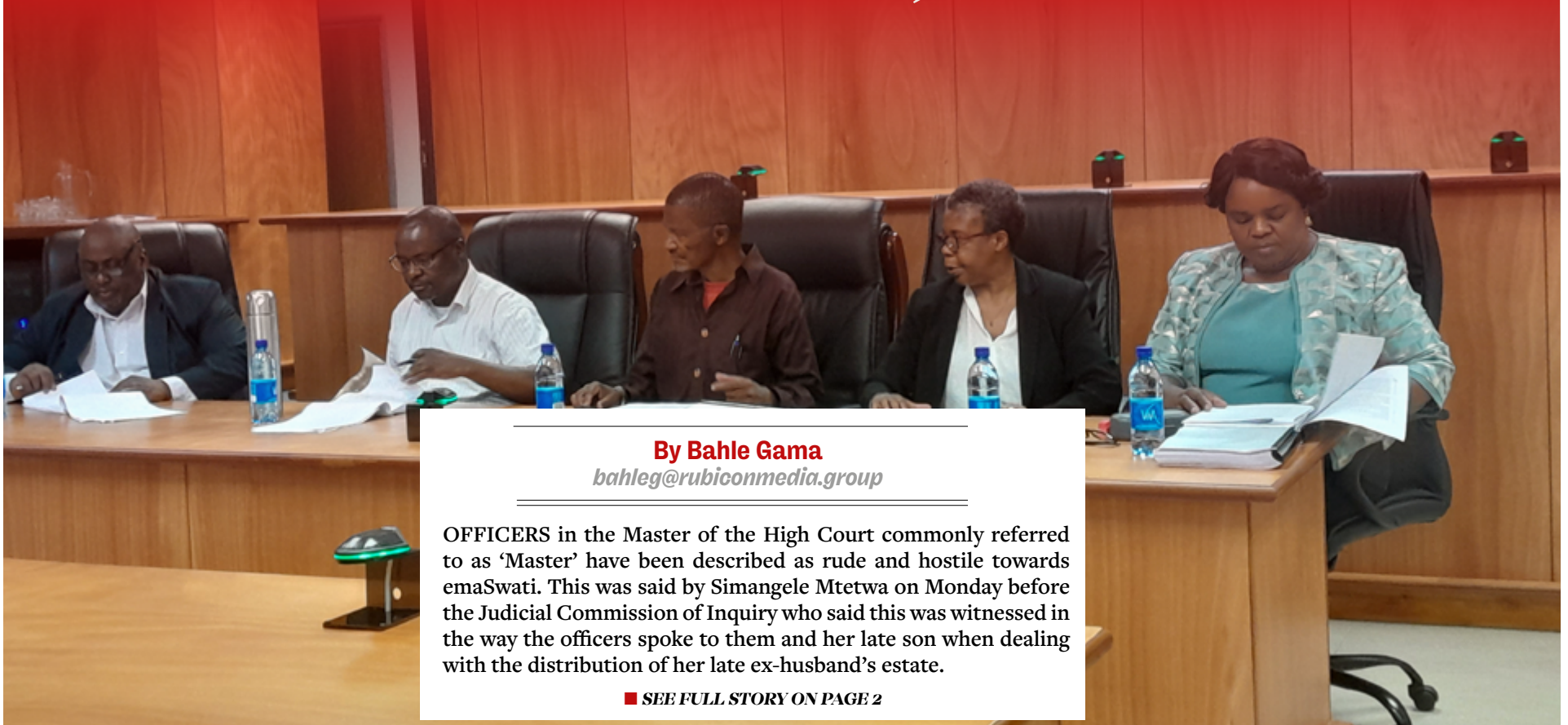




Judicial Commission of Inquiry told:

‘Master of the High Court officers rude, hostile’



By Bahle Gama

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OFFICERS in the Master of the High Court commonly referred to as ‘Master’ have been described as rude and hostile towards emaSwati. This was said by Simangele Mtetwa on Monday before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry who said this was witnessed in the way the officers spoke to them and her late son when dealing with the distribution of her late ex-husband’s estate.

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OFFICERS in the Master of the High Court commonly referred to as ‘Master’ have been described as rude and hostile towards emaSwati.

This was said by Simangele Mtetwa on Monday before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry who said this was witnessed in the way the officers spoke to them and her late son when dealing with the distribution of her late ex-husband’s estate.

“The day my son returned from inventory, he pleaded for assistance, and cited that he takes medication therefore was unable to ask any questions and was forgetful, thus was not in a proper state to talk and the hostile responses he received from the officers were devastating,” she said.

They did and upon arrival, were asked which file they were in the office for. From there, a male officer took them to an office, opened the file, and mentioned the names listed. He questioned who they were and told them he did not know why they were in the office because they were not on the list.

His older sister explained why they were part of the meeting and the officers heard none of it.

They told me they were tired of rival matters and would not be tending to them, and it was explained that such was not the case.

“He said if we had nothing more to say, we should leave Mzwandile behind and excuse them to talk, citing that he was 21 years old,” she said.

Mtetwa said they sat on the bench outside the office when another female officer entered and they started yelling at her son for bringing her to the office, and he was subjected to more rude questions.

Mzwandile explained his situation about taking medication from the psychiatric center and informed them he was incapable of dealing with the estate matter by himself.

He was asked what his problem was, and he cited the missing business and vehicles that had not been listed in his father’s inventory prepared by his stepmother.

They responded that the office would only work with what was listed in the inventory, any pending issues should be resolved with the executor (stepmom).

He further questioned why no bank statements were availed to show how much his father had left, he was told to direct the question to his stepmother and not them.

“He showed them the card from Psych, but they insisted that a letter written by the director should be submitted. He could not take it and he stormed out of the office.”

They went to the psychiatric center to request the letter. They found a foreign doctor who told them he was tired of ‘Master’ as there was another woman from Matsamo requesting the same for the office.

Mtetwa said the doctor insisted that he would not write any letter and that Mzwandile should use the card as it had all the information needed.

They were turned back empty-handed.

Master contributed to son’s severe depression

Mtetwa has told the Commission of Inquiry probing the Master of the High Court that when her son died, he had severe depression which the office had a hand in.

she told the commission that her son Mzwandile Simphiwe Mmemma died three months ago and had been diagnosed with severe depression by a psychologist.

She told the commission she had come

Judicial Commission of Inquiry told: ‘Master of the High Court officers rude, hostile’



▲Simangele Mtetwa and her daughter Gugulethu Vilakati.

to on behalf of her late son and ex-husband. Mtetwa was married to Dumsani Mmemma who died on August 4, 2020.

She said when they married, they each had children from outside the marriage and Mzwandile was the only child they had.

“After giving birth to Mzwandile, Mmemma insisted that I tie my tubes because he only wanted one child in the marriage,” she said.

Mtetwa said Mmemma who was working at Hoageys at the time would always talk about how he wanted to create a future and legacy for all his children, including the ones born out of their marriage.

They sat down and discussed a side hustle, and he complained about Capital.

As a teacher by profession, Mthethwa assured her husband that capital would not be a problem and took a loan at SNAT Co-op and encouraged him to open his own company.

Indeed, Mmemma started a company that supplied and rented out air conditioners to different entities and events nationally. He called it Ecozone (PTY) Ltd. He then resigned from Hoageys and gave full attention to the company. Mmemma received his first tender from the Red Cross where he had to install new air conditioners and the first payment was E480,000.

“According to my knowledge, he was the sole director of the Company because I had a busy schedule. After 20 years in the marriage, we encountered challenges and ended up separating,” he said.

Mtetwa said before the marriage Mmemma was residing at Mobeni flats and decided that they buy a home after she learned about the civil servant’s loan scheme where she sourced the funds. The loan payment was deducted from her salary as a civil servant and when they divorced, E26,000 remained in payments. They were married in a community of property so Mmemma suggested that the house be evaluated so he could buy her out and opted to remain in the house with Mzwandile because they were close. They agreed, and he bought her out. She went to khonta and built her homestead.

During their divorce, it was agreed that Mzwandile would reside with his father and would visit occasionally.

“We also agreed that the company shouldn’t be divided because he didn’t have any other source of income when I did and

because we had a son. All that had to do with the company we agreed that I was leaving it with him,” she said.

After the divorce, Mmemma married a year later, however, no child was born in that marriage which lasted for 10 years before his demise. After his burial, Mtetwa received a call from the Master of the High Court and was told to bring Mzwandile, so they choose an estate executor.

“That was when our stress with Master began and my son was never the same, especially after the death of his father,” she said.

Upon arrival at the offices of the Master of the High Court, they found Mmemma’s wife and only sister. Her older daughter resided in South Africa with her mother and could not attend the meeting. However, she wrote an affidavit that the discussions should proceed and would accept the outcome.

Officers at the office asked that Mtetwa and her children introduce themselves. They were carrying Mmemma’s file and read out the names of the beneficiaries who were Mzwandile, the daughter in SA, and Phumla the wife. They told Mtetwa and her older daughter to excuse them, only the people mentioned were expected to be in the office.

“What was surprising is that Mmemma’s older sister was allowed to be in the office despite not being on the list of beneficiaries. We were told Mzwandile was above 21 so we couldn’t be in the meeting. He was 25 at the time,” she said.

She pleaded that they let them in the meeting, referencing her younger sister who lost her husband, and the entire family was allowed in the office in Manzini, however, in Mbabane they refused and told them to wait for Mzwandile in the car.

When he returned, he told them his stepmother had been chosen as executor and they were all fine with the decision because they thought she was the appropriate person for the position. They called him again after Phumla (stepmother) had put together the inventory and he found that only the house was listed. There was no mention of the business.

He asked about the business and why it had not been included because it was big, having catered for big events in the country including emaganu ceremonies and graduations. Mzwandile was told that was

not why he had come and was supposed to discuss such with the executor.

He asked again about his father’s cars and received the same response.

“His father’s death devastated him that he needed up taking medication from Psych,” she said.

Company transferred after death

Upon learning that Mmemma’s company had not been listed in the inventory, Mtetwa sent her older daughter to check on the company.

Upon arrival, she found that the company had been transferred two weeks before to Mmemma’s wife who was now the sole director. This happened after Mmemma’s burial. Papers about the company’s directorship were missing from the file as well and they concluded that it was the reason the company was not listed in the inventory. When checking in with the registrar of companies, Mmemma’s name did not appear and there was no documentation about the history of the company except for the transfer to the wife.

