



## MAIN STORIES

Intra-party Squabbles

Election Manifestos

Struggling with  
Reforms

Cyber Security Bill  
Approved

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Ruling All Basotho Convention (ABC) bigwigs Keketso Sello and Prince Maliehe engaged in a heated argument during peace talks in late May 2022 between the factions of Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro and party leader, Nkaku Kabi. The meeting came after Kabi and Majoro finally met for face-to-face talks in mid-May under the mediation of Bishop David Thakadu Ramela of St Paul African Apostolic Church. Even this face-to-face meeting failed to yield a breakthrough as hardliners on both sides continued to throw spanners into the works.
- The new Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) party, led by millionaire Sam Matekane is in the throes of internal squabbles triggered by disagreements over the election of constituency committees.
- Kabi launched the ABC election manifesto at a rally that was attended by just a few party members. Agriculture and rural development are among its key priorities with the hope that it will curb hunger and poverty.
- Democratic Congress (DC) leader Mathibeli Mokhothu defended his vision to modernise Lesotho after he unveiled an election manifesto earlier that was derided by critics as highly ambitious and unrealistic. The critics specifically referred to Mokhothu's promise that he will buy helicopters for the police in each district so that they can effectively attend to rampant stock-theft. The DC also plans to open over 30 diamond mines to increase job opportunities.
- Upon winning power, one of the first tasks of a DC government would be to engage South Africa on the return of its conquered territories to enable landlocked Lesotho to have much-needed access to the sea, Mokhothu said.
- The RFP listed 10 priority areas in its manifesto that it promises to implement if elected to government. These include food security and agriculture and energy development.



- There was chaos at a meeting on 23 May after political parties refused to sign a pledge, presented by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitation team lead by South Africa's retired Deputy Justice Dikgang Moseneke to expedite national reforms. While politicians were discussing the pledge some irate Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) members were picketing outside the hotel. They were demanding that their leader Mothetjoa Metsing, who fled to South Africa after being charged with treason, be allowed to return to Lesotho before the reforms are passed. The LCD deputy leader Tšeliso Mokhosi said on 1 June that the party signed a pledge with the government for the safe return of Metsing.
- The new Computer Crimes and Cyber Security Bill, 2022 was approved on 17 May. The Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) said the most prominent characteristic of the Bill "is that it does not strike a balance between civil liberties and the government's interest in national security."
- On 19 May, 35 villagers were allegedly tortured by 'rogue police officers.' Their crime was that they staged a protest against a power outage which has gone on for more than a month.
- A Lesotho Times investigation found that unscrupulous health professionals are selling Covid-19 passports to people who have not been jabbed against the disease. The certificates are selling for anything from M150 to M400.
- An internal audit report prepared by the Ministry of Finance for the 2019/20 and 20/21 financial years exposed how M689 million was squandered under the guise of fighting Covid-19.
- As of 6 June 2022, Lesotho had 32,910 coronavirus cases, 24,155 recoveries and 697 deaths, the same statistics as indicated as of 9 May 2022 by Worldometers.





- The Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL's) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on 24 May decided to increase the CBL Rate from 4.25% per annum to 4.75% per annum.
- On 1 June, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with Lesotho. The IMF said growth had been revised down to 2.1% in FY21/22 after contracting by 6% in FY20/21 and is forecast at 2.7% in FY22/23 and 1.4% on average thereafter.
- The African Development Bank (AfDB) said in its 2022 Africa Economic Outlook (AEO), published in May 2022, that the economy is expected to grow at 2.5% in 2022 and 2.8% in 2023.
- According to the International Budget Partnership (IBP's) 2021 Open Budget Survey (OBS), published on 31 May 2022, Lesotho is ranked 98 out of 120 countries (1=best) in terms of transparency and has a composite budget oversight score of 20 (0=worst; 100=best), down from 31 in 2019.
- The Chairperson of the Road Transport Board, Limema Phoothlo, announced that due to higher inflation and fuel prices rate, transport fares for local trips would increase by 30% from 24 June 2022 and 21.1% for long distance trips.
- The price of flour went up by M300 per metric tonne (mt) effective 20 May 2022. Lesotho Flour Mills stated that the price hike is attributed to rising prices of raw materials and packaging.
- Mobile network users who fail to comply with the legal registration of SIM cards will be cut off until they do so, according to a new law. The process legally kicks off by 24 June 2022.
- M-PESA users can now make online purchases from their mobile money accounts, due to the introduction of the Patala Ka M-Pesa payment service by Vodacom VCL Financial Services (VFS).





- Many residents in the Patising and Maloraneng communities, who live downstream from Letšeng Diamond Mine and rely on surrounding natural water sources, tell stories of toxic contamination they allege is caused by the mine, resulting in illness and death.
- The newly formed Pan-African Kingdoms Council hit back at ActionSA leader Herman Mashaba's suggestion that Lesotho and eSwatini be incorporated into South Afroca, saying such calls are an insult.
- The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, Likopo Mahase, said the violence directed at Lesotho nationals in Hankey, Eastern Cape during the first week of June must be addressed between the two countries as more than 100 Lesotho nationals departed for their home country after being displaced from their homes. More than 400 people were originally displaced.
- The United States (US) government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and Lesotho signed the \$300 million Lesotho Health and Horticulture Compact on 12 May.

