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Govt spends M450m a month on workers
...as high unstable SACU revenues and high expenditures make fiscal discipline hard to maintain **5**

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THURSDAY Nov 25 - Dec 1, 2021 | Tel.: 266 2232 5494 | editor@maserumetro.com | sales@maserumetro.com | Est. 2017



CBL INCREASES REPO RATE TO 3.73%

- Largest contributors to October inflation rate included food, electricity, gas & other fuels
- Hike comes a week after SA Reserve Bank raised its main repo rate to 3.75%

3

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NACOSEC reaches more Basotho with COVID-19 vaccine **9**

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- Rocky times hit SA film industry where it hurts
- NACOSEC reaches more Basotho with COVID-19 vaccine
- NRA gets 6 month extension



BORN ON THIS DAY

November 18

- 1941 - Gary Boyle, rocker (*Isotope*)
- 1942 - Bayani Mendoza de Leon, Filipino-American musician and composer
- 1942 - Billy Connolly, Scottish comedian and actor (*Blue Money*)
- 1943 - Richard Tee, American jazz and session pianist and arranger
- 1965 - Shirley Henderson, Scottish actress
- 1966 - Ledell Eackles, NBA guard (*Wash Wizards/Bullets*)
- 1966 - Paul Robinett, American internet personality
- 1966 - Russell Watson, British singer
- 1967 - Al Martin, Covina CA, outfielder (*Pittsburgh Pirates*)
- 1967 - Cal Eldred, baseball player
- 1983 - Meredith Henderson, Canadian actress
- 1985 - Julia Alexandratou, Greek fashion model and singer
- 1987 - Megan Mullins, American singer
- 1987 - Sabi, American pop singer-songwriter (*You Make Me Feel...*)
- 1989 - Johnny Exantus, Haitian soccer player

Quotes & Quips!

"If they start to tell you what you can say here, because you do business in China, that's a problem. They haven't done it. They're very smart, they're very thoughtful,"

says JPMorgan Chase & Co. Chief Executive Officer Jamie Dimon, showing that his bank is likely to outlast China's Communist Party, while reiterating his company's commitment to the country in wide-ranging comments that touched on Taiwan, free speech and former US President Donald Trump



NewsBriefs

Khetheng murder trial takes off again

- Witness claims he was never promised anything in return for his testimony
- Lawyer accuses witness of being economical with the truth in his evidence

MASERU - The trial against four senior police officers who face the murder charges of their subordinate, Police Constable (PC) Mokalekale Khetheng finally took off in the High Court on Monday after numerous postponements which hindered its process

When the matter that continues before Justice Charles Hungwe from Zimbabwe resumed, PC Tumelo Ntoane was still in the witness box under cross examination by one of the defence lawyers, King's Counsel (KC) Karabo Mohau.

He testified that he was never told about becoming an accomplice witness in the case, adding that he did not hope to gain anything from his testimony.

"The prosecution did not promise me anything for agreeing to testify against the accused," he said, denying to have been economical with the truth in his testimony.

Khetheng is alleged to have died at the hands of the Hlotse police, but this has been refuted by the defence who claims that the deceased was never arrested in the first place.

Khetheng who was at the time of his disappearance stationed in Mokhotlong was arrested on March 26, 2016 and was thereafter never seen alive again.

Senior Superintendent Thabo Tšukulu along with Mabitle Matona, Mothibeli Mofolo and Haleokoe Taasoane are charged with his murder.

The four were stationed at the Hlotse Police Station where Khetheng was allegedly detained after his arrest. At the time, Tšukulu commanded the Leribe



The late Police Constable Mokalekale Khetheng

police.

In their defence, the accused claim that Khetheng left the police station of his accord.

The accused also face charges including perjury and defeating ends of justice. LeNA

Mahao murder trial resumes in January

- Kamoli is accused together with other 8 soldiers of several other charges
- Mahao was allegedly gunned down execution-style by his colleagues

MASERU - Former army boss, Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) Tlali Kamoli and the eight soldiers he is charged with for the 2015 murder of ex LDF commander, Lt Gen Maaparankoe Mahao will have their day again in court on January 24, 2022 when the High Court hears their case.

The matter in which Kamoli is charged together with Motsamai Fako, Motšoane Machae, Tšitso Ramoholi, Litekanyo Nyakane, Haleo Makara, Lekhooa Moepe, Marasi Moleli and Mohlalefi Seitlheko is expected to run until January 28.

The accused soldiers also face other charges including attempted murder, theft, obstruction of justice, damage to property, aggravated assault and risk of injury or death. Most of these crimes allegedly occurred in Ha Lekete and Ha Ratjomose in Maseru on June 25, 2015 the day on which Mahao was allegedly gunned down execution-style by his colleagues.

The case continues before Justice Charles Hungwe. LeNA

FastFACTS

All the ants on Earth weigh about as much as all the humans

The total population of people who are alive on Earth hasn't even hit 8 billion. At the same time, there are 10 quadrillion (10,000,000,000,000,000) individual ants crawling around at any given time. According to wildlife presenter Chris Packham, who appeared on the BBC in 2014 to discuss this, when combined, all of those ants would weigh about the same as all of us humans.

On This Day in History

1783



November 25

Last British soldiers leave New York

On November 25, 1783, nearly three months after the Treaty of Paris was signed ending the American Revolution, the last British soldiers withdraw from New York City, the last British military position in the United States. After the last Redcoat departed New York, U.S. General George Washington entered the city in triumph to the cheers of New Yorkers. The city had remained in British hands since its capture in September 1776.

Four months after New York was returned to the victorious Patriots, the city was declared to be the capital of the United States. In 1789, it was the site of Washington's inauguration as the first U.S. president and remained the nation's capital until 1790, when Philadelphia became the second capital of the United States under the U.S. Constitution.

New Yorkers shaped the history of two new nations. The British evacuated their New York Loyalists to remaining British territories, mainly in Canada. These families had been dispossessed of their land and belongings by the victorious Patriots because of their continued support of the British king and were able to regain some financial independence through lands granted to them by the British in western Quebec (now Ontario) and Nova Scotia. Their arrival in Canada permanently shifted the demographics of what had been French-speaking New France until 1763 into an English-speaking colony, and later nation, with the exception of a French-speaking and culturally French area in eastern Canada that is now Quebec.

In 1784, one year after their arrival, the new Loyalist population spurred the creation of New Brunswick in the previously unpopulated (by Europeans, at least) lands west of the Bay of Fundy in what had been Nova Scotia. In 1785, the Loyalists yet again made their mark on Canadian history when their combined settlements at Parrtown and Carleton of approximately 14,000 people became British North America's first incorporated city under the name City of Saint John. The division between the Anglophone and Francophone sections was ultimately recognized by creating the English-dominant province of Ontario, west of Quebec, in 1867.

ALL JOKES ASIDE

Daring the devil

Three men are traveling on a ship, when they are accosted by the Devil. The Devil proposes that if each man drops something into the sea and he cannot find it, he will be that man's slave. If the Devil does find it, however, he will eat that man up. The first man drops a pure, clear diamond, and immediately gets eaten. The second man drops an expensive watch, trying to impress the Devil, and gets eaten. The third man fills a bottle with water and pours it into the sea yelling, "You think I'm a fool? Try finding that!"

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Govt spends M450m a month on workers 5



Metro BUSINESS

CURRENCIES

(How Lesotho's Loti fared against world major currencies this week)

Loti/SDR	Special Drawing Right (SDR)	21.38
Loti/Dollar	United States (US\$)	15.84
Loti/Rands	South African (ZAR)	1.00
Loti/Euro	European Union (€)	17.75
Loti/Yuan	Chinese (¥)	2.48
Loti/Yen	Japanese (¥)	0.14
Loti/Pound Sterling	British (£)	21.16
Loti/Dollar	Australian (A\$)	11.44
Loti/Dollar	Hong Kong (HK\$)	2.03
Loti/Dollar	Singapore (S\$)	11.60
Loti/Naira	Nigeria's (₦)	0.039
Loti/Kwanza	Angola's (Kz)	0.027
Loti/Birr	Ethiopia's (Br)	0.33
Loti/Pound	Egypt (E£)	1.01
Loti/Ruble	Russia (RUB)	0.21
Loti/Riyal	Saudi Arabia (SAR)	4.23
Loti/Shekel	Israel (₪)	5.03
Loti/Real	Brazilian (R\$)	2.48
Loti/Rupee	India (₹)	0.21
Loti/Dirham	UAE (د.إ.)	5.03
Loti/Rupee	Mauritius (Rs)	0.36

COMMODITIES (International Rates in US\$)

STOCKS		PRECIOUS METALS	
S&P500	4,690.70	Gold p/ounce	1,790.31
NASDAQ100	16,306.72	Platinum p/ounce	987.59
Nikkei225	29,302.66	Silver p/ounce	23.62
Dow Jones30	36,813.80	Copper p/ounce	4.46
FTSE 100	7,274.28	Brent Oil p/barrel	81.17
JSE	70,700.00	EQUITIES	
Hang Seng	24,663.59	Bonds	18.44
		Treasury Bills	3.67
		Interest Rates	91

AGRICULTURE (Rates in Maloti/Rands)

Maize Meal p/kg	M7.00	Eggs p/tray	M45.00
Wheat Meal p/kg	M10.00	Milk (fresh) p/litre	M16.00
Cabbage p/kg	M14.00	Milk (sour) p/litre	M20.00
Potatoes p/kg	M10.50	Rice p/kg	M30.00
Brown Bread p/loaf	M10.00	White Sugar p/kg	M22.00
White Bread p/loaf	M11.00	Brown Sugar p/kg	M25.00
Sorghum Meal p/kg	M25.00	Beef p/kg	M85.00
Brown Beans p/kg	M30.00	Mutton p/kg	M90.00
Tomato p/kg	M15.00		

ENERGY (Rates in Maloti/Rands)

Petrol Unleaded 93 p/litre	M15.35
Unleaded 95 p/litre	M15.50
Diesel 50PPm p/litre	M15.25
Paraffin p/litre	M11.00
Water (Domestic) p/litre	M5.53
Water (Industrial) p/litre	M15.03
Electricity (Domestic) p/unit	M1.38
Electricity (Industrial) p/unit	M0.26
Gas p/kg	M20.00

CBL increases repo rate to 3.75%

...Largest contributors to October inflation rate included food, electricity, gas & other fuels

NEO SENOKO

business@maserumetro.com

MASERU - The Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL), an institution which is committed to conducting monetary policies to among others achieve and maintain price stability, has during its 92nd meeting increased its main repo rate to 3.75 percent per annum from 3.50 percent.