Mtetwa and Mzwandile questioned how such was possible when the wife had submitted that the house at Sidvashini had been attached by the ERS because the company was owed.

Yet the same company had not been listed in the inventory. They also discovered that two of the vehicles owned by Mmemma were no longer registered under his name, yet when he was alive, he owned three vehicles.

“Later I saw on Facebook, that one of the vehicles a white Isuzu had been put on sale by his wife,” Mtetwa said.

Before the attachment of the house by ERS, it had been discussed that the house be sold at E940,000 and they were all advised to get buyers.

Indeed, it was advertised in the newspaper and whilst waiting to get a buyer, a phone came from the Master’s office and Mzwandile was notified about the attachment.

He requested that his mother and sister accompany him.

When they arrived, the wife told him the file at Master was being closed and the house had been attached because the company owed E900,000 in taxes.

The house was to be auctioned and clear taxes of the company which became even more confusing. He questioned why the house was being attached for taxes of a non existent company. When he asked the officers, he was told to ask the executor. Four years later, the house is reportedly occupied by the executor (stepmother) and was never auctioned, the file was closed, and the estate was never distributed.

“In conclusion, we want justice for Mzwandile and the late Mmemma because what has happened is not what he wanted. He worked hard for his children and always said he was working for them. There was no estate distributed at the end, the file was closed by the office of the Master of the High Court,” he said.

An emotional Mtetwa told the Commission that Mzwandile was hit by a vehicle that fled the scene and was never found to date, therefore wants closure on the situation.



▲ A section of the members of the 12th Parliament.

Parliament opening set for February 9th

Stories by Ncaba Ntshakala

THE much-anticipated opening of the Parliament has been confirmed for February 9th, by Speaker Jabulani Mabuza. The Speaker announced that His Majesty King Mswati III has graciously blessed the opening, and preparations are well underway to ensure a smooth and successful ceremony. “On the day of the opening, as per tradition, His Majesty will deliver the Speech from the Throne,” Mabuza explained. “This speech serves as a vital guideline for both the government and Parliament, outlining the key priorities and direction for the coming year.” To ensure a well-organized event, Mabuza urged all invited guests to bring their

designated cards on the day of the opening. “These cards are essential for maintaining order and facilitating proper seating arrangements,” he emphasized. “While the cards may come in different colours, please be assured that they hold no specific meaning. They simply serve as a practical tool for efficient guest management.” The upcoming Parliament opening is expected to draw a large crowd, including dignitaries, members of the diplomatic corps, and the general public. It marks a significant event in the Eswatini calendar, signalling the official commencement of parliamentary proceedings for the year. The Speech from the Throne is a highly anticipated address, as it provides insights into the government’s plans and priorities for the year ahead. It is an opportunity for citizens to understand the key issues that will be shaping the country’s development and to engage in informed discussions about the future of the Kingdom.

‘Govt to support schools with basic amenities’

MINISTER of Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela has assured schools in Eswatini that the government will prioritize providing them with basic amenities like electricity and water. The Minister made the pledge during a recent visit to St Francis Primary School, part of an ongoing program where Cabinet Ministers assess the situation in schools across the country. “We understand the challenges faced by schools, especially regarding access to essential services like electricity and water,” Prince Lonkhokhela stated. “The government is committed to addressing these issues and ensuring that all schools have the necessary resources to function effectively.” The Minister’s visit to St Francis Primary School highlighted some of the challenges faced by schools in Eswatini. The school, like many others, struggles with electricity and water bills. However,

Prince Lonkhokhela emphasized that while some problems require immediate attention, others may necessitate longer-term solutions. “Some issues, such as minor repairs or equipment upgrades, can be resolved quickly. However, more complex problems may require a more comprehensive approach and longer timelines.” Stated the Minister. Prince Lonkhokhela assured school administrators and teachers that he would report his findings and the identified challenges to the Cabinet. He urged schools to actively communicate their needs and not hesitate to seek assistance. The visit was announced by the Minister of Education and Training last week as he said that schools will be visited by some Cabinet Ministers to assess situations. Some of the schools visited were those that underperformed last year on external examinations and those that were destroyed during the disastrous hailstorm that hit seven constituencies.



▲ Pupils at St Francis Primary School where the Minister visited.



National Data Protection Awareness Day

Take Control of Your Data

28 January 2024



Join us in celebrating the National Data Protection Week 2024 by taking control of your data.

The Eswatini Data Protection Act came into force in March 2022 and espouses the Right to Privacy as enshrined in the Eswatini Constitution, 2005. The object of the Act is “to provide for the collection, processing, disclosure and protection of personal data; balancing competing values of personal information privacy and sector-specific laws and other related matters”. The Act designates the Eswatini Communications Commission as the Eswatini Data Protection Authority (EDPA) charged with the responsibility to enforce compliance thereto. On Friday, 26 January 2024, Eswatini joined the world in commemorating the International Data Protection Day by hosting an event under the theme “Take Control of Your Data”. The Data Protection Day is internationally celebrated each year on 28 January, which marks the anniversary of the Council of Europe’s ‘Convention 108’ on the protection of personal information - the first legally binding international law on data protection which was open for signature in 1981. However, other countries soon embraced the initiative, and now Data Protection Day is globally recognized. It is an international effort to create awareness about the importance of respecting privacy, safeguarding data, and enabling trust.

The National Data Protection Day is also a chance to catch up with new developments in the Data Protection area. As the EDPA we recognise the week of 22-28 January as the National Data Protection Week, during which we urge entities (data controllers and data processors) and other actors to organise activities to raise awareness about the importance of data protection and to promote best practices with regards to processing personal information. Data protection concerns mainly individuals (the data subjects) whose personal information is processed by entities in their line of business. Still, many people lack knowledge about how their personal data is being collected, used, and shared. As this year’s theme indicates, taking control of one’s data begins with the data subjects themselves. It is important to make informed and calculated decisions when sharing your personal data, especially with entities. Your personal data such as age, gender, data related to children, health records, National Identity number, financial records, purchase history, location have great value and may be used for unintended purposes. It is important to keep that in mind when deciding what you share and with whom. Entities who in terms of the Act are data controllers and

data processors on the other hand need to make sure that they keep their customers’ data always protected and in accordance with the data protection principles and other applicable legal frameworks on data protection. Risk should always be managed, and to create trust, the entities should be transparent on how they are collecting, using, and sharing personal data. A data breach where an individual’s personal data is leaked or accessed by unauthorised persons can lead to a loss in both reputation and customer trust, in addition to potential financial sanctions which may be imposed by the EDPA. In this regard we invite the public to join us as we create awareness and discuss important privacy-related topics to remind organizations and individuals why they should care about data privacy.



ESCOM Chief Executive
Mvilawemphi Dlamini

‘Drug shortage crisis gradually easing’

By **Nokunceda Magagula**
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MINISTER of Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo has assured emaSwati that the drug shortage crisis is gradually easing.

Minister Khumalo was speaking in his capacity as the head of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Health Crisis during the Sub-Committee’s visit to the Mbabane Government Hospital. The committee went to the hospital to evaluate the availability of medical drugs and medical supplies.

During his address, Minister Khumalo has assured the nation that suppliers have made deliveries, and stock levels will gradually improve in public health facilities.” It is worth mentioning that the situation has not reached the level that we want, but we assure the nation that the Ministry of Health has worked hard to ensure that the situation improves” Minister Khumalo asserted.

He added that Mbabane government hospital is a testament that the situation is getting better. “As the drugs have made their way in the hospital, we now have to look into ways of ensuring that they are secured because in many instances the drugs would go missing,” the Minister said.

Intervene

Minister said they have also asked the Royal Eswatini Police Service to intervene, by giving their perspectives on ways to ensure that the drugs do not go missing.

The Minister of Health Mduduzi Matsebula assured the nation that in due time drugs will reach everywhere in the country. “As time goes on places like Lubulini and Sithobela will receive drugs” Minister Matsebula said.

He mentioned that even though not all the drugs will reach everyone since the shortage was extreme, they are committed to ensuring that everyone receives help. He added that they hope that as the month of February

and March approaches stock will improve at all levels. The Minister appealed to the nation to practice patience.

It is worth noting that this is the second visit of the Sub-committee to the hospital. In the first visit late last year, Minister Khumalo expressed the challenges faced by suppliers, citing prolonged outstanding payments from the government. He emphasized the impact on essential services such as oxygen supply, cleaning, security, and catering. In response to this issue, he stated, “Most of the suppliers have the drugs and material but are constrained because the Government has been owing them for some time.”

To address the financial bottleneck, Minister Khumalo shared a key resolution, stating, “We then agreed that the payment of these suppliers must continue to be prioritized where there is a budget.” Encouragingly, he confirmed that the Minister of Finance has affirmed the availability of budgets to settle most outstanding invoices, a move expected to unlock the steady flow of essential medicines.

Commitment

Highlighting a commitment to transparency and accountability, Minister Khumalo articulated plans to monitor the drug distribution process closely. He emphasized, “We will be careful that as and when the drugs start arriving, we use cars that have tracking devices and camera systems so that those may be monitored, and management reports done fully to prevent the disappearance of drugs.”

As the deadline approaches, the government’s dedication to overcoming logistical challenges and financial constraints underscores its commitment to ensuring timely access to crucial medications for the public by January 2024.

Minister Khumalo, speaking on behalf of the sub-committee, affirmed: “We are working around the clock to ensure that medicinal drugs are available to the public by the end of January 2024.” The commit-



▲ Minister of Commerce Trade and Industry Manqoba Khumalo who is the head of the Subcommittee making his remarks during the tour.



▲ Minister of Health Mduduzi Matsebula being shown around by pharmacist during the tour

ment extends beyond mere assurances, with concrete steps taken to address outstanding payments and enhance the efficiency of the drug distribution network. Acknowledging the progress at the Central Medical Stores, Minister Khumalo highlighted the pivotal role of tracking devices and cameras in delivery vehicles, a move aimed at fortifying the integrity of the supply chain.

Despite challenges faced by suppliers, the government’s pledge to prioritize payments and the availability of budgets signal

a positive shift in ensuring a seamless flow of medications. The Minister’s emphasis on transparency and accountability in drug distribution, utilizing advanced tracking systems, reflects a proactive approach to prevent any mishandling or disappearance of vital drugs.

With these measures in place, the government is poised to fulfil its promise of delivering essential medicines to the public in a timely and secure manner by January 2024.

