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THARI

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# Weekly Observer

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# Sixty percent of Basotho endure poverty

**KHOSI PHEKO**  
Maseru

According to the findings of the Afrobarometer 2024 Survey, a significant 60% of Basotho are reported to persistently endure moderate to high levels of poverty, facing considerable challenges in meeting fundamental life necessities.

This sobering disclosure sheds light on the ongoing socioeconomic struggles within Basotho population.

Moreover, the survey delves into the perspectives of Basotho regarding poverty levels, as well as their encounters in obtaining essential identity documents like birth certificates and passports.

The Afrobarometer, a Pan-African, non-partisan research network conducts public attitude on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in Africa.

The network in Lesotho is led by Advision Lesotho and it is said to have interviewed at least 1200 adult Basotho in the February of 2024.

While revealing the findings, the National Investigator of Afrobarometer Lesotho, Libuseng Malephane shared that although the 60% is an 11 percentage-point decrease compared to what was gathered in 2020, moderate and high lived poverty remains prevalent in rural areas than in the urban areas and specifically, 62% of women experienced high lived poverty as compared 54% of men.

She further stated that, citizens with no formal education or only primary schooling

- Afrobarometer highlights poverty levels
- Calls for govt to create jobs



**Libuseng Malephane**

reported the highest levels of lived poverty, 76% and 66%, respectively, compared to 33% of those with post-secondary qualifications.

The report also outlined that elderly Basotho have reported higher levels of moderate/high lived poverty which is 64% compared to the 50% of respondents aged 18-25.

Additionally, 85% of citizens reported having no cash income.

"Unemployment is the most important problem that Basotho want their government

to address as cited by 63% of respondents as one of their responsibilities. Unemployment is followed by infrastructure/roads, water supply electricity and poverty," she said.

The report criticizes the government's performance, with 87% of Basotho believing it is failing to create jobs, 68% dissatisfied with efforts to improve living standards for the poor, and significant numbers unhappy with water and sanitation services (65%), reliable electricity (58%) and road mainte-

nance (58%).

"Action is required here, we were often promised by those are government that they will address these issues but there is still no light.

At this juncture in our history something needs to change. We need effective poverty eradication and employment strategies, life for ordinary Basotho has to improve," Malephane said.

As one of the stakeholders, World Vision Lesotho Project Coordinator, Tankiso Motipi emphasized the plight of women most particularly those vulnerable to poverty.

She said it is evident that women are still marginalised and so more should be done to empower them.

"There is still a lot to be done to empower and to equip women. The data has shown that women are mostly the ones who have endured poverty and this leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and human trafficking," she said.

On the side-lines of the engagement, Katleho Mabeleng, a Member of Parliament who represents Hloahloeng Constituency told the *Weekly Observer* that this is a wake-up call for lawmakers to do more to free the country from poverty as well as to generate job opportunities.

"The purpose was mainly to scrutinize in areas where we are lagging behind as a nation. Afrobarometer is doing a good job in exposing our weaknesses so that we can be pushed to change the circumstances," he said.

He added that, just like unemployment, the case study reveals that the government needs to do more to develop infrastructure in hard-to-reach areas.

"There are remote areas where you travel almost nine hours and those are places where we live in. In most cases, nothing much is required to address some of the challenges for instance, I mentioned the necessity of water boats where I come from.

They are fundamental instruments that can help to cross over rivers while the government mentioned is working on constructing bridges," Mabeleng said.

## UNFPA, media to tackle youth SRHR barriers in Lesotho

**TS'EPISO SERABELE**  
Maseru

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) this week hosted a pivotal capacity-building workshop for journalists in Maseru.

The event was aimed to bolster media understanding and advocacy for sexual and

reproductive health rights (SRHR), reflecting on the 30-year progress since the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agreement.

The UNFPA's ambitious goals include eliminating maternal deaths, unmet family planning needs, gender-based violence, and HIV transmission.

Recognizing the media's crucial role, the

workshop stressed the importance of journalistic efforts in raising awareness and driving change.

Staggering statistics on teenage pregnancy were unveiled, with reports indicating that 19% of teenagers in Lesotho are pregnant, including 3% of 15-year-olds and a shocking 40% of those under 19.

**Story continues on page 8...**





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# Lesotho's battles maternal mortality

**TS'EPISO SERABELE**

Maseru

Lesotho continues to grapple with a harrowing reality, it ranks second among countries with the highest maternal mortality rates in the Southern African Development Committee (SADC) region and third in the Central.

This, was disclosed by Blandinah Motaung, a sexual reproductive health rights coordinator with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at the Capacity-building workshop focused on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Maseru on Tuesday.

She reported that approximately 566 out of every 100 000 live births result in maternal death, placing Lesotho among the world's worst performers.

Motaung explained that the causes of these maternal deaths are varied, including hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, infections and other medical conditions that can complicate pregnancy and childbirth.

She noted that many of these deaths occur among first-time mothers.

To combat this crisis, healthcare professionals and policymakers in Lesotho are implementing several strategies:

- Improving access to prenatal care and obstetric services, particularly in rural areas where such services are scarce.
- Educating women about pregnancy and childbirth risks, emphasizing the importance of seeking prompt medical attention for complications.
- Addressing socio-cultural and economic factors such as poverty, lack of education and gender inequality that contribute to maternal mortality.

