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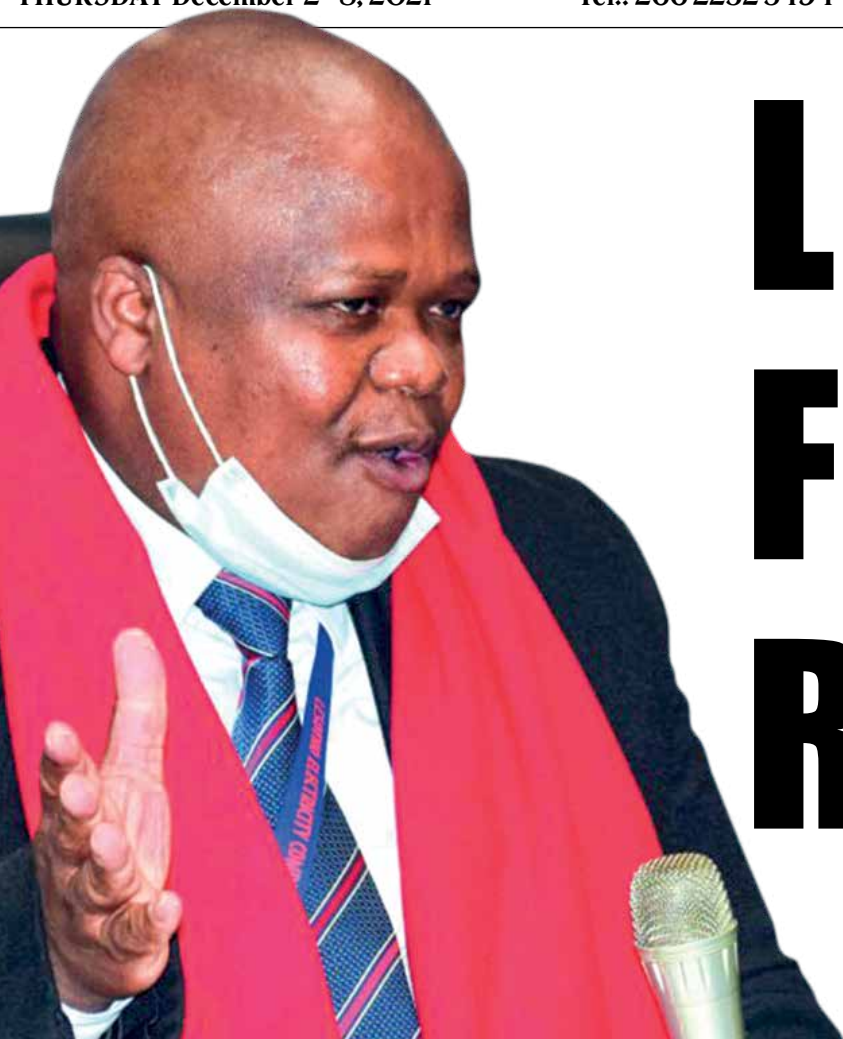
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LEC IN MEDIA FOR WRONG REASONS 3

...as utility outfit signs solar energy deal with Norwegian company

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- NACOSEC to set up vaccination stations at border posts
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BORN ON THIS DAY

December 02

- 1946** - Gianni Versace, Fashion Designer born in Italy and died July 15, 1997
- 1958** - Neelima Azeem, Actress born in New Delhi
- 1960** - Calvin Phillips, Football player born in Leeds, England
- 1996** - Donald De La Haye, YouTuber born in Limon, Costa Rica
- 1998** - Anna Kalinskaya, Tennis player born in Moscow, Russia
- 1989** - Soniya Mehra, Actress born in Bombay, Maharashtra, India
- 1960** - Suborna Mustafa, Actress born in Jhalokati District, Bangladesh
- 2003** - Evie Clair, Musical Artist born in Florence, Arizona
- 1998** - Amber Montana, Actress born in Tampa, Florida, United States
- 1981** - Britney Spears, Singer-Songwriter born in McComb, Mississippi, United States

Quotes & Quips!

“Your presence in your respective villages has eased LDF’s task because you uphold the image and reputation of the army as well as the duties it performs, hence the low level of crime in some areas where retired soldiers like yourselves reside,”

says LDF Commander, Lieutenant General Mojalefa Letsaela, during the Veterans Day, lauding retired army officers who help quell crime in their respective neighbourhoods across the country.

NewsBriefs

Thabane, 'Maesaiah to finally stand trial next year

MASERU – Former Prime Minister Motsoahae Thabane who faces murder charges of his estranged wife Lipolelo will finally stand trial when Justice Molefi Makara hears his case in the High Court on March 10, next year.

Thabane is charged along with his current wife, 'Maesaiah together with Rethabile 'Chakela' Mokete, Seabata Lieta, Macheli Koeshe and Molefi 'Matima' Mokatja.

Chakela, a famous famo musician and leader of the notorious famo gang, Terene has since died from COVID-19 complications.

Lipolelo was gunned down at her Ha Masana residence on the outskirts of Maseru on the night of June 14, 2017, just a few days before her husband's inauguration.

The accused also face attempted murder charges of Lipolelo's friend, Thato Sibolla who was travelling with her on the fateful night.

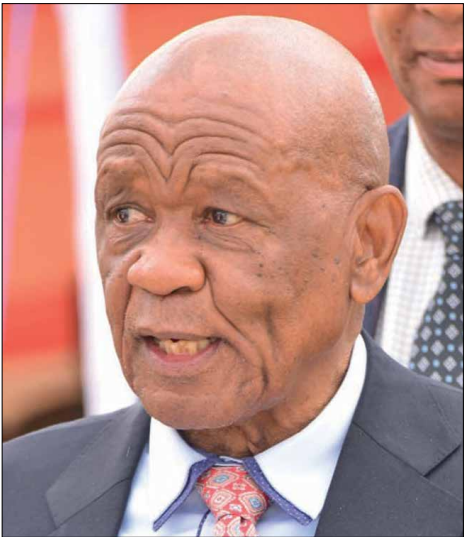
Sibolla who has since turned state witness sustained serious gunshot wounds during the attack.

The accused are further alleged to have damaged Lipolelo's vehicle by peppering it with bullets during the incident.

The Thabanes on Tuesday this week made a brief appearance in the High Court where a pre-trial conference was held by Assistant Registrar of the High Court, Advocate Tebello Mokhoema in respect of their long awaited case.

The interview was conducted in the presence of the media, legal representatives of the accused and the accused's families.

A charge sheet prepared by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) was read during the interview before



Former Prime Minister Motsoahae Thabane

their personal details were taken.

When Thabane was initially charged, the Maseru Magistrate's Court asked the Constitutional Court whether or not it was appropriate for a sitting prime minister to be criminally charged.

This, after the defence had moved an application for the referral as the prosecution was not yet ready to remand the suspect who was still in office.

'Maesaiah was first remanded in the Maseru Magistrate's Court on February 5, 2020 and was released on bail later that by the High Court. LeNA/Metro

Accused soldiers plead not guilty to Mafeteng killings

...as a new judge takes over the case after Motswana judge resigned

MASERU – Five members of the Lesotho Defense Force (LDF) who are charged with the 2012 murder of three Mafeteng men on Monday pleaded not guilty to the killings.

Captain Litekanyo Nyakane along with Khauhelo Makoa, Sebilo Sebilo, Tšepo Tlhakeli and Thebe Tšepe told High Court judge, Justice Polo Banyane that they had nothing to do with the fatal shooting of Thabang Mosole.

Monyane Matsie and Pakiso 'Ntala' Letatabe.

Justice Banyane took over the case after her predecessor, Justice Onkemetse Tshosa from Botswana resigned as the presiding judge.

Mosole, Matsie and Letatabe were allegedly shot dead during an incident that occurred on April 7, 2012 in Ha Motanyane, Mafeteng.

The accused's pleas were followed by the admission of three statements from three witnesses based on Section 273 of Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act No 9 of 1981.

The first statement belonged to Matšelisio Matsie who identified the body of Matsie while the other two statements belonged to Moeketsi Tiheli who identified the bodies of Mosole and Letatabe.

The statements showed that the bodies were identified on April 10, 2012 at the Mafeteng Government Hospital mortuary before and after post-mortems were conducted. LeNA



FastFACTS

Sudan Has More Ancient Pyramids Than Egypt

Egypt's Pyramids of Giza may be considered one of the wonders of the world, but Sudan has nearly twice the number of pyramids. Sudan touts 200-255 known pyramids, built for the Kushite kingdoms of Nubia, compared to Egypt's relatively paltry 138 pyramids. Within the Sahara, you can still visit the ancient and reconstructed pyramids of Meroe.

