

Govt prioritizes service delivery, economic growth and wellbeing

By Ncaba Ntshakala

EMERGING from a productive and insightful retreat, the Eswatini government has laid out a clear roadmap for the nation's future, prioritizing service delivery, economic growth, and the well-being of emaSwati. Prime Minister Russell Mmiso, addressed the nation and shared details of the retreat held since Sunday, where Cabinet Ministers, Principal Secretaries, and government officials gathered to chart a course for a brighter Kingdom.

■ SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

SOS Children's Village appeals for support to raise E2.7 million

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SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

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CABINET RETREAT:

Govt prioritizes service delivery, economic growth and wellbeing



▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini and Cabinet Ministers pose for a group photo after their retreat.

By Ncaba Ntshakala

EMERGING from a productive and insightful retreat, the Eswatini government has laid out a clear roadmap for the nation's future, prioritizing service delivery, economic growth, and the wellbeing of emaSwati. Prime Minister Russell Mmiso, addressed the nation and shared details of the retreat held since Sunday, where Cabinet Ministers, Principal Secretaries, and government officials gathered to chart a course for a brighter Kingdom.

Service delivery at the forefront

The retreat placed service delivery at the heart of the government's agenda. Recognizing the importance of responsiveness to the needs of the people, the government pledged to prioritize all Sibaya submissions. These submissions, a cornerstone of the Tinkhundla system of governance, have served as a direct channel for emaSwati where they shared their concerns and aspirations for the Kingdom. His Majesty King Mswati III further declared and adopted the submissions as a guideline policy which the

government has said will be a priority as they execute their duties. Prime Minister expressed that the government, addressing these submissions effectively will ensure that government services reach the people. "Our retreat focused on how we can grow the economy and improve the lives of emaSwati," said the Prime Minister "We based much of what we discussed on the submissions made by emaSwati at Sibaya. Cabinet agreed that we must develop and implement ambitious plans that should be implemented aggressively to grow the economy"

Boosting the Economy

Economic growth received significant attention during the retreat. Development partners, acknowledging the Kingdom's steady but sluggish economic progress, encouraged the government to develop ambitious plans and implement them with urgency. The government, receptive to this advice, vowed to focus on fostering an environment conducive to investment and job creation. This renewed focus on economic growth promises a brighter future for emaSwati.

Performance Management for better results

To ensure that government officials and civil servants deliver on their duties, the Prime Minister said

that on the retreat, there were discussions on the importance of robust performance management systems (PMS). The existing PMS strategy, designed by the previous government, will be fully implemented and further refined to ensure accountability and efficiency.

Decentralization

Decentralization emerged as a key strategy for bringing government closer to the people. Leveraging the Tinkhundla system, the government aims to ensure that services reach communities and constituencies effectively. This decentralized approach promises to enhance responsiveness to local needs and empower communities to participate in shaping their development.

Investing in Education

Recognizing the crucial role of education in shaping the future, the government highlighted the need for improvements in the education sector. Development partners pledged their support in this endeavour, aiming to equip young emaSwati with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Sustainable Energy

Prime Minister Russell Dlamini also shared that on the retreat, the government also addressed the critical issue of energy. The government acknowledged the need to streamline processes and engage with the Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) to develop sustainable energy solutions and ensure reliable electricity generation.

Call to unity

The Premier further issued a heartfelt plea to the nation, urging all emaSwati to join hands in the collective endeavour to develop the country. Again, the Premier said that in due course, the government will share the full Government working programme which will be an outcome of the retreat.

Govt vows to aggressively fight corruption

IN a resolute stand against corruption, the government has pledged to plug the leaks and hold perpetrators accountable. Emerging from a productive cabinet retreat, Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini declared a zero-tolerance policy on graft, vowing to close the "tap" where public funds are siphoned off and ensure that "those who are found guilty of such are persecuted by the law."

Dlamini said that the government has discussed strategies on how it will deal with corruption by identifying and closing loopholes within existing systems that allow for the misappropriation of public funds.

World Bank, UN pledge support in education, health

Prime Minister Russell Dlamini announced a crucial commitment during his address to the nation following the Cabinet retreat. He expressed that during the retreat, the Development partners, recognizing the critical role of education in shaping the Kingdom's trajectory, have pledged their support for its growth and modernization. Such was delivered by representatives of the organisations which includes United Nations Resident George Wachira who further also made emphasis on helping the country on health. Apart from the United Nations, also the World Bank pledged to support the country.



▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini.

By Ncaba Ntshakala

SOS Children’s Village appeals for support to raise E2.7million



▲ SOS Children’s Village has launched the ‘One Lilangeni’ campaign to raise funds to cater for vulnerable children.



▲ SOS Childrens Village Eswatini Communications Coordinator, Temalangen Dlamini.

SOS Children’s Village, a haven for vulnerable children in the Kingdom, is seeking E2.7 million to continue its vital work.

Temalangen Dlamini, the organisation’s Communication Coordinator, announced the ‘One Lilangeni’ campaign, a call to action for the community to join hands in protecting and empowering children.

Dlamini said that previously, SOS Eswatini relied solely on funding from SOS Children’s Villages International. However, due to global challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic, this support has decreased and now they can no longer solely depend on this funding to meet the needs of the children.

Dlamini said that SOS Children’s Village provides a home and comprehensive care for 288 children in its villages. Additionally, it supports the well-being and education of 3,180 children within their communities. Their services range from providing daily necessities to ensuring access to education.

Dlamini urged individuals and organisations to join the ‘One Lilangeni’ campaign. “A small donation of E1 a day, E30 a month, can make a significant difference,” she emphasised. “Every Lilangeni helps us provide food, shelter, education, and hope to these vulnerable children.”

The appeal extends beyond just financial support. Dlamini encouraged religious entities, NGOs, and companies to consider donating essential materials like stationery, clothing, and hygiene products. These seemingly small contributions can have a major impact on the daily lives of the children.

The Communications Coordinator said

that even the smallest gesture can show children that they are not alone.

SOS Children’s Villages (CV) Eswatini is an independent, non-governmental child welfare organisation and an affiliate member of SOS Children’s Villages International.

Established in 1989, SOS CV Eswatini’s main objective is to support and provide quality child care to children who have lost parental care and those at risk of losing parental care.

The organisation since its inauguration

has strived to drive its mission of building families for children in need, helping them shape their futures and contribute to the development of their communities. In all its efforts the organisation expressed that it is moving towards its vision of, “Every child belongs to a family, grows in respect, love and security”.

To contribute to the ‘One Lilangeni’ campaign or learn more about SOS Children’s Village, Dlamini said people can visit their website or contact them at 2505 8471/2/3.



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Former Anglican Church Arch Deacon Reverend Bhekindlela Magongo dies

By Ncaba Ntshakala

FORMER Chairperson of the Council of Churches and Eswatini Anglican Arch Deacon Reverend Bhekindlela Magongo has died in a tragic car accident on Tuesday night near KaMahhala, Matsapha.

Reverend Sicelo Dlamini, spokesperson for the church, confirmed the news, stating that they received the devastating news and have since reached out to Reverend Magongo's family. Dlamini shared that due to the family's ongoing discussions, further details surrounding the accident and funeral arrangements will be communicated.

Reverend Sicelo Dlamini expressed that the Anglican Church and the wider community mourn the loss of Reverend Magongo, offering their heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones during this difficult time.

His death was also confirmed by

the Council of Churches' Secretary General, Bishop Zwanini Shabalala who said they were still tongue-tied over the sad news of Reverend Magongo's passing on.

"We were told that he died at around 10 pm on Tuesday when his car was involved in an accident," Bishop Shabalala said.

Magongo once served as the Youth Chaplain for Anglican Youth and the Chairperson of the Eswatini Council of Churches.

Served

Ndumiso Myeni a member of the Anglican Church said that Magongo served the church diligently, leaving a lasting impression on countless individuals with his dedication to his faith and community. "We are very saddened by his passing, he will be remembered for his passion, leadership, and unwavering commitment to God and the church," Myeni commented.

A member of the family who preferred to be only identified as Lilunga lemndeni lelincane (a young member of the family) also confirmed the tragic passing of Magongo.

"We are still shocked at the passing of our brother, and we will soon furnish you with details during the week," the member of the family said.

Deputy Police Public Information Communication Officer (PICO) Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni also confirmed the accident, which occurred approximately on Tuesday night.

Serious injuries

"On Tuesday around 8:10 pm at Galp/Breweries off-ramp towards Mahhala, Matsapha along MR3, a Kia sedan driven by a 49-year-old man of Mbabane lost control and knocked on the median concrete wall. The driver sustained serious injuries and was certified dead upon arrival at RFM Hospital. Three passengers sustained serious injuries, and they were treated and admitted at RFM Hospital. The three passengers include a 31-year-old man from Lobamba, a 35-year-old woman from Mvutjini and a 36-year-old woman from Matsapha," Superintendent Mnguni said in a statement.



▲ The late Reverend Bhekindlela Magongo who once served as Eswatini Council of Churches Chairperson and as Arch Deacon

Manzini Municipality closes Ngwane Park Cemetery

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmediagroup

THE Manzini Municipality Council has relocated its burial services to a new multi-cultural cemetery at the new Golf Course Cemetery Extension.

Manzini Municipality Spokesperson Mathokoza Thwala said this has been necessitated by the Ngwane Park Cemetery reaching its full capacity.

He said the reaching of full capacity was exacerbated by a sharp rise in the demand for burial space during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thwala stated that the Municipality has made necessary arrangements to open a new cemetery to accommodate the burial needs of the city's residents with the new Golf Course Cemetery Extension, whose capacity is over 8 200 graves. It is located on the remainder of 1231, below the municipal pound facility.

Relocation

He stated that the relocation of the cemetery comes with several changes, which is to ensure the longevity of the cemetery and prioritise the burial needs of their residents, hence, the Council has decided to restrict burial rights to city residents only.

He explained that proof of residence for a minimum period of six months will be required and in addition to the usual documentation such as a death certificate, national ID of both the applicant for burial space and the deceased, proof of the applicant's relationship with the deceased as well as proof of payment for burial space.

"For the burial of property owners' children, we will require the deceased's birth certificate. iv. Similarly; for tenants, a lease agreement, and a utility bill not older than 3 months will be necessary in order to confirm



▲ The Ngwane Park Cemetery which has since been closed by the Manzini Municipal Council, relocating burials to Golf Coast Multi-cultural Cemetery.

residency," he said.

Thwala added that in the case of a tenant's child, an affidavit confirming residency and the deceased's birth certificate will be required.

"Residents living in informal settlements will have to provide an affidavit signed by the traditional authorities of that particular area, affirming the deceased's residency," he said. He said all these measures have been put in place to ensure that the new cemetery serves the needs of our residents and remains a sustainable option for future generations. Furthermore, the spokesperson stated that the new cemetery has been carefully designed to respect and accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds that exist

in our city.

"The cemetery is divided into several sections to cater to different needs and preferences," he said.

He further explained that the various sections within the new cemetery include a lawn section that is dedicated to adults.

He stated that the lawn section is meant for people who will want to place only a headstone on the grave and no tombstone.

"Additionally, we have a separate lawn section that is specifically designated for children; ensuring a respectful and appropriate resting place for our young ones," he said.

Thwala added that in the cemetery they have created an adult monument section and a children's monument section stating

that these sections will allow families to erect personalised monuments and memorials in remembrance of their loved ones.

He also stated that the cemetery has included an urn section for those who choose cremation as their preferred method of burial and that this area provides a tranquil setting for the interment of cremated remains.

"We also understand that some families may wish to reserve graves for future use. Therefore, we have allocated a section specifically for this purpose. These reserved graves will be available for families to pay for and secure in advance," said Thwala.

set aside

Moreover, he explained that they have also set aside a private cemetery section for those who wish to have an exclusive and intimate burial setting and this section will provide privacy and seclusion as desired by the families.

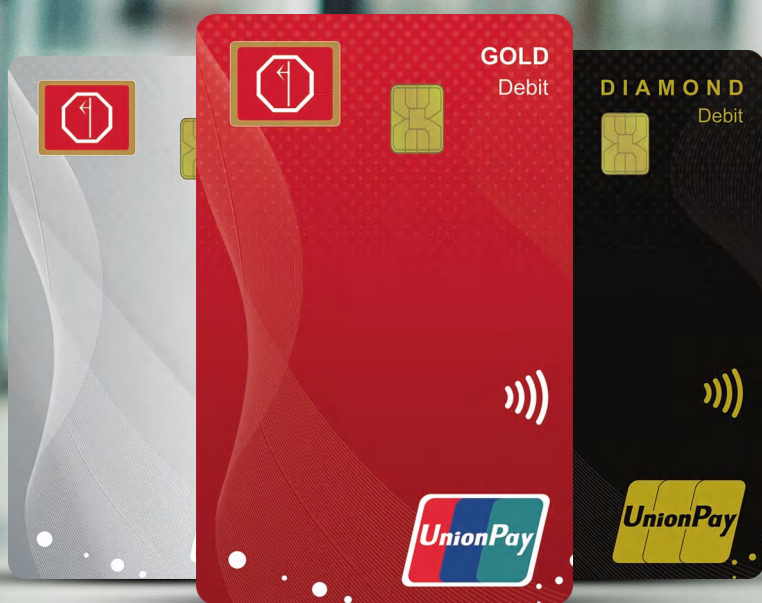
"Lastly, we have dedicated an Islamic Faith section within the cemetery as a way of recognising and respecting the specific requirements and traditions of our Islamic city citizens," he said.

