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THARI

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Weekly Observer

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KHOSI PHEKO
Maseru

Residents struggle amid toxic dumping site

• As they blast govt for delayed action

Ha-Ts'osane residents in Maseru are facing significant challenges due to adverse health and environmental conditions. These issues stem from both the presence of a dumping site within the area and the ongoing, protracted efforts to remove it.

The community's well-being is said to be compromised as the hazardous waste continues to impact their living conditions, despite attempts to address the problem. The prolonged removal process exacerbates the situation, leaving the residents in a state of uncertainty and distress.

The dumping site, which has been in existence for over three decades, has created intolerable living conditions for the residents. The community members report that their homes have become breeding grounds for harmful pests, including cockroaches, rats and ants.

They claim these adverse conditions have significantly impacted their quality of life, as they struggle to cope with the health and environmental hazards posed by the proximity of the dumping site. The residents' plight underscores the urgent need for comprehensive waste management solutions to mitigate these ongoing issues.

They emphasized that despite their efforts to maintain a hygienic environment, the waste-cluttered area undermines these attempts. Consequently, they feel highly exposed to atmospheric pollutants, increasing their vulnerability to lung diseases such as tuberculosis, asthma and pneumonia.

On April 29, a Parliamentary Natural Resources Portfolio Cluster Committee and Law and Public Safety Cluster Committee, Relebohile Mariti who cited that according to Section 90 of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly of Lesotho, residents were not allowed to be part of the meeting because talks are still at an early stage.

This was after the fed-up residents petitioned to the Committee demanding the immediate closure and relocation of the site after years of patience have been futile. In the meeting, it was disclosed by the Ministry of Environment that the dumpsite should never have existed in the first place.

The Ministry claimed the site was no longer eligible to serve its purpose after the Waste Management Act 2008 was passed with strict measures against illegal dumping, however, the site continued to operate.

The meeting was adjourned to give adequate time for the two relevant Ministries to cement an agreement on when and how the issues of the Ts'osane community will be addressed.

Just yesterday (Wednesday), representatives



Ha Ts'osane dump site

of the community returned from the Parliament more aggravated after they were denied access to a meeting for the two Ministries to discuss a way forward.

They were denied entry by the Clerk of the Law and Public Safety Cluster Committee, Relebohile Mariti who cited that according to Section 90 of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly of Lesotho, residents were not allowed to be part of the meeting because talks are still at an early stage.

This angered the representatives who are now beginning to suspect that this are the early tactics that prove that their efforts to shut and to call for the relocation of the dumpsite are now being thwarted.

Speaking to the *Weekly Observer* on the same day, one representative of the community, Mangaliso Cindi expressed dissatisfaction on this, arguing that just like it was stated on the weekly schedule that the meeting was an open one, they as victims should be allowed.

"Honestly speaking we were not invited but when an issue is said to be an open one, it means anyone and everyone who is a stakeholder can join. Now that it is us who are the victims, we were not anticipating to be denied this way. This is ridic-

ulous when we walked in, we were told that the ministry has requested to be given until June 6 to come up, with a plan."

She said despite this, they will not back down but this is a wake-up call for them to go back to the community members to strategize on a new way that would compel the government to do its part.

One other representee, Khoabene Chele also told this publication that, the Government and all the relevant stakeholders are downplaying the crisis because it does not directly affect them. He said they (government officials) are struggling to fathom the urgency of this matter.

"This side-lining does not solve any of our problems, officials are not doing us any justice at all. This was our petition and they kept setting dates which they never honoured. It's been five weeks now ever since our first meeting but no solution no solution has been reached.

When we make an initiative to come and play our part in our issues, we are told to return because we were uninvited, this shows that they do not take us serious while our living conditions continue to get unbearable," he said.

For her part, Clerk of the Law and Public Safety Cluster, Relebohile Mariti assured to the

Weekly Observer yesterday that the dismissal of residents was misunderstood and it was not on bad intentions.

She said they were not invited because negotiations between the ministries were still at an early undecided stage and are yet to be finalised.

"In our last meeting together, they were told that they will be informed when they will be invited back to the discussions. All the meetings which are currently taking place between the two ministries and the Maseru City Council (MCC) were now closed. The meeting has been postponed yet again because all the three parties are yet to reach a decision," she said.

Maraiti stated that, the residents were misled by the status of the meeting which was considered to be open, she assured that once the three stakeholders are ready to share the final decision, they will be summoned.

"We will call them to come and get the final report. We are in no position to issue the report yet and it will be shared once it has been tabled before the National Assembly.

They just showed up maybe because they saw the schedule circulating on social media but truthfully speaking it is still early for them to come."





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Public Service launches body to fight corruption

TS'EPISO SERABELE

Maseru

The Public Service launched a Systems Integrity Committee (SIC) in line with Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) mandate to fight Corruption.

It is mandated to work as an internal self-monitoring mechanism for ensuring that all structures of the Ministry perform their functions efficiently and effectively with integrity and free from corruption.

Speaking at the launch, Litelu Ramakhoru, commented on issues of corruption in the public service stating, "The most recent Auditor General's report, released a few days ago, has exposed the dire state of the country's accounts, where billions of Maluti are unaccounted for. In the same manner, the issue of

recruitment and all that goes with it especially in the public sector, leaves just too much to be desired."

He went on to point out that it is no surprise that in terms of the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Lesotho has plummeted from its best position ever of 55th globally, with a 49% score in 2013 and 2014, consecutively, down to 99th position in 2022, with a score of 37% only.

