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THARI

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Weekly Observer

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KHOSI PHEKO
Maseru

Traders protest in tense stand-off with authorities

The ongoing efforts of local owners of Small Medium Macro Enterprises (SMME) to advocate for the implementation of the highly contentious Section 34 of the Business Licensing and Registration Act 2020 continue to face significant challenges.

This act prohibits foreign nationals to operate in SMMEs reserved for locals. A total of 47 business activities are declared untouchable according to the act which 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 and many more.

In its previous publication of Thursday May 16, the *Weekly Observer* had reported that the business owners had slated Wednesday 22 May 2024 to peacefully march to the Prime Minister, Sam Matekane to urge him to compel the Ministry of Trade, industry and Business development to enact the law as the highest office in the government hierarchy.

They had escalated matters to the Premier's office after the two parties - Ministry of Trade and Business owners - had failed to reach a mutual agreement for months now.

Upon their arrival at Setsoto stadium which was the starting point of the march, intentions of the so determined traders were intercepted by heavily armed police officers who reasoned that the Prime Minister is in no position to welcome their grievances.

They also dispersed them citing that their permit which was legally granted has been nullified and thus they cannot carry on with their march.

This act of obstruction irked the protestors who argued that the nullification of their permit was illegal as it was only verbally made and no legal provisions or documents were presented to support it.

They then rushed to the High court through their representatives from various

- As the struggle to implement Section 34 persists
- Court rejects permit extension to march to PM



Fumane Khabo

business unions to challenge the block of their march.

They were given a chance to justify their argument in the afternoon of the same day, represented by Kings Counsel (KC) Ben Mokobolo, the attorney argued to the presiding High court Judge, Justice Fumane Khabo that the march was illegally revoked citing that the police officers have no authority to revoke permits.

"The officers of the first respondent do not have the powers to revoke the permit because they did not issue the permit. Secondly, Section Six anticipates that a formal denial or revocation of a permit, mine was not formal so much so that I do not know what reasons were preferred for the cancellation, permits are not cancelled by word of mouth," he argued.

The permit of the march was validated from 10:00 hours in the morning to 15:00 hours in the afternoon and for this reason, Mokobolo requested the court to extend the permit hours to the following day because

effort to march on the initiated date were thwarted by the police officers.

"My time for the granted permit has been frustrated somewhere. Now it brings me to the other alternative that I see which is to obtain from this honourable court another day or an extension of this time frame because it was frustrated not by my wrong doing, but an intentional design to frustrate the entire procession," Mokobolo continued.

His request was however rejected by the presiding judge who ruled that the applicants should go and solicit reasons from the Minister of Police, Home affairs and Local Government and Chieftainship, Lebona Lephema on why the permit was cancelled.

The verdict did not meet the traders' expectations. However, determined to obtain what they believe is rightfully theirs, they have accepted the court's decision. They are prepared to appeal to the courts again should their discussions with the Minister be protracted or yield an unfavorable out-

come.

Speaking to the *Weekly Observer* moments after the court's verdict, the Secretary General of Meat Products Association in Lesotho, Teboho Motshephe did not mince his words stating, "We will fight to the last drops our blood, we want Section 34 to be implemented."

Although their protest was legally warranted, Motshephe maintains that the police had no right to cancel their permit in a way he describes as illegal.

He also told this publication that the ruling is unfair for them as it takes them back to the same minister who had given them the green light to proceed with the march.

"This is oppression, we have a legal permit and so we have a right to fight for ourselves. But because we do not have guns to use for our defence, we had to disperse.

We will continue to fight if they want to use the courts in their favour but we will keep trying until we get what is ours," he said.





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KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) Acting Commissioner Mahlape Morai has affirmed that she is more than ready to embark on a mammoth mission of uprooting and curbing violence related to Famo music groups.

Morai revealed that to eradicate these cancerous affiliations, the Police Department has decided to take a holistic approach that involves the nation. This includes making awareness campaigns in communities and villages, she said including Basotho would ease and expedite to achieve their new mandate.

Morai's assertiveness comes in the wake of brutal killings and violence which are allegedly perpetrated by the rivalling notorious Famo juntas that Lesotho has experienced off late.

Earlier this month, three people had been brutally murdered in Matsieng, Maseru while sometime towards end of April, six people, in-

I am up for this challenge - Morai

• As Police boss vows to uproot Famo violence

cluding five from one family were killed in what was believed to be revenge. These gruesome incidents occurred at the villages of Liphakoeng and Fobane in the Leribe district.

The recent upsurge in violence has since raised fear within the public nudging the government and the security agencies to take action.

The police boss told this publication in an exclusive interview during the week that they are a community centred agency and they are now resorting to a community centred ap-

proach to give education about the matter.

"The community has to know what is available. They should be aware of the things they possibly do to promote and encourage Famo gangsterism, they can know all these if we go to them.