Thwala stated that in the absence of unforeseen pandemics such as Covid-19, their projections point to the fact that the new cemetery will last over 40 years. He said double burials will also be encouraged to prolong the cemetery's lifespan.

"Residents are, therefore, encouraged to embrace and adopt the practice of double burials so that we achieve this goal," he said.

Thwala said as a Municipality they trust that all citizens will understand the decision that has been taken and cooperate with us as we operationalise the new multi-cultural cemetery.

"Burial fees remain unchanged at E1 000 for adults and E500 for children. We would like to assure residents and all stakeholders that we remain committed to providing a dignified and culturally inclusive final resting place for our beloved city citizens," he concluded.



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3 men get 9 years for culpable homicide

Stories by Nokunceda Magagula
nokuncedam@rubiconmedia.group

THREE employees from Nkulu Investments, have been sentenced to 9 years without a fine for the culpable homicide of Sibusiso Hlawe.

The construction company is based in Buhleni. According to the judgement affidavit, the culpable homicide was committed on September 28, 2016, in Nkomanzi area by Makhosonkhe Dlamini, Goodman Magagula, and Bonginkhosi Dlamini. The trio did not plead guilty to culpable homicide charge.

During their trial, one of the accused, Bonginkhosi, told the Court how the deceased was killed. He said on September 24 2016, Hlawe arrived at his homestead in Nkomanzi at night, he opened one of the houses and stole two cell phones, keys then he left. The following day, his brother Makhosonkhe, who is the owner of the house, woke up during the night and went to his neighbour, Magagula, to inform him that there had been a break-in. The two men got information that Hlawe was the suspect in the said crime. The day after the break-in, Makhosonkhe asked for assistance from the Hlawe's father on the whereabouts of his son, however, his father did not know where he was. Later that day, Makhosonkhe got information that Hlawe was seen in the mountains of that area.

Makhosonkhe then called Magagula and Bonginkhosi to assist him in apprehending Hlawe. The trio went to the mountain and found the suspect who then attempted to escape, however, they were able to apprehend him and that is when Makhosonkhe began to assault him while Magagula and Bonginkhosi held the suspect. Before the



assault, Hlawe had admitted to the break-in and had surrendered the two stolen mobile phones, however, the assault did not end as Makhosonkhe was demanding for the keys.

The accused (Makhosonkhe) realised that Hlawe was getting weak thus he stopped the assault to release him. Upon Hlawe's release, he fell and hit a rock with his chin. The trio then transported him to his homestead on a wheelbarrow.

Arrested

When they arrived at the Hlawe's homestead they called the community police and that is when the deceased lost his life. When the community police arrived they contacted the Royal Eswatini Police Service who then arrested the trio.

In the trio's mitigation statement, they mentioned that they are all breadwinners, as they are all family men and have children who are dependent on them. When handing down the judgement, Judge Magagula said he had taken into consideration all the personal circumstances of the accused persons as it

appears that all of them have families.

"Unfortunately, all this was known to the accused persons before they embarked on this unnecessary unlawful conduct. This state of events is a direct consequence of their conduct.

"They should have acted more responsibly as breadwinners. Unfortunately, the interest of the society and the seriousness of the crime they have committed must trump their circumstances," Judge Magagula said. Judge Magagula added: "It crossed my mind to mete out a sentence of 12 years on each of the accused persons. However, I was immediately engulfed with a sense of pity and decided to blend the sentence with mercy as I am enjoined to do by law."

"I have come to the considered decision that 9 years fits the degree of severity in which the culpable homicide was committed. A 9-year sentence accords with the purpose of punishment, which is deterrence, retribution, prevention, and rehabilitation," Judge Magagula asserted.



Man breaks-in, steals items worth E10 000

SIBONELO 'Pupu' Sifundza of KaShewula, was arrested and charged for allegedly stealing items worth E10 000 belonging to Dudu Gladys Mndzebele of Gelekececi in Zulwini.

According to the charge sheet, on November 29 2023, near Gelekececi in the Hhohho district, the accused unlawfully and intentionally broke-in and entered a house of Mndzebele and stole items worth E10 000. The items include a double bed worth E2 000, Univar gas stove worth E1 500 and 2 single sofas worth E2 000, among other things. In Court the accused conducted his own defense where he moved his bail application, citing he has children to take care of, he was, therefore, granted bail fixed at E2 000. Just last week another alleged suspect was said to have broken into a house that belongs to Jonker Monique two times on separate occasions, stealing items totaling E37 000.

After being arrested by the Police, Sifiso Madolo made his first appearance at the Mbabane Magistrate's Court, where he was slapped with two charges of house-breaking with intent to steal, the second count being theft. The first count read; On February 24, 2023, at the Mountain Drive area in the Hhohho region, Madolo unlawfully broke-in and entered Monique's house and stole items worth E21 470. These items include a desktop valued at E14 000 and a Samsung Tablet valued at E6 000, among other things.

The second count in the charge sheet read; Madolo is charged with the same offense "On December 23, 2023, in Fonteyn the accused unlawfully broke into the house of Monique and allegedly stole items valued at E16 305". The stolen items include a Samsung soundbar and bluetooth subwoofer valued at E14 500 among other items.

Trail

The Crown stated that because of the high value of the items, the matter should go to trial and also asked how the accused is intending to plead. Madolo responded by saying he would plead guilty to both counts and went on to move his bail application.

In his bail application, he said he has children that he needs to take care of, and added that he is currently unemployed.

Magistrate Motsa said this is the second time the accused is appearing before him for a similar charge so he cannot be considered on the amount of bail he will grant him. "It's unfortunate for you, Madondo, that you are appearing before me for the second time with similar charges as prior, I cannot exercise leniency in any way because it means you are a hardcore criminal," Motsa said.

He further explained that the amount of bail Madolo should get must be half of the item's value (E37 000). Therefore, the accused received bail fixed at E10 000. He will return to Court on February 9, 2023.

Land scam: Woman defrauded of E51 000 in Manzana

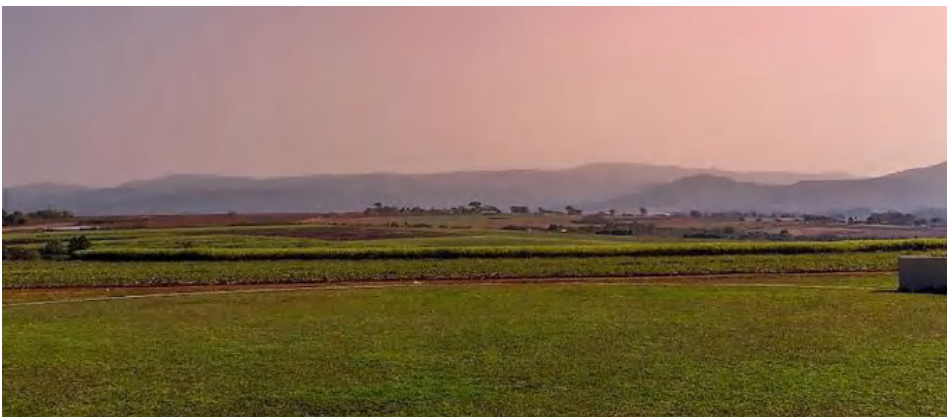
ANOTHER victim has been scammed E51 000 after she bought land that did not belong to the said owners.

The complainant, Siphesihle Dlamini of Manzana, Mbabane alleges that she was promised land by a trio of Olyvia Nomsa Dlamini, Jacob Ndlangamandla and Themba Gwebu, who all reside in Manzana.

The three accused persons have been charged with theft by false pretences. Their charge sheet reads; In the month of August 2023 in Manzana, Mbabane in the Hhohho region the accused unlawfully misrepresented themselves to Dlamini promising her land in Manzana and obtained a sum of E51 000. Upon their arrest in connection with the crime, the trio appeared at the Mbabane Magistrate's Court before Magistrate Qondile Mgetwa.

In Court, the crown submitted that may the accused be remanded into custody pending setting of their trial date on January 26 2024, and bail is not opposed. The trio moved their bail applications and cited their different reasons why they should be admitted to bail. All the accused were granted bail fixed at E2 000 each.

It is worth noting that last year, the Court heard testimony of one victim who suffered the loss of E165 000. Pensioner Simon Fakudze told the Court how he was scammed into buying property which he later found out did not belong to the said owners. These men are Sibusiso Velibanti Dlamini (39), Themba Gwebu (33) who is also involved in aforementioned case, Percy Thembinkosi Mnisi (57), Mandla Bhethemba Sifundza (57) Majahondvwa Sipho Mhlanga (51).



▲ Land selling scam is rife in the country as another victim was defrauded E51 000 in Manzana.

Fakudze told the Court that on January 21 2021, he saw an advert for a house being sold in a local newspaper. The advert had Sibusiso Velibanti Dlamini's contact details, he contacted the number and Dlamini referred him to call Gwebu since Dlamini was far from Mbabane at that moment.

Confirmed

Fakudze said he proceeded to contact Ngwenya who confirmed the house sale stating that it is valued at E180 000. Fakudze told the Court that he suggested to both Dlamini and Gwebu that they should first go to Mangwaneni Umphakatsi to ensure that the house indeed belongs to Dlamini. Upon that request, Dlamini requested Fakudze to pay E7 000 to pay bandlancane.

Fakudze said the day they went to Mangwaneni Umphakatsi, Dlamini called him to come to the Magwaneni house where they would meet with bandlancane. Fakudze

was introduced to the other accused persons Mnisi, Sifundza, and Mhlanga and they were said to be bandlancane. Fakudze said he suspected that something amiss and that is when he questioned why they had to meet in a house and not emphakatsi, but Mhlanga replied that due to Covid-19 pandemic they could not meet at emphakatsi.

The meeting ended and Fakudze deposited the balance of E65 000 to the lawyer's account.

Days passed and Fakudze said he received a call from one Musa Vilakati who told him that the house in Mangwaneni belonged to him.

In frustration, Fakudze went to the Ministry of Works and Public Service to confirm whom the house belonged to and that is when he got information that it belonged to the said Vilakati. Fakudze narrated that at that point in time, Dlamini and Gwebu were not reachable on their cellphones, thereafter, he went to report the matter at Mbabane Police Station.

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

QRS Invt. to manage Mbabane vending

THE Municipality Council of Mbabane has awarded a tender to QRS Investments for the management of markets and street vending. According to the intention of the award issued through the ESPRA website, QRS Investments scored 98.5 per cent on evaluation and there were no competitors.

Mango farmers urged to register on EHIS

THE National Agricultural Marketing Board has urged local mango farmers to register on the ESwatini Horticulture Information System (EHIS) to access local markets. In the notice issued through their social media platforms in line with their Market Facilitation Programme, they invited mango farmers to register on EHIS to have access to the local mango markets.

'SA inflation seen averaging 5% in 2024'

DAVOS, Switzerland — South African central bank governor, Lesetja Kganyago, said on Wednesday that the disinflation process had begun and that he expected inflation to average 5 per cent this year. Speaking to the Reuters Global Markets Forum in Davos, Kganyago said inflation was still a concern as both global and domestic risks weighed on the outlook.

Rand extends losses against strong dollar

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa's rand extended its losses against the U.S. dollar early on Wednesday, as the greenback hovered near a one-month high due to lowered expectations for a March rate cut.

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|-------------|--------------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 18.6583 | 19.1235 |
| G.B. Pound | 23.6335 | 24.3475 |
| EURO | 20.2965 | 20.9043 |
| Bank Rate | (July 2023) | 7.50% |
| Prime Rate | (July 2023) | 11% |
| Inflation | (July 2023) | 4.5% |
| Petrol | E20.50/Litre | |
| Diesel | E24.80/Litre | |
| Paraffin | E16.75/Litre | |

Business Eswatini gears up for its 11th Annual Labour Law Seminar

Stories by Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

... Registration is now open

TO foster a deeper understanding of labour laws and promote informed change and equitable workplaces, Business Eswatini (BE) continues to urge interested people to apply for the upcoming 11th Annual Labour Law Seminar under the theme 'Embracing Change in the Workplace'.

BE Chief Executive Officer (CEO) E. Nathi Dlamini said this anticipated event promises to provide a comprehensive discussion of crucial labour-related issues in the kingdom, with a key focus on Collective Bargaining.

He stated that the Seminar will interrogate organizational rights in the workplace and other bargaining forums; and further evaluate the interplay of minimum wage and collective bargaining.

Dlamini said the seminar, an annual event for BE, is expected to draw professionals such as business leaders and trade unions, human capital practitioners, labour market experts, legal minds, industry experts and policymakers from across the country.

He stated that as the landscape of labour laws evolves, keeping abreast with the latest developments in the international labour market becomes imperative for both employers and employees.

"The 11th edition of the seminar aims to facilitate this knowledge exchange, fostering a conducive environment for healthy employer-employee relationships and promoting fair labour practices," he said.

The CEO explained that the seminar will

have a particular focus on topics such as an evaluation of the Eswatini Collective Bargaining Framework, Constructive, Meaningful and Informed Negotiation, Strikes and Lockout as well as the effectiveness of NEDLAC as a social dialogue forum lesson for Eswatini.

