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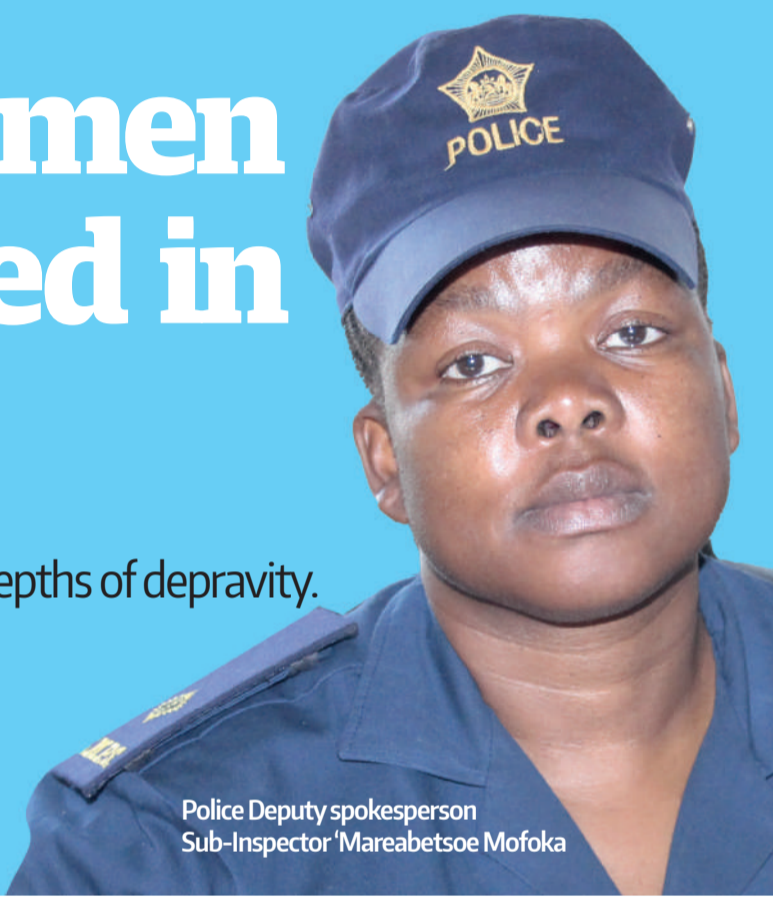
M6 VOL 14 ISSUE 17
July 31 - August 6 2022

Best Sunday read in Lesotho

Five women murdered in a week

As Lesotho sinks to new depths of depravity.

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Police Deputy spokesperson Sub-Inspector Mareabetsoe Mofoka

Lesotho nationals up for murder in SA
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NGOLISO E TLA EMISOA KA LA 28/07/2022

Bacha ba lilemo li 17 'me li tla ba 18 pele kapa ka la 07/10/2022 ba ka qalella ho ngolisa le bona ka ha ngoliso le phalliso ea mabitso e tla emisoa ka la 28/07/2022. Komisi e ipiletsa ho bohle hore ba atamele litsi ho ngolisa, ho fallisa le ho nchafatsa ngoliso ea bona. Nchafatso eona e ea etsahala le ka marang-rang ho IEC website.
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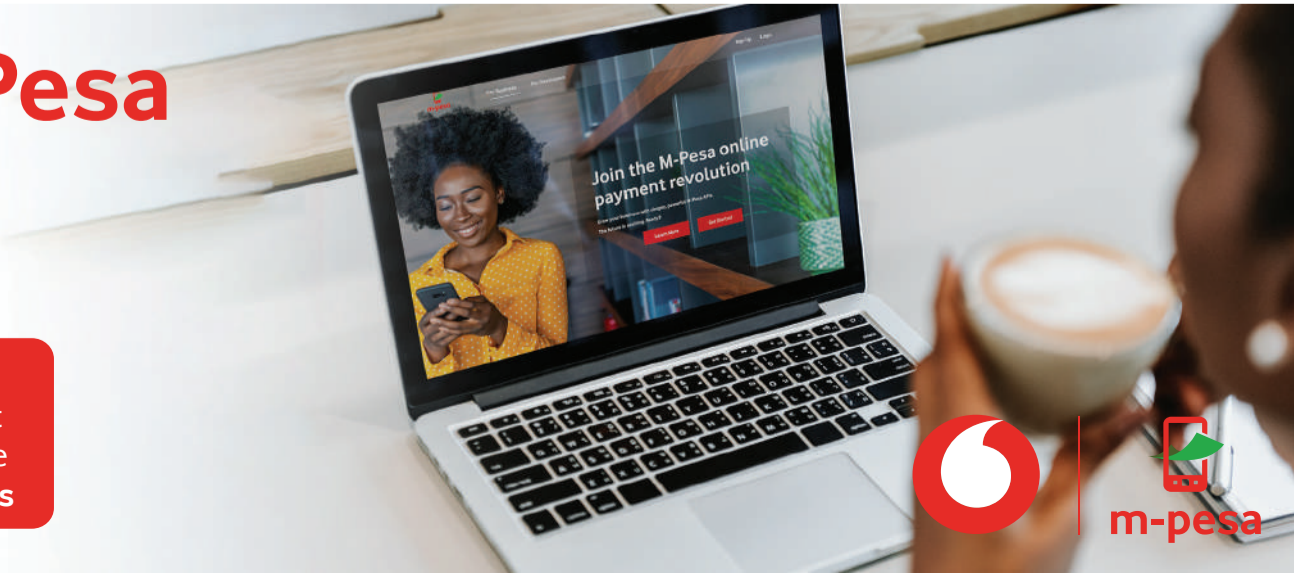
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Five women murdered in a week

'Marafaele Mohloboli

... as Lesotho sinks to new depths of depravity.

LESOTHO has sunk to new depths of depravity and callousness amid reports that five women have been murdered in different parts of the country in just one week.

The latest murders come against the background of recent police disclosures that

144 people were murdered in the past two months. Eighty-four of those killings were recorded in the month of May and another 60 people were murdered in June.

The bloodletting continued with four women reported to have been murdered in different parts of the country during the first week of July alone.

July ended in the same murderous fashion as it had begun with the latest reports indicating that another five defenceless women were butchered in various parts of the country in the space of a week.

Among those killed are a woman and teenager from Ha-Molise, Mafeteng. Deputy police spokesperson, Inspector 'Mareabetsoe Mofoka, said the two left home at about 6pm on 26 July for a neighbouring village where they often charged their mobile phones.

However, the two, a 17-year-old girl and 20-year-old woman, never made it back home. They were found dead the next day not far from their village.

Given that there were traces of semen on their bodies, there is a likelihood that they could have been raped before being butchered to death. Their bodies were discovered by a passer-by, who then raised the alarm, Inspector Mofoka said.

"The pair did not return home from Makotoaneng where they had gone to charge their phones," Inspector Mofoka said in an interview.

"One body was discovered with fractured limbs, stabbings, a badly smashed skull and traces of semen. The other body was found on the mountain with similar stab wounds and traces of semen as well," she added.

In another incident, a 58-year-old woman from Ha-Tšolo, Maseru was found dead on Wednesday.

The woman was employed as an economic planner at the Ministry of Development Planning.

According to police reports, the woman left for work on Tuesday morning and never returned home.

"The deceased was accompanied by her daughter to the bus stop at about 7am. The daughter left her there while she waited for a taxi. It is not known what happened thereafter, except that she never returned home.

"The next day her body was found at a rivulet in Ha-Tšolo. Her colleagues said she had not pitched up for work on Tuesday. Preliminary police reports indicate that she had been assaulted and she had some stab wounds as well. Her assailants are not yet known. The investigations also suggest that she could have been killed elsewhere and hauled to the place where she was dumped," the police reports state.

Inspector Mofoka said they were investigating another case where a 47-year-old woman was found dead in her rented house on Friday at Motheo near Masianokeng.

"Her neighbours said on the previous night they had heard some noises coming from her house but didn't think much of it hence they didn't go to check.



'MASEKOALANE Majoro.



'MAREABETSOE Mofoka.

"This was probably the time when she was being killed.

"The next day her neighbours reported to the landlord that they had seen smoke coming from the now deceased woman's house. Upon opening her house with spare keys, they came across her dead body.

"The deceased was tied up and some rags had been stuffed into her mouth and sealed with a tape. Part of her bed had been burnt and a gas cylinder was open. No one has been arrested yet but investigations are ongoing," Inspector Mofoka said.

Some neighbours who spoke to the *Sunday Express*, said the woman could have been killed by her live-in young lover.

"The two were always quarrelling. Per-

haps things had gotten out of hand on the fateful day and he decided to murder her. We have not seen him here since the incident," a neighbour said yesterday.

A fifth female victim was found dead last week in the bush in Manyoreng. Thaba-Bosiu. Her exact cause of death is not yet known, the police said.

The gruesome murders are merely the latest in a never ending series of violence and killings of Basotho, particularly women and children.

Lesotho has since attained the nefarious distinction of Africa's murder capital and sixth in the world according to the World Population Review's 2021 rankings for murders.

El Salvador was rated the murder capital of the world at number one with Honduras coming second, Venezuela third, the Virgin Islands fourth and Jamaica fifth. With Lesotho taking the sixth slot, it meant the Kingdom has more murders than the numerous African failed states enmeshed in killer civil wars.

It is also possible that Lesotho may have overtaken some of the top five countries above it in the 2021 world rankings given the ongoing gruesome killings in the country. The inefficient Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) has been proved to powerless to stop the murders. What is particularly galling to the public is that some police officers have joined the ranks of murders by often fatally torturing suspects and gunning down civilians as happened during the National University of Lesotho (NUL) protests on 16 June 2022.

First Lady 'Masekoalane Majoro is among high-profile individuals who have repeatedly condemned the rampant killings of women in the country and called on women to unite in the fight against gender-based violence.

Ironically, the latest killings occurred on the eve of women's month which begins tomorrow.

Women's month was originally aimed at commemorating South African women's spirited fight against repressive apartheid laws in the 1950s.

Now women's month commemorates women in general, including Basotho women's fight for emancipation from violence, killings and socio-cultural and economic ills.

Apart from violent killings, rape and other serious crimes against women abound in Lesotho.

Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro has also bemoaned the huge cost of gender-based violence (GBV) on the country.

Citing a 2020 Commonwealth study on GBV in Lesotho, Dr Majoro recently said concerted efforts were needed to eliminate GBV because the scourge annually costs the country more than five percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).

The report, released in September 2020, states that violence against women and girls costs Lesotho more than US\$113 million (about M1, 9 billion) a year.

The report says these costs of GBV are for loss of income and expenses associated with medical, legal and police support for victims.

This, according to Dr Majoro, showed that GBV was a huge burden on state resources as the government incurred huge expenses in paying for the medical treatment of victims, counselling of both victims and perpetrators as well as the resultant court cases.

He said victims and their families also suffered as they also covered costs of treatment and in some instances funeral expenses where deaths occurred as a result of GBV.

"Because of GBV, Lesotho will fail to achieve its goals of attaining excellence if we fail to prevent GVB from its root causes," Dr Majoro said.

But despite all the campaigns, GBV continues unabated. The latest murders and others that preceded them have cast a pall on the Lesotho authorities' failure to protect the womenfolk from blood-thirsty killers.

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Marafaele Mohloboli

DC set for primaries to choose elections candidates

BUOYED by last week's release of the Afrobarometer survey findings which showed that it is the party most likely to win the 7 October 2022 elections, the Democratic Congress (DC) will this week begin holding primary elections to choose candidates to represent the party in 80 constituencies at the upcoming polls.

According to a 27 July circular issued by the party's national executive committee (NEC) to the women's and youth leagues, constituency committees and other party structures, the primaries will kick off at the sub-branch level on Saturday.

A day later, those who triumph at the sub-branches will again contest at the branches to choose candidates to fight it out at constituency level on 13 and 14 August.

In an interview yesterday, DC secretary general, Tsitso Cheba said the names of winners at the constituencies will be submitted to the NEC.

"The DC primaries will begin at sub-branch level on 6 August and those who prevail will then contest at branch level on 7 August," Mr Cheba said.

"The winners at branch level will then contest at constituency level from 13 to 14 August. Thereafter, the NEC will receive reports from the constituency committees regarding the outcome of the primaries. When the NEC has considered and endorsed the reports from the constituencies, it will forward the final candidates list to the IEC," Mr Cheba added.

Asked if party leader and Deputy Prime Minister Mathibeli Mokothu and other powerful figures would be subjected to primaries in their constituencies, Mr Cheba said his party was a democratic organisation and every constituency had a right to choose its candidates instead of having them imposed by the leadership.

"Every constituency has the right to choose its candidate, including the constituency of the leader, deputy leader (Motlalentoa Letsosa) and founder of the party (Pakalitha Mosisili). We are a democratic party and we operate as such," Mr Cheba said.

The primaries will be held against the background of the Wednesday release of interna-



DC secretary general, Tsitso Cheba

tionally acclaimed Afrobarometer Institute survey findings wherein at least 42 percent of the respondents said they would vote for the DC.

According to the findings, the DC's All Basotho Convention (ABC) coalition partner is the second most preferred party with 21 percent of the respondents saying they would vote for the Nkaku Kabi-led party.

Former cabinet minister Nqosa Mahao's Basotho Action Party (BAP) is third on the list with eight percent of the support, the Selibe Mochoboroane-led Movement for Economic Change (MEC), former Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing's Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) and former Deputy Prime Minister Monyane Moleleki's Alliance of Democrats (AD) are all on six percent support.

Only five percent said they would vote for Machesetsa Mofomobe's Basotho National Party (BNP), three percent would vote for Teboho Mojapela's Socialist Revolutionaries Party (SR) and one percent would vote for Law and Justice Minister Lekhetso Rakuoane's Popular Front for Democracy (PFD).

Three percent said they would vote for other parties.

The institute said the figure fell short of the majority required for the DC to form government on its own. Unless if some of those who had not declared which party they were backing voted for the DC, it would have to cobble a coalition with other parties, the research institute said.

Afrobarometer's findings also come with the caveat its research was conducted between February and March this year. It did

not factor in the Sam Matekane-led Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) which was only formed on 22 March.

The RFP has become a scourge to the established parties as some of their prominent members have joined the fledgling party.

Speaking about the survey findings, Mr Cheba said, "We appreciate the findings of the Afrobarometer survey".

"They give us confidence going forward and what they say is that we are on the right track hence the approval by the majority of our people."

He said his party was unlikely to suffer any negative consequences from the formation of the RFP.

"It is true that the survey was conducted before the formation of the RFP but contrary to what some may think, the RFP will not necessarily impact the DC because it was not formed by disgruntled DC people.

"It (RFP) had gained the support of disgruntled members of various parties but following the announcement of its final candidates for the elections there has been widespread anger and disillusionment with the RFP. Starting tomorrow, we will be holding rallies in various constituencies to welcome people who have defected from the RFP and other parties. People are unhappy that the RFP is being run like a corporate company not a political party," Mr Cheba said.

His comments were in reference to widespread anger among RFP supporters over the party NEC's decision to overlook some of their preferred candidates when selecting the final list of individuals who will represent the party in the forthcoming national elections.

Some high-profile politicians like Semena legislator, Tlohelang Aumane, have dumped the RFP for the Socialist Revolutionaries (SR) after losing out in the primaries.