Despite these efforts, Motaung emphasized that maternal mortality in Lesotho remains a stubborn issue. A key challenge is the affordability of health services and supplies.

Many women, particularly in rural areas, struggle to afford medical treatment, delaying their access to necessary care until it's too late.

While antenatal care is free in public hospitals, transportation to these services poses a significant challenge. Lesotho's mountainous terrain and poor road networks hinder

timely access to healthcare facilities, especially in emergencies. Additionally, some women cannot afford transportation costs.

Cultural practices and beliefs also interfere with timely medical assistance. Traditional birth attendants, widely used in rural areas, often lack the necessary skills to handle emergencies, leading to complications.

Furthermore, the absence of a regulatory body in health facilities allows unauthorized medical practice in some areas.

These barriers, combined with inadequate healthcare infrastructure, make it difficult for Lesotho to reduce its high maternal mortality rate.

However, with continued efforts and investment in healthcare and education, progress is possible.

Maseretse Ratia, a Young People and Adolescents Analyst, highlighted the pressing issue of teenage pregnancy in Lesotho. She revealed that 19% of teenage girls in Lesotho are pregnant, with 3% being under the age of 15.

Alarmingly, 40% of these pregnancies occur among 19-year-olds, indicating a concerning trend. Ratia cited 26 births per quar-

ter to girls under 15, underscoring the problem's magnitude.

The analyst also noted the adolescent fertility rate in Lesotho, revealing a substantial number of young girls becoming mothers before they are fully prepared, sometimes resulting in newborn deaths.

She pointed out that child marriage is a significant factor, with 24% of children under 18 married, according to 2016 census data. "Child marriage not only violates children's rights but also contributes to early pregnancy, limiting educational and economic opportunities for young girls," she said.

Mathato Nkuatsana from the Ministry of Health added that a lack of comprehensive sexual education exacerbates the high rates of teenage pregnancy, she explained that many young people in Lesotho are not adequately informed about sexual health and contraception, leading to misinformed and risky decisions.

Nkuatsana observed that cultural taboos and parental discomfort with discussing sexual health leave young people to seek information from unreliable sources or personal experiences, which can be dangerous.

**STAFF REPORTER**

Maseru

Food safety remains a global concern, as contaminated food products can lead to severe food-borne illnesses and nutritional deficiencies.

A stark example occurred in 2017, when 1 060 cases of listeriosis were confirmed in South Africa, resulting in 216 deaths due to the consumption of contaminated processed meat products.

For communities like Basotho, where access to high-quality, nutritious food is vital, the stakes are incredibly high.

Recognizing the importance of nourishment, the Government of Lesotho recently endorsed legislation to regulate the nutritional value of maize meal and wheat flour through fortification.

Despite the high costs associated with adding essential vitamins and minerals, there can be no compromise.

Fortification ensures that these staple products provide crucial micronutrients that might otherwise be missing from daily diets.

Lesotho Flour Mills (LFM) Quality Control Manager stated that she has dedicated her career to safeguarding the quality of their products. "The importance of quality control in food production is immense."

"At Lesotho Flour Mills, we fully support the fortification legislation to ensure that the Basotho people are properly nourished," she said.

The global milling industry has seen significant advancements in technology and practices aimed at improving food safety and quality. From advanced sampling techniques to real-time data analysis, Lesotho Flour Mills has invested in several innovations to monitor and

## Mill talks quality control in food production

maintain the highest standards of quality.

According to the quality control extends beyond safety, it encompasses public health and trust. "Consumers need confidence that the food they consume is safe and of the highest quality. Our processes ensure that only the best grains are used, and that finished products meet stringent standards."

We inspect every truck, grade every grain, and monitor every stage of the milling process with precision and care.

The mill also collaborates closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Nutrition to ensure that local farmers understand the importance of producing high-quality maize and wheat.

"In recent months, I have participated in workshops held by the Ministry to promote local production and explain grading processes and regulations. We are committed to buying all locally produced wheat and maize, supporting local agriculture and ensuring food quality,"

she continued.

Additionally, the Government of Lesotho is dedicated not only to fortification and grading standards but also to collaborating with organizations such as the World Food Program to support school feeding programs.

LFM has consistently worked with these organizations, particularly in cooperation with the World Food Program, to nourish school children across the nation.



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KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

Commercial bank giant Nedbank Lesotho together with the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) have joined forces in effort to boost Lesotho's tourism sector.

This was underscored by the return of Nedbank's annual campaign dubbed Transact and Win Big that will kick off from



Sekonyela Matamane

# Nedbank, LTDC work to promote tourism

today and run until November. This year's campaign returns with prizes worth M200 000 such as cash, grocery vouchers travel vouchers and many more up for grabs.

This campaign is tailored for Nedbank customers who use the bank's online platforms and stand a chance to claim massive prizes.

Online users will stand a high chance when they; tap or swipe bank cards at a Nedbank speed-point, buy airtime or electricity using Nedbank Money (Africa) app or Mobimoney and lastly, they can pay for fuel at a Nedbank speed-point.