He stated that they will also look at the National Minimum Wage Debate where there will be an update of what employers have been working on so far, which will entail discussions on progress and the next steps.

"Another focus will be the Labour Law Updates 2024 Legislation and Case Law," he said.

Dlamini stated that BE remains dedicated to promoting a conducive business environment and fostering sustainable economic growth.

"The annual Labour

Law Seminar stands as a testament to this commitment, providing a platform for stakeholders to engage, learn, and collaborate towards building a robust and equitable labour market," he said.

He added that registration for the 11th Annual Labour Law Seminar is now open.

"Interested participants are encouraged to visit the Business Eswatini website for more details on how to secure their spot at this insightful event," he said.

He stated that the seminar would be held on a date to be announced, at the Happy Valley hotel and BE Members were expected to pay E3 300, non-members to pay E4 500, and Table for 10 to pay E29 000.

Dlamini said the objective of the seminar is that it aims to bring employment and labour law practitioners up to date by providing an overview of the latest policy developments, legislative initiatives, and case law in this field.

BE CEO
E.Nathi
Dlamini.



Puma Energy invites suppliers



▲ Puma Energy is a global oil energy company.

PUMA Energy has invited local eligible suppliers and service providers to apply for registration towards the collation of a pre-qualified vendor list.

Puma Energy is a global oil energy company that focuses on fast-growing markets with high demand for oil products. Puma Energy has an expanding retail network of around 3,000 sites

across markets in Africa, the Americas, and Asia Pacific.

According to the notice, the service providers will be able to access 28 business categories with the company.

"Interested parties should provide copies of the following valid business documentation to qualify them to do business with Puma Energy," he said.

The notice stated that the application must provide an introduction and business profile indications of business location, physical location, mailing and email addresses, and price information.

"The completed documents should be sent by 5 pm on January 31, 2024, through email to nishana.ramdeyal@pumaenergy.com," read the notice.

QRS Investments to manage Mbabane markets and street vending

Stories by Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

THE Municipality Council of Mbabane has awarded a tender to QRS Investments for the management of markets and street vending.

According to the intention of the award issued through the ESPPRA website, QRS Investments scored 98,5 per cent on evaluation and there were no competitors.

In the tender's Request for Proposals

(RFP), the council stated that they were inviting bids for the Services, to the Contract and that the successful Bidder would be expected to complete the performance of the Services by the Intended Completion Date provided in the bidding Data Sheet (BDS).

They stated that the invitation for Bids was open to all bidders, who are registered with the Registrar of Companies in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

"All bidders shall provide in Section III, Bidding Forms, a statement that the Bidder (including all members of a joint venture and subcontractors) is not associated, nor has been associated in the past, directly

or indirectly, with the consultant or any other entity that has prepared the design, specifications, and other documents for the Project or being proposed as Project Manager for the Contract," read a part of the RFP.

The RFP stated that a firm engaged by the council to provide Consultant Services for the preparation or supervision of the Services, and any of its affiliates, shall not be eligible to bid.

"Government-owned enterprises in the Employer's country may only participate if they are legally and financially autonomous, operate under commercial law, and are not a dependent agency of the Employer," read

part of the RFP.

The RFP said the bidders shall not be under a declaration of ineligibility for corrupt and fraudulent practices issued by the Government of Swaziland.

"All bidders shall provide in Section III, Bidding Forms, a preliminary description of the proposed work method and schedule, including drawings and charts, as necessary. Bids submitted by a joint venture of two or more firms as partners shall comply with the following requirements, unless otherwise stated in the BDS," read part of the RFP.



▲ Vendors sell tomatoes at their market stalls.

Register on EHIS, local mango farmers urged

THE National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBOARD) has urged local mango farmers to register on the ESwatini Horticulture Information System (EHIS) to access local markets.

In the notice issued through their social media platforms in line with their Market Facilitation Programme, they invited mango farmers to register on EHIS to have access to the local mango markets.

The registration deadline is on January 18, 2024, at noon after they expended it from the initial January 5, they had announced before.

The notice stated that the extension was because currently a lot of mangos are being produced in the country, but they still had inadequate data.

"As such, we have extended the Mango Farmer registration period to Thursday, 18th January 2023, to allow more farmers to register on EHIS," read the notice.

They stated that once they have

captured all this key information, they will host an innovation forum, which will bring together all value chain players.

According to its website, the Eswatini Horticulture Information System (EHIS) is an inter-agency platform to enhance food market transparency and policy response for food security. It was established by the National Marketing Board (NAMBOARD) in ESwatini.

The platform aims to collect and disseminate relevant agricultural information to promote transparency and visibility in all agricultural production. To promote a market-led production approach amongst our local producers (farmers).

EHIS is a platform that enables both farmers and buyers to access produce as well as know when said produce will be made available or ready.

NamBoard in collaboration with Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (EWADE), through the Smallholder Market-Led Project (SMLP), will be hosting the second Horticulture Innovation Forum.



▲ Mangoes.



▲A customer compares prices while shopping at a Pick and Pay shop in East London, in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa.

SA inflation seen averaging 5% in 2024 — SARB governor

By Divya Chowdhury and Kopano Gumbi

DAVOS, Switzerland — South African central bank governor, Lesetja Kganyago, said on Wednesday that the disinflation process had begun and that he expected inflation to average 5 per cent this year.

Speaking to the Reuters Global Markets Forum in Davos, Kganyago said inflation was still a concern as both global and domestic risks weighed on the outlook.

The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) targets inflation between 3 per cent and 6 per cent.

Despite still-rising food costs, annual inflation slowed for the first time in four months in November in South Africa - to 5.5 per cent - thanks to cooling fuel prices.

However, Kganyago declined to indicate when the central bank would start cutting rates, saying that decisions would continue to be data-dependent.

“We would like to see that inflation has declined sustainably to the 4.5 per cent mark, then the central bank can look whether it is still necessary to keep policy tight,”

Kganyago said.

The SARB will hold its first monetary policy committee meeting next week, wherein they will revise the forecasts for the year. South Africa has suffered almost daily power cuts, some for up to 10 hours a day, for more than a decade.

The SARB estimated that these power cuts had shaved off up to 2 percentage points from growth in 2023, but now think that investments from renewable energy should ease the pressure.

Logistics constraints on the ports and rail network run by troubled state-owned operator Transnet will also impact growth this year.

Kganyago said that, although it was difficult to quantify, it was clear that the inability of the rail network to move goods efficiently was feeding into inflation.

In addition, South Africa will hold its seventh democratic national election this year and pressure to increase spending could impact domestic inflation.

“There will be a lot of contestation in South Africa and that could spill into the labour market and that has implications for wage setting and domestic inflation,” Kganyago said. (Reuters)

South African retail sales fell 0.9 per cent year on year in November

JOHANNESBURG — South African retail sales fell 0.9 per cent year on year in November after falling by a revised 2.3 per cent in October, Statistics South Africa figures showed on Wednesday.

On a month-on-month basis, sales increased 0.4 per cent.

Sales in the three months to the end of November were down 0.7 per cent compared with the same period last year, the statistics agency said. (Reuters)



▲A worker cleans in front of a Truworths shop at the Sandton mall in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Oil falls as China’s economic recovery disappoints, dollar strengthens

By Paul Carsten

LONDON — Oil fell more than \$1 on Wednesday as economic growth in China, the world’s second-largest crude user, slightly missed expectations, raising concerns about future demand, while U.S. dollar strength dented investor’s risk appetite.

Brent crude futures fell \$1.26, or 1.6 per cent, to \$77.03 per barrel by 1158 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures (WTI) were down \$1.35, or 1.9 per cent, at \$71.05.

Even the ongoing naval and air conflicts in the Red Sea have not been enough to support oil, despite increased concerns about tankers having to pause or reroute, increasing shipping costs and slowing deliveries.

China’s economy in the fourth quarter expanded by 5.2 per cent year-on-year, missing analysts expectations and calling into question forecasts that see Chinese demand fuelling 2024 global oil growth.

The economic data “doesn’t end the headwinds over crude oil demand, the Chinese outlook for 2024 and 2025 is still bleak,” said Priyanka Sachdeva, senior market analyst at Phillip Nova.

“(The) oil industry was backing the notion that despite a bumpy recovery, oil demand from China has been resilient and will likely reach record levels in 2024.”

Still, China’s oil refinery throughput in 2023 rose 9.3 per cent to a record high, indicating elevated demand even if it lagged some analysts’ expectations.

Other signs of steady Chinese demand have also appeared.

Additionally, the U.S. dollar hovered



▲A view shows the Yan Dun Jiao 1 bulk carrier in the Vostochny container port in the shore of Nakhodka Bay near the port city of Nakhodka, Russia.

near a one-month high on Wednesday after comments from Federal Reserve officials lowered expectations for aggressive interest rate cuts. A stronger dollar reduces demand for dollar-denominated oil from buyers using other currencies.

“Higher rates can lead to a weaker outlook for oil demand as economic activity tends to cool in a high interest rate environment, leaving oil prices vulnerable,” Sachdeva said.

Also in the U.S., oil refiners are expected to have 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of capacity offline for the week ending Jan. 19, decreasing available refining capacity by 954,000 bpd, research company IIR Energy said on Wednesday.

In the Red Sea, tensions remained high as the U.S. on Tuesday mounted fresh strikes against Iran-aligned Houthi militants in Yemen after a Houthi missile hit a Greek vessel.

“While oil benchmarks may not reflect the Red Sea attacks, the realised price for oil and oil products for consumers has increased given the disruption to trade flows through the Red Sea and Suez Canal,” Vivek Dhar, mining and energy commodities strategist at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, wrote in a note. (Reuters)



▲South African Rand coins are seen in this illustration picture.

Rand extends losses against strong dollar

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s rand extended its losses against the U.S. dollar early on Wednesday, as the greenback hovered near a one-month high due to lowered expectations for a March rate cut.

At 0750 GMT, the rand traded at 19.0225 against the dollar, about 0.3 per cent weaker than its previous close, after losing more than 1 per cent against the dollar the previous day.

The dollar was last up about 0.14 per cent against a basket of global currencies.

The dollar has surged this week due to hawkish comments by European Central

Bank and Federal Reserve officials which suggested the Fed might wait longer than previously expected to cut rates.

Statistics South Africa will release retail sales figures for November at 1100 GMT. Economists polled by Reuters have predicted a year-on-year decrease of about 1.1 per cent.

On the stock market, the Top-40, opens new tab index was down 1.72 per cent while the broader all-share, opens new tab was down 1.56 per cent in early trade.

South Africa’s benchmark 2030 government bond was weaker in early deals, with the yield up 2.5 basis points to 9.835 per cent. (Reuters)



▲ eThekweni Municipality intends to repatriate the Egyptian Mummy of a High Priest to its rightful resting place in the North African state.



eThekweni Municipality expected to repatriate ancient mummy to Egypt

ETHEKWINI Municipality is expected to repatriate Mummy High Priest, Peten-Amun (Ptn-Imn) to Egypt. The mummy was acquired by the Durban Museum somewhere between 1889 and 1910, according to mummipedia.fandom.com. The repatriation process, expected to take place during the course of the 2024/2025 financial year, will be conducted in close co-ordination with Egyptian authorities and in

adherence to national and international protocols governing the return of cultural heritage items to their countries of origin. The City expressed its intent to repatriate the mummy following a thorough investigation of the circumstances surrounding its presence in Durban, which remain unclear. The municipality recognises the importance of addressing historical injustices and

upholding ethical standards in the preservation and handling of cultural artefacts. “After extensive deliberation, the City acknowledges the significance of returning the mummy to its country of origin and honouring its cultural and historical importance to the people of Egypt,” said eThekweni’s head of Parks, Recreation and Culture, Dr Simphiwe Ndlovu. He added that, along with the national De-

partment of Sport, Arts, and Culture and the South African Heritage Resources Agency, they will ensure that the repatriation process is undertaken with the utmost care. The city explained that the mummy and coffin date back to the Late Dynastic or Early Ptolemaic periods. Peten-Amun originally came from Akhmim, which is about 354 kilometres from Cairo, Egypt. (IOL)

The toxic patriarchal side of the bhinca lifestyle

THE Zulu culture, renowned for its rich traditions and heritage, has long faced challenges arising from patriarchal ideologies. While the culture itself embodies deep respect for customs and rituals, there have been instances where certain patriarchal individuals have manipulated these traditions to serve their own selfish desires, often at the expense of women. Patriarchy within Zulu culture has historically led to the subjugation of women, where societal norms often prioritise men’s authority and power. This imbalance has allowed some men to exploit cultural practices for their benefit, misinterpreting traditions to assert dominance and control over women. Such individuals use cultural facets, often twisting their original meaning, to enforce oppressive practices.