ANC suspends former President Jacob Zuma

SOUTH AFRICA’S ruling African National Congress (ANC) has suspended former President Jacob Zuma, weeks after he backed another party ahead of this year’s general election.

“Zuma and others whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles will find themselves outside the African National Congress,” ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula said on Monday.

The decision, which was widely expected, will be seen as a further sign of disunity in the movement ahead of the general election, in which the long-dominant ANC is expected to lose ground.

Zuma was the fourth president of democratic South Africa, serving from 2009 to 2018, but was forced from office under a cloud of corruption allegations, and he has become estranged from the party he once led.

In December, he declared he would campaign for a new party, uMkhonto We Sizwe (MK) or Spear of the Nation, named after the ANC’s former armed wing during the anti-apartheid struggle. Mbalula said that in addition to suspending Zuma, the ANC could complain to the electoral court to get the new party deregistered and mount a trademark challenge to recapture the name.

“The formation of MK party is not an acci-



▲ ANC has suspended former President Jacob Zuma

dent,” Mbalula declared after a meeting with the party’s National Executive Committee, attended by President Cyril Ramaphosa. “It is a deliberate attempt to use the proud history of the armed struggle against the apartheid regime to lend credibility to what is a blatantly counterrevolutionary agenda.” According to a South African Broadcasting Corporation news report, Zuma has 48 hours to respond to the suspension.

(ALJAZEERA)

World Vision Eswatini brings warmth to people of Mtsambama

By **Ncaba Ntshakala**

LAST Friday, smiles bloomed brighter than the summer sun as World Vision Eswatini, through its Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs department, brought warmth and joy to 111 individuals, including children, in the Bhangonoma and Zenzile communities under Mtsambama constituency.

The generous donation, spearheaded by World Vision’s Gifts-In-Kind program, saw families receiving much-needed clothing items which include pants, t-shirts, winter

socks, hats, dresses, sweaters, and jackets – to combat the chilly Eswatini winter.

The excitement was palpable. Young Lungelo, beaming from Bhangonoma, summed it up perfectly; “I really love my clothes, thank you World Vision!” His infectious joy echoed through the gathering, a testament to the impact of such simple acts of kindness.

World Vision’s Gifts-In-Kind program goes beyond providing immediate relief. It empowers individuals and families, particularly those facing disadvantage, to create brighter futures. By addressing basic needs like clothing, the program frees up resources and allows families to focus on education, healthcare, and building sustainable livelihoods.



▲ Thembelihle Primary School pupils receiving the clothing from World Vision Eswatini

SADC health ministers praised for their swift response to fight cholera

Stories by Nokunceda Magagula
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THE Committee of Ministers of Health of the Southern Africa Development Community chairperson (SADC) has praised ministers on the preparedness of SADC Member States, and responses to the cholera outbreaks including measures in place to fight cholera.

According to the SADC website this was during ministerial virtual meeting between ministers of health in the SADC region, presided by Her Excellency Dr. Silvia Lutucuta who is the Minister of Health of the Republic of Angola and Chairperson of the SADC Ministerial Committee on Health, on January 27, 2024. The meeting mandate was to primarily receive and consider reports on the cholera situation which is prevailing in some Member States in the region.

During the meeting Her Excellency Dr. Lutucuta, lauded that in response to the cholera outbreak, the different countries portrayed readiness and swift response to the outbreak, making sure that people from their countries did not die.

Prior to the Ministers’ meeting, the SADC Senior Officials Responsible for Health convened a meeting earlier in the day to clear documents for the Ministers. The Minister also received technical support from World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

This meeting was convened in response



▲ Her Excellency Dr. Silvia Lutucuta, Minister of Health for the Republic of Angola and Chairperson of the SADC Ministerial Committee on Health.

to a widespread cholera outbreak in several Member States within the SADC region, which occurred in the first half of 2023. The region has already witnessed a significant number of cholera cases and fatalities, with the numbers steadily increasing.

The SADC region is united in its efforts to coordinate regional efforts in relation to epidemic preparedness, prevention, control, and eradication of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

It is worth mentioning that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation had previously issued a crucial

reminder to emaSwati planning international travel and emphasized that obtaining health or travel insurance is essential for financial protection against unexpected emergencies and health risks in destination countries. In a statement shared, the Ministry emphasizes safety for emaSwati as they travel.

The Ministry highlighted the importance of vigilance and awareness, urging travelers to stay informed about health advisories and other relevant updates issued by the countries they plan to visit. Recent global health pandemics, the Ministry observes, often require immediate action, and having

proper insurance can significantly ease the burden of unforeseen medical expenses.

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation wishes to inform the general public, parents, and students planning to travel outside of the Kingdom of Eswatini about the continued importance of obtaining health or travel insurance in order to be financially protected against unforeseen and undesirable circumstances that may arise in that country of destination, and at times of transit.” Read the statement “It is crucial that emaSwati travellers remain vigilant and informed on health and other matters as monitored by those countries visited.”

Again, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that recently, it has noted that the Republic of Zambia’s National Public Health Institute reported an outbreak of cholera in Lusaka since October 2023. As the outbreak continues and cases rise in that country, the Ministry appeals to parents, students and visitors to take caution and monitor any symptoms that may develop. These include; profuse watery diarrhoea, thirst, vomiting, restlessness or irritability, and leg cramps, amongst other symptoms. “Should a person develop any of these, medical attention should be sought immediately,” reads the statement “The Ministry remains committed to serving emaSwati and providing any assistance possible,”

A cholera outbreak in Zambia, first reported in October 2023, has seen a dramatic increase in transmission since mid-December. The country has now recorded more than 10,000 cases and 400 deaths, with over 500 new cases daily.

A KOMBI driver who is accused of knocking down his lover with his kombi made it known to the court that the accident was not intentional.

Banele Kunene made this statement when he submitted his defense at the Mbabane Magistrate’s court during his trial. Kunene narrated his version of what transpired on the day of the accident. He said on December 25, 2023, he was with a group of his fellow kombi drivers enjoying drinks at Zone 2 in Mbabane in a mini kombi rank.

Amongst the group of kombi drivers, there was a lady whom he was having a conversation with. While having the conversation with the unidentified woman, the complainant in this case who is his girlfriend and mother of his three children Ntombi* approached them suspecting that Kunene was cheating on her with the lady he was standing with.

Kunene said Ntombi asked him what was happening between him and the lady, and Kunene responded saying nothing was going on. Ntombi then left and went to a homestead nearby, a few minutes later the accused decided to leave with the unidentified woman. They got into the kombi and as he had geared the kombi Ntombi came running and stood in front of the kombi.

He said he accidentally knocked down Ntombi, however, he thought that she was not hurt so he did not bother to check on her. While driving he got a call from Ntombi during the phone call the complainant insulted him, after that call one of the drivers he was with also called him and informed him that Ntombi had been injured, but he

took that lightly since Ntombi had called him and did not say anything about being injured.

Two days later the accused said he got from the police summoning him at the police station where he was arrested and charged with assault. In cross-examination, the crown put it to the accused that he deliberately knocked down the complainant because he wanted to prove a point to the lady he was with, as the witness had stated in her testimony. The accused disputed the claim made by the crown.

Before the accused testimony, the complainant had testified that after the noticed that she was coming towards the kombi, he then drove it straight towards her, knocking her down, and ran over her left arm.

When his friends who were also around tried to call him to let him know about the accident, he did not pick up their calls and was later taken to the hospital. She said one of the friends told her to not say she was run over by Kunene because they might still sort out their issues.

Upon arriving at the hospital, she claimed to have been struck by a kombi she didn’t recognize. However, she later altered her account, realizing that Kunene showed no remorse for his actions, as he failed to answer her phone calls. The matter will resume on 27, February 2024.

Kombi driver who knocked down girlfriend: Maintains that the accident was not intentional



▲ Banele Kunene.

IN THE EX-JOURNALIST RAPE CASE

He wanted sex every day – survivor

Stories by Nokunceda Magagula
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AFTER opening a rape case against Phesheya Kunene, who is a former journalist, the survivor, who happens to be Kunene's fiancée, has come out to say that the accused would want sexual intercourse every day.

The survivor spoke through a popular news page on Facebook after she received overwhelming backlash on Facebook. The victim said she suffered intense abuse at the hands of Kunene. "It has been a rough week for me because it is so painful that I was abused and raped by this person, the abuse started way back at the beginning of 2022 with an argument after I had bought a phone," the victim said.

Cheating

She further stated that the accused would always want to browse through her chats suspecting that she was cheating. She mentioned that they used to talk things through and tried to make peace, but whenever he went broke, the abuse would start all over again, because he would say he felt disrespected.

"He would want to have sex every day and I would sometimes complain because I work hard and get tired but he would proceed anyway without my consent. The last time he was aggressive and fought me, that's why I decided to report him to the police", she narrated.

Kunene used to work as an entertainment journalist in one of the media houses in the country

and is known for his hustle as a businessperson selling house décor including wall mirrors, bed covers, rugs/carpets, and pillows amongst other things.

Kunene was on January 17 arrested by police officers from Lubulini Police Station and subsequently charged with contravening Section 3 (1) as read with Section 3 (2) and (3) (a) of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act 15 of 2018 for allegedly raping his fiancée.

He was also charged with contravening Section 77 (1) (a) of the same act for allegedly physically abusing the victim causing harm to her health and well-being.

Upon his arrest on January 17, he was remanded at Big Bend Correctional Facility.

In his bail application, Kunene told the court that in October 2023 he formally proposed marriage to the complainant by asking for her hand from her family and paying some of the lobola.

Unemployed

He stated that on December 24 after being unemployed, opted to reside with the complainant at her workplace.

He said he was responsible for taking care of her children as well as the general upkeep of the home including cleaning and washing.

According to Kunene, his fiancée was unhappy with the fact that he no longer brought income into the house and suggested that he return to his parental homestead.

This she supposedly said whenever she would be angry at Kunene.

"We started fighting over petty things, including that I was not properly taking care of her older children. During our arguments she would get violent and said if I

dared retaliate, she would have me arrested," Kunene stated.

On December 24, 2023, Kunene said the complainant was drunk and started fighting with him.

Retaliated

She allegedly assaulted and insulted him, and he retaliated by pushing her. However, they talked things out and they continued to reside together in her flat.

On the day in question, January 17, the complainant reportedly returned from work very angry.

Kunene enquired and learned that her staff transport had left her, and it was raining that day and she had to walk to the house.