We use the media all the time for such and it is also important to note that, we do our campaigns across the nation every week, we do them at the south, north and central region. Our measures are about teaching the nation about this," she said.

She further told the Weekly Observer that she is anticipating the fierce groups not to take any act from the police department lying down and for that, she is braced for one of the biggest challenges ever since she assumed office to replace former COMPOL, Holomo Molibeli in March this year.

"We are not expecting it to be easy, we are all aware that these are dangerous people who come to Lesotho to kill and they disappear afterwards. It won't be easy at all but we are making notable strides because we have apprehended a few already.

One was recently arrested in Mafeteng and we will nab others, the South African Police Service also informed us that they managed to arrest some the previous week, so just like we are doing now, we will achieve our goal," she said.

Over the years, it has often been understood that some officers in the police department are affiliated with the such groups. Morai said she has taken heed of that and measures are currently being taken against the rogue cops to teach them a lesson they shall never forget.

"These people bribe Basotho because they have money, it is not just the police, every sector is involved however once we are aware that a police officer is involved in these, we take action against him or her.

We receive tip offs and reports from people of some officials who might be part of all this, and I assure that once we manage to gather all the necessary evidence, we will take extreme measures. We have started already, so we I am talking about something that is currently ongoing but I will not mention the how part for now," Morai said.

This publication's interview with the acting COMPOL was preceded by the Government's declaration where the Minister of Police, Home Affairs and Local government and Chieftainship, Lebona Lephama announced the groups as "unlawful".

The Minister had stated in a gazette that in accordance with the Internal Security Declaration of Unlawful Organisation Act No.4 of 2024, he announced the banning of Famo groups.

"Pursuant to section 10 of the internal Security (General Act, 1984), I Lebona Lephama, Minister responsible for Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police, described below unlawful by reason of being involved in, or promoting or encouraging subversive activities.

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; Tornado; Mahanapuso and Terata ea hlaba and any other organisation whose activity can be categorised within the definition of subversive activity in terms of the Act.

LMPS offers 14-day amnesty for illegal firearms

• Two weeks slated for hand over

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

The Lesotho Mounted Police Services (LMPS) has given an ultimatum of 14 days for Basotho to surrender all illicit guns, ammunition and any weapon to their closest police stations.

This declaration was made by the LMPS acting Commissioner Mahlape Morai while launching operation "Silencing of guns in the Kingdom of Lesotho" at a media briefing in Maseru on Tuesday.

For this initiative, illegal firearm holders are given a chance to hand over guns or any weapon to any post within a period of a fortnight beginning from Tuesday, May 21 to June 5. Holders are also given a chance to return the weapons on a condition of anonymity.

This is yet a responsive approach to the scourge of illegal firearms recorded which are also understood to be the primary cause of heinous crimes across the country.

The police boss stated that the LMPS is aware that many of Basotho possess unlicensed weapons and the 14-day period will be a good opportunity to hand them over without facing any charges.

However, she emphasized a weapon which has been returned is found to be linked with any criminal offence, the owner will face the consequences.

She mentioned once the guns are returned, they will be vetted to assure that they are not connected to any crimes.

"We have discovered as the LMPS that

many of Basotho are holding the illegal firearms, and we invite every Mosotho to volunteer giving away such firearms either to the Chiefs or Police offices nearby without facing any charges," she said.

COMPOL Morai made it clear that any citizen who fails to comply with this directive will face severe consequences. She added that the prevalent murders lately are linked to the illegal firearms and they are taking

heed to the situation.

"We have embarked in this operation of searching and seizing illegal firearms because it has come to our attention that they are the cause of most of the murder cases," she said.

She disclosed that last month alone, at least 57 death cases were reported and 47 of those cases are linked to the illegal guns.



Mahlape Morai

MEET OUR TEAM!

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TS'OANELO SELLO

Maseru

Ombudsman report reveals dire conditions in holding cells

The recent Ombudsman report on the inspection of police cells has highlighted significant concerns regarding the conditions in which suspects are being detained.

The report, which covered 40 police stations nationwide, found that the situation has deteriorated significantly since the last inspection in 2015.

One of the major issues highlighted in the report is the lack of funding, which has resulted in limited resources, especially in remote areas.

This has led to a lack of basic necessities such as transportation, with police officers having to rely on public transport to transport suspects to the police station, risking their escape.

"The use of public transportation to trans-

port suspects poses a significant security risk, increasing the chances of escape and jeopardizing the safety of both officers and detainees," outlined Advocate Tlotliso Polaki of Ombudsman.

The report also highlighted the need for the government to provide all necessary materials for the police, rather than relying on donations from different individuals and organizations. This not only undermines the dignity and pride of the police force but also leaves them vulnerable.

"Relying on donations for essential materials compromises the dignity and integrity of the police force. The government must step

in to provide adequate resources and ensure a standard level of care across all stations," she explained.