Sub-culture

Many such misogynistic individuals nowadays practice or are immersed in what is termed the bhinca lifestyle. This is a Zulu sub-culture with its origins in the migrant labour system of colonial and apartheid South Africa where homesick men gathered in mine hostels and performed traditional music, got dressed in their best traditional clothes etc. This extended to the holidays when they travelled back home and they would bring expensive city clothes and play what was then a new genre of “city” music. There is now a resurgence of a romanticised modern version of this bhinca lifestyle seen mostly in rural KZN and the hostels of Gauteng and driven through social media platforms such as Facebook and TikTok. It is also driven through maskandi music and other social events like izingoma

zezigodi (village traditional music shows). It is mostly represented in a particular fashion style, maskandi music, Toyota Hiluxes and Quantums and a generally showy lifestyle. This romanticised version of the bhinca lifestyle is mainly influenced by self-styled cultural proponents, wealthy business people, media personalities and even some politicians who are all frequently seen mingling with known violent criminals at functions where another questionable bhinca lifestyle practice of ukushaya indishi (gifting hosts of a party, a traditional ceremony or wedding with wads of cash) is

usually on crass display. The lifestyle, however, has a stinking underbelly that is driven by misplaced Zulu nationalism, misogyny and abuse of Zulu culture. Embedded deep in the bhinca lifestyle is the constant need to prove one’s ubunsizwa (manhood), a dangerous gun culture and the deliberate misinterpretation/manipulation of Zulu culture. Criminality (hitmen, extortion rings, armed robberies etc) is also almost always found in the proximity of the bhinca lifestyle. The Shembe church, an influential religious movement within the amabhinca proponents, has also faced criticism for perpetuating harmful

beliefs and practices. While the church espouses principles of spirituality and unity, some factions within it have been accused of fostering a culture where men abuse their power, particularly in their treatment of virgins. The Shembe church’s emphasis on purity and reverence for virgins, while rooted in spiritual teachings, has been distorted by certain individuals to manipulate and exploit young women. These individuals, often in positions of authority or influence within the church, have been reported to coerce young virgins into non-consensual relationships under the guise of religious obligation. (IOL)



▲ Zulu culture and tradition are centuries old and oft-celebrated, like these women at the second annual Ingoma kaZwelonke at Moses Mabhida Stadium People’s Park last June.



▲His Majesty King Mswati III addressing fellow leaders at the Transform Africa Summit on April 26

Tanzania lifts ban on Kenya Airways flights

DAR ES SALAAM - Tanzania said on Tuesday it had reinstated approval for Kenyan national carrier Kenya Airways (KQNA. NR), opens new tab to operate flights between the Kenyan capital Nairobi and Tanzania’s commercial capital Dar es Salaam.

In a tit-for-tat move, Tanzania announced on Monday it had banned Kenya Airways flights after Nairobi refused to grant a request

to Tanzania’s national carrier Air Tanzania to operate cargo flights between both nations.

In a statement on Tuesday, Tanzania said that request had now been granted.

“Following this development, the aeronautical authorities of the United Republic of Tanzania hereby withdraw its decision of 15 January 2024 and therefore approval for Kenya Airways to operate... between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, is hereby restored,” state-run Tanzania Civil

Aviation Authority said in a statement.

Tanzania has been investing heavily on reviving its national carrier since 2016 by expanding its fleet, routes and operations to tap the local and regional markets.

Kenya Airways is one of Africa’s largest airlines and Tanzania, where attractions including mountains and vast wildlife reserves draw more than a million tourists a year, is one of its biggest markets.

(Reuters)

Russia, Niger agree to develop military ties

RUSSIA and Niger, under military rule since a coup last year, have agreed to develop military cooperation, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Tuesday.

According to Russian news agencies, Russian Deputy Defense Ministers Yunus-Bek Yevkurov and Alexander Fomin met Niger’s junta-appointed Defense Minister Salifu Modi on Tuesday.

“The parties noted the importance of developing Russian-Niger relations in the defense sector and agreed to intensify joint actions to stabilize the situation in the region,” - the ministry said, adding that it aims to continue dialogue on “increasing the combat readiness” of Niger’s military.

The ministry has not provided details about its plans.

Niger’s military council, led by General Abdourahamane Tiani, took power after ousting President Mohamed Bazoum in July 2023.

Niger’s junta has kicked out French troops and severed security pacts with the European Union, leaving Western allies concerned that the country could become a new



▲ Russia and Niger, under military rule since a coup last year, have agreed to develop military cooperation.

foothold for Russia in the region.

Niger’s junta-appointed Prime Minister Ali Mahamane Lamine Zeine has also arrived in Moscow. During the visit, Zeine intends to discuss widening a partnership with Russia in the areas of defense, agriculture and energy.



Niger’s uranium and oil reserves and its pivotal role in fighting Islamist militants in the Sahel region give it economic and strategic importance for the United States, Europe, China and Russia.

(Reuters)

Kenyan cult leader to face murder charges in starvation to deaths

MALINDI, Kenya - A Kenyan judge on Wednesday ordered cult leader Paul Mackenzie and 30 associates to undergo mental health evaluations before being charged with the murder of 191 children whose bodies have been exhumed since last April from the Shakahola forest.

Authorities say Mackenzie, the head of the Good News International Church, ordered his followers in southeastern Kenya to starve themselves and their children to death so that they could go to heaven before the world ended.

More than 400 bodies were uncovered over the course of

months of exhumations across tens of thousands of acres of forest, making this one of the world’s worst cult-related tragedies in recent history.

Prosecutors say they will charge 95 people in total on counts of murder, manslaughter, terrorism and torture.

A lawyer for Mackenzie, who has been in custody since police started unearthing bodies in the forest, has said the self-styled pastor is cooperating with the investigation.

During a hearing in the coastal town of Malindi, a judge granted a prosecution request to conduct mental health assessments of the 31 defendants before they are formally charged and enter pleas in two weeks.



▲ Self-proclaimed pastor Paul Mackenzie has been in custody since April

Nigeria blast kills two, dozens hurt as buildings collapse

LAGOS - At least two people were killed and dozens injured when explosives stored at a private residence detonated in Nigeria’s Oyo state, its governor said on Wednesday.

Several houses collapsed from the impact of Tuesday’s blast, witnesses said, sending panicked residents into the streets.

In a statement, the governor, Seyi Makinde, said there were two deaths while 77 people were treated for injuries, most of them being discharged.

“Preliminary investigations by

the security agencies revealed that illegal miners occupying one of the houses in Bodija had stored explosive devices there which caused the blast,” Makinde added.

The explosion was heard in the state’s capital of Ibadan, 130 km (80 miles) from Nigeria’s commercial capital of Lagos.

Makinde said search and rescue operations were underway and the state government would provide temporary accommodation for those who lost their homes.

(Reuters)



▲ A view of the damage caused following a blast in Ibadan, Nigeria

‘India to keep diversifying oil supply, accelerate energy transition’

DAVOS, Switzerland - Supply cuts by OPEC+, costly shipments from some traditional Middle East suppliers and geopolitical tension is driving India, the world’s third biggest oil importer, to diversify its crude sources and accelerate its energy transition, its Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said.

“Whenever there is vulnerability and uncertainty in the market, the transition gets accelerated. No-one is looking at that”, Puri told Reuters in an interview at this week’s World Economic Forum in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, referring to attacks by the Houthis on ships in the Red Sea.

Puri said that while OPEC+ nations have a right to decide on their energy production, supply cuts against such uncertainty, and the resulting adverse impact on global prices, will dent long term

demand.

It is “imperative” for India to accelerate its transition to green energy in this scenario, he added.

Iraq followed Saudi Arabia in charging a premium for oil supplies to Asian markets which made their crude “more expensive than crude sourced elsewhere”, the minister said, noting India is now buying from 37 countries up from 29 earlier.

Saudi Aramco, the national oil giant, this month cut the price of its flagship Arab Light crude to Asian customers to the lowest level in 27 months.

“I didn’t tell them to reduce it but they did it because they also wanted to. If you look at the Indian figures in the last 2-4 years, some of the major suppliers suddenly became number three and somebody who had only 0.2% (import share) went up,” Puri added.

Iraq replaced Saudi Arabia as the top oil supplier to India a few years ago and now cheaper supply

from Russia in the aftermath of Western sanctions for its invasion of Ukraine has pushed it to the top spot followed by Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

While concerned over the disruptions in the Red Sea, Puri said he was “cautiously optimistic” that they will be resolved.

Puri said he had just signed a memorandum of understanding with Guyana to cooperate across the entire energy value chain of the South American country.

He is also talking to companies in Davos who are interested in making investments in India and with whom he would like Indian oil companies to partner with to explore acquisitions and assets in regions such as Latin America.

Puri said countries, including in the Middle East, had told him they want to acquire Indian oil companies outright, he said, but they are strategic and not for sale.

(Reuters)



▲ Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India Hardeep Singh Puri speaks during the 54th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.



▲ Qatari PM Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim al Thani at International Conference of Council for Arab and International Relations in Kuwait City.

Kuwait forms first govt under new emir and prime minister

DUBAI - Kuwait on Wednesday formed a government headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah, the state news agency said, the country’s first cabinet after the death of its previous ruler.

Sheikh Mohammed appointed new ministers for oil, finance and foreign affairs in the first cabinet formed under Kuwait’s new Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, which he said would carry out reforms to comply with the emir’s guidance.

“This is a heavy responsibility of a new phase of Kuwait’s history which includes challenges and aspirations, and requires further hard work and genuine accomplishment,” the prime minister said, quoted by KUNA.

The prime minister appointed Emad Mo-

ammed al-Atiqi as oil minister, Anwar Ali al-Mudhaf as finance minister and Abdullah Ali al-Yahya as foreign minister.

Kuwait’s Emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who came to power in December after his predecessor Sheikh Nawaf died, is expected to preserve Kuwaiti foreign policies including support for Gulf Arab unity, Western alliances, and good ties to Riyadh - a relationship seen as a priority.

Kuwait will have to grapple with long-running strains between the ruling family and its critics in the deadlocked and fractious parliament that critics say has hindered fiscal and economic reform.

The legislature wields more influence than similar bodies in other Gulf monarchies, and political deadlock has for decades led to cabinet reshuffles and dissolutions of parliament. (Reuters)

‘Past U.S. elections were rigged’

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin, running for a new six-year term in an election that his opponents say is a parody of democracy, said on Tuesday that past U.S. elections had been rigged by postal voting.

“In the United States, previous elections were falsified through postal voting ... they bought ballots for \$10, filled them out, and threw them into mailboxes without any supervision from observers, and that’s it,” Putin said, without providing evidence.

Putin’s opponents say the March election in Russia is no real contest as the president wields unchallenged power and his main rival, Alexei Navalny, is serving more than 30 years in jail on charges that Navalny says were trumped up.

(Reuters)



▲ Russian President Vladimir Putin.

UN chief says parties to Gaza war ‘trampling’ on international law

DAVOS, Switzerland - United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Wednesday that parties to the conflict in Gaza were “trampling” on international law and urged them to implement an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Guterres said the warring parties were “ignoring international law, trampling on the Geneva Conventions, and even violating the United Nations Charter”.

“The world is standing by as civilians, mostly women and children, are killed, maimed, bombarded, forced from their homes and denied access to humanitarian

aid,” he said.

“I repeat my call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, and a process that leads to sustained peace for Israelis and Palestinians, based on a two-state solution.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has rejected calls for a ceasefire, saying Israel will continue its offensive in Gaza until it defeats Hamas and recovers the hostages taken there during a deadly rampage by Hamas gunmen on Oct. 7. The Israeli bombardment and ground offensive in the Palestinian enclave in response to the Hamas attacks has driven most of Gaza’s 2.3 million people from their homes.

(Reuters)

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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AWARD-winning poet Christian Maz is currently working on the final stages of his poetry album which will be released on Friday.

Maz revealed that this album will have 12 songs. Its main aim is to poetically speak to issues faced by individuals daily. The album will also carry both English and SiSwati songs to be able to cater to the other population that does not understand SiSwati.

This was part of the versatility as part of growing the brand and tapping into untrodden segments in the market both locally and in Southern Africa. Most of the poems were inspired by the things that happen in life, coupled with experiences in his journey of life.

The songs are blended with upbeat background music with catchy poetic lyrics curated for people of all ages that create high energy with a feel-good vibe, lots of good-natured fun, and deep thoughtful emotions.

His songs in the album include ‘Emoyeni’, ‘At First’, ‘Buya Ekhaya’, ‘Ejele’, and ‘Emaphupho’ amongst others. Maz stated that he has always had plans to expand his career by tapping into segments throughout the country and Southern Africa, hence he is continuously moving in and out of the country to South Africa where he is collaborating with other artists in pushing

Christian Maz’s album ‘Ekhaya’ dropping this Friday



▲ Poet Christian Maz.

his career. He joins the long list of other local artists who have left the country to

pursue and explore their craft in South Africa. As a testament to his move, Maz

stated that one of his songs in the album features a South African artist Msongi, who has released songs including ‘Makukhanye’, and ‘Baba Busisa Imizamo Yethu’ amongst others.

With his mantra ‘Angeke Siyekele Kuzama’, Christian Maz is determined to pursue his career and take his poetry outside Eswatini. Christian Maz’s real name Siphiwolesihle Maziya was the first poet in the country to host a one-man show in October last year, an event that saw fans fill up the theatre club in Mbabane. Maz is also amongst the few poetry artists in the country to release an album fused with poetry and music.

Maz is known for reciting remorseful and emotional poems, hence in the album he promised nothing but soul-touching poetry and music. He is a multi-award-winning and highly sought-after poet in Eswatini. He is building his profile and footprint in Eswatini and South Africa through collaborations with other top poets, personalities, and creatives in the sector.