"She went straight to bed, and I requested that I continue cooking and dish for the children. After the children had gone to bed, I joined her in our bedroom and initiated sexual intercourse. She first mentioned that she was not feeling well, and I let her be," Kunene submitted.

Kunene told the court that they cuddled and after some time, the complainant removed her underwear as she was wearing a kanga to bed.

He requested that they engage in sexual intercourse and this time she agreed, and they kissed and "engaged in consensual sexual intercourse."

In the morning, she left for work and kissed him as usual.

Kunene stated that later in the day she texted him that she did not want to find him in her house when she returned from work because she was tired of feeding a grown man.

"She further stated that I was suffocating her and needed some space in her house. I replied and



▲ Phesheya Kunene who stand accused for allegedly raping his fiancée.

asked where I was supposed to go at such short notice, she said she did not care. I told her I had nowhere to go," he submitted.

Later in the evening, he responded to a knock and found police officers who requested that he come with them, and complied.

Upon arrival at the police station, he was informed that he was being charged with rape and assault. Kunene alleged that he im-

mediately inquired from the complainant why she was doing such a thing and she responded that she wanted to ruin his life. He further stated that on different occasions the complainant has done similar things to frustrate his life but would always resort to forgiving and giving her another chance. Bail was granted at E15,000 and Kunene was ordered to pay E3,000 cash and the balance as surety.

27-year-old man rapes a 46-year-old woman

A 46-year-old woman has opened a case of rape against Fana Dlamini, who has now been arrested and charged with rape.

After his arrest, the accused appeared at the Mbabane Magistrate's Court before Magistrate Thembele Simelane. The accused is alleged to have raped the complainant in the Mangwaneni area on Christmas day of 2023.

"The accused has been charged with contravening Section 3(1) of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence of 2018. On December 25, 2023, in Mangwaneni, the accused unlawfully had sexual intercourse with Sihle* who is 46 years old thus contravening the said Act," the charge sheet reads.

During his appearance in court, the accused was remanded into custody pending committal to the high court.

In the same court, Sanele Nhl-eko was charged with the same offence of rape.

The accused charge sheet reads that



Nhl-eko is alleged to have raped Thuli* on December 23 2023 at Mdzangwini in the Hhohho region.

In detail, the charge sheet mentions that on December 23, 2023, at the Mdzangwini area in the

Hhohho region, the said accused had unlawful sexual intercourse with the complainant without using a condom.

"On December 23, 2023 at Mdzangwini, the said accused unlawfully committed a sexual violation against Thuli without her consent and did thereby contravened the said Act" the charge sheet reads. Furthermore, Nhl-eko's charge is accompanied by aggravating factors as envisaged by Section of the Criminal and Procedure Act.

One of the factors is that the accused did not use a condom during the alleged act of rape, thus exposing the victim to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and AIDS.

The accused will be remanded in custody pending his committal to the High Court on 19, February 2024.

It is worth noting that if both accused are found guilty of the offence they will be included in the national register for sexual offenders.



▲ Fana Dlamini was arrested and charged for allegedly raping a 46 year old woman

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil climbs as Middle East tensions fester

LONDON — Oil prices rose on Monday after a drone attack on U.S. forces in Jordan added to supply disruption concerns in the Middle East and Houthi militants stepped up attacks in the Red Sea. Brent crude futures gained 21 cents to \$83.76 a barrel by 1117 GMT while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures edged up by 21 cents to \$78.22. Risks of widening conflict in the Middle East are burgeoning, with a drone strike by Iran-backed militants on U.S. troops in Jordon last weekend.

Nigeria oil enters unclear new era

LAGOS/LONDON — Shell’s exit from Nigeria’s onshore oil sector highlights risks oil majors face in Africa’s biggest exporter but has raised hopes that local firms could reverse the output decline from the Niger Delta, industry officials and analysts said. Shell – which pioneered Nigeria’s oil industry – is the most prominent Western company to exit the Delta, a region blighted by pollution, oil theft and pipeline vandalism. Those issues have for years stymied investment – and throttled production and government finances.

Rand steady, focus on Fed meeting

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s rand was steady in early trade on Monday amid subdued risk appetite, as investors turned their focus towards the Federal Reserve’s policy meeting this week for fresh clues on its interest rate trajectory. At 0811 GMT, the rand traded at 18.7825 against the dollar , not far from its previous close of 18.7975.ncies.

Agriculture E53 million fund making progress

Stories by Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

THE Ministry of Agriculture’s E53 million Eswatini Agriculture Development Fund is taking shape as the ministry has issued proposals for different sealed bids for the fund.

Through the notice issued by the ministry, the fund is looking for sealed bids on the procurement of accounting and finance consultancy services, logo designing, soft stationery, and branding consulting services, computer networking consultancy services, and national competitive bidding for the supply and delivery of motor vehicles.

The Fund was launched on July 9, 2023, by the Ministry of Agriculture which is in collaboration with Eswatini Bank to address critical financing gaps in the agricultural sector and create an enabling environment for farmers, agribusinesses, and other players to thrive.

According to the ministry, the fund will prioritize capacity-building initiatives as well as investments in agricultural infrastructure, and its operationalization, will start once the Ministry of Agriculture finalizes the modalities for accessing the fund.

It is stated that the priorities of the fund will be informed by the National Agricultural Investment Plan which itself will be prioritizing



▲Eswatini Agriculture Development Fund Haward Mbuyisa.

investments entailed in the commodity Sector Development Plans Agreement (SDPAs) He said it was well known that agriculture is the backbone of the nation, hence the need for such a fund.

It has been the mainstay of the country’s economy, providing food security, and livelihoods for the majority of people and contributing significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

the ministry recognized that the sector faced several challenges that hindered its full potential, and these challenges include limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, climate change, and outdated farming practices.

The ministry was considering these challenges that the fund had been established, and the vision of the fund is to facilitate strong linkages in the agriculture and food industry ecosystem by spearheading and supporting the deployment of both financial and policy instruments.

One of the primary objectives of the fund is to partner with financial institutions to enable them to provide affordable and suitable support to farmers and agribusinesses.

Therefore, the fund will facilitate affordable loans, and other financial instruments to help farmers invest in modern technologies, acquire quality inputs, invest in farm infrastructure, and improve their productivity.

By doing so, they hoped to enhance food security, diversify agriculture GDP, increase incomes, and stimulate rural development, and the fund will also have deliberate financing packages for youth start-up agribusiness.

The fund is under the leadership of appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Haward Mbuyisa.

Persistent underproduction led to importation — NAMBoard

THE National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBOARD) says due to the persistent underproduction of butternut and green peppers in the country they will continue to import these vegetables.

NAMBoard Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Bhekizwe Maziya said they noticed that the production on the ground was not reaching the level of self-sufficiency in the country in terms of local production.

Maziya stated that they analyzed the local demand and compared it to the local production on the ground of these vegetables in order to see how much the producers were producing.

“The two must always be balanced hence we then use these comparisons to determine if the country can be able to ban the importation of these vegetables, however, we do not have much on the ground as a country hence we need to import,” he said.

The CEO said when they do these analyses, they always look into two months further not just the current period, and once the local production exceeds demand then we can ban importations.

“The projections are usually for two to three months, and they are the ones that inform our decision as a board,” he said.

He further explained that the underproduction in the country was due to the recent rains which affected the production of the butternut and other products to a greater extent.

“We are coming from December where the consumption of vegetables was high which then creates the shortage of the vegetables,” he said.

Maziya had previously stated that the lifting of the importation ban on butternut and green pepper was due to the current weather conditions being experienced by the country.

He explained that when a ban is announced it is always because they have made an assessment and noted that the local farmers had volumes of those produce on the ground to sustain the market.

He stated that for the butternut, they had not anticipated the change in the weather conditions experienced in early December which hurt the volumes expected to be harvested.

The CEO also stated that the introduction of the restriction on the Butternut and Green Pepper had been because through their assessment they noted that there were more of these products locally, so they see no need to import them.

Maziya shared that if they had continued allowing importers of vegetables to continue importing these vegetables, they would not have helped the local farmers in any way.

“Importing these vegetables would have brought saturation in the market of this vegetable,” he said.

Maziya stated that NAMBoard shall continue to monitor the situation very closely to ensure that restrictions are reviewed immediately if the volumes fall below the set thresholds to



▲NAMBoard CEO Bhekizwe Maziya.

avoid any market gaps.

According to statistics released by the board between the period of January- October 2023, Eswatini imports reached E1.99 million while exports reached E1.12 million. In the year ended 2022/2023, the country’s imports reached E2.23 million and exports reached E1.14 million.

IMPORTS	EXPORTS
Yellow maize	Animal feed
White maize	Citrus
Wheat	Banana
Rice	Mangoes
Potatoes	Frozen chicken meat

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	18.3925	18.8625
G.B. Pound	23.3068	23.9908
EURO	19.8980	20.5021
Bank Rate	(July 2023)	7.50%
Prime Rate	(July 2023)	11%
Inflation	(July 2023)	4.5%
Petrol	E20.50/Litre	
Diesel	E21.80 /Litre	
Paraffin	E16.75/Litre	

‘Make post offices relevant, income-generating’, Minister Savannah tells EPTC

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

THE Minister of ICT Savannah Maziya has urged the board, management and staff of Eswatini Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (EPTC) to find ways of keeping the country’s post office relevant and income-generating.

Maziya was speaking during her visit to the parastatal’s headquarters in Mbabane on Monday.

The Minister said the post office business is currently struggling globally and needed to be redeemed in the country.

She said she was happy that the EPTC board and management were agreeing with her that they needed to find a way to be future thinking.

“We cannot be stuck in the past, about what we are used to but we have to figure out what we need to be in the future and figure out many different ways of improving and relying less and less on government,” she said.

She stated that right now the government can only give them money for the things they need, and they can’t always put their trust in the government to save them.

She said one of the reasons why she was



▲ Minister of ICT Savannah Maziya.

visiting EPTC was that one of their new strategies in the ministry was to ensure that they visited all agencies under the ministry and see how they operate currently and understand their baseline as to where they are now.

“We have many ideas of projects for the

post office to ensure that it continues to be relevant, servicing the business community

and the public.

She stated that their priority was to supply the country and its people with the best possible ICT.

“Why don’t we just lead in ICT in Africa, why do we follow? We need to find ways that we can follow, and we have to use the young people of the country and not leave them behind,” she said.