In addition, the report noted that stationery is lacking in remote areas, leading to delays in providing services to the people. Accommodations for suspects were also found to be inadequate, with small, untidy rooms and depleted furniture.

Sanitary and hygiene practices were found to be unacceptable, with suspects not being able to bathe regularly, especially males.

"The absence of basic supplies like stationery in remote areas causes delays in processing paperwork and providing necessary

services to the public, hampering the efficiency of police operations.

Inadequate and unsanitary living conditions in police cells, including small and unkempt rooms, highlight a lack of respect for human rights and call for immediate attention to ensure a dignified environment for inmates.

"Unsatisfactory hygiene practices, and limited bathing facilities further compound the substandard living conditions in police cells, underscoring the urgent need for improvements in infrastructure and maintenance." She emphasized.

Story continues on pages 8

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ReNOKA, LEGCO empower sustainability

TS'OANELO SELLO

Maseru

Last week Thursday, the Lesotho Electricity Generation Company (LEGCO) and ReNOKA joined forces to launch a Private Public Partnership at the Ha-Ramarathole Solar Plant in Likhoele.

The event was graced by His Majesty King Letsie III, who took the opportunity to shed light on the environmental challenges facing the solar plant and the measures being implemented through the collaboration between ReNOKA and

LEGCO with the community.

His Majesty explained it has been determined that, for Lesotho to improve on this situation and to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) there is a need to establish and adopt an approach that links all sectors responsible for natural resources management.

The Government of Lesotho has therefore adopted the Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) programme in managing land and water resources within the country.

"We live in times where weather pat-

terns as we have known them, have been affected by climate change, and it is often that developing countries are more heavily impacted by the changing climate than developed countries.

Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to witness partnerships such as the one we are launching infrastructure today which strive towards increasing climate resilience of our land, people and public w at the same time produce clean energy.

The partnership between ReNOKA & LEGCO has put communities at the heart of the protection of the watershed.

This joint initiative reflects the ReNOKA movement and indeed the slogan "Noka e tlatsoa ke linokana," His Majesty added.

One of the key focuses of the LEGCO-ReNOKA partnership is increasing the resilience of the Ha Ramarathole Solar Power Plant through Integrated Catchment Management (ICM). This approach involves managing the catchment area around the solar plant in a holistic manner to mitigate environmental risks and ensure the sustainability of the plant's operation.

Story continues on page 8

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TS'OANELO SELLO

Maseru

In a momentous event held in Maseru, the launch of the book "Lerotholi Lekena Letsie", was not just a celebration of literature, but a tribute to a legend whose legacy persists to inspire generations.

The author, Maneco Sekata (pictured), shared insights into her journey of discovery which began in 2020 at Makena Matsieng, the historical birthplace of Lerotholi Letsie.

The Secretary General and Programme Coordinator for Culture and the Lesotho National Commissioner for UNESCO Mabafokeng Seala highlighted the cultural significance of publishing.

"As Basotho, we need to start writing our ideas and stories down for our generations

Book launch honours for Lerotholi Letsie

to read about and stop talking, it's time to write our stories down with pride. Writing preservers and promotes cultural diversity through literature and the arts," she explained.

While narrating details of the book, Sekata spoke passionately about the incredible history and legacy of Letsie, a legendary figure in Basotho culture, and the impact he has had on his people.

"I worked closely with most of the elders in Makateng and to my surprise, they were not bothered or even hesitant to give me all the information I needed about this legend of ours, I also worked closely with all his family members left behind for the credibility of this story," she continued.

Sekata expressed her desire that the book would serve as a tribute to Letsie and inspire readers to appreciate and celebrate

their cultural heritage. She urged for the preservation of historical sites in Makena Matsieng, stressing the importance of maintaining these sites for future generations.

"There are few historical houses still left but not in such good condition and those houses are the only ones left in Lesotho which I hope our government could look into and rebuilt them because they are significant in our country," she added.



... continued from page 5

Furthermore, the report pointed out that the quality of food and its preparation in police cells is subpar and needs improvement. Communication among police officers was also found to be difficult, as they are not provided with phones and have to use their own airtime.

"The quality of food served to inmates is below acceptable standards, raising concerns about nutrition and sanitation practices that must be addressed to safeguard the health and well-being of detainees.

Also, the absence of dedicated communication devices for officers impedes effective coordination and response efforts, highlighting the need for proper resources to ensure secure and efficient communication within the police force," she continued.

Lastly, the report highlighted the lack of security measures in police stations, emphasizing the need for CCTV cameras for the safety of both the police officers and the suspects. The government was urged to standardize uniforms to prioritize the safety and well-being of all individuals involved.

"The lack of proper security measures, such as CCTV cameras, poses a risk to the safety of both officers and suspects, underscoring the importance of enhancing security protocols to create a secure environment in police stations," she added.

...continued from page 7

Also in attendance European Union Ambassador, H.E Paola Amadei explained that through collaborative efforts with local communities, they have successfully implemented soil rehabilitation measures, reclaiming 565 hectares of watersheds.

