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THARI

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KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Small and medium-sized enterprise proprietors intend to formally petition to Prime Minister Sam Matekane, advocating for his support in compelling the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Business Development to implement regulations safeguarding certain business sectors exclusively for indigenous Basotho.

This after this publication learned that business unions overseeing rights and interests of local traders are growing frustrated over the impasse of the enactment of the Business Licensing and Registration Act 2020, which prohibits foreign nationals to operate Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMMEs) reserved for locals.

According to section 34 of the act, a total of 47 businesses are reserved for Basotho and the prescribed activities are: international road freight transport and logistics, road transport and logistics, motor dealer, real estate agency, clearing agent, warehousing activities, retail sale of household fuel, bottled gas and coal, fast food activities without full restaurant services, hairdressing and beauty treatment, repairs and maintenance of motor vehicles and motor cycles, activities of households as employers of domestic personnel, cleaning of motor vehicles, raising of horses, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry.

Selling of livestock and livestock products, tour operator activities, cleaning activities, landscape care and maintenance service activities, photographic activities, retail sale via stalls and market of food, beverages and tobacco products, textiles, clothing and footwear, retail sale of cultural and recreation goods in specialised stores, activities of business agents and brokers, articles in specialised stores including, wholesale and retail sale of health-related articles or products.

Other businesses which foreigners cannot venture in according to the act, are retail sale of animal feeds, including animal and crops, medical goods and chemicals, retail of bread and confectionery products, retail sale of motor vehicle parts and accessories, repairs of motor vehicles parts including vehicle tyres and motor-cycle parts, retail sale, maintenance and repair of motorcycles and related parts

Business owners to petition to Matekane

- As they demand PM to implement controversial 2020 law
- Fingers Trade Ministry of acting against their interests



Thabo Moleko

and accessories and many more.

According to the business unions, foreign nationals are dominating such activities and they allege that the ministry is doing nothing to enforce compliance or shut down such business to make way for indigenous Basotho.

For this reason, they are fighting for their pound of flesh and now more than ever, they are hell-bent to fight for what is rightfully theirs. They have slated next week Wednesday (May 22), to march to Matekane's office to peacefully protest against delays in the regulations implementation.

The business people told this publication during the week that after several talks and meetings with the Trade Ministry for months now, a consensus still remains elusive and are now escalating matters to the premier's office seeking a definitive solution.

The local traders also said they are now aggravated by a statement made by the Ministry on May 1, where the department

said it was revising section 34 of the regulations to scrap off some business sectors from the list before implementation. It said it had reached an agreement with a task team which had been working to ease implementation of the regulations.

"In an endeavour to implement the regulations, the Ministry sought Government policy direction and such policy directed that the Ministry shall not implement the regulations retrospectively, for examples, businesses that have been licensed to operate in the reserved sectors will not be affected by the regulations and thus should continue operating.

This therefore says, to accommodate the directive, the Ministry is left with no alternative but review the regulations.

Furthermore, the government policy directs that the 47 reserved business items be revisited to ensure that it is all encompassing and should also allow possible withdrawal of other business items.

The Ministry in agreement with the task team has started to review the reg-

ulations and will be engaging with the task team for implementation of the new regulations," the Ministry addressed in a statement.

In an interview with the *Weekly Observer* on Tuesday, the Secretary General of Meat Products Association in Lesotho, Teboho Motshephe, said they are rallying all locally owned SMMEs from different unions to take part in next week's protest. He said they have been patient enough to cooperate but the Ministry is not reciprocating, rather, it is hindering the transition that should have happened in 2023.

"Yes, it is true, we will be petitioning to the Prime Minister next week. This is a regulation it is not just what we are demanding. It was passed by the 10th parliament and the gazette is there which was signed by His Majesty King Letsie III. Now it is like we are fighting and yet we are advocating for something which has been regulated.

The law clearly states that, when the licenses for foreigners have expired, they shall not be renewed and also, those who desire to venture in those reserved sectors should not be given the green light. Why should we fight for something which was clearly regulated?" he said.

Moshephe blasted the government for harbouring foreign traders in such businesses for their own interests. He said the government is failing to level the playing fields to empower local business owners to succeed. For this reason, they have vowed not to take this decision lying down.

"This is the very same government that kept urging us to venture in to businesses because it cannot employ us all. How are we supposed to create businesses yet the legislature is failing us? This is ridiculous.

Story continues on page 4

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KHOSI PHEKO

Butha-Buthe

Matekane breathes fire

- Declares war against notorious famo groups
- As police minister declares them unlawful

Prime Minister, Sam Matekane, has issued a stern warning directed towards notorious famo music groups, urging them to cease their acts of violence and intimidation against the public.

Matekane emphasized that failure to comply with this directive will result in severe consequences. He underscored that those perpetrating such actions will be held accountable for their deeds.