On This Day in History

1961

December 02

Fidel Castro declares himself a Marxist-Leninist

Following a year of severely strained relations between the United States and Cuba, Cuban leader Fidel Castro openly declares that he is a Marxist-Leninist. The announcement sealed the bitter Cold War animosity between the two nations.

Castro came to power in 1959 after leading a successful revolution against the dictatorial regime of Fulgencio Batista. Almost from the start, the United States worried that Castro was too leftist in his politics. He implemented agrarian reform, expropriated foreign oil company holdings, and eventually seized all foreign-owned property in Cuba. He also established close diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and the Russians were soon providing economic and military aid. By January 1961, the United States had severed diplomatic relations with Cuba. In April, the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion took place, wherein hundreds of rebels, armed and trained by the United States, attempted a landing in Cuba with the intent of overthrowing the Castro government. The attack ended in a dismal military defeat for the rebels and an embarrassing diplomatic setback for the United States.

In December 1961, Castro made clear what most U.S. officials already believed. In a televised address on December 2, Castro declared, "I am a Marxist-Leninist and shall be one until the end of my life." He went on to state that, "Marxism or scientific socialism has become the revolutionary movement of the working class." He also noted that communism would be the dominant force in Cuban politics: "There cannot be three or four movements." Some questioned Castro's dedication to the communist cause, believing that his announcement was simply a stunt to get more Soviet assistance. Castro, however, never deviated from his declared principles, and went on to become one of the world's longest-ruling heads of state. In late July 2006, an unwell Fidel Castro temporarily ceded power to his younger brother Raul. Fidel Castro officially stepped down in February 2008. Castro died on November 25, 2016, at 90.

ALL JOKES ASIDE

Two sisters watching football game

Two elderly sisters donated M50 to a charity and, to their surprise, won tickets to a football game. Since they had never seen a live football game before, Maria thought the free tickets would provide an excellent opportunity for doing so.

"I think so, too," said Patience.

"Let's go!"

They soon found themselves high in a noisy stadium overlooking a large, grassy expanse. They watched the kickoff and the seemingly endless back-and-forth struggles that comprised the scoreless first half. They enjoyed the band music and cheerleader performance that followed.

Then came the second half.

When the teams lined up for the second-half kickoff, Maria nudged her sister. "I guess we can go home now, Patience," she said. "This is where we came in."

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CURRENCIES

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

Loti/SDR	Special Drawing Right (SDR)	21.38
Loti/Dollar	United States (US\$)	15.78
Loti/Rands	South African (ZAR)	1.00
Loti/Euro	European Union (€)	17.91
Loti/Yuan	Chinese (¥)	2.48
Loti/Yen	Japanese (¥)	0.14
Loti/Pound Sterling	British (£)	21.07
Loti/Dollar	Australian (A\$)	11.29
Loti/Dollar	Hong Kong (HK\$)	2.02
Loti/Dollar	Singapore (S\$)	11.59
Loti/Naira	Nigeria's (₦)	0.038
Loti/Kwanza	Angola's (Kz)	0.028
Loti/Birr	Ethiopia's (Br)	0.33
Loti/Pound	Egypt (E£)	1.00
Loti/Ruble	Russia (RUB)	0.21
Loti/Riyal	Saudi Arabia (SAR)	4.21
Loti/Shekel	Israel (₪)	5.01
Loti/Real	Brazilian (R\$)	2.81
Loti/Rupee	India (₹)	0.21
Loti/Dirham	UAE (د.إ.)	4.30
Loti/Rupee	Mauritius (Rs)	0.36



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FTSE 100	7,131.01
JSE	70,700.00
Hang Seng	23,698.22

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Gold p/ounce	1,788.55
Platinum p/ounce	956.77
Silver p/ounce	22.72
Copper p/ounce	4.29
Brent Oil p/barrel	71.07
EQUITIES	
Bonds	18.44
Treasury Bills	3.67
Interest Rates	91

AGRICULTURE (Rates in Maloti/Rands)

Maize Meal p/kg	M7.00
Wheat Meal p/kg	M10.00
Cabbage p/kg	M14.00
Potatoes p/kg	M10.50
Brown Bread p/loaf	M10.00
White Bread p/loaf	M11.00
Sorghum Meal p/kg	M25.00
Brown Beans p/kg	M30.00
Tomato p/kg	M15.00

Eggs p/tray	M45.00
Milk (fresh) p/litre	M16.00
Milk (sour) p/litre	M20.00
Rice p/kg	M30.00
White Sugar p/kg	M22.00
Brown Sugar p/kg	M25.00
Beef p/kg	M85.00
Mutton p/kg	M90.00

ENERGY (Rates in Maloti/Rands)

Petrol Unleaded 93 p/litre	M16.60
Unleaded 95 p/litre	M16.80
Diesel 50PPm p/litre	M16.60
Paraffin p/litre	M11.00
Water (Domestic) p/litre	M5.53
Water (Industrial) p/litre	M15.03
Electricity (Domestic) p/unit	M1.38
Electricity (Industrial) p/unit	M0.26
Gas p/kg	M20.00

NEO SENOKO

business@maserumetro.com

MASERU - Lejone Mpotjoane, chairman of the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) board, a utility company charged with the responsibility of supplying electrical energy to all households in Lesotho said they have been in the media for the wrong reasons, adding however that the company is committed to correcting any form of challenges linked to it under its new strategy for the next three years.

He said this recently as the company launched its new strategy which is expected to provide a clear roadmap as the company seeks to improve on its mandate and service delivery going forward.

“We have been in the media for the wrong reasons, but we commit to correct some of the challenges with this new strategy,” Mr Mpotjoane said in his opening remarks during the event.

The LEC has been among others accused by members of the public of lack of commitment towards serving the nation as well as lack of leadership.

Others accuse the utility company of failing to get anything right as per its mandate.

Poor and old infrastructure together with lack of funds are some of the challenges faced by the company.

LEC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mohato Seleke acknowledged some of the challenges but emphasised that while the new strategy will not bring immediate changes to its operations, it will however, provide guidance that will eventually bring the desired changes.

LEC has been in media for wrong reasons - Chairman

...as utility outfit signs solar energy deal with Norwegian company

“Among other things, we have been accused of lack of leadership and that means we have to double our efforts going forward in order to achieve our mandate. Our strategy is aligned with the National Strategic Development Plan II and the Lesotho National Energy Policy of 2015 to 2025. The policy is also aligned with the National Strategic Development Plan,” Mr Seleke said.

Just a few days after the launch of the new strategy, LEC entered an agreement with Scatec, a leading renewable power producer to build the first IPP solar project of 20 MW in Lesotho.

The Power Purchase Agreement, Connection Agreement and the Implementation Deal were signed at an official ceremony held in Maseru, which marked the culmination of successful

negotiations with the LEC and the Government of Lesotho.

The project will be funded by the Renewable Energy Performance Platform (REPP) and equity co-sponsors, Scatec Norfund, One Power Lesotho, Izuba Energy and the Lesotho Pension Fund.

“We are proud to be the first IPP to develop a solar project in Lesotho, an important step for Scatec in the country.

“The Southern African Region is a key market for Scatec, and a region with great potential for the development of affordable clean energy. Scatec is a leading solar IPP in the region, and we look forward to expanding our footprint and developing more renewable energy in years to come,” Scatec General Manager for Sub-Sahara Africa, Jan Fourie said.Scatec will build, operate and majority-own the facility under a 25-year Power Purchase Agreement with financial close expected early next year.

Scatec is a leading renewable power producer, delivering affordable and clean energy worldwide. As a long-term player, Scatec develops, builds, owns and operates solar, wind and hydro power plants as well as storage solutions.

Scatec has more than 3.5 GW in operation and under construction on four continents and more than 500 employees. The company is targeting 15 GW capacity in operation or under construction by the end of 2025.



LEC Chief Executive Officer, Mohato Seleke

Business

EU contributes M17 million to support vulnerable groups

- The timely contribution will help WFP save lives by supporting those who are most at risk
- Each household will receive around M700 in cash per month, allowing them to buy food items from local markets



NEO SENOKO

business@maserumetro.com

MASERU – The United Nations (UN) World Food Programme (WFP), the world's largest humanitarian organisation has welcomed the European Union (EU) contribution of M17 million that will help meet the needs of 14 760 people through cash transfers for a period of six months.