Ramakhoru said the body is to work as a self-monitoring structure to fight corruption, having committees in all ten districts.

"DCEO continues to establish the Students Integrity Associations (SIAs) with the key objective of inculcating anti-corruption values and principles in the students so as to develop them into citizens of integrity.

In fact, on a much broader scale, DCEO has

engaged the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) to infuse anti-corruption education in the school curricular, right from the pre-school level to the tertiary/university level" Ramakhoru said.

Minister of Public Service, Mputi Steven Mputi, stated that he fully internalises the mandate of the Committee and re-iterates that the Committee shall be, "An internal self-monitoring mechanism for making sure that all structures of the Ministry of the Public Service perform their functions efficiently and effectively with integrity and free from corruption."

He highlighted that his Ministry is a leading ministry in operationalizing SIC within ministerial operations, and he consider this is a crucial function to improve governance and delivery of public service, which is their mandate.

The minister stated that they have been sensitizations and rigorous workshops undertaken through DCEO to adequately prepare the newly selected committee to take assignment with integrity and without fear or favour.

The Principal Secretary and chief accounting officer in the Public Service, Makhoabane Lelimo, stated that the Committee is composed of all departments in the ministry.

She continued that in their workshops, poor service delivery and misuse of public resources and privileges thus promoting corruption, officers' misconduct and indiscipline, mismanagement of government houses, procurement irregularities and late payments and challenges raised by audit queries, are challenges likely to create conducive environment for corruption if not addressed properly.

TS'EPISO SERABELE

Leribe

Nestled in a far reaches of Leribe, Vuka Mosotho Primary School, easily translated "Wake up, Mosotho", is a picturesque area surrounded by abundant water sources. The school, situated in the heart of the community, is an institution that carries the hopes and dreams of its 300 students.

Unfortunately, lack of proper infrastructure and sanitation facilities has led to a host of problems that threaten the health and education of the children.

Inadequate classrooms, no toilets along with poor sanitation have resulted in illnesses such as diarrhoea and eye conditions causing many chil-

dren to miss classes.

These conditions have also contributed to a high number of dropouts from the school, hindering the community's ability to break free from the cycle of poverty.

In response to the ongoing health crisis at

primary school, World Vision Lesotho (WVL), through its ECHO project funded by the European Union, collaborated with the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) to address the issue.

This resulted in a heart-warming show of support, as businesses from across the region pledged their assistance at a ceremony held at the school on Tuesday.

The health officer of the nearby health care centre revealed that she had already attended to approximately 60 students from the school, highlighting the pressing need for intervention.

At the event, WVL demonstrated its commitment to the community by pledging a significant amount of supplies and facilities to Vuka Mosotho Primary School, these included four heating stoves, 30 windows, 50 bags of cement, 100 student desks and two teacher desks.

In a true spirit of philanthropy, giant micro lending company LESANA Financial Services contributed 40 bags of cement while Mahlakape Lodge pledged facilities worth M10 000, Aloes Guest House contributing M10 000 and the Ministry of Agriculture's Department of Forestry offered trees and nutritional education.

As a community member and former student, Thuso 'Moso shared heartfelt sentiments on behalf of the parents, underlying the impact the school has had on their lives. He said this while reminiscing his memories as a student when the school was founded in 1982, he revealed that it had only one building whose roof was blown away by the wind, of which current students are still using.

With a tinge of melancholy, he shared that he was currently experiencing vision problems, which he attributed to overexposure to direct sunlight during his time at Vuka Mosotho Primary.

He indicated that the donation is a great investment to the school, as it has a lot of students, with great potential.

The Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Training, Ratšiu Majara, also thanked the sponsors for their generous support. "As a Ministry, our goal is to provide quality education to all children, however, we are aware of restricting conditions that negatively impact children's performance," he said.

The Minister also highlighted the issue of climate change which seems to affect children's health due to extreme conditions that often result to undesirable corollaries.

World Vision explains that, to effectively carry out its humanitarian mission, it has developed a collaborative strategy with the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), aiming to nurture relationships, strengthen WV's global and European humanitarian capabilities, and enhance the quality and quantity of ECHO grants.

The ECHO Partnerships Specialist will play a crucial role in supporting the optimal functioning of the WV EU Representation (EUREP), specifically contributing to achieving the WV-ECHO Strategy. It is with the ECHO that it was able to reach out to Vuka Mosotho Primary, as part of the fourth, which is the last phase of the initiative.

Ray of hope for Vuka Mosotho Primary

• As civic groups pledge to afloat local school



A classroom at Vuka Mosotho Primary School

MEET OUR TEAM!

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TS'EPISO SERABELE

Maseru

Sehloho launches Mountain Marathon

In celebration of Lesotho's bicentenary, the Mountain Marathon, a 21.1km race promises to draw athletes and spectators alike, highlighting the country's breath-taking scenery and commitment to promoting tourism.

The launch of this highly anticipated marathon, financially supported by MS Construction under the leadership of Manti Sehloho, was launched this past Saturday.

One of the marathon organisers, also being a resident of Qacha's Nek, 'Maletsitsa Nthakong, explained that the event will be held in the quaint village of Qacha's Nek on October 26, and will traverse the majestic mountain paths of Ha Noosi and end at the scenic Melele ground.

Nthakong went on to indicate that the total prize pool for both genders amounts

to a staggering amount of cash, she said the awards range from M150 000 for the first-place winner down to M100 000 second position, M60 000 third position, M30 000 for the fourth position and finally, M20 000 for the fifth-place finish.

