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News

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RFP MP claims coalition allies were ordered to sink health MoU


A senior ruling party lawmaker alleges deliberate internal sabotage of a Lesotho-United States health agreement, raising troubling questions about whether coalition power struggles are overriding national interest

By Staff Reporter




A senior Member of Parliament from the Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) has alleged that lawmakers within the ruling coalition were quietly instructed to vote against a health Memorandum of

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Lesotho appeal court questions permanent stay in Tšolo corruption case

By Staff Reporter



A tense and closely watched hearing unfolded in the Lesotho Court of Appeal this week, as judges sharply questioned the High Court's decision to permanently stay corruption charges against former government minister Temeki Tšolo. At the centre of the matter is a controversial solar energy deal allegedly signed between the Government of Lesotho and Frazer Solar during Tšolo's tenure in the Prime Minister's Office. The state is now seeking to overturn the High Court's ruling, arguing that the decision to halt the prosecution entirely was both irregular and unjustified. From the outset, the panel of judges made clear that they were deeply concerned about the legal and procedural basis of the High Court's decision. One of the key questions put to counsel was whether it was even competent for a court to grant a permanent stay of proceedings in the absence of a formal application requesting such relief. The bench pressed further, probing whether a judge's reluctance to continue with a

part-heard case could ever justify such a drastic measure. The judges openly questioned whether the High Court may have overreached.

"A permanent stay is not a light matter. It carries far-reaching implications for the administration of justice."

The judges emphasised that decisions of this magnitude do not only affect the accused person, but also the broader public. In cases involving allegations of corruption, particularly those tied to public office in Lesotho, the stakes are considerably higher. The court noted that the community at large has a vested interest in seeing such matters fully ventilated before a court of law. The High Court's ruling, which effectively brought the prosecution to an end, has therefore come under intense scrutiny.

The Court of Appeal appeared particularly concerned that such a decision might undermine public confidence in Lesotho's justice system, especially if it is perceived as prematurely closing the door on serious allegations of graft. At the same time, the court did not spare the prosecution from criticism. Judges questioned the conduct of the state, particularly its repeated failure to appear in court on several occasions during the earlier proceedings. "There must be accountability on all sides." The bench highlighted the delicate balance between protecting the rights of the accused and ensuring that justice is served in the public interest, a tension familiar to courts across the Southern African region. Representing the appellants, Advocate Jay Naidoo sought to reassure the court that the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO), which is handling the prosecution, had not been negligent. He argued that the High Court judge failed to properly consider explanations

for the delays and absences, effectively shutting down the case without fully engaging with the facts. According to Naidoo, the decision to impose a permanent stay was not only premature but also disproportionate to the circumstances.

He maintained that the case deserved to be heard on its merits, rather than being dismissed on procedural grounds. "The judge did not entertain any explanations."

On the other side, Advocate Molefi Masoabi, representing Tšolo, painted a picture of a client facing personal and logistical challenges. He informed the court that Tšolo had not yet completed necessary processes with Legal Aid, which had affected his ability to adequately prepare for the appeal.

Masoabi further revealed that Tšolo had been unwell. In a dramatic turn, he told the court that Tšolo had collapsed on the morning of the hearing and had been rushed to hospital, adding another layer of complexity to the proceedings. Despite these developments, the appeal moved forward, with the court focusing primarily on the legal principles at stake.

Among the possible outcomes discussed was an order to uphold the appeal, set aside the High Court's decision, and remit the matter back to the High Court for continuation before a different judge. The panel hearing the appeal comprises some of the country's most senior judicial figures, including Court of Appeal President Kananelo Mosito, Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane, and Acting Justice Johann van der Westhuizen. As proceedings concluded, the court reserved judgment. A decision is expected on 15 May 2026. Whether the High Court's decision will stand or be overturned remains to be seen. What is clear is that the Court of Appeal has signalled its willingness to scrutinise not only the outcome of the case, but also the processes that led to it.

In doing so, it has underscored a principle fundamental to justice systems across

Lesotho and South Africa alike: that justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done, especially in matters that carry significant public interest.