This follows a contribution of around M50 million in 2020 that enabled the WFP to provide assistance to 42 500 vulnerable urban food insecure population from urban areas in Maseru, Mafeteng, Quthing, Mhale's Hoek and Qacha's Nek.

"Following the launch of the WFP's urban emergency assistance in 2020, there have been improvements reported in food consumption of the targeted people. We thank the European Union for continuing their support, allowing the WFP and the Government to provide the much needed assistance to vulnerable people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate shocks.

"This timely contribution will help WFP save lives by supporting those who are most at risk and change lives by improving the food security and nutrition of the targeted people," WFP Country Director, Aurorer Rusig said this week.

The funding, provided by the UE's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) will be used to reach families worst affected by the impact of rising climate shocks, food prices and the prolonged effects of COVID-19 in the capital Maseru and Qacha's Nek, including families badly affected by recent windstorms in Sehlabathebe, Qacha's Nek.

Each household will receive around M700 in cash per month, allowing them to buy food items from local markets.

According to the results of the latest Lesotho Vulnerability Report, about 470 000 people face high acute food insecurity in the current period from October 2021 to March 2022 and require humanitarian assistance action to reduce food gaps, protect and restore livelihoods as well as prevent acute malnutrition.

The WFP will undertake Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) initiatives during cash distributions to provide information on basic hygiene for the prevention of COVID-19, as well as information on nutritional practices to enhance purchasing choices for households to meet their nutritional needs.

The EU continues to support partners such as the WFP in order to provide life-saving food assistance to the most vulnerable people suffering the effects of climate shocks and the COVID-19 pandemic.

EU ambassador to Lesotho, Paola Amadei (pictured) said her organization is aware that people in urban and peri-urban areas who lost their jobs or businesses have been hit hard by climate shocks and therefore want to contribute to alleviating their suffering as a consequence of the pandemic.

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Comments & Letters

Remember the importance of knowing your HIV status

The Editor,

Knowing your HIV status gives you powerful information that helps to take essential steps to keep your partner and those around you healthy. Medical experts have warned that with the world's focus now on the COVID-19 pandemic, attention must still be given to HIV which is referred to as one of the most destructive pandemics in the history of mankind.

Just because we are currently weary with the COVID-19 pandemic and the disastrous impact it has had on the world along with its economies, that does not mean we should forget what HIV has been doing to people's lives over the years. Knowing one's HIV status helps them take their medication as prescribed in order to live long and healthy lives.

HIV testing has now been made easy as it can be conducted anywhere, including in the privacy of people's homes.

Treatment is most effective for preventing HIV transmission when started as early as possible.

It is important for people living with HIV to take their medication every day, exactly as prescribed.

Nthabeleng Sebisa
'Mate Ha Selebalo

Let us not forget about HIV too

The Editor,

We know that COVID-19 is a serious disease that will continue destabilising the world for many years to come. And with the burden of HIV on the other hand, things will never be the same again, hence HIV services must continue to be made available for people who need them.

This includes ensuring the availability of condoms, PrEP and HIV testing, to prevent people from running out of medication and to reduce the need to access the health system.

The pandemic will always cause a lot of uncertainty around the world, making matters worse for people living with HIV.

As it continues to disrupt lives everywhere, may it not affect people like us who are proudly living with HIV, including key populations, female sex workers, men who have sex with other men and truck drivers.

Just like before, we still need to see more tents on the streets where we can access information, HIV and testing services. Those services were youth friendly and accessible anytime convenient to us.

Relebohile 'Molotsi
Ha Tsolo, Maseru

Caring for people with HIV does not cost a cent

The Editor,

People living with HIV are our children, siblings, parents and of course friends. Let us always give them the support and the care that they need at all times.

It is important to always ensure that they take their medication as prescribed and that includes keeping the scheduled times as well. Above all, let us not discriminate them, nor call them names.

Some people who were recently diagnosed may find it difficult to take the first step towards HIV treatment. Our support and assistance are very crucial. HIV treatment is recommended for all people with HIV and should be started as soon as possible after diagnosis.

Sera Moalosi
Ha Tsiu, Maseru

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

EDITOR'S NOTE

LEC, sort your house out

Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) should up its game and race against time to improve services in order to run away from the never ending scrutiny from the public.

In recent years, the company has been shamed in all corners, sometimes for the wrong reasons but on many occasions deservedly so.

Recently, those at the helm of the LEC have shown concern over the on-going public shaming by its customer base.

LEC chairman, Lejone Mpotjoane revealed recently that the company has been in the media for wrong reasons, citing that they are willing to 'make corrections on their operations'.

This, he said as the company launched its new strategy which is expected to provide a clear roadmap on improving its mandate and service delivery going forward.

The new strategy has exposed LEC shenanigans that include being accused by members of the public of its lack of commitment towards serving the nation as well as lack of leadership.

Some accuse the company of failing to get anything right as per its mandate.

Poor and old infrastructure and lack of funds are some of the challenges faced by the company.

From this, it is clear that the company leadership should double efforts, particularly after launching the new three-year strategy and improve on its operations as soon as it is possible.

The new strategy should be used as a guiding tool to ensure improved services for the next three years. Government on the other hand should also play its role and assist the utility to fulfill its mandate in terms of making available enough funding that would in turn make it possible for LEC to improve services.

One way to assist would be to force all state-owned companies and other government ministries to pay their electricity bills on time, an undertaking that would generate timely and much needed revenue for the company.

While under ridicule for many years, it has been increasingly difficult for management to respond to all the challenges mainly due to limited finances.

Government has not been able to support the LEC with enough funding to execute its mandate.

This is dangerous not only to individuals, but to the entire economy in that businesses suffer because of poor services from the power utility. It is important to note that energy remains one of the most important tools towards attracting the much desired foreign direct investment into the country.

Final destination: Travel will be the end of us

Have you considered just staying put? Being where you're at? Switch off the engine, take off your safety belts, get up and walk around. We are here. We have arrived.

I don't think it's far-fetched to say that travelling is at the heart of every travesty that has happened to humankind since the beginning of time. Slavery is the direct result of a trip overseas, I would say. A European with a ship told himself he wanted "to see the world" and the fateful Contiki tour was afoot. World War 2, I reckon, began after an innocent interchange, a harmless thought, when Hitler turned to Goebbels and said: "Ever been to France? I hear it's nice."

So, why do we like to travel so much? We're like electrons darting from one spot to the next. Why can't we be protons? Why is "there" always better than "here"? What is driving humans to be constantly on the go?

I think a major contributor to this affliction of having to travel to feel human is the language in use today. We should really revisit sayings like "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" and "Wish you were here". Why journey for a 1,000 miles if a change of scenery is often as easy as getting up from your laptop? And why travel to a distant land only to wistfully want to change your circumstances once you're there? If you want me by your side so badly, don't leave. Hopping from one continent to the next does nothing for feelings of loneliness. Wish all you like, the only way to feel less lonely in the world is to be your own best friend, which is something you can achieve at home, or, at worst, commuting to a psychologist's office once a week.

Advertising is another major trigger for the wayfarer. And this started long ago, I think. Perhaps at the same time that hunting and gathering contentedly in the same valley for generations went out of fashion. Calling it the nomadic lifestyle, for instance, made it sound like something to aspire to. The early adopters probably told others they should really get out more. Or, perhaps, more time-appropriate: "A rolling stone gathers no moss." Once again, you have to ask yourself what is so bad about moss? In the right quantities, moss adds to the appearance of a stone, in my opinion. It gives it character, doesn't it? Moss is a sign of life, if anything; an indication of the abundance that comes from not rolling around all the time. Yet, "Roll" society says. "Flatten everything in your path on your way to some undefined destination, and once you're there, roll

some more."

People seem to want to travel to the bitter end. Is anyone today willing to give up a holiday for the greater good? How long before we realise that extensive travelling – flying especially – is the main cause of the climate crisis?

Adverse living conditions are often to blame for mass movement and you can hardly fault someone for wanting to get away from war. Nothing wrong with that. The migrant crisis is not the cause of the climate crisis. Refugees don't fly, they take a boat. A paddle-powered one or, at best, one with a very small outboard motor. No, governments may point the finger at migrants for many things; global warming is not one of them. Space travel, on the other hand, might be jet-fuelling our demise at speeds as yet unrecorded. Here we have those who've been everywhere on Earth saying: "Where to next?", and strapping in for lift-off exactly perpendicular to the force of gravity for a jaunt among the stars. Imagine the energy it takes to overcome the very force that holds everything in place. "Leave air travel to the environmentalists," the affluent seem to be saying. "We'd like to pollute on a cosmic level."