However, in order to be part of the marathon, one has to pay a certain amount of registration. Nthakong said the registration fee for local citizens is M1 000, SADC countries M2 500 and other global citizens M4 500.

The generous spirit of Manti Sehloho was on full display as he graciously donated a Toyota vehicle to the local police force to

ensure a secure and enjoyable experience for all participants and spectators. This act is said to reflect his strong commitment to the community and desire to promote safety during the race.

In his moving speech, Sehloho emphasized the importance of supporting one's roots, highlighting his own personal connection to Qacha's Nek. He said he always tries to support Tebello Ramakongoana, of the best athletes in Qacha's Nek.

He estimated at around M178,000 that has been offered to him and said if the marathon is won by a Mosotho, M50 000 will be added to their prize.

The launch of the Mountain Marathon was met with enthusiasm and appreciation from the Minister of Tourism, Motlatsi Maqelepo, who highlighted the significance of the occasion falling on Africa Day, a day that celebrates unity, peace, and prosperity across the continent.

Maqelepo emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for Basotho to showcase their talent and passion.

On the same note, Minister of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police Lebona Lephema shared his gratitude for the generous donation of a vehicle to his Ministry.

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Jhpiego educates community on PrEP, circumcision

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Non-profit organisation Jhpiego Lesotho held a Health Awareness Walk as part of its information dissemination efforts to raise awareness on different diseases.

The five-kilometre walk held on Friday took off from Thetsane to Masowe 3 and was led by the organisation's staff which were meant to

sensitise the community about the need for HIV prevention through options like Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC).

It also underscored how to deal with ailments like Tuberculosis (TB) and Covid-19. The event was also meant to remind Basotho about the available services provided by the Ministry of Health, with the support of USAID, as the country continues to struggle to combat new HIV infections.

Jhpiego supports the Ministry of Health to disseminate information about HIV-AIDS prevention and alternative interventions to curtail other diseases, the participants were taught about Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) which is a pill taken daily by HIV negative people, who are at a high risk for HIV exposure to reduce chances of infection.

It was stated that HIV negative individuals who take PrEP every day can lower their risk of

HIV infections by 90 percent.

VMMC is defined as the complete removal of the foreskin so that the penis is exposed, making it difficult for HIV to penetrate.

The two initiatives, PrEP and VMMC, have been scientifically proven as effective methods of reducing the chances of new HIV infection, however, they are not 100% safe. The best method remains faithfulness to a single partner.

Story continues on page 8

Chaperone



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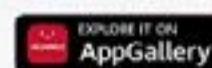
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STAFF REPORTER

Maseru

EU pours M537m in water and land restoration project

The European Union (EU) together with and the German Government has poured in a whopping M537.6 million towards the land and water resources throughout Lesotho.

The scheme will be implemented through a project dubbed Metsi a Lesotho (Lesotho's water) which was launched by the EU and the government's partnership dialogue held in Maseru last



Paola Amadei

week.

Metsi a Lesotho is described as a program with a promising future, poised to make positive impact on the development and well-being of the people of Lesotho through water and land rehabilitation.

The event, held as part of Europe Month, was also described as a testament to the enduring partnership between the EU and Lesotho.

It is part of the Samoa Agreement, penned in November 2023 to succeed the Cotonou Agreement, which serves as the guiding framework for the Lesotho-EU partnership Dialogue.

The Cotonou Agreement was signed in 2000 as a treaty between the EU and the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of states.

In her address, EU Ambassador to Lesotho, Paola Amadei, said the M537 675 000 fund will cater for Metsi a Lesotho and Renoka.

She said the partnership delineated shared objectives and areas of cooperation between Lesotho and the EU. Setting the stage for fruitful collaboration and mutual growth.

The Ambassador highlighted that the inauguration of this project as a significant milestone in the enduring alliance spanning nearly five decades.

"This partnership is founded on the principles of long-term sustainability, mutual prosperity and the promotion of high-quality investments.

Taking cues from the Global Gateway initiative, which aims to enhance intelligent, sustainable and secure connections in digital, environmental, energy, and transportation fields, while also reinforcing global health, education and research infrastructures, Metsi a Lesotho is dedicated to ensure that communities have access to clean water and sanitation services," she stated.

Additionally, Amadei emphasized that the project would safeguard water and land resources for both current and future generations.

The dialogue and program launch not only marked a milestone in the bilateral relations between Lesotho and the EU but also underlined the commitment of both parties to work together towards common goals.

"As representatives engage in discussions and celebrations during Europe Month, the focus remains on deepening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between Lesotho and the European Union."

For his part, Minister of Natural Resources, Mhloni Moleko, emphasised on the positive impact of EU-Lesotho relations on the citizens of Lesotho, highlighting the ongoing financial support from the EU for the Renoka programme.

He said the Government viewed such initiatives as aligned with their collective vision for 2030, particularly in the water sector. It is through these programs that they hope to achieve their goals.

In addition, Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Retselisitsoe Matlanyane, highlighted the significance of a centralized approach in the program, with the goal of improving water services and infrastructure for individuals in rural areas.

STAFF REPORTER

Maseru

New police boss appointed

Former Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) Director General, Borotho Matsoso, is the new commissioner of the Lesotho Mounted Police (LMPS).

This follows Prime Minister Sam Matekane's appointment of Matsoso as the head of the police sector on a three-year contract, effective from Thursday, May 23, 2024 to May 2027.