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China Cancels Lesotho's M214m loan, Eases Country's Debt Burden

By Lemohang Botsane



MASERU

Lesotho and China have intensified their alliance after signing an agreement to cancel part of Lesotho's debt. The deal was signed on Thursday in Maseru. Finance and Development Planning Minister Dr. Retselisitsoe Matlanyane signed on behalf of the Lesotho government while China's Ambassador to Lesotho, Yang Xiaokun, signed for the Chinese government. Under the new protocol, China will disregard two interest-free loans worth a total of M214.466 million. The loans were supposed to be paid back by the end of December 2024. Minister Matlanyane explained that the first loan, M119.805 million, was given in 2011 under the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement. It was used to renovate the Manthabiseng Convention Centre. The second loan, M95.804 million, was given in 2012 for the JUNCAO Mushroom

Cultivation Project, which teaches farmers how to grow mushrooms using grass technology to improve food security and create jobs. The Minister said the waiver is good news for both the government and people of Lesotho.

"This decision gives us important relief," she said. "It will help us manage our public debt better and support our plans to keep government spending under control." Lower debt means the government can use more money for services like health, education, and roads.

Ambassador Xiaokun said the loan cancellation follows a promise made by President Xi Jinping. Last year, President Xi announced that China would cancel all interest-free government loans due by the end of 2024 for the least developed African countries that have diplomatic ties with China. Lesotho is one of those countries.

"This signing shows the principles that guide China's work with Africa," the Ambassador said. "We respect the sovereignty and independent choices of African countries. We do not interfere in their internal affairs." He added that Chinese companies have created more than 1.1 million jobs in Africa over the past three years.

Lesotho and China have worked together for many years on different projects. China has helped build several major facilities in the country, including the State Library, the New Parliament Building, and the Maseru District Hospital.

Officials from both countries said the loan waiver is another sign of the strong friendship and cooperation between Lesotho and China. They hope to continue working together on development projects that benefit the people of Lesotho.

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UNICEF Trains Journalists on Children Welfare

By Lemohang Botsane



MASERU

UNICEF held a one-day training workshop for journalists to help them better understand how the national budget affects the lives of children. The workshop, called Media Orientation on Public Finance for Children (PF4C), brought together media professionals from across the country. The aim was to break down complex budget language so journalists can report on it more clearly.

UNICEF expert Bob Muchabaiwa, who specializes in public finance for children, said many people struggle to understand budget documents. “Budgets use difficult terms, but they decide how much money goes to schools, clinics, clean water, and social support,” he said. “When journalists understand these details,

they can show the public how budget choices directly affect children.” He explained that national budget allocations have a real impact on essential services for children. These include education, health care, nutrition programs, social protection, and access to clean water and sanitation. If funding for these areas is cut or increased, children and their families feel the effects first.

One of the journalists at the training, Relebohile Nts’onyane, said he deemed the workshop very useful. “We often see big numbers in budget speeches, but it’s hard to turn that into a story people can relate to,” she said. “This training helps us take complex budget data and write it in a way that makes sense to our readers and listeners.” Nts’onyane added that better reporting

on public finance helps communities hold leaders accountable. “When people understand how public money is spent, they can ask questions. They can see whether children’s needs are being met in their villages and towns,” she said.

UNICEF is part of the United Nations. It’s main job is to protect children’s rights and make sure their voices are heard. The organization works with many partners, including government, civil society, and the media, to improve children’s wellbeing.

The workshop is part of UNICEF’s wider effort to promote transparency around public spending for children. Organizers said more training sessions for the media are planned for the future.

ESG Lens

Sustainability, accountability, and development impact across Lesotho and the region



Governance collapse in slow motion

How Lesotho's institutional architecture is being hollowed out, one PS dismissal at a time

BY LESOTHO TRIBUNE



There is a quiet shift underway in Lesotho's public administration. It is not written into law, not debated in Parliament, and not formally announced. Yet it is becoming visible in practice: the increasingly casual removal of Principal Secretaries (PSs), sometimes on the basis of suspicion rather than structured process. On the surface, it may appear as decisive leadership. But through an ESG lens, particularly the 'G' in Environmental, Social, and Governance, this trend signals something far more consequential: the erosion of institutional governance discipline. And once governance weakens, everything else follows. Governance is not about outcomes — it is about process. In strong systems, governance is not measured by who gets removed, but how decisions are made. As the OECD has noted in its principles of public governance, the quality of public institutions is a key determinant of long-term economic performance. This

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is not an abstract ideal. It is a measurable reality that shapes how capital flows, how projects are completed, and how citizens experience the state.

Principal Secretaries occupy a unique position in Lesotho's state architecture. They are the accounting officers of ministries. They ensure continuity beyond political cycles. They anchor policy execution and fiscal discipline. Their removal is therefore not a routine HR matter. It is a governance event. When dismissals begin to bypass formal disciplinary procedures, institutional oversight through bodies such as the Public Service Commission, and the foundational principles of natural justice, governance shifts from rules-based to discretion-based. That is the beginning of institutional risk.