TSEBISO

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HA BATHO BOHLE BA AMEHANG

HO LATELA TEMANA EA 3 LE TSE ETLATSETSANG TSA MOLAO OA MOBU OA 2010

MONA HO ETSOA TSEBISO EA HORE MONGOLI OA KOMITI EA KABO LE KAMOHO EA MOBU TOROPONG EA MASERU O FUMANE TLALEHO

E LATELANG MALEBANA LE MOBU O NENG O SEBELISOA KA BAFU BA LATELANG

LEBITSO LA MOFU	LETSATSI LEO A HLOKAHETSENG KA LONA	SEBAKA SEO MOBU O LENG HO SONA	NOMORO EA SETSA	LEBITSO LA MOJALEFA	TSEBELOSO EA MOBU	KHETHO EA MOJALEFA
1. Manoko Bethsheba Honyane	01/04/1988	Lower Thamae	13283-187	Leralleng Investment (PTY) Limited	Bolulo	Lelapa
2. Raphuthi le Maleetoane Moletsi	21/09/2017	Ha Pena-pena	Unnumbered	Malefetsane Molefi	Temo	Lelapa
3. Malitsoanelo Motsoko	29/03/2020	Lithabaneng	13294-348	Tsoanelo Motsoko Fokase	Bolulo	Lelapa
4. Tsotleho Chele	28/06/2021	Ha Tsosane	14283-002	Khoabane Chele	Bolulo	Lelapa
5. Rathakane Mamphane	07/11/1979	Ha Seleso	Unnumbered	Tseliso Mamphane	Temo	Lelapa
Sekapa & Manthabeleng Potiane	23/03/2021 20/11/2005	Koalabata	Unnumbered	Mokoening Potiane	Bolulo	Lelapa
6. Phahlane Mampolokeng	05/04/2011	Ha Thetsane	11294-1555	Selebalo Phahlane	Bolulo	Lelapa
7. Tsohoi Moeketsi	06/05/2014	Khubetsoana	14271-1444	Motseoa Moeketsi	Bolulo	Lelapa
8. Malekarapa Moshoeshe	09/10/2021	Ha Leqe	Unnumbered	Mapeete Moshoeshe	Bolulo	Lelapa
9. Maphakiso Seoehla	17/12/2018	Khubetsoana	13272-1376	Malisema Sophia Lepheana	Bolulo	Lelapa
10. Mamoseketso Makhetha	10/06/2015	Qoaling	12302-927	Nyalleng Makhetha	Bolulo	Lelapa
11. Damacina Seobe	19/03/2022	Ha Thamae	13292-1013	Tsepo Seobe	Bolulo	Lelapa
12. Malerungoana Tjeboko	20/12/1983	Katlehong	12292-540	Lethola Tjeboko	Bolulo	Lelapa
13. Mathebe Sefora Motlomelo	08/10/2019	Qoaling	13293-1641	Maphello Tsoeu	Bolulo	Will
14. Mathabang Lefoka	-	Ha Thetsane	Unnumbered	Makabelo Lefoka	Bolulo	Court Order
15. Moeketsi Malie	28/02/2020	Ha Mabote	13283-187	Taelo Malie	Bolulo	Lelapa
16. Tsebetso & Matankiso Ntsebeng	-	Ha Matala	Unnumbered	Molelekoa Ntsebeng	Bolulo	Lelapa
17. Tsepo & Mareitumetse Tsoana	08/02/2021 10/06/2019	Naleli	14281-699	Thabiso Tsoana	Bolulo	Lelapa
18. Polo Mololi	10/06/2021	Ha Leqe	14302-839	Tlaleng Mololi	Bolulo	Lelapa

Molula Setulo oa Komiti ea Kabo Le Kamoho ea mobu toropong ea Maseru o fana ka Tsebisoe ea hore lipelaolo le likhanyetso tseo ebang li teng li etsoa ho mang kapa mang ea hanyetsang hore Mojalefa ea boletsoeng ha se eena ea nang le litokelo mobung ona, li tlisoa ho mongoli oa Komiti ea Kabo Le Kamoho ea Mobu atereseng e hlahang ka tlase mona. Lipelaolo li finyelle pele libeke tse tseletseng (6) li fela ho tlaha mohla letsatsi la tsebisoe eena.

Komiti ea Kabo Le Kamoho ea Mobu toropong ea Maseru e tla lula ho mamela lipelaolo le bopaki bo hanyetsang kapa bo tising Mojalefa mobung ona ofising ea MONGOLI OA TOROPO EA MASERU (MASERU CITY COUNCIL) FAIRWAY PLAZA P.O. Box 911 Maseru 100). ka la Hlano Khoeling ea Borobong Selemong se holimo (05/09/2022) hoseng (0800hrs). 'Me bohle le koptjoa ho tla le lipaki tse hlahang mangolong a lona a bojalefa 'moho le libukana tsa bona tsa ho eta (Passports) kapa karete ea boitsebisoe (Id's).

Ka Taelo:
Selete Molete (MR)

Acting Town Clerk

27/07/2022

Majoro a mere caretaker PM, he can't fire me: Molibeli

Moorosi Tsiane/ Mohalenyane Phakela

EMBATTLED Police Commissioner Holomo Molibeli has filed a fresh constitutional application to stop Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro from advising His Majesty, King Letsie III to sack him.

In his latest application, he argues that Dr Majoro has no authority to fire him since the recent dissolution of parliament has rendered him "a mere caretaker" prime minister with no such powers.

Commissioner Molibeli was on 1 June 2022, served with a letter by Dr Majoro demanding that he "show cause" why he should not be dismissed over a plethora of charges including his incompetence and failure to tackle the thorny issue of police brutality against citizens.

He has already petitioned both the High Court and Constitutional Court to stop Dr Majoro from advising His Majesty, King Letsie III to fire him. With the matter pending in both courts, Commissioner Molibeli has filed a fresh constitutional application seeking to capitalise on the dissolution of parliament by King Letsie III at midnight on 13 July 2022.

In his latest application filed on Tuesday, the police boss argues that the dissolution of parliament has rendered Dr Majoro a caretaker prime minister who cannot make far-reaching decisions such as firing him.

"Upon the dissolution of the 10th Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho on 13 July 2022, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho assumed the constitutional status of a Caretaker Government with effect from 14 July 2022," Commissioner Molibeli states in his court papers.

"By virtue of the dissolution of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the constitutional caretaker status of the Government, the Prime Minister became the Caretaker Prime Minister.

"The authority of the Caretaker Government and the Caretaker Prime Minister is limited to maintaining the status quo existing before the dissolution of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho, pursuant to section 83(7) of the Constitution of Lesotho. The advice of the Caretaker Prime Minister to His Majesty the King to require the Applicant (Molibeli) to retire from the Office of the Commissioner of Police of the Lesotho Mounted Police Service, during the caretaker period, is unconstitu-

tional, null and void for being contrary to section 83(7) of the Constitution."

Section 83 (7) of the constitution states that "the powers of the prime minister or deputy prime minister as a caretaker government are limited in their function, serving only to maintain the status quo".

Commissioner Molibeli further states apart from saving his job, his application is also motivated by the need to stop Dr Majoro from exercising powers that he allegedly does not have.

"I have substantial legal interest in not only ensuring that I am not removed from the office of the Commissioner of Police of the LMPS in an unlawful and unconstitutional manner, but also that the first respondent (Majoro)'s unconstitutional exercise of public power is not immunised from constitutional review. Consequently, I have the necessary locus standi under section 2 of the Constitution to institute these constitutional review proceedings.

"Added to these concerns is the important factor that during the reforms process, the people of Lesotho expressed in the Plenary II Report that there should be no appointments or removals to the heads of security agencies (LMPS, Lesotho Defence Force and National Security Service) including the Commissioner of Police of the LMPS."

The police boss further argues that his "illegal" removal will undermine respect for the constitution and the rule of law.

"My unconstitutional and illegal removal from office will cause irreparable harm not only to the integrity of the constitution, maintenance of the rule of law. It will also effectuate constitutional injustice to me and trample upon and render illusory and worthless my non-material rights aforementioned."

He wants the court to issue an order "interdicting and restraining the Caretaker Prime Minister from advising His Majesty the King from requiring the Applicant to retire from the Office of the Commissioner of Police of the Lesotho Mounted Police Service, during the caretaker period starting from 14 July 2022.

He also wants an order "interdicting and restraining His Majesty the King from acting on any advice of the Caretaker Prime Minister advising or having the effect of advising His Majesty the King to require the Applicant to retire from the Office of the Commissioner of Police of the Lesotho Mounted Police Ser-

vice, during the caretaker period starting from 14 July 2022".

In his pending applications against his dismissal, Commissioner Molibeli has denied responsibility for police brutality and the crumbling policing standards under his watch. He has blamed the LMPS' incompetence on lack of resources.

Nonetheless, serious crimes have become endemic, murders have escalated to the extent that Lesotho is now the leading homicidal nation in Africa's 54 countries and sixth in the world. So bad have become the police under Commissioner Molibeli, that they cannot even probe simple, straight forward crimes.

Two months ago, the trigger-happy police officers gunned down National University of Lesotho (NUL) student, Kopano Makutoane.

Fellow students said the 22-year-old Makutoane was shot five times in the face by the trigger-happy police officers during the 16 June student protests against the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS)'s decision to cut students' monthly allowances by more than half.

Seven other students were said to have been wounded in the skirmishes.

Political parties, civil society organisations and international development partners like the European Union (EU) have all condemned the dastardly police actions and called for action against the rogue officers.

It is difficult to see how Commissioner Molibeli will emerge unscathed from the brutality visited on students and other ordinary citizens by his officers.



HOLOMO Molibeli.

DC only joined govt to abuse state resources: Moleleki

Moroke Sekoboto /Marafaele Mohloboli

ALLIANCE of Democrats (AD) leader Monyane Moleleki has accused the Democratic Congress (DC) of joining the current All Basotho Convention (ABC)-led governing coalition just to loot state resources.

Mr Moleleki served as deputy prime minister in the previous Thomas Thabane-led four party coalition from June 2017 to May 2020 when Mr Thabane, who was then ABC leader was forced by his own party to step down in favour of former Finance Minister Moeketsi Majoro. The ABC refused to allow the AD to join the current governing coalition because Mr Moleleki had unsuccessfully resisted its moves to oust Mr Thabane. There-

after, the AD was forced to join the opposition benches while the DC, which Mr Moleleki had previously served as deputy leader up to December 2016, joined the government.

Almost six years have passed since Mr Moleleki dumped the DC to form the AD after falling out with then DC leader, Pakalitha Mosisili. This after Mr Mosisili had indicated his preference to be succeeded by current leader, Mathibeli Mokhothu. But as evidenced by his attacks at the recent Mpharane, Mohale's Hoek rally, Mr Moleleki is still bitter with the DC.

Addressing about 1500 AD supporters, Mr Moleleki alleged that the DC leadership had admitted that they only got into government with the ABC just to loot state resources to oil their campaign to win the forthcoming elections slated for 7 October 2022.

He vowed that the AD would win Mpharane and other constituencies in the district to enable it to resume its "good work" of providing services to the elector-

ate it had allegedly been doing while it was part of the previous coalition alongside the ABC, Basotho National Party (BNP) and Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL).

The electorate had since been neglected by the DC which was busy harnessing government vehicles and abusing other state resources to oil its election campaign, Mr Moleleki charged.

"The AD will win Mpharane and all other constituencies in Mohale's Hoek," the AD leader told cheering supporters.

"All of you, from Mpharane, Taung, Mekaling, Ketane and Phamong witnessed the strengths of the AD. You can all attest to the fact that when we were part of government, we delivered services to people in this district.

"However, the DC went into government to abuse state resources. On the road from Mafeteng to Mohale's Hoek, you will find unskilled labourers with spades and wheelbarrows pretending to be fixing the road. In reality they are just digging

and causing soil erosion. This tells you that the DC doesn't care about improving infrastructure.

"It joined government to abuse public funds. They even remove number plates from the government vehicles so that they can use them for their daily campaign rallies. They have no interest in providing electricity, water or rehabilitating roads and improving agriculture.

"Farmers are crying out for fertiliser. They are unable to buy it due to corruption in the agriculture ministry. They had called on Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro to intervene but he has been silent over the matter," Mr Moleleki said.

He said if voted into power, an AD government would work hard to improve the socio-economic well-being of all Basotho. He said his party had been kicked out of government because it had had outshone its partners in the previous coalition when it came to service delivery.

He urged his followers to register for the elections and overwhelmingly vote for his party.



MONYANE Moleleki.

Lesotho nationals up for murder in SA

Staff Reporters

...the trio was extradited to SA for the gruesome killing of Western Cape farmer and the attempted murder of his wife

THREE Lesotho nationals have been extradited to South Africa to face murder and attempted murder charges.

Although it is unclear when they were extradited, the trio of Moeketsi Hlaudi, Keketso Ntsabisa and Thabiso Ramollo, appeared at the Bonnievale Magistrates' Court, in Western Cape on Wednesday.

South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)'s Western Cape Regional communications manager, Eric Ntabazalila, confirmed that the trio had appeared in court on charges of murder, attempted murder, robbery with aggravating circumstances as well as the unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

In a statement, Mr Ntabazalila said, "On 27 July 2022, three Lesotho nationals, Moeketsi Hlaudi, Keketso Ntsabisa and Thabiso Ramollo appeared at the Bonnievale Magistrates Court following their successful extradition from Lesotho to South Africa".

"The prosecutor, Advocate Megan Blows, informed the court that the three face charges of murder, attempted murder, and robbery with aggravating circumstances as well as the unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

"Adv Blows told the court that in 2019, the accused killed Kapteinsdrift farm owner, Jurie Wessels, on his farm in Bonnievale. The accused, who performed seasonal work at the deceased's farm, made use of their knowledge of the farm and planned to attack the farm owner and his wife. They tortured Wessels and his wife by stabbing them beating them and throwing boiling water at them."

Mr Ntabazalila said a fourth suspect, Ntabanyane Tlali, was immediately arrested and he is appearing at the Western Cape High Court in connection with the crimes. Mr Ntabazalila said the other suspects fled to Lesotho and the NPA subsequently applied for



Jurie 'Tool' Wessels' widow, Lielzel, was tortured along with her husband on their farm in Bonnievale, Western Cape.

their extradition to South Africa.

"In 2020, the NPA formally lodged an extradition request to the Kingdom of Lesotho, for the remaining accused who fled immediately after the murder, to be delivered to South Africa to face the charges.

"After a lengthy extradition enquiry which was held in Lesotho, the investigating officer, Sergeant Estelle Wessenaar, as well as members of the South African Police Service and Interpol were finally able to receive the accused and transport them over the South

African border," Mr Ntabazalila said.

He said the trio had been remanded in custody to Wednesday 3 August 2022. On that day, the accused will inform the court whether or not they intend to apply for bail.

"The NPA confirms that it will vehemently oppose any application for bail, pending the criminal trial," Mr Ntabazalila said.

This is merely the latest in the growing list of cases against Lesotho nationals in the neighbouring country. Some Basotho have been fingered in violent killings at illegal

mining sites in South Africa. There have also been rumours that Lesotho nationals are behind some of the violent gun-related murders of people at some of the drinking spots in the neighbouring country.

South Africa's Sunday Times newspaper recently published a story alleging that Famo gangsters were behind the horrific shooting at Mdalose's Tavern in Soweto, which claimed 16 lives three weeks ago. The claims have not been confirmed by the South African authorities.



Government of Lesotho

LESOTHO ELECTRICITY GENERATION COMPANY (LEGCO) VACANCY

Chief Electrical Engineer

- The responsibilities of Chief Electrical Engineer include:
- Provide leadership in order to achieve efficiency and effective generation of electricity and management of staff to ensure optimum performance.
- Coordinate and ensure efficient metering, rectification and implement measures for resolution of irregularities/discrepancies
- Produce energy transaction reports.
- Design, maintain, implement, and improve electrical generation facilities and systems for commercial operation.
- Plan and implement daily and weekly power dispatch in compliance with Power Purchase Agreement, Lesotho grid codes and market rules.
- Ensure that generation installations and operations conform to standards and customer requirements, regulatory requirements (LEWA) by preparing electrical systems specifications, technical drawings and plans.
- Ensure compliance with specifications, codes for equipment manufacturers' requirements by directing or coordinating installations in construction, commissioning and testing activities.
- Prepare reports and compile data regarding existing and potential electrical engineering projects and studies.
- Prepare specifications for purchases of electrical equipment & materials and provision of services (engagement of consultants).
- Estimate material, labour and construction costs for budget preparation.
- Perform quality and performance analysis on new and existing power generation systems.
- Supervise, mentor and train Plant operation & maintenance Engineers and Technicians as well as other subordinate project team members.
- Prepare monthly, quarterly and annual operational reports for the power station.
- Implement, review and update maintenance procedures.
- Periodically check equipment performance and assess any deviations and design deficiencies.
- Monitor and control overall cost effectiveness of the power station through budget controls.
- Liaise with other sections at the Head Office for smooth and efficient running of the power station.

Qualifications

Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering plus a minimum of five (5) years working experience as an Electrical Engineer, three of which should have been at an electrical utility environment.

OR

Degree in Electrical Engineering plus a minimum of ten (10) years working experience as an Electrical Engineer, five of which should have been at an electrical utility environment

Additional Requirements and skills

- Proven expertise as an electrical engineer
- Hands-on experience using design and calculation software
- Deep knowledge of electrical power generation processes
- Understanding of electrical engineering codes and safety standards
- Problem-solving abilities
- Strong organizational and communication skills

Applications with certified copies of educational certificates and CVs should be hand delivered to: Human Resources Office, LEGCO offices located at House No.251 Honeymoon Park, Maseru West.