So, how are we going to save the planet from the travelling hordes? My solution is to ban private transport altogether. If you want to go abroad so badly, you can do so on foot. Burn some calories to get to your precious tourist destination. And the same goes for going to the shops. No more popping out for milk and bread, and taking a ton of metal with you. In fact, the ban should extend to all moving objects not made of human flesh (barring bicycles). This will of course remove the luxury of having stuff delivered to your house and also take ambulances out of commission. But have you heard of cooking at home? Have you even considered dying exactly where you are?

These might all be considered extreme thoughts, but so was flying when it was first attempted. Give it a little time and we'll get used to staying put for hours on end. Things might get done. No traffic, no stress. Car trouble? Forget about it. No more "Are we there yet?" or "We really need to get going". We're here. We've arrived. Everything is going to be okay. DM168

MY
TAKE

HANS MACKENZIE MAIN

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US restricts travel from Lesotho

... as new Covid variant emerges in South Africa

WASHINGTON – The United States restricted travel for non-US citizens from Lesotho and seven other countries including South Africa starting Monday, part of a global effort to stem the spread of the heavily mutated omicron variant of the COVID-19, according to senior Biden administration officials.

The other countries included in the new restrictions are Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Eswatini, Mozambique and Malawi.

There was no indication Friday of how long the bans will remain in place.

President Joe Biden (pictured) said in a statement that moving forward he will be “guided by what the science and my medical team advises.”

The decision came less than three weeks after the administration lifted pandemic travel restrictions on visitors from more than 30 countries, including Lesotho in favour of vaccine requirements for international tourists. Malawi, Namibia, Mozambique were among the 51 countries the U.S. exempted from the vaccine requirement because of low availability there.

Biden was briefed on the variant Friday by White House chief medical advisor Dr Anthony Fauci, as a growing list of countries issued their own travel bans.

Canada, the European Union and the U.K. all announced restrictions on travelers

from southern Africa Friday, even as Belgian officials announced that several cases of omicron variant Covid had already been identified there.

“I’ve decided we’re going to be cautious,” Biden said to reporters Friday following the announcement of the travel restrictions. “We don’t know a lot about the variant except it is a great concern, seems to spread rapidly,” he said.

Also on Friday, the World Health Organisation (WHO) assigned the newly identified variant the Greek letter omicron and formally recognized the strain, previously referred to as lineage B.1.1.529, as a “variant of concern.”

Health experts are deeply concerned about the transmissibility of the omicron variant given that it has an unusual constellation of mutations and a profile that is different from other variants of concern. It is not clear how severe infections would be for vaccinated patients.

Experts fear a sharp upswing of Covid cases in South Africa’s Gauteng province – where the heavily mutated strain of the virus was first identified – could mean it has greater potential to escape prior immunity than other variants.

In a statement announcing the travel ban, Biden urged already immunised Americans to get their booster shots and urged parents

to take advantage of the new vaccine doses approved for children ages 5 to 11.

The emergence of this new strain in South Africa, Biden said, also underscores the importance of making vaccines accessible to people all over the world. To that end, he urged members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to waive intellectual property protections for Covid vaccines.

The designation of a new variant of concern coupled with mounting alarm from health officials sent global markets into a tailspin Friday. Oil prices took heavy losses on the news.

Asked about the market losses, Biden said the reaction didn’t surprise him. “They always do when something with Covid arises,” he said.

Airline and other travel stocks plunged Friday. The fresh travel restrictions followed reports of the new variant in places as distant as Botswana, Belgium, Israel and Hong Kong.

The new restrictions come just as carriers and aerospace manufacturers such as Boeing have been upbeat about a resurgence in travel demand, particularly international routes next year.

Flights between the U.S. and South Africa are limited compared with other international destinations, but the sudden



changes in travel rules make it difficult for customers to book and could further delay the return of lucrative international business travel.

There are 122 flights between the U.S. and South Africa scheduled for December, according to aviation consulting firm Cirium.

United, which has the most scheduled service, with 87 flights, is set to resume nonstop flights between its Newark, New Jersey, hub and Cape Town next month. A spokeswoman said no changes are currently planned.

Delta has 35 scheduled flights between the U.S. and South Africa in December. CNBC

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24 Dec	07:00 - 15:00
25 Dec	Closed
26 Dec	Closed
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MASERU
— MALL —





Sekatle warns nations about new Corona variant

...Omicron has high infection speed as it contains multiple mutations that kill faster than any other experienced viruses in the world

MASERU – Semano Sekatle, the Minister of Health, has issued a warning to the nation about the newly found Corona variant (Variant B.1.1.529) called Omicron.

The variant was discovered on November 24 by the National Institute for Communicable disease (NICD) in the Republic of South Africa (RSA).

The affected areas in the RSA, Mr Sekatle are in the North West and Limpopo provinces.

"Other countries affected include Botswana, Belgium, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom and Hong Kong," he said.

Omicron, he said has high infection speed as it contains multiple mutations that kill faster than any other viruses experienced in the world.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), he said has therefore recommended that while studies and researches are underway, people must continue practicing all health protocols in order to protect themselves against the virus.

However, he said it is saddening to see developed countries closing their borders especially to RSA while they should be congratulating the country for identifying the new variant first.

The countries, he said are now treating the matter as if the variant originated in RSA yet the neighbouring country received it from other unknown sources.

"Lesotho will continue to abide by the WHO rules and regulations and every Mosotho must take responsibility of their lives by taking all the necessary precautionary measures," he said.

The Minister further explained that Lesotho is proud to announce that through the National Referral Laboratory (NRL), every kind of corona virus can be detectable no matter the changes that it does, pleading with the public to maintain the COVID-19 safety protocols in order to avoid lockdown restrictions.

The minister said as of December 1, the ministry will open vaccination points at all the border gates to ensure that all incoming travellers get vaccinated.

"Travellers who claim to have been vaccinated in the RSA will have to produce valid vaccination cards and that will be done through the help of RSA health centres with their database. Meanwhile, South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa has condemned travel bans enacted against his country and its neighbours including Lesotho over the new coronavirus variant.

He said he was "deeply disappointed" by the action, which he described as unjustified, and called for the bans to be urgently lifted.

The UK, EU and US are among those who have imposed travel bans.

Omicron has been classed as a "variant of concern". Early evidence suggests it has a higher re-infection risk.

The heavily mutated variant was detected in South Africa earlier this month and then reported to the WHO last Wednesday.

The variant is responsible for most of



Minister of Health, Semano Sekatle

the infections found in South Africa's most populated province, Gauteng, over the last two weeks, and is now present in all other

provinces in the country.

On Monday, Japan became the latest country to reinstate tough border restrictions,

banning all foreigners from entering the country from November 30.

The WHO has warned against countries hastily imposing travel curbs, saying they should look to a "risk-based and scientific approach". However, numerous bans have been introduced in recent days amid concerns over the variant.

WHO's Africa director Matshidiso Moeti said on Sunday: "With the Omicron variant now detected in several regions of the world, putting in place travel bans that target Africa attacks global solidarity."

In his speech on Sunday, Mr Ramaphosa said there was no scientific basis for the travel bans and that southern Africa was the victim of unfair discrimination. He also argued that the bans would not be effective in preventing the spread of the variant.

"The only thing the prohibition on travel will do is to further damage the economies of the affected countries and undermine their ability to respond to, and recover from, the pandemic," he said.

He called on countries with bans in place to "urgently reverse their decisions... before any further damage is done to our economies".

Mr Ramaphosa described the emergence of the Omicron variant as a wake-up call for the world regarding vaccine inequality - warning that until everyone was vaccinated, more variants were inevitable.

There are no vaccine shortages in South Africa itself, and Mr Ramaphosa urged more people to get jabbed, saying that remained the best way to fight the virus.

A previous statement by the South African foreign ministry on Saturday also strongly criticised the travel bans, saying the country was being punished - instead of applauded - for discovering Omicron.

Omicron has now been detected in a number of countries around the world, including the UK, Germany, Australia and Israel.

Metro/BBC News

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The world in 10 minutes

INDIA

Indian wedding music blamed for death of 63 chickens

A traditional Indian wedding procession with pumping music, fireworks, dancing and a marching brass band in shiny jackets has been blamed for the death of 63 chickens.

Ranjit Kumar Parida said the party was blasting out "ear-splitting noise" as it passed his poultry farm in the eastern state of Odisha.

