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nabbed with
E4.7m of dagga at
Oshoek border**

By Thokozeni Mazibuko

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■ **SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2**



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Two emaSwati nabbed with E4.7m of dagga at Oshoek border

By Thokozani Mazibuko

SOUTH African Police on Monday made a breakthrough by arresting two suspects from Eswatini after they were found in possession of more than E4.7 million worth of dagga.

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“The SAPS members from Border Policing made a breakthrough by arresting two suspects, aged 33 and 34 after being found in possession of more than R4.7 million worth of dagga near Oshoek Ports of Entry on Monday, 22 April 2024,” the SAPS was quoted in its official Facebook page yesterday.

It is said that the members of the SAPS were doing their routine patrol duties near the Redhill-off ramp when they spotted a white Toyota Hilux, branded with a certain Courier company logo. Upon stopping this vehicle, the report discloses that they conducted a thorough search and it was during this time when the astute members discovered large wrapped packages, loaded with 1,133 kg of dagga at the back of the bakkie.

It is said that the estimated street value of the dagga is at about R4, 758, 600, 00 and



▲Bags of dagga were found in a Toyota Hilux at Oshoek border.

according to the report, it was also during this period when the two male suspects were apprehended and charged for dealing in dagga.

Meanwhile, this is not the only major bust, but it has also been reported on the SAPS website that the border policing unit has arrested a 43-year-old truck driver from the Kingdom of Eswatini for allegedly attempting to smuggle dagga into South Africa. In a statement on Friday, the SAPS said the male suspect was apprehended at the Oshoek Port of Entry in the early hours of Thursday morning, last week.

According to police, at around 00:30 am, the suspect was searched by members of the SAPS on the arrivals side of the port of entry.

“It was during this search that the astute members discovered the dagga concealed under a load of timber. As a result, the driver



was detained and charged accordingly,” the statement said.

A total of 150kgs of dagga with an estimated street value of R630 840 was seized.

The truck, with number plates from the Kingdom of Eswatini, was confiscated together with the seized dagga for further investigation.

The suspect is expected to appear at the Elukwatini Magistrate’s Court today.

Mpumalanga Provincial Commissioner of the Police, Lieutenant General Semakaleng Daphney Manamela, in the statement applauded the members for their dedication.

“The continuous arrests and successes witnessed at the borders prove that indeed the members are working with diligence. They are doing an excellent job daily,” General Manamela said.

14 year-old boy stabs 16-year-old to death

Another gruesome murder occurred at Lobamba whereby a 14-year-old boy stabbed and killed a 16-year-old boy who was selling in this area at Sihlahleni traffic circle, yesterday.

Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent, Nosipho Mnguni confirmed the alleged murder.

The 14-year-old suspect is expected to be brought before the Magistrate court on Wednesday (today) where he will be formally charged with the murder.

It cannot be ascertained at the time of going to the Press if the suspect is attending school or not.

In an earlier report, Judge Langwenya stated that Eswatini came third at the rate of 9.31 stabbing deaths per 100,000 people.

She said death by stabbing was a tragically common occurrence in the world today and it is one of the leading cases of violent deaths ranking in the top three alongside shootings and beatings.

By Ncaba Ntshakala
ncaban@rubiconmedia.group

PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini has emphasized the importance of bridging the divide between senior nurses and junior staff, stating that this gap has contributed to challenges between the government and the nurses’ union.

The Premier made these remarks while inaugurating the Eswatini Nursing Leadership Initiative which PEPFAR supports on Monday at the Hilton Garden Inn. Also present during the launch was the Minister of Health Mduduzi Matsebula and officials from the U.S Embassy.

During the launch, the Prime Minister added that Eswatini has been steadfast against the backdrop of the ongoing battle against HIV/AIDS and the Kingdom’s commitment to achieving ambitious healthcare targets.

The Premier expressed the significance of the Nursing Leadership Initiative in fortifying Eswatini’s healthcare infrastructure. With pride, Dlamini celebrated Eswatini’s distinction as one of the seven African countries selected to benefit from this transformative initiative, highlighting the pivotal role nurses play as the backbone of the nation’s health sector.

“The Nursing Leadership Initiative represents a pivotal moment in our collective journey towards achieving our healthcare goals,” declared the Premier. Against the backdrop of past achievements and present challenges, he articulated a vision of resilience and progress, grounded

PM highlights need of addressing the gap between senior and junior nurses

in the empowerment of Eswatini’s nursing cadre.

Central to the Prime Minister’s address were the three foundational priorities of the Nursing Leadership Initiative, each meticulously crafted to empower nurses to lead, adapt, and thrive amidst evolving healthcare landscapes. Firstly, Dlamini viewed the imperative of building leadership capacity among nurses, recognizing their dual role as caregivers and leaders within the healthcare system. The Prime Minister stated that through targeted training and mentorship programs, nurses would be equipped with the tools and expertise needed to navigate the complexities of healthcare leadership, ensuring the sustainability of past gains and the effective management of emerging public health threats.

Secondly, Dlamini emphasised the importance of strengthening frontline nurses’ capacity to respond to emerging public health threats and emergencies. As the first point of contact for individuals seeking healthcare services, frontline nurses play a pivotal role in detecting and responding to new and evolving infections. By providing specialized training in infection control, disease surveillance, and outbreak management, Eswatini aims to empower its frontline nurses to address the evolving landscape of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, with efficiency and precision.



▲Prime Minister Russell Dlamini delivering his remarks during the PEPFAR Nursing Leadership Initiative launch.

Also, the Premier added the commitment to promoting workplace wellness among nurses, recognizing their invaluable contribution to patient care amidst the demands and pressures of their profession. Pushing for a supportive workplace culture, characterized by mental health support services, stress management programs, and work-life balance initiatives, Eswatini seeks to create an environment where nurses feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive both personally and professionally.

The Prime Minister extended a heartfelt appreciation to PEPFAR for entrusting the Ministry of Health with the implementation of the Nurse Leadership Initiative, acknowledging their pledge to advancing global health. He also lauded the dedication and commitment of nurses across Eswatini, from training institutions to nursing associations, for their tireless efforts in improving healthcare delivery in the beloved nation.

Dlamini expressed the Ministry of Health’s commitment to the sustainability of the initiative and pledged to work tirelessly alongside partners and stakeholders to ensure its success. He then declared the Eswatini Nurse Leadership Initiative officially launched.

UNAIDS pledges support of Nursing Leadership Initiative

The UNAIDS Country Representative highlighted that they would offer technical and financial assistance to PEPFAR and the Ministry of Health for the initiative. The Country Representative lauded the collaboration between the government and PEPFAR for the initiative and their commitment towards eradicating AIDS. The Country Representative lauded nurses for their service and pledged to support and promote the Nursing Leadership Initiative.

Eswatini hosts ISSA seminar

By Ncaba Ntshakala
ncaban@rubiconmedia.group

THE Minister of Labour and Social Security, Phila Buthelezi, shared his keynote address to mark the commencement of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) Technical Seminar on Monday at the Happy Valley Hotel.

Hosted by the Eswatini National Provident Fund (ENPF), the three-day event focuses on "Preventing fraud, strengthening compliance, and improving contribution collection - Institutional strategies and innovative approaches."

The Minister officially opened the seminar by expressing immense pleasure in welcoming participants to this vital event. "This gathering brings together esteemed experts, policymakers, and practitioners - a powerful combination for tackling these critical issues in social security," he remarked, as he was setting the tone for an engaging and fruitful discourse.

Gratitude and recognition were extended to the organizers, sponsors, and participants who made the seminar possible. In particular, Minister Buthelezi acknowledged ISSA Secretary General, Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano, and all member organizations for their continued dedication to strengthening social security in the region.

Cornerstone

"Social security is the cornerstone of any prosperous society," the Minister emphasized, highlighting ISSA's pivotal role in expanding social protection and uplifting the lives of workers and their families. Buthelezi lauded Eswatini's achievements through its partnership with ISSA, citing advancements in social security programs and the ongoing endeavour to extend coverage to all workers.

Of particular significance is the transformation of the provident fund into a pension scheme, a central goal for the Government of Eswatini.

Minister Phila Buthelezi shared the Government's firm commitment to this objective and expressed gratitude for His Majesty's Government's immense support.

Collaboration and learning were emphasized as key drivers of progress in social security. The Minister highlighted the importance of leveraging the ISSA network and seeking expertise from global leaders to guide the Government's efforts, particularly

... Minister Phila extols the value of social security collaboration

in expanding social security to the informal sector.

Since 2018, Eswatini has proudly hosted the ISSA Regional Liaison Office for Southern Africa. Minister Phila Buthelezi expressed delight at hosting the seminar coinciding with the office's sixth anniversary, viewing the Kingdom's commitment to a long-lasting partnership with ISSA.

Minister Phila further recognized the exceptional work of the outgoing Chairman of the ISSA Regional Liaison Office for Southern Africa, Minister Prince Lonkhokhela. He commended his leadership and dedication, which shaped many aspects of the regional organization and facilitated the housing of the ISSA Regional Office in Eswatini.

Despite its size, Eswatini has made significant contributions to social security, earning international recognition and respect. The Minister of Labour and Social Security expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share expertise on a global platform and hoped that participation in the seminar would further strengthen the Kingdom's position in the global social security community.

Warm welcome

As he was closing, the Minister extended a warm welcome to all distinguished delegates, inviting them to experience the peaceful and respectful culture of Eswatini. With these opening remarks, she officially declared the seminar open, setting the stage for fruitful discussions and collaboration in the days ahead.

The International Social Security Association (ISSA) is the world's leading international organization for social security institutions, government departments and agencies. The ISSA was founded in 1927 under the auspices of the International Labour Organization, and today has over 320 member institutions from over 160 countries.

The ISSA promotes excellence in social security administration through professional guidelines, expert knowledge, services and support to enable its members to develop dynamic social security systems and policies throughout the world.

The association provides an exclusive member community and promotes cooperation and exchange through events and expert networks. It also develops professional standards, undertakes research and analysis, identifies good practices, and provides data



▲ Minister of Labour and Social Security Phila Buthelezi delivering his remarks when he officially opened the ISSA Technical Seminar.



▲ Minister Phila Buthelezi receiving a token from the ISSA Secretary General, Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano.

on social security systems in 177 countries. ISSA offers practical services and support for social security administrations, and it further facilitates innovative approaches to

strengthen administration, anticipate risks and manage change. Again, the ISSA supports global advocacy to promote comprehensive social security.

SHOCKER!!

3% of girls in Eswatini engage in sex at the age of 15

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THREE per cent of girls aged 15-17 had had a sexual experience by the age of 15 and none of the boys had sex by this age.

This is contained in the 2024 Eswatini National Population Policy Draft.

The 2024 Eswatini National Population Policy is built on the experiences from the review of the 2002 National Population Policy. The 2002 policy was Eswatini's first National Population Policy and was developed as part of the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

Apart from addressing high levels of maternal mortality and emerging issues, the 2024 National Population Policy has also been developed to accelerate the integration of population variables into development planning and efforts aimed at harnessing the demographic dividend.

According to the 2024 National Population Policy Draft, Eswatini's fertility has been falling over the past decades.

"A trend analysis reveals that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined from 7.8 children per woman in 1966 to 3.2 children per woman in 2021-2022. This translates into a decline of about four children per woman," read the policy draft in part.

According to the policy draft, the decline

in total fertility has been observed in both rural and urban areas, however, it has been more pronounced in urban areas.

The policy draft further states that in 2007, the fertility rate in urban areas was three children per woman, while in rural areas, it was 5.6 children per woman.

"Similarly, in 2021-22 fertility was 2.9 for urban areas and 3.3 in rural areas. However, it is worth noting that there was a slight increase in TFR for urban women from 2.3 in 2007 to 2.9 in 2021-22," read the policy draft. According to the policy draft, the country experienced a notable decline in teenage pregnancy, with the adolescent birth rate dropping from 87 per 1000 adolescents in 2014 to 78 per 1000 adolescents

in 2021-22. It states that current estimates show that the proportion of women aged 15-19 years who are married or in the union was at three per cent in 2021-2022 reducing from four per cent in 2014.

The policy draft further states that sexual debut figures reveal that three per cent of girls aged 15-17 had had a sexual experience by the age of 15 and none of the boys had sex by this age.

"These indicators influence the early start of childbearing which hurts education attainment and prospects of gainful employment," read the policy draft. It further reveals that (TFR) is expected to continue to fall from 3.2 per cent in 2017 to 2.5 per cent in 2038.

Siblings fighting over E52 000 worth estate

Stories by Bahle Gama
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TWO siblings decided to battle it out before the Commission of Inquiry of the Master of the High Court over their late mother's vehicle worth E52,000. Boycey Magongo made his submissions before the Commission wherein he stated that his sister should have not been appointed as an executor of their mother's estate.

He stated that his sister Bongiwe once threatened to assault him and reported him to the police for stealing their mother's vehicle when such was not the case. Instead, he bought the vehicle from his mother when she wanted to renovate her kitchen.

His sister Bongiwe was present and told the Commission that she had a car breakdown and had to borrow her mother's car, who told her to ask Boycey because he disappeared with it such that she could no longer go to hospital.

When Bongiwe called Boycey he stated that the car was at the garage being replaced with shocks and other items and was in short of E2,500 for payment, which she said she would pay because she needed to use it.

It turned out that Boycey had pawned the vehicle for a loan.

"I asked our mother about this, and she was beyond baffled as we all were because the vehicle was under her name not Boycey's. I then advised her to open a case with



▲ The siblings Boycey and Bongiwe Magongo.

the police because what our brother had done was illegal," she said.

Their mother opened a case that is pending in court restricting the sale of the vehicle which will allow for the estate to be winded up.

According to Bongiwe, when Boycey found out that police officers from Manzini were looking for him, he rushed to Mbabane police station to report that officers from Manzini were harassing him.

When the officers called the Manzini office, they were directed to tell Boycey to report to the Manzini police station or he would be listed as a fugitive.

He immediately reported to Manzini, and

he was arrested and charged with the theft of a motor vehicle.

When their mother died on April 25, 2023, Bongiwe had to list all her properties as inventory which consisted of the vehicle only because the homestead is on Swazi Nation Land and cannot be sold.

However, the vehicle was found to have been illegally registered under Boycey, and he said he had bought it from their mother.

Boycey was questioned on why his mother would report him for stealing the vehicle if he had purchased it and when asked to produce receipts, he said his mother never gave him any.

According to Bongiwe, Boycey does not

listen to any of his siblings such that they have been to Umphakatsi which also washed its hands on his conduct and the matter has been reported at the Magistrates Court for a peace binding.

