

SUMMARY OF EVENTS IN LESOTHO
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***Lesotho Vision 2020* Reprinted but Extent of Implementation & Monitoring Not Available**

A three day dialogue in January 2001 led to the launching of a **Vision 2020** report later the same year which includes the Lesotho 2020 Vision Statement adopted at the January meeting:

By 2020, Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and well developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong, its environment well managed and its technology well established.

Amongst recommendations in the report were that whereas other reports normally gather dust on the shelves of government offices, this report should be widely disseminated in English and Sesotho. One of the major recommendations, was that a committee should be established after the conference to facilitate development of the National Vision. The then Government Secretary, Mr Kenneth Mohlabi Tsekoa announced at the launching that cabinet had indeed approved a steering committee with wide representation to implement the Vision 2020 report.

The first two-volume report was available in Maseru if one knew the right office where it could be found, but the absence of a Government Bookshop, even in Maseru, let alone with branches in the districts, meant that in reality the number of people who obtained and read either the English or Sesotho version of the report was comparatively small.

A National Steering Committee with 40 representatives from a wide spectrum of stakeholder groups was indeed formed and launched in December 2001. Its deliberations finally appeared in print in a booklet *Lesotho Vision 2020: empowerment to prosperity*, published in 2004 by the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning. For some reason this booklet, despite its importance, did not get wide publicity at the time. However, it has recently been reprinted and it is perhaps timely to make some of its content available here. Part of the report is a review of the existing development environment, and its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Of considerable interest is the scenario analysis, which shows that prosperity depends on key factors which will make it possible, and if these are weak or missing, the future might be bleak rather than prosperous.

Four scenarios are presented. The preferred scenario, the *Melupe* scenario, is named after the Sesotho word for steady soaking rain, the best kind for successful agriculture. It depends on a combination of political stability, effective public sector management and favourable trends in investment. In this scenario Lesotho is able to diversify its export products and markets and exploit fully its complementary features with the economy of South Africa. A long-term GDP growth rate of 6% to 7% per annum is envisaged.

A second scenario is named as *Khomo ha li kae batho re bangata*, implying there are more people than there are resources. It foresees political stability, effective public service management but declining foreign direct investment. The consequences of this scenario are limited access to foreign markets isolating the country in a rapidly globalizing world and a closely integrated

community of nations. The scenario envisages average GDP growth rates of 2% per annum, which make little impact on the heightened state of poverty and unemployment in the country.

The third scenario is named as *Metse e metle liotloana* which is an idiom implying things are not as good as they look. This scenario envisages political stability, favourable trends in investment but weak public sector management. The ineffectiveness of public sector management is manifested in low morale and lethargy among civil servants, and consequent poor service delivery. Public sector programmes that are meant to facilitate the implementation of the Vision such as the Public Sector Improvement and Reform Programme (PSIRP), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Performance Management System are not implemented with the required vigour and enthusiasm. Crime and corruption are not brought under control and the incremental rate of foreign direct investment starts declining. GDP growth under this scenario will be about 2.5% to 3% per annum, which does not make much impact on unemployment and poverty levels.

Finally there is the *lesupi* or ruinous scenario, characterised by the Sesotho proverb *ntlo e itoantšang e fetoha lesupi*, essentially 'a house divided against itself cannot stand'. In this scenario there is political instability, lack of political will to implement Lesotho Vision 2020, weak public sector management, and negative trends in investment. This is estimated as achieving a long-term average growth of less than 1% [indeed it could be disastrously negative as occurred in 1998].

So where is Lesotho now in all this? What has happened in the three key areas needed for the best scenario? An official report of progress has apparently not yet been published, but some indicators can be provided here.

Political stability has been relatively precarious since the February 2007 elections, exacerbated by the exploitation of legal loopholes in the electoral law which distorted the election results. This has led to serious disputes between political parties, which have impacted the economy in stayaways.

Public sector management, while having many useful reform mechanisms, has in practice not achieved much because Parliament itself has been weak. Several years of audited public accounts have been prepared but have not yet reached the Public Accounts Committee, which has only recently been formed and will apparently not meet until after the Christmas recess in February 2008. It has an enormous backlog of work waiting for it. Also the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Offences had its statutorily required annual report ready in March 2007, but it seems it has not yet reached Parliament. The problem with all such reports is that they tend to reveal gross improprieties and numerous irregularities requiring immediate action, but instead the action is ultimately taken, if at all, after many years. The public sector, through weak management systems, tends to persist in its inefficiencies and indeed to deteriorate, even in areas which affect Parliament itself. At one time, it was possible to buy *Hansard* the day after the relevant session. Today that service is rarely available, because photocopiers are broken and there is often no back-up machine. The *Hansard* itself is always 'unrevised' and no final corrected edition appears, so that numerous errors by the audiotypists go uncorrected. One can find for example (National Assembly *Hansard* (15 October 2007), p. 43) in the report of the debate on the *Environment Bill 2007*, a reference to *climate change and clean house guesses* [greenhouse gases]! Again, the *Lesotho Government Gazette*, even if one has a subscription, appears with issues missing, because some government department has taken the whole print run of that issue for its own purposes. The *Gazette* is not collated and bound annually, nor indexed. The *Laws of Lesotho*, which first appear in the *Gazette*, are supposed subsequently to appear in bound annual volumes, but there is a backlog of more than 10 years in producing these, and even when they are produced, they are not produced with the care

that ought to be lavished on the laws of the land. The fundamental law of Lesotho is the Constitution, but where is it to be found in the *Laws of Lesotho*? It was omitted, presumably in error, from the 1993 bound volume, and what is the point of publishing Amendments to the Constitution if the fundamental law is missing? Such laxity results in inefficiencies and delays in the justice system, because magistrates and judges cannot easily access the laws they are supposed to administer. There are numerous other examples, which could be given throughout the whole public sector. In a quite different area, road reserves are gazetted so that no-one is allowed to build within 15 metres of the centre line of a gazetted road. However, land is so short, and the returns from building *malaene* (rented single-room tenements) or eating houses in key areas so great, that roads are being illegally narrowed to the detriment of road users, and with a resulting increase in accidents.

After public sector management, the third key area is direct foreign investment. In this area, although the manufacturing sector has had problems, there has been some success because of Lesotho's qualification for a large capital fund from the USA now being managed in Lesotho by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). This is having benefits in several areas. One is water resource development, where it is making the Metolong Dam scheme possible, making the water supply to Maseru and several other towns more secure. A second area is the health sector, where there is capital for improving a wide range of health facilities. However the MCC's work in the health sector is constrained by manpower shortages. **Lesotho simply does not have adequate numbers of nurses and doctors, which reveals a long standing weakness in public sector management, namely lopsided human resources development which ought to have been attended to by the National Manpower Development Secretariat. This body was set up to provide assistance for training according to national needs. It has in recent years totally failed in this role, so that the country has been producing five times as many lawyers and urban and regional planners as it can absorb, and only one fifth as many nurses and science teachers as are needed. In some areas, such as radiography, there is not a single trained Mosotho in post. There is little point in equipping hospitals with x-ray equipment, if there are no trained staff to use them!**

National University of Lesotho Graduates Record Numbers of Students

The **National University of Lesotho** held its annual Graduation Ceremony on 29 September 2007, and according to the programme awarded a total of 1 519 degrees, diplomas and certificates. However, the statistics when more carefully examined reveal some double counting and omissions, so that a more accurate figure seems to be 1 558, which is an increase of 14.1% compared with the 1 365 students who were awarded degrees, certificates and diplomas the previous year, itself a 12.6% increase on 2005.

86 students were awarded LLB degrees, but only 17 were awarded degrees in the BSc in General Nursing and Midwifery. Amongst other contrasts reflecting inappropriate response to manpower needs were 247 students awarded the BA in Education but only 39 awarded the BSc with Science Education. 43 students were also awarded the Bachelor of Education in Adult Education. It is not clear which part of the education sector will employ the Adult Education graduates, and what subjects they will teach, given that formal posts in Distance Education and Further Education are limited, and in any case need mostly subject-specific skills.

A new degree appearing for the first time is the Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Care &

Counselling. This has proved extremely popular because it follows a Diploma in Pastoral Care in Counselling, which has very low entrance requirements, namely either a School Certificate with a Third Class Pass and passes in six subjects and an aggregate of not more than 40, or a Junior Certificate with two years of further training followed by two years of relevant experience. Students can therefore enter this Diploma without the normal requirement of a School Certificate Credit in English Language. Although students in the two year Diploma course have to pay for the first two years themselves, if they pass with at least a Credit (and almost all do), they can then enter the second year of the full BA programme and gain a government loan bursary. The first group, 49 in all, has just graduated, and there are approximately 60 students now enrolled in each year of the five year programme. While this route enables some students to obtain a university degree who would not otherwise be successful, it is not yet clear what employment prospects there are for students thus qualified. The reality is that many of the students who have entered this programme might have trained as nurses, and should have been helped to do so, even though they might still have needed an extra preliminary year to qualify for entrance to the normal nursing programmes, whether at the University or one of the other hospital-based colleges of nursing. As nurses, their employment opportunities would not be in doubt. But as high level counsellors without nursing training, their employment potential is far less, despite their longer training. This is because the magnitude of the HIV & AIDS problem is such that large numbers of modestly remunerated village adherence counsellors or village health workers, with short but task-specific training, supervised by nurses and doctors, seems to be the appropriate and more affordable mechanism for helping infected persons to persevere with anti-retroviral therapy. They play a vital life-saving role with ordinary members of their communities, given that the side effects of anti-retrovirals are often so severe and demoralising that patients need every encouragement not to abandon the treatment.

The total number of awards on 29 September 2007 was 1558 persons, consisting of 578 subdegree certificates and diplomas, 945 bachelors' degrees, 17 honours degrees, 11 masters' degrees and 7 postgraduate diplomas. There were no doctoral degrees, and no honorary degrees. The weather was good and the ceremony was held at the University sports stadium on which was erected a large tent to protect guests from the sun.

Amongst those who gave speeches was His Majesty King Letsie, who is Chancellor of the University. He referred to the problem of joblessness amongst graduates, and said there must be follow-ups and analysis to gather information so that academic programmes were designed to remain in line with job market requirements. The Vice-Chancellor, in his speech, referred to the sadness resulting from the deaths of 17 students in the space of 6 months, some of which deaths could have been prevented through appropriate HIV/AIDS intervention.

Lesotho Pharmaceutical Corporation Closes

An event with serious repercussions for the health sector only became more generally known much later. After financial problems, the **Lesotho Pharmaceutical Corporation** at Mafeteng closed on 31 August 2007. The matter was later raised as a parliamentary question on 24 October by Dr Khauhelo Raditapole, herself a trained pharmacologist, who asked for an explanation regarding the major findings of a special investigation commissioned by the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning. In particular she wanted to know why LPC management resorted to access-financing through money-lenders, the amount borrowed, and the interest rates and whether this mode of financing was approved by the LPC board.

In the absence of the Minister of Health & Social Welfare, a rather limited reply was given by the Minister of Tourism, Environment & Culture, Ms Lebohang Ntšinyi, who said that LPC is now in the hands of the liquidator, Mr Salemane Phafane. She stated that the LPC board members and its shareholders, the Ministry of Health, the Lesotho National Development Corporation and the Christian Health Association of Lesotho (which represents mission hospitals) were not aware of the problems that LPC was experiencing, until they received summons from unknown organizations that LPC was owing them money. When more information was available, a detailed statement would be made to the National Assembly.

A much fuller statement was later made by the Minister of Health & Social Welfare, Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng, in the Senate on 8 November 2007. It clarified that the shareholders of LPC were the Lesotho Government (88%), LNDC (11%) and CHAL (1%). In January 2007, after the LPC Board had received complaints of debts, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning sent persons to examine the books of the company. What they found was a serious state of affairs which warranted in depth examination, at which point the firm Moteane & Associates was engaged to probe further. In the meantime the Ministry of Finance had lent LPC M4 million to cover operating costs during the investigations.

Moteane & Associates found not only that the Corporation's debts exceeded its assets but that it had taken out loans to cover operating costs from a number of money lenders at extraordinarily high interest rates including, for example, a loan of M3.2 million from 'LEMEC' at 18.5% *per month*. The loans had been signed for by the Managing Director without the knowledge of the Board even though the Board had been meeting recently more frequently and as many as six or seven times a year. The investigations had shown that liquidation would result in a M4.4 million shortfall to be covered by the shareholders, and the only alternative was recapitalization and restructuring of the Corporation with a new technical partner. Discussions between the Ministers of Finance and Health had resulted in the decision that the Corporation should be put in the hands of a liquidator.

Writing in the *Lesotho Medical Journal* for October 2007, a former President of the Lesotho Medical Association, Dr 'Musi Mokete, paid tribute to the LPC and its role in making drugs available to the Lesotho Government, mission hospitals and the private sector at reasonable prices. It had also secured lucrative export markets in several countries of southern Africa and as far as Malawi and Uganda., although it later had competition from Zimbabwean manufacturers. A further blow was to separate LPC from the National Drug Service Organization (NDSO), which developed into a competitor. In recent years, LPC had suffered from loss of business lustre, management skills and business capacity. 'LPC is a national jewel that, with motivated national shareholding, could rise from the dust and be itself again.... If the Lesotho Government intervened now for the revival and rescue of LPC there will be no regrets in the future'.

Rather sadly the Lesotho Pharmaceutical Corporation is just one in a series of initially apparently successful enterprises such as the Molimo-Nthuse Hotel and the Basotho Cannery at Masianokeng which have subsequently collapsed as a result of abysmally poor financial management.

Civil Service Statistics Revealed in Answers to Parliamentary Questions

As recorded in the National Assembly *Hansard* of 24 September 2007, Ranthomeng Matete MP asked the Minister of Public Service, Semano Sekatle, for statistics relating to the public service. In his reply, the total of persons remunerated by the government was given as 40 110, of whom 18 208 were civil servants; 7 450 were police, soldiers or staff in mission hospitals or clinics (those in government

hospitals and clinics were counted as civil servants); 13 976 were teachers; and 476 were daily paid workers. Of the civil servants, all were serving in Lesotho except for 85 persons serving in the diplomatic service abroad. A question answered in Senate on 24 October 2007 gave the strength of the police force as 3 290.