Closing Date: 05th August 2022



Government of Lesotho

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

Invitation for Bids

1. The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho intends to allocate funds to the Ministry of Transport for the financial year 2022/2023 & 2023/2024 and that part of the funds be utilized on eligible payments resulting from the procurement process as reflected below.
2. The Principal Secretary for Ministry of Transport now invites sealed bids from registered Security companies for the Provision of Security Services for the Ministry Transport

IFB No.: GOL/SEC 01/2022/23 & 2023/24

	DEPARTMENTS
1	Moshoeshoe 1 airport
2	Ha 'Masana
3	Ha Motemekoane

3. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the following address:
Procurement Unit
P.O. Box 1606
Maseru 100
Situating on site, St. Catherine's High School
Old Traffic Building, second floor room 218, Maseru Lesotho
Attention: Procurement Unit
Tel: (+ 266) 63933945
Email: semakhetha@gmail.com
Cc: rjnkalai@gmail.com
Mr. Sehlabaka Makhetha
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of M500.00 (Two Thousand Maloti Only), or its equivalent in any freely convertible currency. The method of payment will be by Cash paid at the accounts department, Old Traffic Building, Ministry of Transport; headquarters located next to St. Catharine's High School at old traffic building First Floor room 100. The bidding documents shall be available at the procurement Office located at the same building as accounts department Second floor room 218 upon producing a receipt from the Accounts Section.
5. Bids must be delivered to the address below; (clause (9)) on or before September 05, 2022 at 10:00hrs. Late bids will be rejected. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of M5000.00 cost in the form of Bank Cheque or Bank Guarantee valid for thirty (30) days beyond the validity of the bid.
6. In addition to the bid security mentioned above, it is mandatory for bidders to submit copies of the following valid documents: (a) Tax Clearance Certificates; (b) Form 2A registration certificate, (c) Certificate of Bona Fide Bidding, (d) copies of previous contracts/purchase orders and (e) at least two (2) reference letters from two (2) previous clients.
7. Qualifications requirements for award include: (a) business experience of not less than three years and (b) experience in providing services of similar nature and magnitude in the past two (2) years. The margin of preference for local companies shall be applied in accordance with the requirements of Clause 12 of the Government of Lesotho Public Procurement Regulations 2007 during the evaluation. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
8. A compulsory site visit shall be at Moshoeshoe 1 International airport on the 16th August 2022.
Meeting point: ADMIN CLASS ROOM
Time: 10:00am.
9. Bids will be opened at the address given below in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend on September 05, 2022 at 10:30hrs

The address referred to above for Bid Submission and Bid Opening is:

The Secretary,
MOT Tender Panel,
Ministry of Transport,
Room 203 Old Traffic Building

Bidders shall ensure that the envelopes/packages containing their bids are properly addressed as indicated under 9 above and are CLEARLY MARKED "Provision of Security Services for the Ministry of Transport"

Mohalenyane Phakela / Moorosi Tsiane

Former correctional service boss fights for promotion

FORMER acting Lesotho Correctional Service (LCS) Commissioner, Chabana Majara, has petitioned the High Court to nullify incumbent LCS Commissioner Mating Nkakala's decision to reserve one of the top posts at the institution for a female candidate.

Senior Assistant Commissioner (SAC) Majara, who served as acting Commissioner from August 2020 to May 2021, is currently LCS head of Legal Affairs, Human Rights and Mediation.

He was appointed acting commissioner after Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro had sacked then Commissioner Thabang Mthepu over a host of issues including his alleged irregular appointment by former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane.

He intends to apply for the post of Deputy Commissioner Rehabilitation.

However, Commissioner Nkakala has reserved the post for a female candidate.

This has not gone down well with SAC Majara. He has now approached the High Court to reverse Commissioner Nkakala's decision because he believes the LCS boss' decision is prejudicial to him. He also argues that there is no legal basis for such a decision.

Commissioner Nkakala, the Principal Secretary for Law and Justice, Law and Justice Minister Lekhetho Rakuoane and Attorney General Rapelang Motsieloa are the first to forth respondents respectively in SAC Majara's application.

In his court papers, SAC Majara argues that he is qualified for the position as he has been with the LCS for 36 years, 15 of these as an SAC. He is also a holder of a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Honours Degree.

"I aver that the first respondent (Nkakala)'s actions to earmark the post of Deputy Commissioner Rehabilitation (for a female candidate) is inconsistent with the fundamental freedom from discrimination based on gender or sex," SAC Majara argues.

"The correct principle is to give equal opportunities to all officers, both male and female. Therefore, the job has to be advertised for every interested party to participate so that the interviewing panel will make a de-

termination on who is the best candidate for the job.

"I have an interest in applying for the position as the most qualified candidate both by qualification as I have an LLB degree and experience of more than 30 years of service in the LCS," SAC Majara further states.

He alleges that there has never been any point when posts within the LCS were reserved for anyone on gender grounds. He further alleges that even now, Commissioner Nkakala is only using the gender card as a smokescreen yet the reality is that he wants the post given to his "best friend", one SAC Ramaisa. In any event, SAC Ramaisa is not the only woman qualified for the post, SAC Majara argues.

"I aver that Circular No. 2 of 2022 shocked me to the marrow when the first respondent earmarked the vacant position of Deputy Commissioner Rehabilitation for a female.

"I must put this court into my confidence and say that the vacant position of the Deputy Commissioner Rehabilitation is not earmarked for any female officer but specifically the current acting officer 'M'e Ramaisa for the following reasons:

"She is the squad-mate and best friend of the first respondent. She has 17 years of service and she is not the only female that qualifies for that position," SAC Majara states in his court papers.

He therefore wants the court to set aside "the decision to earmark the position of the Deputy Commissioner of Lesotho Correctional Services Rehabilitation to a female officer". He wants the decision "reviewed, corrected and set-aside as irregular, wrongful and unlawful as it is discriminatory".



CHABANA Majara

Sophonea, Nthunya defections boost BAP

Tšoloane Mohlomi

FINANCE Minister, Thabo Sophonea, and Maseru District Administrator, Mpane Nthunya, will represent the Nqosa Mahao-led Basotho Action Party (BAP) in the Thaba Bosiu and Matsieng constituencies respectively in the forthcoming 7 October 2022 elections.

This was revealed by Professor Mahao at a recent party rally at Ha Makhalayane, Thaba-Bosiu. It was at that rally that Prof Mahao welcomed Messrs Sophonea and Nthunya into the BAP fold.

Both were members of the main governing All Basotho Convention (ABC). Mr Sophonea, the outgoing Thaba Bosiu MP, was widely regarded as a loyalist of Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro, the man who he succeeded as finance minister.

However, Prof Mahao said it would be wrong for the media or anyone else to say that Messrs Sophonea and Nthunya had defected to his party. The two "had always been BAP members," Prof Mahao told an estimated 3000 crowd at the Thaba Bosiu rally.

Their defections seemingly confirm Prof Mahao's claims last year when he and 10 MPs ditched the ABC to form the BAP. He said at the time that other MPs who sided with them would remain in the ABC to avoid being kicked out of their jobs in government. He had said they would only jump ship when the time was right. Probably this is now the right time considering that parliament was dissolved a fortnight ago by His Majesty, King Letsie III. Mr Sophonea is also set to keep his job until after October as his quitting of the ABC will have no bearing on his role as finance minister. The ABC remains split and its leader Nkaku Kabi has no power over



THABO Sophonea.

those ministers who have remained in the cabinet and loyal to his arch foe, Dr Majoro.

Although the BAP is yet to announce its 80 candidates to repre-

sent the party at the forthcoming polls, Messrs Sophonea and Nthunya, have however, been confirmed as candidates for Thaba Bosiu and Matsieng respectively.



MPANE Nthunya.

Addressing the Thaba Bosiu rally, Prof Mahao said he had already been working with the two and they had been chosen by the electorate because of the "good work

and dedication" they had displayed towards uplifting their respective constituencies.

"To all the media representatives present, please do not go around reporting that anyone crossed floor in the Thaba Bosiu and Matsieng constituencies," Prof Mahao said of Messrs Sophonea and Nthunya.

"We had deployed them in their constituencies and I personally worked well with them.

"These respective constituencies recognised the qualities that these candidates we are presenting to you possess. This also shows that their efforts were appreciated and recognised by the BAP. I congratulate them. I say to you comrade Nthunya we've seen you as District Administrator for Maseru, but now we want to ascend you to parliament.

"BAP members in Thaba-Bosiu have also reiterated that they have indeed seen the great job done by Minister Sophonea in parliament and they want him to continue as their MP," Prof Mahao said.

He urged the electorate to vote his party as it was the only one which was genuinely concerned about improving their lives.

On his part, Mr Sophonea vowed to regain the Thaba-Bosiu constituency on behalf of the BAP.

"I accept the call to represent Thaba-Bosiu and assure you that this constituency will be in BAP hands after the elections. I'm not being cory but confident because I know that we have done our job. You have shown that I'm your preferred choice and that no other candidate was more fitting. I will continue from where I left off and also implement other policies as per the BAP manifesto which aims to improve the lives of our people by creating jobs and eradicating poverty," Mr Sophonea said.

'Marafaele Mohloboli

Relatives fail to collect bodies as MKM workers down tools

SCORES of families who had gone to collect bodies of their deceased relatives for burial from MKM Funeral Services in Maseru over the weekend were left stranded after employees went on strike.

Those who had brought bodies were also denied services.

The employees downed tools in protest over non-payment of their monthly salaries. They claimed that they have not been paid since 2011.

Police had to be called in after the disgruntled workers blocked the premises. They also prevented vehicles from entering and leaving as irate relatives demanded answers.

One of the employers who did not want to be named said they had not been paid their salaries since 2011.

"We have not been paid since then. We kept working because we believed that things would be back to normal with time but this was not to be," he said.

He said initially they were only given money for rent and transport but this eventually stopped.

"It's quite stressful."

The employees said they have tried to hold talks with MKM director, Simon Thebe-ea-Khale, but he has not been forthcoming.

They also claimed that Mr Thebe-ea-Khale was not taking them seriously, hence their decision to down their tools.

"His lack of commitment shows that he is not willing to pay us even a cent. He must appreciate that he needs us just as we need him," said one employee.

Another worker said the only way they could be heard by Mr Thebe-ea-Khale was to down their tools when people needed to collect the bodies of their deceased relatives.

"He doesn't take us seriously. That's why we chose to go on strike on a Friday when most families come to collect bodies for burial over the weekend.

"We have no intention to hurt anyone, let alone our clients. But this action was inevitable. It was the only card that we had up our sleeve to be heard," the employee said.

The protesting employees vowed to continue with their strike until they have been

paid their outstanding salaries.

But the affected clients were not amused. They said they were not interested in MKM's internal issues and all they needed was to be given the services they paid for.

"We are not interested in their matters. We want to be given the services that we have paid for, that's all," one client said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Another client, 'Makananelo Lobiane, said she was disappointed that the employees had gone on strike.

"MKM should just close shop. They don't care about us anymore. We can't be treated like this when all that we need right now it to be comforted. Clearly Ntate Thebe-ea-Khale is failing. He should just accept it," she said.

She said she was supposed to be in Quthing by midday where mourners were waiting for the body.

"Now I don't know what to tell them anymore because I am also being lied to by MKM workers."

Another client who also requested anonymity said, "We are already hurt by the passing on of our loved ones. We're trying to put this behind us and now the people who are supposed to see us through our pain are the ones who are adding to it.

"I have been waiting here since morning. My mother's body ought to have been released to us by 8.30 and eight hours later we are still stuck here with some lame excuses. Now that they have agreed to help, we are now told there is no transport."

Contacted for comment, a frustrated Mr Thebe-ea-Khale castigated the workers' protest.

He said this was not the first time that his employers had "rebelled against me in this fashion".

Mr Thebe-ea-Khale said that he could not

pay the employees because he does not have any money. "I don't really know what they expect me to do. I've told them that I don't have the money.

He said the workers' protests started in 2011 after his properties were liquidated.

Mr Thebe-ea-Khale's MKM Star Lion Group was shut down in November 2007 by the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL) after it failed to repay its creditors.

A CBL-commissioned investigation conducted by South African firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers, also revealed that of the M400 million invested by depositors, MKM — comprising MKM Marketing Ltd, Star Lion Group Ltd, Star Lion Insurance Ltd and Star Lion Gold Coin Investment (Pty) Ltd — could only account for M100 million in assets that included buildings and vehicles.

Mr Thebe-ea-Khale said he told the employees that only those who could put up with the conditions of being paid the way he was doing could stay.

"I also made it clear that those who couldn't bear with me were free to leave, but they never left."

He said he had also asked the workers to come on weekends only since he could not pay them for the whole week.

"But they said staying at home was not helping them in any way and they were starving. They begged me to allow them to come to work and I did.

"I don't know why they are being unfair to me like this. I am the one who has been providing for their welfare. I dress some of them. Some of them have even taken away my cars which they are still using.

"Others are staying in my houses without paying rent and they don't want to leave," he said.

Mr Thebe-ea-Khale accused the workers of



SIMON Thebe-ea-Khale.

fighting him because they want to take over everything "that I have".

He said it was not all the employers who were against him but only a few.

Some people who bought his properties were pitting the workers against him to shift divert his concentration because he had court cases against them.

NATIONAL DRUG SERVICE ORGANISATION

P.O.Box 1167
Mafeteng 900
Lesotho
Tel: (+266) 2270 0232
Fax: (+266) 2270 1340

INVITATION FOR PROVISION OF INSURANCE SERVICES FOR ANTIRETROVIRAL MEDICINES AT THE NATIONAL DRUG SERVICE ORGANIZATION

The National Drug Service Organization (NDSO) is a Trading Account for the Ministry of Health in Lesotho. It is mandated to procure, store and distribute Medicines, Medical Supplies and Laboratory Consumables for the Health Institutions in Lesotho. NDSO was legally established through a gazette Supplement No.4 to Gazette No.19 of the 2nd March 2007. The Government Hospitals use their allocated funds for drugs, dressings and other allocations to buy the supplies from NDSO. These funds are used by NDSO to Procure Medicines, Medical Supplies and other Health Sector Goods from eligible Suppliers using the tendering method of procurement. The Ministry of Health has obtained funds from the Global Fund to Fight Tuberculosis, AIDS and Malaria (GFTAM) towards the cost of Strengthening, Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS in Lesotho and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this account to payments under contracts for the Provision of Insurance Services to cover Antiretroviral Medicines, No. NDSO/ARV/INSURANCE/2022/07/GF.

The National Drug Service Organization now invites tenders from eligible bidders for the Provision of Insurance Services to cover Antiretroviral Medicines valued at Two Hundred and Twenty Four Million, Four Hundred and Twenty Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Six Lesotho Maloti stored at NDSO Warehouses and Three Hundred and Three Million, Nine Hundred and Seventy Four Thousand, Four Hundred and Thirty Three Lesotho Maloti per annum for transit consignments with a maximum of Hundred thousand per load from NDSO to different Hospitals and Health Facilities within the country for a period of Twelve Months and renewable for another Twelve Months period of the same premium upon availability of funds.

Description of Products to be insured	Value of ARVs at Warehouses & On Transit (LSL)
ARVs stored at NDSO Warehouses	224,422,706.00
ARVs on Transit per year	303,974,433.00

A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by you and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of LSL1,000.00 (One Thousand Maloti Only) or USD67.00 (Sixty-Seven United States Dollars Only) at the address below. The method of payment will be cash or telegraphic transfer to the bank account details below. Proof of purchase of bidding documents will be required for participation in the bid.

CONDITIONS:
The quotation validity until [01st September, 2022] period shall be ninety (90) days after the deadline for bid submission. Contract for insurance must be renewable with the same contract price for another 12 months' period with initiated instructions from the purchaser. The currency to be used for quoting prices is: United States Dollar, European Euro, Lesotho Maloti or South African Rand. The Bidders from the Rand Monetary Area* shall submit their bids in South African Rand.
* Countries in the Rand Monetary Area include South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho.
All bidders are informed that their Submission must be in an 'A4 Envelope' and must contain only the Mandatory documents listed below:

List of mandatory documents required	Tender Panel Use Only	
	Provided with Tender	
Details of Document	Yes	No
Certificate of Bona Fide Tendering		
Signed Form of Bid		
Tax Clearance Certificate		
Signed Price Schedule		
Bid Security 2% of Bidder's Bid & not expire before 28 th December, 2022		

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDER:
The bid must be delivered to the address below at or before 1400 hours on 01st September, 2022. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives, who choose to attend at the address below at 1400 hours on 01st September, 2022.