Lesotho has of late experienced a spate in violent killings which are allegedly in connection with famo rival groups. Earlier this month three people were brutally murdered in Mat-

sieng, Maseru while towards end of April, six people, including five from one family were killed in what was believed to be revenge. These gruesome incident occurred at the villages of Liphakoeng and Fobane in the Leribe district.

Violence and crimes associated with Famo groups has recently spiralled out of control much to the nation's fear calling for immediate response from the government and security agencies.

Addressing a rally at Matlakeng constituency in Butha-Buthe district on his capacity as leader of ruling Revolution for Prosperity (RFP), Matekane said these groups are terrorists due to the menace they pose in the nation at large and thus stern action should be taken against them.

"They have declared themselves as our enemies, when they fail to resolve their issues in South Africa, they return to kill each other here in Lesotho leaving the people terrified. If they cant find their friend, they start to harass and kill other family members," he said.

He said the government has taken heed of such and have issued a national gazette denouncing all famo music groups. He said the gazette clearly states that wherever and whenever they may be seen, they are terrorists and the law should take its course.

"These criminals should be arrested, they should be detained for at least 14 days and more and they should be given severe punishments to ease work for the security agencies."

Matekane also warned the security agencies on their alliance with such groups, pleading with them to cut ties with such crews and return to their mandate of protecting the nation.

"You should know if you are a monster that you will rue the day, and therefore, I instruct you to desist from such actions and focus on your primary duty. I call upon the gangsters themselves to stop what they are doing, repent from your actions, stop terrorising the nation. We will no



Sam Matekane

longer tolerate any nonsense from you and therefore I plead with you to stop," Matekane thundered.

After the prime Minister's powerful address, the Minister of Home Affairs, Local Government and Chieftainship and Police, Lebona Lephema issued a legal notice of No 37, Vol 69 where he declared the famous groups illegal.

"The Minister responsible for local government, Chieftainship, home affairs and police declares the organizations named described below unlawful by reason of being involved in or promoting or encouraging subversive activities," the gazette says.

The condemned groups are; Terene ea Mokata-lirope; Terene ea Chakela; Letlama (Seakhi); Letlama le le Khubelu; Liala Mabatha; Khang Kholo; Sephiri; Phula Bobete; Parachuti; Tonado; Mahanapuso and Terata ea hlaba.

According to the gazette, other organizations whose activities match the definition of the subversive activity are assumed unlawful. These legal provisions empower the police officer to arrest "without warrant a person whom he reasonably suspects to be a person involved in subversive activity".

They claim the provisions of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act 1981 that will apply when police arrest suspects through invocation of this gazette.

It further reads, "14(i) If it appears to the Commissioner that there are grounds for suspecting a person to be involved in subversive activity, the Commissioner [of Police] may make an interim custody order for the further temporary detention of that person for a period not exceeding 14 days.

14(3) If a person is detained under an interim custody order and a detention order is not made in respect of that person within 14 days following the date of the interim custody order, that interim order shall cease to have effect and the person detained shall be released unless he is in custody under some other provision of this or any other law or is arrested under this Part or information, other than, or for reasons, other than, those stated under section 17(i) in respect of the interim custody order."

These provisions also empower the Police Minister to appoint advisers on matters concerning the detention and release of persons.

... continued from page 2

This is the very same government we voted for which should be serving for our interests but they are neglecting us either way, they will see how serious we are next week," Motshephe said.

For his part, the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Thabo Moleko, told the *Weekly Observer* yesterday that they are working tirelessly and are still committed to implement the regulations but in a less controversial way.

He said they had initially made progress and an agreement was close but business people row backed after learning that the ministry will not implement the regulations retrospectively which is a clause they perceive controversial and might spark trouble.

"Some acts of the regulation are controversial and that is why we decided to revise of it. What we proposed was that the implementation will no longer be done retrospectively as it stated. This means foreigners who are already in these businesses will not be booted out but rather, those who will be beginning to venture in those businesses will not get licenses.

That is the main reason why were the two parties are at odds. One thing we considered was that, a lot of Baostho who aspire to own such businesses lack the capacity and skills to operate in those sectors and this could result to massive job losses of those who are employed by foreigners. We will try to come the down so that they can see the bigger picture," Moleko said.

MEET OUR TEAM!

SUB-EDITOR

Lijeng Moruthane
weeklyobserver.editor@gmail.com
+266 6917 0593

REPORTER

Ts'anelo Sello

MARKETING MANAGER

Ts'episo Serabele
weeklyobserver.marketing@gmail.com
+266 5904 1569

REPORTER

Ts'oloane Mohlomi

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Khosi Pheko
weeklyobserver.editor@gmail.com
+266 5838 8074

REPORTER

Kananelo Masilo

TS'EPISO SERABELE

Maseru

Bacha Entrepreneurship Project opens applications

In a joint force to support entrepreneurship in youth, Bacha Entrepreneurship Project (BEP) opened applications for its next round of funding. This collaborative effort by the Revenue Services Lesotho, Standard Lesotho Bank and the Basotho Enterprise Development Corporation (BEDCO), aims to provide M1.4 million seed financing to top aspiring five businesses.