Death of C. M. H. Morojele, Statistician and International Civil Servant

The death has occurred of **Clifford Malunga Hardy Morojele**. Although he died on 13 July 2007 at the age of 77, there was no press coverage until a formal obituary notice was published in *Leselinyana la Lesotho* of 31 October 2007.



Cliff Morojele was the first of seven children born to Rev. Edwin Sekuruba and Lilian 'Mamalunga Morojele. He was born at Morija on 25 August 1929, educated successively at Matelile and Seapala primary schools, where his father was stationed as *moruti*, and then at Morija Training College and Basutoland High School where he obtained a First Class Matriculation. He won a Government Scholarship to Fort Hare where he graduated with majors in Botany and Mathematics in 1952. His subsequent studies were at Rhodes University, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of South Africa. He went to Oxford University in 1955 where he completed the Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Statistics. In 1958 he married Lindiwe Caroline Ngakane of Soweto, Gauteng, whom he had met when she was a fellow student at Wits.

On his return to Lesotho, Cliff Morojele became the first Director of Statistics and undertook the *1960 Basutoland Agricultural Census*, much praised at the time as a model piece of work. It was designed to be published in 8 volumes, although only 6 volumes actually appeared, because he was called away for further studies at the London School of Economics, a prelude to an appointment with the Food & Agricultural Organization in Addis Ababa. He lived with his family in Addis for 9 years from 1964, until he moved to FAO headquarters in Rome, where he worked until his retirement in 1991. Amongst work undertaken after his retirement in Lesotho was the constituency delimitations for the 1993 elections. His wife predeceased him and he leaves five children and 8 grandchildren.

New Minimum Wages Gazetted

The annual revision of minimum wages was published as the ***Labour Code Wages (Amendment) Order 2007*** in *Lesotho Government Gazette Extraordinary*, no. 57 of 2007 (5 October 2007). The new wages came into force on 1 October 2007.

Minimum wages for agricultural workers are no longer gazetted and right at the bottom of the gazetted wages schedule are domestic workers whose minimum monthly wage rises from M240 to M264, while those who have had more than twelve months service rises from M252 to M277 per month. These represent rises of 10%, in line with rises granted to civil servants earlier in the year. The rises compare with an inflation rate of 8.9% in October 2007 and 9.3% in November 2007. Domestic workers' wages in Lesotho are still less than a third of those in South Africa, which explains why many Basotho women seek domestic work there. As from 1 December 2007, domestic workers' minimum

wages in South Africa were raised from R1067 to R1166 per month in urban areas, and from R866 to R946 in rural areas.

Small businesses are defined as undertakings which do not employ more than 5 persons and are wholly owned by Basotho and include butcheries, snack bars, coal and wood dealers, general cafés (i.e. small shops), greengrocers, food caterers, guest houses and bakeries. The minimum monthly wage in such enterprises also rises by 10% to M528, and to M539 for employees with more than 12 months service.

In manufacturing industry, the minimum wage has risen from M660 to M686 per month for a trainee and for a 'textile general worker', and from M710 to M738 for a trained textile machine operator. Both rises of 3.9% are far below the inflation rate, but presumably reflecting the precarious profitability of this sector.

Workers in the construction industry fare rather better with the minimum monthly wage for a construction worker now M900 compared with M818 a year ago, a rise of 10.0%, while the minimum for a construction machine operator or certificated employee such as a bricklayer, carpenter, steel fixer, welder or electrician, has similarly risen 10.0% from M1442 to M1586. In the previous year the rises had been meagre 3.0%, well below inflation which was already 6.9% in October 2006.

Those working in wholesale and to a lesser extent retail businesses have fared somewhat better. The minimum wage for workers in wholesales, supermarkets and furniture shops has gone up from M830 to M1000 (20.5%), and for minisupermarkets, bakeries, gas and petrol filling stations, and cafés (other than those classified as small businesses) it has gone up from M810 to M900 (11.1%).

In the hospitality sector workers in hotels, motels and lodges have had their minimum monthly wage increased from M840 to M924, while those working for restaurants, caterers and guest houses have received an increase from M800 to M880. In both cases the rises are 10.0%

A trained security guard now has a minimum monthly wage which has risen from M982 to M1011, while a trainee security guard's wage has risen from M800 to M824. In percentage terms these are the lowest rises of all at just 3.0%.

The minimum wage for funeral parlour workers has risen from M810 to M890 (9.9%), but for those with more than 12 months service with the same employer it has risen from M818 to M900, a rise of 10.0%. The minimum wage for those in cleaning services is also M900.

Minimum wages in the transport sector have also generally increased by 10.0% and now range from M1000 to M1450 for drivers, while the minimum monthly wage for a certified auto electrician, motor mechanic or panel beater has risen from M1442 to M1586.

Overall the 'general minimum wage' has risen from M686 to M755, and for employees with more than 12 months service with the same employer it has risen from M697 to M767, in both cases a rise of 10.0%. These wages apply to unskilled or manual workers other than those whose wages are elsewhere specified in the Order.

Amongst other changes are those relating to maternity benefits. In the textile, clothing and

leather manufacturing sector, an employee who has completed one year of continuous employment is entitled to two weeks paid maternity leave. In other sectors the entitlement is to six weeks paid maternity leave, although in both cases the maternity leave is limited to a maximum of two confinements per employee.

'Mamapele Hilda Chakela Autobiography Provides Insights into BCP & University History

The people always win (Florida Hills, South Africa: Vivlia) is the autobiography of a long serving member of the University staff and political activist, **'Mamapele Hilda Chakela**. It has been written with the assistance of Limakatso Kendall. As a result of the absence of any good bookstore in Lesotho, the book at present can only be obtained from South African bookstores.

Born in 1944 to a political family in Leribe District, Hilda Chakela spent some of her childhood and school vacations in the family of Charles Chakela, then Treasurer of the Basutoland Congress Party and later a Senator. At Holy Family High School, the foundations for political activism were laid, when she and another girl successfully waged a campaign for Bookkeeping and Commerce to replace Latin. She passed well at school but could not proceed to her desired nursing career at King Edward Nursing School in KwaZulu-Natal, because the white sisters at the high school wrote a report saying she was 'politically-minded and aggressive'.

She was, however, sent with three other Basotho young women by the British colonial administration for secretarial studies in Lagos, Nigeria in 1964, and having passed, began work in a series of government offices, ultimately ending with the Director of Economic Planning, Timothy Thahane. The 1970 Coup, following elections which the outgoing government had lost, led to mass arrests and to large numbers of BCP sympathizers in government losing their jobs, including nurses and secretaries. To the regret of the Director, Hilda Chakela and another staff member were formally dismissed from the Central Planning & Development Office on 7 April 1970. It was a time when her cousins Lebenya and Koenyama Chakela were hunted men and narrowly escaped an attack on a house in which two of their friends were killed.

In August 1970, Hilda Chakela began work with the lawyers, Mohaleroe, Sello & Company, but the offices were raided, and Mohaleroe was put under house arrest, apparently as part of a strategy to prevent 'Maneo Mokhehle, wife of Ntsu Mokhehle, from proceeding with a court action challenging the legality of the rule of Leabua Jonathan. The case eventually collapsed when Mrs Mokhehle was arrested and South African lawyers who had been retained for the case were not allowed to re-enter Lesotho.

In July 1971, Hilda Chakela moved to Botswana, and in August 1971 began work with the University of Botswana, Lesotho & Swaziland in Gaborone. She moved to UBLS Roma Campus in March 1973.

Amongst her activities at Roma was to establish the Non-Academic Staff Union together with Seisa Nqojane. NASU was registered in November 1977 and Hilda Chakela was the first Secretary-General, a post she occupied until 1980.

Meanwhile with the creation of the Institute of Labour Studies as a branch of the university's Institute of Extra-Mural Studies in Maseru, Hilda Chakela moved there. She gives a very full

account of the rise and fall of this Institute and of the characters involved, most of whom are given pseudonyms which can easily be penetrated by using the university calendars for the period. This is probably the best overall account of the Institute available. It was founded in 1979 with Danish assistance and the secondment for one year of Arne Jensen. The Institute began with offering six month courses in trade unionism and the training of trainers. Hilda Chakela enrolled in the first of these courses and thereafter joined the Institute as an executive officer and also as a trainer. The Danish plan had been for the trade unions to run the ILS themselves, but they did not have sufficient money to pay for the Institute, and consequently it became a university responsibility, functioning as if it were a department within IEMS. Amongst activities entered into at an early stage were conscientization of migrant workers about the possibility of organizing unions, and one result was that the National Union of Mineworkers came into being in South Africa in 1982. ILS ran a radio programme *Voice of Workers* of which the writer was one of the creators, along with two representatives of the Basutoland Federation of Labour (mainly BCP oriented), the Lesotho Council of Workers (mainly BNP oriented) and two representatives of the Lesotho Government Labour Department.

Initially the ILS fell under a Senior Research Fellow, Frank Baffoe ('a very dynamic and hard-working Ghanaian chap'), who wished the Institute to be independently governed by a Board of Directors. In this he was thwarted by the Director of IEMS, 'Bolofo', who had assumed office when the previous Director, Anthony Malefetsane Setšabi had become Vice-Chancellor. Although Baffoe was useful to 'Bolofo' because he could write papers which then came out in 'Bolofo's' name (Hilda Chakela knew this through typing them), the two clashed on the issue of governance. Baffoe did not renew his contract.

Meanwhile ILS had been augmented by a German Research Fellow/Documentalist, Werner Rechmann, funded by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation; and a British trade unionist and lecturer, and former Member of Parliament, Dr Peter Jackson.

Baffoe was replaced by a staunch BNP staff member of IEMS, 'Neo', who created difficulties for Chakela. During his period a staff member, 'Sehapi', was brought in who was also a BNP supporter and had a degree in humanities, but was expected to teach trade unionism about which it is said he knew nothing at all. He also took from Hilda Chakela all the tapes of the *Voice of Workers* programme and kept them in his office. 'Bolofo' and 'Neo' also told Chakela that because she was a BCP supporter she should be sacked, and the only thing that protected her from this was her permanent contract with the University. An account is given of 'Neo's' personality deficiencies including drunkenness and abuse of the ILS kombi which was used at the weekends as a taxi from which he pocketed the revenue. He would often miss work for weeks at a time, and when he could not be found on a Monday after a robbery, Chakela called the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (A. M. Maruping), who then asked her to write an account of the running of the ILS. She believed that it was possibly because of this that 'Neo' was removed from his post while she was on study leave on a course in management in the USA from May 1985 to July 1986. On her return she found 'Neo' was now an Extension Educator in IEMS and 'Sehapi', who had earlier returned from studying in the USA was Acting Director, while her own office was being used to store tyres. '[Sehapi]' still knew nothing about labour, so he had no programmes, no ideas. Nothing went on at all. He eventually gave himself study leave to pursue a PhD. ILS has been 'looking' for a director ever since.'

She comments: 'The subversion of ILS is just one example of many which one could name in Lesotho, of the misuse of donor funds by individuals who serve themselves or their political parties at the expense of the nation. There are two major ways that development aid can be misused: the

most obvious form of corruption is the misappropriation of funds; the less obvious form is the appointment of incompetent individuals to manage the funds so that the organisation is rendered ineffective. The second ... is the one that applied in the case of ILS.'

On her return from the USA, there was an attempt to get Chakela to work in the IEMS typing pool, an obviously ridiculous misuse of her training and experience. The upshot was her being reassigned to the central administration in Roma from 1986, where she worked in the Student Records Office ('after having seen how efficiently things were run in America, I felt very frustrated ...'), and then from March 1987 in the Registry in charge of university records until her retirement in 2004.

A commentary is provided in the meantime on political events in Lesotho including Military Rule (1986-93): 'Many of the soldiers in the Military Council allotted building sites to themselves in the middle of Maseru and gave themselves permission to open shops on land that had formerly been public property. The Minister of the Interior was taking land away from its owners and reallocating it to his friends and political allies.' Corruption on the largest scale is, however, attributed to the Minister of Finance, E. R. Sekhonyana, about whom it is said: 'he built houses for his concubines and bought them expensive cars, and he banked sums beyond imagination in banks outside the country. He taught others how to embezzle money, and he set the example to government officials, that power and corruption went hand in hand.'

There is eventually an account of the lead up to the 1993 General Election, in which Hilda Chakela was a member of a BCP Resource Group which came into conflict with the party leader, Ntsu Mokhehle. The book has no detail, however, about what happened subsequent to the restoration of democracy.

In reflection on her achievements at the university she singles out her part with colleagues in negotiating better conditions: 'All members of staff, whether cleaners or lecturers, can now borrow money from the university to build a house, paying it back at low interest rates; we all have an education allowance for up to four children per household; and we can get loans for furnishing as well. These benefits would have not been offered to us if the union had not pushed for them. I was part of that push ...'.

Illegal Miners, Some Believed to be from Lesotho, Die in Underground Fire

Unregulated illegal deep level gold mining is a relatively recent, but apparently growing phenomenon, and it is perhaps surprising that such risky activities are not being controlled. As reported in *The Star* of 8 October 2007, an underground fire on 2 October 2007, claimed the lives of 23 miners illegally working an unused shaft at St Helena Mine in Welkom. 120 surviving miners were arrested as they made their way out of the mine. Apparently they normally live a troglodyte existence for long periods in the depth of the mine, supported by food smuggled in by legal miners working regular shifts.

According to the report many of the illegal miners were without identity records, and some of the bodies were beyond recognition. It was believed some 'were possibly from neighbouring countries'.

Review of Southern African Studies Reappears

The *Review of Southern African Studies* is the periodical of the National University of Lesotho's **Institute of Southern African Studies**, but it has had a rather chequered career. Commencing with volume 1, no. 1 in January 1995, it proclaimed itself as appearing twice a year. However the two issues of volume 1 took two years to complete, and there was then a year's rest, before volumes 2 to 4 covered the years 1998 to 2000. However, after vol. 4, no. 1 had appeared in 2000, there was a long gap because of staff changes and uncertainty about the future of the Institute, which at one point was to be restructured as an Institute of Research. When the transformation process was reversed, there was the possibility of resuming work on the journal, and vol. 4, no. 2 did finally appear (a special issue on sustainable agriculture), dated December 2000, although its actual appearance was in the year 2006!

