



MAIN STORIES

Still Pushing for
Majoro's Ouster

Politicians Versus the
People

Fight Over
Delimitation of
Constituencies

Coronavirus

LHWP Problems

HIGHLIGHTS

- Speaker of Parliament, Sephiri Motanyane, rejected a plea from disgruntled Member of Parliament (MPs) for a secret ballot to oust Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro. Tefo Mapesela, leader of the Basotho Patriotic Party (BPP), subsequently filed a Constitutional Court application for an order compelling Motanyane to allow MPs to vote secretly in a proposed motion to oust Majoro. Mapesela in his application alleged that Majoro is using national security agencies to “intimidate” his All Basotho Convention (ABC) party legislators who are supporting the no confidence motion.
- The Basotho Action Party (BAP), led by Nqosa Mahao, wants parliament to compel Majoro to advise King Letsie III to dissolve parliament and call for elections within the next three months.
- There was fierce debate at the National Reforms Authority (NRA) indaba as politicians haggled over the interpretation of who should qualify for Proportional Representation (PR) seats in parliament. A resolution was passed by the Multi-Stakeholder National Dialogue in 2019 after consultation of stakeholders at public gatherings had shown that people wanted to choose their own PR candidates. However, politicians rejected the notion.
- The Democratic Congress (DC) and fellow congress parties threatened to go to court to stop the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) from proceeding with the delimitation of constituencies. The IEC proposed to reduce the number of rural constituencies and create more urban ones because of migration. The congress parties consider the rural constituencies their strongholds.
- Parliament scrapped the proposed Computer Crimes and Cyber Security Bill, 2021 and Communications (Identity Module and Mobile Device Regulation) Regulations, 2021 that would have allowed the government to monitor the private communications of citizens.
- The government and the IEC accused the Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) of seeking to generate a constitutional crisis by filing a “malicious” application seeking the de-registration of all political parties.



- The DC condemned the “brutal and inhumane” killings of police officers across the country in recent months. The DC said the spate of killings of police officers which had resulted in the death of at least 10 police officers since February 2021 means Lesotho must consider implementing the death penalty more stringently.
- The Lesotho Defence Force (LDF) arrested three men who were masquerading as soldiers and committing crimes in the Makoanyane barracks. In a statement the army said the LDF command is aware of the gangs that enter the barracks to perpetrate criminal offences.
- A syndicate of employees at the Ministry of Finance allegedly manipulated the payment system to steal M50 million.
- Two senior managers in the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation were suspended over allegations of massive looting at the prestigious Rapokolana High Altitude Sports Training Centre.
- Stone Xie, the controversial Chinese businessman who allegedly fleeced thousands of wool farmers, is in trouble after he allegedly helped three Chinese nationals enter Lesotho with fake documents.
- As of 11 October 2021, Lesotho had 21,457 coronavirus cases, 11,793 recoveries and 652 deaths. Majoro relaxed the COVID-19 restrictions to allow a host of activities, including international travel to resume.
- The World Bank said in its October 2021 Macro Poverty Outlook report that GDP growth contracted by 13.8 percent (year-on-year) during the first quarter of 2021. The economy is expected to rebound and grow by 3.2 percent in 2021 and average 2.9 percent in the medium-term.
- The current account recorded a deficit equivalent to 11.3 percent of GDP in the second quarter of 2021, compared to a surplus of 1.3 percent of GDP in the preceding quarter.





- The government has suspended the implementation of the indigenisation laws as many people felt the regulations did not do enough to protect them from foreign competition. A proposed amendment is for the upward revision of the capital requirements for foreign investors to M2 million but MPs said the figure was too low.
- Lesotho is not anywhere near its dream of ending absolute poverty and boosting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner, according to the findings of stakeholder engagements in preparation for the formulation of the 2021-2025 World Bank Systematic Country Diagnostic report.
- Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH) is allegedly falling apart since government cancelled the management contract of a private consortium, led by South Africa's Netcare.
- The Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA) granted the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) permission to hike electricity charges by 10.37 percent.
- The South African Academy of Engineering (SAAE) called on the South African government to engage urgently with Lesotho to end the wasteful release of water from the Katse and Mohale dams. Water is being released to generate hydropower in Lesotho, even when the Vaal and Bloemhof dams in South Africa are full and overflowing and the Lesotho dams are less than 65% full, it said.
- The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) issued termination letters to HSPY-JV and HSP-JV, the contractors for the construction of the Polihali Western Access Road and rehabilitation of the Northern Access Road respectively.
- The Minister for Africa at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Vicky Ford, pledged the United Kingdom (UK)'s continued support to Lesotho at the official reopening of the British High Commission office in Maseru. It was the first visit to Lesotho by a UK minister since 2013.





- The United States (US) Department of Labour said in its 2020 “Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour” that children in Lesotho were subjected to the worst forms of child labour, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking.
- The US Embassy in Maseru hosted a team of law enforcement agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) to conduct the first phase of a potential multi-year project to create Lesotho’s first national criminal fingerprint database.
- The European Union (EU) appointed Paola Amadei as its new ambassador to Lesotho.