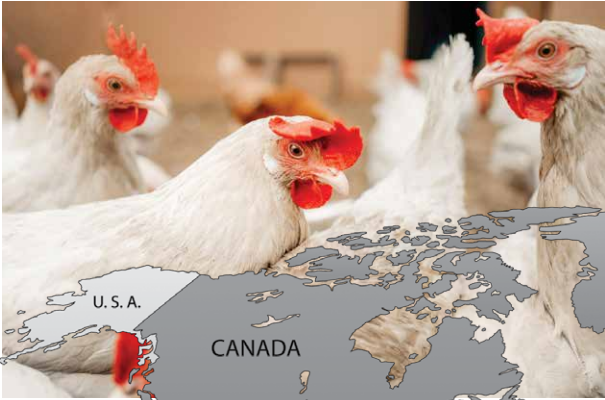
"I asked the band operators to lower the volume as the music was too noisy and terrifying the chickens. But they did not listen and the groom's friends shouted at me," Parida told AFP.

A vet told Parida the chickens had died of a heart attack, and he filed a police complaint after the wedding organisers refused to pay compensation.

Zoology professor Suryakanta Mishra, who has authored a book on animal behaviour, told the Hindustan Times that loud noise increases the risk of cardiovascular disease in birds.

"Chickens are governed by a circadian rhythm that is controlled by the natural light/dark cycle of day and night.

"Sudden excitement or stress due to loud music could disrupt their biological clock," Mishra said.



AUSTRALIA

Australian man, 60, uses pocket knife to fight off crocodile

A 60-year-old Australian man escaped the jaws of a large crocodile by stabbing it repeatedly in the head with his pocket knife as it dragged him into a river, local authorities said.

Wildlife officers said the man was "lucky to be alive" after the terrifying attack at a remote riverbank in Australia's far northern Cape York Peninsula.

"There was a struggle and he fortunately escaped the grip of a four to four-and-a-half-metre crocodile. The odds of doing that are about zero," said the Queensland state environment department's Matt Brien.

The man had gone fishing on his property near Hope Vale, about five hours' drive from Cairns, and he shooed away a bull from the riverbank so he could take over the spot.

Then, the crocodile struck.

SOUTH AFRICA

Man lays charge over use of his name and picture on ANC posters

With the elections finalised and as politicians started negotiations last week, a reluctant resident was outraged after being "put up for election as a ward councillor" without his knowledge or consent.

Nhlakanipho Mthethwa, 49, from Mlalazi was tipped off that his poster had been put up as one of the local councillor candidates, without him having given his consent.

Mthethwa, a representative of Independent South African National Civic Organisation (Isanco), received a call on the day of the local government elections telling him that his name and his face were on ANC posters at one of the voting stations near where Mthethwa lives.

"I was attending my mother's funeral when I got the call informing me that my photograph was on posters as an ANC candidate. I was shocked at the news because I had never registered with any political party and I have no intention of becoming a councillor," said Mthethwa.

Mthethwa said he went to confirm the matter at the voting station and then headed to eShowe Police station to open a case.

SAPS spokesperson Brigadier Vishnu Naidoo said they were aware of the matter and a case of fraud was being investigated.



ITALY

Man asks Italian police to jail him to escape wife at home

For some people, going to prison can feel like escaping to freedom.

A man under house arrest in Italy showed up at a police barracks asking to be put behind bars because life with his wife at home was unbearable, police said.

The 30-year-old Albanian citizen living in Guidonia Montecelio, outside Rome, "was no longer able to cope with the forced cohabitation with his wife," Carabinieri police from nearby Tivoli said in a statement.

"Exasperated by the situation, he preferred to escape, spontaneously presenting himself to the Carabinieri to ask to serve his sentence behind bars," they wrote.

The man had been under house arrest for drug crimes for several months and had a few years left to serve, Captain Francesco Giacomo Ferrante of the Tivoli Carabinieri told AFP.

"He lived at home with his wife and family. It wasn't going well anymore," Ferrante said.

"He said, 'Listen, my domestic life has become hell. I can't do it anymore, I want to go to jail.'"

The man was promptly arrested for violating his house arrest and judicial authorities ordered his transfer to prison.

SOUTH AFRICA

Suspect accidentally shoots himself in armed robbery. Is he Gauteng's dumbest criminal?

A Gauteng man woke up one morning and chose violence - literally. But it seems his plan didn't quite end as he'd hoped after he shot himself in the leg while escaping.

Netcare 911 spokesperson, Shawn Herbst said emergency services were called to the scene of a shooting in Kenilworth just after 7am.

"Reports indicate that an adult male had been shot in the head and chest during an armed robbery by a gun-wielding adult male. This happened at the corners of Van Hulsteyn and Andrews streets.

"After the firearm was discharged, the gunman attempted to flee on foot. In doing so, he had shot himself in the upper thigh, effectively ending his escape," Herbst said.



UGANDA

Staff suspended as grasshoppers sold on Ugandan flight

Uganda's national carrier has banned the sale of a local grasshopper delicacy onboard a flight after an incident recently.

Uganda Airlines said the sale of the delicacy, locally known as Nsenene, contravened the "spirit of the national carrier".

The airline said the incident exposed some passengers to "unruly market experience on their flight".

Local media report that some airline employees have been suspended over the incident.

The airline says it understood that the excitement on board was because the grasshoppers were not in plenty this season and was considering "adding the delicacy to its menu on request".

"This move will boost tourism marketing and the livelihood of the people in the grasshopper value chain going forward," said the airline.

Family bids farewell to Miss Culture Lesotho

- Model will represent the country at the international pageant against other beauties from across the globe
- The pageant is a platform that was created to empower and showcase beauty and fashion talent globally



Reigning Miss Culture Lesotho, Reatile Molefe (Middle) with her family before her departure for South Africa on Sunday

KABELO MASOABI

MASERU – Reigning Miss Culture Lesotho, Reatile Molefe left the country last Sunday to compete at the Miss Culture International pageant to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa on Saturday, December 4.

Molefe, 19, won the 2018 Miss Culture Lesotho pageant that was held in Leribe as a Lesotho High School learner.

The competition was put on hold for three years due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

Molefe’s family and friends convened at her Maseru residence on Sunday to wish her well just before she crossed the border to SA.

Her mother, Maphalatsane Makhele on Tuesday expressed her gratitude to all the people who lent a helping hand in raising funds for her daughter’s trip.

Prior to her departure, Molefe was reportedly short M26 200 to cover all

expenses of the trip.

A major blanket retail outlet, Aranda Textile donated four blankets to the model and her pageant director Rantsatsi Mokeki collected the gifts from the Aranda headquarters in Randfontein, Johannesburg. “You will remember that three blankets were some of the items that she desperately needed in her budget that was shared here. “Reatile will wear these blankets on different evening occasions during this week-long Miss Culture international competition. She will also present one as a gift to one of the contestants from another country,” announces Mokeki.

The Miss Culture International is a platform that was created to empower and showcase beauty and fashion talent globally.

Its purpose is to bring together women from diverse cultures to learn from one another and find common ground in the

pursuit of a transformation and change agenda, according to its website.

The organiser, Miss Culture International, manages pageants in order to unite people from diverse cultures, learn from each other and celebrate different cultures through beauty and fashion. The pageant’s head office is in Cape Town, South Africa.

Molefe has met the criteria for suitable candidates which include amongst other things, age, being a citizen of the country she is representing and meeting all the administrative requirements, according to the Director of King Moshoeshoe Film Festival, Aubrey Silinyana.

Silinyana said they are working with Molefe and the Beauty Pageant Association of Lesotho, to support her in her journey which not only involves participating in the event but also other build-up programmes such as national casting and a boot-camp that will be held in SA.

“As far as I know, in the history of Miss Culture Lesotho the Mountain Kingdom has never been represented before in this international competition. We therefore thank Basotho for making sure that this happens,” he also said.

Feeling excited about competing at international level, Molefe remarks: “I’m proud to say I have won over 10 titles in the past 11 years and while still retaining the Miss Culture Lesotho title. I will strive for more and make Basotho proud at the Miss Culture International.”

The winner of Miss Culture International pageant will travel across the world and visit over 50 000 school children, members of the business community and cultural organisations.

She will be a routine guest-speaker, a custodian of culture, high fashion wearing, smile-bearing example of the diverse beauty and intelligence, according to the organisers of the pageant.