National Drug Service Organization
Main South One Road
Mafeteng
Lesotho

It is expected that Bidders will be notified about the outcome of the request on or before 30th September, 2022.
For further information, do not hesitate to call or email the following officers quoting tender number:
Mrs 'Miki Nt'sonyana and Mr Tebello Sehau
E-mail: tenders@ndsso.org.ls
Website: www.ndsso.org.ls
Telephone: +266 222 15 300 Ext 315/333

ACCOUNT DETAILS FOR PAYMENT FOR BIDDING DOCUMENTS:

Account number:	9080001845574
Account name:	National Drug Service Organization
Bank name:	Standard Lesotho Bank
Branch name:	Mafeteng Branch
Branch code:	060667
Swift Code:	SBICLSMX

Matebele Sefali (Mr)
General Manager
National Drug Service Organization

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LESOTHO HIGHLANDS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LHDA)

Applications are invited from suitably qualified Lesotho and South African nationals to serve on the Board of Directors of the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) in the portfolio of Project Management. The LHDA is tasked with the implementation, operation and maintenance of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) within Lesotho. Members of the Board of Directors must be fluent in English and are required to have competence in analytics, communication, teamwork, management/leadership, and knowledge of the operating environment of the LHDA or of similar organizations. Remuneration of Members of the Board will be market related and shall cover preparation and attendance at Board Meetings, sub-committee work and ad-hoc work such as special delegated tasks or investigations. Applicants with any interest within and outside the LHDA that might compromise the performance of duties in the LHDA Board have to declare their interest in their application letters. A candidate who has a conflict of interest by being either a partner, shareholder, director, employee or family member of any LHDA's service provider shall not be considered for LHDA Board membership. Other key grounds for disqualification are delinquency, insolvency and convictions.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PORTFOLIO OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Main Purpose: The Project Management portfolio deals mainly with the implementation of Phase II of the LHWP and focuses on control and coordination of all material aspects of projects, as well as providing oversight on the projects' completion within budget and to specifications.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS:

1. Strategic Leadership: Overseeing and reviewing multi-disciplinary processes in the implementation of Phase II at all stages as well as providing technical leadership and advice to the Board.
2. Project Management: The individual will be the Chairperson of a multi-disciplinary Technical sub-committee of the Board which is made up of a multi-disciplinary team.
3. Financial Management: Continuous oversight of the annual project budgeting process and cash flow management.
4. Project Related Procurement: Overseeing the process for procurement of service providers for projects/contracts/programmes under Phase II of the LHWP.

REQUIREMENTS:

- The ideal candidate shall be in possession of an internationally recognized university degree in any of the following engineering disciplines: Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering or Mechanical Engineering. or an equivalent built environment discipline.
- The candidate shall possess a minimum of fifteen (15) years' relevant post qualification experience, ten (10) of which shall have been in a senior management position on multi-disciplinary projects preferably in bulk water supply and/or hydropower generation.
- The candidate must have a demonstrable record and experience as a Project Manager in large civil engineering and construction related organisation.
- Registration as a Professional Engineer, Construction Project Manager or other recognized equivalent professional accreditation is mandatory.
- Board experience or insight is an essential attribute.
- High proficiency with computers in particular MS Project, MS Word, MS Excel, MS Outlook, and the Internet.

APPLICATION FOR THE PORTFOLIO

Interested individuals in serving on the Board of LHDA in the portfolio are requested to send their applications with a detailed CV, names and respective addresses of three referees by 31st August 2022 at 16:00 hours to:

Principal Secretary
Ministry of Water
P O Box 772
Maseru
Lesotho

e-mail address: sec@lhwc.org.ls

Applications by e-mail only shall be accepted. No late applications shall be accepted.

Comment

Defections just another manifestation of selfishness

THE political silly season and well and truly upon us following the 13 July 2022 dissolution of parliament by His Majesty, King Letsie III.

The 7 October 2022 date for general elections has also been proclaimed by the King. The proclamation of the elections date coupled with the dissolution of parliament effectively means that Prime Minister Moeletsi Majoro is now leading a caretaker government until a substantive one comes into being after the polls. This could have been playing on the mind of Finance Minister Thabo Sophonea when he defected from the governing All Basotho Convention (ABC) to opposition leader, Nqosa Mahao's Basotho Action Party (BAP) last week.

The outgoing Thaba Bosiu legislator is not the only high-profile individual who has left their party. Former cabinet minister and outgoing Semena MP, Tlohelang Aumane, has ditched the Sam Matekane-led Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) for the Socialist Revolutionaries (SR) led by Teboho Mojaepela.

According to some sources close to the political players who spoke to the *Lesotho Times* recently, these and other defections signal the opening of floodgates after the recent dissolution of parliament, wherein more politicians could dump their parties for new homes ahead of the October elections. But just like the proliferation of political parties, which now stand at a staggering 65, the defections have nothing to do with principle or any ideological differences.

It really doesn't matter how these politicians explain their propensity to jump ship to the electorate. There is no Damascene moment where the scales fall off the politicians' eyes to reveal new fundamental political insights and wisdom.

It's all about self-interest. Defecting is a weapon in the arsenal of politicians who simply hop for one political bed to the other out of the selfishness. An exasperated then leader of South Africa's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) Mangosuthu Buthelezi coined the unflattering epithet "crosstitutes" to describe politicians who crossed the floor to join rival parties in parliament.

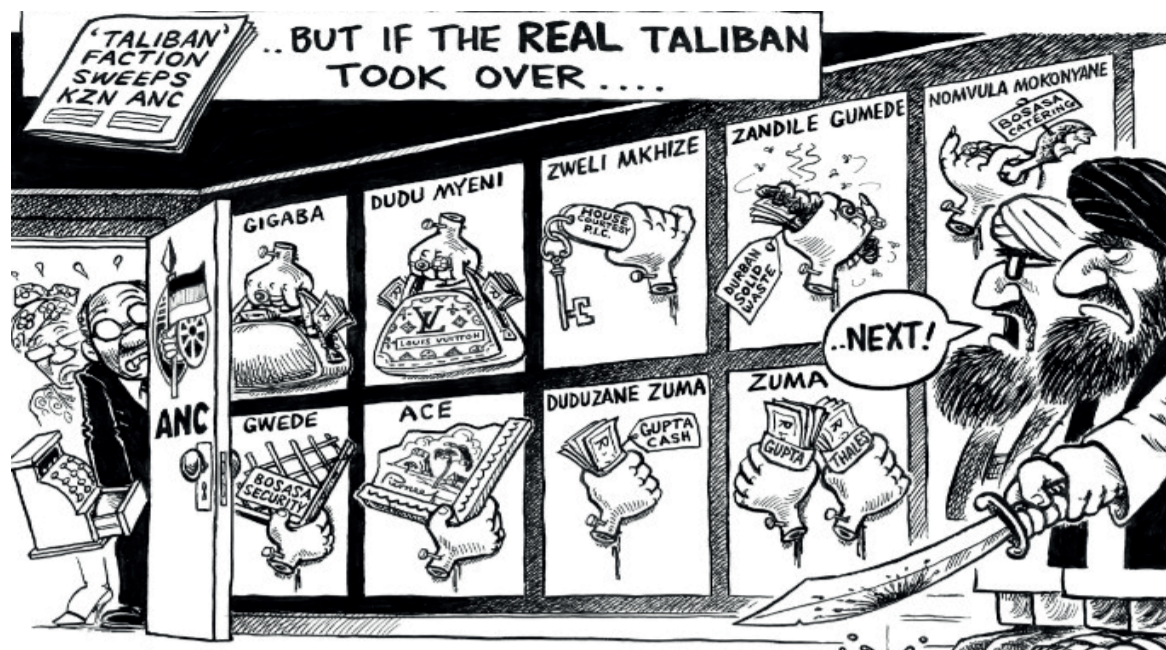
Chief Buthelezi had correctly observed that such politicians were no different from the immoral prostitutes who have to qualms in selling themselves to the highest political suitor who seduces them with promises of cabinet or other powerful posts.

While Mr Sophonea's defection may come as a surprise to many, we can bet that no one batted an eyelid when Mr Aumane dumped the fledgling RFP for the SR. No one was surprised because the former Development Planning minister has seemingly developed a penchant for 'crosstitution' whenever there is something to be gained at a personal level. The SR is his fourth party in just five years. He won the Semena constituency on a Democratic Congress (DC) ticket in the June 2017 elections. Shortly afterwards, he defected to the AD after being promised a cabinet post in the then Thomas Thabane-led four party coalition featuring the ABC, AD, Basotho National Party and the Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL).

In early April this year, he and several other AD bigwigs including Dr Phamotse, defected to the RFP. Following his loss a fortnight ago in the RFP primary polls to another former cabinet minister, Joshua Setipa, Mr Aumane has now dumped the party for the SR.

Asked to comment on his latest move, Mr Aumane said he had dumped the RFP because the party had ignored his concerns about irregularities which he said marred the primary election he lost to Mr Setipa. No one knows where Mr Aumane will end up next. No one knows how many parties he would have joined and left after five years. One thing that seems certain though is that he will jump ship as soon as things don't go his way in whichever party would be his political home at the time.

While defections are not illegal and a good thing when done by politicians taking a principled stand against malfeasance in their parties, Mr Aumane and others' habitual floor crossing antics should be seen for what they are; they are rightly a source of bar jokes about self-serving politicians who jump to whichever party seems to offer them opportunities for self-aggrandisement.



Social media is making it easier for human traffickers to ensnare victims

KEY to any human trafficking operation is the recruiter, who often occupies a position of authority in the community. They might be the leader of a trafficking ring but they are often just someone credible, even with significant religious or political standing. Consider the documented case of a teacher from Lesotho who persuaded students to look for women who were likely to accept employment "abroad".

Five young women were duly introduced to the teacher who deceitfully briefed them on the work and where it was — an offer they readily accepted. However, upon getting to their destination, in South Africa, they were sold into sexual exploitation. In another case, the organiser, a Congolese woman, promised the relatives of five children that they would get a better education in Zambia. When the deal was finalised, the woman arranged for them to enter Zambia irregularly. On arrival, she put the five children to work in her business, selling commodities and food.

The Southern Africa region is not free from human trafficking, a crime that entails the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. Traffickers of human beings treat their victims as commodities that can be used and sold for financial gain, without regard for their dignity and rights.

Essentially, traffickers can be divided into two broad categories: organised criminal groups and opportunistic traffickers operating alone or in cooperation with others. In the latter category are business owners, intimate partners and family members.

Whatever the organisational structure, traffickers usually target the most marginalised and vulnerable, such as those with mental disorders, undocumented migrants, those living in poverty, the unemployed as well as abandoned children and those in dysfunctional families. In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region cases have been reported of people living with albinism being trafficked for their organs.

Trafficking can involve travelling to another country. However, most victims across the world are citizens of the countries where they are detected — but are usually subject to significant geographical movement, often to unfamiliar parts of their region where a different language is spoken. While the scenario of an influential community member doubling as a recruiter is still a reality, the internet has revolutionised human trafficking. It has presented recruiters with more convenient ways to connect with targeted victims, usually with fake job offers,

Jane Ongolo

and to find buyers for their products, such as human kidneys, and even to livestream acts of exploitation.

Through the internet it is also possible to anonymously arrange logistics, such as transport and accommodation for victims, in addition to moving and hiding the proceeds of crime.

In the recruitment phase for human trafficking, two types of strategies can be identified. "Hunting" is when traffickers proactively target specific victims or clients in order to gain access to victims and establish connections with potential buyers or exploitative services. "Fishing" involves traffickers posting adverts online and waiting for potential victims or clients to respond. They might include fake job adverts or offers to buyers for certain services.

Thus, it is critical that guardians and educators teach children how to navigate the internet safely. Social media is a significant danger, not least because it is now such an indispensable part of life, with WhatsApp and Facebook among the most popular platforms.

It is concerning that a third of the children who participated in a 2020 survey, conducted by the Youth Research Unit at the Bureau of Market Research, Unisa and Unicef, had met someone face to face during the previous year who they had first got to know on the internet. The last time they met the person face to face, they experienced feelings of happiness (58,8 percent) and excitement (43,7 percent).

Globally, 50 percent of detected human victims of human trafficking were for sexual exploitation and 38 percent for forced labour, while 6 percent were subjected to forced criminal activity and more than 1 percent to begging. Smaller numbers were trafficked for forced marriages, organ removals and other purposes. This is in contrast to the situation in the SADC region where the majority of victims of human trafficking are exploited for the purpose of forced labour. They are put to work, doing jobs such as selling goods in markets, begging and labouring on farms and in quarries and mines.

Victims of human trafficking are invariably kept against their will through fear of physical violence. In other instances, victims are prevented from fleeing because they have been forcibly introduced to drugs or have been deceived into believing that they owe the traffickers huge amounts of money for services provided, such as the pro-

vision of a false ID, transport or accommodation.

Research by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) shows that, globally, the number of children trafficking victims has tripled, while the number of boys has increased five times over the past 15 years. However, women and girls are still the primary targets of traffickers, making up 46% and 19 percent of all victims, respectively.

"Loveboy" cases have also been reported in the SADC region. This is where male traffickers romance potential female victims for months, and even years, building a relationship of trust, before trafficking them into sexual exploitation or forced labour.

In SADC member states, the number of trafficking cases recorded fell between 2017 and 2020, probably due to increased focus on the crime. More countries have developed specific laws prohibiting such crimes after ratifying the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Trafficking Protocol).

As of August 2020, 169 countries had enacted legislation that criminalises trafficking in persons, in line with the protocol. Across the world the average conviction rate has tripled since 2003 when the protocol came into force, although convictions have been lowest in sub-Saharan Africa.

Between 2017 and 2020, 484 cases of trafficking were recorded in the SADC Regional Trafficking in Persons Database, set up in 2014 by member states, the SADC Secretariat and UNODC. There were 212 cases from nine SADC member states in 2017 — 130 of them were registered in South Africa alone. In 2018, 151 cases were registered in 11 SADC countries, with the number falling to 55 cases from eight member states. The number of recorded cases rose again to 66 cases from eight member states in 2020.

Detection is particularly difficult, and even where suspects have been identified, building a case for prosecution is fraught with technicalities. It doesn't help that human trafficking is often conflated with people smuggling and irregular migration, leading to further complications.

Working with other UN agencies and development partners, UNODC is supporting member states with training to boost detection and prosecution, along with assistance for victims. Just as important is awareness-raising and ongoing data collection to support evidence-based programming.

— The Mail and Guardian

Dr Jane Ongolo is the Southern Africa regional resident representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Sunday Express

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Family contribution to unity in community

Youth have great potential and capacities. They have the potential to channel their energy, capacities and talents towards building a better society and advancement of civilization.

As parents and teachers, it is our responsibility and privilege to help them to develop and enhance their potential and capacities. A candle, for example, has the potential to give light.

But it does not give light without being lit. It has to be lit so that it can shine and illuminate its surroundings.

Bahá'u'lláh compares human beings to a mine containing many hidden jewels, waiting to be discovered. He says: "Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom".

The purpose of educating our children and youth should, therefore, be enhancing their potential capacities, rather than considering them as empty vessels that need to be filled with information and instructions.

Many of the approaches to education today treat children and youth in a very passive way, as receptacles of information rather than active members of their community. Yet young people are anxious to become partners in helping to plan the world they will inherit.

They aspire for spiritual and intellectual growth and "to make a contribution to the fortunes of humanity".

"They have many wonderful powers, and channelling them properly is an important

concern, for when misdirected or manipulated by others, they can cause much social distress".

The period of youth is a very special time in life

The period of youth is a time for preparation. It is the time for personal change, the time during which the youth begin to consciously explore and apply their knowledge, values and beliefs about individual and collective life.

According to the Universal House of Justice, the governing council of the Bahá'í International Community: "the transformation which is to occur in the functioning of society will certainly depend to a great extent on the effectiveness of the preparations the youth make for the world they will inherit".

Through an effective preparation and appropriate education, the power of the values, attitudes, behaviours and skills of our youth can be harnessed towards creating a peaceful society and a better world.

Of course, it is important that education, whether at home or at school, guides our children and youth in their moral empowerment and not just in their intellectual development.

"The proper education of children is of vital importance to the progress of mankind, and the heart and essential foundation of all education is spiritual and moral training" state the Bahá'í Writings and that "knowledge is praiseworthy when it is coupled with ethical conduct and virtuous character".

Through effective education and guidance our youth can be empowered to override the

Religion

A Bahá'í Perspective

with
Flora Teckie

needs of their lower nature in keeping with ethical requirements, to control and channel their natural drives and urges and to transform them into human perfections.

Our youth have great capacities. We need to converse with them, listen to their opinions and try to find out how we can help them enhance their potential capacities.

They should be guided to analyse the constructive and destructive forces operating in society and recognise the influence these forces have on their thoughts and actions.

Education to contribute to individual growth and betterment of society

It is important that education is examined in light of its contribution to individual growth, as well as to social transformation – both of which are necessary for the creation of peaceful and harmonious communities.

Such education would empower our youth to express their God-given talents and capacities in service to humanity.

It is through service to others that one can help bring about social change.