The repo rate determines the interest rate at which the Central Bank lends money to commercial banks, which then affects the rate at which they lend money to consumers.

The increase comes just a week after the South African Reserve Bank also raised its main repo rate to 3.75 percent, its first increase since April 2020.

"The rate, set at this level will ensure that the domestic cost of funds remains aligned with the rest of the region." CBL Governor, Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane said on Monday.

In its 92nd Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, the bank also maintained the NIR target floor at US\$760 million.

At this level, the NIR target remains consistent with the maintenance of the exchange rate peg between the loti and the South African rand. The rate of inflation, as measured by the year-on-year percentage change in the consumer price index (CPI), was 6.2 percent in October 2021, compared to 5.4 percent in September of the same year.

The largest contributors to the October inflation rate included food, electricity, gas and other fuels as well as transport subcomponents.

Furthermore, the CBL's Composite Indicator of Economic Activity (CIEA) reflects that domestic economic activity slowed by 1.1 percent in the third quarter, compared with a 3.7 percent increase recorded in the preceding

quarter.

"The increase was mainly a result of negative growth in the manufacturing and production side of the economy, which was moderated by an improvement of the demand side. Domestic economic recovery remains largely conditional on developments related to the trajectory of virus infections, COVID-19 containment measures and the rollout of vaccines," Dr Matlanyane added.

Private sector credit extended by banks increased by 4.7 percent in the third quarter of 2021, compared to the 1.8 percent rise in the second quarter. Loans and advances extended to business enterprises increased by 7.3 percent during the review period, relative to a 0.2 percent growth in the preceding quarter.

Similarly, total credit granted to households rose by 3.8 percent in the third quarter, following a rise of 2.3 percent in the quarter ending June 2021.

The current account recorded a deficit equivalent to 7.4 percent of GDP in the third quarter of 2021, relative to a larger deficit of 10.2 percent of GDP in the preceding quarter.

"The moderate deficit in the current account was driven mainly by a worsening of balances in the services account, primary income and secondary income accounts," the CBL Governor also said.

Consequently, the gross international reserves, as measured in months of import cover, increased to 5.7 months in the third quarter of 2021, compared to 4.2 months in the previous quarter.

The Government budgetary operations remained under pressure, as expenditure grew faster than revenue during the review period. This therefore resulted in a marginal fiscal deficit.



The Governor of the Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL), Dr Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane

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Business

BEDCO seeks to capacitate SMMEs

Project seeks to strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem in order to enable successful achievement of the programme

NEO SENOKO

business@maserumetro.com

MASERU – Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) are set to benefit

directly from the enterprise development programme under the Basotho Enterprises Development Corporation (BEDCO), an institution established to develop Basotho owned businesses.

The programme that was launched recently comprises several initiatives that will be implemented towards growing the local SMMEs to enable them to recover from post COVID-19 challenges and to boost job creation and economic growth.

Key objectives of the programme are among others to establish 50 start-up MSMEs per annum amongst the youth towards addressing youth unemployment challenges.

It also aims to develop 1300 per existing MSMEs per annum to grow their next level of growth, enabling them

to create more jobs. It further seeks to strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem in order to enable successful achievement of the programme.

The immediate programme beneficiaries will be MSMEs as they will be assisted to develop to their next level of growth.

“To implement a significant part of the programme, BEDCO has received support from the African Development Bank through the Government of Lesotho, under the Economic Diversification Support Project (EDSP). We are grateful for this support and acknowledge the efforts and commitment that have been made by EDSP team in ensuring that we get the necessary support,” BEDCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO,) Idia Penane said during the launch.



BEDCO Chief Executive Officer, Idia Penane

Furthermore, the programme will be implemented through three projects with tailor-made interventions which address specific needs in different categories of facilitation of formalisation project, targeting 1 000 micro enterprises aimed at assisting Basotho businesses in the informal sector to register their businesses and unleash the benefits that come with formalisation.

The project is being carried out in collaboration with the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) and the Ministry of Trade through the One Business Facilitation Center (OBFC).

The three organisations went on to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a way to formalise their collaboration.

The project will also provide capacitation to micro businesses and assist them with the necessary support to be able to access financing and markets.

It will be carried out with other relevant business registration regulatory organisations based on the sectors to be assisted.

Another key focus area of the project will target Small and Medium Enterprises to grow from Small to Medium and from Medium to Large.

“The project will initially assist 250 small businesses as well as the youth enterprises development project which has been coined as ‘The Youth Launchpad’ which specifically targets youth owned startup enterprises.

“This project encourages the pursuit of entrepreneurship among Basotho youth as a means of employment creation. The project provides seed capital through business plan competitions and idea pitching sessions through which we will invite the private sector to sponsor youth businesses requiring small amounts of funding. The winners will undergo incubation and mentorship to ensure success of their businesses,” Ms Penane added.

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Govt spends M450m a month on workers

...as high unstable SACU revenues and high expenditures make fiscal discipline hard to maintain



The Minister of Finance, Thabo Sofonea

NEO SENOKO
business@maserumetro.com

MASERU – Minister of Finance, Thabo Sofonea has revealed that the Government is faced with a

dilemma of balancing the need for support to the economy post the COVID-19 pandemic with ongoing efforts to maintain the fiscal deficit at sustainable levels.

He made the announcement

on Wednesday when announcing the midterm budget review for the financial year 2021/22.

“With an estimated general government spending of 65.0 percent of GDP and total revenue of 47.2 percent of GDP, it is evident that most of the adjustment ought to be made from the recurrent expenditure side,” Mr Sofonea said.

High unstable SACU revenues and high expenditures make fiscal discipline hard to maintain. This condition calls for improvements in the expenditure controls and revenue management. A better and improved revenue management is key to reducing the country’s dependence on volatile SACU revenues.

While compensation of employees is lower at 41.8 percent against the budget, it is however, higher for the first half of this year by M36.3 million relative to prior half year outturn in 2020/21.

On average, Mr Sofonea said, the Government spends approximately M450.9million a month on compensation of employees.

Expenditures for the acquisition of goods and services

in comparison with last year’s six months’ outturn increased by M112.5 million to M961.6 million, driven by an increase in operating costs.

Student grants to the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) rose by M92.4 million to 544.6 million compared with the same period of 2020/21.

“For the remainder of the fiscal year 2021/22, sustained expenditure restraint is required for fiscal sustainability. The hard work to narrow the budget deficit and improve the structure of spending remains on course,” he said.

Furthermore, total revenue including grants and SACU is estimated at M17.3 billion which is 4.4 percent lower than the previous year’s estimates. The lower total revenue estimates is associated with a lesser share of SACU revenue of M6.0 billion against M8.9 billion in 2020/21.

To ensure appropriate and transparent application of the required fiscal consolidation, the Government has sought International Monetary Fund (IMF) support under Extended

Credit Facility (ECF) and Extended Financing Facility (EFF) arrangements which are consistent with the objectives of the National Strategic Development Plan II (NSDP II).

“The Government commits to address the long standing structural problem of a government-led growth model, while focusing on targeted reform action to maintain macroeconomic stability and strengthening the inclusive growth agenda,” Mr Sofonea noted.

He said the Government still commits to control recurrent expenditure in order to preserve fiscal space, while at the same time mobilising domestic revenues.

Public service delivery will be at the heart of this endeavor. The adequate level of Net International Reserves will be maintained to safeguard the Rand/Loti peg.

On a lighter note, cumulative revenue collections for the period April to September 2021 amounted to M8.4 billion against a budget estimate of M17.3 billion, resulting in a variance of 48.7 percent against the budget. This performance benefited from SACU receipts, tax revenue, water royalties from LHDA, and grants which are all well on target.

Non tax revenue receipts totaled M954.3 million which is 1.9 percent below the six months target. However, this year’s collection is M167.4 million higher than the prior year’s collection of M786.4 million.