"Investors are no longer satisfied with promises of stability. They want

evidence of institutional resilience — systems that function regardless of who holds political power."

— Sovereign Risk Analysts, Development Finance Institutions

The ESG risk lens: what investors and institutions see. Globally, ESG frameworks are used by investors, development finance institutions, and sovereign lenders to assess whether a country is predictable, stable, and investable. Within ESG, governance risk includes arbitrary decision-making, weak institutional independence, and the politicisation of administrative roles. The dismissal of senior civil servants in Lesotho without due process triggers multiple governance red flags.

Risk 1 — Institutional fragility. If PSs can be removed at will, decision-making authority shifts from institutions to individuals, and formal structures become symbolic rather than functional. As former World Bank governance specialist Daniel Kaufmann has argued, the rule of law is not a luxury for developed economies. It is the foundation on which any other development goal must rest.

Risk 2 — Policy discontinuity. PSs are custodians of long-term policy execution. Frequent or arbitrary removals lead to disruptions in project implementation, loss of institutional memory, and inconsistent policy direction. These translate directly into execution risk and inflated costs of doing business in Lesotho.

Risk 3 — Regulatory unpredictability. When governance becomes discretionary, rules can be bent and enforcement becomes selective. The African Development Bank noted in its 2023 governance outlook that unpredictability is the single greatest deterrent

to private investment, a verdict Lesotho cannot afford to confirm.

Risk 4 — The chilling effect within the civil service. If PSs believe they can be dismissed without due process, they become risk-averse, prioritise political survival over professional judgment, and avoid necessary but difficult decisions. The most capable public servants, those with options, quietly exit.

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Business & Economy

Markets, Monetary policy & the structural forces shaping Lesotho's economy

10

IT

The true cost of a job in Lesotho — and why the numbers matter

There is no single figure, but the data converges on an uncomfortable truth: building one sustainable job in the Kingdom is a vastly more expensive and fragile undertaking than most policymakers acknowledge.

By Lesotho Tribune



Douth unemployment in Lesotho stands at 39 percent, the public wage bill consumes 17.8 percent of GDP, and the government's own 2025/26 budget acknowledges that the crisis falls hardest on women. Yet the question of what it costs to create a formal, lasting job almost never surfaces in budget speeches. No government agency publishes a single cost-per-job figure for Lesotho. Internationally recognised benchmarks put the investment required to create one durable private-sector job at between \$20,000 and \$30,000, or roughly M370,000 to M550,000 at current exchange rates. In capital-intensive sectors such as manufacturing or aviation, that figure

climbs higher still. This is not the cost of a salary. It is the cost of the entire economic structure that must exist before a salary can be paid: equipment, premises, compliance costs, utilities connections, working capital buffers, and the management capacity to survive the inevitable lean months. Lesotho can create more jobs by promoting private sector-led growth, encouraging investment in export industries, and implementing fiscal policy reforms, according to the World Bank's inaugural Lesotho Economic Update released in April 2025. That report reflects sharpened international attention to precisely this problem.

What makes the local number worse than the global average is a layered set of structural disadvantages. South Africa accounts for 90 percent of Lesotho's consumer goods and services imports, making it the dominant source of nearly everything a business needs to operate. That dependency adds logistics cost and exchange rate exposure to every business before it has earned a single maloti of revenue. Electricity remains unreliable and expensive. Domestic market demand is thin. The outlook for private investment remains constrained, with risks rising from weaker regional and global growth, uncertain AGOA renewal, and domestic political and fiscal instability. Here is the distinction that most policy discussions blur. A formal private-sector job in textile manufacturing, commercial agriculture, financial services, or aviation requires M300,000 to M600,000-plus in foundational investment. These are productive, taxable, scalable positions that build a revenue base for the state and a skills base for the workforce. An informal livelihood, a street stall, subsistence plot, or piece-work arrangement, can be established for a fraction of that. But it generates little tax, no pension, no training pathway, and no durable contribution to national output. It is survival, not development. Lesotho's own 2024 Labour Force Survey found that 95 percent of employed youth are in informal work and 37.8 percent face unemployment. This is the most precise domestic evidence yet of the structural trap: employment statistics look tolerable on the surface, but the quality of what sits beneath

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ESG Lens

Sustainability, accountability, and development impact across Lesotho and the region



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Governance vs political control: a dangerous convergence There is always tension between political leadership and administrative independence. That tension is normal and, in healthy democracies, productive. But when the line collapses and administrative roles become extensions of political power, governance begins to mutate into patronage. “Political systems that cannot separate administrative authority from partisan loyalty are systems that will eventually consume themselves.” — Prof. Nqosa Mahao, Constitutional Scholar, Southern African Governance Reforms Lesotho has been here before. The institutional failures that accompanied successive government collapses in prior decades were not sudden. They were the accumulated result of small, repeated deviations from process that gradually became normal. In a patronage-driven system, loyalty replaces competence, compliance replaces accountability, and discretion replaces law.