Addressing the media in Maseru on Wednesday, Nedbank's Head of Marketing and Communications, Sekonyela Matamane said this year's campaign is special as it also serves in commemoration of Lesotho's 200 years of existence. He said for the bicentenary celebrations, they partnered with

the LTDC to give Basotho a chance to tour some attraction places locally.

"We are proud to be part of the celebrations since the nation was founded in Thaba-Bosiu. To celebrate this milestone in a special way, we came to a conclusion that most of us are acquainted with many places while others are not.

Most of the citizens they think of touring they resort to international places and yet we have a lot of interesting places under the banner of the LTDC.

We approached them to devise a plan for Basotho to prioritize their own tourist attractions. This will also promote Lesotho internationally and also amplify LTDC's efforts luring in international tourists," he said.

He added that, this initiative is also aimed to support the parastatal in their bid to earn from the tourism levy.

"We are aware that it is one of the tools used to enhance the country's economy and so we decided to support the idea. We will be supportive towards this legislation and we will be factual in requesting such in enquiring on such," Matamane said.

For his part, LTDC's Head of Strategic Marketing, Tebello Thoola said the sole purpose of this campaign is to promote the tourism sector. He said the aim to target international tourists as well as tourists from the neighbouring South Africa.

"Most importantly, domestic tourism for us as Basotho to be proud of our tourist attractions, to be tourist ambassadors. When you visit other countries such as Botswana and others, they will be curious of the kind of country Lesotho is so it is our duty to be domestic tourists so that we can know such places," he said.

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... continued from page 2

In the first quarter of this year alone, 26 girls under the age of 15 gave birth, highlighting the pressing need for improved SRHR services. This was highlighted by UNFPA's the Sexual Reproductive Health Rights coordinator, Blandinah Motaung.

Despite efforts by the Ministry of Health and its partners, significant barriers persist in accessing contraceptives. Participants cited stigma, harsh treatment from older health workers and a lack of male engagement in SRHR conversations as critical challenges.

These issues perpetuate traditional gender norms and power imbalances, leading to adverse health outcomes for women and girls, including unwanted pregnancies and increased risks of sexually transmitted infections.

"The lack of male engagement in conversations around sexual and reproductive health also contributes to the issue of access to services. Despite their integral role in safe sexual practices and family planning, men are often overlooked as targets for health education and awareness campaigns," Motaung had continued.

Additionally, the climate crisis is exacerbating existing social and economic disparities, particularly affecting marginalized communities in low-income areas. A 2021 World Health Organization (WHO) report predicted that climate change would significantly reduce health service access worldwide, a trend evident in Lesotho.

UNFPA Representative Innocent Modisaotile emphasized the media's vital role in advocating for marginalized voices. He illustrated the media's power to amplify the stories of vulnerable individuals, such as a 10-year-old girl who suffered sexual assault, contracted HIV, became a mother and was forced into marriage.

She underscored the media's duty to educate the public on social issues, raise awareness about the plight of vulnerable communities, and hold those in power accountable for their actions.

to the implementation of the water projects. We have encountered more than four episodes fostered by major projects, the challenge is finding means to finding a broad-based economy, finding pillars that will ensure the economy is sustained and drive growth without relying on major projects.

Lesotho should decide on its economic growth model, and decisions that will be made should reflect on the decided growth model" he had concluded.

# Technomath aims to lead ICT industry

STAFF REPORTER

Maseru

Established in 2019, Technomath is a technology company with a clear mission, to become a reliable and reputable provider of quality solutions and services in the ICT industry.

To achieve this mission, it boasts a skilled team of professionals who are well-versed in various aspects of system development, including System Analysis and Design, Database Management, Full Stack Development, Mobile App Development, Graphic and Multimedia Design, Computer Support and Maintenance, and Software Development.

The company's diverse service offering enables it to cater to a broad range of client needs, from complex system analysis and design to cutting-edge mobile app development.

With a commitment to high standards and reliability, Technomath aims to be the go-to partner for businesses seeking innovative and effective ICT solutions.

The company's team of experts, equipped with specialized knowledge and expertise in their respective fields, are poised to tackle any project with professionalism and efficiency, no matter the scale or complexity.

As the company continues to grow and expand its client base, it remains true to its values of quality, reliability and innovation.

The company has set its sights on becoming a leader in the ICT industry, and its success can be attributed to its focus on customer satisfaction, its investment in the latest technologies, and its com-



mitment to its team of talented professionals.

Technomath co-founder Khauta Malieha said looking ahead, they poised to play a crucial role in shaping the digital landscape, helping businesses to adapt and thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

"In our pursuit to delivering cutting-edge ICT solutions, we are not only focused on providing innovative products and services but also on driving sustainable growth for its clients," he said.

The company understands that businesses need to be able to adapt and thrive in today's rapidly evolving technological landscape and as such, they offer three key solutions that can help clients achieve sustainable growth:

- Efficiency improvement: By streamlining business processes and au-

tomating tasks, Technomath's solutions can help clients save time, reduce costs and improve overall productivity.

- Innovation enablement: With access to the latest technologies and development techniques, they can help clients stay ahead of the curve and remain competitive in their respective industries.

- Scalability and flexibility: Technomath's solutions are designed to scale with the client's business, allowing them to adapt and grow as their needs change over time.