The fruits of this work are visible, wetlands are replenishing, grasslands are regenerating and native flora and fauna, such as birds, are making a comeback.

"Our initiatives in Hlotse and Likhetha have seen the restoration of 140 hectares of vital watersheds, showcasing promising results in halting erosion and fostering ecosystem recovery," she said.

Yet, the battle against soil erosion persists, according to Amadei, ReNoka remains steadfast in its commitment to combat erosion through a holistic approach including improved rangeland management, storm water diversion, terrace rehabilitation, and

community engagement.

"There is no doubt that ReNoka is a framework around which we can help enshrine government action and development partner's support, reducing the duplication of mandates, and paving the way for common mechanisms, such as pooled funds.

Today marks another significant milestone in this shared journey as we witness the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Lesotho Electricity Generation Company (LEGC) and ReNoka," she emphasized.

This partnership is pivotal in safeguarding the Ha Ramarothole Solar Power Plant against land degradation, ensuring the longevity and resilience of Lesotho's renewable energy infrastructure.

"The area is threatened by severe erosion, undermining the integrity of the solar farm and jeopardising the significant

investment made by the Government of Lesotho. The erosion, as we all witnessed this morning, not only compromises the boundary fence, but also the foundations of several solar panels, she uttered.

Recognising the urgency of the situation, the Lesotho Electricity Generation Company (LEGC) sought assistance from ReNoka.

Local communities are now implementing targeted measures to reduce the volume and speed of water runoff, and curb gully formations around the solar plant site.

The partnership forged between ReNoka and LEGC underscores the transformative potential of soil and water conservation for the long-term sustainability of public investments in critical infrastructure, particularly renewable energy projects.

"This undertaking embodies the key values of the Lesotho-Team Europe part-

nership, a partnership based on long-term sustainability and shared prosperity, as opposed to short-term gains built on fragile foundations. Ours is a partnership that stands for quality investments.

This approach is at the heart of Global Gateway, the European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, climate, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world," she added.

With growing concerns about climate change and the need for sustainable energy solutions, initiatives like the LEGC-ReNoka partnership are essential in creating a more environmentally friendly future. By working together with local communities and implementing innovative strategies such as ICM, solar power plants can not only provide clean energy but also protect the surrounding environment.

INTERNATIONAL
CORRESPONDANT

As the clock draws closer to May 29, South Africa stands at a pivotal moment in its democratic journey, drawing attention to a critical demographic – the youth.

Despite the remarkable strides made since the end of apartheid, there remains a glaring lack of youth participation in the electoral process, raising profound concerns about the health of the nation's democracy.

As it currently stands we have 27,698,369 registered voters, with only 4,974,171 being under the age of 30. This demographic disparity is not just a numerical anomaly but reflects a deeper issue of disengagement and disenfranchisement among South Africa's youth.

With young people constituting over 35% of the population, their under-representation in political processes exacerbates a trust deficit in the democratic system.

The reasons behind this lack of youth participation are multifaceted, revolving around disillusionment and disconnect from the political establishment. Many young South Africans feel that their votes won't bring about tangible change or hold politicians accountable, leading

Is the youth vote dead?



Less than five million of South Africa's more than 27 million registered voters are under the age of 30, says the writer.

to distrust in the electoral process. It's crucial to recognise that young South Africans are not apathetic but deeply care about the future of their country.

The challenge lies in channelling this passion into meaningful political action.

But why should young people vote? Beyond

exercising their democratic right, voting is a powerful tool for effecting change and shaping the future of the country. Young South Africans have the potential to sway elections and influence political outcomes, advocating for policies that reflect their interests and driving social and economic progress.

Voting is about shaping the priorities and values of the nation. By participating in the electoral process, young people can contribute to building a more just, equitable, and prosperous society that reflects their ideals and aspirations.

The low turnout among young voters in the 2019 elections serves as a wake-up call, highlighting the urgent need for concerted efforts to empower and mobilise young voters.

The statistics from the 2019 national election paint a troubling picture of the state of youth voter participation in South Africa. According to the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC), only 56% of eligible voters aged 18-29 registered to vote in the 2019 national and provincial elections. Furthermore, voter turnout in this age group was a meagre 46%, significantly lower than the national average of 66%.

The youth vote is not just a numerical statistic but a powerful force for driving positive change and shaping the trajectory of South Africa's democracy. It's time for young South Africans to recognise the significance of their voices and seize the opportunity to make a difference through active political participation. The future of the nation depends on it.

- IOL

Cross-border trade gives African entrepreneurs access to new markets

INTERNATIONAL
CORRESPONDANT

Growth-focused businesses in South Africa are increasingly looking to cross-border trade for opportunities to develop their bottom line and deepen their revenue channels.

A combination of the right banking partner and technology is making this a viable option for organisations looking for new markets.