Matters have now improved, and the periodical has resumed with a special double issue, volume 5 for the year 2007, dated September 2007. Altogether it includes 12 articles, two of which are on respectively Malawi (P. Kishindo on land scarcity) and Zimbabwe (A. C. Nyanguru on income support for the elderly). An article by F. J. Likoti is based on his 2006 PhD thesis at the University of the Western Cape on military interventions in the 1990s in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Lesotho. Another article by V. Mashinini reflects on the political geography of Lesotho and South Africa. The remaining 8 articles are on Lesotho topics ranging from violence against women to demand for the internet in the National University of Lesotho halls of residence.

Long Standing Criminal Defamation Case Ends

A long standing criminal defamation in which three persons had been accused of producing pamphlets alleging sexual improprieties by cabinet ministers, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of Local Government finally ended on Monday 8 October 2007. The case had originally been set down to be heard by Chief Magistrate Molefi Makara on 3 April 2006, and it subsequently proceeded through many court hearings over a period of 18 months, illustrating the inefficiency of the court system, even in high profile cases. However, in this case there had been an unexpected delay towards the end when defence lawyer, Hae Phoofolo, had been stabbed in a robbery attempt and had had to undergo hospital treatment.

One of the three accused was discharged and the other two, Maketso Matjope (38) and Qamaka Ntsene (46) were both found guilty of criminal defamation. They were each given the comparatively light sentences of two years imprisonment or a fine of M2 000, half of which was suspended. They were also required to write a formal apology.

Police Finally Appear in Court After Suspension on Full Salaries in 1996

Another example of the inefficiency of the justice system and its enormous delays was also provided by *Public Eye* of 12 October 2007. It concerns 29 police who had originally been suspended in 1996 in relation to allegations that they had transferred or assisted with the transfer of motor vehicles confiscated by the police into their own names or those of their spouses. The accused had eventually been charged in 2002, but the case had undergone delays, and was now again postponed. However, it was due to be heard in the High Court on 23 October 2007. The original 29 accused had dwindled to 21, because a number of them had died, while charges against one other policeman had been dropped because of insufficient evidence against him. It was reported

that the suspended policemen had received their full salaries since the time of their suspension.

Death of Phale E. Mokoena MP

A BNP proportional representation Member of Parliament, **Phale Ernest Mokoena**, died in Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, Maseru on 12 October 2007 after a tragic road accident. He was 69.

Phale Mokoena was born at Ha Letlatsa on the Thuathe Plateau and attended primary school nearby at the foot of the plateau at Cenez Primary School. In adult life he was for many years Chairperson of the School Board of this same school. A staunch Catholic, in 1951 he married Mpho Lydia Tšupane, and they had 8 children, 4 boys and 4 girls. Mokoena had a varied career as a spinning instructor, policeman, magistrate's clerk and personnel officer. In 1998, 2002 and 2007 he contested the Seqonoka Constituency for the Basotho National Party, but received a declining percentage of votes. Nevertheless, in 2005 he was elected Chairperson of the National Executive Committee of the BNP. Following the 2007 General Election he was awarded, along with Justin Metsing Lekhanya and Ranthomeng Matete, one of the three BNP proportional representation seats in the National Assembly. Tributes to his work in Parliament and elsewhere can be found in the National Assembly *Hansard* of 2 November 2007.

The new BNP proportional representation MP who replaces Phale Mokoena is **Seabata Thabisi**.

Unusual Case Against Policewoman Ends after 20 Months

As reported in *Public Eye* of 19 October 2007, a 38-year old policewoman, **Khaello Thaele**, was found not guilty of sexually abusing a 16-year old girl, after a court hearing which had begun 20 months earlier.

The case was an unusual one in which it appears that the two persons involved, both members of a women's football club, had had a consensual lesbian relationship, which had led to the older woman, who was unable to have her own child offering to pay the girl M50 000 if she would carry a baby for her. Matters had eventually gone sour, when the girl delayed to accept the necessary insemination, and the policewoman had said she would approach another person. The girl had then complained that she had been abused.

Faction Fighting in Maseru Central Prison Leads to Serious Injuries

Lesotho Today of 11 October 2007 carried a report from the Lesotho News Agency (LENA) about 'gangsterism' at Maseru Central Prison amongst long serving prisoners. Fighting had broken out in September between groups known as Gangs No. 26 and No. 28, and six prisoners had been seriously injured so that they needed hospital treatment.

LENA was permitted to interview both prisoners and Correctional Service Officers on the

matter. One prisoner expressed the view that Correctional Service Officers no longer have much control over the inmates 'due to human rights practices'. Another inmate said that gangsterism in the prison is like a religion and there is no way that it could be abolished. Correctional Service Officers said that they tried to patrol the cells at all times so that they could react speedily when fighting erupted.

There was also a full report in *Leseli ka Sepolesa* of 19 October 2007 including a colour photograph of the weapons seized from prisoners, which included a variety of improvised knives and awl-like stabbing weapons. It confirmed there were gangs (*maquloana*) named No. 26 and No. 28 and also 'Royal Air Force' and 'Big 5'.

Maseru Central Prison was stated to have 871 inmates, both convicts and those awaiting trial.

King's Birthday Amnesty Provides Freedom for 92

Although his 44th Birthday Celebrations had been on 17 July 2007, the traditional amnesty which goes with such events as the King's Birthday, Christmas and Moshoeshoe Day, took some time to process. As reported in *Lesotho Today* of 18 October 2007, 81 men, 4 women and 7 juveniles were released on Wednesday 10 October to mark the King's Birthday. All were convicts with sentences of less than 12 months still to be served.

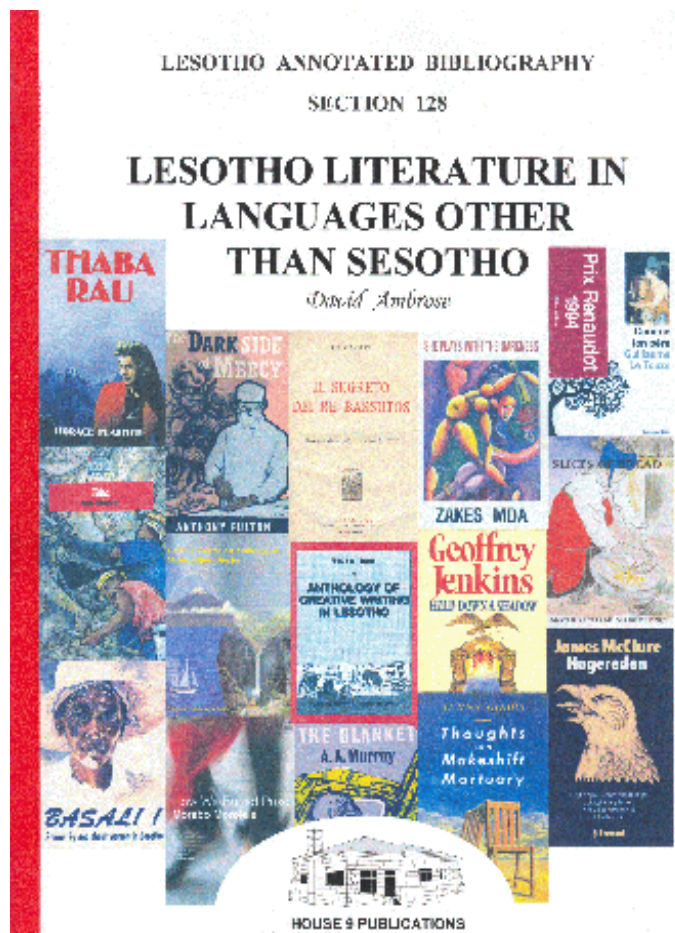
LCD Candidate Wins Mekaling By-Election

The by-election on 27 October 2007 in the Mekaling Constituency in Mohale's Hoek District had been necessitated by the death at the age of 35 of Molefe Konyana, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy MP.

In the by-election, **Mahlomola Makube** of the LCD won an overwhelming victory with 3301 votes, trailed by the candidates from the ABC (328), PFD (76), BNP (76), BBDP (45) and BDNP (29).

Bibliography Appears of Fiction Set in Lesotho but not in Sesotho

Most of the volumes published in the Lesotho Annotated Bibliography series (197 sections of which some 35 are published in hard copy) are rather specialized, but Section 128, published in October 2007, may have some wider interest. It is a bibliography of *Lesotho literature in languages other than Sesotho* (Roma, Lesotho: House 9 Publications, iv + 100pp.). It covers novels, short stories, poetry and drama in English and a number of other languages and begins with the earliest traced



novel set in Lesotho, Luigi Motta's *Il segreto dei re Bassutos* (The secret of the Basotho king), a romantic story which purports to be set in Lesotho, and was published in Italian in Milan in 1902.

The first novel traced in English is John Mackie's *Black man's rock* (1911), which is about the Moorosi War of 1879 and belongs to a time when readership was sexually stereotyped, and 'Boys' adventure stories' were a prominent literary genre, playing a jingoistic role in support of the British Empire. The account in the introduction to the publication also describes the novels of Robert Keable published in the 1920s. Several of these novels were set in Lesotho, and were best sellers at the time, selling hundreds of thousands of copies. Today they are all but forgotten. The first black novelist to set a historical novel partly in Lesotho was the Motswana, Sol Plaatje, with *Mhudi* (1930). In recent years there have been a number of Basotho writing in English (for a recent novel, Morabo Morojele's, *How we buried Puso*, see p. 12), and other languages are represented such as French, with Guillaume Le Touze's, *Comme ton père* which won the prestigious Prix Renaudot in 1994. This is a novel largely set in Lesotho past and present.

Several collections of short stories in English set in Lesotho have appeared in recent years, in part stimulated by creative writing courses at the National University of Lesotho. There are also poems, ancient and modern, and drama, where writing in English and plays set in Lesotho are best known from the playwright Zakes Mda.

The volume also includes translations of items into other languages, which were originally written in English or Sesotho. This means that the bibliography also includes items published in a great many languages ranging from Ewe to Swahili in Africa, and Norwegian to Serbo-Croatian in Europe. Altogether there are 150 annotated items published in 21 different countries. However, there must be even more than this, and the compiler is keen to be informed of any items overlooked.

Lesotho Bank Tower Handed over to LHDA

In a ceremony in Maseru on Friday 12 October, the ten-storey **Lesotho Bank Tower** was handed over to the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority. This follows re-siting by the Standard Lesotho Bank of its services following its merger with Lesotho Bank. In the past few months the International Business Centre, which was formerly Lesotho Bank's foreign exchange centre, has moved from the ground floor of the tower across Kingsway to the main Standard Lesotho Bank buildings. Other specialized banking services have also been relocated to the main SLB headquarters. Although the Tower is now LHDA property, SLB has signed an agreement to be a sub-tenant of LHDA and retain the use of the ground floor and adjoining buildings for a seven year period.

LHDA has since 1987 rented several floors of the Lesotho Bank Tower, but its new purchase will enable LHDA to put all of its Maseru operations within a single building. Formerly many LHDA offices were to be found at the Maseru Sun Cabanas and also at the Post Office Building, although there had been for some time a tendency to gravitate towards the Lesotho Bank Tower, where the Chief Executive of LHDA had his offices and where the binational Lesotho Highlands Water Commission (formerly the Joint Project Technical Commission) is also situated. As an example of earlier moves, the LHDA Library started life in the Maseru Sun Cabanas office wing, moved to the Post Office Building, and then underwent a second move to the Lesotho Bank Tower already some years back.

There had at one point been discussion that LHDA, at the peak of its activities, might have its own purpose-built headquarters building. With the completion of the two components of Phase I of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (the Katse and Mohale Dams) there has been subsequent downsizing and the possibility of such a headquarters building became remote. However the 'tower' option provides a preferable solution to the inefficiency of having operations split, as at present, across three different Maseru sites.

The Lesotho Bank Tower, Maseru's tallest building, was constructed in 1980 as part of a complex which at the time housed the Lesotho Bank's main customer branch and the Central Bank which faced each other across two sides of a plaza, flanking the Tower which faced Kingsway between them. Over the years, the Tower has housed many different commercial and government offices and diplomatic missions including those of Germany and Sweden, countries no longer with resident missions. The South African Embassy still remains in the Tower on the top floor, but it will soon move to its rapidly rising purpose-built premises further to the west along Kingsway.

The question still to be resolved is what the Lesotho Bank Tower will be called as it takes on its new role.

Remarkable Novel Evokes Maseru Urban Life

How we buried Puso (Johannesburg: Jacana) is a remarkable new novel by Morabo Morojele. It is cleverly crafted with flashbacks from the present and central event, the funeral of Puso, to the collective and separate pasts of Puso and that of his younger brother, the main narrator, Molefe. It is a novel, within whose narrative a story is told, but within the wider world of real events. But there are no dates, even the country is not mentioned, nor by name is Maseru, nor its nearby township where most action takes place, while South Africa is always 'the country neighbouring ours'. It is left to the reader to reconstruct the narrative hidden within a richly mature prose style which alternates between the described incident and the flow of reflective thought. However, the writer is sparing in what is shared with us. Some things remain an enigma and *terra incognita*.

The flashbacks begin with the 1970s, when Puso and Molefe are schoolboys in Maseru, living with an irascible but religious widowed grandmother. We never learn what happened to their parents. It is amongst the *terra incognita*.

The events of 1976 in the 'country neighbouring ours' result in changes. There is an inflow of children speaking a different language and amongst them is Thembi, aged 15, who comes to live in the house with them. Her origin and the exact circumstances by which grandmother adopts her are again not explained, but she becomes a part of the household as if an adopted sister.

As Puso and Molefe advance to the age of employment, it is a period when, without a party card, advancement through the civil service is impossible. Indeed without it, the price is unemployment. Puso dutifully applies for a card and eventually advances to become a Deputy Chief Executive. Molefe, briefly a trainee government journalist, is spared the card carrying dilemma by obtaining a scholarship to study overseas. Now after seven years of apparently slow academic progress, news from Thembi of his brother's death brings him back to the world from which he has become estranged.

On his return only a day before the funeral, he is taken to meet for the first time his brother's white wife and two children, from whom his brother has separated to live with a mistress. He meets

Thembi, now the *de facto* head of the household and the person arranging the funeral. She also has her own child. Eventually after the funeral, he meets the drunken schoolteacher neighbour little changed, and his old friend Twice (so called because of his stutter) who disappeared during the Maseru Raid of December 1982 (again the circumstances are only hinted at) and who has returned, after experiences in many countries, to the emerging new South Africa. Thus we can deduce that the funeral is taking place in 1990.