The vehicle cannot be sold, and the money distributed until Boycey's criminal matter has been concluded as it is an exhibit as per the directive from the prosecutor handling the matter. Therefore, the estate remains unwinded.


'Nibanga lite'

DEPUTY Chairperson of the Commission of Inquiry probing Master of the High Court Judge Mzwandile Fakudze said the siblings are fighting over nothing and should find means to keep the peace.

"This is an estate of E52,000 and you all are grabbing each other's throats over nothing," he said.

Fakudze said the siblings should listen to Umphakatsi, stop fighting, and consider that the family homestead is built on Swazi Nation Land and therefore cannot be distributed.

As a result, they should live in harmony for their sake and that of their children.



Living The Football Spirit And Our Pride

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR PROJECT CONSULTANTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOOTBALL TECHNICAL CENTRE (EFAMTC01/2404)

An Expression of Interest is hereby invited from suitably qualified Project Consultants, for the construction of the Eswatini Football Association's (EFA's) Technical Centre, to be implemented in the Manzini Region in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Completed tenders should be hand-delivered in a sealed envelope to the EFA's Head Office at Sigwaca House , in Mbabane and the envelope should only show the Project Name (Football Technical Centre), Project Number (EFAMTC01/2404) and addressed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
Eswatini Football Association
Plot 582
Sigwaca House
Mbabane Industrial Site

The above sealed envelopes must be accompanied by a Proof of Payment for a Non- Refundable Expression of Interest Fee of E2 500.00 to Eswatini Football Association payable to Nedbank Eswatini, Account No. 020000025896, Mbabane Branch (360164) and Swift Code NESWSZMX and bearing the Reference (EFAMTC01/2404).

Expression of Interest closes on Friday, 26th April 2024 at 1600hrs (4:00pm). Enquiries, administrative, and technical relating to the expression of interest may be addressed **ONLY** to the Chief Executive Officer via email : info@nfas.org.sz

EFA does not bind herself to acceptance of the lowest or any expression of interest.

'Side chick' (38) lays rape charge against married man (34)

FOR every action, there is an opposite reaction.

This is evident in a situation whereby a married man who has found himself in hot water after his sexual partner reported him to the police for allegedly committing the offence.

The accused person Sandile Shoba Ginindza put in an urgent bail application at the Hogh Court on Tuesday where he disclosed that he is married, and the complainant is his sexual partner.

In his affidavit, Ginindza stated that he had known the complainant for quite some time and had a sexual relationship whilst he was residing at his parental homestead at Mpolonjeni in Mbabane before he relocated to his homestead at Luve.

On the day of the alleged incident, the couple went out for alcoholic beverages at Mpolonjeni where they were together with their friends.

"Whilst enjoying alcoholic drinks, we would from time to time kiss each other. She was the one who was pursuing me in the presence of my other friends," he submitted.

According to Ginindza, late in the night, he informed one of his friends that he was calling it a night and was headed home.

The complainant offered to accompany him as it was already dark, and he was no longer familiar with the area because he resided at Luve.

Ginindza said he innocently agreed to her offer, and they left for his parental homestead, however, upon arrival at the

gate, she allegedly started kissing him and further suggested that he walk her to her house because she was home alone.

"To my surprise and dismay, she told me she did not feel safe as it was dark, yet she was the one who had accompanied me home.

When we got to her house, she invited me inside and proceeded to her bedroom where she returned with condoms, told me to put one on and engage in sexual intercourse with her," he said.

However, Ginindza was baffled when he received a call on April 18 whilst at his homestead at Luve that she should report at the Mbabane Police Station which he did.

Upon arrival, he was arrested and charged with contravening Section 3 (3) of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act (SODV) 15 of 2018.

He told the court he is married with three minor children and resides with his elderly grandmother at Luve all of whom are fully dependent on him for maintenance and upkeep.

He submitted that he would plead not guilty to the charge and further undertook that he would adhere to all bail conditions imposed by the High Court.





▲ Assistant Commissioner Nicholas Jele educating during the training.



▲ SOS Children's Village officials following proceedings during the training.

Cybersecurity, Health awareness

SOS Children's Villages empower youth

By Ncaba Ntshakala
ncaban@rubiconmedia.group

TEACH them young!

SOS Children's Villages Eswatini organized a comprehensive training session which focused on cybersecurity, sexual reproductive health rights, and mental health awareness. The initiative, which targeted approximately 150 children and young people from Lugongolweni, Langa, Sikhuphe, and other locals within the Lubombo region. In a statement shared by SOS Children's Villages Communication Coordinator Temalangen Dlamini, the event was aimed at addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by adolescents, particularly during school holidays.

The training, spearheaded by SOS Children's Villages in Siteki, emerged from a recognition of the vulnerabilities children encounter when left idle at home. In response, the organization seized the opportunity to educate youngsters on safeguarding themselves across various domains, including online safety, physical health, and mental well-being.

During the event, the sessions commenced with discussions on child protection and safeguarding, led by Gugulethu Mavuso, the National Child Safeguarding Coordinator at SOS Children's Villages. Mavuso highlighted the reciprocal nature of rights and responsibilities, urging participants to honor their obligations while demanding respect for their rights. Emphasizing

the importance of parental involvement, children were encouraged to actively engage in household chores and maintain respectful communication with their guardians.

Assistant Commissioner Nicholas Jele and Cyber Crime Investigator Sergeant Ntokozo Msibi from the Fraud & Commercial Unit's Cyber Desk addressed the prevalent threats of cybercrimes and online harassment and they provided insights into cybercrime prevention strategies. Commissioner Jele issued a stern warning against engaging in illicit online activities, particularly cautioning against divulging personal information and forming relationships with strangers that could potentially lead to child trafficking.

The pivotal role of parental support and understanding in navigating these challenges was emphasized throughout the training. Participants were urged to maintain open communication with their parents or trusted individuals, seeking assistance whenever faced with difficulties or threats.

Further enriching the program, Bukiwe Dlamini, Prevention Officer from Bantwana Initiatives, shed light on the importance of

mental health maintenance. Dlamini shared the positive aspects of leisure time, urging the youth to harness their creativity and explore new avenues of expression during periods of idleness. Dlamini emphasized the need for relaxation and play, as vital components of mental well-being. She further said such aims to mitigate the risk of depression and other mental health issues that could potentially escalate to suicide.

SOS Children's Villages Eswatini is an independent, non-governmental child welfare organization and an affiliate member of SOS Children's Villages International. Established in 1989, SOS main objective is to support and provide quality childcare to children who have lost parental care and those at risk of losing parental care.

The organization since its inauguration has strived to drive its mission of building families for children in need, helping them shape their own futures and contribute to the development of their communities. Currently, SOS has 288 children in the three villages. It also have 3213 children and youths being assisted in communities under the Family strengthening programmes.

Young man who loves widows, challenges MPs;

Enact law protecting widows urgently

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

A young man who has been advocating for the rights of widows for over 8 years now is urging the government to pass laws that protect them and their children.

Delaying the enactment of such a law will have consequences for the children of current lawmakers in the future, according to Lungelo Zulu, Director of Umhluma Women and Youth Foundation, a widows' organization.

Zulu shared, "After losing my father 21 years ago, I developed a deep appreciation for widows. Unfortunately, due to the Inheritance Rights Act, my siblings, mother, and I were not entitled to any inheritance from my father's estate. The issue was that we were the children of his second wife."

Zulu confided in Eswatini on Sunday that he and his siblings had to experience the sorrow and difficulties of losing their father, who was the

only one providing for the family. Zulu recalled the challenging period after their father's passing and emphasized the absence of assistance and safeguards given to widows and their children in such circumstances. "We didn't receive anything after our father's death," he revealed honestly.

Zulu, who possesses a deep empathy for those who are in similar situations, passionately urged the members of Parliament to consider the suffering of widows and their children. Zulu requested the Parliamentarians to take concrete steps to ensure that the welfare and rights of widows and their children are protected by the law.

It is important to note that in the absence of adequate legal provisions, widows and their children face a host of challenges.

Zulu further pointed out that their organization, which has been operational for 8 years, advocates for the rights of widows and provides advice on all customary rights issues. They also provide capacity building on self-sustainable development to reduce vulnerability.



▲ Director of Umhluma Women and Youth Foundation, Lungelo Zulu.

Zulu spoke to Eswatini Sunday, stating that during their youthful years, they have devoted themselves to advocating for the

rights, welfare, politics, and legislation concerning widows.

The director also urged the church to fulfill their biblical obligation to take care of widows and their orphaned children.

"I constantly speak about the plights faced by widows in the country because I know the widowhood experience through my mother. Growing up without a father is hard and painful," pointed out the director.

Zulu believes that it is important to have this law because it will legally protect and safeguard the rights and welfare of widows.

"My request to the newly elected Member of Parliament is to raise motions in the parliament regarding the rights of widows in the country. It is important to protect and respect them, as anyone can become fatherless anytime and can become a widow anytime. Therefore, I urge all the Parliamentarians to take necessary steps to safeguard their rights."

Zulu made an appeal to all women to prevent any widow or child from shedding tears. He emphasized that nobody chooses to become a widow or fatherless. Therefore, it is our collective responsibility to take care of them.

The sad truth is that anyone can become a widow or fatherless, anytime.

Widows need mental wellness support-Umhluma Foundation

THE Umhluma Foundation, which supports widows in Eswatini, has brought attention to the mental well-being of its members.

Umhluma Foundation's Director, Lungelo Zulu, has highlighted the dire need for mental wellness support among over 7000 widows under the foundation's care.

Zulu has raised her voice on behalf of

widows who are not receiving adequate protection under existing laws. She has highlighted the various challenges that widows in Eswatini face, such as land grabbing and discrimination, which worsen their already difficult circumstances and exacerbate their mental health issues.

The revelation of the staggering number of widows in need of mental wellness

assistance underscores the urgent need for greater support and resources to address their emotional well-being.

Support

"The Umhluma Foundation is a strong support system for widows across the nation. They are calling for increased awareness and action to address the mental health challenges faced by this vulnerable group.

Zulu, a representative of the foundation, is championing the cause of widows by advocating for their rights,

protection, and overall well-being. By bringing attention to the struggles of widows in Eswatini, the foundation hopes to encourage support and create a more compassionate and inclusive society for all its members.

By Thokozani Mazibuko

A 74-year-old man who was arrested for drunk driving left everyone in court in stitches when he informed the presiding magistrate that he had been wrongfully detained as the arresting officer took his breath specimen without his consent and further tempered with the breathalyzer. This, he said, was because he had taken the liquor the previous day and therefore, there was no way in which alcohol could have been detected in his breath specimen.

Joram Suborurema of Malkerns Square appeared yesterday before Principal Magistrate David Khumalo at the Manzini Magistrates Court.

He was charged with the contravention of Section 91 (1) as read with Section 122 (2) of the Road Traffic Act 6 of 2007.

According to the charge sheet, being the driver of a Honda sedan, Suborurema wrongfully drove the said vehicle at Nyandza under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drug with a reading of 0.73mg/l which was above the legal limit of 0.38mg/l.

His particulars of drink-driving were said to have been that he had a sharp smell of liquor through his breath and bloodshot eyes.

According to Suborurema, he was shocked after being arrested for driving a motor ve-

hicle while under the influence of alcohol since he had only imbibed the liquor on the previous day of his arrest.

He, therefore, opined that his arrest was unlawful since the reading on the breathalyzer was not factual.

According to the senior citizen, when explaining the circumstances leading to his arrest, he was celebrating the release of his relative from prison after being arrested for over 30 years.

He said thereafter, he never touched alcohol until he was arrested for drink-driving the following day.

He complained that even though he was 74 years of age, the police were keen to keep him in police cells for a longer period before he could appear in court.

The presiding magistrate elucidated to Suborurema that police officers were laymen, and therefore, they were not privy to how one has to temper with a breathalyser.

He, therefore, sentenced him to one-year imprisonment with an option of paying a fine of E2 000.



▲ Joram Suborurema of Malkerns Square appeared yesterday before Principal Magistrate David Khumalo at the Manzini Magistrates Court.

Man granted E3k bail for stealing two goats

By Delisa Thwala

A man from Nkhaba was granted bail of E3000 for stealing two goats worth E2,400 and a Samsung tablet worth E1,500. Sabelo Seluleko Mamba appeared before Magistrate Lenhle Zulu and, in his plea for bail, stated that he was a breadwinner at home, had children of his own, and that his parents were sickly.

The magistrate, after careful consideration, granted him bail, subject to certain terms that are designed to reduce the risk of further offences being committed.

It should be noted that a breach of bail conditions is not an offence but does carry a power of arrest. It is encouraging to know that up to 90% of defendants are successfully bailed with conditions, which are complied with and have therefore meant that the victim or community has been protected from further harm while preventing the need for unnecessary or inappropriate detention in police custody or prison custody.

Another matter of Sihle Ntshangase was taken down by the court after seeing traces of passion. Ntshangase appeared before the court for stealing items worth E2,800 from the mother of his baby. He took Avon lotions, Avon oils, Chanel perfume, a sling bag, baby wipes, perfumes, and Air pods. The value of the stolen items combined was E2,805. Magistrate Zulu warned both parents not to use the child as a weapon in their fights and further warned the mother, Ms Babazile Dlamini, not to defer payments of maintenance. She made it clear that the child would be taken away from both if they continued



▲ Sabelo Mamba who stole goats before the Magistrate.

with such behaviour.

In the same court, two warrants of arrest were issued to Alpheus Mamba and Sibusiso Mpungose. Two young boys were called in front of the magistrate for theft, on April 20, 2024, in Nkoyoyo. They broke into a home and stole a brush cutter worth E2,700. They both had a lawyer who mitigated on their behalf.

The brush cutter was also brought to court as evidence and it highlighted that it was recovered as soon as they stole it. They were charged E1500 each and faced five months

in prison. This was the same fate for Mr. Melusi Shernpad Shongwe who drove into another car at Pick n Pay traffic lights.

When he did this on March 25, 2024, he rammed into another car that he could not help fix. He was fined E500 for negligent driving, and default of payment grants him five months behind bars. It is important to note that the court takes all matters seriously and strives to ensure that justice is served fairly and impartially.

‘My girlfriend (11) told me she was 18’

...body structure and meeting area convinced the suspect that the victim was telling the truth

By Bahle Gama
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A rape suspect, Bonginkhosi Ayanda Mavuso (23) has told the High Court that the complainant he is accused of raping lied about her real age.

He was on April 3 arrested for rape and charged with contravening Section 3 (3) (a) of the Sexual Offence and Domestic Violence Act 15 of 2018 for unlawfully having sexual intercourse with an 11-year-old once without a condom.