In addition to its focus on innovation, Malieha states that they also prioritize shared value and sustainability. The company believes in being a good corporate citizen and giving back to the communities it serves, whether through social responsibility initiatives or community empowerment programs.

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

The Government of Lesotho has made a decision to augment hardship allowances for healthcare workers stationed in remote regions of the country.

This decision followed a meeting convened by the Government's task team, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Nthomeng Majara, alongside Health Minister Selibe Mochoboroane and officials from the Ministry of Public Service, in collaboration with representatives of healthcare practitioners held in Maseru last week.

Under this resolution, the existing hard-



Selibe Mochoboroane

## Govt, health workers agree new hardship allowances

ship allowance of M275 per health worker will be increased to M500, with the implementation scheduled to commence this month.

This consensus effectively concludes the three-week strike staged by healthcare practitioners in the specific districts of Thaba-Tseka, Qacha's Nek, and Mokhotlong, the practitioners had been advocating for an increment in the hardship allowance to M1000.

Following the agreement, they resumed their duties on Friday, concluding their work stoppage initiated on May 13, 2024.

The health Minister stated that, "As the Ministry of Health, we inform the house and the public that that the health services in the highlands have returned to normal starting from today. The Ministry together with nurse's association and worker's representatives, have reached an agreement for the workers to return to work today.

"Our agreement is based on the govern-

ment's commitment that the allowances will be provided from the end of June. We have agreed that that from June 2024 until the end of the current fiscal year, all government worker's hardship allowances, be increased from M275 to M500.

There will be yet another increase in April of 2025 that will further upgrade the allowances to M750. The increase will happen gradually as another one will take place again in April of 2026 to finally reach the M1000 demand," he said.

The Minister said it was imperative for the Parliament to be informed that in the previous year, his ministry had made a proposal to the Public Service, for the workers' allowances to be increased from M275 to M1000.

"My Ministry did that after we had reached an agreement with the nurse's union in 2023, that the minimum hardship allowance should be reduced from the initial M5000

and they had settled for M1000," he said.

The minister further said the ministries of health, public service and finance, had recognised the importance of increasing the hardship allowances over the next two years, taking into account the government's financial difficulties.

The allowances had not been raised for 33 years and the health workers' frustrations were arguably reasonable. He apologised for the inconveniences caused by the strike in the affected areas.

He also informed the house that the raise also extended to other civil servants deployed in the remote hard-to-reach areas, who were not civil servants.

"The increased allowances extends to other ministries. In total, 6000 public servants working in hard-to-reach areas will receive M500 in the end of June as their allowances," he said.



# ConCourt rules against Zuma's MK Party's bid to halt Parliament electing a new president

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDANT

The Constitutional Court has dealt former president Jacob Zuma's MK Party a blow after dismissing its urgent application to interdict Friday's sitting of the National Assembly to elect a new president.

In a judgment delivered late on Wednesday night, South Africa's apex court ruled that it was neither within its jurisdiction to hear the case nor in the interest of justice to grant direct access to MK Party.

The court said: "It is not in the interests of justice to grant direct access as the impugned decisions or conduct first arose between 1 and 2 June 2024, to the knowledge of the applicant.

However, despite this knowledge, the applicant only launched the application on 10 June 2024.

The applicant has failed to show any justification for not bringing this application sooner when it was aware of the constitutional requirement to convene the National Assembly no later than 14 days after the declaration of the election results. In the circumstances, the urgency is thus self-created."



**The Constitutional Court has dismissed the MK Party's urgent application to halt Friday's National Assembly session to elect a new president, ruling the party failed to justify its delay and lacked merit in its case.**

In addition, the Constitutional Court said the MK Party application failed on its merits.

"The applicant has not made out a case for the granting of an interim interdict as it has neither shown that it will

suffer irreparable harm if the interdict is not granted, nor that the balance of convenience favours the granting of the interdict. The applicant has also misconstrued the relevant constitutional provisions it seeks to rely on. In addition, the

applicant has not adduced facts to establish a prima facie case in respect of the relief it will seek in the main application, in order to sustain an interim interdict pending the main application." - IOL

# Who's going to be Gauteng premier? ANC in Gauteng insists it will not be blackmailed

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDANT

The African National Congress (ANC) in Gauteng on Thursday said it will be putting forward a premier candidate when the provincial legislature sits for the first time on Friday to elect key functionaries following the May 29 elections.

IOL reported on Thursday that while various political parties are scrambling to conclude coalition negotiation talks leading up to Friday's swearing in of incoming members of Parliament, there is uncertainty over who will govern South Africa's economic

hub of Gauteng.

This comes after the ANC dipped below 50%, therefore falling short of governing the province.

The ANC has led Gauteng since the dawn of democracy. However, the party received 35% of the votes in the May 29 election — a great decline from the 2019 elections when it received 50.2%.

In an interview with broadcaster Newzroom Afrika, ANC spokesperson in Gauteng Lesego Makhubela said his party has reached some agreements with certain opposition parties, but the ANC in Gauteng led

by provincial chair Panyaza Lesufi will not be held ransom in the negotiations.

"What the PEC said is that we are not entering these discussions with salt in our hands, we are not going to be hunting with salt. We are not ambitious poodles. We have a responsibility to lead this province and ensure that the will of the people is respected," Makhubela said.