In its official launch for the call for proposal that was held at BEDCO premises in Maseru on Tuesday this week, Lenthane Lesoli from BEDCO, stated that in the past ten years of its inception, the initiative has been a cornerstone for their commitment to foster innovation and empowerment, also nurturing talent.

He said the aim is to inject the culture of entrepreneurship within the society, from

employee to employer mindset, with entrepreneurial spirit, "Whether you are passionate about technology, tourism, agriculture or any other sector, we invite you to send your innovative idea, to turn your dreams into reality, unleash your creativity and contribute to a vibrant economy," he added.

One of the stakeholders Ts'epang Mncina from RSL, said applications are open countrywide and the first process being the preliminary screening, selects which businesses qualify for the top 50.

"It is in this top 50 that the businesses will be capacitated in drawing proper business proposals, analyses their market, amongst

other things, then in a period of two weeks, they will be requested to submit their proposals. The top 15 will therefore be selected and will pitch their ideas and go for psychometric test, afterwards top 5 will be awarded," she explained.

Keketso Makara from Standard Lesotho Bank, stated that this initiative will help young innovators on how to effectively run their businesses. He stressed on the importance of supporting the private sector led economy, therefore sees need to offer support.

Makara highlighted that the National Strategic Development Plan II, as well as all gov-

erning bodies always educate the need for an economy relying more on private sector. "Lesotho is our home, we drive Her growth. With small and medium enterprises, we all should be focused on boosting their resilience and ensure youth participate and take charge."

BEP started in 2014, and has invested M8.8million, helping 28 businesses and creating 103 jobs, the targeted beneficiaries are of ages between 21 to 35 years. The initiative offers incubation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as financing with hope to eradicate unemployment.

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TSEPIISO SERABELE

Maseru

In a spectacular display of national pride and cultural heritage, Basotho adorned themselves in vibrant traditional outfits this Wednesday for the grand unveiling of the Lesotho Nation Brand.

This momentous occasion was graced by His Majesty King Letsie III, Her Majesty Masenate Seeiso, and the Honourable Prime Minister Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane, marking a significant milestone in Lesotho's journey towards a brighter future.

Organized by the LNDC, this event aimed to reignite passion for the Kingdom

of Lesotho, reintroducing its rich identity to the world. The initiative seeks to foster unity among its citizens, rekindle a sense of national identity, attract foreign investments, uphold Lesotho's high standards, and promote tourism, among other goals.

The Chief Executive Officer of Lesotho National Development Cooperation (LNDC), Molise Ramaili in his opening remarks said the purpose of this strategy is to fully leverage the unique offerings of the Kingdom of Lesotho, to attract investment, boost tourism, foster international trade, and drive economic diversification.

"Through meticulous planning and strategic execution, LNDC has meticulously designed an internationally appealing Lesotho Nation Brand Positioning Framework, in alignment with our broader Nation Brand Strategy" he said.

Explaining why branding a nation is so imperative, Ramaili explained that branding is based in five fundamental objectives being to attract foreign investment and stimulate trade growth, to enhance the reputation of our country's brands, to manage perceptions, both positive and negative, to boost inbound tourism and tourism re-

ceipts, and finally, to bolster our political influence on the global stage.

His Majesty King Letsie III speaking at the event highlighted the importance of the launch while the country is still in celebration of 200 years of the founding of the Basotho nation.

"I earnestly hope that the new brand identity will also stand as a symbol of our nation's unity, resilience, courage and our determination and desire to work for peace, prosperity and Inclusive development," his Majesty said.

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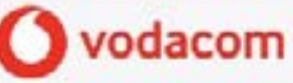
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... continued from page 7

His Majesty stated that the Nation Brand being officially launched has identified four main pillars which form the foundation of the vision of Basotho nation, these pillars include investment, trade, tourism, development of local products, and patriotism.

On the same note, Prime Minister Samuel Matekane emphasized that Lesotho is not just a country, but a nation on the rise. He said there is a lot of untapped potential with cornerstone which can build a prosperous future. "Our time is now. The world is watching, and it is time to show multitudes of opportunities the country has," he said.

Moreover, the Minister of Trade, Industry, Business Development, Mokhethi Shelile said "The LNDC is mandated to develop a Lesotho Country Brand Strategy and Management Framework and implementation thereof."

The Minister went on to note that the basis for the mandate is drawn from National Strategic Development Plan II and the Industrial Policy of 2015. He said the initiative was developed with support from the Trade Competitiveness Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat in 2017 as part of implementation of a project on "Strengthening Capacity on Trade and Investment Promotion and National Branding" within the Corporation.