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Comments & Letters

Police recruits terrorise the nation

The Editor,

When we thought we had seen it all, with cops breaking into police stations to steal firearms, this week young police recruits took to the streets of Maseru and ran amok, terrorising both pedestrians and motorists. The young men and women in khaki outfits armed with batons or tonfas brought the entire city to a standstill and beat several people to a pulp.

Many were forced to do rigorous physical exercises including push-ups on the pavement and when they failed to perform as expected, they were mercilessly assaulted by the young officers who did not have a care in the world as to who their victims were. The operation they had mounted was meant to ensure that pedestrians wore their face masks and used zebra crossings to cross the main roads in town. But the manner in which they conducted the operation and behaved left so much to be desired.

The ill-treatment of people old enough to be their parents and grandparents is something that the police authorities have to urgently address. The country cannot have a situation where young police recruits undergoing training can turn into law-breakers even before they become official police officers.

Tiisetso Mokhameleli
Moshoeshoe II, Maseru

It's time we stopped using outside pit latrines

The Editor,

The continued use of unsafe outside pit latrines is truly worrisome. It is concerning as such toilets do not only pose a health hazard but can lead to death as well. Young children, especially school learners can readily fall down the pits and drown in the refuse down there.

This is something that a good part of the nation has been trying to raise issue with to the Ministry of Education for so many years, but to no avail. The lives of our pupils are not safe at their own schools.

Although the ministry has managed to provide temporary toilets to most of the local schools since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, it still has a long way to go.

The ministry urgently needs to eradicate all the pit toilets because the matter is extremely serious.

Poor sanitation also compromises the well-being of the pupils at school and that is another component that also requires immediate attention of the education ministry.

Lizzy Matoane
Masooe, Maseru

It is important for Basotho to understand that human trafficking is real

The Editor,

As the Ministry of Home Affairs continues to warn the general public about the existence of human trafficking in the country, it is also important for Basotho to understand that the crime is rife in our communities.

It is modern-day slavery that cuts across all age groups and genders. On November 22, a Mosotho lady was stopped from boarding a plane at the Moshoeshoe I International Airport where she was bound for Muscat-Oman, in the Middle East.

The lady had been promised a job and it later emerged that she was being trafficked, but thanks to vigilant authorities at the airport who saved her from an impending ordeal.

People should know that these online jobs are fake and they must always be careful about such offers made to them by relatives, friends or complete strangers.

It is true that unemployment is a big challenge, but they better be safe than sorry.

Selloane Mokatse
Ha Seoli, Maseru

Speak OUT! Your opinions matter. This page is dedicated to those who wish to express their views.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The return of the Roof of Africa rally elates the country

When over 400 international bikers and their support staff along with their families and friends descended on the capital of the Mountain Kingdom, Maseru early this week to attend the iconic Motul Roof of Africa rally for the first time in two years, the whole country was hoping for the usual euphoria that normally accompanies the epic event.

Owing to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, the race that was inaugurated in 1967 as a cross-country rally for cars from Johannesburg to Durban, passing through Lesotho had been postponed for the last two years.

But this time around, the sought after and revered Round the Houses segment of the rally has been cancelled as necessary arrangements were not made in time to ensure that this particular component of the event takes place.

Be that as it may, we still have the illustrious Time Trial and the Main Race to enjoy, therefore all the entertainment involved is not entirely ruined.

The Round the Houses is a tradition that most people who grew up in Maseru have come to love and look forward to every year, hence, its absence somehow makes the international biking show seem incomplete.

The amount of revenue that is normally generated on the day that component of the race is held has over the years made a significant contribution towards the development of Lesotho's economy. The grueling annual riding show that features some of the best and toughest bikers in the world is not only a huge booster to our frail economy, but it also offers local riders a chance to test their proficiency against their more experienced and of course better-equipped counterparts from across the globe.

The race has over the years steadily mutated into an off-road marathon for motorbikes and quads entirely contained within Lesotho's borders before becoming the giant show it is today. In a bid to commemorate the return of the race, a new Iron Class has been added to give lesser experienced riders the opportunity to experience the mountains of Lesotho from the saddle. The new class will be run alongside the established Gold, Silver and Bronze Classes.

The country's ability to put the pandemic under control has opened its doors to both tourists and bikers.

Only one negative PCR test is required to enter Lesotho and must be done within 72 hours of crossing the border. Since the test result, if negative, is valid for 14 days, no second test is required within Lesotho. Rapid tests are available at the border, but this needs to be repeated on exit. Lesotho has also implemented drive-through border formalities, although South Africa is yet to follow suit.

But what really matters is that the spectacular show that has become so synonymous with this season is finally back and as Basotho, we need to fully embrace it while making the best of what it offers.

SA'S Monetary Policy Committee could hike interest rates at every meeting next year

Remembrance Day is celebrated in November in many countries, commemorating the end of World War I in November 1918. When the war broke out in July 1914, it was widely assumed that it "would be over by Christmas". Clearly, that wasn't the case, nor did it turn out to be the "war to end all wars". And to make matters worse, when it did finally end, the world was engulfed by the deadly Spanish flu pandemic.

Today's Covid-19 pandemic similarly drags on. Many of us assumed it would only last a few weeks or months when the first lockdowns were announced in March 2020. The good news is that vaccination and treatment options continue to expand, bringing the end date ever closer. But the virus continues to rage in many countries, most recently in central Europe, and the global economy is still massively distorted by this microscopic pathogen. Millions are still out of work and many businesses closed for good. Companies that still operate face scarcities of several key items, ports are clogged, supply chains stretched, and food and energy prices have shot up. Demand for goods remains elevated and demand for face-to-face services is still below pre-Covid levels.

One of the stranger distortions is that there is simultaneously a lack of jobs and a lack of workers in many places. To use the US example, there are 10 million job openings, and eight million unemployed people. Companies looking for workers can't seem to match up with workers looking for jobs. There are a number of reasons for this, one being that for many people, especially in rich countries, the pandemic has been a period of introspection and many have reassessed when, where and how they want to work. It is in this difficult, fluid and uncertain environment that policymakers need to navigate, and since policies have an impact on economies and markets, investors too are trying to anticipate where things are headed. The US Federal Reserve is the world's most important central bank and its decisions reverberate through all financial markets. When the pandemic hit, the Fed cut interest rates to zero and unleashed quantitative easing on an unimaginable scale, eventually buying \$120-billion a month in Treasury and mortgage bonds. With the economy firmly in recovery mode, this emergency support is no longer needed. The first step back to normality was taken at the recent monetary policy meeting where it was announced that bond buying would be pared back by increments of \$15-billion per month. At this pace, the Fed will have completely stopped its purchases by mid-2022.

Importantly, the announcement went off without a hitch. The Fed had signalled its intentions over several months, and the market was not surprised. Moreover, it made it clear that it was in no hurry to increase interest rates.

Its big challenge is the surge in inflation, which hit a 30-year high of

6.2% in October. The Fed initially characterised the inflationary jump as "transitory", a term it might be regretting somewhat now.

Whether or not inflation is transitory depends on how that is defined. Transitory doesn't mean that the prices that jumped will fall again. Prices for many items might be permanently higher, but the rate of change in those price rises can slow. To use an obvious

example, the price of oil doubled in the past year. It is extremely unlikely to double again, so even if the price stays high, the rate of change of the price will come down rapidly. Transitory also doesn't mean two or three months. It could take as much as 12 months for the current elevated prices to act as a high base to slow year-on-year comparisons.

The way central bankers think about transitory is broadly: "As long as the pandemic continues to distort the economy". Once life returns to normal, so too will spending (fewer goods and more services) and bottlenecks in the supply chain should disappear.

On the other hand, those who argue that inflation is not transitory, point out that the excessive demand for goods is not just because people in rich countries could not consume services, but because there was a massive fiscal injection, particularly in the US, that put money in people's pockets. On top of that, record low interest rates make buying a house or a car cheaper. In this view, developed economies (again, particularly the US), are overstimulated. Central banks need to cool demand by raising interest rates.

Which view of the world turns out to be right we will only know in time, but policymakers also need to judge the risks of acting too soon versus acting too late. The risks aren't always symmetrical. Act too soon and a promising recovery is jeopardised and unemployment is higher than it needs to be. Act too late and higher inflation needs to be brought under control with higher interest rates. Patience may therefore be warranted even amid extreme uncertainty.

Patience is a luxury that many emerging markets do not have. They cannot afford to let inflation rise, even temporarily. They have histories of damaging inflation spikes, even hyperinflation, and inflation expectations can quickly become unmoored. They are less productive, and therefore demand can often outpace supply, leading to inflation. Their currencies are also more volatile, which can compound increases in global food and fuel prices. Therefore, a spate of developing countries has been hiking interest rates, aggressively in some cases like Brazil and Russia. DM/BM



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Liquor licensing services transferred from tourism to trade

...Tourism ministry unable to carry out core mandate of regulating tourism enterprises

MASERU – Liquor licensing services which are currently been offered by the Ministry Tourism, Environment and Culture will soon be transferred to the Ministry of Trade and Industry after the special report of the Portfolio Committee on the Natural Resources, Tourism and Land Cluster on Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was tabled in the National Assembly on Tuesday.

Kimetso Mathaba, the Chairperson of the committee, said there is nothing in particular that the bill holds for Basotho. He said the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture showed that due to a heavy work load and limited resources, the ministry was unable to carry out its core mandate of regulating tourism enterprises and optimising Lesotho's potential in economic development through tourism.

