



IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

JANUARY • No 1/2024

MONTHLY UPDATE

LESOTHO



MAIN STORIES

The Latest on Reform

Debate on
Naturalised Basotho

HIGHLIGHTS

- Interbank and international payments routed through Lesotho were offline for eight days following a cyberattack on the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL). The problem was reportedly fully fixed by 22 December 2023.
- Prime Minister Sam Matekane told parliamentarians and development partners that the government plans to re-table the Omnibus Bill when parliament reconvenes after the Christmas recess. Leaders of opposition parties in parliament boycotted a breakfast meeting on reforms.
- Disgruntled former members of the Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) formally registered a new political party called the United African Transformation (UAT) in Lesotho as an extension of its South African parent, founded by the former Action SA secretary in Gauteng, Abel Tau. Mojela Mafike, an RFP activist, is currently spearheading the party's activities in Lesotho. The party has written to 32 Members of Parliament (MPs) from different parties calling on them to join it so that it is represented in parliament.
- The All-Basotho Convention (ABC) leader Nkaku Kabi said former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane flew into a rage after he rejected an offer to join Matekane's coalition government.
- Police Commissioner Holomo Molibeli blamed famo music gangs, rampant stock theft, and illicit drugs sold to the youth near schools for the high rate of violence in Lesotho.
- The World Bank in its January 2024 Global Economic Prospects (GEP) predicts growth of 2.5% in 2024, down from projected growth of 2.9% in its January 2023 report.
- At least 20 vulnerable homes of the elderly, orphaned children and centres of disability were given donations by Matekane in fulfilment of his pledge that he will give his salary to assist the vulnerable.
- The government is considering a M15 million bailout for Enrich Stores, a Basotho-owned supermarket that collapsed.



- The Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) engaged a new investor, Vishan Clothing, to run Ace Apparel (Pty) Ltd. This after its previous owners vanished in December 2023, leaving workers stranded without their salaries and other benefits. Vishan Clothing is from Durban, South Africa and already operates in Lesotho.
- The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) wants to raise M96.3 million to restore 19 wetlands.
- Chinese President Xi Jinping and King Letsie III exchanged congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Xi pointed out that since the resumption of diplomatic ties 30 years ago, China and Lesotho have supported each other on issues concerning each other's core interests and major concerns.
- India is reportedly in talks with Lesotho to conduct trade using the Indian currency.
- Kenya's President William Ruto hosted Matekane at State House when the latter attended the YouthConnekt Africa Summit in Nairobi. Addressing the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), on the margins of the Summit, Matekane called Kenyans to explore investment opportunities in Lesotho.
- The United States (US) donated US\$28 million to school feeding schemes while Japan donated US\$102 million towards infrastructure that will support inclusive education initiatives.