"But we are not going to be blackmailed into doing that. We have also accepted an option of saying – when these talks are not going to be fruitful, are not going to reach a common point, we will gladly accept our role

to sit in the opposition benches."

Makhubela said the negotiations are going to continue even up to the doorstep of the provincial legislature, before it sits on Friday.

He said "commonality" has been found with majority of the political parties represented in the provincial legislature.

Regarding who will be the ANC Gauteng's premier candidate, Makhubela said three candidates were submitted to the national executive committee of the ANC.

"The ANC PEC recommended three names which is the provincial chairperson comrade Panyaza Lesufi, the treasurer of the province Morakane Mosupyoe, and the deputy secretary of the province Tasneem Motara," Makhubela said.

"We submitted those names in order of priority and we will get feedback from the national executive committee, which will brief the national on all the premier candidates."

The ANC in Gauteng's informal working relationship with the Economic Freedom Fighters has seemingly taken a turn for the worst, with Ekurhuleni Mayor Ekurhuleni Mayor Nkosindiphile Xhakaza, a member of the ANC, firing Gauteng EFF chair Nkululeko Dunga as member of the mayoral committee (MMC) for finance on Wednesday.

IOL understands that the provincial ANC is holding advanced discussions with the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). - IOL



**Gauteng ANC provincial chairperson Panyaza Lesufi gesturing on voting day in Tembisa.**



# Health talk and Patient care

with  
Mosiuoa  
Lesuhlo

## Understanding tooth decay: Prevention and care

**T**ooth decay, also known as dental caries or cavities, is one of the most common chronic diseases affecting people of all ages worldwide. Despite its prevalence, it is largely preventable with proper care and attention. Understanding what causes tooth decay and how to prevent it is crucial for maintaining good oral health.

### What is Tooth Decay?

Tooth decay occurs when the enamel, the hard outer layer of your teeth, is damaged by acids produced by bacteria in the mouth. These bacteria feed on sugars and starches from food and drinks, creating acid as a by-product. Over time, the acid can wear down the enamel, leading to cavities. If left untreated, tooth decay can cause pain, infection, and even tooth loss.

### Causes of Tooth Decay

Several factors contribute to the development of tooth decay:

- Poor Oral Hygiene:** Inadequate brushing and flossing allow plaque, a sticky film of bacteria, to build up on teeth. This plaque can harden into tartar, which can only be removed by a dentist.
- Diet:** Consuming high amounts of sugary and starchy foods and drinks fuels the bacteria that cause decay. Sugary snacks, sodas, candies, and even fruit juices can contribute to this process.
- Dry Mouth:** Saliva helps wash away food particles and bacteria, and it contains substances that neutralize acids produced by bacteria. Conditions that reduce saliva production, such as certain medications or diseases, can increase the risk of decay.
- Frequent Snacking:** Constant snacking or sipping sugary drinks provides a continuous supply of fuel for bacteria, creating a persistent acidic environment in the mouth.

### Symptoms of Tooth Decay

Tooth decay can cause various symptoms, including:

- **Toothache or Pain When Biting:** Persistent or intermittent pain can indicate the presence of decay.
- **Sensitivity to Hot, Cold, or Sweet Foods and Drinks:** Sensitive teeth may



react to temperature changes or sugary foods.

- **Visible Holes or Pits in Teeth:** Cavities may appear as small holes or pits on the surface of the teeth.
- **Discoloration:** Brown, black, or white spots on the surface of a tooth can signal decay.
- **Bad Breath or Unpleasant Taste:** Chronic bad breath or a foul taste in the mouth can also be signs of decay.

### Preventing Tooth Decay

Preventing tooth decay involves a combination of good oral hygiene practices, dietary choices, and regular dental visits. Here are some effective strategies:

- Brush and Floss Regularly:** Brush your teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and floss daily to remove plaque from between teeth and under the gumline. Using an electric toothbrush can also enhance cleaning efficiency.
- Use Fluoride:** Fluoride helps strengthen tooth enamel and can be found in toothpaste, mouth rinses, and tap water. Fluoride treatments provided by a dentist can also be beneficial.
- Limit Sugary Foods and Drinks:** Reduce your intake of sugary snacks and beverages. Consume for water or milk instead of sugary drinks, and choose

healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

- Regular Dental Check-ups:** Visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and check-ups. Early detection of decay can prevent more serious problems. Your dentist can also provide personalized advice and preventive treatments.

- Dental Sealants:** For children and teenagers, dental sealants can be an effective way to protect the grooves in the back teeth from decay. Sealants are a thin, protective coating applied to the chewing surfaces of molars.

- Chewing Sugar-Free Gum:** Chewing sugar-free gum, especially those containing xylitol, can help stimulate saliva production and reduce the risk of decay.

### Treating Tooth Decay

If decay is detected early, it can often be treated with fluoride treatments to help restore enamel. For more advanced decay, your dentist might recommend fillings, crowns, or root canals:

- Fillings:** Decayed material is removed, and the cavity is filled with materials such as composite resin, amalgam, or porcelain.
- Crowns:** A crown, or cap, is placed over a severely decayed tooth to restore

its shape, size, strength, and appearance.

- Root Canals:** If the decay reaches the inner pulp of the tooth, a root canal may be necessary to remove the infected tissue and save the tooth.