We never learn why Puso was murdered. The details proffered are of the nature of grisly and implausible detail. Did Puso himself even know the reason? While the funeral is described in some detail, we do not hear what the *mooki*, a *sine qua non* for a Lesotho funeral, has said about the circumstances of his death.

The author, Morabo Morojele, is himself someone who has spent much of his life outside Lesotho. He is the son of the one time Government Statistician, Cliff Morojele, who after Fort Hare and Oxford, worked in Lesotho, but thereafter spent most of his working life in Addis Ababa and Rome, returning to Lesotho for retirement (see obituary notice earlier in this issue of the *Events*). However, like the narrative of the novel, the brief detail provided for the author has no dates, although it indicates tertiary education at the London School of Economics and the Institute of Social Sciences in the Hague. Employment is mentioned in unspecified international organisations, NGOs, private consulting firms and academia. Lesotho is not mentioned but there is a relatively close connection in that Morabo Morojele is described as an ardent musician who has performed and recorded with many leading South African jazz musicians. This provides yet another enigma. The novel does not conspicuously dwell on musical matters, but its evocation of the urban life of a Maseru township is redolent with detail which seems authentic and convincing in a manner which at times seem to surpass the descriptions found in the novels of Zakes Mda. It is a remarkable achievement for a writer whose life was mainly spent abroad. But then had he himself perhaps not also been a Molefe returning at short notice from abroad to a funeral in a culture and milieu in which he had in many ways become a bystander?

Children of Shot Factory Workers Win Compensation

A protest demonstration on 10 November 2003 by mainly women factory workers calling for increased remuneration had resulted in a disproportionate use of force by the police. Two women had been shot dead and many others injured. As reported in *Public Eye* of 2 November 2007, after a High Court Case there had been a settlement out of court in which the Lesotho Government had agreed to pay M70 000 to each of the five orphaned children of the women who had died in the incident.

Lekhoaba Wins Long Drawn Out Citizenship Case

A bench of three High Court judges sitting as a Constitutional Court on 26 October ruled that high profile *Harvest FM* radio presenter, **Rev. Adam Pholoana Lekhoaba** was a Lesotho citizen. The judges accepted that Lekhoaba was born at Ha Moqekela near Thaba-Tseka in 1970, but as a result of unrest at the time his parents had fled to Senekal in the Free State when he was only a few months old. He had had a South African ID and passport, the latter in effect being a sequel to the former which had been issued when he was a minor. He had been caught in the trap of politics and the South African passport was simply his travelling document.

Lekhoaba had earlier been deported from Lesotho after his radio programme, *Rise and shine*,

had openly supported the opposition ABC party of Tom Thabane. He was triumphant in his victory and provided a long and hard-hitting interview devoted to current Lesotho politics, which was the cover story and occupied almost half the pages of the *Weekly Mail* of 30 October 2007.

Sod Turning at New Parliament Site

On Monday 29 October 2007, there was a sod turning ceremony at the site of Lesotho's new Parliament. The new Parliament will be situated on Mpilo Hill above the Lesotho Sun Hotel, and overlooking on its other side the 'Manthabiseng Convention Centre. Construction is expected to be complete by July 2009.

As reported in *Public Eye* of 2 November 2007 the five-storey complex will include residence facilities for MPs and their families, public art galleries, chambers, spacious and adequately equipped committee rooms, offices, internet cafés, information centres and security features. The complex is funded by the People's Republic of China to the tune of about M64 million and will be built by China Yanzhan Construction Corporation. (The quoted figure of M64 million seems quite modest for what is apparently going to be provided in the new complex.)

Millennium Challenge Corporation Staff Arrive

As reported in *The Mountain Crier* of October 2007, following the signing of the agreement in Washington on 23 July 2007 of the Millennium Challenge Compacts, staff of the Millennium Challenge Corporation have arrived in Lesotho. They are **Gene MacDonald**, Resident Country Director of the MCC program and **Brian Baltimore**, Deputy Resident Director of the MCC program.

NUL Hosts Alumni Homecoming

For the first time since the Alumni Workshop of 29-31 October 1999, the National University of Lesotho hosted a formal alumni reunion on 25-27 October 2007, although this time it was styled an **Alumni Homecoming**. Thursday 25 and Friday 26 October were devoted to a reception and speeches at the 'Manthabiseng Conference Centre in Maseru, where, as in 1999, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka was a guest speaker. Phumzile had in 1999 been South African Minister of Minerals and Energy. In 2007 she was speaking as both a NUL alumna and South African Vice-President. On 26 October there were speeches from amongst others, the Prime Minister, Pakalitha Mosisili, and Mbulelo Mzamane, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare. Both are alumni of the University of Botswana, Lesotho & Swaziland (UBLS), the forerunner of NUL in Lesotho. On Saturday, alumni were invited to Roma to see their former place of study and attend a dramatic performance. Unfortunately wet weather rather marred sightseeing. Overall attendance was rather sparse, and fundraising was far less than targeted.

An earlier reunion for UBLS alumni had been organized at the University of Cape Town at Easter 2007 by Professors Njabulo Ndebele and Thandabantu Nhlapo and their wives, all four of whom are UBLS alumni, while Ndebele and Nhlapo are currently Vice-Chancellor and a Deputy

Vice-Chancellor of UCT. For those attending, it had been a reunion of former students meeting some 35 years after graduating and the occasion included a filmed message from Desmond Tutu, Nobel Laureate, who had been on the UBLS staff in the early 1970s. There were short reminiscences by alumni and longer talks by invited speakers. The gathering included alumni who had distinguished themselves as businessmen and businesswomen, ambassadors, high commissioners, international civil servants, cabinet ministers, university lecturers, doctors, teachers and in many other professions. An invited speaker who runs the UCT alumni office provided advice on how to run an alumni association. Amongst many vital points mentioned was the need to have an active constantly updated database of alumni (UCT keeps track of 75 000 of its alumni, but has lost touch with 50 000), an alumni magazine, and an alumni centre on campus. NUL has something to learn from UCT. At the Homecoming in Lesotho, the three Tšita sisters, all NUL alumnae and owners of the BAM (Business Administration and Management) Consultancy pledged M110 000 to NUL of which M60 000 is for a database system to keep track of alumni, while M50 000 is for free advertising in BAM's flagship newspaper, *Informative*. The NUL alumni database now seems increasingly possible.

Lesotho Drawn against Gabon, Ghana and Libya in First Qualifying Round of Football World Cup

The **Football World Cup** will in 2010 be held in South Africa, the first time that it has been held in an African country. The draw for the groups which will play the first qualifying rounds took place on Sunday 28 October 2007 at the Inkosi Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban.

Initial qualifying rounds are held in each continent, and in Africa there are 48 competing countries divided into 12 groups, with Lesotho drawn in Group 5, so that it will play at home and away to each of Gabon, Ghana and Libya. From the 12 groups, the 12 winners and the 8 best runners-up will make up five groups of four, the five winners of which will qualify for the finals in South Africa.

South Africa itself is drawn in Group 4 with Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone as their opponents. This first round is also the qualifying round for the African Nations Cup to be held in 2010 in Angola. Lesotho's national team Likuena is currently ranked 154th by the international football association, FIFA, and has never qualified for either the World Cup or the Africa Cup of Nations.

The overall draw for the Football World Cup is structured so that in the finals in South Africa there will be the host team, 5 other African teams, 4 Asian teams, 13 European teams, 3 North American teams, 4 South American teams, 1 team from either North or South America (the runners up in the two continents play each other for this place), and 1 team either from Oceania or Asia (similarly determined by a play off). World Cup geography is not quite atlas geography. Australia is counted as falling within Asia; Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel and Kazakhstan as falling within Europe; while the countries of Central America and Guyana and Suriname are considered as falling within North America! African geography is not so distorted. It includes the offshore island nations of Mauritius, Seychelles and Cape Verde. The five African countries which are not competing are the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Somalia, São Tomé & Príncipe, and Western Sahara.

Death of Mohaila Mohale Veteran Journalist and Politician

The death occurred on 30 October 2007 of **Mohaila Stanley Mohale**. Born in Hlotse in 1923, he was one of the first pupils at Basutoland High School. After the Second World War in which he served, he worked from 1949 as a journalist in Johannesburg on the Sesotho newspaper *Mphatlalatsane*. Both he and T. S. Ntoampe were at different times editors of this newspaper and much later they became editors respectively of the rival political papers *Makatolle* and *Mohlanka*. While in Johannesburg, he joined the relatively newly founded Basutoland African Congress (the forerunner of the Basutoland Congress Party) in 1952. He formed the Pimville & Soweto branch in 1954 and was its Secretary and was later Assistant Secretary-General of the Transvaal branch. On his return to Lesotho, he fought the 1965 elections and became MP for Pela-Tšoeu.

With the impending restoration of democracy, the long suppressed Basutoland Congress Party newspaper *Makatolle* was revived in 1992, and Mohaila Mohale, despite being beyond normal retiring age, was on grounds of his great experience in journalism chosen to become its editor. In 1993 he was elected MP for the Pela-Tšoeu constituency, returning to Parliament to represent the constituency he had earlier represented in the 1960s. As an MP he continued to occupy the editorship of *Makatolle* until the watershed March 1996 BCP Party Conference when the *Majelathoko* faction of the BCP narrowly defeated the *Maporesha* faction. At a time of deep division within the party he must have been dismayed to see his old newspaper soon afterwards appearing in two rival editions edited by the rival factions within the party. In 1998, Mohaila Mohale was returned to Parliament with a large majority (69% of votes cast) as MP for Mahobong, the neighbouring constituency to the south of Pela-Tšoeu. Mohaila Mohale, by now a septuagenarian, became the new Minister of Works, although many said at the time that he would have been more at home in the Ministry of Information.

The BCP leadership had by this time survived in Parliament by creating a new party, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy, but in 2001 this also split into factions with the *Lesiba* faction crossing the floor to form the Lesotho People's Congress under Kelebone Maope, the former Deputy Prime Minister. Mohaila Mohale was one of the 27 MPs who crossed the floor and then represented the LPC in Parliament. However in the 2002 elections, Mohaila Mohale, now nearing 80, no longer stood for Parliament and the Mahobong constituency was won for the LCD by a new MP, Mothetjoa Metsing (also with 69% of the votes cast), who is now the Minister of Communications, Science and Technology.

Mohaila Mohale was an extremely knowledgeable person on many matters but particularly on matters relating to language, knowledge brought about by long experience as a journalist and editor. With the restoration of democracy and the installation of Ntsu Mokhehle as Prime Minister, the word *mokaubere* became frequently used to describe him, with the meaning 'a wise and experienced leader'. For those dependent on dictionaries to explain unusual Sesotho words there was a problem, because the word had escaped the attention of lexicographers. Nevertheless, any elderly villager could tell you that it was a word used for the most experienced leading animal in a team of oxen. What was its etymology? Various linguists were consulted but were flummoxed by the question. Not so, Mohaila Mohale. It was derived from the Afrikaans word *gawerig* he said instantly, an adjective which expresses the idea of excellence or outstanding qualities. The connection was not obvious but on reflection he was clearly right, allowing for the sound shifts which occur when words of originally Dutch origin enter Sesotho, so that *gas* becomes *kase* and *werk* (to work) becomes *bereka*. This is a process which both involves sound shifts and svarabhakti, the pedants' name for the process by which a language which dislikes consonantal clusters automatically inserts vowels between them when absorbing foreign words, and also insists on a

terminal vowel to avoid a final consonant.

Lesotho Marathon Runners Pull Off Double Success in the Soweto Marathon

Lesotho's marathon runner, **'Mamoroallo Tjoka**, won the annual Nedbank Soweto Marathon in South Africa on Sunday 4 November 2007. This was her third consecutive win, the first time anyone has achieved a hat-trick. She completed the course in a time of 2.47:57, three minutes ahead of the Russian runner, Olesya Nurglieva, who had been the favourite to win the race. In fact the Russian came third, also beaten by the Zimbabwean runner, Samukeliso Moyo.

In the men's race there was also a Lesotho winner, **Teboho Sello**, in a time of 2.18:51. The men's race was initially dominated by a leading pack of South African runners including Olympic Gold Medallist Josiah Thugwane. However the pack was stalked by a group of Basotho runners who at 35 km surged into the lead, so that at the finishing line they took the three first places, with Teboho Sello coming first, Mabothile Lebopo coming second and Lebenya Nkoka occupying third place.

The Basotho marathon runners are being trained at a high altitude track at Mohale, and they now seem unstoppable. Tjoka and Sello each came back to Lesotho M100 000 richer, thanks to the Nedbank sponsors of the race.

Joint Botswana and Lesotho Military Exercise Held in November

A month long exercise involving 200 Special Operations troops from each of the Botswana and Lesotho Defence Forces was held in Lesotho in November based at Qoqolosing in Leribe District. As reported in *Lesotho Today* of 1 November 2007, amongst special operations were search and rescue, counter-terrorism, VIP protection, conducting raids behind enemy lines, and covert or overt reconnaissance. Skills to be tested would be parachute drops, cargo drops, mobility operations, rope work on cliffs, and helicopter and waterborne operations.

The exercises were not without casualties. Just preliminary to the joint exercises there had been an unfortunate incident at Maqalika Dam on 19 October 2007 when, in a special forces air to water demonstration exercise, one of the soldiers jumping from a helicopter into the dam had been drowned.

During the exercises themselves, a parachute drop took place during strong winds and hail, and Corporal Victor Phuthego of the BDF was blown off course and landed 3 km from the target area with a broken thigh. He was protected from falling hail and rain which threatened to drown him by five girls from St Margaret Primary School. The story is told with photographs in *Family Mirror* of 27 November 2007.

In a similar exercise in Botswana in 2008, Lesotho troops will experience desert conditions.

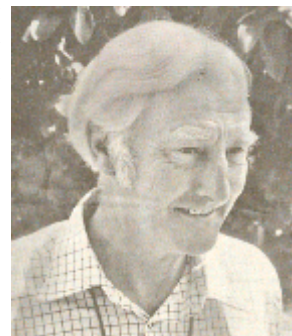
Death of Bishop Graham Chadwick, Founder Warden of Anglican Diocesan Training Centre

The death occurred in Salisbury, England on 28 October 2007 of **Graham Chadwick**, who worked for more than 16 years in Lesotho as an Anglican missionary. He was 84.

