

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

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MAIN STORIES

SADC-initiated
Reforms

Netcare's Deal in
Lesotho Collapses

Coronavirus

HIGHLIGHTS

- The All Basotho Convention (ABC) decided to endorse its leader and former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane to lead its 2022 national elections campaign.
- Deputy army commander, Major General Matela Matobakele, threatened to “unleash the might of the military” on criminals wreaking havoc in rural communities. Matobakele invoked past experiences where soldiers had rounded up civilians and took them to nearby rivers for bouts of torture.
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitator in Lesotho, former South African Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke, refused to give the government a full record of proceedings of its inquiry into the June 2015 murder of army commander Lieutenant-General Maaparankoe Mahao. The full transcript of the inquiry was requested by former army commander Tlali Kamoli to assist him prepare his defence against charges that he ordered Mahao’s murder. Foreign Affairs and International Relations Principal Secretary Retired Colonel Tanki Mothae said the Lesotho government was unhappy with the SADC and Moseneke’s stance.
- The SADC proposed the establishment of a Transitional Justice Commission (TJC) as part of a “peace and trust-building process” in the multi-sector reforms it initiated in 2016. Moseneke said the TJC would, among other things, consider the deferment of the high-profile trials of politicians and any other “politically-motivated trials” until after the full implementation of the multi-sector reforms.
- According to Freedom House’s Freedom in the World 2021 report, Lesotho is rated as “Partly Free” with an aggregate score of 63/100 (0=Least Free, 100=Most Free).



- Political parties, including the ruling ABC, are up in arms with the government over the sale of government-owned farming equipment at knockdown prices to cabinet ministers, government legislators and other well-connected individuals.
- The government has resolved to cut ties with the Tšepong Consortium which has run the Queen Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) since it opened its doors to patients in 2011. South Africa's Netcare has a 40 percent stake in the consortium. Health Minister Semano Sekatle said the final straw was Tšepong's decision to fire 345 striking nurses and nursing assistants.
- The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) is investigating Tšepong for alleged fraud and corruption. DCEO investigators seized computers and documents during a raid, after three of the five companies in the Consortium asked the anti-graft body to probe Netcare for allegedly looting funds over the years.
- The United States (US) Department of State said in its 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices that significant human rights issues included: unlawful or arbitrary killings; torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and harsh and life-threatening prison conditions, amongst others.
- The 2021 Index of Economic Freedom published by the Heritage Foundation ranks Lesotho at 142 out of 178 countries (178=worst; 1=best). Lesotho falls in the category of "Mostly Unfree" nations.
- As of 6 April 2021, Lesotho had 10 707 coronavirus cases, 4 471 recoveries and 315 deaths.
- The government owes the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) M170 million in power bills that have been mounting for decades. This makes the government the biggest debtor to the power company. LEC recently cut power supply to the Maseru Magistrates Court over a M1 million bill.

LESOTHO



- The long-delayed Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), which is facing funding pressures, Covid-19 delays and protests in Lesotho, will begin water delivery under the next phase in 2027, a delay from the initial 2020 deadline.



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