An adequate education, in the Bahá'í view, "will cultivate virtue as the foundation for personal and collective well-being, and will nurture in individuals a deep sense of service and an active commitment to the welfare of their families, their communities, their countries, indeed, all mankind".

For education to contribute to both individual growth and to the transformation of society, it must also aim at cultivating mutual tolerance, brotherhood, compassion, love, understanding, and respect for different ethical values.

Nurturing the consciousness of oneness of humanity and fostering a love for people of all backgrounds, must begin in the family, where children should be trained to rid themselves of various prejudices. Encouraging our children and youth to independently search for truth leads them to personal conviction, rather than merely imitating others, and will help free themselves from prejudices and preconceptions.

Learning to avoid prejudices of all kinds – whether racial, national, tribal, gender or religious – and to adhere to a high moral standard, and to show rectitude in all interactions with others enable youth to become effective actors in endeavours for the betterment of society.

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Ombudsman vows to transform office

Tšoloane Mohlomi

NEWLY-APPOINTED Ombudsman, Tlotliso Polaki, has vowed to transform her office into an efficient unit.

Outlining her vision at a recent press briefing in Maseru, Advocate Polaki said she would work hard to ensure that her office fulfills its mandate of delivering justice to all.

Advocate Polaki who assumed office last month said as part of this initiative, her office had embarked on a national campaign to decentralise its services.

“Our teams have already started going out to the districts. This is part of our campaign to reach more people. We’re on a mission to enlighten the public on the work done by the Ombudsman and how they can benefit

from our services whenever they have complaints.”

Advocate Polaki also called on the government to come up with a long-term plan to root out corruption and maladministration in the public service. This would enable her office to align itself to the government’s policies and priorities.

She would also ensure that cases are speedily dealt with.

The office would also hold regular workshops for stakeholders such as Principal Secretaries (PSs) and parliamentarians to encourage them to enforce compliance with its recommendations.

Currently, the Ombudsman can only make recommendations but these were not legally binding.

“We will have workshops with PSs and MPs so that they understand the importance of the Ombudsman’s office and what it offers. We need to work together to fight corruption,” Adv Polaki said.

There was also need to strengthen the role of the Ombudsman to make the office more effective. Adv Polaki said her office had made recommendations to parliament for a review of the Ombudsman’s powers.

She said they were eagerly awaiting the passing of the Omnibus Bill. This would give her office more bit in fighting corruption.

“We need our role to be strengthened through legal instruments. It is our hope that the Omnibus Bill will be passed soon to cater for this. We made recommendations to this effect.”

The office would also work hard to reduce the backlog of cases.

Adv Polaki said the office would also conduct training for its staff so that they can effectively carry out their duties.

“The main mandate of the Ombudsman’s office is to investigate complaints from the public against government agencies and statutory corporations. For us to be able to achieve this, we need to equip our investigators with the required skills,” she said.

The office would also engage with local communities to ensure that justice is accessible to all.

Adv Polaki said that due to financial constraints, her office would come up with cost effective interventions that best service the public.

US Embassy donates to tools library



UNITED States Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Erika Lewis (left) and RISE founder Thato Nkikana during the hand over ceremony.

Senate Lerotholi

NON-GOVERNMENTAL organisation, Relationships Inspiring Social Enterprise (RISE) International has set up a tools lending resource centre in Maseru.

The tools library is aimed at assisting young entrepreneurs in the construction industry.

Speaking at the official opening ceremony recently, RISE country director, Reitumetse Nthako, said

they had established the centre will financial assistance from the United States (US) Embassy Self Help Fund.

“We are grateful to the US Embassy that gave us M133,208.51 through its Self-Help Fund. This enabled us to buy 69 power, bricklaying and carpentry tools. These tools will help the beneficiaries to excel and reach their fullest potential.”

Ms Nthako said the fully-equipped library would help the

beneficiaries to improve their carpentry, joinery, and welding skills.

Beneficiaries should be aged between 18 to 35 and in the process of setting up their own businesses in the built environment. These include carpenters, electrical and structural engineers, construction workers, and plumbers.

Entrepreneurs would be allowed to borrow tools from the library and return them after finishing their projects. The tools would then

to lent out to other beneficiaries.

“Our overall vision is to see job seekers become job creators. We hope they will be able to create opportunities for themselves and their communities. The Lesotho we want is in the hands of the youth,” Ms Nthako said.

For her part, United States Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Erika Lewis, said her country is committed to working hand-in-hand with Lesotho’s private sector, civil

society, and government to drive investment in innovation and creative solutions.

“This project, which will build skills and opportunity, is a perfect example of what we can accomplish together,” Ms Lewis said.

She said she was looking forward to working with RISE to help communities in Lesotho.

The library is one of the eight projects selected for support by the US Embassy in 2021.



Master KG faces lawsuit for alleged copyright infringement of global hit *Jerusalema*

MULTI-AWARD-WINNING musician Master KG (pictured), real name Kgaogelo Moagi, is facing a lawsuit for alleged copyright infringement of the global hit song *Jerusalema*.

“We are aware of this; it is a matter that is before the court,” Open Mic Productions MD Nkateko Maluleke told to *Channel24*. “We can’t go into further details.”

The statement comes after a press statement announced music artists Charmza the DJ and Biblos instituted legal proceedings against Master KG, Open Mic Productions, and music distributor Africori for alleged copyright infringement in respect of the commercialisation and master recording of *Jerusalema*.

“Court papers filed at the High Court in Pretoria on 08 June 2022 show that the claims are based on allegations that neither Master KG, nor his record label at the time, Open Mic, controlled the rights in the *Jerusalema* song or the master recording when they commercially released it,” the statement says.

“The song was the result of a collaboration between music producer Charmza the DJ, who composed the song, and Nomcebo Zikode, who wrote the lyrics for the song and performed it for the master recording, also produced in studio by Charmza the DJ.”

According to the press statement, Master KG invited Charmza the DJ and Nomcebo to his recording studio to work on a new song.

“No contracts were entered into, and no rights clearances were secured from the copyrights owners for Master KG or his record label to release the song and commercialise it under their name only and for their profit only.”

“Master KG and Open Mic released the recording of the song without obtaining any rights clearances from the artists who originated the song and produced the recording. They also did not secure a license or clearance from Biblos, who owns the sound recording that was sampled in the track,” the statement continued.

In court papers obtained by *Channel24*, it is alleged that Charmza the DJ created the musical work for *Jerusalema* while at Master KG’s residence. Nomcebo Zikode was also invited to the same place to write and perform lyrics to the hit song.

The court papers also allege that Master KG and Open Mic productions “exploited” the copyright works of Charmza the DJ and Biblos for commercial gain since 2019 and reproduced the sound recording without paying Charmza the DJ any royalties.

— channel 24

Trafficking in Persons: Global Challenge, Local Solution



OVER the past year, Lesotho identified more trafficking victims and increased investigations and prosecutions.

US Ambassador Maria Brewer

YESTERDAY was “World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.” Human trafficking is a serious and difficult global challenge. It is a threat to human dignity and basic freedom for an estimated 25 million people around the world every year. It is also a challenge that must be addressed at the local level. The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho is doing that, but it must do more.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken released the 2022 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report on July 19. Thanks to much hard work by Lesotho Government officials, parliament, law enforcement, and civil society, Lesotho demonstrated overall increasing efforts, compared with the previous reporting period, to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

This is noteworthy given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country’s anti-

trafficking capacity. As a result, in this year’s TIP Report, Lesotho was upgraded from Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 2.

This is a very good step for Lesotho — it ensures that US development assistance programs are not negatively impacted, a potential result from a downgrade to Tier 3, and it demonstrates a commitment by the government to continue this important fight. It is not the end of the story, however.

Over the past year, Lesotho identified more trafficking victims and increased investigations and prosecutions. The government launched its national action plan and allocated some funding for its implementation; it finalized and implemented guidelines for victim identification and referral to care; and it increased its anti-trafficking training and awareness-raising efforts for law enforcement, diplomats, and the public.

These are all positive moves, not always easily accomplished. I commend His Maj-

esty’s government and all the officials who were instrumental in achieving this progress.

However, much work remains to be done. Tier 2 is defined by the fact that progress is being made, but the country still does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. In Lesotho, several investigations and prosecutions from the previous reporting period, including cases of alleged official complicity, were still pending.

The government did not amend existing laws that prevent magistrate courts from issuing the maximum penalty for trafficking crimes.

The government continued to rely on one NGO to provide all services to trafficking victims in the country with nascent government funding, and shelter options for survivors remained limited. The Government has achieved important progress. It must maintain that momentum and make greater progress still.

I was pleased to meet with the Minister of Home Affairs, Honorable Motlalentoa Letsosa, on July 18 to present this year’s report and to congratulate him and the whole government on the Lesotho’s upgrade to Tier 2. I also shared with him a roadmap of suggested goals and objectives for Lesotho’s pursuit of a strengthened response to human trafficking, consistent with international law. This road will not be easy, but Lesotho has shown improvement is possible.

I emphasized with Minister Letsosa, and I will reaffirm the commitment here, the US Embassy will continue to work closely with officials across the government and with civil society, here in Lesotho, to help prevent trafficking, assist victims, and draw nearer to our shared vision of a world free from human trafficking. Each of us can make a difference, so let us all commit ourselves to the eradication of the horrific crime of human trafficking.



NANTEFELENG Sebatatso Makhetha is a 24-year-old entrepreneur from Maseru East. She owns Flawless Fashion store. Makhetha graduated in 2020 with a Diploma in Tourism Management from Lerotholi Polytechnic. Her Motto is: "Feel the authentic peace".

Yourstars

Aries - March 21 - April 20

Romantic opportunities will be plentiful if you go out with friends. Your need to be in a leadership position will help you surpass any rivals you might encounter. Friends or groups that you're affiliated with may want you to contribute more cash than you can really afford. Keep important information to yourself.

Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

Taurus - April 21 - May 20

Things at work have been moving quickly and you may be feeling a little uncertain about the changes taking place. Your versatile mind and common sense will allow you to come up with various solutions. Personal problems may be hanging over your head but don't confront the situation. Be careful not to misplace your wallet or belongings.

Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

Gemini - May 21 - June 21

Visit friends who have not been well. Be aggressive and colorful, and you will get your way. Renovations to your domestic scene will pay high rewards. You need an outlet that will not only stimulate you but also challenge your intelligence as well.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Cancer - June 22 - July 22

Partnerships could be tense. Don't push your luck. Your partner may make you feel jealous and unloved. You will learn a great deal from people with different cultural backgrounds. You may be able to get some good advice about your personal problems.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Leo - July 23 - August 22

Make decisions about your professional objectives. You will both have to bend if you want this union to work. You can travel for business or pleasure. Involvement in groups will be favourable and lead to valuable information.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Virgo - August 23 - September 22

Elders may get you going this week. Don't agree to make any of those cosmetic alterations you've been considering. Don't let them blame you. Later in the week your boss will pat you on the back for a job well done.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Libra - September 23 - October 22

You will find that superiors may not see situations as you do. Partnerships could prove to be lucrative. Your reputation may be at stake if you partake in gossip. You will be extremely sensual; take precautions and don't take any risks.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Scorpio - October 23 - November 21

Difficulties with female members of your family may result in estrangements. There is not much you can do to alleviate the problem, but consider putting some extra work into your house. Someone you live with will be quite unreasonable this week. Elders may get you going this week.

Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

Sagittarius - November 22 - December 20

Keep your feelings to yourself if you want to avoid embarrassment. Be an observer before getting involved. Limitations with females could lead to unfortunate circumstances. Your trendy style and unique way of doing things will entice new acquaintances.

Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

Capricorn - December 21 - January 19

You would be wise to consider attending lectures that will broaden your awareness concerning your professional direction. This is a good day to check out your investments. Try to keep a low profile. You should regain some of your self esteem if you get involved in organizational functions.

Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

Aquarius - January 20 - February 18

Be sure that the person you're drawn to is not already involved. Your creative talent will prove to be lucrative if put to proper use. Try not to be too lavish with your lover. Don't let others bully you into agreeing with them.

Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

Pisces - February 19 - March 20

Don't be too quick to judge partners or those you work with. You can make new connections through friends or relatives. Travel will be on your mind, but you should be sure that you've got all your work up-to-date. Believe in yourself and so will those who count.

Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

Teenager avoids getting stuck in jail over £30 000 Wrigley's chewing gum heist



WRIGLEY'S chewing gum worth £30,000 was stolen in the heist.

Siba Jackson

A teenager who helped steal £30,000 of Wrigley's chewing gum to pay off a debt has avoided being sent to jail.

Keon Sanderson, 18, was part of a trio who raided a lorry as the female driver slept while parked at Gloucester Services on the M5.

The gang took seven out of 19 pallets of chewing gum after cutting open the side of the vehicle during a "sophisticated" operation on 4 May this year.

They fled the scene after another driver spotted them and called the police, sparking a chase along the motorway to Cheltenham.

They ended up driving the wrong way on the A40 before dumping their lorry near a BMW dealership and running away.

Sanderson and co-defendant 20-year-old Ellis Benecke — a once promising footballer whose career hopes were destroyed by drugs and debt — were arrested shortly afterwards.

The lorry driver revealed how she took a week off work with emotional distress after "effectively her home was broken

Stranger than Fiction

into".

Sanderson was "coerced" into the raid to cancel his outstanding debts and would not have profited from the sale of the gum, Gloucester Crown Court heard.

He was a "foot soldier" and played "absolutely no part" in planning the heist.

"This was very much done under the boot of an individual who was much older than he was," defence barrister Mandla Ndlovu said.

Police initially thought Sanderson, from Birstall near Leeds, West Yorkshire, was the getaway driver but now accept that was not the case, the court heard.

The 18-year-old pleaded guilty to theft, possession of cannabis and failing to provide a breath test, sample of blood or urine for analysis.

Sentencing him to 10 months in prison, suspended for 18 months, recorder judge Richard Mawhinney said: "This was a sophisticated and planned operation to identify a vehicle from which goods were to be stolen."

But he added: "I accept that planning was not yours, and you were effectively a foot soldier."

"You were under a certain amount of pressure to perform these actions, but at the same time you benefitted by having a debt written off."

He was also handed 150 hours of unpaid work, £200 court costs, and is banned from the road for 18 months for refusing to take a breathalyser test or give a sample.

Benecke, from Leeds, was handed an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months, and 140 hours unpaid work for theft and cannabis.

He was sentenced at the same court on Monday after also admitting taking part in the heist to settle a debt. — Sky News

Pharma deal gives 90 countries access to cheaper HIV prevention injection



THE injectable antiretroviral, cabotegravir (CAB-LA), is aimed at protecting those most at risk of HIV infection, including sex workers, people injecting drugs, men who have sex with men and transgender people.

Kerry Cullinan

CAB-LA's manufacturer, UK pharmaceutical company ViiV, has given the licence to the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) for patents in least-developed, low-income, lower-middle-income and sub-Saharan African countries.

CAB-LA is administered as an injection every two months for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and is aimed at protecting those most at risk of HIV infection, including sex workers, people injecting drugs, men who have sex with men and transgender people.

These groups, designated "key populations" by UNAids because of their vulnerability to HIV, accounted for 70 percent of new infections in 2021, according to the programme.

"From here we'll work with the MPP to help enable generic manufacturing as quickly as possible. We've committed to offering a not-for-profit price for public programmes in low-income, least-developed and all sub-Saharan African countries until a generic is available," ViiV's Deborah Waterhouse told the media on Thursday, on the eve of the International Aids Conference on Friday.

ViiV also produces the antiretroviral drug dolutegravir and has a voluntary licence for this with the MPP.

"By applying this proven modern model to prevention and sharing our intellectual property and enabling generic versions of CAB-LA for PrEP, we hope we can play an important role in preventing new cases of HIV, particularly in women and girls, where challenges with adherence, limited efficacy and stigma have hindered the impact of current PrEP options," said Waterhouse.

Currently, PrEP has been restricted to oral pills that need to be taken every day, which is often hard for the high-risk groups that PrEP is aimed at.

New coalition to address price

MPP executive director Charles Gore said the licence "enables MPP to issue sub-licences to qualified manufacturers who will then develop generic versions".

Aside from the 90 countries covered, language in the licence indicates that additional countries where there are no patents or patent applications may also qualify for generic versions, said Gore.

"Licencees will be required to obtain approval from WHO pre-qualification or from a stringent regulatory authority. The sales are

almost all royalty-free. Just in 10 countries, there will be a 5 percent royalty on net sales," said Gore.

CAB-LA was approved for the prevention of HIV infection by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in December 2021, but its price per vial is about \$3,700.

A new coalition to accelerate access to long-acting PrEP was also announced on Thursday. Convened by the World Health Organization (WHO), Unitaid, UNAids and The Global Fund, and with HIV prevention advocacy group AVAC as the secretariat, the coalition will develop strategies to overcome access barriers to new PrEP options, including the price in wealthier countries.