Graham Charles Chadwick was born in South Wales in 1923 into the large family of a railway signalman. He was educated at Swansea Grammar School after which he saw war service with the Royal Navy which identified his linguistic skills and sent him to the School of Oriental & African Studies to learn Japanese, after which he served on flagships of the Pacific fleet monitoring Japanese broadcasts and signals. He subsequently read theology at Keble College, Oxford and was ordained to the Anglican priesthood after studying further at St Michael's College, Llandaff. After an early curacy in Oystermouth near Swansea, he went to Lesotho where he was Rector of Qacha's Nek from 1954 to 1959; and then Mohale's Hoek from 1959 to 1963, where a notable achievement during his incumbency was the creation of St Stephen's Diocesan High School.

From 1963 he was back in UK where he was Chaplain at University College, Swansea (Rowan Williams, present Archbishop of Canterbury, was then a student there), after which a year was spent at Queen's College, Birmingham studying clinical psychology.

He returned to Lesotho in 1970 to found the Diocesan Training Centre in Maseru, and remained Warden of the DTC until appointed Bishop of Kimberley and Kuruman in 1976. He was an outspoken critic of apartheid, and when a young Anglican schoolteacher, Pakamile Mabija, died in security police detention, he made an issue of it which led to his deportation from South Africa. His diocese at the time included parts of the South African created 'Republic of Bophuthatswana', and since from the point of view of South Africa 'Bop' was no longer part of South Africa, he took up residence at an Anglican hospital there. However, he was remote from his Cathedral, and 'Bop' had a puppet government, so shortly afterwards he also had to leave from there. On his enforced departure from South Africa a crowd of more than 50 000 people bade him farewell, although close contact was impossible because of a large contingent of armed police with dogs. Chadwick was forced by these circumstances to resign from the See in 1982.



Back in UK he worked at St Asaph Cathedral in South Wales and was also Assistant Bishop of Liverpool 1990-5. He headed the Institute for Christian Spirituality at Sarum College, Salisbury, 1995-8. At the time of his death he was President of the UK-based Lesotho Diocesan Association.

Graham Chadwick is survived by his wife Suzanne (they married in 1955), and their son, Simon, now resident in the USA.

Although Graham Chadwick did not publish much during his period in Lesotho, there was one article 'Initiation rites among the Basotho' published in *African World* in February 1958. In it he referred to boys' initiation schools as 'an anachronism perpetuated to maintain heathen customs and, in many cases, for the lucrative benefits of the leaders of the schools'. He did not foresee that such schools, with the decline of migrant labour, would flourish so that 'lucrative benefits' now provide a substantial income for returned migrants and others without alternative sources of income.

[This obituary is based in part on obituaries in the *Church Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and details provided by Canon Anthony Gann.]

Woman Dies after Drinking *Pitsa ea Litotla*

For some time *Radio Moafrika* and *Moafrika* newspaper, both owned by 'Professor' Candi Ratabane Sebomomoea Ramainoane, have been advertising a medicine for women's problems, known as *pitsa ea litotla*, named from *pitsa*, a pot of medicine, and *litotla* ('fat women') but in this case from the familiar name *Litotla*, given to women supporters of *Moafrika*, who make the medicine, apparently in large quantities. Ramainoane indeed encourages his being called Tona-Khoho ea Litotla ('Prime Minister of the Litotla'). In the issue of *Moafrika* of 26 October 2007, 10 different sales points for the medicine are given throughout the Lowlands of Lesotho from Butha-Buthe to Mphahlele's Hoek.

On 5 November 2007, a 27-year-old woman, Sophia Lekhooa, of Ha Tsolo, Maseru, purchased some of the medicine, drank it and soon afterwards died. As a result Ramainoane found himself in court and ordered to produce samples of the medicine. When he failed to do so he was charged with contempt of court. The case was transferred to the High Court and was due to proceed on Monday 10 December 2007, but was later adjourned until February 2008.

Death at Shebeen Results in Death Sentence

As reported in *Family Mirror* of 6 November 2007, **Moroahabusoe Chabeli** was sentenced to death for the murder of Mokotso Boesman at a shebeen at Thabaneng near Mafeteng on 26 December 2001. Despite the relatively simple nature of the evidence, the case had taken nearly six years to reach finality. Chabeli had bludgeoned Boesman with a knobkerrie 15 times shattering his skull and brain. Justice 'Maseforo Mahase, sitting with two assessors, was unable to find sufficient mitigating circumstances and Chabeli was sentenced to be hanged.

Independent Electoral Commission Advertizes for Delimitation Consultant

As advertized in *Moeletsi oa Basotho* of 18 November 2007, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is looking for consultants to review the existing constituency boundaries. This is in accordance with the Constitution which requires a review not less than eight years and not more than ten years since the last review which was made on 15 April 1998.

The responsibility for the review now lies with the IEC in terms of Section 66A(1)(c) of the *Second Amendment to the Constitution Act 1997*. [The statement that the responsibility was with a Commission headed by a Judge, as appeared in *Summary of Events*, vol. 14, no. 2 (Second Quarter 2007), p. 28, was an error based on the unamended Constitution.]

The consultants now have available the 2006 Census, which includes constituency and community council total populations. The final delimitation is required to divide the population over the age of 18 into 80 constituencies of equal population over the age of 18, save that a not very generous leeway of 10% is allowed. In terms of the 2006 census, the largest constituencies in terms of total population are in Maseru where Mabote has a population of 37 669, Maseru Central 37 086 and Qoaling 33 911. The smallest constituencies have a population less than half of the largest, with six constituencies having under 18 000 people. These are Malimong in the Foothills of Berea District (17 122), Abia in the suburbs of Maseru (17 338), Qalabane in the Lowlands of Mafeteng

District (17 393), 'Maliepetsane in the Foothills of Mafeteng District (17 429), Taung in the Lowlands of Mofeng District (17 940), and Thaba-Tšoeu in the Lowlands of Mafeteng District (17 983). These six constituencies can expect to be amalgamated with parts of neighbouring constituencies. Most have declining populations, although in the case of Abia, it is more a case of an earlier overestimate of the population combined with the area being largely already built up and unable to expand into the only green fields area to the south because of the southern by-pass. The three largest constituencies are all areas where Maseru has been rapidly expanding as green fields have been taken over by housing. Mabote constituency includes the rapidly expanding suburb of Khubetsoana. Maseru Central includes extensive new housing areas at Thetsane to the west and south of Lesotho's largest factory site. The constituency of Qoaling adjoins Maseru Central and extends as far as Likotsi mountain and its surrounding villages. Like Maseru Central, Qoaling has significant new areas of housing where *malaene* (single room tenements) accommodate factory workers, while private schools and informal business areas have sprung up to service the expanding population, which has in part been stimulated by ease of access along the new tarred by-pass road and the new tarred road to Matukeng.

Charge Against A. C. Manyeli Dropped

Immediately before the General Election in February, there was a rapid sequence of High Court and Court of Appeal cases, the first of which the veteran National Independent Party leader A. C. Manyeli won, only to have the High Court decision overturned by the Court of Appeal (for details see *Summary of Events*, 2nd Quarter 2007). Manyeli was then reported by *Public Eye* to have said that Justice Ramodibedi of the Appeal Court had committed a crime and should be brought to justice. Manyeli was subsequently charged with contempt of court. However, the *Public Eye* version had been published in English, while the interview with the *PE* journalist had been in Sesotho. In the High Court on Monday 19 November 2007, Justice Kelello Guni dismissed the case and ordered that the charge be dropped.

Opposition Parliamentarians Walk Out of Parliament to Protest MCC Motion

On Wednesday 14 November 2007, a motion of thanks was proposed in the National Assembly by 'the pro-government opposition leader' Dominic Motikoe thanking the United States Government for the M2.5 billion aid package, as described in the **Millennium Challenge Compact**. The motion of thanks however drew unwelcome publicity, because a number of members of opposition parties then walked out of Parliament, one of whom, Kelebone Maope, was quoted in *Public Eye* of 23 November 2007 as saying 'Our decision to leave the Parliament is a protest against government's conduct towards MCC. We have asked the government to avail us with the agreement so that we can know what had been agreed upon.' He went on to say that 'We would not like to see the United States of America funding a government which has breached human rights' and referred to Basotho who had fled to South Africa while others were charged with high treason. In the absence of those who had walked out, the motion was debated for four sittings and was passed by a resolution of the National Assembly on Tuesday 20 November 2007.

In fact, the MCC Compact is in the public domain, and could easily have been distributed to Parliamentarians. It is a 60 page document, of which 47 pages are annexes. The agreement was signed by John J. Danilovich, Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and Mohlabi Kenneth Tsekoa, Lesotho Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations of the

Kingdom of Lesotho on 23 July 2007. A brief description of the document is appended below.

The Compact has Seven Articles, of which the First Article sets out the Compact Goal to reduce poverty in Lesotho through economic growth. It also sets out the Program Objectives which are threefold: (a) to improve the water supply for industrial and domestic needs and enhance urban and rural livelihoods through improved watershed management; (b) to increase access to life-extending anti-retroviral therapy and essential health services by providing a sustainable delivery platform; and (c) to stimulate investment by improving access to credit, reducing transaction costs and increasing the participation of women in the economy. The Lesotho Government is required to take all steps necessary or appropriate to achieve these Objectives.

Article Two provides details of the Funding and Resources. The available funds are US\$362 551 000 and their permitted uses which include under compact implementation support of a wide range of activities including surveys, assessments, studies and reviews relating to the Goals of the Compact. Details are given of disbursement procedures and the Lesotho Government is required to account for MCC funding in its annual budget, which must be additional to normal and expected budgetary resources. There are limitations on how the money may be spent, and assistance may not be used for the training of military, police and similar units; for activities likely to cause a substantial loss of United States jobs; for activities leading to significant environmental, health or safety hazards; and for paying for abortions or involuntary sterilizations, or promoting such activities in any form. The Lesotho Government is also required to exempt MCC funding from all forms of taxes.

Article Three provides for a Program Implementation Agreement and the necessary responsibilities to be assumed by the Lesotho Government and the necessary assurances to be provided by the Lesotho Government. It provides for procurement, records, accounting, providers, access to records, audits and reviews.

Article Four deals with official communications between the MCC and the Lesotho Government.

Article Five deals with termination of the Compact which can be terminated by either party with 30 days' written notice. A set of seven events is provided as examples which could lead to suspension or termination by the MCC, and these include the Lesotho Government engaging 'in a pattern of actions inconsistent with the criteria used to determine the eligibility of Lesotho for assistance under the *Millennium Challenge Act* of 2003 [of the US Congress], as amended.'

Article Six states that the three annexes are an integral part of the Compact, and provides for amendments, additional instruments, and references to laws and regulations.

Article Seven deals with entry into force of the Compact, which requires *inter alia* the execution of the Program Implementation Agreement of Article Three, and that no laws of Lesotho, other than the Constitution take precedence over the Compact. When the necessary conditions have been fulfilled, the Compact comes into force and remains in force for a period of five years, unless terminated earlier under Article Five.

Annex I describes in some detail the Programs being supported by MCC funding, and their management. The Water Sector Project provides funding for downstream works from the Metolong Dam and the establishment of a 'Metolong Program Management Unit'. Details are given of the raw water transmission main from the Metolong Reservoir, the water treatment plant, and the necessary pumping stations, transmission stations and water reservoirs for Roma, Mazonod, Morija and (subject to a European Union feasibility study) Teyatyaneng. [Finance for the Metolong Dam itself is coming from other sources including Saudi Arabia.] Also in the Water Sector Project are Urban and Peri-Urban Water Network Activity including reticulation and reticulation extensions for Mazonod and six district headquarters, and also a water supply system for Semonkong. The third activity in the Water Sector Project relate to Rural Water Supply and Sanitation and includes support for construction, rehabilitation and/or expansion of up to 250 water systems and construction of up to 10 000 VIP latrines. It targets improvements for some 150 000 people. The fourth and last Water Sector Project Activity relates to restoration and alternative land management prescriptions at three targeted wetland areas, Khalong-la-Lithunya (between Oxbow and Mokhotlong); Kotisephola (between Mokhotlong and Sani Top); and Letšeng-la-Letsie (on the Quthing river headwaters).

Annex I also contains details of the Health Sector Project which is divided into seven activities devoted to renovating and rehabilitating up to 150 Health Centres; improving infrastructure in up to 14 hospital outpatient departments to support extension of anti-retroviral activity; providing for a new central laboratory; designing and equipping a new Blood Transfusion Service with central blood collection and processing facility at Botšabelo; upgrading the National Health Training College, including provision of additional student dormitory spaces and staff residences; a Health Systems Strengthening Activity with emphasis on strengthening training capacities, decentralization and research and development; and finally the improvement of occupational health and safety and in particular the management of medical waste.

Finally in Annex I, the Private Sector Development Project has five described activities, and these relate to establishment of a credit bureau and a national identification card system; introducing a payments and settlement system which will reduce the use of cash and cheques; provision of technical assistance to support land reform legislation; support of legal reform to expedite commercial disputes (currently said to take on average nearly 700 days to resolve); and training and public awareness to support gender equality in economic rights.

Annex II of the Compact summarizes the Five-Year Financial Plan, while Annex III describes in some detail the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

NUL Students Elect Woman Leader

Although the majority of students at the National University of Lesotho Roma Campus are women, it is rare for the student body to be headed by a woman. In October 2007, however, the students chose a 28-year old Third Year Drama and Theatre woman student as the Student Representative Council President. The new President is **Boreng Hlalele**, and it is only the third occasion that the SRC has been led by a woman. An earlier woman President was Titii Thelejane, more than 15 years previously, while going back some 30 years there was Leah Matlhare, elected Deputy President, who assumed office when the male President of the SRC relinquished his office during the academic year.

New University Announced for Lesotho

As announced in *Lesotho Today* of 15 November 2007, the Lesotho Government Office of Smart Partnership in Lesotho is processing plans for a **University of Creative Technology** in Lesotho. This follows a request from the Office to Malaysia to establish the University. There are as yet no details as to where the university will be located, but it is set to open in June 2008 with an electronic library and six faculties which will include the Faculty of Creative Multimedia, Television and Broadcasting; the Faculty of Design and Innovation; and the Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Business Leadership. The Director of Smart Partnership, Lira Ralebese, is quoted as saying that there are already similar universities in Botswana and London.