It is no secret that economic growth in South Africa has been constrained through a number of factors which has left the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasting a growth rate of just 1% in 2024.

With a growth rate of 1%, the economic pie is not getting any bigger and entrepreneurs are forced to compete with each other and navigate increasingly narrow operating margins.

The problem with being inwardly focused and purely looking at the South African market is that we forget that we form a part of the global economy. Tourism, for example, has recorded a significant rebound in 2023 – while it hasn't quite reached pre-Covid-19 levels, 8.5 million tourists came into South Africa.

While the sector has been negatively impacted by the pandemic-enforced lockdowns, it does contribute nearly 9% to gross domestic product (GDP).

In rand terms, data from Statistics South Africa indicated that domestic visitors spent R435 billion in 2022 and pre-pandemic, international tourists were bringing in more than R121bn per year. These are sizeable markets in the South African context and represent very real business opportunities.

Agriculture has been another positive proof point for international trade, with South African products being exported across the globe, and soya beans and av-

ocados are in great demand from the EU through to China.

Research from the Agriculture Business Chamber released in February 2024 indicated that South Africa hit a new record in exports in 2023 with \$13.2bn. This was achieved despite major issues at the ports and other logistics constraints. Importantly, the sector was not simply driven by exports but also included \$7bn in imports.

Import and export trade is not limited purely to the traditional markets like the EU, China, India and the US. Earlier this year, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced South Africa's first shipment and preferential trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

According to the World Bank, if fully implemented, the AfCFTA could raise incomes by 9% by 2035 and lift 50 million people out of extreme poverty.

As South African – and broader African businesses – are waking up to the opportunities beyond their home markets, the issue of access to finance becomes a key challenge. If we look across our portfolio and where we are seeing a lot of activity, it is typically in capital-intensive sectors including logistics, automotive, mining and manufacturing.

A major pain point that many of the growth businesses in our commercial and business banking portfolios face is that they often struggle with cash-flow issues and then are forced to pursue funders who offer quick turnaround times but at very expensive rates. This is an interesting dynamic that is playing out in the market at the moment where fintechs in the lending space are offering funding solutions which are perhaps nimbler than those offered from traditional banks, but which often come at a higher cost to the entrepreneurs.

One of the frustrations that the banking sector often encounters is that its clients are taking on the incorrect type of funding solu-

tions for their long-term sustainability. The right solutions may take longer to unlock but should be more suitable for the client in the long run. This could include cheaper debt, lower administration fees and more flexible payment terms.

While there is a natural tension between the banks and the fintech operators, one of the areas where we are seeing some encouraging gains is around the digitisation of client documents and other records required for finance.

Whether you are applying for funding or you are importing and exporting goods, you shouldn't be filling in the same forms over and over again with high levels of administrative friction inhibiting your ability to do business.

We are encouraged by the partnerships we are seeing with our stakeholders to introduce digital solutions to reduce friction and allow for swifter transacting across the business banking ecosystem – from SME through to larger corporate transactions.

Lastly, we believe that if we are serious about the subject of growth in South Africa,

then we cannot ignore the environmental, social and governance (ESG) discussion. While many of the larger businesses in South Africa – including multinationals and those listed on the JSE – are beginning to understand the role that ESG plays in terms of unlocking funding and opportunities, many of our business banking clients and stakeholders do not understand how they can utilise this as a growth channel for themselves.

Banks have a key role to play in educating the market around ESG solutions and how they can participate.

South African and African businesses form a key part of the global economy and while there are some constraints around growth, we have the ability to participate in the broader global economy. If we can identify solutions that include import and export of products, we are no longer constrained by the domestic economy.

It is a global playground for entrepreneurs, and we look forward to working with them to unlock these growth opportunities to see them flourish. - IOL



Growth-focused businesses in South Africa are increasingly looking to cross-border trade for opportunities to develop their bottom line and deepen their revenue channels.



Health talk and Patient care

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Understanding kidney diseases: A comprehensive guide for health and wellness

Kidney diseases encompass a range of conditions that impair the function of the kidneys, vital organs responsible for filtering waste from the blood, balancing electrolytes, and maintaining fluid balance in the body. When the kidneys are damaged or malfunction, waste products and excess fluids can build up, leading to a variety of health problems.

Types of Kidney Diseases

1. Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD):

- A gradual loss of kidney function over months or years.

- Often caused by diabetes or high blood pressure.

- Can progress to end-stage kidney disease, requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant.

2. Acute Kidney Injury (AKI):

- A sudden reduction in kidney function, often due to a severe infection, injury, or certain medications.

- Can be reversible with prompt treatment.

3. Glomerulonephritis:

- Inflammation of the kidney's filtering units (glomeruli).

- Can result from infections, autoimmune diseases, or other health conditions.

4. Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD):

- A genetic disorder characterized by the growth of numerous cysts in the kidneys.

- Can lead to kidney failure over time.