The high school-going suspect told the court that he met the victim three months ago at a sports ground where he is currently schooling and when he proposed love to her, she told him she was 18 years old.

He took into consideration her mature body structure and the fact that they met at the High School sports ground and

believed her.

Mavuso stated that before they engaged in sexual intercourse on the day in question, she allegedly disclosed to him that she previously had engaged in sexual relations with two other boys from the surrounding area, and assured him she was of mature age and could consent to the encounter.

“I only discovered her real age when I was arrested that she had lied. At all material times in our two-month relationship, I was under the impression that the complainant is 18 and was about to complete high school,” Mavuso submitted.

He stated that he is innocent and will plead not guilty during trial.

Bail was granted at E50,000 and Mavuso was ordered to pay E5,000 cash and the rest as surety and he is expected to report at the Piggs Peak police station every last Friday of the month pending finalisation of the matter.



▲ A rape suspect, Bonginkhosi Ayanda Mavuso (23) has told the High Court that the complainant he is accused of raping lied about her real age.

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

'18 % chance of women graduating with a bachelor's degree'

A STUDY by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) revealed that 14 countries, one of which is Eswatini that the possibility for female students graduating with a Bachelors' degree was 18%. When unpacking the study, Dr Rejoice Maseko said it was amazing to see the numbers, but they also proved more women needed to join the field.

World Vision for the girl child

WORLD Vision Eswatini (WVE) has helped countless young girls overcome adversity and achieve their dreams. Their CANGO News-funded project, "Halting the Spread of HIV And Reversing Its Impact In The Swazi Society," has been a powerful tool for change in the Shiselweni region. Sekwenele, a 17-year-old from Mantambe, was one of the young girls whose life was transformed by this project.

SARB: path to 4.5% inflation likely 'bumpy and protracted'

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa's central bank said on Tuesday that the path back to 4.5 per cent inflation would probably be "bumpy and protracted" after setbacks in the disinflation trajectory in recent months. The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) has held its main interest rate at 8.25 per cent since May 2023, keeping policy restrictive to try to steer inflation towards the midpoint of its 3 per cent to 6 per cent target band.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	18.8240	19.3266
G.B. Pound	23.1885	23.8725
EURO	20.0335	20.6395
Bank Rate (July 2023)		7.50%
Prime Rate (July 2023)		11%
Inflation (July 2023)		4.5%
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90 /Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	

£

\$

Minister Tshawuka advocates for sustainable agriculture at FAO Africa conference



▲Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka during the 33rd FAO Africa Conference.

By Ncaba Ntshakala
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THE Minister of Agriculture, Mandla Tshawuka, alongside Minister of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Jane Mkhonta and Principal Secretary Sydney Simelane, attended the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 33rd Africa Conference and the Moroccan International Trade Fair.

The conference, which is a pivotal platform for discussions on pressing agricultural and environmental issues, saw Minister Tshawuka actively engaging on crucial topics such as the Blue Economy and the transformation of agrifood systems.

During the conference, Minister Mandla Tshawuka highlighted impactful contributions that expressed Eswatini's commitment to addressing regional challenges and strengthening sustainable development. According to information shared by the Ministry, in a morning session focused on the Blue Economy, Tshawuka highlighted the unique predicament faced by landlocked countries, including Eswatini, which lack direct access to ocean resources.

He called upon coastal nations to facilitate the participation of landlocked countries in the Blue Economy, emphasizing the importance of equitable access to aquatic food systems for all nations.

Furthermore, Minister Tshawuka appealed to the FAO to support Eswatini in developing its Fisheries and Aquatic food system, recognizing the potential for growth and food security in this sector. He also urged coastal countries to combat unsustainable fishing practices, emphasizing the urgency of preserving marine resources for future generations.

In the afternoon session on the transformation of agrifood systems, Minister Tshawuka addressed the pressing issue of climate change and its impact on Eswatini's



▲Ministers Mandla Tshawuka, Jane Mkhonta and the Eswatini delegation in Rabat, Morocco.

agricultural sector. He highlighted the devastating effects of drought and hailstorms on crop production and emphasized the need for international assistance to mitigate climate-related challenges.

Moreover, Minister Tshawuka emphasized the importance of enhancing Eswatini's resilience to climate change through four key pillars. These pillars included the construction of dams to improve irrigation infrastructure, the implementation of climate-smart agriculture practices, the promotion of value addition in the agricultural sector, and the development of climate change resilience among vulnerable communities.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations will brought together African Member Nations to deliberate on the future of Africa's agrifood systems, at the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC33), hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco in Rabat.

Discusion were on the urgent need to transform agrifood systems to be more efficient,

inclusive, resilient and sustainable in order to meet the needs of a growing population, and participants discussed ways on addressing the challenges of the climate crisis and ending hunger and malnutrition.

The conference was one of the major regional forums on agriculture, food security and nutrition in Africa. It came as hunger continues to grow on the continent, driven largely by conflicts, economic downturns and the impacts of the climate crisis such as the El Nino-induced drought in southern Africa.

Various Agriculture ministers and other government officials from across Africa joined with civil society groups, private sector representatives, development partners and observer Member Nations for the conference.

Following the conference, Minister Tshawuka and the Eswatini delegation embarked on a series of visits to key agricultural and environmental sites in Morocco. They toured the largest animal feed manufacturing plant in Africa, Alf Sahel, and visited the largest water project in Morocco.

18 % chance of women graduating with a bachelor's degree — Study

Stories by Delisa Thwala

A STUDY by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) revealed that 14 countries, one of which is Eswatini that the possibility for female students graduating with a Bachelors' degree was 18%.

When unpacking the study, Dr Rejoice Maseko said it was amazing to see the numbers, but they also proved more women needed to join the field.

On Tuesday, the country and the world at large celebrated women in science. This forum organized jointly by the Ministry of ICT, the Women in Science Engineering and Technology (WISSET) and the Joint River Basin Authorities.

This event sought to honour women in science and encourage active participation of women and girls in science and innovation. It also allowed women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to engage with professionals, policymakers, and aspiring women leaders, fostering collaboration and inspiring change.

“A study by UNESCO in 14 countries revealed that the probability for female and maybe male students graduating with a Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and Doctor's degree in science-related field are 18%,” said Maseko.

Maseko in addition, said in most western countries women are highly underrepresented in those Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields that have not a direct connection with the provision of care,



▲ Minister of ICT Savannah Maziya seated with the Women in Science who celebrated the day on Monday.

such as engineering and computer science (UNESCO, 2021).

“However, women are highly represented in those STEM fields associated with health and the provision of care, such as medicine, chemistry, or biology,” she said.

Interestingly, current research has identified a paradox between levels of gender equality and the participation of women in

STEM fields. In this way, the more egalitarian the countries are (for example, Norway or Finland), the less female participation in STEM fields. On the other hand, there is a tendency to make invisible the contributions of women in scientific and technological fields whereas, on the contrary, highlight the contributions of men in these areas.

This undoubtedly has an impact on

the way in which these contributions are transmitted and taught in the school and university contexts, but it also has an influence on the workplace, where on many occasions, the contributions of women to the development of a discipline, an idea, or a specific project tend to be undervalued. Likewise, in many societies' male-dominated STEM.

World Vision for the girl child

WORLD Vision Eswatini (WVE) has helped countless young girls overcome adversity and achieve their dreams. Their CANGO News-funded project, “Halting the Spread of HIV And Reversing Its Impact In The Swazi Society,” has been a powerful tool for change in the Shiselweni region.

Sekwenele, a 17-year-old from Mantambe, was one of the young girls whose life was transformed by this project. She attended sessions that addressed the dangers of transactional sex in her community and the importance of prioritising her wellbeing. She made the courageous choice to chart her own path and refused to compromise her dignity for temporary gains.

With WVE's support, Sekwenele turned her passion for gardening into a profitable enterprise. She now grows spinach, lettuce, and cabbages, and her fresh produce is in high demand in her community. Her garden is not only a source of food for her family but also a means of income, giving her the ability to take care of herself and her loved ones.

Sinethemba, another young girl from Davis, faced an unexpected pregnancy that forced her to leave school. Her parents, who are both unemployed, struggled to pay for her school fees. However, WVE stepped in and covered Sinethemba's fees and provided her with essential school supplies. With

their support, Sinethemba was able to re-enrol in Form 1 at Ngwane Central High School in 2023.

WVE's vision is to ensure that all children are educated for life in a safe and nurturing environment. Their efforts have lifted the weight from the shoulders of many families and given young girls like Sekwenele and Sinethemba the tools to succeed. Their project has been a game-changer in the fight against the spread of HIV and has helped to reverse its impact in Swati society.

The work of WVE has been commended countrywide as their work and commitment to empowering young girls and communities in need. Their project serves as a reminder that with determination and support, anything is possible.

► Sekwenele, a 17-year-old from Mantambe, was one of the young girls whose life was transformed by this project.





▲South Africa's central bank governor, Lesetja Kganyago.

SARB: path to 4.5% inflation likely ‘bumpy and protracted’

By Kopano Gumbi

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s central bank said on Tuesday that the path back to 4.5 per cent inflation would probably be “bumpy and protracted” after setbacks in the disinflation trajectory in recent months.

The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) has held its main interest rate at 8.25 per cent since May 2023, keeping policy restrictive to try to steer inflation towards the midpoint of its 3 per cent to 6 per cent target band.

In March headline inflation slowed to 5.3 per cent in annual terms from 5.6 per cent in February.

In a biannual review of its monetary policy stance, the bank said the slower pace of disinflation partly reflected normalising

services components and elevated inflation expectations.

Administered prices continue to exert substantial upward pressure on headline inflation, it said in its April Monetary Policy Review.

The SARB, which is in discussions with the National Treasury about lowering its inflation target, also said in the document that it had modelled the impact of targeting 3.0 per cent inflation over a five-year timeframe.

That modelling showed the economic growth rate decreased by about 0.3 percentage points relative to the baseline, but the decline was quickly reversed and surpassed as growth strengthened more than the initial weakening.

The central bank added markets now expect the repo rate to remain unchanged this year. (Reuters)



▲Customers queue to draw money from an ATM outside a branch of South Africa's Capitec Bank in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Capitec expects loan losses to be within target in 2025

By Nqobile Dlodla

JOHANNESBURG — South African lender Capitec Bank said on Tuesday its loan losses in retail banking will likely shrink to within its target range in 2025, as its full-year profit rose by 16 per cent, sending its share up 7.43 per cent.

Capitec Bank is one of the fastest-growing South African lenders, targeting low-income earners who were largely ignored by the country’s bigger, established banks.

But this exposure has meant higher impairments, with its customers under pressure from 10 successive interest rate hikes and higher food inflation.

The lender, South Africa’s biggest retail bank by customer numbers, has seen a slower migration of retail credit into underperforming loans from performing loans in the second half of its 2024 year ended Feb.29, CEO Gerrie Fourie told investors.

Client cash flow strain, however, has improved over the last six months, with customer insufficient fund transactions coming down, he added.

But estimated credit loss increased in the full-year period, and as a result, the credit loss ratio - a measure of bad loans as a percentage of total loans - in retail banking increased to 101 basis points (bps) from 80 bps in 2023.

“The credit loss ratio is expected to return to through-the-cycle target of 8.5 per cent (or 85 bps) by February 2025,” Fourie said.

The company, with 22 million retail clients, said overall credit impairment charges rose by 38 per cent to 8.7 billion rand (\$453.21 million). At group level, its credit loss ratio rose to 87 bps from 70 bps.

Capitec said it continued to tighten its credit-granting criteria.

The group’s headline earnings per share - the main profit measure in South Africa - rose to 9,171 cents as its net transaction and commission income grew by 29 per cent to 14.8 billion rand.

After terminating its funeral product co-operation arrangement with insurer Sanlam, Capitec said it will start adding life cover as it continues building its insurance business. (Reuters)

PepsiCo’s results beat as international demand, higher prices drive growth



▲Bottles of Pepsi are pictured at a grocery store in Pasadena, California, U.S.

PEPSICO beat Wall Street expectations for first-quarter revenue and profit on Tuesday as demand for its sodas and snacks like Cheetos and Doritos in international markets drove growth even as it witnessed a slowdown in the United States.

Consumers across Europe, Asia Pacific and China shelled out money for PepsiCo’s pricey sodas and chips, while customers in the U.S. cut back on the products due to strained budgets.

“We’ve had three years of ... massive consumer inflation and that has to be absorbed and I think the cumulative impact of that put a bit of strain on the consumer. But we expect that to abate as time goes on,”

PepsiCo CFO Jamie Caulfield said.

The company’s average prices jumped 5 per cent in the first quarter. Its organic volume slipped 2 per cent, compared to a 4 per cent drop seen in the fourth quarter.

International business accounted for about 40 per cent of PepsiCo’s fiscal 2023 revenue, while its North America businesses accounted for the remaining.

PepsiCo has been expanding its portfolio in developed and emerging markets to drive demand by launching items such as flavored Quaker instant oats and Celsius energy drink, CEO Ramon Laguarta said.

Shares of the company, which also maintained its fiscal 2024 forecasts, fell 1.5 per cent.

First-quarter sales at PepsiCo’s largest business, its North America beverage unit,

rose 1 per cent, while organic volume fell 5 per cent.

Total sales at its Quaker Foods North America unit fell 24 per cent following Quaker product recalls first made in December in the U.S. due to a potential salmonella contamination.

PepsiCo expects its North America businesses to gradually improve as impacts associated with product recalls moderate.

The company’s first-quarter net revenue rose 2.3 per cent to \$18.25 billion, beating LSEG estimates of \$18.07 billion. PepsiCo’s core profit of \$1.61 per share topped expectations of \$1.52.

“This is going to be another year of price-led revenue growth even though pricing has come down,” Wedbush analyst Gerald Pascarelli said. (Reuters)

SINGER John Legend says former President Trump is a racist down “to his core.”

Speaking to MSNBC’s Jen Psaki, Legend spoke of Trump’s response to the Black Lives Matter protests following the 2020 murder of George Floyd.

“When we protested the killing of George Floyd, he was advocating for the military to shoot us in the streets,” Legend said. “He has made it clear throughout his life that he believes Black people are inferior. Like, he believes that, to his core, in his bones.”

According to then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper, Trump asked authorities in 2020 if they could shoot protesters in the legs during the unrest across the country. Gen. Mark Milley, who was the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2020, also told The Wall Street Journal that Trump’s idea for law enforcement to handle protesters was to “crack their skulls.”

Trump has faced accusations of racism throughout and before his political career. He launched his 2016 campaign decrying immigrants as criminals and “racists,” and earlier this year he hypothesized that “the Black people” appreciate him more because of his criminal indictments.