Former Chief Justice Kheola Laid to Rest

Former Chief Justice **Lebona Joseph Kheola**, who had died on 30 October 2007, was laid to rest at a State Funeral in Makhoakhoeng, Butha Buthe District on Friday 16 November 2007. As reported in *Lesotho Today* of 22 November 2007 and *The Lesotho Monitor* of 28 November 2007, the

funeral was attended by the King, Prime Minister and the present Chief Justice, Mahapela Lehohla, as well as many other judges and lawyers. Chief Justice Kheola, born in Bethlehem South Africa in 1935, was a UBLS LLB graduate, and had been promoted to Chief Magistrate in 1982 and Chief Justice in 1994. He had retired in 2000 due to ill health brought on by chronic diabetes.

New Newspapers Hit the Streets of Maseru

As reported in the previous edition of *Events*, two new English language newspapers appeared in the third quarter of 2007. They were *Family Mirror* and *Weekly Mail*. Two more English-language weekly papers have now emerged to join them.

Lesotho Monitor, published and edited by a former Minister of Agriculture, Dr D. R. Phororo, revives the name of a more or less quarterly glossy magazine which he published in the period 2001-4. It is a 16-page colour-printed tabloid, first issue 13 November 2007, with thoughtful articles and rather fewer of the typographical and grammatical errors which mar the pages of most other English-language papers.

Another 16-page tabloid weekly printed in full colour is *The Voice of Free Democrats* whose first issue appeared on 5 December 2007. The newspaper has taken a long Christmas break and only two issues have appeared in 2007, each with a 6-page section in Sesotho, *Mohala oa Ntsu* ('Calling Ntsu'), as if it is a telephone message to the late BCP leader, Dr Ntsu Mokhehle. Edited by Mohapi Qacha, the paper is permeated by political nostalgia for the Basutoland Congress Party and also supports one of its successors, the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy.

World's 18th Largest Diamond Sold for US\$10.4 million

As reported in *Lesotho Today* of 22 November 2007, the 494.7 carat gem from the Letšeng satellite pipe, found on 7 September 2007, and subsequently named the **Letšeng Legacy**, was sold in Antwerp to a South African company for US\$10.4 million.

New HIV/AIDS Centre Opens at Ha Senekane on Thuathe Plateau

The **Paballong HIV/AIDS Care Centre** was officially opened at Ha Senekane on the Thuathe Plateau in Berea District on Saturday 24 November 2007. It is centred around an old sandstone house, which formerly belonged to the Surtie family of traders but was abandoned after the 'Manthabiseng' riots of 1991 had turned against traders of Indian origin and destroyed their shops (Gani Surtie had had an Indian father and Mosotho mother).

The house has been extended, refurbished and modernized using appropriate technology, with solar panels providing hot water for the bathrooms, photovoltaics providing electricity, and a biogas digester producing gas for cooking from sewage and animal waste. The new centre which has been established with donor support, particularly from the Lesotho Netherlands Foundation, offers testing, counselling and treatment for HIV/AIDS victims. It also has a number of agricultural projects generating income through a piggery, dairy cattle, poultry, beef, and rabbit projects, as well

as vegetable production.

Street Vendors Cleared from Kingsway

Police fired teargas and shots in the air in Maseru's main thoroughfare, Kingsway, on Monday 26 November 2007, as the Maseru City Council cleared away street vendors who protested against their removal. Kingsway is a choice spot for vendors, because of the large number of potential purchasers, but at the same time the vendors block the entrances to shops and occupy the pavements so that pedestrians have to walk in the road. They also leave unsightly rubbish. A press briefing was held by the Town Clerk, Lebamang Tlali, of the Maseru City Council the same day, and he pointed out that the expelled vendors were trading at unauthorised places while others did not even have trading licences. Street vendors still had to be cleared from other roads. There are apparently some 700 vacant places in town markets, but street vendors are reluctant to use them because they find few customers at these places.

The Bubble Finally Bursts: Financial Assets of Pyramid Banking Schemes Frozen

Action which many had seen as inevitable eventually occurred on Tuesday 27 November 2007. The Central Bank had already taken advertisements in newspapers warning against pyramid schemes since September. It now obtained a High Court Order as a result of which **MKM**, which began as a funeral parlour and burial society, had its assets frozen together with those of its associated financial schemes, The Bursary Scheme, The One Million Scheme, The Pension & Equity Creator Subscription Plan, The Star Lion Provider Plan and The Burial Society. The firm of accountants PricewaterhouseCoopers was employed to carry out an investigation of the amount of moneys invested held by the MKM group with the idea that those who held assets would be repaid to the extent that was possible. Similar action was taken in the High Court at the same time against the rather smaller Millenium [sic] Goal Action Society and 12 of its associates.

MKM had for some time been operating what is commonly known as a pyramid scheme. It was operating as an unlicensed financial institution, providing large annual interest rates, commonly 66% per annum, so that someone who invested M3 000 was repaid M5 000 after a year. The fact that these large amounts of interest were really being paid attracted more and more people and for a time as the scheme expanded, it apparently flourished. However, by late 2007 it was clear that something was seriously wrong. MKM could no longer pay back the loans, let alone the promised interest. Cheques were bouncing. Cash was not available. The bubble had finally burst.

News of the freezing of the assets of MKM was announced in Parliament the same day by the Minister of Finance, Timothy Thahane, who stated that he fully backed the action by the Central Bank.

Out in the streets, there was complete shock. MKM had grown very rapidly into an enormous Empire, with over 700 employees in Maseru alone. Everyone knew people who had money in MKM, and in some cases the potential losses were very great. Education seemed no bar to gullibility. One university lecturer had taken a loan from a commercial bank for M70 000 just two weeks before the collapse, using her salary as security for the loan. She had expected to make a

major profit, even allowing for the bank interest charges. Now in all probability she would lose heavily.

The **MKM Burial Society** had been profiled two years earlier in an article by Mothusi Thabane in *The Mirror* of 24 August 2005. It had been started in 1988 by a former coal miner **Simon Lebuaajoang Thebeeakhale** from the remote Qabane valley together with **Mothofoela Ramakatsa**, in a small office at Thebeeakhale's home in the Maseru suburb of Tšenola. The business was registered in 1991 as MKM which stands for *Mosebetsi, Katleho, 'Moho* (Work, Success, Together), and as it developed ever more elaborate funeral policies and loan schemes, the business expanded. The headquarters at the Industrial Area in Maseru was purchased in 1996, and by this time MKM had expanded outside Maseru, until it soon had branches in every district in Lesotho. More recently it had spread to South Africa where MKM owned two mortuaries and a farm. Already in 2005, MKM had over 100 vehicles and employed more than 600 people, whom Thebeeakhale described as being from all walks of life from university graduates to initiation school graduates and illiterates. In 2005, MKM was expanding its activities still further at Khubetsoana, north-east of Maseru by creating an MKM Memorial Park to include cemeteries, a crematorium and a chapel. At the time of MKM's collapse, this development had not been completed. There were however, several new buildings in Maseru, including a nearly completed six-storey Star Lion Insurance Building, and MKM was also believed to own the former Lesotho Agricultural Development Bank/Woolworths Building (the only one in Lesotho with escalators) opposite Queen Elizabeth II Hospital.

On Thursday 6 December 2007, the Prime Minister, Pakalitha Mosisili, spoke about the MKM saga. He gave examples of the MKM pyramid schemes which ultimately were bound to fail. MKM had no investments except a handful of buildings and there was no proper record keeping for the various schemes so that if customers lost their own documents with evidence of investment, their entire fortune would be lost with no recourse for compensation. The company was keeping hordes of cash on its premises, presenting a risk if it was struck by fire or thieves. It was even more risky because the company was not insured. The company was operating an informal bank without being licensed for such activities. Its insurance business also did not meet the principal conditions for a licence. The Central Bank was therefore perfectly entitled to intervene, indeed had a responsibility to do so because it had a mandate to license and supervise all financial institutions in the country.

Roof of Africa Rally Brings Motorcyclists to Maseru

The **Roof of Africa Rally** began as a car race in 1969, incorporated motorcycles from 1969, and quad bikes from 1990, but is today purely for motorcycles. It was held this year from Thursday 29 November to Saturday 1 December 2007. On the first day, the traditional Round the Houses race was held in Maseru, something which nowadays seriously dislocates traffic. One of the rounds, as reported by Caswell Tlali in *Family Mirror* of 4 December 2007 was won by a Lesotho citizen, 17-year old **Carsley Vencatasamy**, who is a pupil at Machabeng College. Carsley's father is a naturalised Mosotho businessman of Indonesian origin and his mother is a Lesotho-born Mosotho.

Parliament Adjourns *Sine Die* but with Considerable Outstanding Business

The National Assembly in October 2007 devoted a number of sittings to the *Environment Bill 2007*, which passed its Third Reading on 25 October 2007, but still has to go to the Upper House (Senate). Subsequent sittings were used to debate the rather curiously named *Drugs of Abuse Bill 2007* (should it not have been the Control of Abused Drugs Bill?), which passed its Third Reading on 7 November 2007. Following that the *Aviation Bill 2007* passed its Third Reading on 13 November 2007, and on 29 November the National Assembly passed amendments which had been made by Senate to the *Money Laundering & Proceeds of Crime Bill 2007* which then became ready for Royal Assent.

On 14 November 2007, some 9 months after the General Election (an unexplained delay), three important committees were announced, the membership being chosen by the Business Committee of the National Assembly. The 17 member **Public Accounts Committee** will have some three years of audited government accounts waiting for its scrutiny when it finally meets in February. At that point it will have to choose its Chairman who is traditionally a member of the opposition. Several opposition leaders have been appointed to the Committee including Tom Thabane of the All Basotho Convention, Metsing Lekhanya of the Basotho National Party, Kelebone Maope of the Alliance of Congress Parties, and Vincent Malebo of the Marematlou Freedom Party. Significantly, Dominic Motikoe, leader of the Parliamentary National Independent Party is not amongst those nominated. Membership was also announced at the same time of the 15-member **HIV and AIDS Committee** and the 15-member **Privileges Committee**, which does include Dominic Motikoe.

On 27 November 2007, following recommendations from the Parliamentary Reforms Committee, chaired by the Patriotic Front for Democracy MP, Lekhetho Rakuoane, the National Assembly adopted new Standing Orders. The weekday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. sittings are now modified, except on Fridays, to run from 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. This releases the morning hours for meetings of the five newly constituted portfolio committees. The names and chairpersons of these committees can be found in the National Assembly *Hansard* of 27 September 2007. The Social Cluster is chaired by Tahleho Mabetha (NIP); the Economic Cluster by Sekoala Toloane (BCP); the Natural Resources Cluster by Kimetso Mathaba (NIP); the Law Cluster by Ms Rethabile Marumo (LCD); and the Prime Minister's Cluster by Hlonepho Ntšekhe.

The Standing Orders have a procedure for suspending some of their sections, and on 30 November this was necessary so that the *Millennium Challenge Account - Lesotho Authority Bill 2007* could pass through all its readings on that day. The National Assembly was then adjourned *sine die*, i.e. without its date of resumption fixed, although according to the adopted Parliamentary Calendar this will be some time in early February.

The Bill passed by the Lower House on Friday 30 November had also to be passed by the Upper House, so Senate found itself sitting a week later than the National Assembly before adjourning *sine die* on Thursday 6 December 2007.

Death of Prof. F. Z. A. Matšela, Educationist & Co-Founder of the Sesotho Language Academy

The death occurred in the National Hospital in Bloemfontein on the afternoon of Monday 3 December of **Fusi Zakaria**



Aunyane Matšela. A life-long educationist, Professor Matšela had been during his distinguished career co-founder of the Sesotho Language Academy, Director of the National Teacher Training College, Permanent Secretary for Education, Professor at the National University of Lesotho, and most recently Senator in the Parliament of Lesotho.

Fusi Matšela, known also to many as Aunyane, was born on 16 January 1935 at the remote village of Letsatseng Ha Mapola, also known as Makoabating, on the west side of the Senqu opposite Sehonghong in what was at the time of his birth Qacha's Nek District, but is today Thaba-Tseka District. His parents were Toko Alexis and 'Mafusi Alice Matšela, and he was a Mohlakoana oa Ha Napo by clan. (Clans are an important part of Sesotho tradition and Matšela was later to co-author (1988) with Maboe Moletsane 'Mantlatilane, a book of clan praises, *lithello* or *lireneketsotse seboko*, each illustrated with a picture of the clan emblem. This book is now an established primary school textbook.)

Fusi Matšela was a herd boy, tending his parents' animals until the age of 11, while his father was away as a soldier with the African Pioneer Corps in North Africa. When there was finally a younger brother able to take over this work he was able to go to school. He first attended the local Letsatseng French Protestant Primary School, but later walked daily to the more distant Catholic Primary School at Liqonong Ha Ramaomane. He progressed via intermediate school (as higher primary schools were called before 1956) at Paray Mission, Thaba-Tseka, and then to secondary school at Eagle's Peak near Qacha's Nek. He next went to Roma College, where he qualified as a primary school teacher in 1957.

He went back to the Maloti, and taught at Paray Mission, Thaba-Tseka in the years 1958-9. He married Regina Khasoane of Lesobeng Ha Khupiso on 1 July 1959, the wedding taking place at the nearby Montmartre Mission, often considered the most remote of all the Catholic missions in Lesotho. After his marriage both he and his wife (now 'Manapo Matšela) taught at the primary school at Auray Mission from 1960 to 1963, where he was also the headmaster. In the meantime, he was studying for his matriculation certificate by correspondence which he duly passed.

His potential was recognized by his being given the opportunity to undertake a Diploma in Agriculture at McGill University in Montréal in Canada, and when he graduated in 1965 he received a special award for being the most outstanding student in Horticulture and Pomology [the cultivation of fruit].

On his return, Fusi Matšela was appointed Inspector of Schools in Qacha's Nek District, and he made use of his recent training to produce a school text on *Primary agriculture*, published in 1967. In Qacha's Nek, he worked from a two-roomed miniature white-washed Education Office situated on the left of the road to the airstrip, and he has left a thinly disguised autobiographical account of his work in an article, 'Some experiences of Mr Limpho, a Maluti school inspector', published in *The Education of Teachers in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland*, no. 7 (March 1969):

The fifty-odd mile road in the district helps him reach only about 25 of his 140 plus schools. He could get to all the other schools only on horseback and to less than a dozen of them by air, and air trips had never been comfortable to him ... He could well remember three such air-trips which had nearly cost him his life when the pilot force-landed with great difficulty.... He could not forget ... when ... he had been locked up for days between flooded rivers, or snowed out several-score miles away from his base camp... Because he had only one mule to carry his tent, utensils etc., he sometimes ran short of good food.

