Teboho 'Malisebo 'Mokela, currently holds the powerful role of Government Secretary within the public service. Once again, we see a husband-and-wife pair occupying significant offices simultaneously. However, this time, there is a lack of opposition. In fact, we observe admiration. Applause is given.

Justifications abound. What has changed? Certainly not the governing principle. The only distinction is the political favouritism involved. When Basotho disapprove of a leader, they meticulously examine every action, amplify every error, and assume the worst possible intentions.

Conversely, when they support a leader, they readily excuse behaviours they previously condemned with moral zeal. This represents a failure of accountability and partisanship disguised as patriotism. This pattern highlights a more profound national issue. We profess to denounce nepotism, corruption, and misuse of power, but only when it is convenient for us. We reference the Constitution when it disadvantages our rivals and disregard it when it poses challenges for our allies. Such selective outrage undermines the rule of law and reduces public debate to a struggle of loyalties instead of principles and ideas. Prime Minister Matekane is, without a doubt, a fortunate individual. He

receives a level of goodwill and presumption of innocence that his predecessors did not benefit from. Actions that would have ignited widespread anger in prior administrations are now justified, normalized, or conveniently overlooked. However, luck and popularity cannot replace constitutional governance. A democratic society cannot thrive solely on admiration; it necessitates consistency, integrity, and respect for the rule of law.

If Basotho are genuinely committed to establishing a fair and accountable government, we must discard

double standards. The Constitution should apply uniformly, irrespective of who holds the Prime Minister's office. Nepotism must be uniformly condemned or not at all. Appointments need to be open and transparent, or we should acknowledge that our calls for reform are insincere.

Until we are willing to critique our favoured leaders with the same vigour we direct at those we oppose, we will continue to be ensnared in cycles of hypocrisy and no amount of enthusiasm about new appointments can alter that uncomfortable reality.



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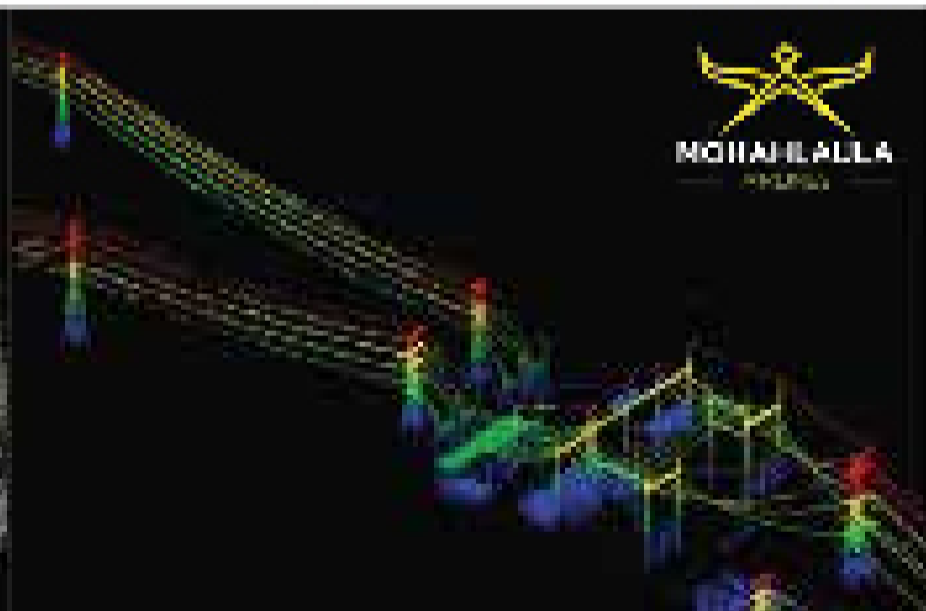
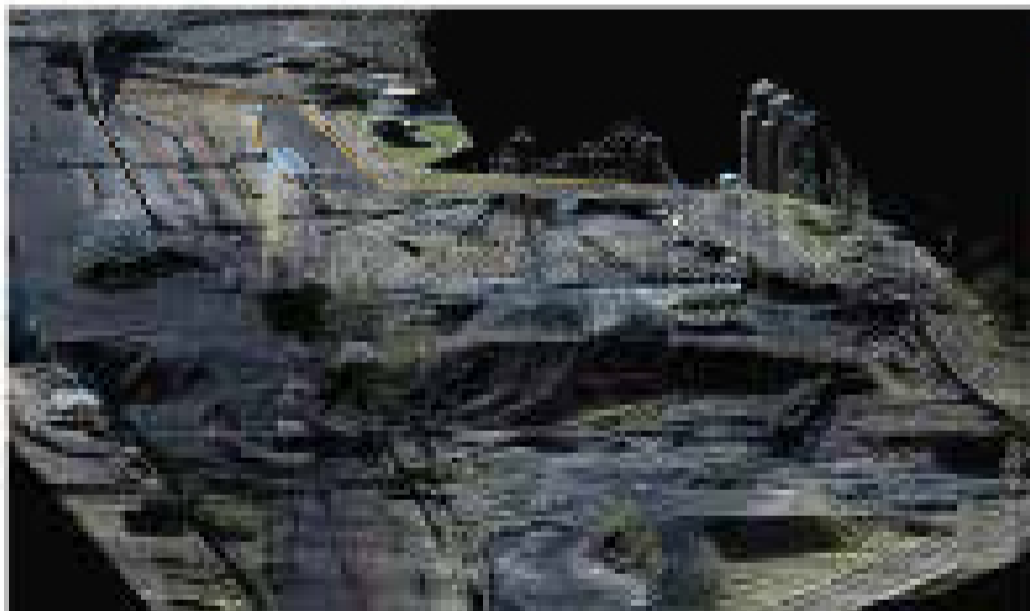