"The Bill is meant to transfer legal and regulatory control on liquor from the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture to the Ministry of Trade and Industry so that the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC) can focus on regulating tourism enterprises and optimising the potential of Lesotho in development through tourism," he said.

Mr Mathaba said the two ministries agreed that the streamlining of the tourism licensing system will help the ministry to improve and maintain minimum quality standards for consumers in the tourism sector other than focus on the prevention of health risks and untoward behaviour related to alcohol consumption by the Tourism Sector.

He said the Bill is aligned with the National Tourism Policy, National Strategic Development Plan II and Sustainable Development Goal 8, adding that the total revenue budgeted for licenses in 2021-2022 is M926 560.

The minister said it was worth noting that in the next financial year, the revenue will be budgeted for and collected by the Ministry of Trade.

However, he said as much as the Lesotho Hotels and Hospitality Association (LHHA) and the Lesotho Liquor and Restaurant Owners Association (LLROA) welcomed the Parliament's initiatives to include them in law-making decisions by submitting written submissions to the Committee, as the stakeholders in the liquor and hospitality sectors, they are not happy with the Amendment and have raised their concerns.

They are among others not happy that the ministry did not make the necessary consultations regarding this Amendment, yet it has negative impact on the day-to-day running of their businesses.

They are also not content about switching from one ministry to another in order to renew their businesses licenses, which they argue is time-consuming on their part, adding that a one-stop shop facility would be ideal for the renewal of all business licenses.

Mr Mathaba further noted that the stakeholders also raised the concern that the Ministry of Trade is already overwhelmed with the businesses that it has to monitor, arguing that adding liquor businesses to the lot is a recipe for disaster in terms of spot checks as a way to maintain cleanliness and compliance.

He said his committee noted with concern the lack of consultation by the MTEC with the relevant stakeholders whose businesses are directly affected by the Amendment, as well as the overloading on the Ministry of Trade on monitoring.

"The Government found it necessary to set up a one-stop shop because all these factors may have a negative impact on the liquor and hospitality businesses," the Chairperson said, adding that the committee has recommended that the Minister of Tourism, Environment and Culture be allowed to withdraw the Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Bill, 2021 so that the necessary consultations with the relevant stakeholders could be done.

The Committee's conclusion on the special report was to submit it for adoption by the House. LeNA



Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Natural Resources, Tourism and Land Cluster, Kimetso Mathaba



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NACOSEC reaches more Basotho with COVID-19 vaccine

He said as they proceed with the process, they come across individuals who are scared of taking the vaccine because of lies spread about the dangers it poses.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Dr Moeketsi Majoro has announced that since the country moved to the blue colour code, vaccination cards will be required at all sporting activities, gyms, entertainment centres, creative and cultural activities, public recreational areas and parks, liquor stores, night clubs and political gatherings.

Lesotho launched the COVID-19 vaccine in March at the Scott Hospital in Morija and currently, there are four types of vaccines available in the country including Johnson and Johnson (J&J), Sinopharm, Astra Zeneca and Pfizer.

Latest updates show that to date, 253 345 tests have been conducted with 21 729 positive cases and 13 600 recoveries and 661 COVID-19 related deaths recorded countrywide.

LeNA

MASERU – Thabo Ntoi, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer Operational Support of the National COVID-19 Secretariat (NACOSEC) says the body has made significant strides in its journey of vaccinating the nation as 35 percent of Basotho have already accessed the COVID-19 vaccine.

He said their target is to vaccinate 1.6 million by the end of this year although due to some challenges they have encountered, they only managed to vaccinate 702 000 people thus far.

Mr Ntoi said they intend to increase this number by ensuring that people readily access the vaccine at all border gates and all villages.

He therefore encouraged eligible Basotho to visit centres where they can access the vaccine, as it reduces their chances of becoming severely ill and dying from COVID-19 related complications.



Prime Minister Dr Moeketsi Majoro

Mabapi le ho tšela malibohong

Bo RAKHOEBO

Ba hlokoa tse latelang:

- **Lengolo la COVID-19 (COVID-19 Certificate)**
- **Litokomane tsa khoebo**



The world in 10 minutes

UNITED KINGDOM

Dog TV set to launch to help with stress and behavioural problems

DogTV has been developed following studies into animals' physiological and psychological needs, moods and responses, to help them feel more stimulated or relaxed when needed, producers said in a statement.

Man's best friend no longer has to put up with joining humans on the sofa for soaps or the latest binge-watch series - soon the nation's dogs will have a range of specialist pooch-friendly content to enjoy.

DogTV is a new television network created specifically for our four-legged friends which is launched in the UK.

Created after three years of research, the channel will air scientifically tested programming aiming to alleviate symptoms of conditions such as separation anxiety, loneliness and stress, bosses say. It will also have shows to help owners better understand and look after their pets.



NEW ZEALAND

Bird of the year controversy after contest is won by a bat

This year's bird of the year competition saw an unlikely winner capture voters' hearts. The inclusion of a bat has proven to be a controversial choice, but a success for those pushing to get more attention for the mammal in "serious trouble".

A tiny bat made an unexpectedly big impact by winning an annual bird of the year competition in New Zealand.

Pekapeka-tou-roa, also known as the long-tailed bat, is one of only a few land mammals native to New Zealand and is best known for its small size.

Controversially, conservationist group Forest and Bird decided to include it in the contest, and it went on to win with a comfortable 3,000 vote lead.

The bat, which is close to the size of a thumb and with the wingspan of a human hand, was given its debut to raise awareness of the threats they face.



MALAWI

Malawi asks Mike Tyson to be its cannabis ambassador

Malawi's agriculture ministry has written to former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson to be the ambassador for the country's cannabis.

Minister Lobin Lowe said the legalisation of cannabis last year in Malawi had created opportunities locally and internationally.

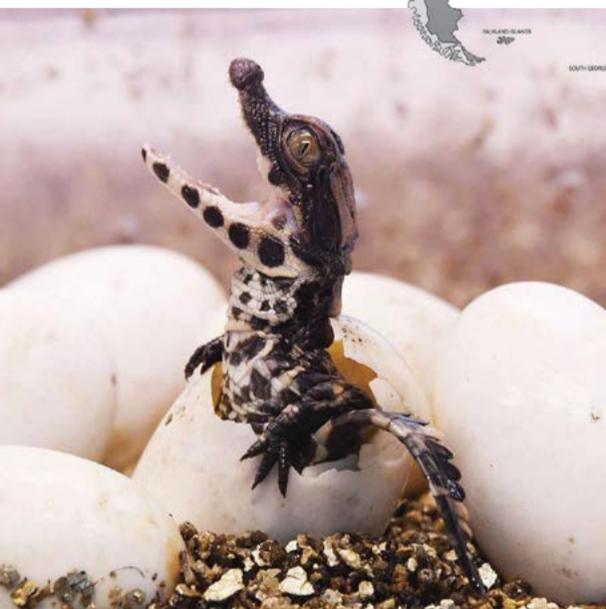
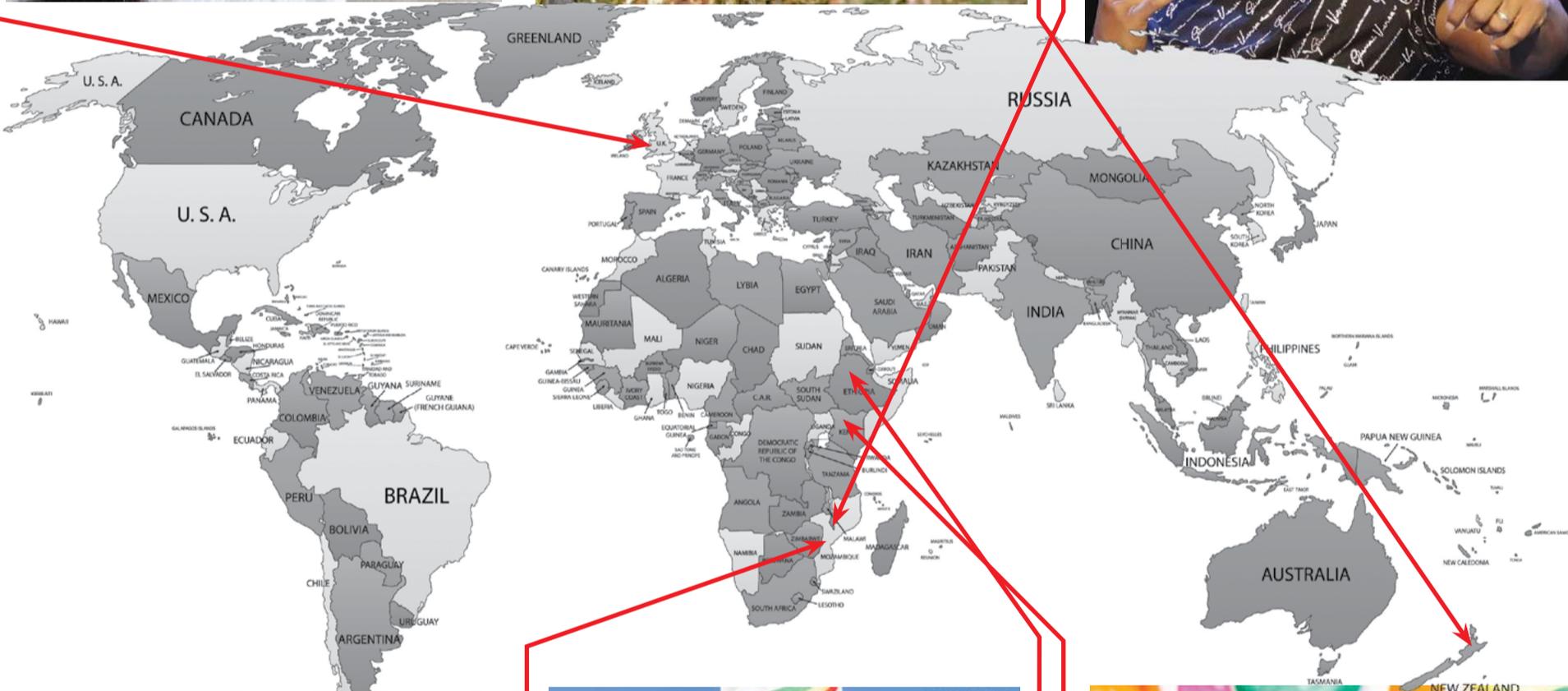
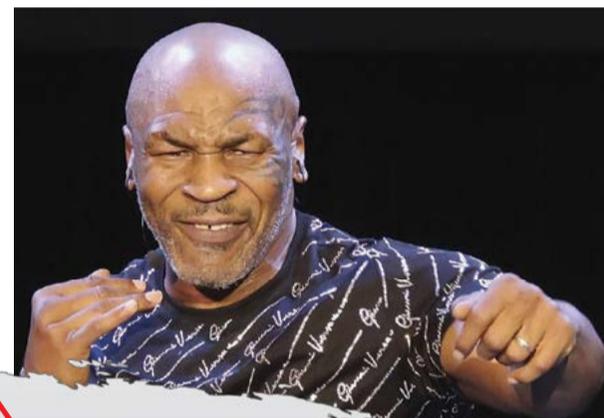
The ministry said the United States Cannabis Association was facilitating the deal with Tyson.