“And a lot of people said that’s why the Black people like me, because they have been hurt so badly and discriminated against, and they actually viewed me as I’m being discriminated against,” Trump said in South Carolina in February. “It’s been pretty amazing, but possibly, maybe, there’s something there.”

John Legend says Trump believes ‘to his core’ that ‘Black people are inferior’

On Sunday, Legend also spoke of how Trump would avoid renting units in his buildings to Black Americans, something the FBI detailed in 20117.

Legend said Trump “believes in a genetic hierarchy of humanity, and it’s racially determined.”

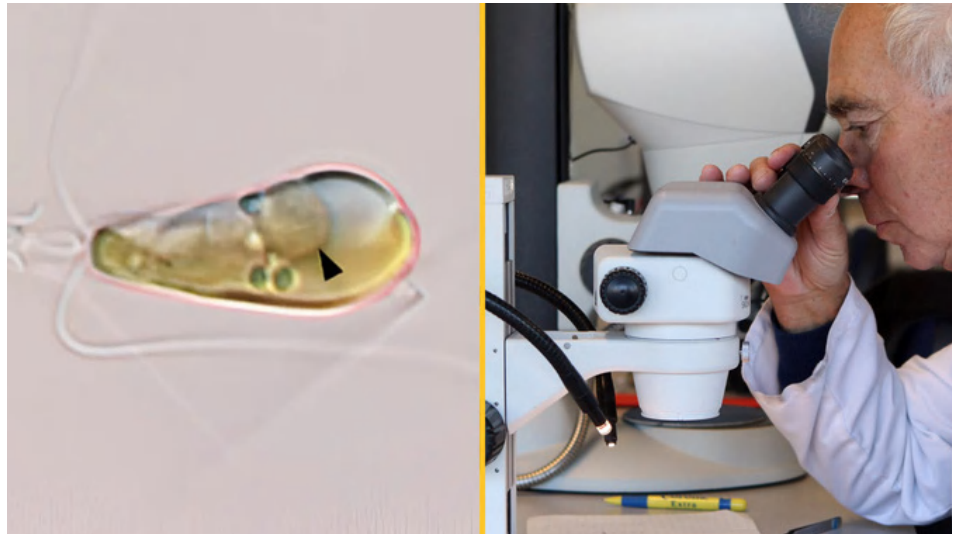
Trump, who is seeking a second term in the White House, has been working to court Black voters this election cycle. In February, he attended the Black Conservative Federation’s annual gala and he has hinted at choosing a Black running mate.

Trump has also claimed that he was the best president for African Americans. He has pointed to Black unemployment rate under his administration, funding for historically Black colleges and universities and criminal justice reform that passed during his time in office.

But Legend dismissed these comments, particularly claims of Trump’s success with criminal justice reform, pointing out that Trump had previously called for shoplifters to be shot on the spot. (msn)



▲ Speaking to MSNBC’s Jen Psaki, John Legend spoke of Trump’s response to the Black Lives Matter protests following the 2020 murder of George Floyd.



▲ Primary endosymbiosis, has only happened twice in the history of the Earth, with the first time giving rise to all complex life as we know it through mitochondria.

Two lifeforms merge into one for first time in a billion years

FOR the first time in at least a billion years, two lifeforms have merged into a single organism.

The process, called primary endosymbiosis, has only happened twice in the history of the Earth, with the first time giving rise to all complex life as we know it through mitochondria. The second time that it happened saw the emergence of plants.

Now, an international team of scientists have observed the evolutionary event happening between a species of algae commonly found in the ocean and a bacterium.

“The first time we think it happened, it gave rise to all complex life,” said Tyler Coale, a postdoctoral researcher at University of California, Santa Cruz, who led the research on one of two recent studies that uncovered the phenomenon.

“Everything more complicated than a bacterial cell owes its existence to that

event. A billion years ago or so, it happened again with the chloroplast, and that gave us plants.”

The process involves the algae engulfing the bacterium and providing it with nutrients, energy and protection in return for functions that it could not previously perform – in this instance, the ability to “fix” nitrogen from the air.

The algae then incorporates the bacterium as an internal organ called an organelle, which becomes vital to the host’s ability to function.

The researchers from the US and Japan who made the discovery said it will offer new insights into the process of evolution, while also holding the potential to fundamentally change agriculture.

“This system is a new perspective on nitrogen fixation, and it might provide clues into how such an organelle could be engineered into crop plants,” said Dr Coale.

(msn)

Japan is sending a ‘sugar baby’ to prison for 9 years ... for defrauding men out of \$1 Million

A 25-year-old “sugar baby” was handed a nine-year prison sentence for defrauding men she met on dating apps out of more than \$1 million, and selling a manual on how to carry out similar scams.

Mai Watanabe, also known as “itadaki joshi Riri-chan,” which translates as “sugar baby Riri,” was sentenced by the Nagoya District Court on Monday, The Japan Times reported.

The news outlet said that Watanabe was also fined 8 million yen, about \$52,000.

According to the court’s ruling, Watanabe defrauded three men in their 50s out of a total of around 55.8 million yen, about \$1 million, between 2021 and 2023, the Nippon

news agency reported.

She swindled one victim out of 117 million yen, about \$756,000, by convincing him that she needed the money to pay off a debt, according to the Kyodo news agency, which added that she used a similar story to defraud the other two men.

Nippon reported that Watanabe used most of the money to make payments at male host clubs in Tokyo’s Kabukichō district.

In these clubs, female customers pay for male company and are often poured drinks and flirted with by male hosts.

Kyodo, citing the court’s ruling, said that Watanabe was also convicted of creating a manual on how to execute similar scams.

(Reuters)



▲ Mai Watanabe, also known as “itadaki joshi Riri-chan,” which translates as “sugar baby Riri,” was sentenced by the Nagoya District Court on Monday, The Japan Times reported.

Fuming residents set seven classrooms alight

MAFIKENG - Teaching and learning was badly disrupted at the at Tosca Primary School in the Kagisano Molopo Local Municipality, North West, after seven classrooms were set on fire by angry residents.

The residents burnt school furniture, files, textbooks, and Grade R equipment during the violent and fiery action last Friday.

The North West Department of Education spokesperson, Mphata Molokwane, said in a statement that this comes after officials from the Department of Employment and Labour closed a block of three classrooms at the school last week on Tuesday, due to inadequate conditions for learning and teaching.

Following that, fuming residents in the area went to the school's premises intending to shut the school down.

"It is further alleged that on the day of



▲ TSeven classrooms of Tosca Primary School in North West were set alight by angry community R equipment."

the incident around 11am a group of people entered the school premises and burnt down seven classrooms, school furniture, school files, and textbooks and damaged the Grade

North West Education MEC Viola Motsumi has condemned the act, expressing concern over the continued targeting of

school properties as a means of venting anger.

"This is extremely sad and disturbing. It is disturbing that there are still communities in this province who vent their anger by burning school properties," Motsumi said.

"A school is a centre of knowledge for the community. Really, how do we expect learners to acquire information when we burn schools?"

Result

Motsumi said that as a result of this incident, learners have lost five days without learning and teaching.

She added: "We have lost all the records of learners due to this horrible incident. As a department, we condemn this incident in the strongest terms and call for the immediate arrest of all those behind this fire."

Meanwhile, the department said that it is committed to delivering mobile classrooms, today on Monday, to assist with teaching and learning.

Molokwane mentioned that a team of counsellors from the department has been put on standby to counsel learners and teachers as soon as teaching and learning resume.

(IOL)



Rishi Sunak's Rwanda bill to become law after late-night showdown

KIGALI - Rishi Sunak's Rwanda bill will finally become law after a parliamentary showdown ended late in the night.

Plans to send some asylum seekers to Africa have met with fierce criticism, but the bill passed on Monday when the Lords dropped their opposition.

Mr Sunak said in a statement "nothing will stand in our way" now of getting flights off the ground.

But the scheme could still be held up by challenges in the courts.

Ahead of the bill passing, the prime minister said flights to Rwanda would take off within 10 to 12 weeks, missing his original spring target.

In a statement on Tuesday, he called the passing of the Rwanda bill "not just a step forward but a fundamental change in the global equation on migration".

He said: "We introduced the Rwanda bill to deter vulnerable migrants from making

perilous crossings and break the business model of the criminal gangs who exploit them.

"The passing of this legislation will allow us to do that and make it very clear that if you come here illegally, you will not be able to stay.

Charities have also hit out at the scheme, with leading human rights groups describing it as a "breach of international law".

During a live TV report by the BBC's home affairs correspondent Tom Symonds in Calais on Tuesday morning, a group of about 30 migrants boarded a small boat on the beach and could be seen heading out into the Channel towards the UK.

Asked about the moment shortly after during an interview on BBC Breakfast, Minister for Illegal Migration Michael Tomlinson said the bill passing was a "landmark moment", and that the deterrent would be felt when flights get off the ground.

(BBC Africa)

Senegal's new leader calls for 'rethought' relationship with EU

DAKAR - Senegal's new leader Bassirou Diomaye Faye has called for a "rethought" relationship with the EU during a visit by European Council President Charles Michel.

Faye, who was inaugurated as president on April 2, was elected on pledges of radical reform and promises to restore national "sovereignty" over key industries.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Michel on Monday night, Faye said cooperation between Senegal and Europe was "dense and multifaceted, but together we want a rethought, renovated partnership", one "capable of supporting the innovative dynamic we want to imprint on our relations".

As part of his promised reforms, Faye recently announced the renegotiation of oil and gas contracts, and hopes to do the same with fishing agreements signed with the European Union.

Fishing is a significant part of Senegal's economy, but the industry is grappling with the effects of overexploitation of marine stocks.

Michel said the two parties "should not dread" broaching difficult subjects if it meant "bringing about improvements for both sides", pointing to the fisheries issue in particular.

Faye said his government would pursue a model of boosting development from within, focusing on agriculture, livestock and fishing, while also strengthening infrastructure such as railways, electrical grids, telecommunications and roads.



▲ Senegal's new leader Bassirou Diomaye Faye.

"European investors whose companies have recognised skills in these different sectors are welcome," he added.

Michel said Europe had an "objective interest in Senegal being able to meet the challenges of development, economic emergence and improvement of the living conditions of the people".

(AFP)

Truce crumbles in Sudanese army's last Darfur holdout

CAIRO/DUBAI - Attacks around the Sudanese city of al-Fashir have shattered a truce that protected it from a year-old war, leading to warnings of a new wave of inter-communal violence and humanitarian risks for 1.6 million residents crammed into the North Darfur capital.

Al-Fashir is the last major city in the vast, western Darfur region not under control

of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The RSF and its allies swept through four other Darfur state capitals last year, and were blamed for a campaign of ethnically driven killings against non-Arab groups and other abuses in West Darfur.

The fight for al-Fashir, a historic centre of power, could be more protracted, inflame ethnic tensions that surfaced in the early-2000s conflict in the region and reach across Sudan's border with Chad, say

residents, aid agencies and analysts.

Al-Fashir's population includes an estimated half a million people displaced during that earlier conflict, when the army, assisted by Arab militias that evolved into the RSF, put down a rebellion by non-Arab rebel groups.

About half a million more people moved into the city during the war that broke out between the army and the RSF in the capital Khartoum in April 2023, as long-simmering

tensions over integrating the two forces came to a head.

As the war spread to other parts of the country, local leaders brokered a truce in al-Fashir, with the RSF confined to eastern areas of the city while the former rebel groups stayed neutral.

But the arrangement fell apart after the RSF took the town of Melit this month, effectively blockading al-Fashir.

(Reuters)

Biden and Trump face enthusiasm test in bat

PHILADELPHIA - U.S. President Joe Biden and Republican challenger Donald Trump go before voters on Tuesday's primaries in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, one of the last tests of voter enthusiasm ahead of November's general election.

Pennsylvania, with 19 Electoral College votes toward the 270 needed to win, is a top prize and a toss-up in the 2024 presidential election featuring a Biden-Trump rematch.

In 2020, Biden won Pennsylvania by less than 1.5%, or roughly 80,000 votes. Trump beat Democrat Hillary Clinton there by fewer than 45,000 votes in 2016.

Biden clinched the Democratic nomination and Trump secured the Republican nod in early March, and neither faces serious opposition on the primary ballot. Still, the pair have visited the state in recent weeks and focused on the general election rather than Tuesday's vote. Biden was born and spent part of his childhood in the state, and has for decades been a fixture in the politics of neighboring Delaware.

Incumbent U.S. Senator Bob Casey, a Democrat, and his Republican challenger, Dave McCormick, are both expected to breeze through Tuesday's primaries. The race, which opinion polls show as close, could help decide whether Democrats retain control of the Senate.

Muslim and Arab-American voters are mounting an "Abandon Biden" campaign in Pennsylvania to protest the president's



▲ Combination picture showing former U.S. President Donald Trump attending the Trump Organization civil fraud trial, in New York State Supreme Court in the Manhattan borough of New York City, U.S., November 6, 2023 and U.S. President Joe Biden participating in a meeting with Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in the Oval Office.

handling of the Gaza crisis. He faced similar efforts in battleground states like Arizona, Wisconsin and North Carolina, with the biggest turnout a 13% uncommitted vote in Michigan's primary.

Organizers in Pennsylvania are aiming to get 40,000 write-in "uncommitted" votes. The results are not expected to come on Tuesday night because they will have to be entered manually.

Pennsylvania is home to a sizeable Arab-American population, but also one of the

largest Jewish populations, trailing only New York, California, Florida and New Jersey, according to a U.S. Jewish population report , opens new tab published by Brandeis University.

Although Trump's former rival Nikki Haley, a former South Carolina governor and U.N. ambassador, remains on the Pennsylvania ballot, voting is confined to registered Republicans and the primary locks out the independent voters who favored Haley during her run. (Reuters)



▲ A man walks past the national flags of China and the U.S. before a meeting between China's Vice Premier He Lifeng and U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen at the Guangdong Zhudao Guest House, in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, China. epublican presidential candidate and former U.S. President Donald Trump greets supporters as he attends a rally in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania.

China-US relations stable despite US 'interference', Chinese official says

BEIJING, April 23 (Reuters) - Relations between Beijing and Washington are stabilising despite U.S. actions that harm Chinese interests, a Chinese foreign ministry official has said ahead of a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

In laying out goals for the visit, the unnamed official, described as director-general of the foreign ministry's department of North American and Oceanian affairs, said relations should stabilise and advance on a sustainable path.

But he said Chinese interests and its "bottom line" must be safeguarded, the state

news agency Xinhua reported on Tuesday.