The constitutional contradiction Lesotho’s governance framework is not designed for arbitrary removals. The Public Service Commission exists precisely to depoliticise appointments and discipline. Administrative law principles, recognised in Lesotho’s courts and drawn from the Lesotho Tribune · lesothotribune.co.ls ESG Lens Series — Governance & Accountability Page 1 · April 2026 Lesotho Tribune Governance collapse in slow motion — continued Kingdom’s constitutional heritage, require fairness, reason, and due process before any adverse decision affecting a public servant.

The emerging practice, however, suggests a drift toward informal power overriding formal structure. This is not merely a legal issue, though it is that too. It is a governance credibility problem. And credibility, once lost in institutional contexts, is extraordinarily difficult to recover. ESG implications beyond government Governance failures in the public sector do not remain contained. They spill over into state-owned enterprises, public procurement systems, and regulatory bodies. If senior officials can be removed without process, procurement decisions become more vulnerable, oversight weakens, and corruption risks increase.

“Corruption is not just a symptom of weak governance. It is its logical conclusion.” — Transparency International, Sub-Saharan Governance Trends Analysis When the precedent is set at the top of the civil service hierarchy, it reverberates throughout every institution beneath it. In ESG terms, this elevates the sovereign risk premium, raises the cost of capital, and tightens development financing constraints at precisely the moment Lesotho needs investment to drive economic transformation. The long-term cost: invisible, but severe The immediate effect of dismissing a PS may seem minimal. A replacement is appointed, work continues, headlines fade. But the cumulative effect is structural. Institutions lose authority. Rules lose meaning.

Confidence erodes. Over time, the state transitions from rules-based governance to personality-driven governance. “Countries do not fall into dysfunction overnight. They

drift there, one compromised institution at a time.” — Dambisa Moyo, Economist and Author A governance reset is needed If this trajectory continues, Lesotho risks embedding a precedent that will outlive any single administration. Reversal requires clarity on three fronts. First, reaffirm the Public Service Commission: its institutional authority must be made visible, respected,

and operationally central. Second, codify dismissal procedures for PSs with clarity and enforce them without exception. Third, restore the line between political leadership and administrative execution. Political leaders set direction; administrative officers execute. Blurring these roles does not strengthen the state. It hollows it out. Final assessment Governance does not collapse overnight. It erodes through small, repeated deviations from process that gradually become normal.

The dismissal of Principal Secretaries without due process may appear tactical in the moment. It may even be defended as necessary. But through an ESG lens, it signals something deeper: a system slowly moving away from rules and toward discretion.

“A nation’s governance is only as strong as its weakest institutional safeguard.” — Kofi Annan, Former United Nations Secretary-General For any country seeking investment, stability, and long-term growth, that is not just a governance issue. It is a strategic risk. This analysis is part of the Lesotho Tribune’s ESG Lens series, examining governance, sustainability, and accountability in Lesotho’s public and private sectors. The series applies internationally recognised ESG frameworks to Southern African institutional challenges.



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Business & Economy



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them is deeply inadequate.

Creating a job is the easier half of the challenge. Keeping it alive is harder. A business in Lesotho must generate monthly revenue that comfortably exceeds wages, overheads, input costs, and taxes, month after month, across a small domestic market, against imported competition that travels 90 percent of its supply chain through a neighbouring country's infrastructure. Lesotho's private sector is largely concentrated in mining and textile and apparel manufacturing, leaving the economy acutely exposed when either sector encounters headwinds. The textile sector suffered from reduced orders in the US market in 2023, causing the secondary sector to contract by 8.2 percent. Thousands of garment workers

felt that contraction immediately. The 2025/26 budget's M400 million Inclusive Growth Fund aims to lower barriers to credit and promote SME growth. The World Bank-supported CAFI project, backed by \$52.5 million, began its first cohort of 50 incubated businesses in November 2023. Early results from ICT, fashion, agriculture, and media are encouraging, but the scale remains far smaller than the need. The World Bank's April 2025 Economic Update recommends saving increased SACU revenues and water royalties to rebuild fiscal buffers and channelling more resources toward capital investment while controlling recurrent public spending. That is the right framework. Whether the political will exists to subordinate short-term consumption pressures to long-term productive investment is a question Lesotho has been deferring for a generation.

