



IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

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MONTHLY UPDATE

LESOTHO



MAIN STORIES

Matekane at Work

**MCC Implementation
Needs Laws to be
Approved**

**Frazer Solar Saga
Continues**

HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime Minister Sam Matekane launched his engagement meetings with various sectors on 10 November. He met with district officials, highlighting the need for decentralisation; State-owned Enterprises (SOEs), stressing the need for reforms as government and SOEs are in fiscal distress; he told farmers that the government aims to improve the agriculture sector, focusing on exports; with civil society, where he spoke about a Civil Society Policy, which is aimed at paving a way for civil society to hold the government accountable; and told the media that there is a need for the government to work with the media and not to dictate to them.
- The Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Limpho Tau, said in response to questions in parliament, that Matekane's private jet was used by the government for his official visit to Namibia, free of charge.
- Matekane travelled to Namibia for a courtesy call on President Hage Geingob, chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) organ on defence and security. The scope of bilateral ties between Namibia and Lesotho as well as SADC regional matters were discussed.
- Matekane's trip to South Africa was cancelled "indefinitely." Matekane was to pay a courtesy call on President Cyril Ramaphosa on 2 December. The cancellation of the trip came in the wake of the Phala Phala crisis.
- The new government must ensure the passing of the Harmonisation Bill, the Counter Domestic Violence Bill and a law which will establish the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA Lesotho) if Lesotho is to get the US\$300 million second compact under the United States (US)-sponsored Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).
- The High Court nullified a M1.7 billion tender awarded to Frazer Solar in 2018 for the supply of solar power to Lesotho. The court ruled that the tender was unconstitutional, unlawful and invalid because Lesotho's procurement laws had not been followed. Frazer dismissed the Lesotho High Court judgment.



- Frazer was awarded a garnishing order to seize Lesotho's property in Brussels, Belgium. The Belgium court recognised Frazer's €50 million arbitration award against Lesotho and issued an order allowing the company to seize the Kingdom's assets in Belgium, including the bank account of the Lesotho embassy in Brussels.
- The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) is investigating the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) for alleged corruption in the procurement of ballot papers used in the October 7 election.
- On 29 November, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL) decided to increase the CBL Rate from 6.25% per annum to 7.00% per annum.
- The inflation rate decreased to 8.50% in October from 9.20% in September 2022.
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- The CBL said that in the third quarter economic activity is estimated to have contracted by 3.9% following a 0.9% decline in the quarter ending in June 2022.
- The current account balance registered a deficit equivalent to 0.2% of GDP compared to a deficit equivalent to 10.8% in the quarter ending in June 2022.
- The stock of public debt, rose to 58.2% of GDP in the third quarter, from 54.3% in the previous quarter. (CBL)
- Lesotho said South Africa breached its free movement arrangement with the country when authorities instructed 400 Basotho to leave Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal. The Lesotho government had to repatriate its nationals amid questions about their status in South Africa.
- Farmers alongside South Africa's border with Lesotho are falling prey to rampant crime, according to Dr Jane Buys, Free State Agriculture's (FSA) safety risk analyst. She said it was becoming virtually impossible for these farmers to continue farming due to rampant stock theft, theft of infrastructure and violent crimes committed by Lesotho nationals.





- Following the completion of further feasibility studies into the hydropower component of Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) started the procurement process for the design and construction supervision of the Oxbow Hydropower Scheme.
- The LHDA has announced the construction contract awards for the Polihali Dam and Polihali Transfer Tunnel to the tune of M16 billion.
- China and Lesotho are consolidating their ties as well as deepening bilateral exchanges and cooperation. China's Ambassador to Lesotho, Lei Kezhong said China pays close attention to the development plan and priority goals of the new government.
- Akanda, an international medical cannabis operator, will abandon its operations in Lesotho following a legal battle with a disgruntled former director.