"The United States stubbornly promotes the strategy of containing China, continuously adopts erroneous words and actions that interfere in China's internal affairs, smear China's image, and harm China's interests," the official was quoted as saying. During Blinken's visit, China will focus on strengthening understanding and dialogue, managing differences and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation and shared responsibilities, the official added. The trip will be Blinken's first to China since June, when the United States was trying to restore high-level engagements after "spy balloon" incidents, and increased

tensions around Taiwan were souring relations. Since then, friction has eased, but Blinken is expected to raise a number of concerns related to the South China Sea, the Russia-Ukraine war and the crisis in the Middle East, among others.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Joe Biden recently held talks that touched on hot-button issues, most notably ongoing confrontations in the South China Sea, and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. Xi had said ties between the China and the U.S. were beginning to stabilize, but that they could "slide into conflict or confrontation", according to Xinhua. (BBC News)

Judge to consider gag order violations in Trump hush money trial

NEW YORK, April 23 (Reuters) - The judge overseeing Donald Trump's criminal hush money trial will decide on Tuesday whether the former U.S. president should be punished for violating a gag order that prevents him from criticizing witnesses and others involved in the case.

Prosecutors are asking Justice Juan Merchan to fine Trump for criticizing porn star Stormy Daniels and his former lawyer Michael Cohen, both of whom are expected to testify. They also have highlighted Trump's claim last week that people were lying to get on the jury so they could convict him.

Merchan could opt to fine Trump \$1,000 for each of those violations, as Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg's office has requested.

Prosecutors have asked Merchan to remind Trump at the 9:30 a.m. hearing (1330 GMT) he may face more severe consequences if he keeps violating the order. The law permits the judge to send Trump to jail for up to 30 days, in what would be a dramatic twist to the first criminal trial of a former U.S. president.

Trump says the partial gag order, which prevents him from publicly criticizing witnesses, court officials and their relatives, is a violation of free speech.

Trump is charged with falsifying business records to cover up a \$130,000 payment before the 2016 election to buy Daniels' silence about a sexual encounter she says they had in 2006. Trump has pleaded not guilty and denies an encounter took place.

Prosecutors say it was part of a wider conspiracy to hide unflattering information from voters at a time when he was facing multiple accusations of sexual misbehavior.

"It was election fraud, pure and simple," prosecutor Matthew Colangelo said on Monday.

In his opening statement on Monday, defense lawyer Todd Blanche said Trump did not commit any crimes. "There's nothing wrong with trying to influence an election. It's called democracy," Blanche told jurors on Monday.

He said Trump acted to protect his family and his reputation and accused Daniels of trying to profit from a false accusation that they had sex.

(Reuters)



▲ Republican presidential candidate and former U.S. President Donald Trump greets supporters as he attends a rally in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania.

Young Zesh on King’s Birthday celebration performance:

‘Performing for Their Majesties a dream come true’

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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LOCAL sensation Young Zesh recently had the opportunity of a lifetime as he performed for Their Majesties, an experience he describes as a dream come true.

The talented artist, known for his hit song ‘KaKhoza,’ was one of the performers at the Garden Party which was held at Mandvulo Hall on April 19, 2024. The event was meant to celebrate His Majesty King Mswati III. Other performers included Don Laka and Zonke Dikana.

Young Zesh expressed gratitude and excitement in an exclusive interview, highlighting the significance of this milestone in his career. The ‘Liphasela’ composer shared his elation at finally realizing his long-held aspiration of performing for royalty. “It’s a great feeling, something I’ve always wished for, and I’m thrilled that it has become a reality,” he remarked, beaming with pride.

Describing the performance as his most challenging yet deeply rewarding, Young Zesh emphasized his eagerness to recreate the magic on stage. “I loved it so much. I can’t wait to do it again,” he exclaimed, underscoring his passion for his craft and commitment to delivering memorable performances.

For the rising star, this momentous



▲ Young Zesh.

occasion symbolizes growth and a pivotal step towards establishing his brand as one that resonates with audiences of all ages. Reflecting on the significance of the performance, Young Zesh expressed his hopes that it would open doors that were previously closed, dispelling the notion that his music is solely for the youth.

Appeals

“I ensure that my music appeals to all age groups,” he affirmed, aiming to reach a diverse audience with his artistry. Teasing his highly anticipated album ‘Lwandiso,’

set to release in less than 10 days, Young Zesh urged fans to brace themselves for an immersive musical journey.

“People must wait a little bit longer before immersing themselves in this body of work. I’m incredibly excited about it,” he shared, hinting at the depth and diversity of the album, which features 15 tracks. With only two singles released so far, the album promises to captivate listeners with its rich storytelling and musical prowess, showcasing Young Zesh’s evolution as an artist.



▲ Grammy award-winning songwriter Manana.

Manana to soar with new single

RENOWNED Eswatini-born artist and Grammy award-winning songwriter, Manana, is gearing up to captivate audiences once again with his upcoming single ‘Hold Me Tight.’

The talented musician took to his social media platforms to announce the much-anticipated release, sharing a sneak peek of the song and inviting fans to join in on the excitement.

In a video posted online, Manana could be seen vibing to the infectious beats of ‘Hold Me Tight’ in his car, setting the stage for its official debut on Friday, April 26. With a caption that read, “Hold Me Tight, out on Friday, April 26. I hope you’re all practising this groundbreaking dance for Friday,” the artist teased a track that promises to leave a lasting impression on listeners.

Having made a name for himself in South Africa’s vibrant music scene, Manana has quickly risen to prominence with his soulful performances and masterful songwriting. His debut project, “In the Beginning Was the End,” offered a glimpse into his artistry, showcasing his ability to craft emotive and compelling music that resonates with audiences worldwide.

Hit songs

A musical virtuoso, Manana has lent his songwriting talents to a diverse range of artists, including Ami Faku, Amanda Black, and Sauti Sol, among others. His contributions to hit songs such as ‘eBhayi,’ ‘Africa,’ and ‘Feel My Love and Fire’ have solidified his reputation as a sought-after collaborator with a knack for creating unforgettable melodies and lyrics.

With recent collaborations on Nasty C’s acclaimed album ‘I Love It Here,’ featuring standout tracks like ‘See Me Now’ and ‘Temptations,’ Manana has further cemented his position as a powerhouse in the music industry. His ability to seamlessly blend genres and work with high-profile artists showcases his versatility and unwavering dedication to his craft.

As fans eagerly await the release of ‘Hold Me Tight,’ Manana continues to push boundaries and redefine the music landscape with his unique sound and heartfelt storytelling. With a track record of success and a growing global fan base, Manana is poised to make a lasting impact with his latest single.

Putuma Tiso joins Linda Dlamini’s Live Recording

IN a musical event set to captivate the hearts and souls of all in attendance, South African Gospel sensation Putuma Tiso has been announced as the latest addition to the star-studded line-up of the highly anticipated More Than Enough Live CD and DVD Recording.

The event, hosted by the esteemed Linda Dlamini, promises an evening of surprises, special moments, and unforgettable performances that will leave a lasting impact on all who listen. Hailing from Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape and now based in Johannesburg, Putuma Tiso’s journey from jazz to gospel has been nothing short of remarkable. Having collaborated with legends such as Bra Hugh Masekela, Rebecca Malope, and Benjamin Dube, Putuma has devoted her career to the worship and service of God, with her latest work ‘Sacred Moments’ receiving critical acclaim and available on digital platforms and CD.

The More Than Enough live recording event is not only a showcase of Putuma Tiso’s incredible talent but will also feature a special performance by the

renowned Manzini Choir. Joining the stellar lineup are other notable artists including Takie Ndou, Sneziey, Thabile Myeni, and Nomthie Sibisi, promising a night filled with soul-stirring melodies and powerful worship.

Scheduled for August 10, 2024, guests attending the event are encouraged to dress elegantly for the red-carpet affair that will kick off the festivities at 5 p.m., leading up to the main event at 6 p.m. Presale tickets priced at E250 are available at all Galitos outlets, with no tickets being sold at the gate, urging attendees to secure their spots early to avoid missing out on this unique musical experience.

In an exclusive interview, Linda Dlamini expressed his excitement for



▲ South African Gospel sensation Putuma Tiso.

the event, hinting at surprises and special moments that will keep the audience on the edge of their seats. After a three-year hiatus from releasing new music, Linda Dlamini revealed that the live recording will be more than just a recording session, teasing the launch of a new group and unexpected acts that will add an extra layer of excitement to the evening.

With a commitment to creating a visually stunning and musically captivating experience, Linda Dlamini and his production team are dedicated to delivering a night to remember for all in attendance. The stage is set, the artists are ready, and the anticipation is high for what promises to be a night of gospel magic and musical excellence.

Zuma, Babes Wodumo show 80 per cent sold out

THE ‘Afterwork Chillout’ which will feature South African music sensations Zuma and Babes Wodumo is now 80 per cent sold out.

The highly anticipated ‘Afterwork Chillout’ event which will host the two phenomenal performers is scheduled for April 26, 2024, at Mdzimba View Shisanyama. This epic musical extravaganza will see Zuma and Babes Wodumo bring their unique blend of talent and charisma, making sure patrons dance the night away and experience the magic of South African music at its finest. Fans can expect a night of non-stop entertainment as Zuma and Babes Wodumo deliver show-stopping performances that will leave the audience wanting more. General tickets for the event are priced at E80, with VIP tickets available for E150. For those looking to secure their spot at the gate, general tickets will be priced at E120.

Performance

Zuma, a musical prodigy known for his captivating Amapiano beats, has captured the hearts of music lovers worldwide with his infectious melodies and energetic performances. His music has taken him to different countries to perform such as the United Kingdom where he performed in places like Bec Arena, Manchester City, The Mill, and Birmingham. He also performed at Night Tales in London alongside Kid Alpha, Nutty Cyber, and Xavier. Joining Zuma on stage is the dynamic Babes Wodumo, affectionately known as the Gqom Queen. She is a talented South African singer-songwriter and choreographer. She rose to fame following the release of her debut album Gqom Queen, Vol. 1 and subsequently being nominated at the MTV Europe Music Award for Best African Act. She appeared on the ‘Black Panther: The Album’ compilation by Kendrick Lamar on a song titled ‘Redemption’. In 2017, she was nominated for the BET Award for Best International Act: Africa. In July 2020, she released her second album ‘Intandokazi’ which included the hit song, ‘eLamont’ featuring her late husband Mampintsha (former Big Nuz member) and Skillz.

▲ South African Gospel sensation Zuma.



▲ Uzalo star Simphiwe ‘Sbu’Majozi.

Uzalo star ‘S’bu’ headlines Groove Land Party

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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FANS of the hit TV show Uzalo are in for a treat as Simphiwe Majozi, better known as S’bu, is set to grace the stage at the highly anticipated Groove Land Party.

The multi-talented South African actor, musician, and master of ceremonies is gearing up to showcase his talents at the Tippy Cow Club in Matsapha this Saturday.

The South African actor confirmed his performance at the club through a social media video. “What’s up, guys? Let’s meet at Sidlamafa Club (Tippy Cow Club) on April 27. It’s only E30,” he said.

Joining S’bu on stage will be a star-studded lineup including Calvinator, also known as Prince from Uzalo, Sbu Wama Lawyer, and Emza, all hailing from South Africa.

Local talent will also be on full display with acts such as Immortal 7, Badelicious, DJ SFYT, Swytüre, and DJ Wawa set to rock the crowd.

Known for his captivating portrayal on the soapie Uzalo, Simphiwe Majozi shot to fame with his undeniable talent and charm. Originally slated for just one scene, Majozi’s exceptional performance demanded more screen time, captivating audiences across the nation.

Not one to be confined to the small screen, Majozi has proven his versatility as a singer and songwriter. Leveraging the Covid-19 lockdown to launch his music career, he released a poignant song titled “Nizobona Ngomophu” (You will reap what you sow), aimed at raising awareness about the pandemic. The song quickly garnered praise from fans and critics alike, solidifying Majozi’s status as a rising star in the music industry.

With tickets priced at E30, the Groove Land Party promises to be a night to remember, blending top-tier entertainment with a showcase of local and international talent.



▲ Sancheziey.

Sancheziey Epic Gig’s Freshman

TALENTED Eswatini musician Sancheziey has emerged victorious in the highly competitive Epic Gig Freshman contest, beating out over 20 other contestants with a staggering 753 votes.

This win has not only secured Sancheziey a coveted spot on the prestigious Freshman Stage at the upcoming festival in 2024 but also a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to collaborate with the multi-talented South African artist, Aubrey Qwana.

His collaboration with Sancheziey promises to be a groundbreaking musical partnership, with the liSwati finalist retaining ownership of the collaborative song, ensuring that their creative vision and talent shine through.

Happy

When reached for comment, Sancheziey said he is happy to emerge victorious in the contest but would love to reserve his comments, pending the green light from Epic Gig. The voting process, overseen by Epic Gig management, saw Sancheziey clinch the top spot with 753 votes, leaving Parkman in second place with 534 votes and Jay D in third with 457 votes.

Aubrey Qwana, who will collaborate with Sancheziey has risen to fame in the South African music scene in a manner that has been nothing short of meteoric, with his hit song ‘Ngaqonywa’ featuring DJ Tira catapulting him to stardom in 2019. Since then, he has continued to captivate audiences with his unique blend of traditional and modern sounds, earning him a dedicated fan base and critical acclaim.

With successful albums like ‘Unplugged EP’ and ‘Imvula Mlomo EP’ under his belt, Aubrey Qwana has proven himself as a versatile and innovative artist who pushes boundaries with his music. Collaborations with industry heavyweights like Sho Madjozi, Emtee, and Major Lazer have further solidified his position as a powerhouse in the music industry.



50 Cent opens G-Unit Studios

... facility In Shreveport, Louisiana and rapper hopes to mirror Tyler Perry Studios

50 Cent has officially launched G-Unit Studios, his latest media venture, in Shreveport, Louisiana. The Grammy-winning artist said in a statement that the newest addition is an expansion of his G-Unit Film & Television company and part of his continuing effort to provide a platform for “compelling stories.”

“From the gritty narratives of the streets to the compelling stories that define our era, G-Unit has always been more than just entertainment; it’s a platform for voices that need to be heard, stories that need to be told,” 50 Cent told Billboard.

“Bringing G-Unit Studios to Shreveport is not just a business decision; it’s a commitment to fostering talent, creating opportunities, and building a community that thrives through creativity and innovation.”

The 48-year-old rapper described Shreveport as “a beacon of inspiration and creativity.” Shreveport Mayor Tom Arceneaux also expressed his excitement as he talked more about the impact G-Unit Studios will make on the city.