"Malawi may not go it alone as the industry is complex requiring collaboration. I would therefore like to appoint you, Mr Mike Tyson, as Malawi's Cannabis Branch ambassador," Mr Lowe wrote.

Tyson is also an entrepreneur and has invested in a cannabis farm.

Local media reported that Tyson was expected in Malawi last week but his visit was postponed.

Malawian cannabis, particularly the strain known as Malawi Gold, is considered by recreational smokers as one of the finest.



MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique to resume collecting crocodile eggs

The authorities in Mozambique's central Sofala province want to resume the collection of crocodile eggs from the banks of the mighty Zambezi River in order to curb the population of the reptiles - and thus prevent attacks on people.

The collection of the eggs was stopped nearly two years ago. The crocodile population has almost doubled since then, and nine people have already been attacked.

However, some environmental organisations have criticised the plan, saying it could biodiversity at risk.



ETHIOPIA

'Startling' announcement by Ethiopia's PM

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said he was setting off, in person, to march on the battlefield, and to lead the defence of his country.

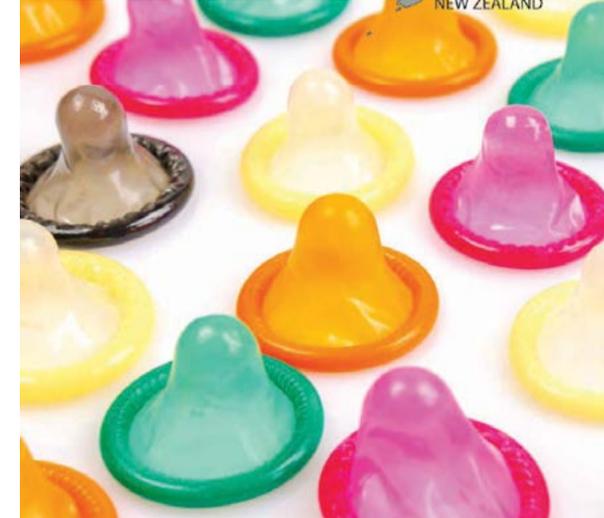
His startling announcement came as rebel forces claimed they were advancing on at least four fronts, towards the capital, Addis Ababa.

The Ethiopian government has denied that the rebels - led by forces from the war and famine-ravaged northern region of Tigray - are making progress.

But the tone of the prime minister's speech - lashing out at unnamed local and foreign enemies - carried both an air of defiance and, to some, of desperation.

A state of emergency has already been declared. And there are reports that the rebels are close to disrupting the main supply route into the capital.

Just two years ago, Mr Abiy won a Nobel Prize for his leadership of a rising African giant. Today, he's asking his countrymen to stand up and fight for the nation's very existence.



KENYA

Kenya reports shortage of condoms

The health authorities in Kenya have urged people to use other alternatives as the country is experiencing a shortage of condoms.

Restaurants, hospitals and other public facilities have not had free condoms in their toilets for people to take.

A government agency, the National Aids and STIs Control Programme (Nascop) has expressed concern over the shortage.

The shortage has been attributed to high taxes imposed on condoms even though they are usually donor funded.

Earlier this year, a tax dispute between the government and donors who import anti-HIV drugs led to a shortage of the commodity.

Kenya needs 455 million condoms annually while the government only provides 1.6 million per month.



Makhadzi

Makhadzi ready to set Maseru ablaze

- Star won her first All Africa Music Awards (Afrima) 2021 accolade in Lagos, Nigeria
- Audience at the "All White" party is expected to wear only white outfit, from head to toe

KABELO MASOABI

MASERU – A festive mood already prevails as the country awaits with great anticipation the second annual Lesotho "All White" party, which is billed for December 11, at the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre in Maseru.

The much-loved show dubbed "The Hangover" will this year feature amongst others, South African (SA)-born star, Ndivhudzannyi Ralivhona, better known by her stage name Makhadzi.

The song-bird from the Limpopo province who made a name for herself performing in small events, in the streets, taxi ranks and nameless night clubs has since turned into a renowned international performer.

She now entertains revelers from countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria and soon she will entertain crowds in Lesotho.

Organisers of the "All White" party - Big Events, powered by Maluti Mountain Brewery (MMB), also announced that the event will feature live performances from a lineup of SA artistes including Shekinah, DJ Sumbody, Vetkuk and Mahoota along with several local favorites such as Juvy, Boobs, Monyase DJ, Frequency, Le Goody and Tribes.

The audience at the show is expected to wear only white outfit, from head to toe.

Makhadzi who is making waves as a singer, dancer and songwriter is currently a popular artiste in her homeland.

She started her career in 2010

as a street dancer in a musical group called Makirikiri. She is known to many music lovers for her hit songs – "Tshanda Vhuya" and Matorokisi; that she recorded with DJ Call Me.

Makhadzi's fans call her "Queen of Africa" and her anticipated performance in Maseru has become the talk of the nation.

"She is undoubtedly the biggest crowd-puller for the upcoming event," remarks local and veteran Kwaito artist, Manyofi. On a recent post on her social media account, Makhadzi left her fans drooling over her endearing pictures which depicted her in Sesotho attire, indicating her readiness to visit Lesotho.

Last Sunday, the energetic performer bagged her first All Africa Music Awards (Afrima) 2021 accolade in Lagos, Nigeria.

She got the nod in the best artiste and duo or group in African electro category for her hit song Murahu.

Makhadzi also gave an electrifying performance on Sunday night in Lagos.

In a post event interview, the musician said she had tried in vain for the past seven years to be recognised by the Afrima awards.

"Good evening Africa. I'm speechless, but I want to thank God, for taking me out of the streets of SA and bringing me here, in Lagos, to represent my culture, Tshivenda," she said.

The Afrima, in partnership with the African Union commission, seeks to celebrate the rich musical heritage of the African continent and the diaspora.

