

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

1 FEBRUARY • NO 2/2021

LESOTHO



MAIN STORIES

Coronavirus Crisis

Targeting Majoro

Damning AG Report
on Fight Against
Covid-19

Warning from US
Ambassador

HIGHLIGHTS

- As of 1 February 2021, Lesotho had 8 664 coronavirus cases, 2 552 recoveries and 172 deaths. On 27 January 2021, Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro announced that a hard lockdown had been extended to 3 February 2021. The government has been widely criticised for allowing tens of thousands of Basotho, who live and work in South Africa, back into the country for the festive season without testing or presenting valid Covid-19 certificates at the various ports of entry.
- The Lesotho Nurses Association (LNA) warned that the health delivery system was overwhelmed and could no longer cope with the soaring Covid-19 infections.
- Lesotho may consider purchasing Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against the coronavirus. Majoro said the government would set aside M240 million to procure Covid-19 vaccines. This in addition to the free vaccines Lesotho expects to receive from the COVAX facility, a fully subsidised initiative by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- The Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) director general, Mahlomola Manyokole, who is fighting his suspension, alleged in court papers that Prime Minister Majoro, Law and Justice Minister Nqosa Mahao and retired Judge Teboho Moiloa were guilty of various acts of corruption. However, Tsofeng Likotsi, a DCEO investigator, has alleged that Manyokole is a disgruntled officer who was appointed at the behest of former First Lady, 'Maesaiah Thabane, and is probably doing the latter's bidding to try and topple the government.
- Former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane's attempt to oust Majoro suffered a blow on 29 December 2020 after the All-Basotho Convention (ABC)'s national executive committee voted against his proposal to remove Majoro.

LESOTHO



- The ruling ABC and Democratic Congress (DC) parties agreed to stop attacking each other in public. They also agreed on talks aimed at resolving their differences and ensuring that their governing coalition lasts the distance.
- Police Commissioner Holomo Molibeli and Deputy Police Commissioner Paseka Mokete, say they are “baffled” why the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Hlalefang Motinyane has still not charged Tom Thabane with the June 2017 murder of his ex-wife, Lipolelo Thabane.
- Lesotho is ranked 83 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI: 1=clean; 180=highly corrupt).
- The World Bank said in its latest Global Economic Prospects report for January 2021 that growth contracted by 5.3% in 2020 and it forecasts that the economy will grow by 3.1% in 2021 and 3.8% in 2022.
- Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune dispatched Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Sabri Boukadoum to thank Lesotho for its support on the matter of the independence of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara).