ViiV is also collaborating with Unitaid, MedAccess and donors Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and the Gates Foundation, to speed up equitable access to its product.

"New HIV prevention options now reaching the market, such as injectable cabotegravir, hold the promise to transform HIV prevention," Tenu Avafia, deputy executive director of Unitaid, said.

"But we must move far more quickly than we did with oral PrEP if we are to have a real impact on the epidemic. This new coalition being formed will prioritise the acceleration of affordable, equitable and widespread access to injectable, long-acting cabotegravir for PrEP without delay.

AVAC executive director Mitchell Warren described the agreement as "a major step forward, and we applaud ViiV Healthcare and MPP for agreeing to a voluntary licence".

"But this is just one step, and there is much more to be done. All stakeholders need to step up to accelerate access to CAB for PrEP at the lowest possible price while building a sustainable market for generics."

Community representative Jacque Wambui from Afrocab said community partners had been encouraged to see the responsiveness and engagement from global partners.

"However, we recognise this is just the first step on this path for long-acting cabotegra-

vir for PrEP. Speedy technology transfer and low-cost pricing have still not been secured. Until then, the promise of accessible, affordable CAB-LA will not be realised. Afrocab and our community partners will continue to advocate around these issues until they are resolved."

New WHO guidelines, new research

The WHO also released new guidelines for the use of CAB-LA on Thursday.

"Long-acting cabotegravir is a safe and highly effective HIV prevention tool, but isn't yet available outside study settings," said Meg Doherty, WHO director of HIV, Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections.

"We hope these new guidelines will help accelerate country efforts to start to plan and deliver CAB-LA alongside other HIV prevention options, including oral PrEP and the dapivirine vaginal ring."

Meanwhile, results from a recent study that followed 3,223 women who were using PrEP – pills and the CAB-LA injections – were also released at the media briefing.

The women, based in Botswana, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, had initially been part of a clinical trial to compare oral and injectable PrEP (CAB-LA). The trial was unblinded in November 2020 after proving that CAB-LA was 66 percent more effective than oral PrEP, but the trial participants continued to use either oral or injectable PrEP while waiting for a protocol amendment to enable all to get open-label CAB-LA.

In the year after the unblinding, three participants using CAB-LA became infected with HIV and 20 in the group using the oral pills.

"Women in sub-Saharan Africa bear a disproportionate burden of HIV and while there have been incredible efforts to expand access to oral PrEP, many women experienced social and structural barriers to daily pill-taking," said Dr Sinead Delany-Moretlwe, the trial's protocol chair and research professor at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Researchers also announced the first trans-

specific analysis of data in a study that confirmed that CAB-LA is a safe and highly effective HIV prevention option for trans women.

The study involved 570 transgender women, 58 percent of whom were using gender-affirming hormone therapy, and CAB-LA was also safe and effective for those on hormonal treatment.

Reacting to the licensing announcement, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) described it as "a welcome yet limited step given its restrictive geographical scope".

"The licence allows only up to three generic companies globally to produce and supply," said Leena Menghaney, South Asia head of the MSF Access Campaign. "It is disappointing to note that a number of developing countries with generic manufacturing capacities in Latin America and Asia are currently excluded from this licence agreement."

Health GAP executive director Asia Russell said the agreement was the result of activist pressure as "just four months ago, ViiV announced it would not pursue voluntary licensing for CAB-LA to allow generic manufacturing and accessible pricing for low- and middle-income countries.

"But generics won't reach the market for years and years. ViiV must cut the price now to one equivalent to the price of oral PrEP, and make sufficient supply available so people can actually access it," added Russell.

"This licence is not open, doesn't include tech transfer, and doesn't include all countries where it is needed. With the current direct and indirect territorial coverage included in this licensing deal, there are still far too many people left behind, including those who stand to benefit the most from this scientific advancement. Brazil is an excluded country – when gay men and other men who have sex with men and trans women participated in clinical trials that delivered the data to make CAB-LA a marketable product for ViiV."

— DM/MC

Kerry Cullinan is the Africa editor of Health Policy Watch.



LESOTHO Defence Force (LDF) members with a casket bearing the remains of Commando Corporal Lebohlang Solomon Mofoka at the army's Mejametala in Maseru on Wednesday. Commando Corporal Mofoka died in Mozambique on 22 July 2022 during a SADC mission.



LDF officers with Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro at Mejametala Airbase in Maseru.



CONSTRUCTION of the Maseru District Hospital and Eye Clinic is ongoing at the disputed site.



A FIRE broke out at Sethaleng-Sa-Mopapa in Maseru on Tuesday. The cause of the fire is unknown.

New coalition agreement signed in Nelson Mandela Bay in bid to unseat ANC-led government

Estelle Ellis

IN the first step to unseat the current coalition government in Nelson Mandela Bay, seven political parties signed an agreement on Thursday to form a new local government for the Eastern Cape's biggest metro.

The DA's leader in the Eastern Cape, Ngaba Bhanga, called the agreement historic, adding that it had been discussed for eight months. The parties are the DA, the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), the Freedom Front Plus, the Abantu Integrity Movement (AIM), the African Independent Congress (AIC), the PAC and the United Democratic Movement (UDM).

DA leader John Steenhuisen said the door was still open to the Northern Alliance, a small party that has three seats on the council, to join them.

Bhanga said the coalition agreement was based on certain principles.

"Something must be done to save Nelson Mandela Bay," he said. "This is a very exciting day."

The ANC and the DA obtained an equal number of seats (48) on the Nelson Mandela Bay City Council after the previous local government elections, with neither having 61 votes. The ANC managed to put together a coalition to govern the city, consisting of the Northern Alliance, the GOOD Party, the AIC, the UDM, the PAC, the Defenders of the People and the AIM, but after a falling-out with mayor Eugene Johnson she appeared to have stopped recognising the councillors from the Northern Alliance as coalition partners.

The Northern Alliance, GOOD and the Patriotic Alliance are not included in the new coalition deal.

Odendaal for mayor

Steenhuisen said the DA's candidate for mayor would be Retief Odendaal, who was the mayoral member committee for finance under Athol Trollip. He is a senior politician in the city and a member of the provincial legislature.

Steenhuisen said the intention



DA leader John Steenhuisen and AIM leader Khusta Jack talk before the signing of the new coalition agreement in Nelson Mandela Bay on 28 July 2022.

of the coalition was to bring hope and transparency to Nelson Mandela Bay, and while the coalition partners had different philosophies they agreed on a programme of action to put the metro on a new trajectory. "This is a city in great crisis," he added. However, he warned: "Coalitions are not easy. Nobody else is coming to save Nelson Man-

dela Bay. There is so little hope in South Africa. These coalitions are providing a silver lining."

'Decay' and 'lawlessness'

Wayne Thring of the ACDP said he hoped the new coalition will bring much-needed stability and change to the city.

The FF Plus's Corné Mulder said

the ANC had destroyed the city, and promised that a difference would be visible within six months.

Mahlubi Jafta from the AIC said they believed a coalition government should not be about the parties but about the people. "We must make a government that will be accountable."

While others were a bit more dip-

lomatic, Khusta Jack of the AIM did not mince his words.

"You will never understand the gravity of the decay, the lack of leadership and the lawlessness that prevail in this city," said Jack, who serves on Johnson's mayoral committee. "The current coalition is in a destructive mode."

As of March 16, the council had become dysfunctional and the running of the city had been taken over by officials, he said.

"We joined the coalition because we wanted to be in government. It won't be our aim to turn a blind eye to corruption. We will raise the alarm."

They would also put a stop to the transfer of officials from failing municipalities to Nelson Mandela Bay.

"Council cannot be a cash cow to be used for elections and for never-ending conferences."

It was the coalition's aim to revive the metro's economy. "We are going to build a great future here," he said, adding: "I choose to hope. I love this city. We are going to get it right."

'Not a DA-led coalition'

The UDM's Luxolo Namette said they were pledging their unwavering support to the new coalition and were fully committed to it.

"We will do everything to ensure that the coalition will become sustainable," he said. "This is not a DA-led coalition. We are here for service delivery."

The PAC's Sandla Goqwana said their goal was to serve the people of Nelson Mandela Bay.

"Its administration is in shambles," he said. "We don't want to associate ourselves with any party-political agendas. We will support stability in the metro and service delivery."

On Wednesday afternoon the parties were drawing up a petition, for which they need 61 signatures to call a special council meeting where a motion of no confidence in Johnson will be voted on.

Steenhuisen said they hoped to proceed as soon as possible.

— DM/MC

How South Africa benefits from BRICS' New Development Bank's renewable energy funding

CAPE TOWN — In the light of Cyril Ramaphosa's new measures to combat South Africa's energy crisis, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) looked at how BRICS' New Development Bank is channelling its funding.

On Monday, Ramaphosa announced how he plans to stabilise the energy crisis that forced the country into Stage 6 earlier this month. The president admitted the power utility was "unreliable and vulnerable" and said the new measures allows Eskom to procure power from private entities such as shopping malls, mines and paper mills, as well as purchasing from neighbouring countries in the SADC region.

Meanwhile, the HSRC's Krish Chetty, in partnership with Nelson Mandela University, the University of Venda, and the South African BRICS Think Tank, hosted a webinar on Tuesday to share ideas and strategies on renewable energy and other green infrastructure projects.

Looking into the financing of renewable energy, Chetty noted that the BRICS New Development Bank has been investing in clean energy projects since 2016, with the respective heads of state urging partners to turn to the New

Development Bank more often in order to source financing.

"We also have the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism, which was introduced in 2017," said Chetty.

"And this is to allow BRICS to extend lanes of credit to each other in local currency and limiting their exposure to the US Dollar," he said.

Chetty added that South Africa and China have so far been the leading beneficiaries in channelling finances from the New Development Bank with respect to clean energy. The bank has 14 different infrastructure projects, which has a total of over \$4 billion (R67.6 billion), with China having received \$1.4 billion and South Africa \$1.43 billion.

"It's important to note that BRICS also classifies clean coal, nuclear energy and gas as clean energy sources," said Chetty.

"China's big projects have been in gas generation, offshore wind and solar; while South Africa has used the funds for carbon extraction, for energy storage as well as generating and transmitting energy," he said.

— IOL



CYRIL Ramaphosa.

Joseph Siegle

Why Russia is on a charm offensive in Africa

... the reasons aren't pretty

RUSSIA is the source of less than 1 percent of the foreign direct investment into Africa. Substantively, then, Russia brings little to the continent. But the fact that Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is making a high-profile trip to Africa in the throes of Russia's war on Ukraine reveals how much Russia needs Africa.

A priority for Lavrov's trip to Egypt, the Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Ethiopia is to show that Russia is not isolated internationally, despite expansive western sanctions. The objective is to portray Russia as an unencumbered Great Power that maintains allies around the globe with whom it can conduct business as usual.

Russia is also vying to normalise an international order where might makes right. And democracy and respect for human rights are optional.

Lavrov's Africa trip is significant, accordingly, for Russia's geostrategic posturing. Russian messaging recasts Russia's imperialistic land grab in Ukraine as a broader East-West ideological struggle. To the extent that Moscow succeeds in this framing, few African countries will criticise it.

This, in part, explains why 25 of Africa's 54 states abstained or did not vote to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine during the UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/1 in March. This ambivalent response was in stark contrast to the overwhelming condemnation of Russia's aggression from every other region of the world.

Lavrov can also be expected to portray the recent Ukrainian-Russian deal to unblock more than 20 million metric tonnes of Ukrainian grain for export as a humanitarian gesture by Moscow. This, even though it was Russia's invasion and blockade of Ukrainian ports that has prevented the grain from reaching international markets. Russia's bombing of the Ukrainian port of Odessa the day after the agreement was signed suggests that Moscow will continue to try to weaponise the food crisis. All while blaming the west.

Egypt and Ethiopia — key countries on Lavrov's itinerary — have been particularly hard hit by this disruption in food supply. The Russian blockade has caused global grain prices to double this year, creating intense political and social strains throughout Africa.

What African hosts gain

Focusing on ideological themes helps obscure how modest Russia's official economic and diplomatic investments in Africa are.

This begs the question of what African leaders gain from hosting Lavrov at a time when Russia is under severe criticism for its unprovoked aggression and the destabilisation of global food, fuel, and fertiliser markets. The



PUTIN and Lavrov are intent on growing Russia's African influence.

short answer is political support.

Russia's expanding influence in Africa in recent years is mostly a result of Moscow's use of unofficial means — deploying mercenaries, disinformation campaigns, arms for resources deals, and trafficking of precious metals.

These low-cost, high impact tools are typically employed in support of isolated African leaders with dubious legitimacy. Russian backing of beleaguered leaders in Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and Sudan has been vital to keeping these actors in power.

Russia's asymmetric approach to gaining

influence in Africa is also notable in that these "partnerships" are with the individual leaders Moscow is propping up — and not with the broader public. It's about elite co-option more than traditional bilateral cooperation.

Understanding these motivations brings Lavrov's trip and itinerary into sharper focus.

Egypt's President Abdel al Sisi is a key ally in Russia's efforts to install a proxy government in Libya. This would enable Russia to establish an enduring naval presence in the southern Mediterranean and tap Libyan oil reserves. Sisi has also been a Russian partner in attempting to derail the democratic transi-

tions in Sudan and Tunisia.

Russia, moreover, is a major arms supplier for Egypt. A \$25 billion Russian-financed loan for Russian atomic energy company Rosatom, to construct the Dabaa nuclear power plant in Cairo, makes little economic sense. But it does provide a potential windfall for cronies of Sisi and Putin. And it is a means for Russia to gain further leverage over Sisi.

Lavrov's trip to Uganda provides political cover for the increasingly repressive and erratic regime of President Yoweri Museveni as it attempts to orchestrate a hereditary succession to Museveni's son, Muhoozi Kainerugaba.

Russia's driving interest in Uganda is to pull another historically western-leaning African country into Moscow's orbit. For Museveni, drawing closer to Russia sends a none-too-subtle message that he will move further towards Moscow if the west is too critical of his deteriorating human rights and democratisation record.

Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed is also fending off fierce international criticism for Ethiopia's alleged human rights abuses in Tigray and subsequent obstacles hampering the humanitarian response in the region. Russia's thwarting of UN Security Council resolutions drawing attention to the Tigray conflict and humanitarian crisis have been well appreciated in Addis.

Ethiopia has long maintained an independent foreign policy. But Addis Ababa is set to host the next Russia-Africa summit meeting later this year. The event would provide a high-profile platform to reinforce Moscow's message that it remains welcome on the global stage.

While in Addis Ababa, Lavrov can be expected to highlight Russia's close ties with the African Union. Fear of annoying Russia led the regional body to repeatedly put off a virtual meeting with Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. When the meeting was finally (and quietly) held in July, only four African heads of state tuned in.

— The Conversation

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Africa's free trade area offers promise for cities — but only if there's investment

Astrid R.N. Haas

THE African Continental Free Trade Area came into operation on 1 January 2021. This is a considerable achievement. The free trade area is now the world's single largest market for goods and services, when measured by number of countries, after the World Trade Organisation. It is also the largest in terms of geographic area and population size.

If implemented as foreseen by the agreement, the free trade area will unlock significant growth for the African continent. The World Bank has estimated that by 2035, trade between African countries could expand by 81 percent, boosting output by US\$450 billion, raising wages by 10 percent, particularly benefiting women, and lifting 30 million people out of extreme poverty.

These expectations, based on research into the links between trade and economic growth, have generated excitement and political impetus around getting the free trade area working.

Less well understood, however, is the fact that for the agreement to fulfil its promises, the continent's cities are key. They are hubs for production and consumption, and will

become significantly more so. But their current set-up, lacking the necessary infrastructure and services, means most of Africa's cities are not yet ready to benefit from and support the free trade area. This will require substantially greater investments in the continent's cities.

This link between urbanisation and trade is analysed in the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's recently launched publication, *Cities: Gateways for Africa's Regional Economic Integration*.

What cities bring to the party

The importance of cities in unlocking the benefits of the free trade area is premised on three well established advantages of the economic density that cities can provide.

Firstly, firms, which are the primary vehicles for producing goods for export, prefer to be in cities. There, they are closer to a larger pool of labour and to each other. This proximity enables them to specialise but still have access to inputs for their production processes from other firms. They can also learn from each other, which spurs innovation.

Secondly, cities are the physical locations from which most trade

takes place. Cities provide the main transport links, including road junctions, ports and airports.

Think of the Port of Mombasa, which serves not only Kenya, but also Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. It is also difficult to think of a major city that is not served by an airport.