The cost of that deferral is measured, ultimately, in the number of Basotho who cannot find work worth having. This article draws on the World Bank's inaugural Lesotho Economic Update (April 2025), the ILO-supported 2024 Labour Force Survey, and the 2025/26 national budget analysis.



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Editorial

The Tribune's position, and voices that challenge, provoke and inform

14 **IT**

A nation of contradictions or a moment of reckoning?

Professor Mosotho George has been elected to the Executive Board of Commonwealth Chemistry, placing a Mosotho scientist at the centre of global scientific governance. He is also facing a DCEO prosecution. The Tribune examines what both facts tell us about this country.

By Editorial



Lesotho has always had a complicated relationship with excellence. We celebrate it loudly when it breaks through. We suffocate it quietly when it threatens to inconvenience us. The election of Professor Mosotho George to the Executive Board of Commonwealth Chemistry is, on the face of it, a moment of genuine national pride. It places a Mosotho scientist at the centre of global scientific governance,

a body that shapes research priorities, international collaboration, and scientific diplomacy across dozens of countries. This is not a ceremonial appointment. It is influence, earned and consequential. And yet it lands in Lesotho trailing a prosecution. Because this is the same professor currently facing corruption and fraud charges brought by the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences, allegations that he used his

position within NUL's innovation structures to secure funding for a company in which he allegedly held undisclosed interests, involving approximately M129,000 in public-backed resources. We are required, at this point, to note that he remains innocent until proven otherwise.

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Editorial

The Tribune's position, and voices that challenge, provoke and inform



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We are also required, by the same commitment to honesty, to note who is doing the charging.

The accuser in the room The DCEO is not a neutral instrument of justice. It has not been for some time. This is an institution whose record on selective prosecution is, at this point, extensively documented. It has a pattern of targeting individuals whose prominence makes the charge sheet newsworthy, while demonstrating conspicuous restraint when the accused are politically protected. It operates in an environment where the line between law enforcement and political utility has been, on too many occasions, difficult to locate. We are not saying Professor George is innocent. That is for the courts to determine.

We are saying that a charge sheet

originating from the DCEO does not carry the evidentiary weight that a charge sheet ought to carry. It carries, instead, a question: who benefits from this prosecution, and why now? When an institution with a credibility deficit charges a man at the precise moment of his most significant professional elevation, the timing is not automatically suspicious. But it is not automatically innocent either. That is not a question this editorial can answer definitively. It is, however, a question that responsible journalism requires us to ask. What the appointment actually represents Set the prosecution aside for a moment, or rather, hold it at arm's length, which is where it belongs until the courts do their work. Professor George's election to the Commonwealth Chemistry Executive Board matters in concrete terms for this country. It generates scientific visibility in spaces where Lesotho is largely absent. It opens access to funding networks, research partnerships,

and international policy conversations that a country of this size and resource base rarely enters. For a nation still too dependent on remittances and textile exports, scientific leadership is not an indulgence. It is strategy, and it is rare.

NUL, in particular, should be paying close attention. This appointment validates the calibre of talent the university can produce and creates potential pipelines for student exposure and institutional partnership. In a functioning system, this would be an unambiguous cause for institutional pride. The tragedy is that Lesotho's reflexive response to any public figure under prosecution is not nuance. It is either defensive celebration or wholesale condemnation, and neither serves the country. The real contradiction The deeper problem this moment exposes is not Professor George's alleged conduct. It is the institutional ecosystem in which both the appointment and the prosecution are

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HEALTH & ECONOMY

16 **IT**

Lesotho handed \$143 million roadmap to end preventable maternal deaths and gender-based violence by 2030

The fight against maternal mortality and gender-based violence is reframed not as charity but as economic strategy, as the United Nations hands Lesotho a multi-million dollar blueprint with a stark warning: inaction costs far more than intervention.

By MOLEFI TSUMANE



The Government has received a \$143 million economic strategy, reframing the fight against maternal mortality and gender-based violence not merely as a moral duty but as a financial necessity for national survival. At a high-level meeting on Friday, the UNFPA Case handover on Friday, the UNFPA revealed that while Lesotho aims to reduce maternal deaths by 50 per cent in the next five years, the kingdom remains the

[The following text is heavily blurred and illegible in the original image.]