Shelile added that LNDC has been working on a Lesotho Country Brand Strategy and Management Framework since 2017, therefore, the launch is a significant milestone.

Suicide cases a great concern - LMPS

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

Heightened apprehension is palpable within the Lesotho Mounted Police Services (LMPS) regarding the recent surge in suicidal incidents within the country. This concern has been underscored by the LMPS's documentation of five cases of individuals taking their own lives in their weekly reports.

While announcing these reports at the Police Headquarters in Maseru on Tuesday, Police interim spokesperson Superintendent Kabelo Halahala told the media that at Ha Mosebo in the Berea district, a deceased 94-year-old man was found hanging from the roof.

Still in Berea, a 17-year-old boy was found dead after hoisting himself on a tree. While still in the outskirts of the same districts, a 41-year-old man of Ha Ntisa was found dead by his 14-year-old son who noticed him hanged on the roof of their home.

A 33-year-old man of Qeme, Ha Selonyane in Maseru was found hanging on a toilet roof at his workplace at the Lesotho Funeral Services showing no proof of life.

Halahala mentioned that it is not yet clear whether the man claimed his own life or was murdered. He said reports indicate that upon arriving at his workplace from home, the deceased

called his family members informing them that he made it to work safely but he was suddenly found dead.

"The death of this man is not yet clear whether he hanged himself or it was somebody who did. Therefore, the police are still doing the investigation on this matter," he said.

A report of another suicidal case was disclosed by the LMPS that a man aged 64 was also found hanging in his bedroom. It was stated that

the man lived alone and therefore, the cause of death is yet to be revealed.

Halahala plead with Basotho to refrain from suicide whenever they go through various predicaments.

"It is our plea to Basotho that they should stop taking their own lives when they are having bad times but they should sit and settle things accordingly without the thought of suicide," he said.



Kabelo Halahala

TS'OANELO SELLO

Maseru

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, in collaboration with United Nations Development Program (UNDP), is currently hosting an ongoing workshop in Maseru to validate the extended National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) II Strategic Framework for the next five years.

The workshop has brought together over 60 professionals from diverse sectors, with a focus on shaping the future of education in Lesotho.

Participants at the workshop have been engaging in fruitful deliberations, sharing challenges, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that they are facing in the education sector. The aim is to address these issues and come up with strategies to ensure better education for everyone in Lesotho.

Naleli Mokeona from the Research Hub and Education Sector presented weaknesses, challenges and threats to the stakeholders to debate on and add on them. Some of the discussed weaknesses were, gender inequality, which they explained that significant gender disparity exists beyond the primary education with more

UNDP, Stakeholders validate for the future

females benefiting from education.

Another point raised by the stakeholders was a huge dependency of government funding in the higher education. Outdated education that most of the time don't align with the needs of the country. Indigenous knowledge integration in the education system, and communication and information dissemination.

Other important topics discussed was threats face by our country according to shareholders from the education sector was global pandemic, which always brings great impact on them due to the country not being able to prepare for those kinds of disasters in time.

Political instability was another point raised, on this point it was also mentioned that the Ministry of Education is given M2.6 Billion monthly

which M2.1 billion goes to the teacher's salaries so which means the Ministry does not have money at all to improve most of the problems faced in this sector.

Another threat was lack of organization personal serving teachers work force, with the population of 15 000 teachers in the country there are only 4 personnel to assist each and every one of them which is a great impact in the education sector.

These ideas were been carefully noted down, and final decisions will be made at the end of the workshop, which is scheduled to conclude next week.

The workshop has been a platform for constructive dialogue and collaboration, with a strong focus on driving positive change in the

education sector.

By bringing together professionals from different fields, the workshop aims to create a comprehensive and inclusive strategic framework that will guide education policies and programs in Lesotho for the next five years.

As the workshop progresses, participants are eager to contribute their expertise and ideas to shape the future of education in Lesotho, with a shared commitment to improving access to quality education for all. The collaboration between UNDP and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning signifies a strong partnership in working towards sustainable development goals in Lesotho, particularly in the crucial area of education.

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

On the May 2, the Ministry of Education and Training celebrated the 200 years of the foundation Basotho and the month of Early Child Care and Development (ECCD).

The mandate of this celebration is particularly aimed at the ECCD, and background of the ECCD is that the children are taught to recognize their well-being and the love for their country.

Education Minister, Ntoi Rapapa, showed that Ministry has appealed to itself to celebrate the ECCD, he added that the early childhood schools were introduced in the year 1985.

In the year 2007, Lesotho College of Education also introduced the certificate and diploma courses for the teachers who will work at the pre-schools and they are paid by TSD from 2010.