Cities also provide their own internal markets. Rapid urbanisation, with an estimated 900 million people set to enter African cities in the next 30 years, creates a large upcoming consumer pool. This is the third advantage of density.

Particularly in the African context, it is not only the number of consumers that will make the difference. As evidence shows, when people move to cities, their diets change as well. For example, there is a greater demand for goods with higher value addition, such as refined grains and processed foods. This is an opportunity for Africa's farmers to gain, too, as this value addition will fetch a higher price.

Not yet fit for purpose

Substantial investments in infrastructure are needed for cities to be able to unlock the benefits of the

free trade area.

Most notable is the paucity of paved roads. Currently only an estimated 800,000km out of 2.8 million km of the continent's roads are paved. This statistic is critical because an estimated 80 percent-90 percent of African trade takes place by road.

This raises the costs of African trade. For example, while it costs about US\$2,000 to ship a container from China to the port in Beira, Mozambique, it costs more than double that amount, namely US\$5000, to move it 500km further inland to Malawi.

This lack of infrastructure is a hindrance in cities too. In particular, according to the UN Economic Commission for Africa report, the cities that should drive the largest portion of trade and reap relatively larger benefits from the free trade agreement's provisions are small to medium size ones, especially those located close to borders.

These are also the cities that have had comparatively less investment to date. Without basic infrastructure, they will not attract firms — the drivers of production, value addition and export.

Whatever happens in implementing the free trade area, rapid

urbanisation will continue across Africa. Consumption preferences of the continent's population will shift. If African firms can't meet these demands, imports from other regions of the world will do so.

Under this scenario, other countries will disproportionately gain from Africa's new urban consumer population.

Investing in cities

The current political support for the free trade agreement is significant, with all but one African country having signed the deal and 43 countries already having ratified it. Harnessing the combined effect of trade and urbanisation could positively transform the African continent's economy. This will require not only the signing of policies but their implementation.

To date, only Egypt, Ghana and South Africa have readjusted their national regimes to implement the customs rules under the agreement. Well-managed urbanisation is still not a primary policy focus in many countries.

The result is that populations are settling in cities quicker than planning and investments are happening. Rather than benefiting from well-managed density, major African cities are characterised by the proliferation of slums and congestion. On top of this, substandard infrastructure is deterring large firms.

— The Conversation

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Brooks Spector

Russia is sacrificing its economy and military for Putin's dream of empire

PERHAPS the right metaphor for the consequences of this ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia are Charlie Brown's frustrations when Lucy pulls the football away from him just before he can kick it. Or, maybe, it is the African story of the frog and scorpion who are about to cross a river, when, at the midpoint, the scorpion stings the frog. The scorpion says he couldn't help it because "it is my nature". Of course, the frog dies from the poison and the scorpion drowns because he cannot swim.

As we look on at the ongoing horrors of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as city after city is pummeled by cruise missiles and rockets, we begin to wonder if the pursuit of this war is drawing on something in Russia's way of warfare. (Perhaps I am being infected by the imagery of Anthony Beevor's new book about the Russian Revolution and subsequent civil war with its devastation and horror as the fighting ground on and on, but this Russian war also seems as if it is unlikely to end any time soon.)

Nevertheless, amazingly, in the midst of all the gloom and devastation, one faint ray of sunshine broke through last week. A Turkish/UN-brokered deal was reached that would allow shipments of grain from Ukrainian ports like Odesa to feed an increasingly hungry world.

In more peaceful times, Ukrainian exports of grain and edible oils have been major contributors to global food stocks as a bounty from the extraordinarily fertile Ukrainian soil. As a result, Ukraine's grain has also been crucial for various UN emergency relief efforts — especially for countries in the Middle East and Africa.

Meanwhile, however, the Russian invasion has already made many Ukrainian Black Sea ports unusable for grain exports, even if Russian troops had not yet been able to reach the major city and port of Odesa.

To ward off possible seaborne Russian attacks, the Ukrainians had sown mines in the seaward approaches to its ports; Russian naval patrols (now minus its sunken flagship, the Moskva) have carried out their blockade of Ukraine's ports; Russian forces carried out landings (and now have lost their foothold) on the strategically situated Snake Island, and they have continued to launch barrages of cruise missiles and other aerial weaponry on Ukrainian coastal cities — as well as many other Ukrainian targets.

Many of these attacks seemed to have been in lieu of the Russian ability to carry out sustained military operations much beyond a creeping advance through the two Donbas provinces in the easternmost part of the country.

War of attrition

Western military strategists and analysts now seem to feel that with the Russian advance on Kyiv stymied, and with some astonishing losses of manpower and materiel by the Russians, the invasion has turned from being a war of annihilation (of the Ukrainian forces) to one of mutual attrition.

In that version of events, outcomes become more dependent on troop (and civilian) morale; on the ability of the respective armies to bring to bear manpower and the best possible weapons against their opponent, and on the ability of the military's leadership to adapt flexibly to the evolving fighting conditions.

Moreover, the continuing flow of hi-tech weaponry to Ukrainian forces from the West — and the Ukrainians' evident ability to make increasingly effective use of such weapons — may mean the two sides are now ever more evenly matched, despite the disparities in population and GDP.

Relative equality on the battlefield does not bode well for an invading force.

In a contest of evenly matched forces, the advantage may go to the side defending its homeland and people — as long as military and civilian morale does not break. Until now, at least as far as Ukraine is concerned, it has not.

By contrast, there are persistent rumours of Russian soldiers engaged in the kinds of behaviour against orders and their officers that is typical in history when an army's personnel have little or no idea why they are in that fight (think of the Americans in Vietnam). This is despite the Russian president's public importuning of his military to press on until final victory — whatever that may look like.

While deadly ground fighting continues on fronts in the south and east, increasingly the major effort by the Russians now largely seems to comprise shock aerial bombardments that have only tenuous connections to military or strategic objectives. Schools,



RUSSIAN Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu (left) and Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar shake hands at a meeting on the sidelines of the signing ceremony of the grain shipment agreement between Turkey, the UN, Russia and Ukraine after their meeting in Istanbul on 22 July 2022.

apartment buildings, hospitals, theatres, passenger rail terminals and shopping malls do not qualify as military targets, save as a way to terrorise a civilian population.

Given the foregoing, it has seemed there was only a small likelihood of any let-up in the invasion, and that the war would continue until either the Russians gave up on their primary goal of reducing the core of Ukraine to a sullen, 21st-century vassal state, and with significant chunks of the nation absorbed outright into Russia, and in the consolidation of the twilight circumstances of those "independent" republics in the Donbas.

Alternatively, there remains the possibility the Ukrainians might manage to fight the Russians to enough of a draw that Moscow simply declared its objectives had been achieved, and then withdrew to its status quo ante borders, save for the Donbas and Crimea and let an acrimonious peace negotiation settle things.

Grain agreement

And then, mirabile dictu, weeks of patient diplomatic effort seemed to pay off as the Turkish government and the UN secretary-general brokered an agreement between Russia and Ukraine to establish safe shipping corridors to bring Ukrainian grain to a waiting world. On 22 July, the agreement was signed, even though it clearly was not sealed with a kiss — let alone a handshake or even a wan, tight smile — between the combatants.

The agreement would be closely monitored by Turkey and the UN and would obviously require the blockading Russian ships to permit grain bulk freighters to transit the corridors, as well as provision of information from Ukraine about those minefields to allow ships to make those transits safely.

Turkey obviously has a major role in all of this, because incoming and departing ships must transit the narrow Dardanelles and Bosphorus waterways dividing European and Asiatic Turkey, and connecting the Black Sea to the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas — as they head to the rest of the globe.

But ship owners and operators must be prepared for sailing through what effectively will remain a war zone. There would clearly be the possibility of devastating mistakes as a result of unmoored, drifting mines, or mistaken identification of ships and their cargoes, as the agreement would only permit grain-bearing vessels to use the water corridors.

If not a major move towards ending the conflict, still, this minor triumph had seemed unachievable just a few weeks earlier. Just prior to the announcement, The Economist had, in pointing out likely difficulties, noted, "the proposed deal would create two 'co-ordination centres' staffed by officials from Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and the UN. They would inspect and oversee the passage of cargo ships in and out of Ukrainian ports.

The centres would be in Istanbul and perhaps in Odesa, which raises the question of who would represent Russia there. Another sticking point is Ukraine's demand for a commitment that Russia stop attacking its ports.

Ukraine will open only narrow sea corridors, to prevent a Russian attack from the sea.

Questions remain

Many questions remain: who would do the de-mining; how much repair do the ports require; will shipping firms trust assurances that they will be safe, and will Ukrainian cargo need to be trans-shipped in Istanbul?

"Markiyam Dmitrasyevych, Ukraine's deputy agriculture minister, says about 18m tonnes of grain await export. In the first four months of the war, Ukraine shifted 5.2m tonnes — roughly the amount it used to ship in just a month — via alternative routes, mainly through ports on the Danube river but also by rail and road.

"A Russian missile damaged a bridge at Zatoka on July 20th, which may curb exports further. With 60m tonnes expected from this autumn's harvest, Mr Dmitrasyevych says Ukraine will lack storage for 15 million-18m tonnes. If the Black Sea ports remain closed, much food will be left to rot.

"Meanwhile, Ukraine accuses Russia of stealing grain from land it occupies; it also chides Turkey for allowing Russia to ship the cargo through the Bosphorus or sell it in Turkey."

Nevertheless, such a vast amount of grain released to a hungry world would be no small thing.

Missile strikes

But almost as soon as the accord was announced, several Russian missiles slammed into Odesa port facilities, in what must be seen as a violation of the just-signed agreement. (There was apparently no serious damage and, although there were injuries, there were no fatalities — either by design or luck on the part of those who fired the rockets.)

But just imagine the impact of further Russian missile strikes in the near future, once grain shipments actually began, on a third country's bulk carrier loaded with grain or edible oil, and crew casualties from such an attack.

Then there would be an unwillingness of ship owners and operators to carry shipments of Ukrainian crops. The end of grain shipments would be the likely outcome.

After the two blasts, international criticism was fierce.

The UN spokesperson noted, "The Secretary-General (António Guterres) unequivocally condemns reported strikes today in the Ukrainian port of Odesa. Yesterday, all parties made clear commitments on the global stage to ensure the safe movement of Ukrainian grain and related products to global markets. These products are desperately needed to address the global food crisis and ease the suffering of millions of people in need around the globe."

Not surprisingly, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky added, "This proves only one thing: no matter what Russia says and promises, it will find ways not to implement it (the grain deal)."

The Russians had initially declined to speak

about the missile strikes at all, choosing only to outline progress in their invasion, but their foreign ministry spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, flying a flag of some real whataboutism, eventually responded to the UN statement, saying, "It is awful that UN Secretary-General António Guterres does not 'unequivocally' condemn also the Kyiv regime's killing of children in Donbas."

Admission of guilt

By Sunday, however, Russia admitted to the attacks, but insisted they were designed to destroy a ship filled with Western weapons. (Given the Russian blockade, one wonders how such a ship managed both to violate Turkish sailing controls and to cruise through the Black Sea to Odesa.)

Meanwhile, in an effort to steady a now-rocking ship of the agreement they had helped broker, the Turkish defence minister said, "they (Ukrainian officials) stated that one of the missile attacks hit one of the silos there, and the other one fell in an area close to the silo, but there was no problem in the loading capacity and capability of the docks, which is important, and that the activities there can continue."

The Turkish minister added, "the Russians told us that they had absolutely nothing to do with this attack, and that they were examining the issue very closely and in detail. The fact that such an incident took place right after the agreement we made yesterday regarding the grain shipment really worried us." The Russians first told a porky — and then a second one, it seems.

Meanwhile, German, American, British and EU spokespersons were less restrained in their condemnations of the missile attacks, calling them "cowardly" and "outrageous", among the gentler terms they used. At this point, it is still not clear when grain shipments will actually commence moving through those safe corridors in the Black Sea.

Even if shipments do begin, those two missile strikes could easily be read as a heads-up that shipments could be interrupted at will if the Russians chose to do so. Should that happen, it would — at least potentially — put the UN and many other nations in the position of imploring Ukraine to bend a knee towards Russian positions. (Observant readers may also recall hand-wringing over the recent, brief interruption in gas shipments to Germany from Russia, and concerns about whether gas transmission would even continue.)

And so here we are. Fighting continues even as Ukrainian forces are being bolstered with some of the best weapons available in Western arsenals; and Russian troops are largely — but not totally — stalemated, even as their aerial assault on civilian targets continues unabated.

Ring of sanctions

While Russia has put a brave face on its economic circumstances from the tightening ring of sanctions, the reality is that not all is well in Vladimir Putin's kingdom.

Yale University management scholars Jeffrey Sonnenfeld and Steven Tian wrote in Foreign Policy on 22 July, "Five months into the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there remains a startling lack of understanding by many Western policymakers and commentators of the economic dimensions of President Vladimir Putin's invasion and what it has meant for Russia's economic positioning both domestically and globally.

"Far from being ineffective or disappointing, as many have argued, international sanctions and voluntary business retreats have exerted a devastating effect over Russia's economy. The deteriorating economy has served as a powerful if underappreciated complement to the deteriorating political landscape facing Putin.

"That these misunderstandings persist is not entirely surprising given the lack of available economic data. In fact, many of the excessively sanguine Russian economic analyses, forecasts, and projections that have proliferated in recent months share a crucial methodological flaw: these analyses draw most, if not all, of their underlying evidence from periodic economic releases by the Russian government itself. Numbers released by the Kremlin have long been held to be largely if not always credible, but there are certain problems. — DM

What is a labour shortage?



SOME industries have a more challenging time recruiting and retaining employees than others.

Alison Doyle

WHEN a labour shortage occurs, it means that employers are having a difficult time recruiting qualified applicants for available job openings. There aren't enough candidates to fill the roles they are hiring for, and the few available candidates are hard to find.

However, labour shortages can be more complicated. Some jobs are harder to fill, and some industries have a more challenging time recruiting and retaining employees than others.

Here's what you need to know about labour shortages, the industries and occupations with the highest demand for workers, and how a labour shortage can benefit your career.

Definition and example of a labour shortage

When the demand for workers for a particular occupation is greater than the supply of workers who are qualified, available, and willing to do that job, there is a labour shortage. That shortage is based on supply and demand — are there enough workers to meet an organisation's hiring needs? If not, there is a labour shortage.

During a labour shortage, the labour pool is low, recruiting qualified workers is difficult, filling open positions takes longer, and the retention rate is poor. Employers may need to pay higher wages and improve benefit packages to attract and retain employees.

- Alternate name: manpower shortage, occupational shortage

An example of a sector experiencing a labour shortage is nursing. Investment and asset management firm Mercer's 2021 Healthcare Labour Market report explains that there are over 3 million registered nurses in the U.S.

The demand for nurses is expected to increase by 5 percent over the next five years, and 1.1 million nurses are predicted to retire or change careers. If this trend holds, it could leave a shortfall of about 100,000 nurses in more than half of the states in the U.S.

Types of labour shortages

Labour shortages aren't simply based on the number of jobs compared to the number of workers. It's complicated because of

the different factors that impact hiring. Job applicants' training and experience level, the qualifications the employer needs in an ideal candidate, and the wages an employer is willing to pay all factor into whether there is a labour shortage in a particular industry or occupation.

The basic types of labour shortages include:

- Quantity of people: There can be a labour shortage when there aren't enough qualified applicants to fill an organization's needs.
- Quality of job candidates: When an employer has difficulty finding employees with the qualifications they need, there also can be a labour shortage.

Reasons for labour shortages

Labour shortages are caused by a combination of factors, including:

- An aging workforce
- Early retirement
- Health concerns
- Workers leaving the labour market
- A decline of blue-collar workers
- Limits on immigration
- People opting for self-employment
- Workers quitting their jobs
- Higher demand for information technology (IT) services

One cause of a labour shortage is employees quitting at high rates while demand for workers remains high. In September 2021, for example, 4.4 million U.S. workers quit their jobs — the highest on record — while job openings remained steady at 10.4 million.

Labour shortages can also impact industries with higher-than-average quit rates. For instance, the Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) reported that 867,000 food services workers quit their jobs in August 2021.

This quit rate of 6.6 percent was more than double the national average of 2.9 percent.

Employers in hard-hit sectors often offer hiring incentives and increase pay to attract and keep workers.

Industries and occupations with labour shortages

A Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) survey found that 73 percent of employers are experiencing a decrease in applications for jobs that are hard to fill.

The hardest jobs to hire for, according to SHRM, include hourly, entry-level, and mid-level nonmanagerial positions, especially in sectors such as manufacturing, hospitality, food service, and health care.

Meanwhile, non-profit research firm The Conference Board reports that recruiting and retention of blue-collar and manual services workers is challenging for employers, and there is also a tight labour market for tech employees.