SHOW YOUR LEGS

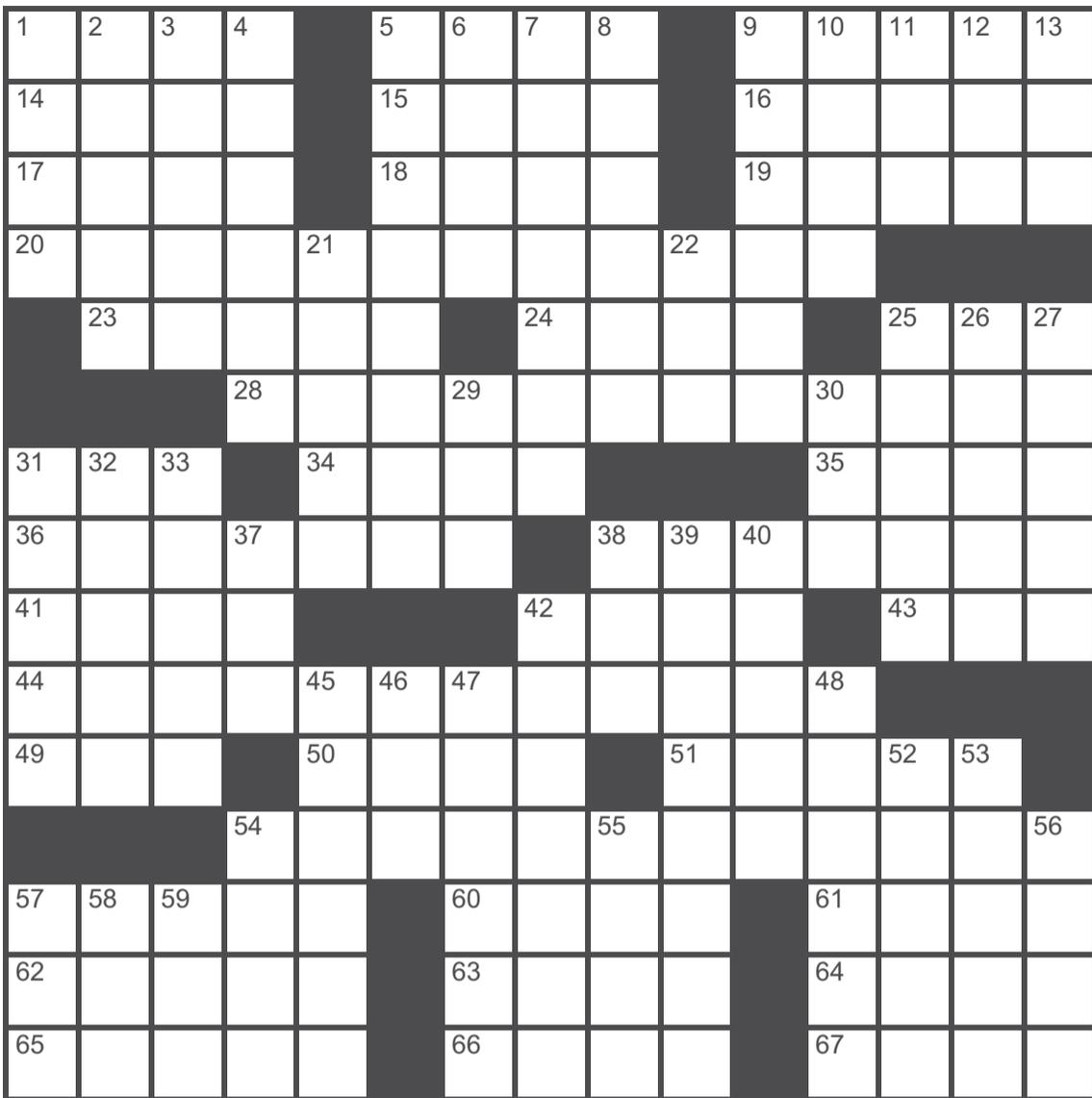
THEME - SHOW YOUR LEGS

27th NOV

MTSUZI FEATURING

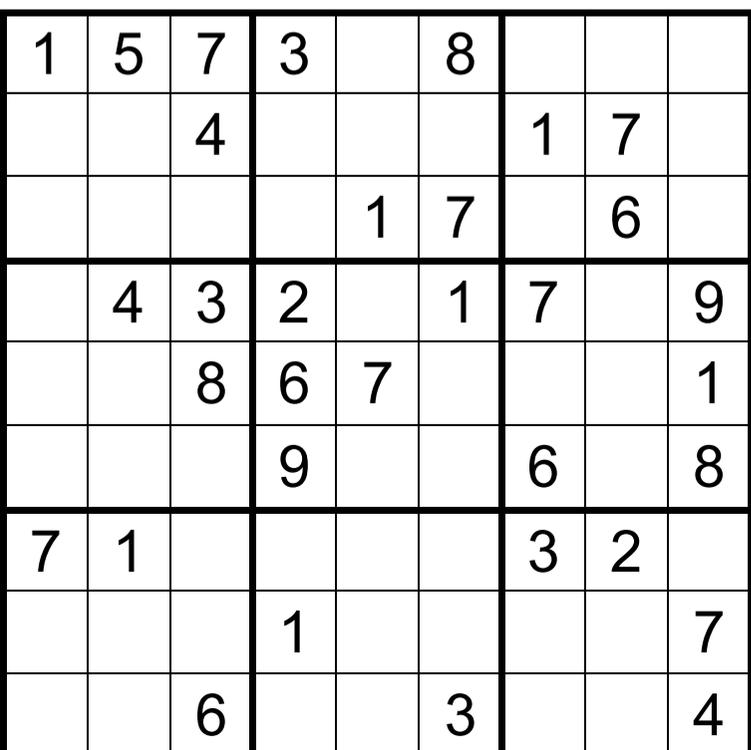
Kasi Keta

General Crosswords



- Across**
- 1. British tax
 - 5. Captures
 - 9. Association of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand
 - 14. Ness monster
 - 15. Neutral shade
 - 16. Florida's Key _____
 - 17. China setting
 - 18. Pigeon-pea plant
 - 19. Scarecrow stuffing
 - 20. Distinguishing characteristics
 - 23. Rocket fuel ingredient, for short
 - 24. After-bath powder
 - 25. Rainbow
 - 28. Bar owner
 - 31. New England catch
 - 34. Play smoothly
 - 35. Dalai _____
 - 36. Unstressed- unstressed- stressed syllables
 - 38. Wild canine pup
 - 41. Hindu princess
 - 42. Arrangement holder
 - 43. Feminine suffix
 - 44. Second in command
 - 49. Bard's "before"
 - 50. Sales force
 - 51. 1970 World's Fair site
 - 54. Venous blood vessel
 - 57. Everyday
 - 60. Ghanian monetary unit
 - 61. Prefix with China
 - 62. Shore bird
 - 63. "_____go bragh!"
 - 64. Spotted
 - 65. Indistinctly
 - 66. Warbled
 - 67. Back talk
- Down**
- 1. Dressed
 - 2. Red flourescent dye used in cosmetics
 - 3. Video store section
 - 4. Elevator passageways
 - 5. Sheets to go
 - 6. Tooth trouble
 - 7. Bestower
 - 8. Mideast V.I.P.
 - 9. _____-Lorraine
 - 10. Stuff
 - 11. Miscalculate
 - 12. Turkish honorific
 - 13. Right this minute
 - 21. Wipe clean
 - 22. Class

Sudoku Puzzle



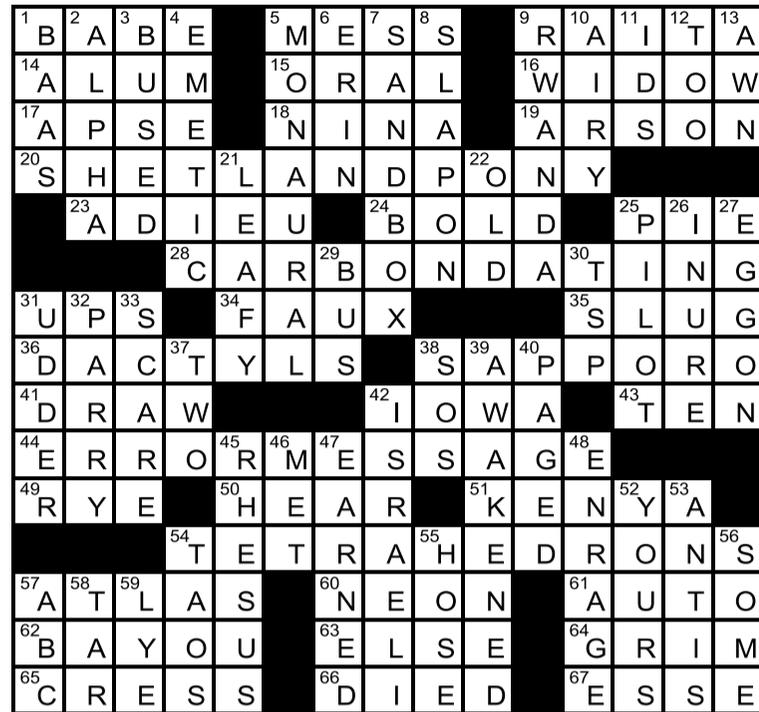
Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, each column and each 3x3 square contain all the from 1-9

This is the Quick Sudoku for the solver in a hurr: target time, ten minutes.

Last Week's Solution

1	4	3	9	5	6	7	8	2
6	7	5	4	8	2	1	9	3
2	9	8	7	1	3	6	5	4
3	6	7	5	2	9	4	1	8
5	2	1	6	4	8	3	7	9
4	8	9	3	7	1	2	6	5
8	1	4	2	9	7	5	3	6
9	5	6	1	3	4	8	2	7
7	3	2	8	6	5	9	4	1

Last Week's Solution



- 25. Lickety-split
- 26. Twin of Romulus
- 27. Shore dinner entree
- 29. Not at home
- 30. Polar helper
- 31. Cut up
- 32. TV studio sign
- 33. Social
- 37. Epitome of easiness
- 38. Conflict
- 39. Gradually absorbing
- 40. Car dealer's offering
- 42. Guts
- 45. Crevice
- 46. _____Royal Highness
- 47. High points
- 48. Sea-going military units
- 52. Nairobi's land
- 53. West Wing workers
- 54. Six-stringed instrument
- 55. Norse war god
- 56. Silent assents
- 57. High degree
- 58. Floral necklace
- 59. Usher's offering

So You Think You are Geneius

Question (Answer next week)

: A numismatist decides to divide his coin collection between his children. The oldest gets 1/2 of the collection, the next gets 1/4, the next gets 1/5, and the youngest gets the remaining 49 coins. How many coins are in the collection?