SKIN UNDER
CONSTRUCTION



General Crosswords

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22					
	23						24					25	26	27
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41							42					43		
44				45	46	47				48				
49				50					51			52	53	
			54					55						56
57	58	59					60					61		
62							63					64		
65							66					67		

- Across

1. Opposing

5. Rainbows

9. Foreshadow

14. Divided

15. Sack

16. Big mess

17. Metallurgist's materials

18. "O.K."

19. Kitchen light

20. Read wrongly

23. In motion

24. "Beowulf," for one

25. Big galoot

28. Below par

31. Clairvoyant's gift

34. Genuine

35. Equipment

36. Coffee maker

38. Keyboard instrument
41. Arabian Peninsula

45. Add to the pot

13. Lack of muscular tension

21. Same old, same old

42. Dressed to the

45. Capable of being split

66. Power

46. country

46. Hammer's end

42. In the capacity of

42. Producing vapors

43. Aquatic shocker

44. Illogical conclusions

49. Talk, talk, talk

50. Women in habits

51. Hit the road

54. New evaluation

57. Errand runner

60. Not yet final, at law

61. Highlands hillside
62. Bit of parsley

63. "The Sun _____ Rises"

67. Appear to be

Down

1. Elementary particle

2. Waterwheel

3. Rapunzel feature

4. Undisturbed

5. Nonfigurative

6. Profligate

7. Make right

8. Treeless plain

9. Appearance

10. Complex dwelling

11. _____Friday

12. Roswell sighting

22. Upholstery problem

25. Way too weighty

26. Winged

27. Untamed

Last Week's Solution

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22					
	23						24				25	26	27	
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49				50					51		52	53		
			54					55						56
57	58	59					60							
62							63							
65							66							

29. When repeated, a Latin dance

30. Time of one's life

31. Key material

32. Pago Pago's place

33. Caper

37. _____and outs

38. Film director's cry

39. Film coating

40. Harps
47. To undo, as in jeans

48. Brazilian dances

52. Phileas Fogg's creator

53. Related maternally

54. Curb, with "in"

55. To be, in old Rome

56. Abound

57. Fed. construction overseer

58. Select, with "for"

59. To and____

So You Think You are Geneius

Question (Answer next week)

My current age, is the age of my brother, who is 14, plus one third of my age. How old will I be when my brother is twice his current age?



Last Week's Answer

There are 980 coins in the collection: 490 + 245 + 196 + 49 = 980.

Sudoku Puzzle

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

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

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

Last Week's Solution

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

Be Car-Smart

It's simple. Avoid the urge to spend if you don't have the cash...

It's that time of the year again, when no matter what you are watching, listening to or reading, two simple words beckon you to part with your hard-earned money. Black Friday. They seem innocuous enough but, if you are drawn in and let them tempt you, the results could be more than you bargained for. Black Friday, taking place on 26 November this year, promises never-to-be-repeated discounts, deals and offers across a wide spectrum of products and services, from cinema-style TV screens to fridges and cars, holidays and even financial services. While the sale price might seem to be too good to be true, in many instances that is unfortunately the case, so it is important not to get caught up in the hype and media frenzy. The thrill of buying something at a real bargain price, whether you actually need it or not, can be very tempting.

The shopping drawcard that is Black Friday has grown exponentially over the years. According to the Unisa Bureau of Market Research, Black Friday 2021 will generate M11.3 billion – not as much as in 2019 when South Africans spent M15.4 billion, but slightly more than the M10.2 billion spent in 2020. This is due in part to the fact that while 2.1 million people lost their jobs during 2019 to 2020, only 733 000 new jobs were created in the period from 2020 to 2021.

"These are staggering figures, particularly at a time when many South Africans are facing financial pressures as they try to stretch their monthly budgets," says Kutlwano Mogatusi, WesBank Motor Communications Specialist. "As such, if there is something you really want or need, and have been putting savings aside for the purchase, make sure you do your homework and shop around first to ensure you are getting the best deal."

"However, the thing about Black Friday is to approach it

with caution, making sure that you have all your financial wits about you. First up, you need to do an honest appraisal of your budget, and carefully list your monthly expenses, line item by line item, against your income. Remember to include any personal loans, vehicle asset finance repayments and payments for store or credit cards. Skipping any of these payments to fill that space on the lounge wall with a cinema-size TV screen is not advisable."

With online shopping increasing exponentially during this period, so too are the possibilities to get caught out in an online fraud, scam or phishing scheme. Be extra cautious when sharing any of your personal or banking details on a website, and double check that the site is safe, secure and reputable. Don't let your guard down in the hype and excitement of landing the best Black Friday deal ever.

While Black Friday spending may pre-empt or even supersede the annual Christmas shopping spree, it is important to check your budget and only buy what you need and, more importantly, what you can actually afford within your budget.

"After another tough year marred by the ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns, job losses, economic pressures and emotional stresses, it is easy to throw caution to the wind at this time of the year and join the spending frenzy. The period between the December and January salary payments can seem endless, and it is important to start off the new year with a healthy balance sheet to pay all the bills and even settle some outstanding debts," concludes Mogatusi.



New 2021 Lexus UX Hybrid F Sport

... exceptional body rigidity and a low centre of gravity



and refined suspension tuning endow it with exemplary handling agility and ride comfort, and a distinctive driving character reinforced by some bespoke F Sport* fettling under the skin.

Lexus designers created an overall design theme for the UX that combines strength with refinement and is stylish yet functional. The treatment of the spindle grille - a signature feature of all Lexus models - is unique to the UX, featuring a mesh pattern with individual elements that gradually change in shape as they radiate out from the central Lexus emblem.

The F Sport package comes standard with a UX-tailored version of the new high-response Adaptive Variable Suspension (AVS) system that debuted on the Lexus LC and LS flagship coupe and sedan. The system increases damping force to minimise roll when cornering or changing lanes and reduces damping force in straight-line driving to preserve ride quality. With AVS, the vehicle's Drive Mode Selector adds the Sport S+ mode which activates the system.

The UX 250h F Sport features the advanced safety technology expected from a Lexus. All UX models are equipped with eight airbags: driver and front passenger airbags; driver and front passenger knee airbags; driver and front passenger seat-mounted side impact airbags; and front to rear side curtain airbags. The Lexus Safety System comes standard in the hybrid F Sport:

- Standard Adaptive Cruise Control,
- Pre-Crash System (PCS) – Brake Synchronised,
- Blind Spot Monitor,
- Lane Keep Assist with Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist,
- LED Adaptive High-beam System (AHS).

This model comes standard with three different interior trims for customers to select from. The trim comprises Flare Red, White and F Black.

In the range, there are nine colours available for the exterior. However, unique to F Sport are the new-for-UX White Nova and Poseidon Blue.

The Lexus UX models retail from M745 100 for the hybrid EX grade, M824 000 for the hybrid 250h SE and M874 800 for the new hybrid F Sport. The entire UX range boasts a Lexus best-in-class 7-year/105 000km Warranty and Full Maintenance Plan. The vehicle service intervals are at every 15 000km, alternatively once a year.

The UX presents Lexus' innovative luxury and safety in a package that combines bold design and an ultra-efficient powertrain. Lexus UX launched in 2019 in South Africa and has had notable sales success in the country.

It's designed for modern urban motorists who seek a fresh, contemporary and dynamic take on luxury driving, something that is not just new and exciting, but also relevant to their lifestyles, and for many young urban explorers, it will most likely be their very first Lexus. Infused with dynamic attitude, the UX is engineered to deliver quick and engaging driving with a Lexus-smooth demeanour, making it a unique entry in the luxury compact SUV market.

To recap, Lexus in South Africa is now available in hybrid only, once again taking

another confident step on the path to Carbon Neutral by further lowering fuel emissions and providing a realistic entry to electrified motoring. (It's worth noting that Lexus' NEV share has grown from 8% in 2017 to 34% in 2021 YTD - and of that share, UX hybrids account for a 76% average.) Lexus South Africa introduced the EX grade (entry level) hybrid model in June last year. Fast forward to 2021, the brand is excited to launch the F Sport model grade for UX hybrid. This brings the total range to three grades: namely Lexus UX 250h EX, UX 250h SE and now the newly-minted UX 250h F Sport. Like its siblings, the front-wheel drive Lexus UX 250h F Sport boasts superior performance thanks to fourth-generation self-charging hybrid powertrain technology which

provides exhilarating driving with high-speed responsiveness and a feeling of smooth, natural acceleration.

The 2.0-litre petrol engine alone delivers 107kW of power at 6000rpm and 180Nm of torque at 4400rpm, but when combined with the electric motor, provides a total system output of 135kW.