"In 2023 the agenda of pre-schools was reformed and will cover all pre-schools, it is at least 310 primary schools that have achieved to have

Little Mayor leads cleaning campaign

receptions in their schools. The aim is to see each primary school in Lesotho having receptions before a child can proceed to Grade 1," he said.

Rapapa showed that as the Ministry they are facing a challenge of unregistered pre-schools, and the education is still not in good conditions. Also he added that there is still a challenge of the teachers who are not well trained.

He added that another big challenge is that money is a problem for them to improve the education, also pre-schools are not free yet primary is free. He showed that parents are hesitant to pay for children to go to pre-school therefore, they skip the level of pre-school.

Rapapa concluded by advising all the schools



to make a celebration of these 200 years and help build the country of Lesotho to a better country.

INTERNATIONAL
CORRESPONDANT

Thursday marked the 50th consecutive day without load shedding being rolled out by South Africa's struggling power utility Eskom.

Eskom board chairperson Mteto Nyati told broadcaster Newzroom Africa that the power utility is taking it one day at a time.

"First, let's celebrate the 50 days and secondly we are also looking forward as Eskom to another 50 days of (no) load shedding," Nyati said in an interview with the broadcaster.

"But we are taking it one day at a time. We have a generation recovery plan that we have been implementing over the last year and we have another year to go where we can comfortably say load shedding is going to be behind us," he said.

"We still have another year of working hard, making sure we are safely out of this challenge."

The elongated suspension of load shedding has been widely welcomed by citizens and businesses across South Africa.

However, Electricity Minister Kgosientsho Ramokgopa has often faced a barrage of questions from sections of society who believe the suspension of load shedding is linked to the upcoming May 29 general elections.

Earlier this week, Independent Online reported that Ramokgopa stated that Eskom's En-

'Let us celebrate': Eskom marks 50 days without load shedding but warns that dark days are not behind us



Mteto Nyati, chairperson of the Eskom board.

ergy Availability Factor (EAF) has breached the 70%, while just over R53.4 million was spent on burning diesel to power the Open Cycle Gas Turbines (OCGT) last week.

Eskom has consistently defended its use

of OCGTs, saying it was only being used during morning and evening peaks to meet high electricity demand when it is necessary.

On Thursday, Nyati said South Africa is not out of the woods yet when it comes to power

supply.

"We had a fleet that was highly unreliable. In order for us to say we are safely out of the woods we need to make sure that we touch all of those units and do the proper maintenance," Nyati told the television news channel.

"Right now we have done a sufficient number and that is giving us the reliability that we see now."

On Monday, the power utility said South Africa is currently in a load shedding free environment, not because they are burning diesel to keep the lights on, but because of their extensive maintenance programme and success of their Generation Operational Recovery Plan, which was initiated in March last year.

According to Ramokgopa, who spoke during a media briefing on Monday, the EAF has breached the 70% mark and is currently tracking at 70.78%. This is the first time the EAF has breached 70% since August 2021.

For the month-to-date, the EAF is at 64.34% and year-to-date (YTD) the EAF has reached 59.92%. - IOL

The ANC has left South Africa a land of broken dreams. Its time seems over.

INTERNATIONAL
CORRESPONDANT

Who will save South Africa from itself? Not the ruling African National Congress (ANC), whose 30 unbroken years of under-achievement have brought the country to its present sorry pass. Not "reformist" president Cyril Ramaphosa, widely considered a disappointment. And not Russia or China, either, to which Pretoria's flailing regime, increasingly at odds with the west, looks for succour.

Three decades after Nelson Mandela's historic poll victory formally vanquished apartheid, and less than three weeks before another watershed election, it's all going wrong for the Rainbow Nation. Africa's most developed country is now its most unequal, the World Bank says. Crime is rampant, corruption endemic, growth is tanking. More than 60% live in poverty. Unemployment among black people is 40%.

Voters face a choice on 29 May between a discredited, tarnished ANC, which is predicted to lose its parliamentary majority for the first time, and a broad array of disunited opposition parties. Like 1994, it is also a fundamental choice about what sort of South Africa they want – democratic or authoritarian, open or

closed, free market or centrally directed, inclusive or exclusive.

The same pivotal choice faces other would-be 21st-century powers – countries such as Nigeria, Brazil, Mexico, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Indonesia. As when Mandela completed his long walk to freedom, the international community, and the western democracies especially, are watching closely to see which way South Africa jumps. It has a chance to lead again.

The statistical story so far is an index of broken dreams. Reporting in 2022, the World Bank identified race, apartheid's legacy and unequal land ownership as ongoing core problems. Even now, 30 years on, about 10% of the 60 million population controls 80% of the wealth.

Government attempts to level the playing field frequently misfire. Ramaphosa says about 25% of farmland is now owned by black South Africans. But critics argue the land restitution programme has sharply reduced productivity and employment. Government "equity targets" to ensure workplaces accurately reflect the country's racial make-up attract similar controversy.