5. Kidney Stones:

- Hard deposits of minerals and salts that form in the kidneys.

- Can cause severe pain and block the flow of urine.

6. Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs):

- Infections that affect any part of the urinary system, including the kidneys.

- Can lead to kidney damage if not treated promptly.

Causes and Risk Factors

Several factors can contribute to the development of kidney diseases, including:

- **Chronic Conditions:** Diabetes and high blood pressure are the leading causes of CKD.

- **Genetic Factors:** A family history of kidney disease can increase risk.

- **Lifestyle Factors:** Smoking, obesity, and a poor diet can exacerbate kidney problems.

- **Medications:** Long-term use of certain medications, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can harm the kidneys.

- **Infections and Autoimmune Diseases:** Conditions like lupus and frequent UTIs can also damage the kidneys.



Recognizing Symptoms

Kidney disease symptoms can vary depending on the type and severity. Early stages often present mild symptoms, while advanced stages can cause more severe issues. Common symptoms include:

- **Early Symptoms:** Fatigue, trouble concentrating, poor appetite, and dry, itchy skin.

- **Advanced Symptoms:** Swelling in the legs, ankles, or feet (edema), shortness of breath, persistent itching, chest pain, nausea, and decreased urine output.

Diagnosis of Kidney Diseases

Diagnosing kidney disease typically involves several tests and procedures, including:

- **Blood Tests:** Measuring levels of creatinine and urea, waste products filtered by the kidneys, to assess kidney function.

- **Urine Tests:** Detecting abnormalities like protein or blood in urine.

- **Imaging Tests:** Ultrasound, CT scans, and MRI to visualize the kidneys and detect any structural abnormalities.

- **Biopsy:** Taking a small sample of kidney tissue for examination to identify the cause of kidney problems.

Treatment Options

Treatment for kidney disease depends on the underlying cause and severity of the condition. Common treatments include:

- **Medications:** To control blood pressure, manage blood sugar levels, and reduce cholesterol.

- **Dietary Changes:** A kidney-friendly diet that is low in sodium, protein, and phosphorus can help reduce the kidneys' workload.

- **Dialysis:** A treatment that filters waste and excess fluids from the blood when the kidneys are no longer able to do so effectively.

- **Kidney Transplant:** Surgically replacing a diseased kidney with a healthy donor kidney, an option for end-stage kidney disease.

Managing and Preventing Kidney Diseases

Preventive measures and effective management can significantly reduce the risk of developing kidney diseases or slow their progression. Here are some strategies:

- **Healthy Lifestyle:** Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and maintaining a healthy weight are crucial. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, while low in sodium and unhealthy fats, can help keep kidneys healthy.

- **Regular Check-ups:** Monitoring blood pressure, blood sugar, and kidney function through regular medical check-ups can detect early signs of kidney disease.

- **Avoid Smoking and Excessive Alcohol:** Both can harm the kidneys and worsen existing kidney problems.

- **Hydration:** Drinking adequate water helps the kidneys function properly and can prevent kidney stones.

- **Medication Management:** Avoiding the overuse of medications that can harm the kidneys, such as NSAIDs, is important.

Living with Kidney Disease

Living with kidney disease requires ongoing management and support. Here are some key points:

- **Chronic Management:** Regular monitoring and adhering to treatment plans are crucial to managing chronic kidney disease.

- **Support Systems:** Psychological support and patient education are vital for coping with the emotional and physical challenges of kidney disease. Support groups and counseling can provide additional help.

- **Quality of Life:** Strategies to maintain a good quality of life include staying active, following dietary recommendations, and managing symptoms effectively.

Kidney diseases are serious conditions that can significantly impact health and quality of life. However, early detection, regular monitoring, and a healthy lifestyle can prevent or manage these conditions effectively. It is essential to stay informed, get regular medical check-ups, and support ongoing research in kidney health to improve outcomes for those affected by kidney diseases.



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The art of letting things happen

Last week, I spent a full week in the hospital and missed two exams. In total, I had five exams to write, with three remaining now. Tomorrow's exam is scheduled for 9 am, and it's currently 6 pm, yet I haven't had the chance to prepare for it.

I was discharged three days ago, but I couldn't find the time to study due to a 20-page assignment which was due today. While I could use being sick as an excuse to postpone these three exams until I'm better, that's not my style.

I thrive on pressure and have a history of succeeding through cramming, a method that served me well in both my form five examinations and university. However, it's not my sole strategy. I pay close attention during lectures and ensure I grasp the material thoroughly, which keeps me prepared for any situation.

Even without cramming, I'm always ready to write an exam at a moment's notice. This commitment to readiness was further fueled by my desire for freedom from stress, leading me to integrate the concept of Wu Wei into my approach.

Wu Wei, or effortless action, is a principle from Taoist philosophy that emphasizes acting in alignment with the natural flow of life, without force or struggle. In the context of exam preparation, it means trusting in my ability to perform well with minimal effort, relying on a deep understanding of the material and a calm, focused mindset.

