

MAIN STORIES

**Thabane Charged
with Murder**

**Mochoboroane and
Metsing Charged**

Chaos in the Police

Corruption

**Mid-Term Budget
Review**

Coronavirus

HIGHLIGHTS

- Former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane was charged with the 2017 murder of his estranged wife Lipolelo Thabane. The trial will proceed from 8 to 10 March 2022.
- Development Planning minister Selibe Mochoboroane and former Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing were charged with treason and murder. Chief Justice Sakoane Sakoane on 6 December accused South Africa's prosecutor Shaun Abrahams of "tardiness" after he did not furnish the defence with the statements of 24 witnesses. Sakoane adjourned the case to 13 December 2021 and issued a warrant of arrest for Metsing for failing to appear before the court without an explanation.
- The opposition Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) has accused the government of seeking to disrupt the ongoing reforms by forging ahead with Metsing's treason and murder trial.
- An All Basotho Convention (ABC) meeting at the end of November to decide the fate of Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro failed to take place after party leader Thomas Thabane fell ill. Majoro was expected to be censured at the party's executive committee meeting.
- The Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Marketing Nkaku Kabi has been relieved of his duties. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Marketing, Letsitsi Mokoma, will serve as acting minister for the time being.
- There was chaos at the National Reforms Authority (NRA) meeting on 7 December as party leaders almost came to blows over the proposed removal of Liteboho Kompfi as the NRA deputy chairman.
- The police are investigating the Lesotho Police Staff Association (LEPOSA) over its alleged failure to account for 159 firearms that it purchased for its members.
- Prime Minister Majoro reprimanded Police Commissioner Holomo Molibeli after a group of police recruits were caught on video assaulting civilians in the streets. Majoro and his deputy, Mathibeli Mokhothu, have reportedly agreed to fire Molibeli.



- Some of the 75 guns that were stolen from the Mafeteng Police Station armoury, with assistance from corrupt police officers, have reportedly been sold to Famo gangs largely responsible for the killing sprees in Lesotho and at several illegal mining sites in South Africa.
- The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA-Lesotho) expressed concern over the growing rate of harassment of journalists in Lesotho.
- The acting Auditor General, Monica Besetsa, revealed that M3.5 billion in government funds is missing from its bank accounts and the Accountant General does not know how much money the government has in various banks, both locally and internationally. Besetsa raised her concerns over the information which was presented by the banks. She said the banks were known for proper record keeping but this time the Auditor General experienced challenges with banks which could not give accurate information of accounts and bank balances.
- Commissioner Molibeli said police recovered about M41 million out of the M49.5 million looted from the Ministry of Finance in recent months.
- According to the Mid-Term Budget Review, presented by Minister of Finance, Thabo Sophonea, on 24 November, domestic economic growth is projected to recover to 0.1 percent in 2021/22, following a contraction of 6.7 percent in 2020/21.
- As of 10 December 2021, Lesotho had 21,838 coronavirus cases, 13,741 recoveries and 663 deaths. Health minister Semano Sekatle on 9 December announced mandatory vaccination against COVID-19 for every individual entering the country.
- The rate of inflation was 6.2% in October 2021, compared to 5.4% in September.
- The latest report by the Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS Net) said another wave of COVID-19 associated with the new variant could lead to new restrictions, potentially driving extended and higher levels of unemployment.





- The Lesotho Millennium Development Agency (LMDA) is broke and owes its suppliers millions of maloti. The LMDA CEO said although it recently received about M16 million from the government this was inadequate and it needed about M40 million more to fully settle its debts.
- Denimwear manufacturing company, C&Y Garments began retrenching 2600 employees as it prepares to shut down.
- The National Assembly passed the Mines and Minerals (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which legalises artisanal and small scale (ASM) mining. Mining Minister Serialong Qoo said his ministry was already working on reviewing sections of the Act which deal with local shareholding as well as addressing the issue of alluvial diamonds.
- Norway-based renewable power producer Scatec entered into an agreement with the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) and the government to build the first independent power producer (IPP) solar project in Lesotho.
- Prime Minister Majoro's quest to overturn a South African arbitrator's award of £50 million damages to Frazer Solar received a boost from the South African government, which decided to fight in his corner. The South African government argues that granting Frazer Solar damages from Lesotho's revenues due to it in terms of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) would harm the diplomatic relations between the two countries.