The official, overall unemployment figure is a dismaying 32%. Surveys suggest vast disparities between the average monthly incomes

of black and white households are persisting. Housing and education are other big problem areas, where the discriminatory and segregationist practices of the past still disadvantage the least well off.

Yet at the same time, white South Africans, angry at the institutionalised bias of the Black Economic Empowerment regulations and spooked by violent crime, continue to vote with their feet. Nearly one-fifth of 1994's total white population has emigrated, exacerbating present-day skills shortages. This has led to arbitrary curbs on capital export and pension payments, and declining tax revenues. Only about 12% of South Africans pay income tax. About 62% of the black population receives state grants (welfare benefits).

In his state of the nation address in February, Ramaphosa implicitly laid much blame for post-1994 failures on his predecessor, Jacob Zuma, who was briefly jailed amid corruption allegations in 2021. "For a decade, individuals at the highest levels of the state conspired with private individuals to take over and re-purpose state-owned companies, law enforcement agencies and other public institutions," he said.

"Billions of rands that were meant to meet the needs of ordinary South Africans were stolen. Confidence in our country was badly eroded. Public institutions were severely weakened. The effects of state capture continue to be felt across society, from the shortage of freight locomotives to crumbling public services, from the poor performance of our power stations to failed development projects."

It was an extraordinary confession, inadvertently highlighting Ramaphosa's own ineffectiveness since taking office in 2018. Organised corruption remains a hugely destructive problem. The speech provided an odd preface to the coming election, in which Ramaphosa, as ANC leader, is seeking a second presidential term.

The main challenger is the liberal, centre-right Democratic Alliance, good for an estimated fifth of the vote. Unsustainable state

spending, low growth and investment, crime and graft are key DA campaign issues. Yet if the ANC does fall below 50% support, it may be the land-expropriating, hard-left Economic Freedom Fighters and a new populist party, uMkhonto weSizwe (Spear of the Nation), backed by Zuma, that do the most damage.

Messy coalition negotiations could lie ahead. By rights, in any modern democracy, the ANC's record should "cast it into oblivion", wrote Brian Pottinger, former editor of South Africa's Sunday Times. "Not so in South Africa. To many, particularly poor and rural black people, [it] is a powerful, even mystical brand. There is nostalgic pride in the ANC's 112-year-long struggle for black emancipation and dignity."

Yet research shows loyalty to the ANC is weaker among post-1994 generations – the so-called "born frees".

Pottinger believes that, while the country desperately needs change, the ANC is incapable of delivering it – and will double down on failure. "The ANC will stick to its catastrophic redistributive economic policies rather than pursuing growth, batten the hatches against capital flight and pre-emptively seek to chill free speech," he predicted.

As western political confidence and business investment wanes, the ANC is relying ever more heavily on defence, security and commercial ties with Russia and China. South Africa has refused to condemn Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and joined naval operations with China and Russia last year. Beijing is South Africa's largest trading partner. Russian oligarchs have helped fund the ANC.

For all who value democracy, freedom and the rule of law, these are plainly the wrong choices. Exploitative great powers and dictators such as Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping will not save South Africa from itself. Nor will self-serving ANC elites. Only South Africans themselves can do that – by exercising en masse the power of the vote bequeathed to them by Nelson Mandela.





Health talk and Patient care

with
Mosiuoa
Lesuhlo

Understanding stomach sores: A journey into Peptic Ulcer Disease

Welcome to our exploration of Peptic Ulcer Disease (PUD), a common stomach condition that causes painful sores. We'll break down what causes these sores, how to recognize them, and what you can do to feel better.

What are Stomach Sores?

Stomach sores, or peptic ulcers, are like little wounds that form in your stomach or the upper part of your small intestine. They can be really painful and make eating uncomfortable.

What Causes Stomach Sores?

1. **H. pylori Bacteria:** Sometimes, a type of bacteria called *H. pylori* can make your stomach lining weak, leading to sores.

2. **Painkillers:** Taking too many painkillers, like aspirin or ibuprofen, can also hurt your stomach lining and cause ulcers.

3. **Lifestyle Habits:** Smoking, drinking too much alcohol, and eating spicy foods can make it easier for ulcers to form.

Recognizing Stomach Sores:

If you have stomach sores, you might feel pain in your belly, bloating, or nausea. Sometimes, you might throw up or feel like you have no appetite.

Getting Help:

If you think you have stomach sores, it's important to visit nearest health facility. They can do tests to figure out what's causing your symptoms and suggest the best treatment for you.

Treatment Options:

1. **Medicines:**

- **Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs):** Examples include omeprazole (Prilosec), esomeprazole (Nexium), and lansoprazole (Prevacid). These drugs reduce the amount of



acid your stomach makes, helping to heal ulcers and relieve symptoms.