- Tooth Extraction:** In severe cases where the tooth cannot be saved, it may need to be extracted. This should be followed by options for tooth replacement, such as implants or bridges, to maintain dental function and aesthetics.

### Conclusion

Tooth decay is a significant yet preventable health issue. By maintaining good oral hygiene, making smart dietary choices, and visiting your dentist regularly, you can keep your teeth healthy and strong. Remember, prevention is always better than cure when it comes to oral health.

Good oral health is not just about a beautiful smile; it's also about overall health and well-being. Take the necessary steps today to protect your teeth from decay. For more information on dental care and to schedule a check-up, consult with your dentist today.

This health talk aims to raise awareness about the importance of preventing tooth decay and encouraging proactive dental care in our community.



# INSIGHTS & Balance

with  
RELEBOHILE  
KABELO

## Duality is the basis of oneness: Africa is one with the world

In the past two weeks, I have been writing articles about “oneness,” focusing on the perspective of the self being part of its environment. With this article, I want to raise awareness about the possibility of the entire globe, being a unified entity rather than separate entities often referred to as dark or light.

For instance, Africa is considered a dark continent for various reasons, while other continents are seen as full of light. We should recognize the relationship between “dark” and “light” as parts of a whole, differing only in degrees.

This means we should change our mindset from viewing something as absolute darkness or absolute lightness and instead use a single metric to provide perspective.

This article explores this notion using ancient principles, the Taoist concept of yin-yang and the fourth Hermetic principle, known as the principle of polarity, from *The Kybalion* by the Three Initiates.

There are many famous aphorisms about the concept that “there are two sides to everything.” Examples include “there is a reverse side to every shield,” “all truths are but half-truths, every truth is half false,” and “everything is and isn’t, at the same time.”

These maxims are based on the notion that a coin is made of two sides; the moment you have one side, an opposite side must automatically exist. In the same way, when you bring good, badness inevitably shows up.

This is addressed by the philosophical problem known as “the problem of evil,” which posits that the moment you introduce God (who is all good), evil (which is all bad) will also exist.

Thus, we can agree that every side has an opposite: the opposite of left is right, and other examples include high and low, east and west, north and south, noise and quiet, sharp and dull, courage and fear, heat and cold, and positive and negative. My argument focuses on darkness and light.

This shows that nothing exists as an absolute, meaning it is possible to use only one side as a metric since they are both parts of a whole. A yin-yang symbol is part of a larger circle, representing one entity, and it is possible to use only one part as a measuring metric.

For instance, using only white to define the whole yin-yang, you might say that

a particular area is less white (which we might call black) rather than simply calling it black.

To illustrate the distinction: yin is black while yang is white, yin is feminine while yang is masculine, yin is dark while yang is light, yin is negative while yang is positive, yin is cold while yang is hot, yin is bad while yang is good.

The morality of the Taoist concept is to show that in every bad there is good, and in every good there is bad, symbolized by the smaller circles within the yin and yang, making them resemble a 9 and a 6.

Thus, yin does not exist as an absolute bad, and yang does not exist as an absolute good; nothing exists as an absolute.

To measure temperature, we use a thermometer, which indicates whether what we are measuring is hot or cold.

However, I want us to eliminate the idea of absolute hotness or coldness and instead view it from a single perspective: how hot it is. On a thermometer, there is no clear distinction between hot and cold; rather, every point is either hotter than the point below it or colder than the point above it.

This means we can choose to be optimistic by using the lens of “yang,” since yang represents the positive aspect.

Being optimistic is beneficial for many reasons, particularly for our mentality, as positivity fosters better outcomes and nothing is inherently negative.

Therefore, we can choose to view everything through the lens of heat, saying that even the lowest point on the thermometer is hotter than the point below it.

This implies that there is always a lower point until infinity, and we can avoid negativity by not using the word “cold” and instead defining everything in terms of “hot.”

Applying this perspective to Africa and other continents, instead of viewing Africa as dark and others as light, we can simply use lightness as the measuring metric. We can acknowledge that African countries may face challenges, but let’s be positive and use the lens of richness. Instead of saying they are poor, we can say, “African countries are less rich than Asian countries,” because, at the end of the day, they are still rich.

This approach differs significantly from saying, “African countries are poor while Asian countries are rich,” which presents them as absolutes. The notion of oneness

shows that everything is interconnected.

Not only does this idea apply to my concept of continents being one but also to individuals, in the sense that they can be optimistic and enforce positive growth in various ways.

Viewing Africa in this way promotes a healthy and harmonious relationship between our mindsets, reality and future. It helps us see that there is nothing inherently wrong with Africa and that efforts are being made daily to improve it.

This optimistic perspective prevents us from seeing Africa as decaying and instead focuses on its potential and ongoing progress.

This idea not only applies to the concept of continents being one but also to individuals. By adopting an optimistic outlook, people can promote positive growth in vari-

ous aspects of their lives.

This shift in perspective encourages a more harmonious relationship between our mindsets, reality and future, emphasizing potential and progress rather than deficits and decay.




This article is inspired by the fact that my home country, Lesotho, is improving bit by bit, yet people still focus on the negative aspects. These negative aspects can be transmuted into positive aspects and viewed with optimism.