The Minister stated that the youth are very knowledgeable in the areas of ICT, and they need to be trained now on how to be leaders so that that part of their lives is nourished and fulfilled.

“So, I am here to say that we are here to support the post office and the staff, but we need to ensure that its relevant for the next coming 20 years and not a relic of the past. We need to be able to let go of certain thinking and just think of the sky and be able to give this country what it deserves, which is great service, reliable service, constant and cost-effective service,” she said.

Maziya stated that she believes that they could do this as it would ensure that the economy grows, people have jobs, and we are able to communicate with the world around us.

Heavy Plant Centre bags E1.2mil Ngwenya Town Board tender

HEAVY Plant Centre has bagged an E1,2 million tender from Ngwenya Town Board for the supply and delivery of a 3-cube drops side tipper truck.

According to the intention to award issued by ESPPRA on their website, Heavy Plant Centre was awarded in terms of section 45 of the Public Procurement Act No. 7 of 2011 (the Act), following a competitive bidding process, beating no competitors.

“In terms of sections 45(4), 46, and 47 of the Act, all tenderers who submitted bids are hereby notified that a period of ten (10) working days is hereby allowed for the submission of any application for review from the above-stated date of first publication of this notice,” read the intension.

According to the Request for Proposal (RFP), the board was seeking reliable, financially stable vendors who could meet its stringent cost, quality, and service requirements.

The RFP stated that the tender document as well as all other correspondence and documents relating to the tender exchanged by the tenderer and The Ngwenya Town Board, shall be written in the English language.

“Tenderers should double-check the prices quoted for accuracy before submitting their tender documents. Under no circumstances will The Ngwenya Town Board accept any request for a price adjustment because a mistake was made in the tendered prices,” read part of the tender.

The RFP also stated that the tenderers would assist in the examination, evaluation, and comparison of tenders, and the Ngwenya Town Board may, at its discretion, ask the tenderer for clarification on any part of its tender.

“The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing, and no change in the prices or substance of the tender shall

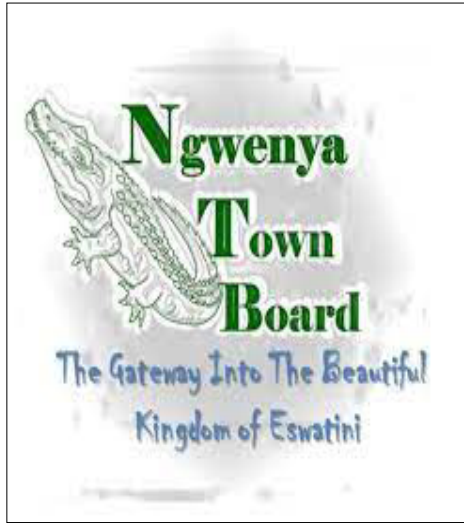
be sought, offered, or permitted,” read part of the RFP.

The RFP further stated that by submission of the tender, the Tenderer implicitly certifies that the prices in the tender have been arrived at independently without consultation, communication, or agreement for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices, with any other Tenderer or competitor.

“Unless otherwise required by law; the prices quoted in the tender have not knowingly been disclosed by the Tenderer and will not knowingly be disclosed, directly or indirectly, to any other Tenderer or competitor until he has been informed of the results of the Tender,” read part of the RFP.

The RFP further stated that the Ngwenya Town Board did not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender nor give any reason for the acceptance or rejection of a tender.

“The Ngwenya Town Board may accept a tender for a part of the quantity offered or reject any tender without assigning any reason,” read part of the RFP.



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Oil climbs as Middle East tensions fester

By Natalie Grover

LONDON — Oil prices rose on Monday after a drone attack on U.S. forces in Jordan added to supply disruption concerns in the Middle East and Houthi militants stepped up attacks in the Red Sea.

Brent crude futures gained 21 cents to \$83.76 a barrel by 1117 GMT while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures edged up by 21 cents to \$78.22.

Risks of widening conflict in the Middle East are burgeoning, with a drone strike by Iran-backed militants on U.S. troops in Jordon last weekend.

Commodities trader Trafigura, meanwhile, is assessing the security risks of further Red Sea voyages after firefighters put out a blaze on a tanker attacked by Yemen’s Houthi group a day earlier.

“We believe the death of three U.S. service members today in Jordan marks a critical

inflection point in the ongoing conflict in the Middle East,” RBC Capital analyst Helima Croft said, adding that a more direct confrontation with Iran heightened the risk of regional energy supply disruptions.

ANZ analysts said: “Disruptions to supply have been limited, but that changed on Friday after an oil tanker operating on behalf of Trafigura was hit by a missile off the coast of Yemen.”

In China, meanwhile, a Hong Kong court on Monday ordered the liquidation of property giant China Evergrande Group in a sign of a deepening crisis in China’s real estate sector, knocking sentiment on crude demand in the world’s largest oil importer.

Lingering high interest rates in Europe are also on investors’ radar after the European Central Bank policymakers were unable to reach a consensus on Monday over when interest rates should be cut.

Russia, meanwhile, is likely to cut exports of naphtha, a petrochemical feedstock, by between 127,500 and 136,000 barrels per day - about a third of its total exports - after fires



▲A view shows oil tanks of Transneft oil pipeline operator at the crude oil terminal Kozmino on the shore of Nakhodka Bay near the port city of Nakhodka, Russia.

disrupted operations at Baltic and Black Sea refineries, according to traders and LSEG ship-tracking data.

Another Russian oil facility came under

attack on Monday, with Russian authorities indicating they had thwarted a drone attack on the Slavneft-YANOS refinery in the city of Yaroslavl. (Reuters)

Nigeria oil enters unclear new era after Shell’s onshore asset sale

By Macdonald Dzirutwe and Libby George

LAGOS/LONDON — Shell’s exit from Nigeria’s onshore oil sector highlights risks oil majors face in Africa’s biggest exporter but has raised hopes that local firms could reverse the output decline from the Niger Delta, industry officials and analysts said.

Shell – which pioneered Nigeria’s oil industry – is the most prominent Western company to exit the Delta, a region blighted by pollution, oil theft and pipeline vandalism. Those issues have for years stymied investment – and throttled production and government finances.

The company’s sale of its subsidiary to five mostly local firms fits an ongoing trend of Western energy companies divesting onshore Nigerian oil fields. Exxon, Italy’s Eni, Norway’s Equinor and China’s Addax have struck deals to sell assets in the country in recent years.

“Nigeria has had well-established problems in policy in the oil sector, and the FX policy concerns have put constraints on investments. That’s probably partially why you have seen the majors pulling out, and disinvesting to some extent,” said Andrew Matheny, senior economist with Goldman Sachs.

“It explains a significant portion of the decline in oil production in recent years.”

President Bola Tinubu took office last May pledging to remove obstacles faced by producers, including ending crude theft and pipeline vandalism. But seven months into his presidency, the asset sales, which were well underway before his election, highlight the inexorable changes to the country’s oil sector.

“If companies are now leaving the less capital-intensive onshore operations to



▲The logo of a Shell gas station is pictured in Ulm, Germany.

focus on offshore operations, it sends a perfect picture of the risk involved in doing business in Nigeria,” said Seyi Awojulgbe, a senior analyst at security consultancy SBM Intelligence in Lagos.

Spills, cash and incoming companies

Ten years ago, Shell’s share of production was as high as 300,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day (boed) in Nigeria. This fell to 131,000 boed in 2022, which the company blamed on sabotage and theft in the Niger Delta, its annual reports showed.

Industry experts said Shell, Exxon and other majors who hoped to divest were not putting much money into developing onshore assets – hastening production decline.

“The majors reduced investments in the onshore for many years,” said Roger Brown, chief executive of Nigeria’s Seplat Energy. He cited the combination of local issues and the fact that major oil companies must compete for cash with their assets in other regions, such as Guyana, that can often look more attractive.

“I think the independent companies will get production up more than the IOCs will because they do have the appetite to invest,”

Brown added.

Seplat is still awaiting regulatory approval of its own deal, announced in February 2022, to buy Exxon’s assets onshore. Nigeria’s junior oil minister said Shell’s asset sale would be quickly approved once all paperwork was received, adding that local companies would be able to step up to fill the void.

Some local firms, including Seplat, First E&P and Heritage have managed to raise production and reduce oil spills on assets purchased from Shell.

But it has not worked for others, including Aiteo Eastern E&P and Eroton Exploration, which have struggled with leaking pipelines and oil spills.

Richard Bronze, head of geopolitics at London-based Energy Aspects, said local firms lacked the financial heft of oil majors, which could affect future output.

Still, Brown said that if oil majors aren’t investing, their access to cheaper capital is irrelevant. Local banks, some international lenders, and oil traders, are also sources of cash for local companies.

“It will be available but it won’t be cheap,” he said. “But at these oil prices, indigenous businesses can afford to develop it.” (Reuters)

South African rand steady, focus on Fed meeting



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

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s rand was steady in early trade on Monday amid subdued risk appetite, as investors turned their focus towards the Federal Reserve’s policy meeting this week for fresh clues on its interest rate trajectory.

At 0811 GMT, the rand traded at 18.7825 against the dollar , not far from its previous close of 18.7975.

The dollar was also little-changed at 103.53 against a basket of currencies, ahead of the Fed’s two-day policy meeting starting on Tuesday.

Risk appetite was muted early on Monday with an escalation of tensions in the Middle East after three U.S. soldiers were killed in Jordan, said Andre Cilliers, currency strategist at TreasuryONE.

The local focus this week will be on December money supply, budget and trade balance figures.

On the stock market, the Top-40 index was down 0.52 per cent while the broader all-share was 0.6 per cent lower in early trade.