Most of the teachers he visited were well-meaning people, but many of them were ill-qualified or still clung to the old-fashioned lecture-and-rod methods of getting their lessons across, with their eager-faced and rather unhappy pupils forced to rote learn their work.... In many cases teaching aids were not

available and hardly ever used. The classrooms reflected the very harsh and stern atmosphere ... with blank walls hungry for another white washing and interwoven with spider-webs [and] looked quite dreary places indeed. But what worried Mr Limpho most were those poor children who were being forced to memorise dead facts and hardly ever given the opportunity to think, make their own decisions and act as they thought best under their teachers' guidance (and not goading), children who liked their work – work which inspired them to more and more systematic thinking and which encouraged discovery by the children themselves where possible. He gave advice and guidance at all the schools he visited and in some cases even demonstration lessons.

[The account goes on to tell of Mr Limpho's plans to upgrade the teaching through refresher courses at centrally situated schools and to involve all local secondary teachers, the local training college, school managers and parents in an effort to improve the situation. Although the situation has improved in the subsequent 40 years, there are still many schools in Qacha's Nek District which cannot be reached by road and have unqualified teachers. However, it is unusual today to find an Education Officer (as inspectors are now called) willing to go on trek visiting primary schools by horseback.]

In the meantime, Ntate Matšela was again taking correspondence courses, this time with the University of South Africa which resulted in his acquiring a BA degree in 1971 (with majors in Education and Southern Sotho), and a Higher Education Diploma in 1975. In between he had the opportunity in 1973 to attend a course on Adult Education in Developing Countries at the University of Edinburgh.

By this time he had been assigned to the Ministry of Education headquarters as Sesotho Inspector, and the creation of the Sesotho Language Academy in 1973 was very much the result of his hard work and initiative. The Academy had its origins in a first meeting held at the Lerotholi Technical Institute on 9 June 1972, when a committee was set up under the chairmanship of the Senior Education Officer, I. L. Monese, with F. Z. A. Matšela as secretary. Arising from this meeting, a committee to draft a constitution for the proposed Academy was chosen, and at a further meeting on 7-8 September 1972, an Executive Committee was chosen with the late Professor J. M. Mohapeloa as chairman and F. Z. A. Matšela as secretary. Even ahead of its inaugural meeting, the Academy was hard at work with five subcommittees each charged with a separate responsibility such as *Boqapi ba Mantsoe le Kaloso ea Puo* (no English translations were provided, but one could translate this as 'Lexical Accessions and Correct Speech').

The inaugural meeting was held at the Lerotholi Technical Institute on 8-9 September 1973, and as its report shows, the largest number of papers was given by F. Z. A. Matšela himself. His four papers included pleas for preserving the purity of Sesotho avoiding colloquialisms, and he also spoke about funeral customs, traditional poetry and word games suitable for primary schools. It appears that one of the delegates, Thabo Pitso, committed something of a solecism by presenting his paper *in English* on 'Problems of orthography in the teaching of African languages'. It was the longest paper, but Matšela insisted that the Proceedings of the Inaugural Meeting had to be in Sesotho, so he translated it into Sesotho himself. Nevertheless, rather curiously, the Proceedings did include one English item and that was the Constitution of the Sesotho Language Academy itself! The preamble to this Constitution expressed strong feelings about Sesotho. '... we are sad and disturbed to notice that it will not be long before the kind of Sesotho handed down by our ancestors disappears Present day Sesotho is not Sesotho. It is a confused mixture of ideas and words from foreign languages which sully the beautiful Sesotho for which the Basotho were renowned Lesotho is now at the mercy of other countries, such as the Republic of South Africa which produces books written in its orthography, which are insidiously introducing the incorrect Sesotho spoken in that country'

Orthography did indeed play a considerable part in the deliberations of the Academy. The Academy, despite the preamble to its own Constitution, did eventually come out in favour of

orthographic reform and advocated that Lesotho should adopt an orthography for Sesotho which would have brought it in line with that of South Africa. This was expressed in a 25 January 1980 letter from Matšela, then General Secretary of the Academy, to the Minister of Culture. However, Lesotho lacked a mechanism similar to that of the authoritarian diktats of the apartheid regime. There it was made mandatory in 1960 to adopt the new orthography, with penalties for schools and publishers who did not conform. In Lesotho, the old orthography survived.

Meanwhile, as part of his work with the Academy, Matšela produced a string of publications, singly or co-authored, on Sesotho grammar and correct speech. He also produced a number of books of Sesotho poetry, and eventually books on Sesotho games, praise poetry and also a book (1997) of short stories, *Mahakwe a tsela* (Gems of the pathway) which, significantly, was published in South African orthography. The survival of the Language Academy owed a great deal to Aunyane Matšela. He was still its General Secretary at the time of his death, more than a quarter of a century after the first meetings which led to the formation of the Academy.

With experience of primary school teaching and administration as well as working as a primary school inspector, Aunyane Matšela was an obvious choice for a senior position when the National Teacher Training College was finally opened in 1975. Indeed, he was one of the very few staff ever recruited to NTTC who had had primary school teaching experience. The first Director of NTTC was Dwight Allen, from the USA, and Matšela became counterpart Director, with the expectation that he would succeed him. In the manner of United States academia, a doctorate was a *sine qua non* for such an appointment, and so arrangements were made for Matšela to be admitted to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to obtain a Master's degree and doctorate. His doctoral thesis was on Basotho initiation schools, hardly a topic on which the members of his US thesis committee could have been knowledgeable! On his return in 1979, however, Dr Matšela, did not become Director of NTTC. He was instead appointed Principal Secretary for Education and eventually in 1982 he joined the National University of Lesotho as Senior Lecturer in Language and Social Education.

At the National University of Lesotho he became Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Education in 1985, and was promoted to full Professor in 1990. He served on many committees and at times was Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor. For many years he also served as Chairman of the Examinations Council of Lesotho. He retired from the University at the age of 65 in 2000, but subsequently remained involved in multifarious educational and community service activities.

Professor Matšela's association with Roma began rather earlier than his university appointment. He and his wife obtained a site in Roma in 1969, a convenient location for making use of the nearby campus library facilities. His family occupied what became the first house in the village across the donga immediately west of the NUL campus, and it was Ntate Matšela who gave the village the name Thoteng ('on the flat ground'). The village is today, however, often known as Thoteng Ha Sekautu, a name derived from John G. Scout, also a former Education Inspector, originally from Quthing District. Scout was actually the fourth person to obtain a site and to build there. He spent much of his retirement drinking in surrounding villages and so became better known amongst the local villagers who play a significant role in naming new villages. When minibus taxi services began to serve Roma a few years' later, Scout's house was close to the bus stop for Thoteng, and this bus stop also acquired the name Ha Sekautu.

Professor Matšela became an important member of the Roma Parish, and was a frequent attender and speaker at the Catholic Church, as well as an active participant in two of its choirs.

His last major responsibility was to be one of the eleven appointed Senators, following the election in February 2007. He was chosen as a member of a three-person Parliamentary Delegation to India in October 2007.

Professor Matšela enjoyed generally good health, although he suffered from leucoderma, a condition which over the years led to the progressive whitening of his skin so that he had to protect his head and arms from the sun. Illness struck him relatively quickly after his return from India. It took some time before it was diagnosed as a rapidly developing form of leukemia, from which he died after a month spent mainly in hospitals in Bloemfontein.

His wife, 'Manapo, who survives him, was an experienced primary school teacher, and established the Khobeng Lower Primary School in the Roma valley, better known as Makoeteng Primary School. It acquired this name when it moved to its present lower site, where its first building, as its name indicates, was built of mud bricks. She also furthered her studies and obtained a Bachelor of Commerce degree. The Matšelas had nine children, two of whom died in infancy, while the eldest son, Napo and his wife both predeceased Professor Matšela. Of the surviving three sons and three daughters, three have followed their parents into the education profession, their daughter Lineo as an Assistant Librarian at the National University of Lesotho, their son Simon as Headmaster of Motsekuoa High School, and another son Thabang as a Lecturer at the Lesotho College of Education. There are 13 grandchildren. The large Matšela house at Thoteng houses some of these grandchildren who are orphans and also orphaned nieces and nephews, so that it seems never to have been a place without children of school age.

Professor Matšela's funeral in the Pro-Cathedral at Roma on Friday 15 December was conducted by Archbishop Bernard Mohlalisi, and was attended by some 2 000 people including many members of his large extended family and many former colleagues and associates. So many people wanted to speak of his activities in different fields that to keep the speeches following the religious service to a reasonable length, the Minister of Education, Dr 'Mamphono Khaketla, summarized his work in the educational field on behalf of the many educational institutions and other educational organizations in which he played a prominent role. Nevertheless more than 20 people spoke, beginning with the *Mooki* who traditionally explains the cause of death, and ending with the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, Pakalitha Mosisili, and His Majesty King Letsie III. A striking part of the service was the performance of the more than 150 strong Choir of the *Kopano ea Pelo e Atorehang* which occupied and indeed overspilled the south transept. Professor Matšela himself had played a part in the transformation of this choir so that its lively performance contained traditional elements including bells and rattles, but most strikingly matching white fly whisks raised flamboyantly by the male members of the choir in time with the music. The male members of the choir wore scarlet ties and dark suits, across which were scarlet gold-bordered sashes. The women of the choir wore dark blue scapulars with scarlet ribbons extending from the collar in the front to trail over the back to clasps which directed the ribbons to create a Y-shape scarlet design over the contrasting scapular. When in full voice, as it was at short intervals throughout the service, the choir swayed in unison, joined by much of the congregation including some of the concelebrating priests. Overall, the funeral service and speeches in the church occupied 6 hours, and were followed by interment in the Roma cemetery, and refreshments provided at the Matšela house at Thoteng.

Indefinite Stayaway Called for Tuesday 11 December Fizzles Out

The frustration of political parties who consider that the proportional representation procedure following the February General Election was unfair has resulted in months of fruitless talks with the

Government. Direct action took place on Tuesday 11 December, when an indefinite stayaway was called. On the first day, the stayaway was generally heeded in Maseru and a few places elsewhere such as Roma, where students did not write examinations scheduled for the day. On the Wednesday morning, the tide turned as a few minibus taxis ventured out onto the streets and were heavily patronised. The trickle turned into a flood, and by late Wednesday life was back to normal.

2007 Primary School Leaving Examination Results Published

There was considerable excitement amongst pupils and their parents on Thursday 6 December 2007, when the **Primary School Leaving Examination Pass List** was published by the Examinations Council of Lesotho. Altogether 42 512 candidates from 1292 primary schools sat the examination, a drop of 4% from the previous year's record total of 44 316 candidates. However, the previous year had been the first in which pupils benefiting from free primary education had completed the seven year course, and this had led to a bulge because parents had kept some pupils back a year or more in order that they could avoid having to pay school fees. A drop in enrolment for the examination was therefore not unexpected, even allowing for the fact that significant numbers of pupils who had failed the previous year were taking the examination for the second time. 83.1% of candidates passed the examination, compared with 85.8% the previous year. Of the total candidates in 2007, 14.1% passed in the First Class, 23.6% in Second Class and 45.4% in Third Class.

Some schools achieved outstanding results, including the consistently high performing Leribe English Medium School which entered 53 candidates. 48 of these achieved First Class passes, and the remaining 5 achieved Second Class passes. Two other high performing schools were also in Leribe District, Mafube English Medium School with 46 First Class passes and 1 Third Class pass, while the rather smaller Joy to the World School achieved 10 First Class passes and 1 Second Class pass. However, these schools had a surprising competitor. A very remote school in Maseru's Hoek District, Tlaling Anglican Primary School had all of its candidates, 21 in all, obtaining First Class passes, the only school in Lesotho with such a record. This school clearly needs a visit from the Ministry to see how it managed to achieve such a wonderful result.

At the other end of the scale there were a number of schools where no pupil achieved better than a Third Class. At the poorest schools, not a single pupil passed. Four such schools were Bokong Litsebe LEC Primary School in the upper Maseru Catchment, Linaka LEC Primary School near Linakaneng on the borders of Thaba-Tseka and Mokhotlong Districts, Kokobe LEC Primary School near to Moyeni in Quthing District and Linareng RC Primary School high up in the Moremoholo valley in Mokhotlong District. All four are small schools, and three are in very remote areas, two of them inaccessible even by 4 x 4 vehicles. These schools obviously also need to be visited to find out their problems, but one could perhaps predict in advance that they will be schools without qualified teachers. Such is the shortage of primary schools that in mountain areas particularly, more than half the teachers in many schools are unqualified, and some are so unqualified that they do not even have the minimum qualifications to enter teacher training.

The overall best candidate in the country was announced as Libokanyo Jafeta of the Muslim Soofia English Medium Primary School in Butha-Buthe.

School sizes vary enormously. The largest schools in the country have more than 2 000 pupils and enter more than 200 pupils annually for the Primary School Leaving Examination. The school listed with the largest number of candidates is the 'Juvenile Primary School' in Maseru. However, this seems to be the Juvenile Training Centre School for young offenders at which other inmates of the Correctional Services Institutions could also write the examination. 283 inmates entered the

examination with a respectable 87.5% pass rate, above the national average. There were also eight conventional schools which had over 200 candidates, the largest being Sion RC Primary School at Mapoteng in Berea District with 245 candidates of whom 21 obtained First Class passes. The best performing large primary school was Lithabaneng LEC Primary School with 203 candidates of whom 92 obtained First Class passes. At the other end of the league of large schools, was Roma RC Primary School with 212 candidates and only 6 First Class passes.

Contrasting with the large schools are the very small schools, mostly situated in very remote areas, and indeed there are still some 200 schools in Lesotho which cannot be reached even by a 4 x 4 vehicle. The total number of schools which entered 10 or less candidates for the Primary School Leaving Examination was 177, some 13.7 % of the total numbers of schools. In the past, many were one teacher schools, but it has been Ministry policy to ensure that each school now has at least two teachers, although they will not necessarily be qualified teachers. There are seven primary classes or standards, and for two teachers to manage at least three classes each is quite a feat of school management.

There is little chance of amalgamating these small schools into larger schools because 97% of children in Lesotho walk to school, and in remote areas there has to be a school within walking distance. A recent study showed that while the average walking time to school was 26.5 minutes, 8% took more than an hour and some 3%, mainly in the Maloti, had to walk for more than two hours. As a result of the difficulty of getting to school, some 6 and 7 year olds are not at school despite the advent of free primary education. Others, particularly boys, still delay to go to school for several years, because of traditional herding duties, although this has diminished in recent years because of armed stock theft, which requires adult men to act as herders. Men are now more available as herdsmen because of the absence of opportunities to work in the mines.