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HEALTH & ECONOMY

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stalking the country's clinics. The investment case also earmarks \$21 million (M344.40 million) specifically to combat GBV, which remains Lesotho's most pervasive social crisis. With 86 per cent of women reporting a lifetime experience

of violence, the strategy shifts funding from reaction to prevention. Experts at the launch emphasised that by investing in the Respect Framework to stop violence before it happens, the government will significantly reduce the secondary burden on an already overstretched healthcare system. 86%

of women report a lifetime experience of violence The UNFPA has provided the data and the strategy. The burden of proof now lies with the Lesotho government to reflect these priorities in the upcoming national budget. Lesotho has the roadmap and the economic justification. The only



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HEALTH & ECONOMY

18 **IT**

Lesotho handed \$143 million roadmap to end preventable maternal deaths and gender-based violence by 2030

The fight against maternal mortality and gender-based violence is reframed not as charity but as economic strategy, as the United Nations hands Lesotho a multi-million dollar blueprint with a stark warning: inaction costs far more than intervention.

By MOLEFI TSUMANE



The Government of Lesotho has received a multi-million dollar economic roadmap framing the fight against maternal mortality and gender-based violence not merely as a moral duty, but as a high-yield financial necessity for the nation's survival. At a high-level Investment Case handover on Friday, the UNFPA revealed that while Lesotho has slashed maternal deaths by 50 per cent in the past year, the kingdom remains the third-most dangerous place in the region to give birth, trailing only South Sudan and Somalia. Post-partum haemorrhage, uncon-

trolled bleeding after childbirth, was identified as the leading cause of maternal death, responsible for 33 per cent of all fatalities recorded in 2025. Data revealed that Thaba-Tseka district is a red zone, recording the highest fertility rates and the most severe shortage of emergency obstetric care in the country. \$143m M2.35bn Total blueprint (2030 target) \$7.90 return per \$1 Invested in maternal health \$570m M9.35bn Economic gain from ending child marriage by 2050 To bridge the gap, the government was presented with a \$143 million (M2.35 billion) blueprint to achieve "Three Zeros"

by 2030: zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero gender-based violence. THREE ZEROS FRAMEWORK · 2030 01 Zero preventable maternal deaths 02 Zero unmet need for family planning 03 Zero gender-based violence Gareth Mackerty, an economist with UNFPA East and Southern Africa, broke the diplomatic silence on the cost of inaction. For every \$1 (M16.40) spent on maternal and child health, Lesotho will see an economic return of \$7.90 (M129.56), the investment case argues.

With 13 per cent of Basotho girls currently married before age 18, eliminating child marriage could inject an additional \$570 million (M9.35 billion) into the economy by 2050 by keeping girls in school and moving them into the productive labour force. "We have brought the number of deaths down from 44 to 21 in one year. But until that number is zero, we are still failing our sisters." DR SEKHOBE · MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Despite the optimistic financial projections, health officials presented a sobering account of the silent killers stalking the country's clinics. The investment case also earmarks \$21 million (M344.40 million) specifically to combat GBV, which remains Lesotho's most pervasive social crisis. With 86 per cent of women reporting a lifetime experience of violence, the strategy shifts funding from reaction to prevention. Experts at the launch emphasised that by investing in the Respect Framework to stop violence before it happens, the government will significantly reduce the secondary burden on an already overstretched healthcare system. 86% of women report a lifetime experience of violence The UNFPA has provided the data and the strategy. The burden of proof now lies with the Lesotho government to reflect these priorities in the upcoming national budget. Lesotho has the roadmap and the economic justification. The only