“We are thrilled that G-Unit Studios will plant its roots in Shreveport,” Arceneaux told Billboard. “This city’s rich culture and talent provides the perfect backdrop for this endeavor. We are eager to collaborate with Mr. Jackson and G-Unit Film & Television to bring captivating movies and entertainment to Shreveport and Caddo Parish.”

As the city held a special ceremony on Thursday to celebrate the opening of G-Unit Studios, Arceneaux declared April 18 as Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson Day.

“Ladies, gentlemen, Mayor Tom Arceneaux and the wonderful people of Shreveport, it is an honor for me to stand before you here today,” 50 Cent said at the ceremony, per Shreveport Times. “As someone who’s always believed in the transformative power of music, film and television I’m really excited to show you the expansion of film and television through G-Unit Studio right here in Shreveport.”

The media mogul made an agreement with the city, leasing his studio for 30 years with a yearly rate of \$2,400, Shreveport Times reported.

“I am excited about this opportunity,” 50 Cent said, adding that the G-Unit Studios will resemble the Tyler Perry studio in Atlanta.

G-Unit Film & Television Inc. has produced several hit projects since launching in 2005. One of its most notable productions is the Starz TV series Power. 50 Cent has also produced BMF and Power spinoffs Power Book III: Raising Kanan, Power Book IV: Force and Power Book II: Ghost.

(XXL Magazine)



▲ Hip Hop mogul 50 Cent has opened GiUnit Studios in Louisiana, USA.



▲ DJ Tira (Below) will be returning to the Durban July marquee.

DJ Tira is returning to Durban July

DJ Tira is returning to the Hollywoodbets Durban July with his Afrotainment maquee.

The music mogul announced last year that he will not be returning to host Durban July this year.

However, DJ Tira, whose real name is Mthokozisi Khathi, shared that, he is back again.

“We need people to understand that we are launching in a big way hence the people who are part of the Afrotainment marquee this year are people who are making waves at this year’s theme is ‘Ride the Wave’ so we will be giving people a good time,” he told TimesLive.

“When we launch, we want to launch a big way,”

says Tira.

He emphasized the importance of rocking a line-up captivates the audience.

“Liema has a super following, so we definitely made it a point to have her as part of our Durban July line-up, with Wiseman Ncube and Vuyo. We know those celebrities who are doing amazing work on screen.

“Cici and Mawhoo, who are some of the best vocalists that we have in the country, definitely add a flavour. We always go for the best. We have got the A-listers,” he said.

The Durban July takes place at the Greyville Racecourse on



July 6.
(IOL)



Jackie Phamotse writing another book

CONVICTED author Jackie Phamotse has announced that she will be releasing another book as part of her ‘Bare’ series.

Phamotse has been using her time under house arrest constructively and has completed the new manuscript for her new book under the ‘Bare’ series.

The Randburg Magistrate’s Court sentenced the explosive author to a two year sentence for defaming media moguls Romeo and Basetsana Kumalo, after she published a tweet alleging that Romeo had engaged in a sexual encounter with another man.

Phamotse’s ‘Bare’ series explores the flashy, yet dark side of slay queens, blessers and human trafficking – all relevant topics in South African society.

The popular author shared on Instagram that the manuscript was done, after her readers requested another book and in her caption seemingly threw shade at the legal battles she has been facing.

Phamotse tweeted: “The BARE nation wanted a book and that’s what I will deliver! Manuscript done. The worst thing you have ever done was to let me have my pen! I will use it!”

In response to a tweep, who advised Phamotse not to mention any names in her book, she clapped back that people should wait to read the book before assuming what it is about. “Wait until you know what the book is about! Stop assuming, the manuscript is highly protected at this point.

“I’m a writer that’s my job and that’s what I will continue to do for the rest of my life. God willing. You must have lost your mind if you think I won’t work. When the time is right, we will reveal the book’s contents,” wrote Phamotse.

Phamotse pleaded that people revoke their lies and reminded them that no one ordered her not to work and that her life will continue as it was.

(IOL)



Why does medicine keep getting it wrong?

IN the case of children with gender-related distress, the Cass Review, published two weeks ago, makes it clear that for years, doctors have been prescribing powerful hormones to these children despite a lack of evidence that this would help them.

‘The reality is that we have no good evidence on the long-term outcomes of interventions to manage gender-related distress,’ wrote Dr Hilary Cass, a paediatrician who was commissioned to review NHS services for gender.

Dr Cass described how clinicians had become widely influenced by a single Dutch study, which excluded children who had dropped out of the research because they developed problems on treatment.

Yet doctors applied the findings to many more children and, as she wrote, ‘abandoned normal approaches to holistic assessment’. So children were not having, for example, the impact of depression assessed.

As a result, young people with gender dysphoria (where they feel their biological sex does not match their gender), who have often been suffering very much, have been poorly served by the healthcare service.

I’ve met many who went to the NHS for help and ended up with surgery and medication whose side-effects they later deeply regretted.

But, unfortunately, this is only part of a longer-term pattern of health services acting without good-quality evidence.

The only reason why medicine should have any authority is because it is based on science — where assumptions and hypotheses are tested, and questions about harms and unintended consequences are asked. If it’s not based on science, frankly, it may as well be homeopathy.

It’s easy to think that you are helping when, in fact, you are harming people.

Back in the 1980s, it was recognised that some people who had heart attacks go on to develop fatal heart rhythm disorders — these patients often had abnormal heartbeats and the logical assumption was that reducing these would cut death rates.

And yes, trials showed that taking drugs called class Ic antiarrhythmics did reduce those abnormal beats.

However, when high-quality trials were eventually done, it was clear that they did the opposite in terms of saving lives; in fact, the drugs led to an increased risk of death. What seemed ‘logical’ was actively harmful.

And it’s not enough to say you have ‘evidence’ — it has to be good quality. Take arthritic knees. For decades surgeons would do ‘washout’ arthroscopy, where patients have incisions in the joint which are then washed out with saline — the idea being that fragments of cartilage are cleared, making the joint work more efficiently.

Certainly, patients tended to report that it made them feel better. But in 2002, a trial compared knee arthroscopy to a placebo — patients either had the real operation, or a ‘placebo’ procedure where they also had small skin incisions and the surgeons ‘splashed’ the saline to make it sound like the real operation was happening, but didn’t actually put the saline into the joint.

Both placebo and real surgery groups got better, with patients describing less pain and better function for months afterwards.

Medicine that can’t help you can only harm you — either through side-effects, or costs to the patient and the health service. That’s why, unless it’s in very specific

Treatments proven not to work but are still being given to patients

● Is yours one of them?



circumstances, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) now makes clear that ‘arthroscopic knee washout alone should not be used as a treatment for osteoarthritis’.

There are other examples. For years, pregnant and breastfeeding women with a family history of allergies were told to avoid eating peanuts, in case they increased the risk of allergy in their child; parents were also warned against giving peanuts to children under three.

But the rates of peanut allergy in the population soared — the problem was that the studies that supported this avoidance were mainly ‘look-back’ studies, relying on people’s recall of what was eaten.

Then, in 2015, a ‘forward-looking’, randomised controlled trial (the gold standard for testing a new approach, where a control group doesn’t get the intervention) found infants with severe eczema or egg allergy actually developed fewer allergies to peanuts if they were introduced as part of their normal transition to a solid diet, compared with children whose parents were told to avoid them (the control group).

In the case of gender dysphoria, what was lacking in the research — that single Dutch study — was information about how young people’s feelings would change over time, without hormones or surgery.

In fact, we now have data showing that for most young people, ‘gender non-contentedness’ — in other words, feeling unease in the physical body — tends to improve with age, something that should give great hope in the midst of what might be huge despair. The Dutch research also didn’t have control groups, meaning we couldn’t compare what would have happened without medical intervention.

It’s tempting to conclude that any improvements are down to the treatment, when in fact, young people may have done just as well — or better — without.

How should we be getting round this and making sure we do act on truly good-quality evidence?

That’s what NICE was set up to do when it was founded in 1999. It was a move away from what was nicknamed ‘eminence-based medicine’ — doing things because esteemed professors said it worked — and towards ‘evidence-based medicine’.

Dr Cass is clear in her report that the clinicians she met had the ‘best intentions’ — and I am sure that is the case.

However, best intentions don’t work

● It’s easy to think that you are helping when, in fact, you are harming people. Back in the 1980s, it was recognised that some people who had heart attacks go on to develop fatal heart rhythm disorders — these patients often had abnormal heartbeats and the logical assumption was that reducing these would cut death rates.



well in medicine unless you also have good-quality evidence on your side.

The paediatrician and best-selling author Dr Spock, for example, was by all accounts a compassionate, caring man. He recommended, from 1956 until the late 1970s, that babies should be put to sleep on their fronts.

After all, isn't it obvious that vomiting would be less dangerous in that position?

But, as we now know, it was wrong; Dr Spock had based it on a theory, not high-quality evidence. Researchers later estimated that 50,000 infant deaths in Europe could have been avoided had the high-quality evidence from the 1970s onwards — suggesting it was better to put babies on their backs — been acted on sooner.

Part of the problem, I think, has been the way in which other clinicians' concerns about treatments have been dealt with — and who have often ended up having to go through whistleblowing procedures and employment tribunals.

That happened with Sonia Appleby, a children's safeguarding lead, after she raised concerns at the Tavistock gender clinic at the centre of the Cass Review.

We've become used to the pharmaceutical industry putting pressure on doctors to prescribe the latest drug, even if there are worries about side-effects — and while we still aren't good enough at resisting this, there's at least (usually) an acknowledgement that we should try to resist biased information.

Yet, in the case of gender dysphoria in young people, lobby groups seemed to have been welcomed into the NHS.

Training modules were often sponsored by activist groups — who have every right to express their views, but do not necessarily have expertise in critical appraisal of evidence. This also meant that the voices of people harmed by medical intervention didn't get heard enough.

Unfortunately, asking questions was often met with hostility — and worse — rather than a discussion of the evidence base. A recent conference in London to discuss the uncertainties about how to best treat children with gender dysphoria was targeted by protesters with smoke bombs.

Dr Cass has made clear that this should not be an 'exceptional' area of practice; my hope is that now we really can centre on the distressed young people who need help — and to do that as well as possible, using truly evidence-based, and not ideologically based, care. **MailOnline**

● **Part of the problem, I think, has been the way in which other clinicians' concerns about treatments have been dealt with — and who have often ended up having to go through whistleblowing procedures and employment tribunals.**

Your guide to preventative health screenings you should get in your 40s

SO you've reached the Big 4-0? It's time to celebrate — and to make plans for some preventative care and screenings to help keep your health on track.

CBS News HealthWatch has compiled a series of guides to help you know which preventative screenings should be on your list, starting with people in their 20s and in each decade through your 60s. Compared to those in their 20s and 30s, people in their 40s have some additional recommendations to consider, including mammograms and colon cancer screening. So what should 40-somethings have on their preventative checklist? Here is a look at the guidelines experts recommend for people at average risk:

Vaccines in your 40s

In your 40s, it's important to make sure you're up-to-date on a few vaccines, including the Td or Tdap booster shot, which protects against tetanus and diphtheria, as well as the Covid-19 vaccine and annual flu shot, which are recommended for people ages 6 months and up.

Colon cancer screening in your 40s

At age 45, people should begin screening for colorectal cancer, according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an independent panel of national experts. This can be done via several different screening strategies. "Obviously the gold standard still remains the colonoscopy, but Cologuard (a brand of at-home stool tests) is a great test," says Dr. Robert M. Biernbaum, chief medical officer for WellNow Urgent Care. The frequency of testing will depend on the test type and an individual's risk level. In 2018, the recommended age to get a first colonoscopy screening was lowered to 45, from 50, for those at average risk, because rates of colon cancer have been increasing in younger age groups. If you're at increased risk, which includes having a family history or inflammatory bowel disease, talk to your doctor about being screened earlier.

Mammograms for women in their 40s

For women, your 40s is the age range when doctors recommend starting mammograms or other exams to screen for breast cancer, for those at average risk.

The latest draft guidance from the USPSTF says breast cancer screenings for women at average risk should be done every other year starting at age 40, 10 years earlier than the panel previously recommended in 2016. (It previously recommended women in their 40s make individual decisions about screenings based on their health history.) Other organizations already recommend annual



mammograms at 40, including the American College of Radiology.

Sexual and reproductive health in your 40s

For women, cervical cancer screenings should continue on the same schedule as in your 30s, for those at average risk, the USPSTF recommends: "Screening every 3 years with cervical cytology alone, every 5 years with high-risk human papillomavirus (hrHPV) testing alone, or every 5 years with hrHPV testing in combination with cytology (cotesting)." The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends visiting an OB-GYN, at least once a year for a well-woman visit and deciding with your doctor how frequently to do a pelvic exam. You may also want to talk to your doctor about menopause or perimenopause, which is when the body is transitioning to menopause, marking the end of someone's reproductive years. Perimenopause can last anywhere from 7 to 10 years, throughout your 40s and early 50s, Dr. Jessica Shepherd, OB-GYN and chief medical officer of Verywell Health, previously told CBS News.

"The average age of menopause is 52, so during that perimenopausal timeframe is when you might start to have symptoms," Shepherd said, adding some may notice changes as early as their mid-30s in certain cases. If you're postmenopausal in your 40s, ask your doctor about any additional tests you may want to consider, such as ovarian screening. For men, the USPSTF does not recommend routine testicular cancer screenings; however, the American Cancer Society recommends testicular exams be incorporated into a male patient's annual physical exam or performed as a self-test at home. For anyone who is sexually active, the CDC recommends getting HIV-tested at least once. Depending on risk factors, it

is also recommends getting tested for other sexually transmitted diseases and infections, including hepatitis B and C. People should also be screened for whether they are at risk for HIV and should be on PrEP, a highly effective HIV prevention drug. See the CDC's website for a breakdown of specific recommendations.

More screenings to consider in your 40s

Heart health — The American Heart Association recommends getting your blood pressure checked every 2 years if it's below 120/80 mm Hg but more often if it's higher. Cholesterol levels should be checked every 4 to 6 years for average-risk adults. "After age 40, your health care professional will also want to use an equation to calculate your 10-year risk of having a heart attack or stroke," the AHA says on its website. **Diabetes risk** — Beginning at age 45, the AHA recommends testing for prediabetes and risk for future diabetes. "If tests are normal, it is reasonable to repeat testing at a minimum of 3-year intervals," the AHA notes. The USPSTF also recommends screening for prediabetes in the 40s and to assess whether someone should be on a statin, a cholesterol-lowering drug. **Skin health** — To check for skin cancer, a yearly dermatological exam is recommended by the Skin Cancer Foundation. **Eye health** — Chances are you've already had multiple comprehensive eye and vision exams before hitting 40, but if not, it's definitely the time to do so, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. "This is when early signs of disease or changes in vision may appear," its website notes. "It is important to find eye diseases early. Early treatment can help preserve your vision." The American Optometric Association recommends an eye exam at least every 2 years between the ages of 40 through 64.