Africa is an excellent example, often overlooked due to various reasons, primarily conditions imposed by outsiders who view it negatively. I believe that at a micro level, Lesotho, and at a macro level, Africa, are already rich and striving to become better every single day, on a global scale, all continents are inherently rich.

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# Kimberly redefines her music journey

**LIJENG MORUTHANE**

Maseru

**W**ith her recent comeback in the music industry, Mantseli Kimberly Matete, popularly known as Bad Girl Kimberly, serves her latest single “Fashion,” marking a bold and intentional return to the spotlight.

Hailing from Vereeniging, South Africa, and bred in Maseru, this dynamic Afro and Hip-Hop artiste is determined to make a memorable impact with her narrative-changing track.

Kimberly’s music journey began in 2019, introduced to the microphone by a fellow artist.

In a recent interview with the [Weekly Observer](#), she revealed that her musical roots run deep, with her mother being a singer and her father a guitarist.

The rising star took a three-year break from her career, feeling overwhelmed by the challenges she faced. “A lot of my plans didn’t fall through, and a lot happened to me while considering the contracts that were coming in,” Kimberly explained. “I got cheated, abused, and hurt. I wasn’t going anywhere with my career, so I felt the need to restart and restore my mental health,” she said.

The music industry, Kimberly notes, comes with its fair share of issues,

one notable challenge was navigating the industry as a gay woman. “A lot of people in power demanded unspeakable things from me, and when I couldn’t deliver, they lost interest,” she remarked. “It’s a very dirty business, especially for women.”

Despite these hardships, Kimberly’s passion for her craft and her desire to make a difference fueled her return. “I’ve always been a woman of presentation. For me, first impressions count. ‘Fashion’ was inspired by my morals as a woman and a lesbian. I wanted to remove the stereotypes of how lesbians are seen in the country – that we are beautiful, amazingly attractive women, ridiculously talented, and above all, human.”

Fashion is more than just a song, it’s a statement of identity and resilience, Kimberly’s long-term goals include reaching the highest levels of success and gaining international recognition.

“I’d like to be identified internationally, perform on big stages, and have bigger collaborations and features. I want to make a difference for our people and hopefully, one day, be the first to open a real record label to help other artists reach their dreams,” artiste said.

Bad Girl Kimberly’s return is not just a comeback; it’s a declaration of strength and a promise of more to come.

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

# Econet aids FLR with equipment

In a significant boost to rugby in Lesotho, Econet Telecom Lesotho (ETL) donated over M20 000 worth of essential equipment to the Federation of Rugby Lesotho (FLR).

This initiative underscores Econet's ongoing commitment to fostering the sport within the Mountain Kingdom.

The donation, comprising crucial items such as corner flags, marker wedges and post protectors, was officially handed over in a ceremony that highlighted the robust partnership between Econet and the FLR.

The equipment is expected to enhance the safety and efficiency of rugby matches across the country.

Since 2013, ETL has been a stalwart supporter of the local rugby community, contributing over M1.5 million to the sport. This year alone, Econet provided M170 000 to support the Econet Rugby League, ensuring teams are well-resourced to perform at their peak.

"We are thrilled to support the Federation of Lesotho Rugby with this vital equipment," said 'Mapusetso Ntšekhe, ETL's General Manager of Marketing Communications and Customer Experience.

"Rugby is a sport that unites communities, promotes teamwork and encourages physical fitness. By providing these items, we hope to foster the development and growth of rugby in Lesotho and inspire more young people to embrace the sport."

FLR expressed profound gratitude for Econet's sustained support, "Econet's sponsorship and this latest donation are crucial to the growth of rugby in our country," said Fetang Selialia, President of the Federation of Lesotho Rugby.

"With proper equipment, we can ensure our players' safety and the smooth operation of our matches. We are excited about rugby's future in Lesotho, thanks to partners like Econet."

The handover ceremony was a celebra-

tion of this fruitful partnership and showcased the positive impact of Econet's support. Attendees included representatives from Econet, the FLR and the Lesotho Sports and Recreation Commission.



'Mapusetso Ntšekhe (left) and Fetang Selialia

## Bafana beat Zimbabwe before buzzing Bloemfontein crowd to strengthen World Cup hopes

KHOSI PHEKO

Maseru

The three points that Bafana Bafana earned by beating Zimbabwe 3-1 in their World Cup qualification fixture on Tuesday ensures that the team's destiny remains in its own hands.

There was a time when South Africa soccer supporters knew that when Bafana Bafana were about to embark on a qualification journey for a major tournament, it was imperative to sharpen their arithmetic skills.

However, under Hugo Broos's tutelage, these mental and mathematical gymnastics appear to be history. South Africa's senior men's soccer side beat neighbours Zimbabwe 3-1 in Bloemfontein on Tuesday night to ensure that their bid to qualify for the 2026 Fifa World Cup remains firmly in their hands.

In front of an almost-capacity crowd which had braved a chilly winter evening to grace the 46,000-seater Free State Stadium, Bafana Bafana sprinted into the lead in just 30 seconds of play. Stellenbosch striker Iqraam Rayners pounced on a lapse in concentration by Zimbabwe's defence to hand his country a dream start.

The dream soon turned into a nightmare though as the visitors counterpunched immediately, with Tawanda Chirewa scoring the Warriors' equalising goal less than two minutes after South Africa's opener.