With the appointment, Matsoso immediately replaces Mahlape Morai who had been acting Commissioner from March of this year after being chosen to fill in for then COMPOL, Holomo Molibeli who is now retired.

Matsoso was the DCEO boss since 2003 from when the unit was established, he was then unceremoniously dismissed from the agency by former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane in 2017, just four months before his contract was due to expire.

He had been a senior LMPS officer of Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) rank before his 2003 appointment in the DCEO.

Confirmation of Matsoso's appointment at the helm of the LMPS was disclosed in a 23 May Legal Notice NO. 47 of 2024: Appointment of commissioner of Police Notice, 2024.

"I, King Letsie III, pursuant to section 147(3) of the constitution of Lesotho, 1993 and Section 5(2) of the Police service Act, 1998 and acting accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister to appoint Borotho James Matsoso as the Commissioner of Police with effect from 23 May 2024 to 23 May, 2027." Press attaché Thapelo Mabote in the Prime Minister's office said in a press statement issued last Friday.

Mabote also pleaded with the public to support the new Commissioner of Police and cooperate with the them in the fight against crime.

Matsoso assumes this role at a time when the country plagued by violent crimes with murder cases topping the list, these killings are often believed to be attributed by the rivalling famo groups which have since been declared as "unlawful."

Earlier this month three people had brutally murdered in Matsieng, Maseru while sometime towards end of April, six people, including five from one family were killed in what was believed to be revenge. This gruesome incident occurred at the villages of Liphakoeng and Fobane in the Leribe district.

In his response, Minister of Local Government, Chieftainship, Home Affairs and Police,

Lebona Lephama, denounced the groups as "unlawful", he 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; Tonado; 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.

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Borotho Matsoso

... continued from page 7

"HIV negative people who take the pill every day can lower their risk of HIV infection by more than 90 percent," said Jhpiego's technical advisor, Rajab Kakaire.

He explained that PrEP was recommended for people with more than one sexual partner and for those who have sex without a condom with a person or people of unknown HIV status.

"The pill should be used in combination with other prevention methods such as the correct and constant use of condoms and VMMC," he said it was important to take daily while at the risk of getting HIV but if a person felt he or she was no longer at risk, that person could approach his/her healthcare provider for advice on stopping the pills.

Dr Kakaire also warned that despite PrEP lowering HIV infection risk, it does not prevent sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs).

For her part, Jhpiego Communications Advisor, Polo Mots'oari, said the purpose of the walk was to create awareness in Ha Thetsane as a

Earlier this month three people had brutally murdered in Matsieng, Maseru while sometime towards end of April, six people, including five from one family were killed in what was believed to be revenge. This gruesome incident occurred at the villages of Liphakoeng and Fobane in the Leribe district.

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hotspot for factory workers who needed to know about access to free services for HIV prevention, VMMC and Covid-19 vaccines among others.

Mots'oari explained VMMC as the complete removal of the foreskin so that the tip of the penis is exposed making it difficult for the infection to penetrate.

"It is freely provided to males from 15 years and above. It reduces the risk of HIV infection by 60 percent, the risk of penile cancer and also reduces chances of getting STIs."

She also explained that it does not provide full protection against HIV, therefore, it is important to continue practicing safe sex, abstinence and being faithful to one partner.

The Likotsi area Chief, Motsoahae Nnona, thanked Jhpiego and Ministry of Health for bringing free services to this community.

He said their initiative was quite helpful, especially for men who hesitate to go to the clinics to access health services.

‘Sick and tired of being sick and tired’ – SA casts critical votes

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDANT

The highly anticipated 2024 National and Provincial elections are underway and despite some challenges, IEC maintains that the commission has enough voting material and every voter will be assisted before stations close at 9pm.

On 29 May, millions of South Africans went out in their numbers to mark their vote in the highly anticipated 2024 National and Provincial elections.

From Limpopo to the Western Cape, long queues were the order of the day even before voting stations opened at 7 am on Wednesday, as millions of South Africans took up the call to decide who would govern the nation.

Katleho Twala, who was waiting in line at the Jan Shoba Street and Duxbury Road voting station in Hatfield, Pretoria said that he was cautiously optimistic. The young voter, wrapped in a South African flag, said that he joined the queue at 7:30 am, just after voting stations opened and was still waiting to make his mark when Daily Maverick spoke to him at 12:30.

“I’m not going to leave the queue before I vote and I don’t see anybody else leaving the queue either. We are here for change,” Twala said.

Taking the stage at the National Results Operation Center in Gallagher Estate, Deputy IEC CEO Masego Sheburi gave media, political parties and observers an update on the elections, saying that they were off to a smooth start despite some delays and challenges in some regions of the country.

“This, we think, is a testament to the enthusiasm of South Africans to record their political choice,” Sheburi said.

Although the commission could not share voter turnout as the law prohibited that, Sheburi said that the commission planned on receiving as many voters as anticipated, with estimates showing that the turnout may be more than 66% from 2019.

Sheburi said 93% of the 23,292 voting stations opened on time, and the remainder of the



A drone view shows people queuing at the Hospital Hill township to vote during the South African elections, in Johannesburg, South Africa.

voting stations opened within an hour of the 7 am start date.

Sheburi explained that some of the voting stations opened late because materials did not arrive in time as a result of the IEC not having enough security to escort delivery teams and protests in certain communities in the Eastern Cape.