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Lesotho Tribune

By Litšitso Letsunyane

The National Olympic Committee of Lesotho (LNOC) and the Federation of Cycling Lesotho have received a major boost following the delivery of 594 bicycles and accessories from Working Bikes, a Chicago-based non profit organization, under the 'Bikes for Lesotho' initiative. This latest consignment marks another significant chapter in a long-standing partnership aimed at expanding access to bicycles while simultaneously developing cycling sport in the country. A vote of thanks has been extended to the Director of Bikes for Lesotho and Board President of Working Bikes, Mr David Patrick Gorman, for his continued commitment to a thoughtful bicycle access programme that targets orphans, children and Basotho communities at large.

# ARTS & SPORTS

## 594 Bicycles Finally Arrive from Chicago as Bikes For Lesotho Donates Another Container of Bikes



This delivery made its way from Chicago to Maseru from October 21st 2025 to January 16th 2026. This delivery also represents a huge milestone, bringing the total number of bicycles delivered to Lesotho to more than 7,000 over the years.

The primary focus of the current delivery is talent identification and to empower the sport itself, with bicycles being channelled towards young people to also support both everyday mobility and sporting development. Beyond their practical use, the bikes arrive "with love and sweat from the people of Chicago."

For many here in Lesotho, bicycles are far more than means of transport, they symbolise freedom, joy and opportunity. This belief sits at the heart of the Bikes for Lesotho initiative, founded by David Gorman, the American responsible to donating 14 containers of bicycles, at total of over 7,000 bicycles to Lesotho in just over a decade. Gorman's connection to Lesotho dates back to 1989, when he first arrived in the country as a Peace Corps volunteer stationed in Seforong, Quthing. He spent only three years in the Mountain Kingdom, an experience that left a lasting impression. Two decades

later, in 2012, he founded 'Bikes for Lesotho' with a focus on providing bicycles to children, particularly orphans, across the country. Since launching the project, Gorman has shipped 14 containers of used bicycles to the country. For him, bicycles are not just tools of mobility but powerful instruments of empowerment. "The joy of riding a bike should be available to everyone, especially children," Gorman said.

"From that joy comes confidence, health, savings, and even mechanical skills. But it all begins with that first feeling of freedom on two wheels."

David Gorman hopes to move beyond charity towards sustainable cycling development in Lesotho. His vision is to help build a thriving ecosystem of bicycle shops, more bicycle clubs and maybe even bicycle races that can sustain themselves long after donations have stopped. "I want to help build a system that lasts where children can ride, learn and dream," he said.

"To me, the meaning of life is to be of service to others. I'm grateful that I've found a way to do that in what I now call my second home — Lesotho."

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