

The Government is taking another initiative to get this matter of licences resolved. Accordingly, I have issued instructions through the Minister of Finance to the effect that officers of the Mining Department should proceed to Kao on , March , 1969, and remain there for approximately 14 days. The purpose of their visit is to issue permanent licences to those diggers who previously applied for licences and who have satisfied all the necessary legal requirements. To other diggers a temporary licence will be granted for 3 months while their application forms for permanent licences are being processed.

The Government is taking this step to minimise the hardships on the diggers and to ensure that their digging operations are not halted.

Every digger must obtain a licence during these 14 days and anyone failing to do so will be contravening the law and this act may have serious consequences.

This instruction ensures, I repeat ensures, that diggers will not be required to vacate or leave their diggings for any period of time. The Government officers will have application forms for the diggers to complete before being granted a three months' digging licence. The licence will entitle the diggers to dig for diamonds at Kao and Liqhobong.

I trust that you will recognise in this instruction my intention and that of Government to legalise the present situation with the minimum of inconvenience to the diggers.

The licences will take the form of a contract between the diggers and the Lesotho National Development Corporation, a wholly-owned Government organization which has been granted the mining rights at Kao and Liqhobong.

The diggers will be required to pay R1.00 for a 3-months' licence and this money will be paid into general Government revenue. As licensed diggers they will be entitled to be in lawful possession of any diamonds which they may find and which they will be conveying to licensed dealers for their sale.

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