South Africa’s benchmark 2030 government bond was marginally stronger in early deals, with the yield down 0.5 basis point to 9.755 per cent. (Reuters)

Arc's new iPhone browser wants to be your search companion

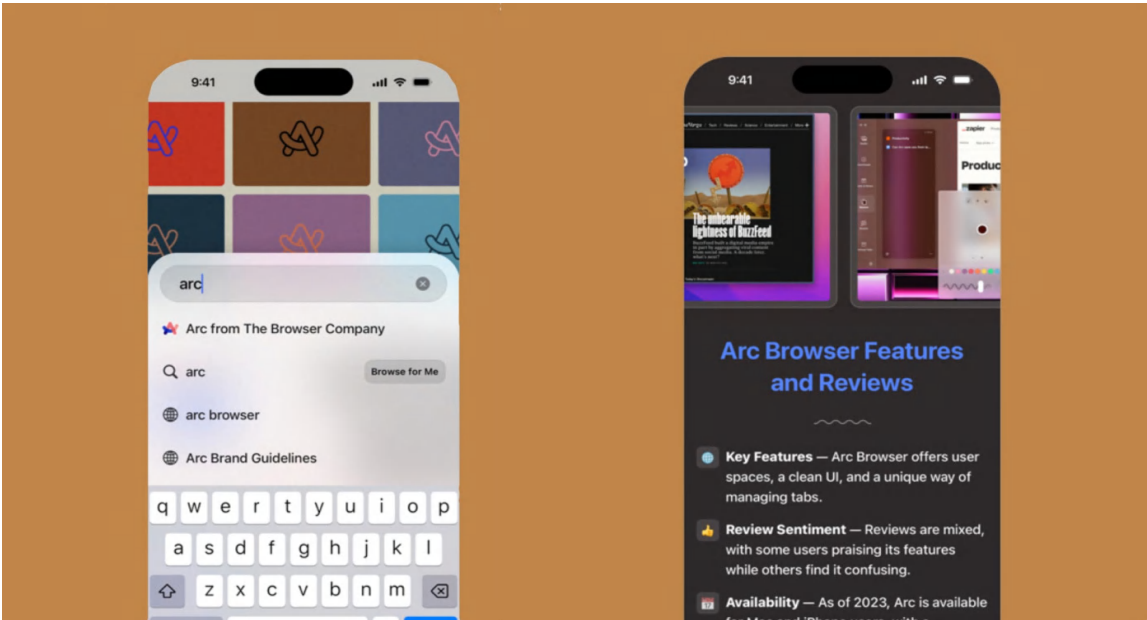
THE Browser Company launched the Arc's first iPhone companion app last year, allowing users to save links for consumption on the desktop application later. The firm has now released a new mobile app, called Arc Search, that aims to focus on the search experience.

The marquee AI-powered feature of the app, "Browse for me," returns a neatly built webpage with information about the search query. The feature, powered by models from OpenAI and others, reads at least six web pages and builds a new page with different sections.

For instance, when I searched "How to make a perfectly poached egg," Arc Search made a page for me with sections like "Ingredients and Tools," "Poaching technique," "Cooking process," and additional tips. The page also had a bunch of useful photos and videos.

The browser also made a neat summary for me when I asked about "What changes Apple made to the App Store in response to DMA." While it didn't get all the points across, the web page had the crux of the announcements made by the Cupertino-based tech giant.

These pages are great for me to get information at glance, and I can also use the "Dive Deeper" section to explore additional links listed for the topic. However, at



▲The Browser Company's CEO Josh Miller said in a thread on X that the startup wanted to make the fastest way to look up things as that's what most people do with phone browsers

the moment I can't share these pages with anyone unless I take a screenshot.

Other features

If users don't want to use the AI-powered feature, they can just tap on the query to use Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, or Ecosia — whichever you have set as default.

Notably, last week, the Browser Company announced that users can set Perplexity as their default search engine on the Arc's desktop client. But it's not clear if this option will be available for the mobile client.

There is also a reader mode for all webpage for easy reading and you can bookmark the webpage as well. But there is no folder system to store these bookmarks.

Arc Search browser also archives tabs after 1 day (this is customizable) to save you from tab overload. You can look at your open tabs through the tab switcher on the bottom bar, or you can swipe and hold from the left edge of the screen.

Additionally, Arc Search blocks GDPR and newsletter popups, ads, and trackers automatically. Unlike the first companion browser, you can set this as a default on the

iPhone.

Why did Arc build a browser this way?

The Browser Company's CEO Josh Miller said in a thread on X that the startup wanted to make the fastest way to look up things as that's what most people do with phone browsers. So it started with a search bar in the middle. And it opens up with a keyboard so you can start typing in the query immediately.

With its new page creation feature search, the new Arc Search browser wants to make you feel

like you are interacting with an AI Agent that will do the heavy lifting of looking up things, summarizing the content, and presenting it well. We have seen this kind of approach with Google's Search Generative Experience (SGE) or Perplexity AI. On the flip side, browsers have primarily introduced AI-powered features to summarize pages or to help you write posts. Arc Search is trying to merge both of these feature surfaces.

What's next?

At the moment, Arc will keep its mobile companion for saving links alive, but it plans to merge both browser clients at a later stage.

What's more, the company said it plans to launch cross-browser syncing. Miller said in his thread that as the company starts to ramp up its rollout of the Windows client, it can't rely on just iCloud. That's why the team is building Arc's own syncing experience, which will launch soon.

Arc started with a waitlist system for Mac and dropped it last year for anyone to download. Its Windows client, which is in beta, still adopts a waitlist system. With this new Arc Search client, the company wanted to have a low-barrier entry point for users where they don't have to create an account and get started with browsing right away. (TechCrunch)

Startups must strategize and budget for AI-assisted software development in 2024

OF all enterprise departments, product and engineering spend by far the most on AI technology. Doing so effectively stands to generate huge value — developers can complete certain tasks up to 50% faster with generative AI, according to McKinsey.

But that's not as easy as just throwing money at AI and hoping for the best. Enterprises need to understand how much to budget into AI tools, how to weigh the benefits of AI versus new recruits, and how to ensure their training is on point. A recent study also found that who is using AI tools is a critical business decision, as less experienced developers get far more benefits out of AI than experienced ones. Not making these calculations could lead to lackluster initiatives, a wasted budget and even a loss of staff.

At Waydev, we've spent the past year experimenting on the best way to use generative AI in our own software development processes, developing AI products, and measuring the success of AI tools in software teams. This is what we've



▲Enterprises need to understand how much to budget into AI tools, how to weigh the benefits of AI versus new recruits, and how to ensure their training is on point.

learned on how enterprises need to prepare for a serious AI investment in software development.

When your CIO is deciding whether to spend your budget on more hires or on AI development tools, you first need to carry out a proof of concept. Our enterprise customers who are adding AI tools to their engineering teams are doing a proof of concept to establish whether the AI is generating tangible value — and how much. This step is important not only in

justifying budget allocation but also in promoting acceptance across the team.

The first step is to specify what you're looking to improve within the engineering team. Is it code security, velocity, or developer well-being? Then use an engineering management platform (EMP) or software engineering intelligence platform (SEIP) to track whether your adoption of AI is moving the needle on those variables.

(TechCrunch)

Microsoft set for AI powered revenue surge

MICROSOFT is expected to report a 15.8 per cent jump in quarterly revenue, its best growth in nearly two years, as rising adoption of its products infused with generative AI fuels demand for its cloud services.

Thanks to its early lead in artificial intelligence, Microsoft is likely to cement its lead as the biggest company by market value this year.

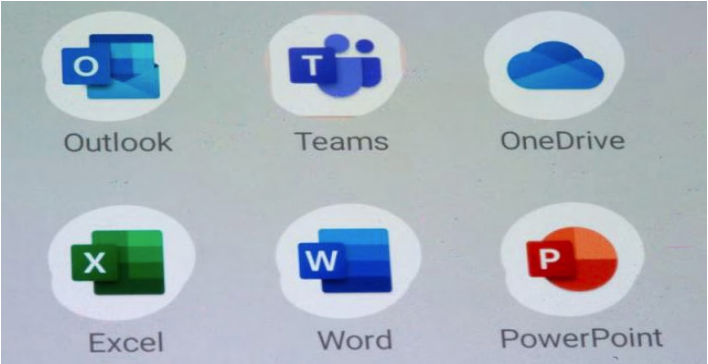
The software giant snagged the top spot on Friday, with a valuation of US\$3 trillion, toppling by a small margin Apple, the most valuable

company since 2011.

Results on Tuesday from Microsoft, which has committed to invest more than US\$10 billion in generative AI posterchild and ChatGPT maker OpenAI, will set the tone for expectations from AI this year, after investors poured billions of dollars into the technology in 2023.

Any boost to companies' topline will still be small for the next few months, analysts have said. Nevertheless, Wall Street will watch closely to see if these investments are starting to show returns.

(Reuters)



▲Microsoft is expected to report a 15.8 per cent jump in quarterly revenue, benefits of AI versus new recruits, and how to ensure their training is on point.

2021 July unrest not directly linked to Zuma's arrest – SAHRC

DESPITE the coincidental timing of the July 2021 unrest and former president Jacob Zuma's incarceration, there is no evidence proving a direct link between the two events.

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) made this information public on Monday during the release of the July unrest report.

The commission noted that the unrest, which escalated into widespread violence, looting, and destruction, resulting in an estimated financial damage of R50-billion and claiming over 300 lives, could not be linked to Zuma's arrest despite protests over his imprisonment.

"The timing of the events of the July unrest coincided with the incarceration of former president Jacob Zuma," reads the report.

"This caused an intertwining that blurred the lines between where one ended and when the other started. This intersection of events has led many to conclude that the two are related."

Destabilising the economy

According to the commission, the motive behind the unrest was likely aimed at destabilising the economy.

Its findings show that the unrest was orchestrated by well-resourced primary parties mobilising secondary parties to target malls and other locations.

"The blocking of the N3 and the N2 [highways], the calculated destruction of factories and warehouses, the organised disconnection of security and fire alarm systems, the attack on government communication facilities at the Durban Port, and the bombing and removal of ATMs — together, they cannot be viewed as mutually distinct.

"These events point to a significant investment in the execution of the July unrest."

Intelligence coordination failure

The commission criticised the SA Police Service for shortcomings in intelligence coordination and communication, noting a failure to detect the planning and execution of the unrest.

This is despite arrests that were made with varying legal outcomes.

Ngizwe Mchunu, Mdumiseni Zuma, and Bonginkosi Khanyile, among others, faced arrest on charges of instigating the unrest.

Mchunu was later acquitted, Mdumiseni received a 12-year sentence, and Khanyile's case is continuing.

(Sunday world)



▲ The unrest, which coincided with the arrest of former president Jacob Zuma, claimed more than 300 lives in some parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.



▲ Guernsey's auction house in New York has halted the sale of approximately 70 personal items belonging to South Africa's anti-apartheid hero, Nelson Mandela.

Auction to sell Mandela's personal items suspended

GUERNSEY'S auction house in New York has halted the sale of approximately 70 personal items belonging to South Africa's anti-apartheid hero, Nelson Mandela.