Last Week's Answer

Square feet in half a square mile: there are 13,939,200 square feet in half a square mile and 10,648,000 cubic yards in a cubic furlong.

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Be Car-Smart

Keep Your Focus

Staring down long straight roadways for longer than 5 minutes at a time fatigues the visual cortex of your brain, causing you to speed and underestimate distances between cars, according to a study in Human Perception and Performance. Check all three mirrors and your gauges at the end of every song on the radio to keep your vision - and brain - sharp.

People admit to spending 13 minutes a day on their phones while driving. That's 91 minutes a week of distracted driving, which greatly increases the chances of getting into accidents. Here are the tips that can help you give your full attention to focused driving. That's one tip for every minute per day that we need to take our eyes off our phones and turn them to the road ahead.

1. Commit to phone-free driving

You've probably heard it said that changing a negative habit - or building a positive one - requires commitment and goal-setting. Science says to dedicate at least three weeks to not using your phone at all while driving to break the habit. Put it in the glove box, trunk, your bag, or wherever it will be well

out of reach.

2. Map out your route before you leave

Look up or plug in directions ahead of time, so you have at least a general idea of your driving route. Looking up directions while you're on the road is as risky as texting and driving. If you need to make adjustments during your drive, pull over when and where it's safe to do so.

3. Create a pre-driving ritual

Seatbelt, mirrors, music, maps - whatever you need for your ride, set it up before you drive. Like buckling up, it will become second nature in no time.

4. Prep your playlist

How many times has your podcast or playlist ended before your drive did? Prepare a driving soundtrack that covers your commute in advance.

5. Enable Do Not Disturb

If you forget to put your phone out of reach, the Do Not Disturb feature can be a literal lifesaver. You'll be less tempted to check a message if all of the pings are on pause. You can

customize your settings and even create auto replies.

6. Limit passengers and pets

Sometimes, loading kids and pets into the car is unavoidable. For their safety and to limit any distractions they might cause, be sure to buckle children into their seatbelts or car seats, and secure pets in harnesses or crates.

7. Stop multitasking

It's easy to think, "Other people can't multitask, but I can, just for a second."

But no one is the exception to distracted driving. If you've multitasked or texted while driving before and been fine, you've just been lucky - so far.

8. Unless you're at the drive-in, save screen time for later

Theatres and living rooms are the place for taut drama - not the streets and roads we all share.

9. Finish your morning routine before you leave

Whether eating or shaving, nearly 3 in 10 drivers (29%) admit to using body parts other than their hands when steering. Vehicles are for getting around safely, not to finish getting ready.

10. Set aside time for socializing

When we carry around our social networks in our pockets, we get used to instant communication. When someone likes your photo or sends you a message, dopamine levels in your brain increase. So, it makes sense that we want to immediately satisfy the urge to check our smartphones.

Set aside time in your day to check social media - outside of your car - until it becomes a habit.

11. Embrace alone time, and keep calm

Smartphones have set expectations that we're always reachable, wherever we are. Now, with unrealistic time demands, interconnectivity, and entertainment at our fingertips, we struggle with alone and quiet time.

Try using your commute as an opportunity to get away from it all - no emails, phone calls, or deadlines. Just focus on the road. If that road is a traffic jam and you feel your emotions rise, allow yourself time to cool off where it's safe to pull over on the side of the road or at an exit. Driving while highly emotional can be extremely dangerous. Pause serious conversations with passengers until you're not driving and can give each other the attention the situation deserves.

12. Accessorize your ride

If you're going to make a call - in the case of an emergency only - use a bluetooth device, so your hands are free.

There are accessories that can help, including mobile phone car cradles and mounts. However, it's still dangerous to use voice commands and bluetooth while driving, so please use them sparingly.

13. Use rideshares

Not driving is better than driving while distracted. Consider using a rideshare company if you're going to be texting, emailing, shopping, etc.

Breaking habits is hard, but it's not impossible. And the facts around distracted driving are sobering. Experiment with incentives and routines to figure out what works for you, and remember that change is a journey worth taking.

Having just launched the EV6 to great international acclaim, Kia Corporation has stunned onlookers at AutoMobility LA with the reveal of its all-electric SUV concept, the Kia Concept EV9. Seen as the clearest signal yet from Kia as to what might be the next addition to its new-generation EV line-up, the Concept EV9 epitomises the brand's recent leadership in designing and developing desirable, high-tech, zero-emissions vehicles.

Just like the EV6, the Concept EV9 is known as a dedicated EV from Kia, having been carefully developed and optimised on the company's advanced Electric Global Modular Platform (E-GMP).

Concept EV9 embodies Kia's commitment to sustainable mobility solutions, having recently showcased the company's future vision at the 'Kia Sustainability Movement' digital presentation. The design of the vehicle was inspired by nature and uses upcycled materials developed from waste deposited into the fragile marine ecosystem.

The SUV also offers striking visual aesthetics thanks to Kia's 'Opposites United' design philosophy.

The Kia design team was especially influenced by the 'Bold for Nature' pillar of Opposites United. This has helped the all-electric SUV concept to take on an iconic and bold form, meshing logical and emotional qualities with playful, rugged features and styling cues.

Concept EV9's extensive tech capabilities and all-round flexibility ensure that it feels at home when tackling traffic in densely populated urban areas; at the same time, it offers families the freedom to experience leisure pursuits away from city centres.

"The Kia Concept EV9 is yet another important marker for us in what has been an incredible journey since the start of the year. Having made our intentions clear - to become a global leader in sustainable mobility solutions - today we are proud to show the world our all-electric SUV concept, which fuses together an advanced zero-emissions powertrain, a cutting-edge exterior design and a contemporary and innovative tech-based interior space," said Karim Habib, Senior Vice President and Head of Kia Global Design Center. Concept EV9 represents a next possible iteration for the SUV. Developed on the advanced E-GMP architecture, the Concept EV9 is a high-tech, family-friendly vehicle powered by a zero-emissions all-electric powertrain.

It blends a stunning exterior profile with a modern and sleek interior space that is influenced with state-of-the-art tech. The incredible aesthetics of the Concept EV9 - both inside and out - have been carefully honed from Opposites United, Kia's new design philosophy.

Kia's iconic Tiger Face facade has been reinterpreted for the BEV era and is showcased on the Concept EV9.

The new Digital Tiger Face benefits from the fact that all-electric vehicles don't need the traditional grille that ICE vehicles rely upon, resulting in the

The Kia Concept EV9 all-electric SUV takes centre stage at AutoMobility LA

... as the all-electric SUV concept embodies Kia's commitment to sustainability, following the recently showcased 'Kia Sustainability Movement' vision



Concept EV9 having a full body coloured front that clearly conveys sustainability values.

The new BEV-focused grille houses an intricate star cloud pattern display that is completely hidden behind the body panel of the Concept EV9 when not in use. This stylish lightshow further highlights the high-tech nature of the all-electric SUV while still paying homage to the natural world. Sequential patterns create a 'welcome light' for the driver and also function to appropriately position lights during driving. The star cloud pattern inspired the Kia design team to create standout vertical Daytime Running Lamps (DRLs) for both the front and rear of the car, in-turn creating a unique signature look from start to finish.

At the rear of the Concept EV9 is a compelling yet beautifully delicate triangular D-pillar treatment that acts as a visual focal point and resonates with the SUV's angular design elements. The innovative

D-pillar design also creates a unique Daylight Opening (DLO) signature.

The machined 22-inch wheels further add to the geometric appearance and robust nature of the Concept EV9. A triangular aero design piece controls the airflow around the wheel and creates a visual contrast to the circular nature of the wheel to fully express the Opposites United design philosophy, making sure a balance in harmony extends into every element and section.

Against a wellbeing, wellness and mindfulness backdrop, the Concept EV9 has been carefully crafted to offer the driver and passengers a transformative interior space as the journey experience evolves.

Mirroring the exterior design, the interior of the Concept EV9 has also been greatly influenced by the 'Bold for Nature' design pillar of Opposites United.

The interior of the Concept EV9 explores new perspectives as the journey experience evolves. The

all-electric SUV has three forward-thinking interior modes that capture different journey situations and requirements.

Active Mode is when the Concept EV9 is on the move, making sure the driver and passengers have an optimal driving experience from within the all-electric SUV. Kia recently announced its corporate vision to become a "Sustainable Mobility Solutions Provider," along with the intention to achieve carbon neutrality throughout the company's value chain by 2045 at the 'Kia Sustainability Movement' event on 11 November. The three-pillared carbon neutrality goal consists of commitments to "Sustainable Mobility," "Sustainable Planet" and "Sustainable Energy". The strategy encompasses processes from logistics, vehicle production, vehicle use and the disposal of waste. The Concept EV9 embodies an important part of this strategy as the next possible addition to Kia's high-tech BEV line-up.

Metro SPORTS



Roof of Africa returns in 2021

...as riders descend on Lesotho for epic showdown

JOHANNESBURG - More than 400 riders will tough it out when one of Africa's most iconic Hard Enduro events returns on 24 November, after the Motul Roof of Africa saw its second-ever postponement as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

To celebrate its return, a new Iron Class has been added to give lesser experienced riders the chance to experience the mountains of Lesotho from the saddle. The new class will be run alongside the established Gold, Silver and Bronze Classes.