- **Histamine-2 (H2) Blockers:** Examples include ranitidine (Zantac), famotidine (Pepcid), and cimetidine (Tagamet). They also reduce stomach acid production, providing relief from ulcer pain and promoting healing.

- **Antibiotics:** If your ulcers are caused by an *H. pylori* infection, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics like amoxicillin, clarithromycin, or metronidazole to kill the bacteria and prevent ulcers from coming back.

- **Antacids:** These drugs, such as Maalox, Mylanta, or Tums, can help neutralize stomach acid and provide temporary relief from ulcer symptoms. They are often used in combination with other medications for more effective symptom control.

2. **Healthy Habits:**

- **Dietary Changes:** Eating smaller, more frequent meals that are low in spice and acidity can help reduce stomach irritation and discomfort. Avoiding trigger foods like caffeine, alcohol, and fatty or fried foods can also promote ulcer healing.

- **Stress Management:** Finding ways to manage stress, such as practicing relaxation techniques, engaging in regular exercise, and getting enough sleep, can help reduce the risk of ulcer flare-ups and improve overall well-being.

- **Avoiding NSAIDs:** If you regularly take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for pain relief, talk to your doctor about alternative medications or ways to manage your pain without increasing the risk of ulcer formation.

3. **Taking Care of Yourself:**

- **Medication Adherence:** It's

essential to take your prescribed medications exactly as directed by your doctor, even if you start feeling better. Skipping doses or stopping treatment too soon can allow ulcers to come back or become more severe.

- **Follow-up Visits:** Regular check-ups with your healthcare provider are crucial for monitoring your ulcer healing progress, adjusting treatment as needed, and addressing any new symptoms or concerns that may arise. Don't hesitate to reach out to your healthcare professional if you have questions or notice changes in your condition.

Stomach sores can be painful, but with the right treatment and lifestyle changes, you can feel better and get back to enjoying life. Remember to listen to your body, take care of yourself, and reach out to your doctor if you need help.



Popular Djs announce second version of charity cookout

TS'EPISO SERABELE

Maseru

Lesotho's popular DJs, AfroDeejay and Big Bear, have announced the second edition of their charity cookout event, which originated from a social media trend where the duo showcased their culinary skills.

This year's event aims to support impoverished communities and institutions that house orphans. The organizers have identified three schools that will receive school shoes and are in the process of selecting two homes to support.

The event not only brings together the community for a fun competition but also serves as a platform to address the needs of vulnerable children in Lesotho. By providing essential resources like school shoes, the initiative contributes to improving the lives of orphans and creating opportunities for a brighter future.

Big Bear stated that this year's cookout will feature more competitors beyond just himself and AfroDeejay, with a total of two competitions. The event will be different, offering various engaging activities such as food exhibitions by professional chefs, food tasting, and a dedicated kids' section.

He said the judging panel for the competition will consist of renowned chefs Chef Maitu, Chef Dits, and Chef Rea, who

will evaluate the participants' culinary skills.

According to Big Bear, his preparation for the competition has been excellent, and he has honed several techniques such as spice mixing and food prepping. He expressed confidence in his new recipes and feels ready for the event.

Overall, he said, this year's cookout promises to be an exciting event filled with engaging activities, talented chefs, and, most importantly, a platform to support vulnerable children in Lesotho.

Both DJs developed their passion for cooking at a young age. Big Bear, inspired by his father's exceptional culinary skills, learned from observing and assisting him in the kitchen. Similarly, AfroDeejay has been cooking since his childhood, frequently preparing meals for his family, a practice that continues to this day.

"The cookout event has gained more attention and support from sponsors compared to the previous edition". While AfroDeejay acknowledges the importance of the charitable aspect of the competition, he also expressed confidence in his abilities and is determined to win again. However, it remains to be seen whether Big Bear will retain his title or forfeit it.

LNIG sponsors Michelle Tau

• As insurance group rewards top performers at Two Oceans Marathon

TS'EPISO SERABELE

Maseru

As part of their Cooperate Social Responsibility initiative, LNIG Hollard on Friday handed mock cheques to support Lesotho's own Taekwondo star, Michelle Tau in preparations of her upcoming camp

in Spain in July prior to the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Tau was gifted M80 000, alongside other athletes who performed well in the previous Two Oceans Marathon that took place in South Africa, April this year.

The recipients of this gesture in-

cludes Makatise Mokulubete who received M5 000, Kamohelo Mafolo M4 000 while Lineo Makholo, Lebello Mopenyane, Tebenya Nkoka and Jobo Khatoane who individually received M3 500 and lastly Khoarahlane Seutloali M2 500.

The Chief Executive Officer of LNIG Hollard Mpho Vumbukani, said they had identified gaps within sports as a company, and they are aware Basotho are outplaying themselves and representing the country well, however, struggling with financing.