Eswatini Creators Awards dates announced

ESWATINI Creators Awards have recently announced the highly anticipated dates for this year’s awards presentation.

The event promises to be a dazzling celebration of the Kingdom’s creative industry, showcasing the immense talent that resides within its borders. With the theme dress code set as ‘African Bling,’ attendees can expect a night of glamour and cultural pride.

Miss N, the Communications Officer for the Eswatini Creators Awards, revealed that this year’s event will take place on February 3, 2024. While the venue remains unrevealed, anticipation is building as the Kingdom eagerly awaits the unveiling of the prestigious location.

This grand event not only recognises the exceptional talents of the nation’s creators but also provides them with a platform to showcase their skills and gain recognition. It is a chance for these gifted individuals to step into the spotlight and have their work appreciated by a wider audience.

The Eswatini Creators Awards have become a symbol of inclusivity, welcoming every citizen and resident to participate. This commitment ensures that talents from all walks of life are acknowledged and allowed to shine. From models to influencers, the awards aim to empower and support individuals while elevating the value of existing brands.

Beyond the celebration of individual achievements, the Eswatini Creators Awards foster a sense of unity and fun

throughout the Kingdom. With social media platforms playing a significant role in the daily lives of its citizens, the awards leverage this connectivity to create a vibrant community of creators. By sharing and engaging with each other’s work, they cultivate a sense of camaraderie that transcends borders and unites the nation in its creative endeavours.



▲ SwaziBoy Communications Officer Miss N.



▲ South African gospel artist Mpumi Mtsweni.

SA Gospel artist Mpumi Mtsweni confirmed for ‘Atmosphere of Love’

AS Valentine’s bells ring louder, love is in the air, and South African Gospel artist Mpumi Mtsweni is ready to serenade the hearts of music lovers at the Atmosphere of Love event.

This talented Gospel musician is set to take the stage and captivate audiences with her soul-stirring performances. Taking place at Bethesda, in Nhlanguano, this event is not to be missed. Alongside Mpumi Mtsweni, is one of the most talented Eswatini Gospel musicians, Shekinah Motsa, who will also grace the stage, ensuring an unforgettable night of uplifting music.

Organised by Vineyard School of Ministry, this event promises to be a celebration of love and faith. Scheduled for February 16, 2024, the event will kick off at 6 pm and continue until the early hours of the morning, ending at 6 am.

Tickets for the Atmosphere of Love event are available. Early bird tickets are priced at E80, general tickets at E100, and VIP tickets at E250.

Mpumi Mtsweni’s journey in the music industry began at the tender age of eighteen when she joined the music group, ‘Gospel Extravaganza.’ However, it was in 2014 that she decided to embark on a solo career, showcasing her exceptional talent for songwriting. Since then, she has been making waves with her heartfelt lyrics and powerful vocals.

One of the highlights of Mpumi Mtsweni’s career came in 2018 when she recorded her live DVD, ‘Gethsemane Season 1.’ This incredible project was officially released in 2020 and quickly became one of her biggest hits, resonating with audiences far and wide.

Zee Nxumalo collaborates with Makhadzi, DJ Tira

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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ESWATINI-born musician Zee Nxumalo has shared an electrifying video of herself working alongside the renowned South African artists Makhadzi and DJ Tira in the recording studio.

This collaboration has sent social media into a frenzy, with fans and music enthusiasts alike rejoicing at the prospect of witnessing the birth of a potential chart-topping hit.

Fans and followers flooded her post with congratulatory messages, expressing excitement for the upcoming release. The anticipation surrounding this collaboration is palpable, as music enthusiasts eagerly await the unveiling of this highly anticipated track.

Zandile Nxumalo, affectionately known as Zee, is a young and vibrant singer, songwriter, musician, and entertainer. While her roots lie in Eswatini, she has become a beloved figure in Johannesburg, earning the moniker of a 'Jozi baby' due to her formative years spent in the bustling city.

Recently, Zee Nxumalo joined forces with the esteemed independent record label Punchline Media to embark on her solo career. This partnership has provided her with a platform to showcase her immense talent and catapult her into the spotlight. Drawing inspiration from the likes of Kelly Khumalo, The Soil, and the late Brenda Fassie, Zee Nxumalo has carved a unique musical identity for herself. In 2022, Zee released a captivating six-track project titled 'KwaNxumalo.' This project followed the success of her single 'Hamba' in May, which garnered widespread acclaim. Produced by the talented



▲ Ligwalagwala FM presenter Nobuhle 'Buhle' Ndlovu.



▲ Eswatini-born musician Zee Nxumalo, South African artists Makhadzi and DJ Tira.

Profound, who recently collaborated with Khuli Chana on his latest single 'Take Care,' 'KwaNxumalo' offered listeners a glimpse into the multifaceted themes that shape Zee Nxumalo's life. From heartbreak to personal growth, the EP delved into the depths of her experiences, providing an

intimate and relatable musical journey. One of Zee Nxumalo's most notable hits to date is the infectious track 'Funk 55,' a collaboration with the esteemed DBN Gogo. This song took the airwaves by storm, solidifying Zee's position as a rising star in the music industry.

Buhle for The Chairman Lounge and Bar grand opening party

LIGWALAGWALA FM presenter, Nobuhle Ndlovu, popularly known as Buhle, is set to bring her infectious energy and vibrant personality to The Chairman Lounge and Bar Grand Opening Party.

This event promises to be a night of excitement, entertainment, and celebration as the fun hotspot officially opens its doors to the public.

Buhle is no stranger to Eswatini, having made a memorable appearance as the MC at the Makoti Festival just last year. Her engaging presence and natural ability to captivate

audiences make her the perfect choice to grace the stage at this grand opening extravaganza.

The Chairman Lounge and Bar Grand Opening Party will not only feature Buhle but will also be headlined by the talented Motion Dee. These exceptional artists will be supported by a lineup of incredible performers, including Supa CDQ, The Bishops, Dope Deep, Ayacity, Its All Black, Tibza, Jazzinsoul, Bob Star, Macdeep, Fantasy, Tharo, Speech Umlangeni, Mavava, and King Keissy.

The event, themed smart casual, promises to be a night of elegance and style. Attendees are encouraged to dress to impress as they join in the celebration of The Chairman Lounge and Bar's grand opening. Entry to this exciting event is free, ensuring that everyone can be a part of the festivities.

Located at the MVA building in Mbabane, The Chairman Lounge and Bar is set to become the go-to destination for those seeking a fun-filled night out. With its sleek and sophisticated ambiance, top-notch service, and an array of

Club 83 to host Fusion Frenzy & Jamboree activation party

LOCAL entertainment hangout spot, Club 83 is gearing up to host a truly unforgettable event - the Fusion Frenzy & Jamboree activation party.

Hosted by Underground on Demand (UOD), the event is one of the series of underground music sessions for alternative music and great intimate vibe lovers. This 'activation' special edition promises to be a fusion frenzy and jamboree, showcasing the best of the underground music scene.

On January 19, 2024, Club 83 will transform into a haven for music enthusiasts, as a lineup of talented artists takes the stage. Among the featured acts are Orthodox, Tharo The DJ, The Other Guy, Mac Deep, Lord Boogy, Flava, Curious Lounger, and the club's resident DJs. With such an eclectic mix of performers, attendees can expect an evening filled with diverse sounds and infectious beats.

Club 83, the venue of the activation party, has always been known for its vibrant atmosphere. By bringing together a mix of established names and rising stars, Club 83 continues to foster a sense of community and creativity within the local music scene.

This activation party is just a taste of what's to come. It serves as a thrilling precursor to the main event, 'Fusion Frenzy & Jamboree,' which will take place on February 24, 2024. This celebration is an opportunity for music lovers to come together and revel in the joy of music, dance, and camaraderie.



▲ DJ Orthodox.

Dlala Thukzin left without ‘iPlan’ at Kenya airport

Sofía Vergara single now

GQOM DJ and iPlan hitmaker Dlala Thukzin was left stranded for hours at an airport in Kenya over the weekend. This happened after the KZN-born music producer had a gig in Dar Salaam, Tanzania over the weekend.

The following day, on his way back to Mzansi, he was stuck at the Nairobi International Airport.

Sunday World has learnt that the conflict between Kenya and the Tanzanian government was the reason why the DJ and other passengers were stranded at the airport.

Costly delay

Sources close to the hitmaker say the ordeal has cost him a lot. This was because he missed gigs that he was scheduled to perform on Sunday in South Africa. He was a headliner on all of them.

“He flew out of the country on Friday night and nothing seemed suspicious about the unfortunate circumstances between the two countries. Everything went accordingly. But coming back, it was a different story, as there kept on being delays,” said a source.

Another source added: “Thukzin, together with his managerial team, were stuck at the airport for over four hours. [He] could be seen roaming up and down at the airport with excuses from the flight attendants.”

Later on Sunday evening, Thuk-



▲ DJ dlala Thukzin was left stranded for hours at an airport in Kenya.

in posted on his social media page: “Sorry I can’t make it to Brown Sugar, I’m stuck in Kenya (Broken Hearted emoji).”

Late last year Thukzin suffered difficulties while attending a gig in Amsterdam, Netherlands after his UK tour. This was due to an issue with his travel documents.

A set of questions was sent to his management team. However, they had not replied by the time of publishing.

The travel woes come as Dlala Thukzin is preparing for his upcoming tour in the US. The tour is set to take place in March.

(Reuters)

SOFÍA Vergara thinks the city that never sleeps is the perfect place to find a date! The 51-year-old Griselda actress opened up about her dating life during a Tuesday appearance on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon while discussing New York City.

“I love it. Who doesn’t love New York City? The people, it’s the energy,” the Modern Family alum gushed. “I think that you have more options with men, also.”

Clarifying her relationship status, Vergara noted, “I’m single now, so in New York, there are more people. There’s not only actors or writers or directors, I think there’s a bigger [pool]. I’m going to spend more time in New York.”

Another reason for dating in the city — the cuisine.

The Colombian-born actress announced her split from ex Joe Manganiello last summer

after seven years of marriage. She was briefly linked to Dr Justin Saliman last fall after they were spotted out together several times.

During a recent interview with CBS Sunday Morning, Vergara said of her personal life, “I’ve been moving on.”

She added of the press surrounding her divorce from Manganiello, “It wasn’t bad. I have to say the press was very respectful and very nice. I thought that they were going to invent more things, you know how they usually [do]. And I was just kind of surprised. They kind of just said what it was and that was it.”

Meanwhile, Manganiello has been seeing actress Caitlin O’Connor.

Vergara and Manganiello released a joint statement over the summer announcing their plans to divorce. “We have made the difficult decision to divorce.

(Reuters)



▲ Single and searching, actress Sofia Vergara.

SABC1 bows to pleas moves ‘Skeem Saam’ to a new timeslot

WEEKDAY drama series Skeem Saam has been moved to the 7.30 pm slot starting from March 4, the SABC1 has confirmed.

The channel said the decision to move Skeem Saam to the new slot is in line with the public broadcaster’s video entertainment strategy to amplify its prime-time local drama offering from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm.

Skeem Saam will join other crowd pullers including Generations – The Legacy, Uzalo and SABC2’s Muvhango in the 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm prime-time slot.

The SABC will host two hours of back-to-back drama on the SABC video entertainment platform, intentionally targeting a broader audience and ensuring the platform remains competitive.

Skeem Saam, created by Winnie Serite, has been broadcast at 6.30 pm since it started in 2011. Set in Johannesburg and Turfloop in Limpopo, the series revolves around the ups and downs of teenagers trying to find their way through life’s struggles.

Over the years, viewers have seen the character of Mapitsi grow from being a teenage mother to getting married to the father of her child, and recently launching a career as a radio presenter.

Kwaito and Lizzy grew from being high-school enemies to walking down the aisle, Leeto purchasing Bazaruto and losing a licence to practice law after his murder conviction, and MaNtuli moving into her dream double-story house.

Intriguing storylines lined up

With the new Skeem Saam timeslot comes intriguing storylines full of suspense and in-



▲ Weekday drama series Skeem Saam has been moved to the 7.30 pm slot starting from March 4, the SABC1 has confirmed.

tense drama.

A human trafficking drama unfolds in Turfloop, someone goes down for murder, a soccer star blows up millions of rands, and there is a new hot couple in town.

Ofentse Thinane, SABC1 channel head, said the viewers have been pleading for years that Skeem Saam’s timeslot be changed.

They argued that the drama series is broadcast early when many viewers are still on the road travelling back home.

“For SABC1, we see this as an opportunity to make the channel edgier and braver, and to adapt to the audience’s needs,” said Thinane.

“The world of television is an exciting platform where we should not be afraid to adapt while upholding our responsibility to shape the youth and societal roles.”

Sumaya Petersen Mogola, publicity manager for Peu Communications Solutions, said: “A timeslot change in our 12th season will definitely be a big change for us. It is something we will have to adjust to.

“However, we are positive the change will give us an opportunity to expand and reach a larger audience. We have great stories lined up, and we can’t wait for our viewers to tune in.”

(Sunday World)

Khuzani vows to take a back seat from awards

MASKANDI singer Khuzani “Indlamlenze” Mpungose says he will now take a break from entering competitions.