CBS Health



▲Palestinians walk past the rubble of residential buildings destroyed by Israeli strikes, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in the northern Gaza Strip.



▲A woman pulls a trolley with recyclable material past veld fires occurring as winter approaches, in Lenasia in the south of Johannesburg, South Africa.



▲Children jump into the water body of Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Rayerbazar, to cool themselves during a heatwave in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



▲A man rides a motorcycle on a flooded street following heavy rains in Sanaa, Yemen.



▲A drone view shows migrants from South and Central America as they assist border officials in moving a pile of trash collected from migrant crossings after surrendering to border officials in El Paso, Texas.



▲Dusk falls at the protest encampment in support of Palestinians at Columbia University, during the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in New York City.



▲A teacher shouts as she stands in front of riot police officers, during a protest against a proposed retirement law, in La Paz, Bolivia.

Mourinho says he didn't get the same support as Ten Hag at Man Utd

FORMER Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho has said he did not have the same kind of support at the club during his 2-1/2 year tenure as current Old Trafford boss Erik ten Hag.

The 61-year-old Portuguese, who last managed Serie A side AS Roma before being sacked in January, was fired by United in December 2018 following a series of dismal results having won the League Cup and Europa League in the 2016-17 season.

Mourinho, who has also managed Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan, Real Madrid and Tottenham Hotspur, added that there were still a few players at United who he did not want when he was there.

"What Ten Hag has in his time at Manchester United I didn't have. I didn't have that level of support. I didn't have that level of trust," Mourinho told The Telegraph. "So I left sad because I felt I was in the beginning of the process.

"In some moments, I felt if they trusted me and believed in my experience, things could be different.

"There are a couple of players still there I didn't want five or six years ago. I think they represent a little bit what I consider not the best professional profile to a club of a certain dimension.

"But I did my job there. Time always tells the truth. I would love Manchester United to succeed."

Under Ten Hag, United ended a six-year trophy drought last season by winning the



▲ Former Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho has said he did not have the same kind of support at the club during his 2-1/2 year tenure as current Old Trafford boss Erik ten Hag.



League Cup after the Dutchman joined the club from Ajax Amsterdam in 2022.

United are seventh in the Premier League, with British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe having struck a long-awaited deal in December to buy a 25% stake in the club and take charge of soccer operations to try to revive their fortunes on the pitch.

Mourinho, who is presently without a club, said there was still a long way to go in his managerial career.

"It is not like I am 61 and I want to stop at 65," he said. "No way at all. There is still a long career to go."

(Reuters)

Woods adds 3 players to his indoor golf team

TIGER Woods announced on Monday that Max Homa, Tom Kim and Kevin Kisner will join him on his four-man Jupiter Links Golf Club team that will compete in the indoor simulator golf league scheduled to begin in January 2025.

The TGL, a primetime golf league featuring six squads of four PGA Tour players competing in a fast-paced form of team golf, is run by TMRW Sports, a tech-focused sports company established by Woods and Rory McIlroy in 2022.

"I have already shared my excitement and optimism for TGL as a league and product," Woods, who is part owner of Jupiter Links Golf Club, said in a news release.

"Now that we have finalised our roster with a team of world-class golfers, I am even more confident that this group will proudly represent the Jupiter area and connect with our fans for years to come."

Homa, a six-times winner on the PGA Tour who is ninth in the world rankings, had his best major outing at this year's Masters where he finished in a share of third place.

World number 23 Kim is a rising star as the 21-year-old South Korean already has seven international victories in addition to three triumphs on the PGA Tour. Kisner, a four-times winner on the PGA Tour, match play wizard and one of the game's top personalities, has made just one cut in seven events this year on the U.S.-based circuit. (Reuters)

Inter become Serie A champions with derby win over Milan

INTER have won the 2023-24 Serie A title after an incredible season.

The team coached by Simone Inzaghi has secured its 20th Serie A title, the second-most of any in Italy, behind only Juventus. The Nerazzurri lead the league from wire to wire and deserved to win locking up the historic Scudetto in a season where they absolutely demolished the competition.

By winning the 2023-24 title, Inter win the 20th Scudetto in their history, the so-called second star. In Italian soccer, teams that win at least ten Serie A titles can sew one star on their jerseys, twenty gets you two, and so on . Inter, from next season, can officially show their second star on the official jersey and logo. The Nerazzurri become the second Italian team, after Juventus and their 36 Serie A titles, to be entitled to it.

This is also the first Scudetto for manager Simone Inzaghi, who finally made his dream true. Inzaghi joined Inter in the summer of 2021 to replace Antonio Conte, only a few days after the Nerazzurri won their 19th title.

The club was forced to make some changes over the years but Inzaghi kept the club competitive since the beginning, winning the Coppa Italia twice, and the Supercoppa Italiana three times in his first two seasons in charge.

After reaching the 2022-23 Champions League final which Inter lost 1-0 to Manchester City, the club and Inzaghi himself started this season with a clear target of winning the championship.

... earn 'second star' for historic 20th Scudetto win



▲ Inter have won the 2023-24 Serie A title after an incredible season.

After losing the 2021-22 Scudetto on the last matchday of the season, and then a disappointing Serie A campaign the following season where Inter ended up third behind Napoli and Lazio, Inzaghi has now finally clinched the Serie A title in his third season at the club, becoming also the third manager in the history of the club in terms of total titles won (6). Only Roberto Mancini and

Helenio Herrera (7) have more than him up to now.

The club worked over the years to create a solid group inside the dressing room, but it's one that was also changed throughout the years as the club needed to sell players over the past two years due to their financial situation. Despite losing players such as Achraf Hakimi, Romelu Lukaku, Edin Dzeko,

Milan Skriniar or Andre Onana, to name the most relevant ones, Inter were able to keep the level of the roster high and were able to compete in Italy and also in Europe in the past three seasons. Players such as Lautaro Martinez, who this season also became the captain of the club, or Hakan Calhanoglu, were able to step up and drive the others to the glory this season. (The Guardian)

Barca may request Real replay – Laporta

...if VAR is found wrong to disallow Yamal goal

BARCELONA may request a full replay of Sunday's 3-2 LaLiga loss at Real Madrid if Lamine Yamal's 28th-minute attempt to score, deemed not a goal after a VAR review, is confirmed to be a goal, club president Joan Laporta said.

The club will request all footage and audio of the incident from the Spanish Football Federation, Laporta said on Monday.

The match was paused for several minutes as the VAR tried to determine whether Yamal's effort had crossed the goal line, but it could not find a clear camera angle and the de-

cision not to award a goal stood.

"If... the club understands that an error was made in the revision of the incident, we will take all available measure to reverse the situation, without discounting, obviously, any necessary legal action," Laporta said.

"If it is confirmed that it was a legal goal, we will move ahead and we do not discount requesting that the game be replayed, just as has happened in another game in Europe due to a VAR error."

A Belgian Pro League match between Anderlecht and Genk, originally played in December, was scheduled to be replayed in full due to a VAR error, after the Disciplinary

Council for Professional Football ruled in favour of a Genk appeal.

Laporta said he was dissatisfied with "improper use" of VAR, adding the tool was creating "confusions with contradictory criteria according to matches and teams."

"We understand the difficulty faced by officials, but it's for that reason that such tools exist (like VAR) which should help the competition be fairer and not the other way around," he said.

Barcelona, with 70 points after 32 matches, trail leaders Real by 11 points.

(Reuters)



▲ Barcelona may request a full replay of Sunday's 3-2 LaLiga loss at Real Madrid if Lamine Yamal's 28th-minute attempt to score, deemed not a goal after a VAR review, is confirmed to be a goal

Bellingham eyeing triple trophy success this season

JUDE Bellingham is targeting LaLiga and Champions League titles with Real Madrid this season, as well as the Euros with England this summer, the 20-year-old said after winning the Breakthrough of the Year prize at the Laureus awards on Monday.

Bellingham has scored 21 goals for Real since signing in the close season from Borussia Dortmund for 103 million euros (\$109 million).

The Englishman scored in added time to secure a 3-2 comeback win over Barcelona on Sunday as Real opened up an 11-point lead over their rivals.

"It's definitely something I want to do," Bellingham said of his trophy targets. "We've still got a few more games to wrap up LaLiga and then we've got two very difficult games against (Bayern) Munich (in the Champions League semi-finals)."

"For the Euros hopefully we can take our form from the last few tournaments and do one better."



▲ Jude Bellingham after winning the Breakthrough of the Year prize at the Laureus awards on Monday.

Bellingham's impact at Real has been undeniable. His leadership qualities have been praised by his team mates and he is the league's second-highest goal scorer with 17, one behind Girona's Artem Dovbyk.

Having made his debut in 2020, Bellingham has 29 caps for England and scored three goals. England are grouped with Slovenia, Denmark and Serbia at Euro 2024, which begins on June 14.

(Reuters)

Pirates ready to sell Mabasa, agent confirms talks with overseas club

TSHEGOFATSO Mabasa's agent, Gary Cassisa, has confirmed talks with Fotbal Club FCSB, formerly named FC Steaua București, over a possible move to Romania.

Mabasa has been in fine form for Orlando Pirates, scoring eight goals in 10 appearances in all competitions for Pirates since returning in January from a loan spell at Moroka Swallows.

Pirates rivals Mamelodi Sundowns were keen to sign Mabasa during the January transfer window but that deal failed to materialise.

Now Mabasa's agent, Cassica says the Brazilians are facing stiff competition from European clubs, including Siyabonga Ngezana's FCSB, for the 27-year-old striker's signature.

"At this point, his decision has to be considerate of his future as a player considering his age. Sundowns have the financial muscles to get him. But a chance at playing in the Champions League is not easy to resist." "FCSB want him. They are on top in the Super Liga and are likely to be playing in the UEFA Champions League. At the moment, I'm also



▲ Tshegofatso Mabasa has been in fine form for Orlando Pirates, scoring eight goals in 10 appearances in all competitions for Pirates since returning in January from a loan spell at Moroka Swallows.

talking to other clubs in Europe. But the idea is to help him keep his calm until the season is over," he added.

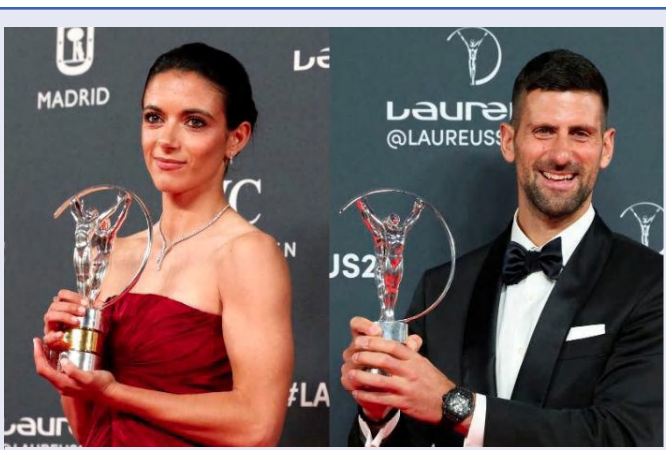
Cassica also revealed that Pirates are willing to sell their prized asset for the right price.

"The good thing is that Pirates are ready to sell and also open up space for upcoming youngsters. So we wait until the season ends. "Initially, he was supposed to have joined Ma-

melodi Sundowns in January, but the move couldn't happen. Orlando Pirates exercised their options to extend the contract, but all will be settled when the season ends."

Mabasa's initial contract was supposed to end in June this year, but Pirates exercised their two-year option, meaning that his current deal will now expire in June 2026.

(The Citizen)



▲ Spain's World Cup winning midfielder Aitana Bonmati (l) was named the Sportswoman of the Year, while Serbia's Novak Djokovic captured the top men's honour at the Laureus awards ceremony on Monday.

Bonmati, Djokovic win top Laureus awards

SPAIN'S World Cup winning midfielder Aitana Bonmati was named the Sportswoman of the Year, while Serbia's Novak Djokovic captured the top men's honour at the Laureus awards ceremony on Monday.

Bonmati, who has cemented her place at the top of women's football by winning FIFA's The Best, Ballon d'Or and World Cup MVP among other accomplishments, made her way on to the stage for a second time on Monday as the Spanish women's football team were named Team of the Year, the first female squad to win the award. Seven-time Super Bowl champion Tom Brady handed Djokovic his fifth Laureus award after the top ranked tennis player enjoyed a remarkable 2023.

The Serb equalled Margaret Court's all time record haul of 24 Grand Slam titles after winning U.S. Open last September.

Djokovic contested all four major finals in 2023, also winning the Australian and French Opens. He was the runner-up at Wimbledon.

England midfielder Jude Bellingham, who has taken LaLiga by storm in his first season with Real Madrid, was named the Breakthrough Player of the Year, the first footballer to win this award. Gymnast Simone Biles won Comeback of the Year award after winning four gold medals at last year's world championships, her first international event since competing at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

(Reuters)

Eswatini ranked 16th in Mandela Cup

Stories By Sibusiso Masilela
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Eswatini Boxing national team has been ranked number 16 in the recently ended Mandela African Cup.

THE FULL MANDELA CUP RANKINGS			
Country	Gold	Silver	
DR Congo	10	3	6
Mozambique	2	3	0
Mauritius	2	0	2
Gabon	2	0	0
Lesotho	1	1	5
Botswana	1	1	4
Angola	1	1	0
Namibia	1	0	4
Egypt	1	0	2
Seychelles	1	0	1
Bangladesh	1	0	0
Tunisia	1	0	0
Kenya	1	0	0
South Africa	0	7	4
Ethiopia	0	3	3
Eswatini	0	2	1
Uganda	0	1	4
Zimbabwe	0	1	4
Tanzania	0	1	1
Cape Verde	0	1	0
Cameroon	0	0	2



▲ Members of team Eswatini led by Eswatini Boxing Association and IBA member Pearl Dlamini after the Mandela Cup presentation on Sunday at Durban International Convention Centre.

This is according to the rankings released by the inaugural International Boxing Association after the finals of the continental Cup held at the Durban International Convention Centre.

The national team won three medals two silver medals and one bronze through continental championships with the female duo of Veliswa Magaya and Temalangen Dlamini each taking E57 000 plus silver medals.