Sheburi reiterated that the commission has enough voting material and every voter will be assisted before stations close at 9pm.

Despite some of the challenges experienced, the elections were commencing smoothly, he added.

“The problems we have experienced do not amount to the deviation from the legal and standard requirements for free and fair elections. We could have done without them but we are dealing with them,” he said.

Noting the various challenges the commission faced, including malfunctioning Voter Management Device (VMD) and some voters not being able to vote, Sheburi said that the commission did not want to underplay the reports, but stressed that perspective was important.

Answering questions about issues with the VMD being offline, Sheburi said that it is not a requirement for the voting process, but

is instead there to facilitate the smooth flow of voters and doesn’t reduce the integrity of the results.

“However, where it proves to be a hindrance rather than an enabler to voting, we can put it aside and revert to the manual system,” he assured.

Some voters unable to vote

Sheburi made a point to remind voters of the cardinal rule in the 2024 elections, which is to only vote where they were registered. The IEC opened section 24A applications which allowed voters to change their voting station. However, several hopeful voters were met with disappointment when the change was not reflected in the IEC’s system, despite successful applications.

Daily Maverick was at the Jan Shoba Street and Duxbury Road voting station in Hatfield and spoke to three individuals who were experiencing challenges.

“I registered to vote, and it was confirmed that I changed voting stations but now the system has not captured that I changed locations and I can’t vote. It is frustrating because I have been here since 6:30 am,” said one individual who asked not to be identified.

“The problem is that it is not our fault. It is the fault of the system. We don’t even mind

if we can’t vote regionally, but provincial and national matters”.

Another individual said she arrived at 7 am to vote but the system also did not reflect the change in her voting station.

“I can’t go to the Northern Cape I am studying here in Pretoria. I changed and confirmed that I had changed because I do want to vote and now I can’t,” she said.

The third individual said that although he had changed his station from the Mamelodi station to the Jan Shoba Street and Duxbury Road one, the system also did not reflect the change.

“I changed stations because I knew I would be working here today and now I won’t be able to vote. What if I go to the Mamelodi station and I am also unable to vote?”

The presiding officer of the station said these were the first voters of the day who had been experiencing this issue. Daily Maverick watched as she worked hard, calling the provincial office trying to rectify the situation.

Polarising feelings experienced in the lines Jackson Mojapelo (64) said that the lines of voters he had seen at Winnie Mandela Secondary School in Tembisa, Midrand were similar to the lines he saw in 1994.

“We took this government from the ground up to where it is today. Other people can say a lot of things, but we know for a fact, particularly us who started this democracy in 1994, we know where the government and economy were,” he said.

Mojapelo still has faith in the ANC.

“There is no political party that can do what the ANC has done for this country. Look how big Tembisa is. Before 1994 we only had two streets which had been tarred. There was no electricity. This school that we are standing at started in 1994, look at the clinic, the customer care centre, library, and this marvellous school all thanks to the ANC,” he said.

However, another voter in the line who asked not to be named expressed her frustration with the ANC.

“I am voting for change. There is a lot of issues, service delivery, water shortage, lack of electricity,” she said.

Youth unemployment was a key concern for her and one of the reasons she was in the line.

“The youth want to see themselves growing career-wise, we can’t go to school and just be unemployed,” she said.

The 22-year-old first-time voter said she was excited to cast her vote.

“I am excited, I have a feeling that my vote can lead to change,” she said.

‘Sick and tired of being sick and tired,’ says youth.

Twala said he was trying to be as positive as he could about the outcome of the election.

“Because I do understand that the ANC’s hold will continue because a lot of our elders still feel loyal and like they owe them something, whereas a lot of the youth we don’t feel that same loyalty because the promises they have made had not been kept,” he said.

Some of the key issues for Twala include electricity and service delivery.

“My thoughts on any international issues are taking a backseat because I am looking at what I go through on a daily basis and what people around me go through. So that is what I am going to be focusing on,” he said.

Twala said that he felt the youth level of participation and engagement with these elections were surprisingly high.

“The sentiment among the youth is that ‘we are sick and tired of being sick and tired’ and amongst the elders, there is the sentiment of ‘better the devil you know than the one you don’t, I am personally ready to roll the dice on a new devil,’ he said. DM



Election staff prepare a polling station as citizens arrive to cast their votes during the South African general election in Johannesburg



Health talk and Patient care

with
Mosiuoa
Lesuhlo

Understanding fibroids and cysts: Essential health information for patients

Fibroids and cysts are common health conditions affecting many women, yet they often cause confusion and concern due to their varying nature and symptoms. Here's a straightforward guide to help you understand these conditions and what to do if you're affected.

What Are Fibroids?

Fibroids are non-cancerous growths that develop in or on the uterus. They are composed of muscle and fibrous tissue and can vary in size from tiny seedlings to large masses that can distort and enlarge the uterus.

Symptoms of Fibroids:

- Heavy or prolonged menstrual periods
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Frequent urination
- Difficulty emptying the bladder
- Constipation
- Backache or leg pains

What Are Ovarian Cysts?

Ovarian cysts are fluid-filled sacs that develop on or within an ovary. They are common during the reproductive years and often form as part of the normal menstrual cycle.

Symptoms of Ovarian Cysts:

- Pelvic pain, often during the menstrual cycle
- Bloating or swelling in the abdomen
- Pain during bowel movements
- Painful intercourse
- Frequent or difficult urination

Causes and Risk Factors

- Fibroids: The exact cause is unknown, but factors such as



genetic changes, hormonal influences (especially estrogen and progesterone), and growth factors (substances in the body that help maintain tissues) are believed to play a role.