House 9 Publications Reproduces *Naledi* Newspaper

The first independent newspaper in Lesotho, *Naledi ea Lesotho*, appeared in 1904, but until recently little was known about it because despite a publication history which lasted from 1904 to 1937, there were only 21 surviving copies. These were all that remained even though it had been fortnightly for its first six years of existence followed by weekly issues for a further 17 years.

Most of the known extant copies of *Naledi* were in the Morija Museum & Archives, but in December 2004, David Ambrose and Mamhlongo Maphisa happened to find in the floor well of a house in Maseru West, under splintered and collapsed floorboards, a roll of 115 copies of the newspaper. The house, which at the time was open and used by children as a playground, had earlier been used as temporary storage for the Lesotho National Archives.

When the newspapers were unrolled, fragments of the fragile paper scattered onto the table like confetti, and much restoration work had to be done.

The newspapers have now been carefully restored, photographically reduced (three years spare time



work by Mamhlongo Maphisa) and produced by House 9 Publications at the National University of Lesotho in a very limited (and expensive) bound edition for libraries at A3 size. The final size of reproduction is a compromise which enables the newspapers still to be read, but which is considerably smaller than the original papers which ranged from a size larger than tabloid to broadsheet. An introduction has been written by David Ambrose from which a few of the following notes are taken. References to the sources of information are given in the introduction in the bound volume.

In the summer of 1902, three men were lying on the grass outside the house of Mr Sofonea Tlale in Mafeteng. They were James R. Makepe, Solomon Monne and Abimael S. Tlale, and they were reading the *Cape Times*. It was apparently James Makepe who came up with the idea that Lesotho should have its own newspaper of the kind already being published by John Tengo Jabavu with the title *Imvo Zabantsundu*. It had been published partly in Xhosa and partly in English since 1883.

Makepe's comment was apparently the stimulus which eventually gave birth to *Naledi ea Lesotho: Basutoland Star* in 1904. The opportunity arose when the Morija Printing Works installed new machinery and was prepared to sell its old printing plant. It seems that Sofonea Tlale, the father of Abimael was a sponsor of the project. He was one of the *Maroellane*, the first Basotho to have learned to read and to write at the Beersheba Mission schools run by Elizabeth Rolland, and he clearly valued his education. In a photograph published much later he is seen with a copy of *Naledi* from 1904 in his breast pocket. The Printing Works of *Naledi* were situated in Mafeteng near to his house and just west of the present post office.

James Makepe became the first editor, but it seems that the three men who thought up the idea of the newspaper were all partners in Solomon Monne & Co., the proprietors. Some had reason for anonymity. Abimael Tlale, for example, was at the time the senior government interpreter, and could not openly declare his connection with the newspaper until he retired from government service in 1908.

In early 1906, *Naledi* gained an editor of considerable background and experience, Simon Phamotse, and he was instrumental with others in forming the Basutoland Progressive Association in 1907, and for much of its life, *Naledi* became the mouthpiece of this educated elite group. Nevertheless, when Josiel Lefela founded the first political party, the Lekhotla la Bafo or Commoners' League at Mapoteng in 1919, he was given the freedom to publish in *Naledi* polemical diatribes against the colonial administration. For a while the editor, by this time Edwin Tlale, son of Abimael, was in deep trouble with the Resident Commissioner, Sir Edward Garraway. However, he defended his freedom to publish, although in time there were editorials indicating that the newspaper could not espouse the policies of the Lekhotla la Bafo.

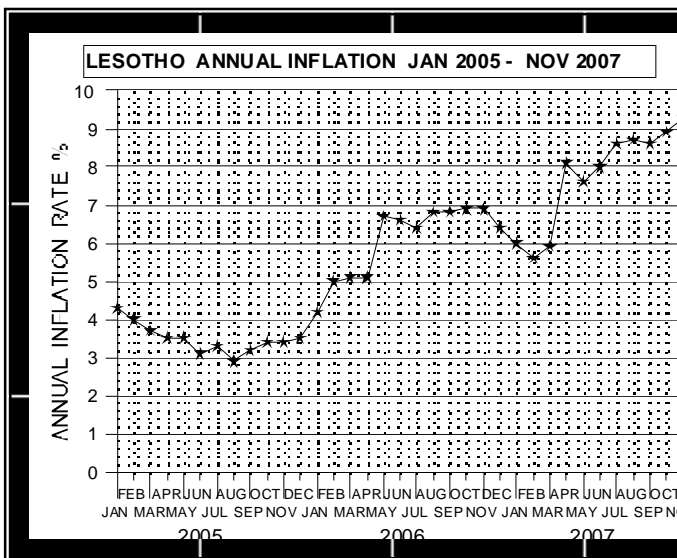
The newly available copies cover parts of the years 1924, 1925, 1926 and 1929, and they provide an interesting glimpse of life in Lesotho at that time. The Tlales played cricket and three Tlale brothers were in the Basutoland Cricket Club team which soundly beat the Orange Free State in 1929. Football, tennis and horse racing get much less coverage. Much South African news is covered, and in particular developments affecting race relations such as the Colour Bar Bill which was before the South African House of Assembly in 1925. Even the advertisements tell a story. For a while, Thomas Mofolo the novelist (*Chaka* had been praised in an editorial in 1926) was advertising his store at Bokong. He was one of the first two Basotho to be granted trading licences, but had been told that he must site his store so as not to compete with existing white traders. His solution was to site it at Bokong, near the present Katse Dam, then one of the remotest places in Lesotho, where goods could only be delivered from the nearest roadhead by donkey after several

days journey. By way of contrast, and aimed at the readers of the English language sections of the paper, there was an advertisement from the 'Periodical Posting Co.' in Plymouth, England, which could supply 'News from the Old Country' through magazine subscriptions.

What finally happened to *Naledi* and what was its legacy? The introduction to the newly available bound volumes (which are very bulky) attempts to answer this, and traces some of the later history of the independent press.

Inflation Climbs to 9.3%, Highest since January 2003

Inflation rose significantly in October and November 2007, reaching 9.3%, the highest since January 2003. A main factor in the increasing inflation rate was food prices and in particular the price of maize which remained more than 50% higher than a year earlier. Rising fuel prices did not play a large role during the period but threaten to impact on December and January annual inflation rates. Petrol had actually been reduced from M6.80 to M6.60 a litre on 14 September 2007, but thereafter rose to M6.70 on 12 October, and M7.05 on 14 December a 5.2% rise, although the rise in paraffin prices from M5.05 to M5.70 per litre (a 12.9% rise) in the same period would have had a severe impact on a larger number of people. The year on year (20 December 2006 to 20 December 2007) rises in petrol and paraffin have been respectively 24.8% (M5.65 to M7.05 per litre) and 34.1% (M4.25 to M5.70 per litre). With oil prices (Brent crude) rising to hover around \$100 a barrel at the end of the year, further major petrol and paraffin price rises seemed inevitable.



Meanwhile in South Africa, the inflation rate, as measured by the closest comparable index, the CPIX, has also been rising. From 6.3% in August 2007, it reached 6.7% in September, 7.3% in October and 7.9% in November, well above the South African Reserve Bank's targeted 3% to 6% band, but significantly lower than the Lesotho inflation rate. Maize meal is weighted much less in the computation of the CPIX.

Christmas Holidays Marred by Accidents

The Christmas holiday season was marred by many road accidents, two of which led to multiple deaths and injuries. Newspapers take a two week holiday at this time, and *Summary of Events* is grateful to Lesoetsa Makafane for passing on the following details obtained from Police Headquarters.

At 11.30 a.m. on Monday 24 December between Nyakosoba and Ngope-Tšoeu in Maseru District, a Leribe-registered bus C1195, carrying migrant workers and others returning for Christmas in Semonkong, left the winding road through the Makhalaneng valley. The driver Hopolang Nyaphe (26) was apparently unfamiliar with the road, lost control and the bus overturned. Ambulances were called from Maseru and elsewhere. One person died on the spot, one in hospital and 32 were seriously injured.

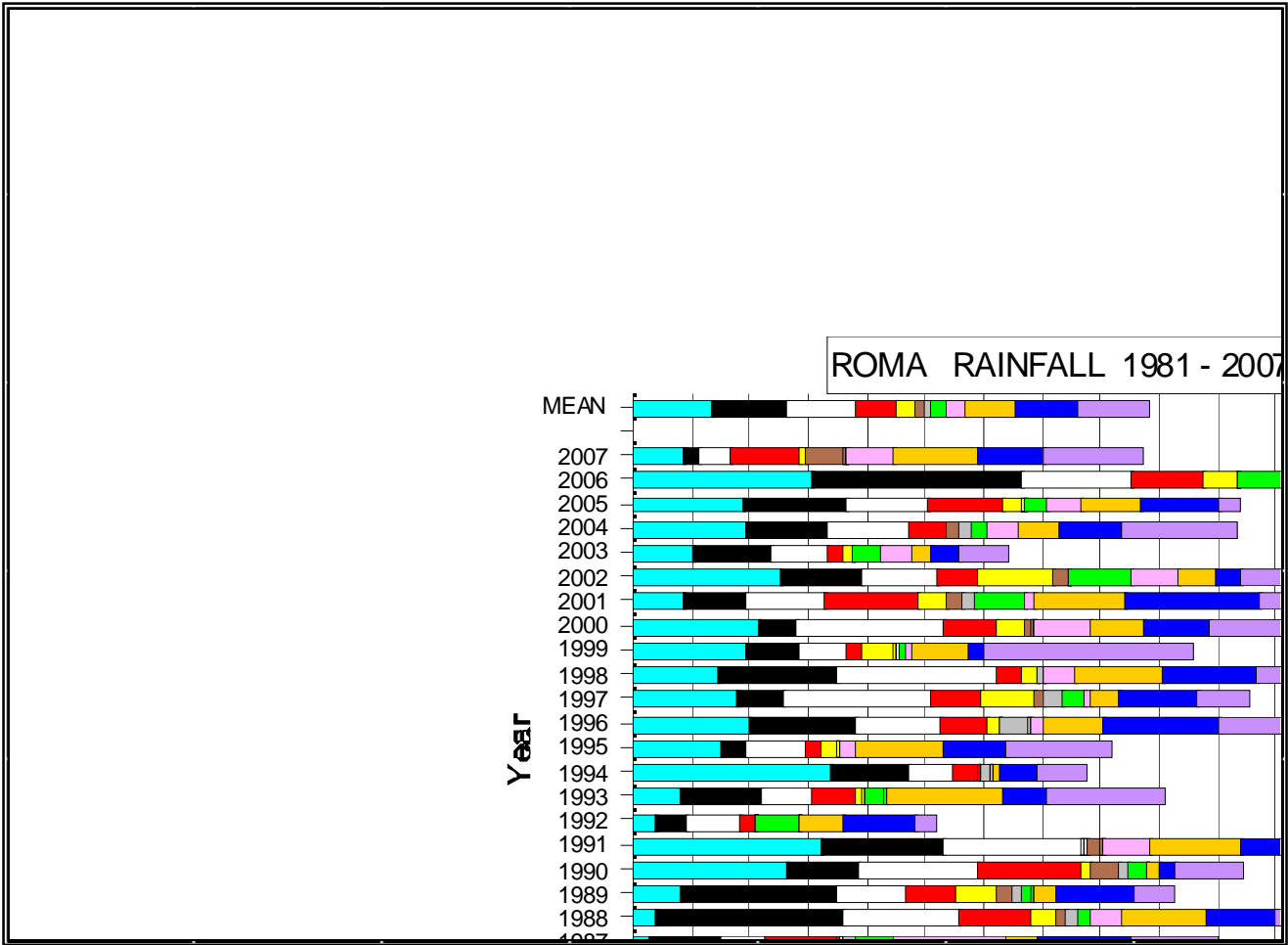
On Wednesday 26 December, a lorry carrying people returning from a Christmas soccer festival near Ha Seshote, left the road between Ha Theko and Khohlo-Ntšo near Katse Dam in Thaba-Tseka District. The passengers were thrown out as the lorry rolled on top of them. 19 passengers died on the spot and many others were admitted to 'Mamohau and Motebang Hospitals, where 6 died from their injuries.

Consultations in Clinics to be Free from 1 January 2008

As reported in *Lentsoe la Basotho* of 20 December 2007, the Minister of Health & Social Welfare, Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng has announced that consultations in clinics will be free with effect from 1 January 2008. This applies both to Government clinics and to those run by mission hospitals.

However, as is well known and as is also documented by questions in Parliament about queues at clinics, and patients not being served after waiting all day, clinics are far from adequate, and indeed several clinics have been closed for years because of the impossibility of finding nurses to staff them.

To try to alleviate the problem (which ought to have been solved years ago by proper manpower planning), it was announced in December that Government has recruited 75 nurses from Kenya on three year contracts and they were expected to begin work in January 2008. These nurses will need interpreters, and it is not quite clear what provision is being made in this regard.



Dry Start and Wet Finish Combine to Make Overall Average Rainfall for 2007 Calendar Year

Unlike 2006, which set a record for a calendar year’s rainfall at Roma, the 2007 total rainfall at 869 mm was overall close to the average of 879 mm. However this total masks major contrasts between the beginning and end of the year. The January to March total was the lowest since 1965 and the 27 mm which fell in February was the lowest for that month in 72 years of records. However, by way of contrast, at the end of the year there were four consecutive months all with well above average rainfall. Two other months with above average rainfall were April with 122 mm, more than any of the months January to March; and June with 64 mm, the second wettest June in the 72 years of records. June is a month when zero rainfall is often recorded. Overall there were six months wetter and six months drier than average.

Is global warming making Lesotho wetter? The chart above might provide some clues. Certainly 8 out of the past 10 years have been wetter than average, pushing up the mean rainfall from 849 mm ten years ago to 879 mm, which incorporates last year’s record breaking rainfall. Back in 1987 the mean was only 828 mm; in 1977, 824 mm; in 1967, 816 mm; and in 1957, 815 mm. Draw your own conclusions!

At the end of the year after four wet months, the Katse Reservoir was 99% full and likely to overflow if any significant major storm occurred in the catchment. However, the Mphahle Reservoir