By embracing Wu Wei, I aim to approach my exams with confidence and ease, trusting that my preparation and intuition will guide me to success.

Wu wei, at its core, is about achieving a state of effortless action by harmonizing with the natural rhythm of existence. It's not about being passive or lazy or apathy, but rather about being in tune with the flow of life and allowing things to unfold organically.

In the context of exam preparation, embracing Wu Wei means finding a balance between diligent study and a relaxed, confident mindset.

For example, instead of forcing myself to cram all night before an exam, I might take a more balanced approach. I'll review my notes and materials, but I'll also make time for rest and relaxation, trusting that my preparation up to this point has equipped me with the necessary knowledge.

By adopting this mindset, I can enter the exam room with a clear mind and a sense of calm, allowing me to recall information more effectively and perform at my best.

Moreover, Wu Wei encourages adaptability and spontaneity. It's about being present

in the moment and responding to challenges with grace and flexibility. If I encounter a question on the exam that I didn't specifically study for, instead of panicking, I can draw on my broader understanding of the subject and apply critical thinking skills to formulate a thoughtful response.

This ability to think on my feet and adapt to unexpected situations is a hallmark of Wu Wei in action.

In essence, embracing Wu Wei in exam preparation is about cultivating a mindset of confidence, trust, and adaptability. It's about recognizing that success isn't solely depend-

ent on exhaustive effort, but also on a deeper understanding of the material and a willingness to flow with the natural course of events.

By integrating the principles of Wu Wei into my approach to exams, I not only enhance my academic performance but also cultivate a sense of inner peace and harmony.

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Miss Culture eyes Face of Lesotho

TS'OANELO SELLO

Maseru

The current holder of the Miss Culture Lesotho crown and the former Miss National University of Lesotho (NUL), Keketso Jobo will look to add one more coveted accolade to her impressive cabinet.

In a recent interview with the [Weekly Observer](#), Jobo shared her exciting plans for the months ahead. Not only is she gearing up to compete in the prestigious Face of Lesotho beauty pageant in November, but she is also on track to complete her final year doing double major in Chemistry and Biology at the NUL.

In addition to her academic pursuits, Keketso Jobo, is also a talented hairdresser, balancing her passion for beauty and style with her commitment to her education.

Juggling multiple responsibilities can be challenging, but she manages to excel in all areas of her life with grace and determination.

"I plan on making money and also going back to school but while on the wait I'll have my hands on something, i am hairdresser so i guess for now that's where my focus will be," she explained.

When asked about the struggles and issues that many face in the

beauty pageant industry, Keketso Jobo had some insightful advice to share. She emphasized the importance of being strong and bold, as contestants are putting themselves out there for the world to see.

Despite the pressure and scrutiny that comes with competing in pageants, she believes that success ultimately comes down to doing your best and staying true to yourself.

"As for challenges I believe a lot has been said about them but I'd like to emphasize more on the fact that whoever is willing to start, they should understand that going in this industry is putting yourself out there where you wait for people to accept you.

Sad reality it is not always going to be the case so they need to be strong and build their name through the hate and love they will receive. Be strong," she encouraged.

The beauty Queen urged aspiring beauty queens to stay true to themselves and embrace their uniqueness, as success in the industry requires strong and bold individuals who are not afraid to shine in the spotlight.

As Jobo continues to defy expectations and carve out her own path in the world of beauty and academia, she serves as an inspiration to all who dare to dream big.

Lioli finally break eight-year drought

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Lioli Football Club has finally snapped an eight year drought ever since winning their last league title in the 2015/16 season.

Lioli were crowned champions of the 2023/24 Vodacom Premier League after playing rivals Matlama to a one all draw last Saturday at the Lioli Football Ground in Teya-teyaneng. The two title contenders went head-to-head with each side standing a chance of winning the coveted crown.

The hosts, Lioli, came into this clash hoping for at least a draw to confirm themselves as the champions. They came into the decider as the current log leaders with 67 points while Matlama were second with just two points from the top with 65 points.

This means that nothing but a win would guarantee the Maseru based club the championship.

After a tense first half where Matlama proved to be the most dominant side this by their superior ball possession and their constant threats in the Lioli penalty box, Lioli returned from

the half time break as an improved side and broke the deadlock in the 60th minute thanks to strike from Sihle Maso.

This was a huge blow for Tse Putsoa, Matlama's affectionate name, who had to fight from a goal down in hunt for a victory.

In the 81st minute Matlama's Captain and Talisman, Jane Thabant'so levelled the score for the visitors to give them hope of a possible turnaround. As they pushed for a decisive goal, Lioli's defence remained solid and resolute and could hold their rivals to a much

needed draw to clinch the league title.