The auction, titled "Mandela, The Auction SUSPENDED," was abruptly stopped without an explanation. The decision comes in response to public outcry in South Africa.

Makaziwe Mandela, the eldest daughter of Nelson Mandela, had planned to auction items such as his hearing aids, walking sticks, and reading glasses on February 22.

She aimed to use the proceeds to fund a memorial garden near his burial site. The South African Heritage Resources Agency (Sahra) contested her decision

in court but lost the case. Sahra intends to appeal the ruling.

South Africa's Arts and Culture Minister Zizi Kodwa said that blocking the sale was necessary as Mr Mandela "is integral to South Africa's heritage".

"It is thus important that we preserve the legacy of former President Mandela and ensure that his life's work experiences remain in the country for generations to come," he said.

Mr Mandela's grandson, Nda-ba, was quoted by local media as saying he too was opposed to the auction.

Mr Mandela died in 2013 at the age of 95.

He was imprisoned for nearly 30 years for fighting white-minority rule and became South Africa's first black president in 1994. (Africanews)

Egypt criticizes western countries' decision to cut funding to UN agency in Gaza

EGYPT'S Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukry, expressed criticism on Sunday over the decision by certain Western countries to slash funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Gaza.

The move follows Israel's allegations that 12 UNRWA employees were involved in the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas.

Shoukry, during a joint news conference in Cairo with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, voiced surprise at the strong language used in connection with the allegations against UNRWA employees. He pointed out that similar expressions were not employed when addressing the tragic deaths of over 26,000 innocent civilians in Gaza, predominantly women and children.

The foreign minister deemed it unacceptable to diminish UNRWA's capacity to fulfill its responsibilities due to the actions of certain individuals. He emphasized that holding the entire agency responsible for the actions of a few is unwarranted, given the crucial role the agency plays.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged countries to reinstate funding to UNRWA, warning that the agency might have to reduce aid to over 2 million Palestinians in Gaza as early as February.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza has worsened due to fighting and Israeli restrictions, hindering the delivery of essential aid. A quarter of the population faces starvation, intensifying the urgency of maintaining UNRWA's operations.

Regarding the 12 employees implicated in the attack, Guterres reported that nine were immediately ter-



▲ Egypt's Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukry, expressed criticism on Sunday over the decision by certain Western countries to slash funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Gaza.

minated, one was confirmed dead, and two others were still being identified. He assured that they would be held accountable, including through criminal prosecution.

UNRWA, with 13,000 staffers in Gaza, is predominantly composed of Palestinians, serving various roles from educators in agency-run schools to medical professionals and aid workers.

Separately, Saudi Arabia's For-

eign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, criticized Israel's rejection of the U.N. top court's call to prevent death, destruction, and acts of genocide in Gaza. He emphasized that this rejection has contributed to the dire situation, approaching 30,000 deaths in Gaza. Bin Farhan called on the international community to value international law and coordinate efforts to address the crisis and achieve peace. (Africanews)

Foreign-born residents file suit in Japan over alleged racial profiling

TOKYO, Jan 29 - Three foreign-born residents of Japan filed a lawsuit on Monday against the national and local governments over alleged illegal questioning by police based on racial profiling.

It is the first such lawsuit in Japan, according to the plaintiffs' lawyers, and comes amid a sharp rise in the number of foreign workers coming to the country to help stem labour shortages as its population ages and declines.

It also comes amid a renewed debate over what it means to be and look Japanese, after a Ukrainian-born, naturalised Japanese citizen was crowned Miss Japan last week.

The three men filed the lawsuit with the Tokyo District Court demanding that the national, Tokyo Metropolitan and Aichi Prefecture governments recognise that it is illegal for police officers to stop and question people solely on the basis of their race, nationality or ethnicity.

The plaintiffs say they have suffered distress from repeated police questioning based on their appearance and ethnicity, which they say is a violation of the constitution.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Aichi Prefectural Government and National Police Agency all declined to comment, while representatives of the Ministry of Justice could not be reached.

They and their legal team arrived at Tokyo District Court around midday and spoke to media outside before heading in to file their case. One of the plaintiffs, Matthew, a man of Indian descent who has lived in Japan for



▲ Matthew, Syed Zain and Maurice, the foreign-born residents of Japan who filed a lawsuit against the national and local governments over alleged illegal questioning by police based on racial profiling, walk toward Tokyo District Court with their legal team, in Tokyo, Japan

more than 20 years and holds permanent residency, said he had been questioned by police countless times. He said he is afraid to go out for fear of being stopped again.

"I never knew what social withdrawal was until recently," he said, declining to provide his surname for fear of harassment. "I feel like every time I finish work, I'm hiding in my house."

Syed Zain, who was born in Pakistan but took Japanese citizenship after moving to Japan with his family as a child, said he hoped the case would lead to positive change in a

society where the number of Japanese with foreign roots is growing.

Likewise, Maurice, an American who did not provide his surname, said he hoped to raise awareness of the issue among Japanese people and make life easier for others.

"I want them (Japanese people) to understand that this is an everyday occurrence, it's an everyday thing, and that we have to do something to prevent that," he said.

The lawsuit also seeks 3 million yen (about \$20,250) in damages for each plaintiff. (Reuters)



▲ Pope Francis.

Pope says Africans are 'special case' when it comes to LGBT blessings

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis said in an interview published on Monday that Africans were a "special case" in the opposition of bishops and many other people in the continent to homosexuality.

But he said he was confident that, except for Africans, critics of his decision to allow blessings for same-sex couples would eventually understand it.

Blessings were allowed last month in a document called *Fiducia Supplicans* (Supplicating Trust), which has caused widespread debate in the Catholic Church, with particularly strong resistance coming from African bishops.

"Those who protest vehemently belong to small ideological groups," Francis told Italian newspaper *La Stampa*. "A special case are Africans: for them homosexuality is something 'bad' from a cultural point of view, they don't tolerate it".

"But in general, I trust that gradually everyone will be reassured by the spirit of the '*Fiducia Supplicans*' declaration by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith: it aims to include, not divide," the pope said.

Acknowledge

Last week, Francis appeared to acknowledge the pushback the document received, especially in Africa, where bishops have effectively rejected it and where in some countries same-sex can lead to prison or even the death penalty.

He said that when the blessings are given, priests should "naturally take into account the context, the sensitivities, the places where one lives and the most appropriate ways to do it".

In the interview with *La Stampa*, Francis said he was not concerned about the risk of conservatives breaking away from the Catholic Church due to his reforms, saying that talk of a schism is always led by "small groups."

"We must leave them to it and move on... and look forward", he said.

Turning to Israel and the Palestinians, he said "true peace" between them will not materialise until a two-state solution is implemented and lamented that their conflict was widening. Francis confirmed he is scheduled to meet the president of his native Argentina, Javier Milei, on Feb. 11, and that finally visiting the country - where he has not returned since becoming pope in 2013 - is a possibility. He said his agenda for 2024 currently includes trips to Belgium, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

Speaking about his health, which has taken some knocks in recent years with hospitalisations, mobility problems and cancelled trips or events, the 87-year-old said, "there are some aches and pains but it's better now, I'm fine." (Reuters)

Biden faces pressure to strike Iran after US troops killed

WASHINGTON - The killing of three U.S. troops and wounding of dozens more on Sunday by Iran-backed militants is piling political pressure on President Joe Biden to deal a blow directly against Iran, a move he's been reluctant to do out of fear of igniting a broader war.

Biden's response options could range anywhere from targeting Iranian forces outside to even inside Iran, or opting for a more cautious retaliatory attack solely against the Iran-backed militants responsible, experts say.

American forces in the Middle East have been attacked more than 150 times by Iran-backed forces in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and off the coast of Yemen since the Israel-Hamas war erupted in October.

But until Sunday's attack on a remote outpost known as Tower 22 near Jordan's northeastern border with Syria, the strikes had not killed U.S. troops nor wounded so many. That allowed Biden the political space to mete out U.S. retaliation, inflicting

costs on Iran-backed forces without risking a direct war with Tehran.

Biden said the United States would respond, without giving any more details.

Republicans accused Biden of letting American forces become sitting ducks, waiting for the day when a drone or missile would evade base defenses. They say that day came on Sunday, when a single one-way attack drone struck near base barracks early in the morning.

In response, they say Biden must strike Iran.

"He left our troops as sitting ducks," said Republican U.S. Senator Tom Cotton. "The only answer to these attacks must be devastating military retaliation against Iran's terrorist forces, both in Iran and across the Middle East."

The Republican who leads the U.S. military oversight committee in the House of Representatives, Representative Mike Rogers, also called for action against Tehran.

"It's long past time for President Biden to finally hold the terrorist Iranian regime and their extremist proxies account-



▲ U.S. President Joe Biden delivers a prime-time address to the nation about his approach to the conflict between Israel and Hamas, humanitarian assistance in Gaza and continued support for Ukraine in their war with Russia, from the Oval Office of the White House in Washington

able for the attacks they've carried out," Rogers said.

Former President Donald Trump, who hopes to face off against Biden in this year's presidential election, portrayed the attack as a "consequence of Joe Biden's weakness and surrender."

The Biden administration has said that it goes to great lengths to protect U.S. troops around the world.

One Democrat openly voiced concern that Biden's strategy of containing the Israel-Hamas conflict to Gaza was failing.

"As we see now, it is spiraling out of control. It's beginning to emerge as a regional war, and unfortunately the United States and our troops are in harms way," Democratic Representative Barbara Lee said, renewing calls for a ceasefire in the Israel-Palestinian war. (Reuters)

House Musiq Fest unveils stellar Phase 1 line-up

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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HOUSE Musiq Fest (HMF) has revealed the highly anticipated phase 1 line-up for its upcoming 5th Edition.

The festival, known for its electrifying atmosphere and diverse musical offerings, is set to take place on March 30, 2023, at Manzini Club. With a reputation for curating exceptional talent, HMF has once again exceeded expectations with its selection of artists.

Headlining the event will be the legendary Vinny da Vinci, who is world-acclaimed and has entertained audiences worldwide. Joining him on stage will be Soul Freakah, known for his charismatic energy and unique sound.

Adding to the excitement, HMF has also secured the talents of Ace4nic, Cece & Mthizo, DJ Benny, Ndumz DJ, and ! Sooks. These stars are set to deliver unforgettable performances, showcasing their distinct styles, and leaving festival goers in awe.

Now in its 5th edition, House Musiq Fest has firmly established itself as a must-attend event on the country's music calendar.