Event organisers of Live Lesotho have refined the format to achieve a perfect balance between challenging elements and striving to ensure the safety of riders and their support crews. This will see each rider limited to just five support crew members.

The format this year will be similar to 2019, with the notable exception of the EnduroX component. The organisers decided to avoid mass gatherings while Covid-19 is still a consideration.

Wednesday, 24 November, is set aside for riders to complete the required documentation and

scrutineering sessions. While the process, which will take place at the Avani Lesotho Hotel and Casino, will be streamlined to facilitate social distancing, it will not be less rigorous, Live Lesotho promises.

Thursday was supposed to see the Round the Houses component through the streets of Maseru.

But the section according to Keketso Malebo, the Public Relations Officer of the Lesotho Off Road Association (LORA) has been cancelled because it was not properly prepared for.

The same day, (Thursday) a Time Trial for all classes will be held in Thaba Bosiu on the outskirts of the capital Maseru.

Friday November 26 and Saturday 27 will be Race Day 1 and 2, respectively, and the start/finish will be in Thaba Bosiu, headquarters for the event.

Charan Moore, Motul Roof of Africa Route Director and Manager of Live Lesotho, said: "This year's Motul Roof of Africa will be the result of two years' planning and plotting new routes, so we're certain that riders will feel it was worth the wait. We can



Defending Roof champion Wade Young of the Sherco Racing Factory Motul Team

confidently promise both Roof rookies and returning riders a rewarding, challenging course - something they will never forget."

Defending Roof champion Wade Young of the Sherco Racing Factory Motul Team, hot off the international circuit, will head this year's field. Young defend his crown in the face of stiff Gold Class competition from the likes of Travis Teasdale (Trax GasGas), Brett Swanepoel (Rockstar Energy Husqvarna), Matt Green (Matthew Green Racing), Luke Walker (McLarens bLU cRU Yamaha), Kerim Fitzgerald (Red Bull KTM) and Heinrich Aust (Rockstar Energy Husqvarna).

Kirsten Landman (Brother Leadertread KTM) will be tackling the Gold Class as training for next year's Dakar Rally. Confirmed participants in other classes include

riders from the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, Egypt, Malawi, Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland, and a strong showing of Basotho riders.

Motul, always a strong presence in local motorsport, will be sponsoring the Bike Wash facility in partnership with Eco Tanks and Goscor Power Products, with Craig Kruger and his team providing facility management.

Mercia Jansen, Motul Area Manager for Southern and Eastern Africa, commented: "We are very much looking forward to reconnecting with our friends in the Enduro community - whilst still respecting social distance guidelines. Last year's postponement left a gap in our diaries, so we're especially looking forward to returning to Lesotho and the Maloti Mountains."

Lesotho's management of

COVID-19 has led to borders being reopened for tourists and riders alike. Only one negative PCR test is required to enter Lesotho and must be done within 72 hours of crossing the border. Since the test result, if negative, is valid for 14 days, no second test is required within Lesotho. Rapid tests are available at the border, but this needs to be repeated on exit. Lesotho has also implemented drive-through border formalities, although South Africa has yet to follow suit.

The efforts of the stakeholders, including sponsors and the Lesotho Government, has contributed significantly to the excitement that is building around the Motul Roof of Africa 2021. In addition to being an exciting motorsport event, the Roof also provides a welcome boost to a local tourism sector that the pandemic has hard hit. News 24/Metro



Bantu Head Coach Bob Mafoso

Bantu FC

Mafoso breaks silence on future with Bantu

MASERU - Bantu Head Coach Bob Mafoso has broken the silence on his future with the Mafeteng-based outfit following the expiry of his contract in September.

A Matšo Matebele have in recent months been linked with the return of James Madidilane, who previously worked at the club with Mafoso.

However, the Bantu mentor said he is not shaken by the reports, irrespective of whether they are true or not, confirming that he has started negotiations for a new deal after his contract expired in September.

"All the speculations about the club are not in my control whether they are true or not," Mafoso said.

"What is important for me is to focus on what I know, but you can never rule out these things because like they always say, there is no smoke without fire."

Bantu were impressive in Mafoso's first season in charge as the head coach and were confirmed as champions of the 2019/20 season after the campaign was brought to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

They were at that stage enjoying a 16-point lead over second-placed Matlama with eight games to the completion of the season.

"I have started negotiating with the club over a new deal after my contract expired in September and the finalisation of it doesn't only depend on me, but the team as well," the Bantu coach added.

"My contract expired at the time when there was no activity as far as football and the league are concerned in the country and I know it looks like a desperate move that I'm still in charge of the team notwithstanding the expiry of my contract.

"I must say, I'm not desperate, but at the same time, there is nothing that can influence my decision to leave the club now. Of course, everything depends on how the negotiations go though I think that's a story for another day.

"We are still talking and the team says it still wants me as its coach, we will see how it goes," he said.

Mafoso is one of the most highly qualified young local coaches and has served the national teams as the Head Coach of the national under-20 side. He is currently the Assistant Coach to Mpitsa Marai for the national under-23.

His journey with the national teams started as Assistant Coach to Leslie Notsi for Makoanyane XI, where they reached the final of the COSAFA Under-20 Championship losing 2-1 to South Africa to get a silver medal.

The Vodacom Premier League will return to action this weekend with catch up matches after the long layoff brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Linare will host LMPS at Maputsoe DIFA ground this Saturday while LDF will entertain Liphakoe at the Ratjomose Barracks on the same day.





Lesotho's number one weightlifter, top mentor - Relebohile Motjamela

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MASERU – At the age of 37, Relebohile Motjamela is probably one of the first Lesotho weightlifters to turn professional before making a name for himself as a top coach.

He appeared 15th in the men's 56kg weight category after lifting 155 pounds at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia.

He was 14th at the 2006

Commonwealth Federation weightlifting competition held in Sri Lanka in the same weight division.

He finished fifth at the 2017 Weightlifting WFA African Championships in the Men's 85kg class, after lifting 105 pounds. His teammate Bafokeng Moeti finished eighth and lifted 195 pounds in the 69 kg weight division in the same tournament.

He led Team Lesotho that comprised Thapelo Sebota, 'Makoena Tšosane and



Machachamise Ntšinyi to the 2019 African Games in Rabat, Morocco, where Ntšinyi finished ninth in the 73kg class with Sebota appearing sixth in the 61kg weight category.

He led Team Lesotho that included Sebota and Ntšinyi to the 2021 African Senior Men Gold Olympic Weightlifting Qualification Championships in Nairobi, Kenya in May but his charges failed to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics that were held in Japan from July-August. The two, however, improved their African rankings.

Motjamela is also earmarked to lead Team Lesotho including Sebota and Ntšinyi to the 2021 World Weightlifting Championships scheduled for Tashkent, Uzbekistan from December 7-17.

The competition will serve as qualifiers for the Commonwealth Games set for Birmingham, England in July next year.

He did his primary education at Loreto Primary in Qoaling where he completed his Standard Seven in 1996 and proceeded to Cenez High School where he obtained his Junior Certificate (JC) in 1999 and his Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) at Maseru Day High School in 2002.

When he left high school, he worked for Formosa Textiles as a Machine Operator before joining Global Garments as an Operator for two years.

He currently works at the Lehakoe Recreational Centre Gymnasium as a Personal Trainer where he has been based since April 2011.

He has done basic First Aid training with the Lesotho Red Cross

Society (LRCS). He holds a Sports Administration Course Level 1 certificate from the Lesotho National Olympic Committee (LNOC).

He also holds an Indoor Cycling certificate acquired from the Cycle LAB Academy at Lehakoe Recreational Centre and a Personal Training Certificate from the IIFTT in Bloemfontein, South Africa.

He is a holder of a Weightlifting Coaching certificate obtained from the Weightlifting Federation of Africa (WFA) in collaboration with the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) in Lesotho. He also attended a weightlifting coaching seminar of the WFA-IWF in Mauritius.

He is a Sport Conditioning specialist after obtaining relevant qualifications from the Olympic Solidarity in Canada.

Born on May 2, 1984, Relebohile Motjamela is the son of the 'Mathato and the late Lebetsa Motjamela of Qoaling, on the outskirts of Maseru. He is the last born in the family of seven.

During his high school days, he was an active volleyball player before he joined weightlifting in 2004. He made his maiden international appearance at the 2006 Commonwealth games and has since never looked back.

Between 2005 and 2016, he competed under the banner of the Lesotho Weightlifting Federation (LWF).

Since 2010, he has been the Head Coach of the LWF and is also a Body Conditioning Expert of the High Performance Team for the Lesotho National Olympic Committee.

In 2018 after his teammate

Bafokeng Moeti qualified for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in Australia, he volunteered to coach him in preparation for the competition as Moeti did not have an official mentor.

As an upcoming athlete, he looked up to Mohamed Ehab of Egypt, who was the World Champion competing in the 77 kg category until 2018.

People who contributed in grooming him to become the athlete he is today include Pule Lentsoe, the current LWF President, Lebohlang Ratsiu and the LWF Secretary General, Advocate Bothobile Shebe.

He is married to Nthabiseng Mashiloane now 'Matlhlokomelo Motjamela and the couple is blessed with two children, a boy and a girl.



Region 5 Youth Games
MASERU 2020
 START FROM 3RD - 12TH
 DECEMBER 2021