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Sunday Express

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Lesotho's only Sunday paper

Fresh headache for Letsoela

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Acrimonious divorce

- Tšepong finally vacates QMMH and govt takes over,
- Netcare accused of looting hospital, sabotage ahead of departure.

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'Marafaele Mohloboli

LEGENDARY musician Tšepo Tshola has been laid to rest in Thaba-Bosiu, at a church cemetery designated for heroes. The Teyateyaneng-born star, who was affectionately known as “The village Pope” for his hauntingly beautiful socially conscious music delivered in rich booming voice, succumbed to Covid-19 complications on 15 July 2021.

His Majesty, King Letsie III attended the burial along with Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro, Thaba-Bosiu Principal Chief Khoabane Theko, other government leaders, clergymen and ordinary members of the public. Also, in attendance were opposition South African political firebrand, Julius Malema, of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) party, Free State MEC Limakatso Mahasa and the Batlokoa Chief Montoeli Mota.

King Letsie III led the tributes, praising Tshola for supporting the royal family with prayers when they were going through troubled times.

“The Tshola family was blessed to have a son like Tšepo Tshola,” His Majesty said.

“We thank God for blessing us with this man of talent. Our hearts are very sore but as Christians, we have to accept and say it is well and let thy will be done Lord.”

Dr Majoro recalled Tshola’s electrifying performances which made him a highly sought-after entertainer and regular feature at the annual Lesotho Tourism Festival of music (LETOFE).

“We would wait for the new artistes to perform and when it was time for Tshola to take the stage, we would then appear and dance the night away.

“Today is a sad day in Lesotho, a day on which we bid farewell to one of our finest. He was a nightingale that sang selflessly and graced international stages. He made us proud and today he is no more,” Dr Majoro said.

Tourism, Environment and Culture Minister Ntlhoi Motsamai consoled Tshola’s family, saying, “we cannot erase your pain but we can help you shoulder the burden and to get back on your feet”.

“Life is better when we are together because we are stronger together. The nation is mourning the departed soul of *Ntate* Tšepo Tshola, a titan of the music industry. A legend, a towering figure has fallen. We have been robbed of a seasoned Afro Jazz artist, a jewel, one of a kind. We have been robbed of Lesotho’s finest breed who was incredibly talented and earned his fame as an internationally acclaimed artist.

“His legacy will forever remain for posterity and his name will be engraved in stone. This has been a period of much pain and sorrow. But amidst the sad reality and tears, we have taken time to reflect.

“We have come out to celebrate a life well-lived and to honour the legacy of *Ntate* Tšepo Mobu Tshola.

“He was born with music clenched tightly in his fist. Music coded his genes and flowed in his veins. He was born to sing and win. He worked very hard to become the best in what he did,” Mr Motsamai said.

Rousing send-off for legend Tšepo Tshola

... His Majesty leads tributes to the late music maestro



HIS Majesty King Letsie III.

Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL) representative, Reverend Teboho Molapo, said, “Tshepo Tshola never discriminated against anyone and treated everyone with equal respect.

“What many did not know is that besides the Commander of the Most Loyal Order of Ramatšeatsana award, Tshepo had also received the Honorary Bishop award in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E) in Africa. He has done his part and like he always said, let’s take the baton and run, may we do that and continue with the journey,” Rev Molapo said.

South African producer Lebogang Morake, better known as Lebo M, also lauded the



SENTEBALE Funeral Gap officials carry Tšepo Tshola's coffin at his burial on Friday.

late Tshola for his “amazing talent”. He described Tshola as a rare gem who had been able to represent the Lesotho and South African musical cultures simultaneously.

On his part, Chief Theko said Tshola had led an exemplary life and thanked his family for allowing him to be buried at the Heroes Acre in Thaba-Bosiu. Tshola became the second Mosotho to be buried at that place after Tšelisio Ramakhula, the late historian and author.

Chief Theko said there were many other luminaries like the author, Thomas Mofolo, and singer Letsema Matšela who were buried in their home areas before the establish-

ment of the Heroes’ Acre.

“It is an honour that the Tshola family has agreed to release their son to be buried away from his home,” Chief Theko said.