- Ovarian Cysts: These can develop as part of the menstrual cycle (functional cysts) or from abnormal cell growth (pathological cysts). Factors like hormonal imbalances, pregnancy, severe pelvic infections, and conditions like endometriosis can increase the risk.

Diagnosis

Both fibroids and cysts are often discovered during routine pelvic exams or imaging tests such as ultrasounds, MRIs, or CT scans

Treatment Options

- Fibroids: Treatment depends on the size, number, and location of fibroids, as well as symptoms.

Options include medication to regulate hormones, non-invasive procedures like MRI-guided focused ultrasound surgery, minimally invasive procedures like uterine artery embolization, or traditional surgical methods such as myomectomy or hysterectomy.

- Ovarian Cysts: Many cysts resolve on their own without treatment. For persistent or symptomatic cysts, hormonal contraceptives may be prescribed to prevent new cysts, or surgery may be required to remove problematic cysts.

When to See a Doctor

- Unusual or severe pelvic pain
- Heavy or irregular menstrual periods
- Symptoms that interfere with daily activities
- Sudden, severe abdominal

pain, fever, or vomiting (these could indicate a ruptured cyst or other complications)

Living with Fibroids and Cysts

While these conditions can be unsettling, they are often manageable. Regular check-ups, staying informed about your body, and working closely with your healthcare provider can help maintain your health and quality of life. If you're experiencing any symptoms or have concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to your doctor for advice and treatment options.

By understanding fibroids and cysts, you can take proactive steps towards better health and well-being. Stay informed, listen to your body, and seek medical guidance when necessary.



INSIGHTS & Balance

with
RELEBOHILE
KABELO

Transcending the ego: The interconnected self and the universe

The question “Who am I?” has puzzled philosophers, theologians, and scientists for centuries. Personally, I grew up asking myself existential questions like “Why am I on earth?” and it is only recently that I have begun to consider identity questions such as “Who am I?” which touch the very core of human identity and existence.

In contemporary discourse, this question is often explored through the concept of the ego and its transcendence, personally it made me see that I do not know myself and will never do.

This article examines how individuals are not isolated entities but interconnected beings, fundamentally part of the universe experiencing itself, through the eyes of prominent intellectuals.

By delving into philosophical, spiritual, and scientific perspectives, we explore how transcending the ego reveals a profound sense of interconnectedness, resonating with the ideas of thinkers like Alan Watts.

Note that while I have drawn on AI-generated insights for some of the thinkers mentioned here, I am not fully familiar with all their works and have cross-referenced key ideas with secondary sources to ensure accuracy.

However, I am well acquainted with the concept I need to present due to my extensive engagement with Alan Watts’ lectures and lessons from my philosophy courses.

The major aim of this article is to portray how thinkers view a world beyond the ego. The next article will explicitly show how you, as a reader, can benefit from transcending your ego.

As Alan Watts illustrates, we are part of the Big Bang, more like the universe experiencing itself. Next week’s article will expound further on notions like the one in the previous statement.

Historical context

The idea of interconnectedness is deeply rooted in both Eastern and Western traditions. In Eastern philosophies such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism, the notion that individuals are interconnected with the cosmos is a central tenet. The Upanishads of Hinduism speak of Atman (the self) as being one with Brahman (the universal soul). Buddhism’s concept of anatta (non-self) and the interdependent origination (pratyasamutpada) emphasize that the self is an illusion, and all beings are interconnected.

In the West, similar ideas can be traced back to Stoicism, which teaches that humans

are part of a larger rational order, and to Spinoza’s pantheism, which identifies God with Nature, suggesting an intrinsic connection between all things. These ideas set the stage for modern explorations of the interconnected self.

Key concepts and thinkers

Modern Physics: Quantum physics offers intriguing insights into interconnectedness. Concepts like quantum entanglement suggest that particles can be interconnected in ways that transcend space and time. The Big Bang Theory also supports the idea that all matter in the universe was once condensed into a singularity, indicating a fundamental unity at the moment of creation.

Ego and Self: The ego is often seen as the individual self, separate from others. Transcending the ego involves recognizing that this sense of separation is an illusion.

Alan Watts: A key figure in popularizing Eastern philosophies in the West, Watts argued that the self is an illusion and that we are all part of a larger cosmic process. In “The Book: On the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are,” Watts suggests that the belief in a separate self is a social construct, and true enlightenment comes from recognizing our fundamental unity with the universe.

Carl Jung: Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious posits that beneath our individual unconscious lies a deeper, shared unconscious that connects all of humanity. This idea aligns with the notion of interconnectedness.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: A Jesuit priest and paleontologist, Teilhard de Chardin introduced the concept of the noosphere, a sphere of human thought enveloping the earth, evolving towards greater consciousness and unity.

Spinoza: Spinoza’s philosophy of pantheism suggests that the universe and all its components, including humans, are interconnected manifestations of a single divine substance, emphasizing the unity of all existence.

Laozi: Laozi’s Taoist teachings emphasize the interconnectedness and harmony of all things, advocating for aligning with the natural flow of the Tao to achieve balance and peace within oneself and the universe.

Buddha: Buddha’s teachings on dependent origination highlight the interconnectedness of all phenomena, asserting that all beings and events arise due to interdependent causes and conditions, promoting compassion and non-attachment.