Sentiment Tracker

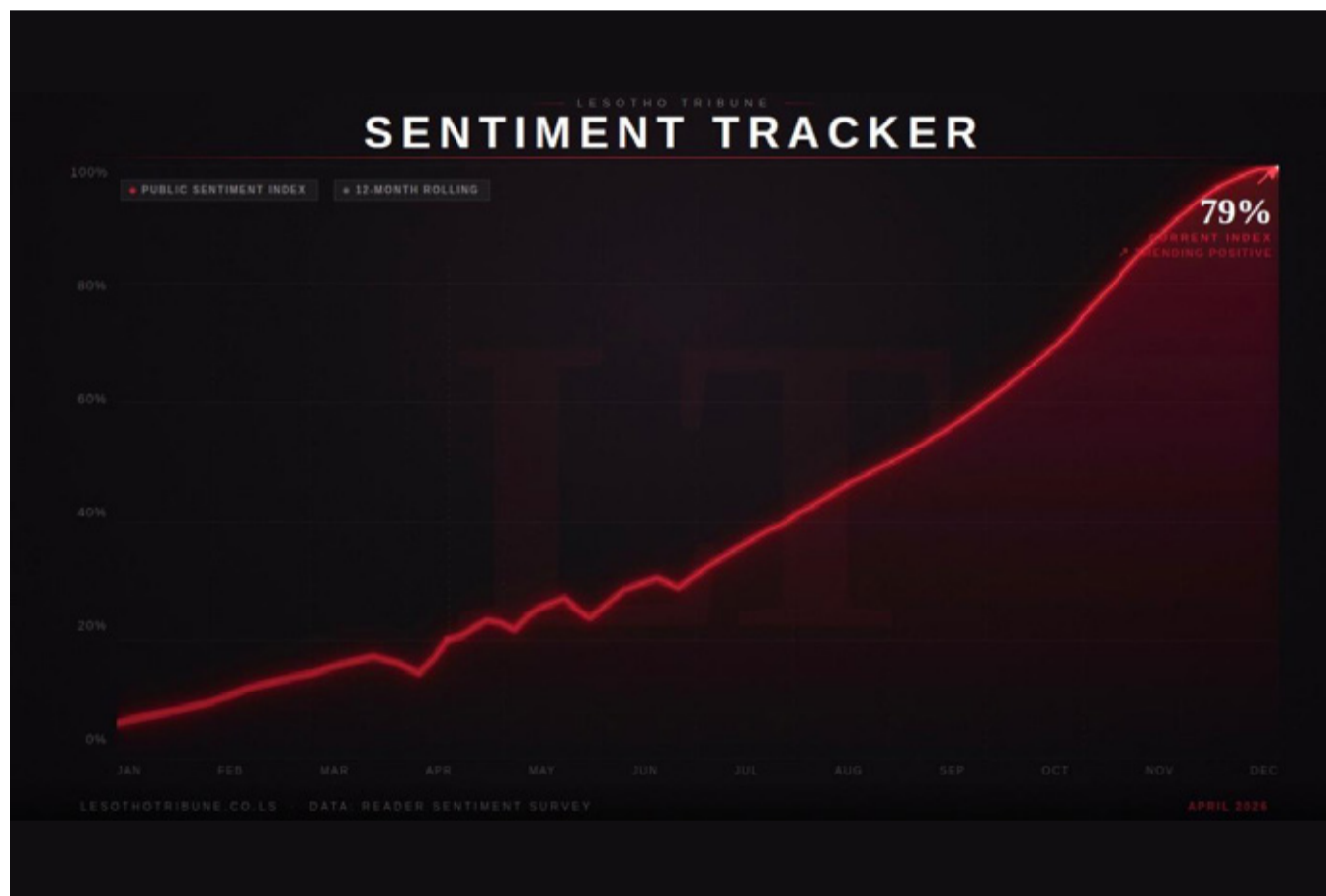
Technology, Connectivity and the digital transformation of economics like Lesotho



Nine in ten demand automatic DCEO probe for every public servant dismissed on suspicion of corruption

A Lesotho Tribune reader poll on fighting corruption in the public service reveals near-unanimous demand for automatic referrals to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences when government employees are dismissed on suspicion of graft.

BY LESOTHO TRIBUNE STAFF



April 2026 The poll question asked specifically about automatic referral, a procedural step that does not presuppose guilt but ensures that a dismissal triggers formal scrutiny by an independent body.

Proponents of automatic referral point to comparable mechanisms in South Africa, where Section 34 of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act obliges certain office-holders to report corruption. The provision has been inconsistently enforced but sets a statutory expectation of disclosure that Lesotho does not yet formally mirror in its Public Service Act.

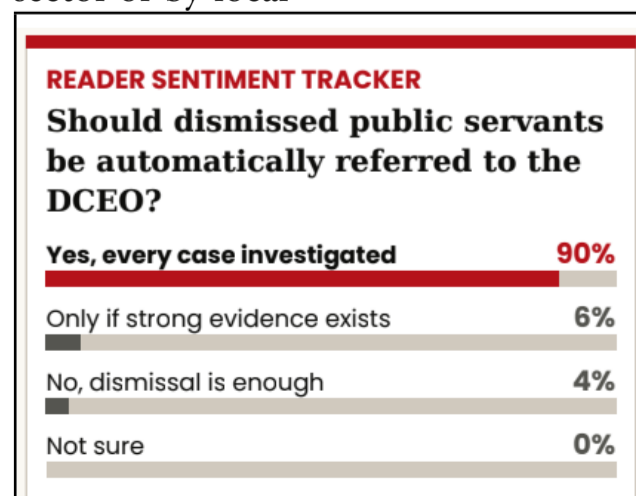
“The public is saying dismissal is not enough. They want a full legal process, not a quiet exit.”