This follows controversy around his Ukhozi FM Song of the Year Award. Mpungose, however, said he will ask his legion of fans to vote for any artist he feels stands a chance in that competition.

Mpungose made this claim after being handed a R100,000 cheque from song contest sponsors Amathole Funerals.

The special handover was staged during the Ukhozi FM Woza Nabangani Bakho Drive Show. The drive show is anchored by Tshatha Ngobe and Selbeyonce Mkhize at the radio station in Durban on Tuesday.

Joining him in accepting the cheque were his throngs of fans, who are known as the Blue Nation, clad in blue pants and T-shirts.

Mpungose’s song, titled Umjolo Lowo, got the nod ahead of others because it garnered the most votes.

It’s the second time Mpungose has his maskandi song win the competition. This after his song Ijele became a crossover song on Ukhozi FM in 2020. “It’s a huge feat for me as I have made history as a maskandi singer,” he said. “This is largely due to outpouring of love of my loyal fans over these years.”

(Sunday World)



ALTHOUGH refined carbs can be harmful when consumed in excess, whole-food sources of carbs are incredibly healthy.

In fact, many of the world's healthiest foods are high in carbs. Carb intake is one of the most hotly debated topics in nutritional science. Carbs are now accused of causing weight gain, heart disease, and various other problems — just as fat once was.

Indeed, so-called “junk” foods are often high in carbs — particularly refined carbs. Low carb diets can also be beneficial, especially for weight loss, diabetes, and other health conditions.

However, not all carb sources are created equal. Here are 9 reasons why you shouldn't avoid all carbs.

1. Carbs are not uniquely fattening

Scientists once hypothesized that carbs increased the risk of obesity more than fat and protein.

According to this hypothesis, carbs are the primary cause of obesity due to their ability to raise insulin levels, promoting the storage of calories as fat. This idea is known as the carbohydrate-insulin model of obesity.

Of course, excessive intake of any calorie-providing nutrient — fat, carb, or protein — can be an effective recipe for weight gain.

However, no compelling evidence supports the idea that high carb diets are especially fattening. In fact, many studies suggest that there is no significant association between high carb intake and obesity.

Nevertheless, healthy low carb diets have been proven effective for weight loss — at least in the short term.

Scientists believe their effectiveness is due to the elimination of refined carbs like added sugars and an increased focus on healthy, high fiber carb sources, as well as protein and fat.

Still, one large, 12-month study that compared the effectiveness of a healthy low carb diet with a healthy low fat diet detected no significant differences in weight loss.

In short, the quality of the carbs you eat is of greater importance than the proportion of carbs in your diet.

2. Early humans frequently ate carbs

Learning to cook was a game-changer for early humans, as cooked meat provided increased protein, fat, and calories.

New evidence indicates that carb-rich foods like root vegetables, legumes, and even grains were cooked and consumed by human ancestors as well.

Cooked carbs would not only have been more nutritious but also more appealing to a hungry hunter-gatherer.

This theory is supported by emerging biological evidence showing that early humans began developing extra copies of the amylase gene, which helps produce the enzymes you need to digest starchy carbs.

In fact, this change in DNA occurred long before humans started farming. That's why people today can have up to 18 amylase gene copies, indicating that humans have evolved to digest starches more efficiently.

Also, consider that every single cell in your body runs on glucose, which is a carbohydrate sugar. Even the most fat-adapted brain requires at least 20 per cent of its energy from carbs.

3. Gluten intolerance isn't particularly common

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. By cutting carbs from your diet, you

automatically cut out gluten, too.

A gluten-free diet is necessary for people with celiac disease or some other types of autoimmune disease. Gluten-free diets may also benefit people with non-celiac gluten sensitivity or wheat intolerance.

However, studies indicate that few people with self-reported gluten sensitivity actually have this condition. One 2015 study showed that only 3 out of 59 participants who believed they were gluten-sensitive reacted to gluten. Newer research suggests that the condition known as non-celiac gluten sensitivity is not sensitivity to gluten at all. Instead, it appears sensitive to fructan, a type of soluble fiber or FODMAPs found in wheat. FODMAPs like fructans cause digestive symptoms like gas, diarrhea, and stomach pain in some people — especially those with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). If you have FODMAP sensitivity, try to identify and avoid only those foods to which you're sensitive.

4. Fiber — a carbohydrate — is important for optimal health

Nutrition is rarely black and white. Still, most experts agree that eating fiber is good for your health.

Most dietary fiber is made of carbohydrates. Soluble fiber is particularly beneficial for weight maintenance and heart health. Fiber increases the time it takes to digest and absorb nutrients, contributing to reduced body weight and improved health.

5. Gut bacteria rely on carbs for energy

The balance between beneficial and harmful gut bacteria may influence your risk for many lifestyle-related conditions, both physical and psychological.

To grow, your beneficial gut bacteria need carbs to ferment for energy. As it turns out, soluble fiber is an important nutrient.

Some of the best food sources of soluble fiber include legumes and oats, which are high in carbs.

6. Legumes are a superfood — on a nutrient-to-cost basis

Legumes are edible plant seeds that include beans, peas, chickpeas, lentils, and peanuts. They're naturally high in carbs and thus often excluded from low carb eating patterns. They're also eliminated on

a strict paleo diet. However, legumes are nutritionally unique. They're one of the few foods rich in both protein and fiber. Legumes are also high in vitamins and minerals. Plus, calorie for calorie, they're one of the most nutrient-dense foods available.

7. Cutting carbs does not improve exercise performance

It's a myth that a low carb diet can outperform a conventional high carb diet for athletes.

In a well-designed — albeit older — study of cyclists performing a 62-mile (100-km) trial with intermittent sprints, participants followed either a low carb or a high carb diet for the week leading up to the test.

Though both groups had similar race times, the high carb group outperformed the low carb group's sprint output on all four occasions.

While a single study cannot draw solid conclusions, the weight of evidence overwhelmingly supports these results.

If you're fat-adapted on a low carb diet, you can still perform very well, but no high quality studies show that cutting carbs allows you to outperform those on higher-





carb diets. This holds for cardio endurance events like cycling, as well as weight training and bodybuilding for muscular strength and endurance. For those who exercise to keep fit, a low carb diet likely won't hurt your performance — but it probably won't improve it either.

8. Carbs don't cause brain damage

Some claim that carbs cause harmful brain inflammation. However, this idea is not based on scientific evidence. Unlike refined grains, whole grains are high in magnesium and fiber — both of which are linked to less inflammation. In fact, the extensively studied Mediterranean diet, which is rich in whole grains, is strongly associated with slower age-related mental decline and a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease. On the other hand, a high intake of refined carbs and added sugars should be avoided. As part of an unhealthy lifestyle, these ingredients reduce overall health, adversely affecting your body as a whole.

9. The world's longest-lived populations eat plenty of carbs

The Blue Zones — the regions where people live measurably longer — provide scientists with unique insights into certain eating patterns. The island of Okinawa in Japan has the most centenarians (people who live over the age of 100) in the world. Their diet is very high in carb-rich sweet potatoes, green vegetables, and legumes. Before 1950, a whopping 69% of their calorie intake came from sweet potatoes alone. Another long-living population inhabits the Greek island of Ikaria. Nearly 1 in every 3 people lives to be 90, and they eat a diet rich in legumes, potatoes, and bread. Several other Blue Zone regions share similar dietary traits, indicating that carbs are not causing problems for these people.

The bottom line

It's important to think about foods as a whole and not just consider their nutrients. This is especially true when it comes to carbs. For instance, highly processed foods are unhealthy, providing little to no nutritional value. They're today's biggest contributors to excess calories. And though low carb diets can be an effective tool for weight loss and diabetes control, that doesn't mean carbs alone cause weight gain or disease — nor are they the sole cause of the current state of public health. This depends entirely on the context and varies between individuals. Some people do well with fewer carbs, while others function fine by eating plenty of carbs from nutritious food. In any case, whole-carb foods can be part of a healthy diet and don't need to be avoided at all costs.

Healthline

Some claim that carbs cause harmful brain inflammation. However, this idea is not based on scientific evidence. Unlike refined grains, whole grains are high in magnesium and fiber — both of which are linked to less inflammation.

NATURAL remedies, including honey, salt water, and herbs, may help manage sore throat symptoms.

But if it doesn't improve, you may need medical care or over-the-counter (OTC) medications.

A sore throat typically causes pain, itchiness, or irritation. The pain may get worse when you swallow, making it difficult to consume foods and liquids.

Even if a sore throat isn't serious enough for a trip to the doctor, it's still painful and may prevent you from getting a good night's sleep. At-home remedies can help soothe pain and irritation.

Generally speaking, the remedies discussed below may help ease a mild or typical sore throat. If you have a severe sore throat, particularly if it's getting worse or has lasted several days, it's a good idea to make an appointment with a doctor to discuss your symptoms.

SORE THROAT HOME REMEDIES TO TRY

The following remedies may help ease symptoms of a sore throat.

1. Honey

Honey mixed in tea or taken on its own is a common remedy for a sore throat.

According to a 2021 research review, honey is just as effective as the cough suppressant dextromethorphan at taming coughs in children. Dextromethorphan is an active ingredient in products such as Robitussin and Delsym.

A 2021 literature review examined the effect of honey on acute upper respiratory tract infections. The researchers concluded that honey was more effective at relieving symptoms than other treatments, including antibiotics and the antihistamine diphenhydramine.

2. Saltwater gargle

Gargling with warm salt water can help soothe a sore throat and break down secretions. It may also help reduce bacteria in the throat. Make a saltwater solution by adding half a teaspoon of salt to a full glass of warm water. Gargle with it to help reduce swelling and keep the throat clear. According to the American Osteopathic Association, people with a sore throat should perform a saltwater gargle at least once an hour.

3. Baking soda gargle

While the saltwater gargle is more commonly used, gargling with a baking soda-saltwater mixture can also help relieve a sore throat. This oral solution can reduce bacteria and prevent the growth of fungi. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) recommends gargling with and gently swishing around a combination of:

- ▶ 1 cup warm water
- ▶ 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda
- ▶ 1/8 teaspoon of salt

The NCI suggests using the rinse three or four times daily and then rinsing your mouth with plain water.

4. Chamomile tea

Naturally soothing chamomile tea has long been used for medicinal purposes, including treating a sore throat. It has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and astringent properties. According to a 2023 review of research, chamomile powder may help relieve inflammation in the eyes, nose, and throat. Drinking chamomile tea may offer

Sore throat remedies that work (and what not to do)



the same benefit. It may also stimulate the immune system to help your body treat the infection that caused your sore throat.

5. Peppermint

Peppermint is well known for its ability to freshen the breath. It also has anti-inflammatory properties and some antibacterial and antiviral qualities, according to a 2019 literature review.

Peppermint contains the compound menthol, which helps thin mucus and calm sore throats and coughs. While many peppermint teas are available, you can also make your own. Place some dried peppermint leaves in boiled water and let the mixture sit for a few minutes. After a few minutes have passed, strain the tea and allow it to cool slightly. Diluted peppermint oil sprays may also relieve sore throats. To make a spray, mix a few drops of food-grade peppermint oil with 1 ounce of plant-based oil, such as:

- ▶ olive oil
- ▶ almond oil
- ▶ softened coconut oil

6. Fenugreek

The herb fenugreek is available in many forms. You can eat fenugreek seeds, apply fenugreek oil to the skin, or drink fenugreek tea. Fenugreek tea is a common remedy for sore throats.

A 2018 literature review demonstrates the healing powers of fenugreek. Among other benefits, it may help:

- ▶ relieve pain, including menstrual cramps
- ▶ reduce bacteria that cause irritation or inflammation
- ▶ serve as an effective antifungal
- ▶ promote lactation

The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) suggests that pregnant people avoid consuming large doses of fenugreek. Children should also not use it as a supplement.

7. Marshmallow root

Marshmallow root, a type of herb, contains mucilage, a mucus-like substance that coats and soothes a sore throat. A 2019 literature review notes that marshmallow root can be

helpful for irritations of the respiratory tract, which may include a sore throat.

Marshmallow root is available:

- ▶ as an herbal tea
- ▶ as a tincture
- ▶ dried and in capsule form

Remember that marshmallow products, like those used in your favorite desserts, don't typically contain marshmallow root.

8. Licorice root

Licorice root has long been used to treat sore throats. A 2019 study found that, out of several herbal infusions, licorice root tea was the most effective at inhibiting the growth of Streptococcus pyogenes. This bacterium causes strep throat. Using licorice root lozenges or as a gargle before surgery may help reduce sore throat following surgery, according to the NCCIH. Though the organisation notes that licorice root remedies may not be safe for people who are pregnant or nursing.

9. Slippery elm

Like marshmallow root, slippery elm also contains mucilage. When mixed with water, slippery elm forms a slick gel that coats and soothes the throat.

To use slippery elm, pour boiling water over powdered bark, stir it, and drink. You may also find that slippery elm lozenges help.

Slippery elm is a traditional remedy for sore throat, but more research on its effectiveness is still needed. Slippery elm may slow the absorption of some oral medications. To prevent possible drug interactions, use slippery elm at least 1 hour after taking oral medications.