Marx: Marx’s theory of historical materialism underscores the interconnectedness of

social classes and economic structures, asserting that societal change is driven by the dialectical struggle between opposing forces, leading to the eventual realization of classless society.

Fichte: Fichte’s concept of the “Absolute I” suggests an interconnectedness between individual consciousnesses and the universal spirit, positing that the self and the external world are intimately linked, forming the basis of reality.

Nietzsche: Nietzsche’s idea of the eternal recurrence proposes a cosmic interconnectedness where all events and experiences repeat infinitely, challenging individuals to affirm life and embrace their interconnectedness with the eternal cycle of existence.

Heidegger: Heidegger’s existential phenomenology explores the interconnectedness between Being and human existence, suggesting that individuals are always already situated within a shared world, calling for an authentic engagement with one’s own existence and the world.

Einstein: Einstein’s theory of relativity revolutionized our understanding of space, time, and gravity, highlighting the interconnectedness of all physical phenomena and suggesting that the universe is a unified whole governed by fundamental principles.

Schopenhauer: Schopenhauer’s philosophy emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living beings through the concept of the will-to-live, asserting that all beings are driven by the same underlying force, leading to a shared experience of suffering and striving for fulfillment.

Hegel: Hegel’s dialectical method explores the interconnectedness of opposing ideas and historical processes, suggesting that reality unfolds through a process of thesis-antithesis-synthesis, ultimately leading to the realization of the Absolute Spirit and the unity of all contradictions in the Absolute.

Intellectual development over time

The development of the idea of interconnectedness has evolved through significant historical phases. Ancient Eastern philosophies laid the groundwork, which was later mirrored and expanded upon by Western thinkers.

The Renaissance and Enlightenment periods in Europe saw a resurgence of interest in holistic views of nature and humanity’s place within it. In the 20th century, thinkers like Watts, Jung, and Teilhard de Chardin synthesized these ideas with modern scientific understandings, bringing a renewed focus on

interconnectedness.

However, we also have The Transcendental period, often associated with the American Transcendentalism movement of the early to mid-19th century, which was a cultural, literary, and philosophical movement that emerged primarily in New England.

This movement was characterized by a strong emphasis on individual intuition and conscience, a deep connection to nature, and a belief in the inherent goodness and potential of humanity.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, often considered the leader of the Transcendental movement, was one of its central figures. His essays and lectures, such as “Nature” (1836) and “Self-Reliance” (1841), articulated the core principles of Transcendentalism. Emerson emphasized the importance of the individual’s direct relationship with the divine and nature.

Practical implications and modern relevance

Transcending the ego has profound implications for personal well-being and societal harmony. Recognizing our interconnectedness can foster empathy, reduce conflict, and inspire collaborative efforts to address global issues. In environmentalism, for example, understanding the interconnectedness of all life can motivate sustainable practices and policies.

Instead of seeing yourself as an individual, you can begin seeing yourself in the environment around you. In other words, transcending the ego liberates can liberate you from the constraints of self-centered desires and attachments, leading you to a deeper sense of inner peace and fulfillment.

By recognizing your interconnectedness with others and the larger universe, individuals cultivate empathy, compassion, and a greater capacity for meaningful relationships, fostering personal growth and a sense of belonging. Your environment makes you, and next week’s article will show how.

The exploration of “Who am I?” through the lens of transcending the ego reveals a profound interconnectedness with the universe. Drawing on insights from Eastern and Western philosophies, psychology, and modern science, we find that the self is not an isolated entity but part of a larger cosmic process. This understanding not only enriches our intellectual history but also offers practical guidance for fostering a more connected and compassionate world.



Khuele shines as a global filmmaker

TS'EPISO SERABELO

Maseru

Imagine making waves in the international film industry at just the ripe age of 24, meet Ayesha Khuele, an internationally recognized filmmaker who burst onto the scene in 2019 with her debut film, *Molisana*.

This remarkable short film acted as a pilot for the feature film she will soon be shooting to showcase her exceptional talent and unique creative vision.

The film, *Molisana*, garnered attention and acclaim from festivals worldwide, starting with the Waco Family and Faith International Film Festival, Khuele made history as the youngest nominated Director at the festival that year, demonstrating her skill and potential as a rising star in the industry.

Her success didn't stop there, her work continued to captivate audiences, receiving recognition from prestigious festivals such as Portugal's Moinho Fine Fest, England's Lift-off Global Network Sessions and the BeBop Channel Content Festival in the United States.

Additionally, she earned a spot in the First Time Filmmaker Sessions in New York, further solidifying her status as a promising talent in the global film community.

"Embarking on a feature film with a zero-budget is pretty daunting, and assistance would be very helpful right now. I am soon to start production of *Molisana*, I am seeking support from both private and public sector. Shooting a film is hard and expensive,"

said Khuele in a recent interview with the *Weekly Observer* showing determination to bring her vision to life.

The filmmaker continued by adding that, "Over the past four years, I poured my heart into writing the screenplay, honing skills and maturing as a filmmaker. Despite the financial hurdles, my passion and dedication to the project have only grown stronger."

Molisana illustrates a range of social-economic issues that resonate with young people, including education, poverty, theft and abuse. Khuele said she is committed to using her platform to illuminate these challenges that further project her role as a devoted youth advocate.

By addressing these pressing concerns through the art of storytelling, she aims to create a impactful narrative that catalyses conversations and drives positive change.