This equates to a very laudable 0-100km/h sprint time of 8.5 seconds. Fuel economy though is a real eye-opener - returning figures of 4.5-litres/100km combined and CO2 emissions of just 103g/km.

The UX is the first Lexus to be constructed using the new Global Architecture - Compact (GA-C) platform. A lightweight yet super-rigid structure, extremely low centre of gravity



Rapokolana lauded as great facility for sports tourism

...owing to its high standard, the centre can attract athletes from all over the world

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MASERU – Stanley Mutoya, the Chairperson of the African Union

Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 Organising Committee, has applauded the Rapokolana High Altitude Sports Training Centre located on the outskirts of Maseru, describing it as an ideal

facility that Lesotho could generate a lot of income from.

“This centre is a milestone and a place to be used not only by Basotho but by the entire region and the African continent. Due to the standard of its gymnasium, the centre will attract athletes from all over Africa and Europe because of its advantage of being located very high above sea level. Athletic specialists value high altitude training camp towards preparations for major competitions.

“The swimming competition for AUSC Region 5 Games is crucial to the athletes as it will be used as qualification for the 2023 African Games set for Accra, Ghana,” Mutoya (**pictured**) told a media briefing at the centre on Saturday during a tour of the facility.

The tour was spearheaded by the Minister of Sports and Recreation, Likeleli Tampane alongside her Public Works counterpart, Lebohang Monaheng.

The Rapokolana High Altitude Sports Training Centre is a M55 million-worth sports facility constructed by the Government of Lesotho in 2005 in order to develop local athletes.

The centre has, however remained unutilised since then for unexplained reasons.

The facility comprises a state-of-the-art gymnasium, an indoor swimming pool, a football pitch, a running-track as netball and tennis courts, among others.

This top class centre will be utilised

for the first time in 16 years when hosts the swimming component of the competition.

Lehlohonolo Ncheke, the Manager Projects Planning and Studies at Water and Sewage Company (WASCO) who is working in collaboration with the South African contractor, ImproChem (Pty) Ltd said the water pumping and purification project commenced on November 4, adding that it is almost complete.

“We have installed a water purification system which pumps water from the nearby river to the purification station where the water is refined and transported to the Rapokolana centre. This system filters and transports 1million litres of water to the centre each day and we started transporting water on Sunday. The capacity is enough for filling the swimming pool and for consumption at the residence,” he noted.

The system, he said operates day and night, making an assurance that the water will be consistently available at the centre throughout the duration of the games.

“Upon arrival in the pool, the water will be transported to the pool filtering room and will be heated before it can be transported back to the pool ready for use by the athletes,” Ncheke said.

For her part, Tampane thanked all the contractors who were involved in the project for a job well done, saying the sports ministry was able to replace the furniture that was stolen from the facility a few months ago.



Stanley Mutoya, the Chairperson of the AUSC Region 5 Organising Committee

Lesotho Volleyball team in Botswana 2018 AUSC Region 5

Young bags 6th Roof of Africa title

- *The champ appeared in second position in 01:29:11 during the time trial on Thursday*
- *Saturday saw the Kwazulu-Natal born rider appearing second behind Teasdale*

MASERU – Wade Young, South Africa's top biker retained his Motul Roof of Africa title on Sunday in Lesotho when he won one of the toughest biking competitions in the world for a record sixth time.

He finished the 80.3km race dubbed the 'Mother of Hard Enduro' ahead of Travis Teasdale and Matthew Green, who appeared second and third, respectively.

Young, 25, appeared in second position in 01:29:11 during the time trial on Thursday, just a minute after Teasdale who finished first in 01:28:51 while Green was third in 01:32:46.

Young's dominance took another level during the 80 km race on Friday, as he finished first in 07:40:15 while Teasdale and Green came second and third respectively.

Saturday saw the Kwazulu-Natal born rider appearing second behind Teasdale while Green settled for a fourth place in the gold class.

Sechaba Chabeli, local rider had an emotional finish in 16th position in the demanding silver class, in honour of his late father.

"I cannot believe I made it through the rain and dense fog, but position 16 is a great achievement for me. It is my first finish in this demanding race. It therefore means everything to me, I did this for my father who passed away in January, he wanted me to finish the race and I did, so thank you," he told Roof of Africa media.

The event, which attracted over 400 riders from every corner of the globe including America and Europe, among others also featured eight up and coming local riders.

Keketso Malebo, one of the race organisers and the Public Relations Officer of the Lesotho Off-Road Association (LORA) told Metro that while the event was a great success, they however, encountered several challenges due to the heavy rains that fell during the duration of the race.

"Rain caused many setbacks, but fortunately we already had plans B and C. The race was expected to end at the Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village but we had to change our plans and end it at Lekhalong La Baroa Pass on Saturday to avoid further complications such as muddy terrains," he said.

"In less than 2km from the starting point in Thaba Bosiu, a rider fell into a deep hole full of water and he could not continue with the race.

"Another one fell off his bike shortly thereafter and broke both his arms. Along the way, many riders met complications but they helped each other, showing great team spirit. Some of the competitors were assisted by Basotho who pulled their bikes out of muddy terrains," he said.

Malebo was quick to show that



The Motul Roof of Africa rally champion, Wade Young of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa

this year's edition of the race did not feature as many foreign spectators as it usually does.

The annual event, he said normally attracts many spectators from Botswana, all over South Africa and Europe, but due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, few were able to come over this time around.

Generally, the race contributes immensely to Lesotho's economy as local hotels and guest houses accommodate a lot of visitors during this time of the year.

"There is no doubt that the absence of the famous 'Round the Houses race' has dealt spectators from the lowlands of the country a low blow.

"Street vendors who sell their ware in the streets of Maseru also missed out a lot on the opportunity to make their normal killing from trading with the foreign visitors," he said.

The champion, Young, made another spectacular finish when he won the 2019 edition of the global race.

In 2012, the Red Bull hard enduro rider became the youngest racer to win the iconic motorbike enduro race and has had a close relationship with the event ever since.

After an incredible inaugural season of the FIM Hard Enduro World Championship, Young secured a third place finish, with

83 points after eight rounds at the 2021 FIM Hard Enduro World Championship.

The final chapter of the Championship, the 24MX Gatzenduro which took place in Debrach – Germany, saw the Kwazulu-Natal-born Young battle through the race in 10 laps, finishing in a time of 1:31:29.006.

Some would say that winning one of the toughest hard Enduro races on the planet so early in your career is a fluke. But the manner in which he did it, beating second place by a full eleven minutes and finishing ahead of former winners such as 2011 victor Graham Jarvis (third) and three-time winner Chris Birch, speaks of a rider of class way

beyond his years.

In 2013, (then aged 17) he won the South African Championship in the Senior Off-Road class and took the title in the under-21 class. He also put in credible finishes at Harescramble and Romaniacs and was runner-up in the iconic King of The Hill event.

Then in 2014 Young took the big step up from heir apparent to main contender in the world of Hard Enduro. Not only did he win his second Roof of Africa title, but he also claimed both Ukupachu and King of the Hill Hard Enduro's and stood on the podium at Red Bull Romaniacs and Sea to Sky.

On South African soil he successfully defended his overall South African Enduro championship title.

2015 saw him once again focused on the World Hard Enduro circuit with a fourth place at Romaniacs (he was on course for a much higher finish until he drowned his bike on the final stage) a third place at Sea to Sky and a second at The Roof of Africa.

In 2016 Young signed with Factory Sherco and started the year with a big win at Hell's Gate. A crash at Sea to Sky (where he won the Forest Stage) saw him break a bone in his hand and put an unfortunate end to his season.

He bounced back in 2017 however, and so far has won the German Wiesel-X extreme enduro, King of the Hill Hard Enduro in Romania and the XL Lagares.

He followed this up with an epic 2018 winning three of the major global hard enduro events this year, taking out Red Bull Romaniacs, Red Bull Megawatt III in Poland and Sea to Sky in Turkey, among a string of other podium results. He then capped the year off by successfully defending his Roof of Africa title.

2019 saw him start strong with a runner up finish at the Extreme XL Lagares in Portugal. Unfortunately he spent some time on the sidelines during the middle of the season after having to withdraw from Red Bull Romaniacs due to the crash.

He came back strong during the latter part however, winning the American Hard Enduro Series (AHES) as well as stringing together a host of big results around the globe, including second place at Sea to Sky, winning the Uncle Hard Enduro in South Borneo, Indonesia in late November and claiming the one-day Wildwood Rock Extreme earlier the same month.