10. Garlic

Garlic has natural antibacterial properties as well. It contains allicin, a compound known for its ability to fight off viral infections, according to a 2020 literature review on the antiviral uses of garlic. Taking garlic supplements daily can help prevent and treat upper respiratory tract infections, according to a 2018 article. These same respiratory tract infections may potentially cause a sore throat. **Healthline**



▲ Taylor Swift attends the 81st Annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, California.

PICTURES OF THE WEEK



▲ Filipino devotees jostle to get on the cart that carries the statue of the Black Nazarene during its annual procession in Manila, Philippines.



▲ A Somali police officers stands guard during a march against the Ethiopia-Somaliland port deal along KM4 street in Mogadishu, Somalia.



▲ Police officers present the detainees who stormed the TC Television studio during a live TV broadcast amid the ongoing wave of violence around the nation, in Guayaquil, Ecuador.



▲ Robert Downey Jr. pretends to renew his vows to his wife Susan Downey as Florence Pugh looks on, at the 14th Governors Awards in Los Angeles, California.



▲ A person films the snow next to a food cart as snow falls in New York City



▲ Sherco Tvs Rally Factory's Harith Noah Koitha Veettil in action during stage 1 of the Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia.



▲ Helen, a 5-year-old migrant girl from Venezuela traveling with her family and seeking asylum in the United States, covers herself from the cold during the celebration of Epiphany Day, at the border between Mexico and the United States, in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

Hearing date set for Man City's financial rule breach charges

A date has been set for the hearing into Manchester City's alleged financial rule breaches, the Premier League's CEO Richard Masters said on Tuesday.

City were charged in February with more than 100 alleged breaches of finance rules since their acquisition by the Abu Dhabi-based City Football Group, and were referred to an independent commission for a hearing.

"There is a date set for that proceeding. Unfortunately, I can't tell you when that is but it is progress-

ing," Masters told the Culture, Media and Sport (CMS) Committee of the UK Parliament.

When the charges were announced in February, City said they welcomed "the review of this matter by an independent commission, to impartially consider the comprehensive body of irrefutable evidence that exists in support of its position."

The charges against City, who are targeting a fourth straight Premier League title this season, are different to those brought against Everton and Nottingham Forest on Monday, Masters told the committee.

"If any club, the current champi-

ons or otherwise, had been found in breach of the spending rules, they would be in exactly the same position as Everton or Nottingham Forest," he said.

"But the volume and character of the charges laid before Manchester City, which I obviously cannot talk about at all, are being heard in a completely different environment."

Everton and Forest are facing potential points deductions - which would be a second for Everton this season after they were docked 10 points in November.

(Reuters)



▲ A date has been set for the hearing into Manchester City's alleged financial rule breaches.

Man U cuts profit forecast after CL exit

MANCHESTER United, opens new tab cut its annual revenue and profit forecasts on Wednesday, after the English Premier League club was knocked out of Europe's top tier Champions League tournament in the early stages this season.

The reduction will be a blow to British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe, who struck a long-awaited deal last month to buy a 25% stake in the club to try to revive its fortunes.

As part of that deal, Ratcliffe's INEOS group took over management of the club's soccer operations.

The club currently sits seventh in the Premier League table following a 2-2 draw against Tottenham Hotspur at the weekend.

Broadcasting revenue for the first quarter of its financial year rose 12.3% to 39.3 million pounds (\$49.9 million), thanks to its participation in the group stage of the Champions League.

But that revenue is expected to fall after the club's 1-0 defeat to Bayern Munich last month ended its hopes in Europe this season, piling pressure on manager Erik ten Hag.

UEFA, Europe's soccer governing



▲ Manchester United, opens new tab cut its annual revenue and profit forecasts on Wednesday.

body, distributes a share of revenues to clubs competing in the lucrative tournament.

Manchester United reported a net loss of 25.8 million pounds for the quarter ended Sept. 30, compared with 26.5 million pounds a year earlier.

It now expects fiscal 2024 revenue of 635-665 million pounds, versus its previous forecast of 650-680 million pounds, and adjusted core profit of

125-150 million pounds, compared with 140-165 million pounds previously.

Operating expenses as well as costs related to players' salaries also rose in the quarter.

Under ten Hag, the club bolstered its squad in the summer transfer window, with new signings including Rasmus Hojlund from Atalanta, Mason Mount from Chelsea and Andre Onana from Inter Milan. (Reuters)

Djokovic survives Popyrin scare to reach third round

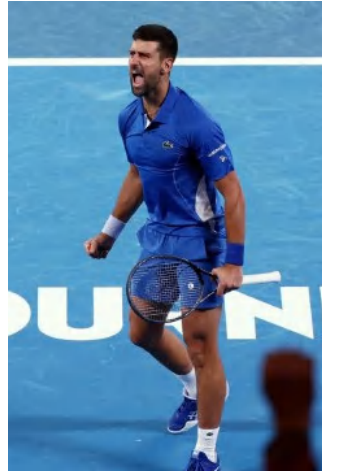
MELBOURNE - Defending champion Novak Djokovic survived a huge scare before beating home hope Alexei Popyrin 6-3 4-6 7-6(4) 6-3 to reach the third round of the Australian Open on Wednesday.

The 36-year-old Serb, bidding for a record-extending 11th crown in Melbourne, was in deep trouble in the third set when errors began to flow and he had to save four set points.

With the packed night-time crowd on the edge of their seats, top seed Djokovic used his vast experience to win the pivotal tiebreak and then broke a dispirited Popyrin midway through the fourth set to finally seize control.

Djokovic breezed through the fourth set to rack up his 30th successive victory at the Australian Open -- his last defeat coming in 2018 -- but for the second successive round he was pushed hard and looked short of his best form.

"He missed an easy forehand and I was lucky to get away with that game," Djokovic, who was riled up by a



▲ Defending champion Novak Djokovic survived a huge scare before beating home hope Alexei Popyrin.

heckling fan as the match neared its conclusion, said on court.

"He was the better player for a set and a half but the momentum shifted after the tiebreak."

Djokovic, bidding to claim a record 25th Grand Slam title, was kept on court four hours during his opening round victory over Croatian qualifier Dino Prizmic on Sunday.

(Reuters)

Henderson, Al Ettifaq part ways after six months set to join Ajax

JORDAN Henderson has reached an agreement with Al Ettifaq to leave the Saudi Pro League club and is close to joining Ajax on a permanent basis, according to sources with knowledge of the deal.

The England international and his current side are in the process of finalising the termination of a three-year contract that he signed last summer, ensuring no transfer fee will be involved in the midfielder's exit.

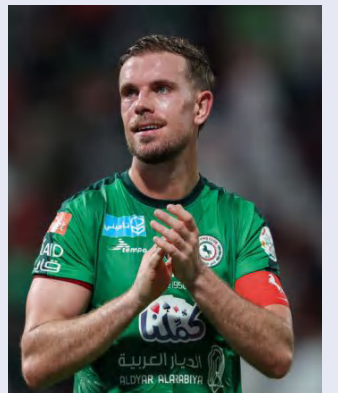
Meanwhile, Henderson is flying back to the UK from Al Ettifaq's winter training camp in Abu Dhabi, having agreed a switch to Ajax in principle.

That proposed move also requires paperwork and details to be ironed out before the 33-year-old former Liverpool midfielder's return to European football is complete after a brief stint in the SPL.

Henderson's exit from Saudi Arabia comes just six months after his move from Anfield. Speaking about his move, Henderson said: "I wanted something that would excite me. But it needed to be something that I felt as though I could add value in and do and try something new -- a new challenge and for different reasons. "And this opportunity with Stevie (Gerrard) in

a totally different league and totally different culture was something completely different, that maybe it would excite us in terms of the project that was put in front of us, in terms of the league and using my experience to try to help with that in many different areas and feeling that people value.

Last June, the Saudi Arabia ministry of sport announced the country's Public Investment Fund (PIF) was to take control of four teams in the Saudi Pro League: Al Ahli, Al Ittihad, Al Hilal and Al Nassr. Many high-profile transfers followed that announcement, with Karim Benzema, Roberto Firmino and Sergej Milinkovic-Savic among those to join Henderson in swapping European football for the Gulf state. (Reuters)



▲ Jordan Henderson has reached an agreement with Al Ettifaq to leave the Saudi Pro League club and is close to joining Ajax



André Ayew, Youssef Msakni make history

GHANA captain, Andre Ayew and Tunisian captain, Youssef Msakni made history after playing for their respective countries in the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations Côte d'Ivoire 2023. The appearance meant the two have participated in a record of 8 times in the TotalEnergies CAF AFCON and equalled the record held by Cameroonian, Rigobert Song and the Egyptian Ahmed Hassan.

The feat held since 2010 by the former Cameroonian international Rigobert Song and the Egyptian Ahmed Hassan is now equalled by the Ghanaian André Ayew and the Tunisian Youssef Msakni who are both present in Côte d'Ivoire for the 34th edition, at 34 and 33 years old respectively.

André Ayew had his first TotalEnergies CAF AFCON in 2008, hosted in his country, Ghana when he was just 18 years old.

Since then, he has only missed the 2013 edition, following an exclusion from coach James Kwesi Appiah's team due to injury.

The Le Havre player has 118 caps with Ghana, including 35 in the TotalEnergies CAF AFCON and Msakni has worn the colours of the Tunisian National team since 2009. Since 2010, Youssef Msakni has taken part in all editions of the TotalEnergies CAF AFCON with the Carthage Eagles of Tunisia.

His game against Namibia in the TotalEnergies CAF AFCON Côte d'Ivoire 2023 is his 100th cap for Tunisia.

Rigobert Song and Ahmed Hassan both played in eight TotalEnergies CAF AFCON competitions between 1996 and 2010. The Cameroonian won two titles, in 2000 and 2002 while the Egyptian won four trophies (1998, 2006, 2008 and 2010).

Ayew and Msakni on the other hand, despite this long experience in the competition, have still not won the ultimate yet.

The Ghanaian has often come so close to winning, having played and lost two finals in 2010 against Egypt and in 2015 against Cote D'Ivoire. Msakni's best performance for Tunisia remains the fourth place obtained in 2019 in Egypt.

(Cafonline)



▲ Ghana captain Andre Ayew and Youssef Msakni.

Onana back training with Cameroon and likely to play

GOALKEEPER Andre Onana (27) is likely to be included in Cameroon's line-up for Friday's Africa Cup of Nations group game against holders Senegal after returning to training with the team on Wednesday.

Onana missed Cameroon's opening match of the tournament in the Ivory Coast on Monday after he was allowed to stay at Manchester United and play in their 2-2 draw with Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday.

He flew by charter plane overnight to the Ivory Coast after the clash at Old Trafford but only arrived hours before kick off of the Group C clash against Guinea, in which Cameroon came from behind to force a 1-1 draw.

The decision to allow him to forgo the opening match of the tournament caused controversy among Cameroon supporters.

In an interview after his arrival in the Ivory Coast, Onana told reporters of the difficult tug of loyalty between club and country, especially for African internationals forced

to leave their European clubs mid-season to compete at the Cup of Nations.

"It's like choosing between my father and my mother, but my country comes first, that's why I'm here," he said

"Let people continue to criticise me. I'm used to it. I do what is good for my country," Onana added.

Onana has a chequered history with Cameroon after breaking through into the team while still a teenager at Ajax Amsterdam.

Call-up

He turned down a call-up to the 2017 Cup of Nations finals, which Cameroon went onto win, and at the last World Cup in Qatar was sent home after one match following a row with coach Rigobert Song, which has since been patched up.

But he did compete at the last edition of the Cup of Nations two years ago, just months after returning from a lengthy doping ban.

(Reuters)



▲ Cameroon Goalkeeper Andre Onana.

Morocco make light work of Tanzania

THE Atlas Lions of Morocco cruised to a comfortable 3-0 win over Tanzania at the Stade Laurent Pokou in their opening game at the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations Côte d'Ivoire 2023.

The Moroccans from the start took a total dominance of the game and created all the goal scoring opportunities.

Oncoming

The 2022 World Cup semifinalist shot into the lead and it was Hakim Ziyech who saw his free kick parried out by Salum Manula only for oncoming Roman Saiss to pounce on for the game's opener.

Novatus Miroshi was shown second yellow card and Tanzania were reduced to ten men in the

70th minute and Walid Regragui aided Morocco's absolute control of the game from there.

Thunderbolt

Luck had no place in this game as Morocco worked their way up to the cushioning through Azzedine Ounahi who after receiving a pass inside the box and without hesitation powered a thunderbolt to the underside of the goal for a 2-0 lead at 77 minutes.

Youssef En Nesry scored his own and Morocco's third after receiving a pass inside the penalty area from Achraf Hakimi and showed composure before finding the far corner of goal to put Morocco 3-0 up against Tanzania. The goal stood after VAR review.

(Cafonline)



▲ Manzini-Mbadlane Blue Highway constructed by Inyatsi

By Ntokozo Magongo
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No more underdogs in AFCON – local coaches

LOCAL coaches have observed that there are no longer underdogs in the on-going African Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Ivory Coast.

The coaches said so far they have been impressed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) national team's performance in the tournament. They said in the past, SADC countries went to the tournament as under-dogs and go there to defend while in this year's edition, it is a different case.

Green Mamba coach Ernest Mavuso the approach by countries like Namibia and Mozambique in the tournament was positive and it gave them positive results.

Fear

"In the past SADC countries approached the tournament with fear and went there to defend but I'm impressed by the change of approach this time around. They all went out to attack and play their style of football, something that yielded them positive results," he said.