For the massive achievement, they walked away with a cheque of M650 000 as their cut for being champions. As if it was enough, they received a shot in the arm as Member of Minister of Police, Home Affairs and Local government and Chieftainship who is also a Member of Parliament for Teya-Teyaneng constituency, Lebona Lephema pledged a total of M150 000 that will be shared amongst the players.

On his post-match interview, Lioli Head Coach, Motheo Mohapi was on cloud nine as this was his first league title for more than 15 years since he became a coach.

He hailed the players for the determination and hard work they displayed all through the season citing that due to this, something had to give for his charges.

"I have always yearned for such an opportunity to mentor a side where I can implement my agenda. I have always believed that I can deliver good results but the challenge is that in my previous club, the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) I wasn't able to outsource or incorporate players outside of the sector, and that limited my ideas. But when you look at this team unlike LDF, it is made up of young inexperienced players but they are all players of my choice so it makes my work easy," he said.

Had things went their way on Saturday, Matlama would have had what is deemed a perfect season. This is because they finished the current campaign with at least two trophies in their cabinet.



Victors of the Vodacom Premier League Lioli

LTA to host international taekwondo tournament

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

The Lesotho Taekwondo Association (LTA) in collaboration with the Council of Southern African Taekwondo Association (COSATA) will host a tournament this coming weekend.

Scheduled to take place at the Lehakoe Sports and Recreational Centre in Maseru, LTA representative Pesupha Mapesela stated at a press conference held on Monday that the upcoming event will be huge as it will feature some countries within the Southern African Development Community

(SADC).

The countries which will participate are Botswana, Eswatini, South Africa and Lesotho which is the host of the nation. The name of the event is called the Maseru Regional Taekwondo Team Cup Championship.

He mentioned that the purpose of this event is to reignite the spirit of the sport in the country of and to make the nation aware that taekwondo is still up and running.

"The purpose of this event is to bring back the spirit of taekwondo in the country of Lesotho, and it is important that Basotho know that taekwondo is still alive," he said.

Mapesela then conveyed gratitude to the Lesotho Sport Recreation and Commission (LSRC) and the Olympic sponsorship by supporting them with the logistics and necessities for this tournament.

Molapo Moshoeshoe the president of COSATA shared that the structure of the tournament will have 10 players per team divided by boys and girls. Each team from the five players will have a substitute from within them.

He added that there will be three categories in the tournament where seniors of both male and females will play mixed gender teams, and the cadets which are players aged 12 to 14 will

also have a chance to play.

The secretary of Ministry of sports Moferefere Mahlomola, stressed that it is their mandate to get back to the old status of this sport since it almost fell drastically in the recent years and this will help it to grow once again.

"We are happy as the Ministry with this event because sport are not just about winning medals but, they are also assisting us to manage our health. We wish to go back to our old status of this sport since it has almost lapsed and this shows that our journey of taekwondo growth," we said.

Weekly Observer Sport

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Likuena back in duty

• As they begin preps for the upcoming World Cup qualifiers



Likuena Football during practice

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Lesotho's senior football team, Likuena has resumed preparations ahead of the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers scheduled for the month of June.

This was announced by the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA) who shared that, a 23-man provisional squad announced by the head Coach Leslie Notsi and his technical team began training yesterday (Wednesday).

Likuena will play Zimbabwe at the Orlando Stadium, Johannes-

burg on June 7 2024. The national team will then meet Rwanda at the Moses Mabhida stadium in Durban also in South Africa on June 11.

Both Likuena and Zimbabwe are forced to play their games on foreign soil because their stadiums for international football matches have been suspended by FIFA and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) since 2021.

Likuena is currently in Group C of the qualifiers along with Benin, Nigeria, South Africa, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

The Leslie Notsi coached side has already played two matches of

the qualifiers. In their first match, they held Nigeria to a one all draw at the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium in Uyo, Nigeria on November 16 2023.

Thereafter, they played a goalless draw with Benin on November 21 still in 2023 at the Moses Mabhida Stadium, South Africa.

Likuena's provisional squad:
Goalkeepers - Sekhoane Moerane (Orbit College), Ntsane Molise (Linare), Tankiso Chaba (LCS).

Defenders -Thabang Malane (LCS), Motete Mohai (Matlama), Thabo Mats'oele (Bantu), Kopano, Tseka, Rethabile Rasethunt-

sa (Linare), Rethabile Mokokoane Matlama), Mokhele Molise (Linare) Katleho Koeana(LMPS).

Midfielders - Lehlohonolo Matsau (LDF) Lisema Lebokallane (Linare), Thabo Lesaoana (Bantu) Ts'epo Toloane (LDF), Teboho Letsema (Sekhukhune), Lehlohonolo Fothoane (Bantu), Ts'epang Sefali (Linare), Tumelo Khutlang (Lioli) Tswarello Bereng (Orbit College), Jane Thabants'o (Matlama).

Forwards - Lemohang Lints'a (Limkokwing University), Teboho Masuoane (Lioli).