



IN TRANSFORMATION  
INITIATIVE

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# MONTHLY UPDATE

## LESOTHO



### MAIN STORIES

**Matekane Survives**

**Mid-Term Budget  
Review**

**Corruption at QMMH**

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime Minister Sam Matekane survived a vote of no confidence from a group of opposition parties led by the leader of the Democratic Congress (DC), Mathibeli Mokhothu. Matekane secured the support of the Basotho Action Party (BAP), led by Nqosa Mahao with six more seats; the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) of Mothetjoa Metsing with 3 seats; HOPE of 'Machabana Lemphane-Letsie with one seat; and the Lesotho People's Congress (LPC)-Baena Alliance of Reverend Paul Masiu with one seat. These parties joined the coalition government of the ruling Revolution for Prosperity (RFP), the Alliance of Democrats (AD) and the Movement of Economic Change (MEC). The seven-party coalition now holds 67 seats in Parliament against the opposition's 53.
- Matekane extended his cabinet with six new ministries and five deputy ministers. Amongst others, Mahao was appointed as minister of energy.
- Basotho National Party (BNP) leader, Machesetsa Mofomobe vowed to proceed with his motion of no confidence against Matekane's government.
- The army, police and intelligence chiefs have in effect threatened a military coup, warning they will step in to prevent Matekane from being toppled in a parliamentary no-confidence vote.
- Zambia's President Hakainde Hichilema as the Chairman of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Corporation visited Lesotho and expressed hope that various political stakeholders in Lesotho would come to a consensus and implement reforms.
- Opposition parties tabled a demand that the heads of the country's security agencies be fired. Mofomobe said that they had told Hichilema that the reforms process needed a conducive environment to be completed. Such an environment had been derailed by the behaviour of the security chiefs. The opposition also told Hichilema that they would continue with their motion of no confidence.



- A warrant of arrest was issued in November for the leader of the BNP, Machesetsa Mofomobe. The order for his arrest came after the BNP failed to comply with a labour court order for the party to pay its former secretary, Ts'epo Lethobane, an estimated sum of M160 000.
- Socialist Revolutionaries (SR) leader, Teboho Mojapela, was interrogated for allegedly being escorted by six cars with heavily armed people. He was later released. Police Minister Lebona Lephema Lephema told parliament that Mojapela's firearms which were found in his vehicles were cleared as they had valid licenses.
- Four assassins are believed to be behind the murders of Disaster Management Authority (DMA) CEO, 'Makhotso Mahosi and her 9-year-old child. Mahosi was a primary witness of parliament's Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) investigation into reckless spending of Covid-19 funds.
- The National Command Centre tender panel blew M45 million on dry rations for the army and police during the Covid-19 pandemic. The figure is three times higher than what the Public Accounts Committee believed had been spent on the dry rations.
- Minister of Finance, Retselisitsoe Matlanyane, said in her Mid-Term Budget Review for the 2023/24 fiscal year on 8 November that real GDP in the first half of 2023 recorded a contraction of 0.7%. She added that annual growth was revised downwards to 1.8% by the end of 2023/24 from a projection of 2.3%.
- Senior politicians in the health ministry reportedly parachuted friends, family and party comrades into jobs at the flagship Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital in 2022, swelling the hospital's wage bill. Many of the new appointees were not qualified.
- The annual inflation rate edged up to 5.8% in September 2023 from 5.2% in August.





- Matekane launched a youth development program called “Sebatatso.” It is aimed at mentoring, investing in youth innovators and creating a national platform for youth to showcase their businesses.
- One of Africa's largest outdoor cannabis-growing facilities, Highlands Investments in Lesotho, will be auctioned on 22 November 2023 in Johannesburg.
- KFC announced it had closed all its restaurants in Lesotho, for a lack of chicken from South Africa. Lesotho banned all imports of poultry from South Africa due to the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza.
- The Lesotho Special Permit (LSP) is scheduled to expire on 31 December 2023. Lesotho nationals are optimistic that South Africa’s cabinet will renew the permit in December.
- Matekane expressed pride in the country’s achievement in passing 15 out of 20 Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) indicators. United States (US) Ambassador to Lesotho Maria Brewer said Lesotho’s improvement in indicators signifies the country’s commitment to strengthening democratic governance and economic freedom. Brewer also noted that to achieve the entry into force of the compact by 30 March 2024, Lesotho must urgently accelerate the enactment of the Labour Bill of 2022, occupational health and safety regulations and additional inheritance reforms.
- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded Lesotho \$31.4 million for the Food for Progress (FFP) Program to strengthen Lesotho’s poultry sector.
- Lesotho signed the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)-East African Community (EAC)-Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement.