Mavuso said as a country we got a lot to learn from the tournament. He said the football played in the AFCON was quick.

"What I also observed is the fact that there is no unnecessary kicking the ball but with every kick, the players are making a pass. This is one style that we have to learn and also introduce to our football," he said.

Denver Sundowns Coach Milton Dlamini said there were no longer small teams in the tournament.

"All the teams are now equal and it is very hard to predict the results. All the team

including those from the SADC region approached the game with positive mind and that has brought lot of competition in the game," he said.

Dlamini, who spent most of his football coaching career in South Africa, added that most of the SADC countries were benefiting from their international players. He said Namibia had majority of their players playing in professional leagues including South Africa and that was benefiting their countries.

"South African had the chance to win the game but unfortunately, they missed the crucial penalty that could have



▲ Coaches Ernest Mavuso and Milton Dlamini.



▲ Namibian players celebrating the historic 1-0 victory over Tunisia at AFCON 23.

changed the whole completion of the game. Mozambique took on Egypt and they were unlucky not to record a win. Same with Namibia they attacked, and it yielded positive results for them beating Tunisia 1-0," he said.

Namibia beat Tunisia 1-0 with Mozambique settling for a 2-all draw

against Egypt that features one of the best player in the world, Liverpool's Mohamed Salah with Angola playing a goalless draw against Algeria and South Africa lost 0-2 to Mali.

The National team, Sihlangu has never qualified for the AFCON or the FIFA World Cup.

Top Boxers for EBA qualifying tourney

Stories By Sibusiso Masilela
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TOP boxers are expected to attend the Eswatini Boxing Association All Africa Games qualifying tournament on Saturday at Olymp Africa Centre.

Some of the boxers include Thabiso Dlamini, Zweli Dlamini, Sifiso 'Ommo' Ngwenya, Qhawe Gamedze and Veliswa Magaya, who will be fighting to secure places in the boxing national

Games

To compete in the continental games scheduled in March at Accra, Ghana. Eswatini Boxing Association (EBA) Secretary Nkosinathi Dlamini said preparations for the tournament were proceeding smoothly.

"We are looking forward to the tournament where we will be having some of our top

boxers. The outstanding boxers will qualify for the African games, and I am not yet able to pre-empt the numbers of boxers for now until we receive the budget from Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOCGA). We urge teams and fans to attend the tournament in numbers," he said.

The boxing national team attended the 2023 African championships and World championships which were held at Uzbekistan and Senegal respectively.

The country was represented by Zweli Dlamini, Thabiso Dlamini and Veliswa Magaya in the two assignments.

Thabiso recently returned home from a one-year training program in Russia.

Boxing is among the lists of disciplines that will be included in the Ghana bound African games team including Taekwondo, volleyball, Chess, karate and athletics by local Olympic movement (EOCGA).



▲ Boxers during a tournament. (Right) Pugilist Thabo Dlamini.

International tournament for Ncobile

LOCAL pool sensation Ncobile Dlamini will be able to redeem herself on the international scene in February.

The national team players will be competing in the Gauteng tournament on February 10 in Soweto following her final loss in the recent Eswatini Pool Festival.

She recently finished second in the ladies singles category of the recently ended international pool tournament held at Prince Mfanyana hall. The player confirmed the updates when contacted on Wednesday.

"I will be attending the Gauteng international tournament in South Africa, and I am confident that will do well by using the experience which I gained from the Eswatini pool festival. I would like to thank the Eswatini pool festival for supporting me in my

career," she said.

Dlamini is among the local players that finished in the top two of the pool festival together with Nkosinathi

'Bhubesi' Sihlongonyane who came second in the male's singles category. The Eswatini pool festival males and female's category were

won South African star Jeremiah Naidoo and Botswana's Boinelo Kalantsho respectively.

Dlamini is not a newcomer in the international scenes having represented the country in the 2023 All Africa Black Ball championships and the Hawley Cup which were both held in South Africa.

Eswatini Cues Sports Association has shown interest to host the 2025 All Africa championships together with Kenya.

This was recently confirmed by All Africa pool Association (AAPA) President Sibusiso Dladla during the Eswatini festival.



▲ Ladies category runner up and local star Ncobile Dlamini and South African counterpart Beatrice Monyake.

‘We are going nowhere’ — Nyanga



▲Manzini Wanderers Coach Nyanga Hlophe.

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
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MANZINI Wanderers head coach Nyanga ‘Crooks’ Hlophe is adamant that his team will survive relegation in the MTN Premier League this season.

The veteran mentor said this after guiding the ‘crowd pullers’ to an emphatic 1-0 over Green Mamba on Tuesday evening at Mavuso Sports Centre.

“I can safely say we will remain in the MTN Premier League despite our current log position. I am proud of my players’ commitment to the match as they played as if our lives depended on the outcome of the match. We are good in progress, and we will fight until the end. We will still be in the

premier league and I appeal for support from our supporters,” he said.

Meanwhile, the losing coach Ernest Mavuso said he was not happy with the outcome of the match.

“Justice was not done in this match as most decisions that were taken against us and such things kills the standard of the sport. I am confident that we will soon return to winning ways in the league, and I am pleased with the performance of my team despite the loss” he said.

The result moved the ‘Weslians’ out of the drop zone to position 11 with 11 points after 14 matches in the log standings while the defending champions are still sitting tops with 27 points despite their third loss of the season.



▲Manzini Wanderers Captain Mlamuli ‘Mlaba’ Nkambule.

‘This was one of my best goals ever’ — ‘Mlaba’

MANZINI Wanderers captain Mlamuli ‘Mlaba’ Nkambule has described his stunning goal against Green Mamba as one of the best goals in his illustrious career.

The left footed former Mbabane Highlanders playmaker said this after scoring a screamer that guided the hub giants to their second win of the season at the expense of the MTN Premier League defending champions on Tuesday night.

“I am happy with the goal which helped us to secure the hard-fought over Green Mamba which remains of my best goals in my career. The victory was through hard work from the entire team and we will continue working hard throughout the season. We are still a work in progress and we are grateful for the loyal support from our fans,” he said.

The hub giants will now shift their focus to the Ingwenyama Cup where they will take Madlenya FC at Mavuso Sports Centre on Sunday.

Leopard throw weight behind beleaguered coach Edwin Matsebula

By Sibusiso Masilela

DESPITE results not coming their way, Royal Leopard have thrown their weight behind the under fire Technical Bench headed by Edwin Matsebula.

The Police side lost 1-3 to Nsingizini Hotspurs in the MTN Premier League on Sunday while they had also been kicked out of the Ingwenyama Cup last 32 by National First Division League side Tambankulu Celtics.

The team had gone for five seasons without silver ware. The club Public Relations Officer (PRO) Frank Hurube said, there was nothing wrong with the technical bench they were just unlucky.

“We were on our verge of winning the first-round incentive but we were unlucky as we played a draw against Manzini Sea Birds. Then came Ingwenyama Cup and we prepared well but we also lost. We then lose to Nsingizini Hotspurs,” he said.

Hurube said they will be beefing up the squad during the second registration window period.

“We are looking forward at least signing a central midfielder and a striker. Currently we do not have a striker and we believe that will improve our performance,” he said.

Leopard’s hope of silver ware now only remains with the MTN Premier League where they are second, two points behind Correctional Service side, Green Mamba.

Matsebula was appointed Coach by the Police side in 2018.



▲Royal Leopard technical bench (left to right) Mphikeleli ‘Rabo’ Dlamini, Mfanzile ‘Fash’ Dlamini and Coach Edwin Matsebula.

Mxolisi joins Jwaneng Galaxy

... Green Mamba captain Mxolisi Mkhonto completes move to Botswana's premier league side Jwaneng Galaxy after penning a two-year deal

By Sibusiso Masilela
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IT's a dream come true for Green Mamba star Mxolisi Mkhonto. The Sihlangu attacking midfielder has joined Botswana Premier League side Jwaneng Galaxy on a two-year contract. This comes after the player impressed the Jwaneng during his assessment in Botswana under the tutelage of former Botswana interim coach Morena Ramoreboli. The reigning MTN Premier League player of the years becomes the second local player to ply his trade in Botswana after ex-Mbabane Highlanders midfielder

Banele 'Stiga' Ndzabandzaba. Galaxy has beaten Mozambique champions UD Songo in the signature of the former Malanti Chiefs player. He has followed the footsteps of ex Manzini Wanderers striker Thabiso Mokenkoane who recently moved to Township Rollers. Green Mamba Management Committee Chairman Davies Zwane confirmed the update. "We have agreed to release the player to Jwaneng Galaxy on a two-year contract, and we are in the process of finalizing the entire deal. We are happy with his move, and we believe it will improve his career," he said. Mkhonto boasts of various Sihlangu caps under Serbian mentor

Kostadin Papic and the incumbent coach Dominic Kunene. He featured in the 2023 CAF Champions League preliminary round tie with Green Mamba, where they were knocked out by UD Songo. This was after he led the Ernest Mavuso led side to the 2022/23 MTN Premier League title which was 'Inyoka eluhlazana's third in history. Other local international players are Justice Figareido (Richards Bay, South Africa) and Lindo Mkhonta (Zesco United, Zambia). Galaxy was founded in 2015 after a merger between Jwaneng Comets and Debswana Youngsters and they were promoted to the Botswana Premier League in 2015. The team has already participated in the 2018 CAF Confederation Cup and 2022 CAF Champions League.



▲Mxolisi Mkhonto has joined Botswana Premier League side Jwaneng Galaxy.

Ex-Birds Simanga Shongwe striker joins Wanderers

By Sibusiso Masilela
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MANZINI Wanderers have beefed up their squad with the services of former Mbabane Swallows striker Simanga Shongwe. The former Sihlangu striker joined the hub giants from National First Division side Sis-onkhe FC ahead of the crunch Ingwenyama Cup last 16 clash against Madlenya FC on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre. Shongwe is set to replace South African striker Thabiso Mokenkoane who recently moved to Botswana premier League side Township Rollers. The new signing won't be part of the Ingwenyama Cup as he is cup tied having featured in the same tournament with his former team.

Clash

The crowd pullers have also recalled their South African prodigal son Siphamandla Dhlamini recently went Absent Without official leave (AWOL) ahead of the last 16 clash against the Siphofaneni based side. Wanderers Management Committee (MC) Chairman Berger Nxumalo confirmed the updates. "It's true that we signed Simanga Shongwe and we are happy to have a player of his calibre in the team. We have also recalled Siph-amandla Dhlamini from South Africa and he is expected to start training with the team on Thursday," he said. The maroon and white ensemble is also on the verge of signing former Mbabane Highlanders playmaker Sibusiso Mkhonta and former national under-20 defender Majaha Nhlabatsi on loan from Royal Leopards. The 'Weslians' recently beefed up its technical bench with the services of Zimbabwean mentor Ikabort Masocha and physical trainer Percy Shongwe.



▲Mbabane Highlanders players celebrating a goal.

Weslians', 'Bull' to co-hosts at Mavuso Sunday

By Ntokozo Magongo
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A mouth-watering double header to feature Manzini Wanderers and Mbabane Highlanders is billed for Mavuso Sports Centre on Sunday. This will be during the Ingwenyama Cup last 16 where Mbabane Highlanders will take centre stage against National First Division League side, Louis XIV at 1:30pm and Manzini

Wanderers will be next against Madlenya at 4pm. Another double header is scheduled for King Sobhuza II Memorial Stadium where Green Mamba will face Manzini Sea Birds at 1pm and Nsingizini Hotspurs will play against Denver Sundowns at 3pm. Four fixtures will be played on Saturday with Ezulwini United taking on Seven Dreams at Mkhuzweni



▲Manzini Wanderers players in discussion.

| INGWENYAMA CUP LAST 16 FIXTURES: | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|--------------|--------|
| Saturday | | | |
| Prince of Wales Sports Ground: | | | |
| M. Hotspurs | vs | PPK, Rangers | 3pm |
| Mkhuzweni Technical Centre: | | | |
| Ezulwini | vs | S. Dreams | 3pm |
| Mayaluka Stadium: | | | |
| M. Swallows | vs | T. Celtics | 3pm |
| KaLanga Technical Centre: | | | |
| Y. Buffaloes | vs | Illovo | 3pm |
| Sunday: | | | |
| Mavuso Sports Centre: | | | |
| Highlanders | vs | Louis XIV | 1:30pm |
| M. Wanderers | vs | Madlenya | 4pm |
| King Sobhuza II Memorial Stadium: | | | |
| G. Mamba | vs | M. Sea Birds | 1pm |

Technical Centre while Mbabane Swallows will host Tambankulu Callies at Mayaluka Stadium. Milling Hotspurs will play Pigg's Peak Rangers at Prince of Wales Sports Ground and Young Buffaloes will be visited by Illovo at KaLanga Technical Centre. All the games will start at 3pm.



**Henderson,
Page 19 Al Ettifaq
part ways, set
to join Ajax**

**Weslians',
Page 23 'Bull' to
co-hosts
at Mavuso**



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Mxolisi joins Jwaneng Galaxy

... Green Mamba captain Mxolisi Mkhonto completes move to Botswana's premier league side Jwaneng Galaxy after penning a two-year deal. **Page 23**