Iterations of Bafana Bafana that were present before the arrival of Belgian coach Broos in 2021 might have crumbled and withered away following this setback. However, under the 72-year-old's guidance, the South Africans have shown incredible men-

tal fortitude and resilience.

This attitude was rewarded in the second half as super-sub Thapelo Morena netted a brace to snuff any hopes of Zimbabwe potentially earning their first win in this World Cup qualification campaign.

The two goals also signified a dream homecoming for Morena. The 30-year-old fullback/winger made his name in the City of Roses playing for the now-defunct Bloemfontein Celtic before moving to Mamelodi Sundowns in 2016.

More importantly, though, the win took South Africa to seven points from four games in Group C. They are second on goal difference, but level with surprise group leaders Rwanda, as well as third-placed Benin.

Nigeria — who would have been many

people's favourites to secure top spot and qualify for a seventh World Cup — currently languish in fifth place, with just four points accumulated so far in the six-team mini-league.

"The team was a little bit shaken by the goal of Zimbabwe. We did not do what he needed to do. We played too much in the centre and we did not use the wings," Broos told the South African Football Association's media department.

"In the second half, we corrected some things and we saw a much better South Africa. We had many chances, even in the first half. So, we deserve this victory. It's an important victory," he added.

### Super spectators

In recent years Bafana Bafana have

struggled to pull spectators into the stadiums they've played in. An all-time low came when Broos and his men battled the Democratic Republic of Congo in an international friendly played at Orlando Stadium in September 2023.

During that fixture, less than 5,000 spectators made it to the stadium. Of those that did, the majority were Congolese nationals. It was a moment that left Broos bemused, even though his side had secured a 1-0 win on the day.

Having experienced the passion of Bloemfontein — a city that last hosted a Bafana Bafana match 14 years ago (when they beat France 2-1 in the 2010 World Cup) — Broos was pleasantly surprised.

"I'm happy to have played in this stadium, with a fantastic crowd. This is what a crowd can do [to boost a team's performance]. They were behind the players. Yes, we had difficult moments. But when you have a crowd like this, you go the extra mile," Broos stated.

"That's what we saw in the second half. We got confidence [from the crowd] and played better. It was a fantastic evening... In my three years [as Bafana coach] I've never had an atmosphere like this one."

Bafana Bafana will now take an extended hiatus from their World Cup qualification campaign, with their next set of fixtures on this particular journey scheduled for March 2025.

The South Africans are bidding to participate in the global tournament for the first time since hosting it in 2010. With four matches played to date, they have another six to navigate before their fate is determined. - DM



Oswin Appollis of Bafana Bafana during the 2026 Fifa World Cup Qualifier against Zimbabwe at Free State Stadium in Bloemfontein

# Weekly Observer Sport

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**KHOSI PHEKO**

Maseru

**L**esotho's senior national football team Head Coach Leslie Nots'i has lamented lack of missed chances after his side lost 1:0 against Rwanda in a 2026 World Cup Qualifier match played at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban, South Africa.

Likuena, as the team is affectionately known, came into the encounter with high spirits after their 2:0 victory against Zimbabwe at Orlando Stadium in Johannesburg last Friday.

Against Rwanda, they threatened to break the deadlock in several occasions of the first half but the closest opportunity came in the 15th minute after forward Jane Thabants'o failed to capitalize on the howler made by the Rwandan defence to only to fire wide of the target.

Those missed opportunities would then haunt Lesotho as Rwanda's Kwizera Jojea opened the scoring in the stroke of half time to take his side to the break with a goal to the good.

In the second half, Likuena did not threaten much while the east African nation seemed comfortable to defend their one goal advantage that proved to be pivotal at the end as they returned home with maximum points.

Speaking at a post-match conference after the game, Nots'i said his attackers were not confident enough to bury the ball in the back of the net.

"I think there was a lot of anxiety on some of our players especially upfront whereby we had numerous goal-scoring opportunities but we were not clinical enough to convert them.

Unfortunately, they scored at a crucial time just as we were about to halt for the half time break and at the same time, we knew they were going to up their game in the second half, of which they did," he said.

The coach also mentioned that,

## Nots'i rues missed chances

• As Likuena end WC Qualifiers first round with a defeat



**Likuena's Lisema Lebokollane (Left) and Rwanda's Mugisha Gilbert**

there were some positives to take from the encounter and he is convinced that they are on the right track to compete against the continent's elites.

"We made some changes that I believe they gave us options in terms of offensive play. Our transitions were much better and we did try to create goal scoring opportunities but we could not score.

However, there are a lot of positives that came out of this match on our side

like I said, we are a work in progress so the manner in which the boys conducted themselves under pressure is impressive," Nots'i said.

The defeat then placed Likuena on fourth position of Group C after enjoying being at the top as a result of their famous victory against Zimbabwe

They are currently on five points from four matches played while Rwanda, neighbours South Africa and west African giants Benin are first, second

and third respectively with seven points but are separated by a goal difference of one.

Giants Nigeria find themselves in an unfamiliar territory of fifth position with three points and remain winless after losing 2:1 against Benin on Monday before playing South Africa to a one all draw last Friday. Zimbabwe are at the bottom of the group with just two points.

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