



### MAIN STORIES

#### Constitutional Reforms

#### Famo-related Violence

#### Calls to Empower Basotho

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Law and Justice Minister, Richard Ramoetsi, introduced the 10th Amendment to the Constitution, which includes bills that require a simple majority to pass into law, and the 11th Amendment, which contains bills requiring a two-thirds majority, in parliament. He rejected recommendations from legal experts to draft a new Constitution to safeguard the reform process.
- Amnesty International's Regional Director for East and Southern Africa, Tigere Chagutah, said in a statement on 25 April that authorities must stop threats against Phafane Nkotsi, journalist and proprietor of Lesotho Tribune and Lesotho Times after he published articles critical of government.
- Lesotho is ranked 122 out of 180 countries (1=best; 180=worst) on the 2024 World Press Freedom Index, published by Reporters Without Borders, down from 67 in 2023.
- Following the killing of nine people in Famo related violence in Leribe in April, Tšepiso 'Mosotho' Radebe, the leader of one of the Famogroups, warned of the possibility of more bloodshed should the government continue failing to rein in members of the armed forces whom he accuses of fuelling rivalry and violence among the Famogangs.
- Amnesty International said in its 2023/24 annual report that security forces suppressed peaceful demonstrations at the Polihali Dam and surrounding areas.
- The United States (US) State Department's 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices states that significant human rights issues included credible reports of amongst others arbitrary or unlawful killings; torture or cruel, inhuman treatment; and arbitrary arrest or detention.
- The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) is seeking the extradition of Robert Frazer, the founder of Frazer Solar GmbH, a German company, to Lesotho to answer fraud charges that resulted in the country incurring a M1.2 billion debt for solar energy.



- Natural Resources Minister, Mohlomi Moleko, said the country's mining sector is enmeshed in corruption which he is struggling to control.
- The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Association held an inaugural Basotho Business Empowerment Forum on 17 April, demanding that government immediately implement the Business Licensing and Registration Regulations (Amendment) 2021, which expressly lists 47 enterprises set aside for indigenous Basotho.
- The IMF said in its April 2024 World Economic Outlook (WEO), that the economy will grow by 2.4% in 2024. It predicts growth of 2.5% in 2025 and 2.1% in 2029.
- Lesotho will now earn M298 million monthly in royalties for sending water to Gauteng, under the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP). This is more than double the M130 million the country has been receiving.
- The 90-day visa-free agreement between Lesotho and South Africa (SA) has not yet been implemented.
- The Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) contingent withdrew from the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM).
- Deputy Prime Minister Nthomeng Majara had a meeting with the Acting Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Chester Cooper and presented Joshua Setipa as Lesotho and the SADC's candidate for the position of the Commonwealth Secretary General.
- Majara visited Hubei Province in China accompanied by the Minister of Health, Selibe Mochoboroane and senior officials from the Ministry of Health "to forge a deeper partnership."
- The United States (US) government commended Lesotho for passing laws required for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)-Compact II to enter into force.
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the government signed a Letter of Intent on the resumption of direct funding to Lesotho, following the successful implementation of pre-disbursement financial systems requirements.