“For the longest time, we have not had a place designated for the burial of people who are considered to have lived their lives in a befitting way to be called heroes. We therefore thank the Lesotho Evangelical Church for agreeing to set aside land for this burial site.

“We would like to see many people from all walks of life being buried here who have worked for the betterment of our people and not those who have embarrassed us,” said Chief Theko.

Frazer Solar, govt court battle set for November

Staff Reporter

THE hearing of the government’s eagerly awaited Gauteng High Court application to stop Frazer Solar from seizing its assets has been set for 9 and 19 November 2021.

In a statement yesterday, Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro’s press attaché, Buta Moseme, said the application would be heard on those dates as they were the “nearest available dates” all the parties to the dispute could agree on.

“The case will now be heard on the 9th and 10th of November 2021, those being the nearest available dates agreed upon by all parties,” Mr Moseme said.

“In the interim, Frazer Solar has undertaken to take no further steps to execute the order granted by the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Local Division, Johannesburg) and any writ of execution or notice of attachment issued pursuant to that order, pending finalisation of the Kingdom’s application for a stay. There is a consent draft order of court to that effect,” Mr Moseme added.

The Lesotho government’s application seeks to reverse the same court’s April 2021 order endorsing the awarding of a default

£50 million (M856 million) damages claim brought against it by Frazer Solar.

The massive damages award against the Lesotho government arose from its alleged breach of its 2018 contract with Frazer Solar for the provision of 40 000 solar water heating systems, 20 megawatts of solar power capacity, 1 million LED lights and 350 000 solar lanterns to Lesotho over four years.

Dr Majoro was finance minister at the time of the deal. He had refused to sign the financing agreement for the project. Former Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office, Tšolo, had already signed the main supply agreement before Dr Majoro’s refusal, the company claimed.

The damages were initially awarded in January 2020 by South African arbitrator, Vincent Maleka. Frazer Solar subsequently successfully petitioned the Gauteng High Court in April to endorse the award. The South African court also court granted Frazer Solar’s application to garnish the royalties due to Lesotho in terms of the bi-national Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP).

Buoyed by the court judgment, Frazer Solar also moved to seize Lesotho government assets in other countries. These include the government’s shares in a Mauritian com-

pany, West Indian Ocean Cable Company (WIOCC).

The looming seizure of the assets finally jolted the government into action. Last month, it dispatched an inter-ministerial delegation for talks with South Africa to stop Frazer Solar from laying its hands on the water royalties and any other Lesotho assets in South Africa.

The government followed up on the talks by assembling a team of lawyers from four different law firms in South Africa to collectively formulate an application for the reversal of the court judgement garnishing the water royalties.

In his founding affidavit filed with the Gauteng High Court last month, Dr Majoro accuses Mr Tšolo of illegally signing the controversial deal with Frazer Solar.

Dr Majoro said Mr Tšolo had no right to negotiate and sign such an agreement.

The premier said the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO)’s investigations had established that there was “evidence which points in the direction of this (legal) process having been deliberately kept from the relevant officials, for a corrupt purpose”.

The premier further alleges that he only

learnt about the Gauteng High Court’s April 2021 judgement in favour of Frazer Solar from the media on 18 May 2021.

He states that any seizure of Lesotho’s assets to pay off the alleged debt to Frazer Solar “would be catastrophic for the finances of Lesotho”.

However, Frazer Solar accuses the premier of lying.

“Dr Majoro has misled the DCEO,” Frazer Solar said in a statement issued last week.

“He has misled Basotho and now we learn he intends to mislead the South African court as well. This pattern of inaccuracies raises serious questions over the Government of Lesotho’s ability to present any credible legal case as and when proceedings begin in South Africa.

“It is clear that complacency, not conspiracy, is the reason why the Lesotho government (GOL) has failed to engage with this legal process.

“This fanciful conspiracy has been dreamed up by Dr Majoro. It is an insult to Basotho, and a desperate attempt to distract attention away from the multiple opportunities he (Dr Majoro) and the GOL were offered to resolve this dispute but failed to act,” Frazer Solar says.