Khuele's accomplishments extend beyond *Molisana*, her student film, *Tormented*, delved into the complexities of culture and religion among youth, earning recognition on a global scale.

In 2022, Ayesha had the honour of representing her country as one of seven youth ambassadors at the prestigious AU-EU Summit held in Belgium.

With her unique perspective, she undoubtedly inspires future generations of filmmakers while advocating for the issues that shape their global community.

Ntlaloe steps down as LU Head Coach

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Limkokwing University (LU) Football Club Head coach will not coach the team from the coming season of 2024/25.



Ntlaloe Ntlaloe

This after the coach decided to step down from his role citing lack of support from the club's management.

Ntlaloe leaves the Malaysian originating side after a successful debut season in the Vodacom Premier League (VPL). He

has been the club's mentor ever since its advent in Lesotho's football community ever since the 2015/16 season.

After waiting to get promotion into the top tier League for eight years, he finally inspired the club to their first ever VPL campaign where they finished 11th with seven wins, 10 draws and 13 losses. They gathered a total of 31 points a record not bad for the debutants.

Speaking to the *Weekly Observer* Sport on Tuesday that he fills cannot continue with the role of head coach beyond this season because the club's management is not fulfilling their financial obligations to cater for the team. He said the situation that he had to use his personal money to provide for the team in some instances.

"I am not leaving because of sporting reasons at all. It is because I had a lot on my plate, I was now serving the role of an admin and I occasionally used funds for my own family to run and support the team," he said.

Further revealing that the team has been struggling financially for a significant part of the season where he had to provide financial aid to save the club from being disqualified in the league for viola-

tions by the Lesotho Football Association (LeFA).

"I wasn't going to leave the players to go through such a mess alone. I had to do everything I can so that the team avoids expulsion in the league, I told myself that it would be a shame for the players to suffer for something they know nothing off and I decided to play my part to save the team.

I also told myself that I will support the team until the season ends and whatever the management would decide to do after the season will be beyond my control," he said.

Despite this drastic decision, there will be no love lost between Ntlaloe and LU and for this reason, he firmly told this publication that he will take a total break from coaching in the upcoming season.

He also confirmed that he does not dream of working for any other club except LU and so he will not return to the job anytime soon.

Efforts made by this publication to solicit the response from the club's management were not successful. However, this publication will track all developments regarding the team.

Sundowns starred while other teams fought for lead supporting role in DStv Premiership campaign

KANANELO MASILO

Maseru

Another DStv Premiership season recently concluded. Unsurprisingly, it was Mamelodi Sundowns that starred once again, while the other 15 teams played the supporting roles.

Sundowns were crowned South African soccer league for a record-extending seventh successive season. The latest league crown also stretched Sundowns' overall tally in the Premier Soccer League to 14 Premiership crowns, 10 more than the next-best sides (Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs).

The only other teams to be crowned South Africa champions under the current guise of the league — which has been around since 1996 — were Bidvest Wits, Manning Rangers and Santos. They each clinched the title once.

Coincidentally the two latter clubs won their single title while being coached by former Pirates and Sundowns mentor Gordon Igesund.

With this latest victory, Sundowns head coach Rulani Mokwena has three league titles to his name. Only Pitso Mosimane, with five, plus Igesund and current SuperSport United coach Gavin Hunt (with four each) have won the Premiership more times.

However, none of those legendary coaches in South African soccer managed to do it while accumulating a record points haul of 73 after 30 games. Nor did they manage to leave the second-placed team trailing by a



Mamelodi Sundowns celebrate following their DStv Premiership clash with Cape Town City FC at Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria, South Africa.

massive 23 points at the conclusion of the league campaign. Mokwena achieved both of these feats.

Nevertheless, at the conclusion of yet another memorable season for Masandawana, Mokwena was conflicted. The Tshwane gi-

ants were aiming to become the first South African top-flight team to end the season without suffering a single defeat.

However, Cape Town City had other plans. The Citizens defeated Masandawana 1-0 on the last day of the season to shatter that

dream. Thus Sundowns ended the season with just a single loss in 30 league matches.

The loss to City also snapped a 53-game unbeaten streak for Sundowns in the league. Prior to losing this past weekend, they had last been defeated in September 2022. - DM

Weekly Observer Sport

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as LU Head
Coach**

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LeBA to host National championships



Boxing champion file picture

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

The Lesotho Boxing Association (LeBA) is set to host sport's National Championship scheduled to take place on June 29, this year.

These are the annual national games which are often used to select the best amongst the rest on various categories and weights. They are also usually regarded as a pre-requisite for the upcoming international tourna-

ments which Lesotho participates or is invited to compete in.

Speaking to the *Weekly Observer* during the week, LeBA Public Relations Officer and Events Organizer, Taole Lets'asa said this year's edition will be used as preparations as Lesotho ahead of the major tournament organised by the International Friendship Association (IFA).

This tournament is scheduled to take place in September 2024 in Russia and Lesotho like any other mem-

ber state of IFA is invited to tussle with other top nations.

"We are preparing for some international games which will be held in Russia and we will be part of the tournament if everything goes well," he said.

Lets'asa also told this masthead that over 15 local clubs under the affiliation of the LeBA will participate in the championships. He said different stars with various weights will lock horns and each winner from each

weight category will be regarded as a national champion.

"We have about nine weight categories. So for us to form a national team, we make it from all the champions from the nine categories. So, in our case, we will have those who outperformed in the weights of 48, 52, 57, 60 and so on. They will automatically form our national team and represent us in Russia," he said.