Labour shortages vs. Job openings

Labour shortages are impacting some industries more than others. Even though there is a shortage of workers in some sectors, overall, there are fewer jobs than there were before the pandemic.

The BLS reports that as of October 2021, U.S. employment is still down by nearly 4 million workers compared to pre-pandemic levels in February 2020.

Labour shortages vs. Unemployment

While the job market has fewer jobs than in prior years, there are still more job openings than there are unemployed workers.

In April 2020, there were five unemployed workers for every available job. By September 2021, however, there was less than one (0.7) worker per job opening.

In that same month, there were nearly 7.7 million unemployed people, 10.4 million job openings, and 6.5 million new hires. Over the 12 months ending in September 2021, there

was a net employment gain of 5.6 million jobs.

As the job market continues to grow, the likelihood of labour shortages in impacted industries will continue to increase. To compete, employers are offering sign-on bonuses, higher salaries, and expanded benefits to attract candidates.

How a labour shortage can benefit your career

If you're in the job market or considering a career change, a labour shortage could potentially benefit your career — and your pay check. It can be easier to get hired in a tight labour market because employers may lower hiring requirements and raise wages to attract applicants.

An SHRM employer survey reports that 57 percent of employers are offering referral bonuses, 55 percent are hiring external or temporary workers, 44 percent are upskilling and reskilling staff, and 43 percent are boosting pay.

In addition, according to ADP's Q3 2021 Workforce Vitality Report, there was an average salary increase of 6.6 percent for workers who switched jobs compared to 2.5 percent for entry-level jobs and 4.8 percent for existing employee salary increases.

Some ways a labour shortage can benefit job seekers and career changers include:

- Increasing your chances of getting hired because employers are lowering the job qualifications for applicants for some positions
 - Getting hired faster as employers are shortening the recruiting process to onboard new employees quickly
 - Earning more money when employers offer hiring bonuses, retention bonuses, and increased pay to attract applicants
 - Gaining new skills and opportunities for advancement as organisations increase on-the-job reskilling and upskilling programs
- The Balance Career

McCarthy joins Man Utd coaching staff

MANCHESTER United have strengthened Erik ten Hag's backroom staff by bringing in former South Africa striker Benni McCarthy as a first-team coach. McCarthy has been in talks with United about taking up a role at Old Trafford all week — and his appointment has now been confirmed by the club.

The much-travelled 44-year-old stepped down as coach of Durban-based AmaZulu in March after helping them qualify for the CAF Champions League.

McCarthy is a boyhood United fan who once scored two goals that famously helped Jose Mourinho's Porto dump Sir Alex Ferguson out of the Champions League in 2004.

He is a close friend of Ten Hag's assistant Mitchell van der Gaag and will form part of a backroom team that also includes former England boss Steve McClaren, with the South African focusing on work with United's forwards.

McCarthy will bring a wealth of top-level experience that includes a six-year spell in the Premier League with Blackburn and West Ham.

He also has an Ajax background after joining the Dutch club in 1997 and helping them win the Eredivisie title and two domestic cups.

McCarthy then spent four years in Spain with Celta Vigo before moving to Portugal with Porto - where he became a key part of Mourinho's all-conquering side.

The Cape Town-born striker scored twice in the 2-1 Champions League victory over United in the Estadio do Dragao.

The win set-up a memorable Old Trafford showdown that ended with Mourinho dancing along the touchline in celebration after his team had knocked the Reds out thanks to a last-minute equaliser by Costinha after McCarthy's free-kick had been fumbled by keeper Tim Howard.

McCarthy recalled: "I support Man United and always wanted to play for them.

"I loved players like Mark Hughes, Andy Cole and Ryan Giggs. So I was heartbroken to score twice.

"My dream was to score once at Old Trafford - not to knock United out.

"I got hammered by Jose Mourinho after the game because I wasn't very happy.

"He told me that if I didn't cheer up, I'd never play in his team again."

Porto went on to win the Champions League and the Portuguese title that season — and Mourinho departed to Chelsea. — Mirror



BENNI McCarthy.

Jesus, Saka run riot as Arsenal destroy Sevilla



GABRIEL Jesus.

ARSENAL plundered four goals in 10 minutes as they pummelled Sevilla to claim the Emirates Cup yesterday afternoon and heighten anticipation for the

fast-approaching Premier League season.

Bukayo Saka opened the scoring in the 10th minute with a cool penalty he won after a clumsy shove in the back from Karim Rekik,

with Martin Odegaard instrumental in creating the chance. Gabriel Jesus doubled the lead just three minutes later with a poacher's finish from close range after fine work from Gabriel Martinelli and Granit Xhaka.

The Gunners all but put the game to bed with just a quarter of an hour on the clock as Jesus latched onto a whipped cross from Martinelli to poke beyond goalkeeper Bono and send the Emirates wild. Adding to Arsenal's delight and Sevilla's woe, Saka pounced on some dire passing by the visiting defence to grab his second with 19 minutes played.

Although the Gunners were kept at bay throughout most of the second half, Jesus capitalised on a loose ball in the area to complete his hat-trick with just under 15 minutes remaining. Martinelli then registered another assist with an unselfish pass from Xhaka's through-ball to tee up substitute Eddie Nketiah and make it six.

The result means Mikel Arteta's side have won six of their seven pre-season outings, with a 2-1 defeat by Brentford in a behind-closed-doors fixture the only blemish on their excellent record.

Here are five talking points from a brilliant afternoon for Arsenal:

Kounde's first day as a Barcelona player
Having already notched four goals in his first pre-season as an Arsenal player, Gabriel Jesus lit up the Emirates with another two-goal display against Sevilla. The Brazilian looks every bit the No. 9 the Gunners were crying out for last season and he may well be the man to inspire a charge towards Champions League qualification this campaign.

He showed his knack for being in the right place at the right time to score his first and produced a fine bit of movement to combine with Gabriel Martinelli to add his second and Arsenal's third. Jesus completed his hat-trick in the 77th minute with another opportunistic strike, again popping up in the box to pounce on a loose ball.

Mikel Arteta could not have hoped for more from Jesus on his first Gunners appearance at the Emirates, and the £45million fee paid to Manchester City may well prove to be a bargain once the season proper gets underway.

Martin Odegaard was unveiled as Arsenal's new captain ahead of the Emirates Cup clash, meaning he now skips his country, Norway, as well as his club. The playmaker may only be 23 but he continues to show maturity and leadership qualities beyond his

years, making him the obvious successor to Alexandre Lacazette and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang.

Against Sevilla, Odegaard lined up in his regular No. 10 role and was typically dynamic in midfield. He had a crucial role in Bukayo Saka's opener, playing his teammate through with a delightful clipped pass before the Englishman was bundled to the ground.

The new Gunners captain will have been delighted by the frenzied intensity with which his teammates went about their business as they relentlessly harried Sevilla and forced the visitors into a glut of errors.

While the headlines will focus on Arsenal's rampaging forwards, Mikel Arteta's defence also played its part in the thoroughly-dominant victory over Sevilla. The Gunners manager deployed a trio of centre-backs against the Spanish club, with William Saliba flanked by Benjamin White to his right and Gabriel to his left.

Arsenal were rarely troubled despite the attacking talent on show for Sevilla, while the back-three system allowed Bukayo Saka and Oleksandr Zinchenko to excel in the wing-back roles. Although Arteta largely used a four-man defence last season, he may be wondering whether the formation he used against the La Liga side may be the one which gets the best out of his first-choice XI.

How impressive was this victory?

While fans are often reminded not to get carried away by pre-season results, this was by no means a weak Sevilla team which Arsenal put to the sword. Of course, Julen Lopetegui has seen his defence torn apart during the transfer window thanks to Diego Costa and Jules Kounde joining Aston Villa and Barcelona respectively.

But there were plenty of household names on show for the visitors, including Jesus Navas, Ivan Rakitic, Erik Lamela — the former Tottenham winger was booed with every touch — and Youssef En-Nesyri. When the team sheets were released, few could have envisaged Arsenal running away with the game as they did, with many suspecting the Emirates Cup would produce a hard-fought fixture.

As it happens, the remarkable scoreline bore testament to Arsenal's constant pressing and desire to thrill their fans, proving there is a burning desire to write the wrongs of last season's late collapse in pursuit of a top-four finish.

— The Guardian

Leemisa Thuseho

Lesotho suspended from World Netball

WORLD Netball has suspended the Lesotho Netball Association (LNA) for failing to pay its annual subscription.

The £650 (M13 082) subscription was initially supposed to have been paid in January this year. Although the deadline was moved to March, Lesotho still failed to pay.

And now World Netball has written to the association informing it of the suspension.

The association is also yet to pay about \$200 (M3352) and \$300 (M5024) affiliation fees to the Confederation of Southern Africa Netball Associations (COSANA) and African Netball (AN) respectively. The fees were also supposed to be paid in January 2022.

LNA president, 'Mamots'abi Lekhabunyane, confirmed the development to Lesotho Times this week.

"It is true that we haven't subscribed with our international mother bodies," Lekhabunyane said.

"We were supposed to have done so by end of January this year. However, World Netball postponed its deadline to March but unfortunately, we missed that deadline too. We are yet to subscribe even now. World Netball wrote to us saying we were being suspended for failing to pay our affiliation fees."

According to Lekhabunyane, LNA's compliance issues are handled by the secretary general, Lineo Palime. However, she said Palime failed to request the funds from the Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission (LSRC). The LSRC normally helps national federations in paying their international affiliation fees.

The status quo means that Lesotho's participation at international competitions is now in doubt. Currently, the women's national team is hard at work preparing for the 2023 Netball World Cup qualifiers to be held in South Africa next month. The latest development may scuttle all the plans.

But Lekhabunyane is hopeful that before the qualifiers start, they would have paid the fees.

"In this remaining time, I think the office of the secretary will do the



Lesotho's participation at international competitions is now in doubt after the country failed to pay its annual affiliation fees to World Netball.

requisition and LSRC will eventually help us for the team to partake in the qualifiers," Lekhabunyane said.

In May 2022, she said she attempted to chip in and help the secretary resolve pending issues, but the committee said that would be tantamount to interference.

"To some, it appeared as if my attempt to assist was tantamount to usurping the secretary's powers."

On her part, Palime admitted there was a delay in requesting the fees from the LSRC.

She however, said she was new in office, and she did not get ori-

entation about the office upon her arrival.

Palime took office after former secretary general, Abiel Lekulo, resigned early this year.

"It is true we are behind, but when I took the office were already behind with the payments. Since I was new in the office, I didn't get

any orientation or assistance on how to go about the work in that office. I was forced to learn things by myself along the way, and that made things difficult," Palime said.

The request for the funds has since been presented to the LSRC, she said.

AUSC workers still unpaid



Sport ministry information officer, Retšelisitsoe Matsepe

Moorosi Tsiane

FOURTEEN African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 Games volunteers who were employed at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) games' village are yet to get their allowances from the Gender, Youth, Sport and Recreation ministry.

The volunteers are owed for the work they did before and during the Maseru edition of the games held in Maseru in December 2021.

They had been promised M1500 monthly, but the cash-strapped ministry is yet to pay them.

The volunteers' contracts ran from August to December 2021. They were responsible for different jobs that include security and maintenance of the facilities.

However, the broke Sport ministry is now failing to settle their dues nine months after the end of their contracts.

One of the volunteers, Liteboho Nono, said of all the volunteers who worked in different jurisdictions, the people who worked at the NUL were the only ones who were yet to be paid.

Despite making countless follow-ups, they had been taken from pillar to post.

"We had contracts with the Sport ministry from August until December when the games ended," Nono said.

"The agreement was that we

would get M1500 monthly, but we have never received the money even up to now.

"The sad thing is that only our cluster is yet to be paid. All 14 of us are yet to be paid."

Their latest attempt to chase the payments was last week when Sport ministry official, Nkomane Mosola, told them the government did not have money.

"We met Nkomane Masola at the minister's office. He tried to follow-up, but he also told us that the ministry didn't have funds.

"However, we are unhappy because only our group is yet to be paid. If the ministry didn't have money, how did it manage to pay the others? Our cluster worked the hardest because we worked day and night to ensure the safety of the athletes."

Sport ministry information officer, Retšelisitsoe Matsepe, confirmed that the volunteers were yet to be paid. He said their requisition had been submitted to the Finance ministry and would be paid once the money was availed.

"There is no money and unfortunately now, I can't even say when they will be paid. We requested money from the Finance ministry and only when we receive the money can we pay them.

"They are not being discriminated against. It is just unfortunate that theirs was the last batch," Matsepe said.

LSRC to appoint new CEO

Leemisa Thuseho

GENDER, Youth, Sport and Recreation ministry staffer, Thabo Tsiki, will soon be appointed the new substantive CEO of the Lesotho Sport and Recreation Commission (LSRC).

This after the resignation of acting CEO, Teboho Malataliana, who has been in the post since November 2019.

Malataliana, who held the fort after the resignation of former CEO, Sechaba Mokhameleli, in October 2019, will revert to his old post as the Commission's operations manager.

LSRC president, Litšitso Motšeremeli, confirmed that the Commission was on the verge of hiring Tsiki.

He was however, reluctant to say when Tsiki would be officially announced as new CEO.

"It is true Malataliana has resigned, and we will now engage Tsiki although information regarding his appointment would be divulged in the due course," Motšeremeli told Sunday Express this weekend.

In a circular to national federations, the LSRC said: "National Federations are hereby informed of the stepping down of the current acting CEO.

"He shall be resuming his usual designation of the operations manager."

In the meantime, LSRC finance manager, Lefa Moneri, is in charge of the Commission's affairs.



Former LSRC acting CEO, Teboho Malataliana

Cosmos dominates Bloem tourney



Kamohelo Khethisa (left) and Lerato Mathibela

Moorosi Tsiane

COSMOS Academy starlets, Lerato Mathibela and Kamohelo Khethisa, were outstanding during the Pro Kennex Mini-Series Tournament in Bloemfontein last weekend.

So good were they that the males' singles final saw the duo being pitted against each other on Sunday.

Khethisa eventually emerged the winner beating his countryman 1-6,

6-3, 11-9.

Rantsane Monare, Cosmos Academy founder, told the Sunday Express this weekend that the tournament was exactly what his charges needed to gauge their progress since joining the academy in March 2022.

The exposure the duo gained from the tournament will be vital in improving its International Tennis Federation (ITF) rankings, he said.

"It was a good exposure for both of them and the fact that they made it all the way to the final shows the

potential that we have been sleeping on here at home," Monare said.

"They shocked everyone given this was their first competition since joining the academy. The most important thing for them now is they are now ranked by ITF. We are just awaiting the release of the lists so that we know their rankings.

"For now, we are not worried about their rankings because they have just made their first entry so we can't expect them to be high up."

The players have already been invited for another tournament in

Pretoria in September. In that tournament, Khethisa will be among the players in the main draw while Mathibela will start in the preliminaries.

For the players to keep improving, they must play as many ITF tournaments as possible. But that will be a challenge because they lack resources.

"They must now keep playing more for them to accumulate more points although our biggest challenge is the lack of sponsorship. It is expensive for individuals to be

self-funded, therefore, we call on the corporate sector to come in and sponsor players because they have immense potential.

"It really wouldn't make sense to only have players being active when they prepare for tournaments such as the AUSC. They won't grow because they would be playing once or twice annually."

To keep the players active, Monare has lined up an Independence tournament for which players from outside the country will be invited.

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Makatsi records a personal best at Commonwealth Games



Leemisa Thuseho

MARATHONER, Mokulubete Makatsi, yesterday came eighth recording her personal best of 2:36:05 during the ongoing Commonwealth Games at the Victoria Square in Birmingham, England.

The latest time was nearly 10 minutes better than her previous personal best of 2:44:52 set in October 2021 during the Sanlam Marathon in Cape Town.

Makatsi was the only Lesotho marathoner in the ladies' category.

She said she was happy with the time she recorded.

"I think I had a good race even though I didn't make it to the top positions," Makatsi said.

"I was in good shape and the course did not give me any problems. However, I was using new shoes which started burning me midway through the race.

"Nevertheless, I am happy with my new time although I was targeting 2:30:00."

In the men's category, veteran Lebenya Nkoka, came 15th with his seasonal best of 2:32:52 while Tšepo Mathibelle came 17th registering his seasonal best of 2:38:52.

Motlokoa Nkhabutlane failed to finish his race after suffering a muscle cramp during the race.

Meanwhile, Lesotho's only weightlifter at the games, Thapelo Sebota, finished eighth in the men's 61kg finals. He lifted a total of 186kg with 80kg snatch, and 106kg clean and jerk.

Mokulubete Makatsi