He also chalked up yet another Roof of Africa title – his fifth (and his third in a row). With that victory, Young cemented second place in the all-time Roof of Africa hall of fame ahead of Graham Jarvis (four victories) but getting closer to the legendary Alfie Cox, who has nine. Metro/Red Bull media



The Black Knight, international ambassador of golf, Gary Player

JOHANNESBURG - Born on November 1, 1935 in Jupiter Island, Florida, Colesberg, South Africa, Gary Player dubbed the "Black Knight," "Mr Fitness" and the "International ambassador of golf" is a renowned golf course designer with more than 400 design projects located throughout the world.

He is the Designer of "The Links" at Fancourt in South Africa, the site of the 2003 Presidents Cup.

His biggest thrill in golf is being the third player in history after Gene Sarazen and Ben Hogan to win all four Grand Slam events as well as being the only player to achieve the Grand Slam on both the Regular and the Senior Tours.

Among his heroes are Sir Winston Churchill, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi while his favorite athletes are Roger Federer and soccer great, Pele.

Player was honored with the PGA Tour's Lifetime Achievement Award, joining a list of recipients that includes pals Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer as well as Byron Nelson, Sam Snead and former President George H.W. Bush.

In 1955, he won his first tournament as a professional, the East Rand Open and later added the Egyptian Match-play title before he won his first South African Open the following year.

He played in his first World Cup, teaming with Bobby Locke. The team finished second, a distant 14 strokes behind the U.S. team of Ben Hogan-Sam Snead at Wentworth Club in England and won.

He finished T2 in the International Trophy at the World Cup at Kasumigaseki GC in Tokyo, Japan, (with American Snead and Wales' Dave Thomas), in 1957, seven strokes behind winner, Torakichi Nakamura. Teaming with Harold Henning, the duo was solo third, 12 strokes behind Japan (Nakamura-Koichi Ono).

In 1958, he battled Tommy Bolt at the U.S. Open at Southern Hills CC in Tulsa. Finished second, four strokes back of Bolt and battled Snead again, at the Greenbrier Invitational in Virginia, losing in a five-hole playoff after rounds of 66-65-67-66 got him into the overtime session before he won the first TOUR event of his career, at the Kentucky Derby Open. He had four rounds in the 60s at Seneca GC to outdistance Chick Harbert and Ernie Vossler in Louisville.

At the World Cup, he again paired with Harold Henning to solo third at the Mexico GC in Mexico City. In the

individual portion, he T7 with Ben Hogan before he won the Australian Open in record-setting fashion and matched the tournament's 18-hole scoring record, shooting a final-round 66. His 271 total easily surpassed Norman Von Nida's 278 set in 1955.

He claimed his first major title with victory, at The Open Championship, beating Fred Bullock and Flory Van Donck by two strokes at Muirfield. During a qualifying round for The Open Championship at Muirfield GC, he made a double eagle in 1959 and battled Tommy Bolt at the U.S. Open at Southern Hills CC in Tulsa to finish second, four strokes back of Bolt.

In 1960, he won the unofficial Edgewater Pro-Am, an 18-hole event. Tied with Johnny Pott at 64, and the duo was declared co-winners before he successfully defended his Transvaal Open title in his native South Africa, again beating Henning with a 17-under total good for a five-shot triumph.

He was later Henning's partner at the World Cup for the third consecutive year. The duo finished solo fourth, and he was solo fourth in the International Trophy and also won the South African PGA Championship, beating Henning, 3 and 1, in the finals the same year.

In 1961, he won his first of three Masters Tournament titles and also claimed two other victories for first multi-win season. He was the leading money winner on TOUR for the only time in his career. The same year, he became the first international player to win the Masters and won the tournament when Arnold Palmer made double bogey-6 on the 18th hole in the final round after he had made an up-and-down par from the bunker on the same hole.

In 1962, Player reached the final top-five of the season at Seattle World's Fair Open, where he made a fifth-place, showing on the strength of a third-round 64 and won on the first of two PGA Championships—a one-stroke victory over Bob Goalby at Aronimink GC outside Philadelphia. He became the second international player to win the tournament (Jim Ferrier) and the first after the event moved to medal play.

In 1969, he had a close call in Wisconsin, shooting a final-round 65 at the Greater Milwaukee Open, a score matched by Ken Still, who went on to win the event by two strokes and had a two-putt par from 50 feet on the closing hole of the Australian Open during a severe rain and windstorm at Royal Sydney GC to win the tournament for a fifth time. He shot a

5-over 77 Sunday, which was enough to beat Guy Wolstenholme by a stroke.

In 1970, he finished T3 at the Atlanta Classic, two strokes behind winner Tommy Aaron and also made a run at victory at the Houston Champions International. Had 72s in the first three rounds before shooting a final-round 68 to solo fourth. He was T2 at the Tournament of Champions at La Costa, a distant seven strokes behind Frank Beard in defense of his title the year previous and finished a stroke out of the Billy Casper-Gene Littler playoff at the Masters Tournament to finish solo third.

At the National Airlines Open in Miami in 1971, he held a four-stroke lead with two holes to play at the CC of Miami and held on to win by two strokes over Lee Trevino which made him the TOUR's first back-to-back winner in two years before he won his fourth Piccadilly World Match Play Championship, beating Nicklaus for a second time in the finals (1966). He took a 5-and-4 victory.

In 1972, during the PGA Championship, he earned his second PGA Championship title. After making bogey on consecutive holes on the back nine, he birdied the 16th hole to steady himself, ultimately winning by two over Aaron and Jim Jamieson at Oakland Hills CC, 10 years after his first victory in the championship.

In 1974, Player was inducted as a member of the inaugural class of the World Golf Hall of Fame, he captured both the second Masters title of his career and third Open Championship. At Augusta National, he shot a 6-under 66 in the third round and eventually edged Dave Stockton and Tom Weiskopf by two strokes and became the only player in the 20th century to win The Championship in three different decades, beating Peter

Oosterhuis by four strokes at Royal Lytham & St Annes.

He received the Charlie Bartlett Award from the Golf Writers Association of American for his unselfish contributions to the betterment of society in 1974 and won his sixth international title of the year when he won the Australian Open for a seventh time. He began the final round five strokes ahead of Scotsman Norman Wood after a 9-under 63. He went on to win by three strokes over

Wood the same year.

In 1981, he had the privilege of presenting Lee Trevino at Trevino's induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame and won a career-high five times in 20 starts, including his second PGA Seniors' Championship and second U.S. Senior Open in 1988. Player received the South African Sportsman of the Century Award in 1990.

In 1993, he was T4 at The Transamerica, a finish that helped him finish inside the top 30 on the money list for an eighth consecutive season, his best earnings campaign since 1990 before he celebrated his 40th year as a professional with his 38th TOUR victory, a three-stroke win over Dale Douglass at the Bank One Classic in Lexington, Ky.

He was tied with Douglass heading into the final round and responded with a 6-under 66 Sunday, collecting his 17th Champions Tour title.

In 1996, he returned to a familiar position in the top 31 after a year's absence. His 23 tournament appearances yielded just under \$500,00 in prize money (\$494,714) and a 24th-place money-list finish, his best official earnings year since 1992 and was honoured with an honorary Doctor of Science award by the University of Ulster the following year.

He also received the 1998 Hendrik F. Verwoerd Award, named for the assassinated South Africa prime minister who was the principal architect

of the apartheid system and earned the third Masters title of his career when he began the final round seven strokes behind Hubert Green and shot 64, winning by one after birdies on seven of the final 10 holes.

Just two months' shy of his 63rd birthday, in 1998, he became the second-oldest winner in the history of the Champions Tour with his one-stroke victory.

Player was voted South Africa's Sportsman of the Century in 2000 before he was named the World Golf Hall of Fame's Global Ambassador the following year and recipient of the Payne Stewart Award in 2006. He also won the World Golf Hall of Fame exhibited Gary Player—A Global Journey for one year.

He is the recipient of the 2006 Payne Stewart Award, given at THE TOUR Championship in Atlanta in early November. He captained the International team in The Presidents Cup for the third consecutive time. The Internationals lost to the United States in Montreal in 2007.

In 2012, he joined Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus as an Honorary Starter at the Masters Tournament.

Player has been married to Vivienne Verwey for 62 years. He is the father of six children, grandfather of 22, and one great grandchild.

His interest comprises breeding thoroughbred race horses, family, farming, physical fitness, diet and wellness. The Player Foundation benefiting underprivileged children's education with a quest to raise more than \$100 million worldwide. PGA Tour