Whether Lesotho’s Public Service Act requires, or could be amended to require, automatic DCEO referral on dismissal is a question the Tribune will pursue with the Ministry of Public Service in a follow-up report. The DCEO was established under the Corruption Act of 1999 and is empowered to investigate, arrest, and prosecute in corruption and related economic offences. However, advocacy groups have noted that referrals from government ministries remain rare.

Readers wishing to contribute further views on public service accountability are invited to participate in the Tribune’s ongoing Facebook polls at facebook.com/LesothoTribune.

The poll, posted by the Lesotho Tribune as part of its ongoing series on fighting corruption in the public service, drew 51 responses and produced a striking consensus. Forty-six respondents, representing 90 per cent of participants, backed automatic referrals to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences for every dismissed public servant facing corruption suspicions. Only three respondents, or 6 per cent, said referrals should proceed only when strong evidence already exists. Two respondents, representing 4 per cent, said dismissal from public office was sufficient and that further investigation was unnecessary. The results reflect a broader mood of impatience with accountability gaps in the Lesotho public service. The DCEO, mandated to investigate corruption and economic offences, has

faced persistent criticism over the pace of prosecutions involving government officials. Critics argue that dismissal without referral allows corrupt officials to escape criminal accountability and, in some cases, to be quietly re-employed in the private sector or by local



Total: 51 responses | Facebook poll |

Arts & Sports

The stories Lesotho about itself - on the field, on the stage, and on the page

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IT

Lesotho Athletes Are On the Rise on the Global Stage

BY LITS'ITSO LETSUNYANE



The country's athletics contingent has been on the move in recent days, with competitors and their coaches travelling across continents to test themselves against other elite international athletes. From the speed tracks of South Africa to the long roads of the United States, Basotho athletes continue demonstrating both depth and ambition on the international tracks.

In Potchefstroom, three of our short and middle distance specialists lined up at the Hezekiel Sepeng Invitational Meet on Wednesday, April 8. The meet, which is also classified as a World Athletics Continental Challenger event, attracted high-calibre competition from across the region and further.

First representing Lesotho was Maqabang Tsibela. she competed in the women's 800m race and delivered a strong performance to finish fourth place, with

a time of 2:02.92. She crossed the line just two seconds behind Prudence Sekgodiso, the former world indoor champion who claimed top position. Tsibela's run places her firmly among the region's competitive middle-distance athletes as the season gathers momentum.

Next up in the women's 400m, Mamakoli Senauoane continued her upward trajectory by securing third place in a very tightly contested race. Clocking 52:57, she held her own against a strong field that included 2 elite athletes from South Africa and Bahrain. Her podium finish shows growing consistency. After the race; she made it clear that her focus is now on lowering her personal best and potentially rewriting the national record.

Sprinter Mojela Koneshe rounded off Lesotho's participation on the tracks with another podium finish, taking third place in the men's 100m first

final. His time of 10:20 underlined his competitiveness in the sprint ranks, the margins were razor-thin too. Koneshe will be aiming to dip below that mark in upcoming meets as he searches for a new season best and looks to replicate or even surpass the form he displayed last year.

While the sprinters were making their mark in South Africa, elite long-distance runner Tebello Ramakongoana was en route to the United States, where he is set to compete in one of the sport's most iconic races. The Boston Marathon, now in its 130th edition, it will take place on Patriots' Day, Monday, April 20, 2026, in Boston. Renowned as one of the oldest and most demanding marathons on the international calendar, the race presents both a physical and tactical challenge for elite runners.

This will mark Ramakongoana's second appearance at the event. In his debut last year, he impressed with an eighth-place finish, recording a time of 2:07:19 against a world-class field. That performance established him as a serious contender, and this year he returns with significantly higher ambitions. With experience on the course and confidence from his previous showing, he has his sights strongly set on challenging for top honours and potentially stepping onto the podium.

Taken together, these performances and upcoming challenges reflect a promising period for athletics and sports in Lesotho. Whether on the track or over the marathon distance, Basotho athletes are not only competing internationally but doing so with intent, pushing for podium finishes and personal bests.