Meanwhile, male boxer Nhlanhla Dlamini

won himself E28 000 and a bronze medal in the male category.

National team head of the coaching panel Mpendulo Mbingo said they need to work hard as a country.

Methods

“We have a lot of work to do as a country in the international arena. We must introduce extensive training methods for our boxers so that they can be able to compete effectively in big tournaments. We are grateful to the Eswatini Boxing Association for allowing

us to partake in such huge tournaments. We need to continue working hard as a country and groom young talent at a tender age,” he said.

The technical team is also comprised of Douglas Simelane (Head coach), Muzi Shongwe, Ndumiso Mthembu, Maxwell Ngwenya and the legendary Simanga ‘De Boer’ Shiba.

The squad manager was Eswatini Boxing Association Vice President Emmanuel du Pont.



▲ Karate artists during a local grading tournament.

E20 to watch Oyama Karate Dev. Tourney

By Chris Dlamini

IT is going down this Saturday at the Zakhele Community Hall in Manzini - its fight time for junior karatekas. The Oyama Kyokushinkaikan Karate Association of Eswatini (OKKAS) is hosting an Oyama Karate Development Tournament. Spectators are welcome as always to see the action. It will cost each member of the public E20 to witness the tournament. “We are starting the tournament at 9am, and we will be having all our Karate dojos (clubs) involved. This one is exclusively for our white to brown belts,” OKKAS Spokesperson Sensei Musa Ginindza said.

He explained that their blackbelts were off this one as its sole purpose is to develop the young talent within the association.

It is also a requirement for every participating karate artist to pay a registration fee of E150. Ginindza further said the blackbelts and seniors will be officiating in the tournament to be graced by Shihans Mfanafuthi Vilakati and Lucky Tfomo. For more information, Ginindza and Sensei Mkhize can be contacted at 7627 8215 and 7612 6672.

Fighting Weight Divisions:

Male
55kg, 60kg, 65kg, 70kg, and Open Weight
Female
55kg, 60kg, 65kg, 70kg, and Open Weight.

VOC appreciates Instacash E10 000 sponsorship

Voice of the Church (VOC) has thanked Instacash for sponsoring their upcoming half Marathon with E10 000.

The sponsorship also includes 1000 water units of 500ml water units to be utilised during the annual road race scheduled for May 4, 2024.

Instacash has joined the footsteps of 8 Bet who recently contributed E 19 500 towards the 2024 edition slated for the Zakhele Sports Ground.

The Christian radio station’s Chief Executive Office (CEO) Dr Zachariah Mthethwa said they are grateful for the sponsorship.

“We are grateful for the sponsorship which will contribute to the success of the race. We are appealing for more sponsors so that we can have a successful race and We encourage runners to register at the various registration Centres,” he said.

Registration for the race can be done at various outlets such as Furniture Warehouse branches, VOC, Fitness Zone, Manzini and Destiny Music Mbabane, among others.

Athletes will have to part with the E160 registration fee for the 21km, E140 -10km and E120 for 5km.



▲ Instacash MD Mandla ‘Cheeks’ Nxumalo during a recent event.

Meanwhile, Instacash Managing Director Mandla ‘Cheeks’ Nxumalo said they were happy to partner with the radio station.

“Instacash is proud to partner with VOC for the second consecutive year on the latter’s annual Half Marathon event scheduled for May 4, 2024. As the country’s newest mobile money operator, we are committed to serving a healthy clientele; hence wellness initiatives such as the VOC Half Marathon event augur well with our social and business objectives,” he said.

He added: “It is in that regard that almost all our staff

members will participate in this challenge. Most participants from other organizations as well as individual entrants are already our customers. We wish VOC, partners, and all participants a safe and successful event,”

Registration points

Mbabane: Furniture Warehouse store, Destiny Music and Sounds
Siteki: Furniture Warehouse store
Manzini: VOC offices, Fitness Zone, Torga Optical Bhunu Mall
Nhlangano: Furniture Warehouse store
Contacts: 2505 4772 /7980 7984

Hub Utilities sponsorship launch



▲Hub Utilities officials Khumbuzile Dlamini, Darren Dunn presenting E80 000 sponsorship to EFA CEO Frederick Mngometulu, HRFA Chairman Comfort Shongwe and HRFA executive member Ntokozo.



▲Hub Utilities Chief Brand and Customer Service Officer Khumbuzile Dlamini also had something to say on the day.



▲Hub Utilities stores marketing officer Darren Dunn announcing the sponsorship.

E80 000 for Hub utilities HRFA U-17 KO

By Sibusiso Masilela
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HUB Utiles stores continue to spearhead youth development under the Hhohho region by pumping E80 000 towards the 2024 Under 17 tournament. The sponsorship of various junior teams under HRFA Southern Zone compete for E40 000 worth of prizes under the boys and girl’s categories. The other E40 000 of the sponsorship will be channelled into administration of the tournament.

The sponsorship was announced by Hub Utilities marketing Officer Darren Dunn during the Launch held at Sigwaca House on Tuesday.

The sponsorship also includes the capacitation of the youngsters on life skills by the sponsor’s delegation led by Chief Brand and Customer Experience Officer Khumbuzile Dlamini.

“We are pleased with our long-standing partnership with HRFA which is now at nine years, and we are pleased with the impact of the games within the various zones. We are committed to seeing future football stars and referees emerging from the tournament. We commend the effort that has been put by the Hhohho Regional Football Association (HRFA) in ensuring the smooth proceedings of the games,” he said.

Meanwhile, HRFA Chairman Dr Comfort Shongwe thanked the sponsor for the kind gesture.

“We are grateful for the sponsorship which has impacted youth development in the region over the years. We urge teams to continue behaving themselves throughout



▲Youngsters following proceedings.

the games and we commend the good work of the sponsor through this tournament as they also teach youngsters life skills. We appreciate guidance and support of the Eswatini Football Association towards our programs.

Eswatini Football Association Chief Executive Officer Frederick Mngomezulu applauded the partnership between the two partners.

“We are pleased with the Partnership between HRFA and the sponsor which enhances the development of football for both males and females. We commend the good governance that is being displayed by HRFA in its programs which makes them the leading regional association in the country,” he said.

The tournament will kick off on April 27, 2024, within the various HRFA Zones.



▲More players pictured during the event.

‘Produce audited financials’, court orders Zakhele, Thoba

...Athletics teams win round one, after High court ruled that Athletics Eswatini (AE) President Zakhele Dlamini and secretary, Thoba Mazibuko release financial statements to the member clubs.

By Bahle Gama
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THE High Court has ordered Eswatini Athletics President Zakhele Dlamini and Chief Operations Officer Thoba Mazibuko to produce audited financials to member clubs.

This follows after member clubs moved an urgent application in this regard demanding that the president, treasurer and chief operations officer to produce audited financial and hold a special and general meeting to fill vacancies of board members. The court also ordered Dlamini and Mazibuko to hold the requested meetings by the club members within 14 days.

In an urgent application filed on April 18 at the High Court, Edward Ndlangamandla a member of the Nhlanguano Track Athletics stated that on April 14,11 athletics clubs resolved to launch proceedings.

These are UNESWA, Swazi Slojos, Manzini Striders, Mhlatane, Mbabane, Manzini, Nhlanguano, Ngculiwini, UEDF, RES, and GFC athletic clubs.

He stated that discord began to prevail under Dlamini’s administration occasioned by a series of unprecedented acts which led the club to request a general meeting, known as a special meeting.

Dlamini allegedly facilitated the meetings for clubs more than three times after the members had on several occasions made

requests and he allegedly appointed a disciplinary committee and instituted proceedings against members following the constitution which is the backbone of the federation.

Ndlangamandla stated that Dlamini further unilaterally selected teams and officials for international participation without the mandate of the executive board and has the power to confirm athletes for international meetings, contests, and meetings.

Grievancies

On behalf of the club members, he stated other grievances in that other executive board members wrote a letter on January 28 denouncing and distancing themselves from the unconstitutional acts of Dlamini and Mazibuko.

An annual general assembly was scheduled to be convened on March 16 which was aborted by Mazibuko without any just and reasonable cause.

Immediately after the scheduled Annual General Meeting (AGM) three of the voting executive board members tendered their resignation citing amongst other issues. These are Sipho Vilakati, Sanele Mamba and Dr Zabenguni Mkhathshwa.

Ndlangamandla stated that Mazibuko continued to sow seeds of inharmony within the federation by fostering practices contrary to those which had hitherto ensured the smooth operation of the federation.

The member clubs learnt of the resignation



▲ Eswatini Athletics President Zakhele Dlamini. of the three executive board members and again requested in writing another special general meeting.

After receiving a request for the meeting, Mazibuko notified member clubs that such a meeting would be held on April 4 at Olympiafrica Centre at Lobamba.

“The unsuspecting member clubs were then informed that a correspondence from the Confederation of African Athletics was sent to Dlamini and Mazibuko instructing that the meeting be postponed until the CAA delegation comes to Eswatini to resolve the leadership challenges,” he said.

He stated that the clubs were perplexed by this ordeal because they had not reported to

any regional or international federation that they had failed to resolve their issues within the proper availed structures in the country.

He stated that the clubs suspect that Dlamini who also sits on the CAA board manipulated the situation and gave the CAA the wrong impression that there were leadership challenges within Athletics Eswatini, whereas there are only vacant positions that need to be filled.

The question that boggles one’s mind according to Ndlangamandla is when the CAA delegation intends to finalise the travel logistics to Eswatini because it has no mandate or clear mechanism as to how to intervene in issues affecting the federation.

He stated that no communication was forwarded to the World Athletics hence it remains a mystery how CAA mandated itself to intervene on issues when they have not failed to do so let alone mandated by WA.

He stated that the club members feared that due to the defunct executive board that can make any decision in terms of accountability and governance the Federation risks facing suspension by these affiliates due to improper constitution.

“We may further lose our licence to operate which was due for inspection on April 1 by EOCGA and ESRC,” he said.

He added that the clubs learnt from the media that the Federation organised build-ups to the National Championships Youth and Junior athletics without the quorate of the board.

“We believe that the life of any Federation rests on transparent administration being at the helm and members being entitled to its effective control including finances to which respondents are currently having free reign over,” he added.

Bull stars go on strike

- * Trained only a day before Y. Buffaloes game
- * Delayed Salaries led to strike, players paid on eve of game
- * Some accused of indiscipline after pay

By Chris Dlamini

THE cat is out of the bag - Mbabane Highlanders players were on strike last week.

Challenging for the league title before suffering a 4-1 defeat at the hands of Young Buffaloes last Saturday, Highlanders blew it all away. It has transpired the match nearly did not happen as Inkunz’emnyama players had planned to boycott it too after staying away from training all week but last Friday.

“There was no training all week but a few hours on Friday. Its Buffaloes we were going

to play, and they destroyed us. Our players had misunderstood that their month-end last term was on the 17th, so they were paid on the sane day even now,” said an impeccable source.

The source said this was well known by some supporters of the club, and rightly so, as one fan put it on Facebook. The fan even included all their defeats where players were not training due to delayed salaries, including losing to Mbabane Swallows in the Ingwenyama Cup 2024 and the 5-0 first round drubbing by same Buffaloes.

Swallows beat Highlanders 3-0 to reach the cup finals but lost to Green Mamba.

“A lot of games they played without good

enough preparation we won’t mention. In a week, it is a norm to train once before the game. What do you think is not going well inside their camp? Mind you some players if not all will leave the team off season,” wrote a supporter on Facebook under the page Premier League of Eswatini yesterday.

It transpired that the supporter was right about the strike last week. The team’s head coach Milton Dlamini lamented the lack of discipline among the players. He ran short of mentioning what discipline issues, but sources claim some players could not help it, as they allegedly engaged in unexpected activity later on the day.

“What I can say is that we all received our pay last Friday, and yes, we had not trained all week,” one of the players concurred.

Dlamini has been criticised and supported by some for his post-match outburst. The team’s Managing Director (MD) Chief Ally Kgomongwe has also encouraged him to be mindful of his tongue, saying it was painful to lose like that, but you do not speak ill of

your players.

It turns out Dlamini may have hit the nail on the head about the lack of discipline given the news of a strike all week.

“The sad thing is that even our coaches aren’t working together. Milton and Siya seem to not have a good working relationship, and already, our MD knows as he has been told,” a source claimed.

Speaking to Dlamini and the team’s physical trainer, Siyabonga Bhembe, the latter affirmed he was aware that the MD received a report of that sort about their working relationship with the former.

Dlamini’s assistant is Dumsani ‘DU’ Makhanya. It was claimed that Dlamini may be wanting his own technical team, with his main issue said to be Bhembe, who has good ties with Kgomongwe. Dlamini asked not to comment, especially because the MD had already spoken about the situation of the team. Meanwhile, Highlanders officially dropped off the league title race after they lost 4-1 to the army side.

Bufs, ‘Westians’ in epic week 23 fixture

By Sibusiso Masilela
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MTN Premier title hopefuls Young Buffaloes and relegation-threatened hub giants Manzini Wanderers will face off in an epic week 23 MTN Premier League fixture.

The match will take place at Mayaluka Stadium on Saturday where both sides will be having different missions.

The army side will be aiming to keep their grip in the title race as they currently perched at three with 41 points while the hub giants are still fighting to move out of the relegation zone.

The marron and white outfit are still not safe from the dreaded axe as they are languishing at position 12 with 20 points.

Consolidate

Current log leaders Mbabane Swallows will be looking to consolidate the top spot against Manzini Sea Birds at Mkhuzweni Technical Centre whilst defending champions Green Mamba and second-placed will be in action against resurgent Ezulwini United at Simunye Stadium.

MTN Premier League Fixture Programme Week 23				
Saturday				
Simunye Stadium				
Green Mamba	vs	Ezulwini United		3pm
Mkhuzweni Sports Ground				
M. Swallows	vs	Manzini Sea Birds		3pm
Mhlume Stadium				
Royal Leopards	vs	Moneni Pirates		3pm
Mayaluka Stadium				
Manzini Wanderers	vs	Young Buffaloes		3pm
King Sobhuza Stadium				
Nsingizini	vs	Illovo		3pm
KaLanga Stadium				
Mbabane Highlanders	vs	Denver Sundowns FC		1pm
Madlenya	vs	Rangers		3pm



**Bellingham
eyeing triple
trophy success**

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**Highlanders
stars go
on strike**

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Sport

#ATHLETICS_ESWATINI



Court orders Zakhele, Thoba:

**‘Produce
audited
financials’**

... Athletics teams win round one, after High court ruled that Athletics Eswatini (AE) President Zakhele Dlamini and secretary, Thoba Mazibuko release financial statements to the member clubs. *Page 23*