He went on to indicate that LNIG Hollard is determined to support where there is talent, and it is only just that in the country's celebration of the 200 years, well performance is awarded.

On the same note, the Minister of Tourism, Sports, Arts and Culture, Motlatsi Maqelepo said it is his mandate to ensure that sports become one of top five priorities of the country. He said he is aware Lesotho's potential in marathons, and its contribution on the economy when athletes scoop high positions winning prizes.

He pointed that sports are sponsored by cooperates worldwide, and top earners globally are individuals in sports and those in creative indus-

tries. However, he said this is a different case in Lesotho as those are the most struggling individuals.

Maqelepo went on to mention that one of their strategic plans with his team is to enhance national identity and pride. "Good performance of sports, particularly at international level helps the country maintain its good image and attract investments, and that first starts with companies investing in sports," he said.

In his closing remarks, he advised for improved sports governance in the national sports committees, and made a call for other corporates to invest in sports.

Khoarahlane Seutloali, speaking on behalf of the recipients of the awards, expressed his gratitude to the LNIG Hollard for their kind gesture. He pointed that most athletes were not in the country on the day of the awards because they were in Cape Town for ABSA Marathon, which Lesotho should take pride in.

Seutloali further stressed the importance of sponsorships prior games as it is often the most challenging and costly time for the athletes. "This would motivate aspiring athletes and Lesotho's flag will rise higher," he said.



Michelle Tau

CFL readies for Olympiads

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

The Chess Federation of Lesotho hosted a tournament of the open section for the national qualifiers where winners will represent Lesotho at the Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary in September this year.

A fortnight ago on May 5, it was the last chance for the players to qualify for the national championships where winners will participate in Budapest and dates will be confirmed at a later stage.

Lesotho will delegate 10 stars at the famous games and it is also confirmed that the 10 players will be divided into five female players and five male players

In an interview with Chess Federation publicist Selatela Khiba, he stated that they are still preparing the team for the competition.

"We are still preparing our team for the competition they will participate



...

in, and we have had training sessions with highly qualified coaches before and we hope to get to that point for the team to have even better practice," he said.

Khiba added that as part of their

preparations for the Olympiad, they are hoping to send the team to the international events before they depart to Budapest.

"We are also hoping to send the team to many international events

before they depart to Budapest. This will be the other form of preparations since the Olympiad is scheduled for September this year."

Weekly Observer Sport

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sponsors
Michelle
Tau**
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Clash of the titans

• As Matlama and Lioli battle it out for the VPL tittle



KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

All roads will lead to Teya-Teyaneng this Saturday for the two heavyweights, Lioli and Matlama to excite the local football fraternity as they collide for the Vodacom Premier League title.

The two sides contending for the league have been cut above the rest in the 2023/24 season and hence the title will be decided on the final day. The two teams head to Saturday as favourites to clinch the trophy.

Currently occupying first position, Lioli has managed to surpass expectations this season after the appointment of Motheo Mohapi as Head Coach. Out of the 29 league matches, they have

gathered 67 points where they won 20, drawn seven and lost only twice. At least a draw against tse Putsoa, Matlama's affectionate name, will guarantee them their first league title ever since the 2015/16 season.

Speaking to the Weekly Observer Sport on Tuesday, Lioli Head Coach, Motheo Mohapi said even though they will go out to fight for the trophy, the season was already a success after Tse Nala, Lioli's affectionate name, has struggled to even make it into the top four in recent seasons.

He said this was a season where they did not project to win the league but to restore the Club's lost dignity but due to the hard work and determination of his players, they have an opportunity to break an eight-year spell without the

prestigious tittle.

"At the beginning of the season, we wanted to restore the dignity of this wonderful club and we surpassed that. It wasn't our initial target but now we will leave everything on the pitch so that the trophy returns to TY," he said.

Coming from the back of one all draw against the Lesotho Correctional Services (LCS) last Sunday, the capital-based side will go into this clash aiming for nothing except a win if they hope to return to Maseru as champions.

They are on second place with 65 points just two points behind log leaders Lioli. They managed to win 19, draw eight and lose two matches. Victory at the backyard of their bitter rivals will arguably be the perfect season for them after winning two trophies during the

season.

In August 2023, they began the season on high note where they won the Alliance Cup, a pre-season tournament played by all the teams sponsored by Alliance Insurance group. On March 15 this year, they won this year's edition of the People's Cup after beating the Lesotho Mounted Police Service 4:3 on penalties.

For his part, Matlama's Head Coach Halemakale Mahlaha said although they were disappointed with the result against LCS, they are motivated to fight for the tittle.

"I say to all the Matlama family, let us go to Ty and fight for the crown. We will fight like orphans because all the odds are against us no one is protecting us. We will give our all when we get to TY," Mahlaha said.