Each year, the festival attracts a massive following of music enthusiasts, and this year promises to be no exception. With a line-up of this caliber, HMF aims to surpass all previous editions, delivering an experience that will leave attendees



▲ Soul Freakah.

craving more.

Beyond the music, House Musiq Fest offers a plethora of experiences for all festival goers.

Atmosphere

From delectable food and beverages to artisanal crafts, therapy and body wellness, health and wellbeing, merchandise, retail, and corporate stalls, the festival caters to every taste and interest. Attendees can immerse themselves in a vibrant and diverse atmosphere, indulging in a range

of activities that go beyond the auditory delights.

Anticipation has crept in for the upcoming House Musiq Fest, and music lovers from all walks of life eagerly await the chance to witness this extraordinary event.

With a line-up that promises to ignite the dance floor and an array of experiences to explore, the 5th Edition of House Musiq Fest is anticipated to be the biggest and most unforgettable one yet.

Skomota, Limpopo Boy to rock Mdzimba View

MDZIMBA View Shisanyama is about to witness an electrifying performance by two of South Africa's most renowned dancers, Skomota and Limpopo Boy.

Joining them on the "Afterwork Chill-out Vibes" stage is the talented Felix Minister 1632. This highly anticipated event is scheduled for March 1, 2024, and is exclusively for individuals aged 18 and above. Pre-sale tickets are priced at E120, while tickets at the gate will be available for E150.

Limpopo Boy, known as Mahlatse Thoka in his hometown of Botlokwa, South Africa, has always had a passion for craftsmanship and dance. In 2012, he made the move to Pretoria, where he honed his skills as a professional dancer. His exceptional talent soon caught the attention of the South African State Theater, propelling him into the limelight. Limpopo Boy has since graced the stages of prestigious events like the SAMAs and the MTV base Awards, sharing the spotlight with renowned artists such as DJ Cleo, Dr Malinga, and King Monada.

Incredible

Skomota, whose real name is Thabang Sefala, is considered the luckiest man in South Africa. His life took an incredible turn when he won a staggering E3 million on Betway. Winning on Betway requires strategic analysis, planning, and accurate predictions, making Skomota's triumph even more remarkable. His newfound wealth allowed him to indulge in the finest things life had to offer, including the company of beautiful women. As his lavish lifestyle and captivating videos and photos began to circulate in the media, Skomota's journey to stardom commenced.

With his sudden rise to fame, Skomota quickly became a favorite among partygoers and secured coveted slots at some of South Africa's biggest events and festivals, including the prestigious SAMA. However, it was his unique dance moves that truly set him apart. Skomota's unconventional style of 'Skomota Dance' and infectious energy have captivated audiences, inspiring everyone to join in and let loose on the dance floor.



▲ Skomota and Limpopo Boy.

Eswatini Kota Festival: a crunchy delight for food enthusiasts

KOTA lovers should prepare their taste buds for a mouthwatering experience as the highly anticipated Eswatini Kota Festival approaches.

Kota lovers from all corners of Eswatini are eagerly awaiting this event, which promises to be a celebration of the beloved South African street food, the Kota. Taking place at Manzini Club, the festival will be a full jam-packed show, with Kota taking center stage. That's not all - the event is designed to be a fun-filled family day, with entertainment for everyone to enjoy. Kids will have their dedicated section, complete with giant slides, a jumping castle, Playstations, bumpy rides, and even rock climbing. It's an event that promises to keep the whole family entertained.

The festival will be held on September 24, 2024, the day when Manzini Club will come alive with the flavors of Kota from South Africa and Eswatini. The festival aims to bring together the best Kota flavors from both countries, creating a culinary experience like no other. From traditional fillings to innovative twists, attendees can expect a wide variety of Kota creations to tantalize their taste buds.

To ensure a smooth and enjoyable



▲ Fun lovers pictured on a previous Kota Festival.

experience for all, the festival organizers have implemented a ticketing system. Early bird tickets (Phase 1) are available in limited quantities and can be purchased exclusively from Computicket. General tickets for children are priced at E50, students at E60, and adults at E80. For those looking for a VIP experience, tickets are priced at E400 and include parking and backstage experience. It's important to note that tickets will not be sold at the gate, so be sure to secure yours in advance.

To make the festival even more convenient, attendees are allowed to bring empty cooler boxes for free. However, it's important to note that no cooler boxes will be allowed in the VIP section. Camp chairs are permitted, but Hubbly bunnies will not be allowed on the premises, as they will be available for hire at the venue. Food vendors will be on-site, selling a variety of Kotas, refreshments, and snacks to keep festival goers fueled throughout the day.

Sibebe Resort to host Vintage Valentine's Dinner

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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SIBEBE Resort is gearing up to host an enchanting evening of love and nostalgia with their Vintage Valentine's Party.

The resort's Public Relations Officer, Larry Mhlanga, shared that the choice of a vintage theme was to create a romantic and timeless atmosphere for guests.

The idea behind the vintage clothing is to transport attendees back in time, evoking a sense of nostalgia and appreciation for the fashion and styles of the past. Mhlanga believes that donning vintage clothes and accessories can foster a unique connection and intimacy between couples. "We hope that our guests will enjoy this special night and that it will be a memorable experience for them," he said. The event aims to celebrate love and romance distinctively and unforgettably. Sibebe Resort wishes to create an atmosphere that encourages meaningful connections between couples, leaving a lasting impression on their hearts. Furthermore, the Vintage Valentine's Party seeks to bring people together and foster a positive and uplifting ambiance. Love and joy are at the forefront of this event, intending to make a positive impact on the community. Mhlanga assured fun lovers that preparations for the event were progressing smoothly. The team is thrilled to host this exceptional occasion and is putting in tremendous effort to ensure its success. While this is not the first time Sibebe Resort has organized such an event, they continuously strive to make it even more special and enjoyable for attendees. Guests can anticipate



▲ Sibebe Resort. ► Cece is one of the performers to serenade at Valentine's Dinner.

a romantic and intimate atmosphere, delectable cuisine, and live entertainment. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to engage in fun activities and socialize with other attendees. Mhlanga hopes that the event will provide a memorable and enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The highlight of the evening will be a special performance by local pop opera singer, Cece. In addition, several esteemed guests, including local authors, relationship experts, and business leaders, have been invited to speak at the event. Mhlanga believes that their unique perspectives and experiences will be valuable and inspiring for the attendees. The selection of guest speakers was based on their expertise, ability to connect with the audience, and positive impact on the community. "Overall, we are excited to host this event and to provide a special and memorable experience for our guests. We look forward to making this an annual event that grows and evolves," Mhlanga said.

The Eswatini Creators Awards' venue revealed

TFUNGISANI!

The stage has been set and the Eswatini Creators Awards will be held at Sharma House, in Ezulwini.

With the theme dress code of 'African Bling,' attendees can expect a dazzling display of cultural pride and elegance. The organizers have spared no expense in creating an atmosphere that truly embodies the spirit of the nation. From the moment guests step foot into Sharma House, they will be transported into a world of African splendor, where creativity reigns supreme.

Miss N, the Communications Officer for the Eswatini Creators Awards, has revealed that the event will take place on February 3, 2024. Tickets to the event will cost E150. The Eswatini Creators Awards are not just about glitz and glamour but a platform for the nation's talented creators to shine and gain recognition for their exceptional skills. From fashion designers to musicians, models to influencers, this event is a celebration of diversity and inclusivity. It is a chance for every citizen and resident to showcase their unique talents and be appreciated by



▲ SwaziBoy communications officer Miss N.

a wider audience. The awards have become a symbol of unity, bringing together creators from all walks of life. In a world where social media plays a significant role, the Eswatini Creators Awards leverage this connectivity to foster a vibrant community of artists and innovators. Through sharing and engaging with each other's work, they create a sense of camaraderie that transcends borders and

unites the nation in its creative endeavors.

Moreover, the Eswatini Creators Awards aim to empower and support individuals while elevating the value of existing brands. By recognizing and celebrating the achievements of creators, they inspire others to pursue their passions and contribute to the growth of the creative industry in Eswatini.



▲ M Age Lepoet.

Soul Therapy reveals 'Ematsandvweni' line-up

LOVE is in the air as Soul Therapy unveils the line-up for their highly anticipated 'Ematsandvweni' event.

The event, scheduled for March 2, 2024, has confirmed an impressive line-up of talented artists who will grace the stage and serenade attendees with their soulful performances. M Age, Anthonimass, Nashisa, Bhesu, Bulelwa, and SmiSmi The Poetic Veteran are all confirmed to perform at the event.

Set against the breathtaking backdrop of Sheba's Breast Trail, this love-themed gathering promises to be a day filled with romance, music, poetry, and games that will leave couples and singles alike with unforgettable memories.

Event

Ematsandvweni is not your typical event. It offers a unique twist by combining the joy of music and entertainment with a hiking experience. Couples and singles will have the opportunity to embark on a scenic hike, immersing themselves in the beauty of nature while celebrating love in all its forms. The event's director, Sipiwo 'Dede' Dlamini, expressed excitement for the upcoming gathering, emphasizing the importance of promoting love and unity.

"We want to create an unforgettable experience where participants can walk hand in hand, enjoying the beauty of nature and each other's company," shared Dlamini in a recent interview. "Ematsandvweni is all about fostering connections and spreading love. We believe that through entertainment and engaging activities, we can bring people closer together."

To streamline the ticketing process, Soul Therapy has opted for an electronic payment system. Attendees are advised that physical tickets will not be available, and all payments will be processed electronically through Smart Ticket. Couples can secure their spot for E200, while singles can join in on the fun for E150. With limited spots available, it is recommended to book early to avoid missing out on this extraordinary love-filled adventure.

REAL Housewives of Durban television star and businesswoman Annie Mthembu will not be cast in the new season of the show on Showmax because she and her businessman husband Kgolo De Guru have hit rock bottom.

This is because people have stolen a lot of money from De Guru's club in Durban.

The startling news was revealed by De Guru himself in an exclusive interview with Sunday World last week.

De Guru poured his heart out following allegations that he



▲ Real Housewives of Durban television star and businesswoman Annie Mthembu.

Broke Mthembu loses Real Housewives lustre

has not been paying his staff members and artists who performed at his establishments in Durban recently.

De Guru said his financial situation was so dire that his wife had to pull out of the popular show, which showcases the lush life of Durban housewives and is regarded as the epitome of success.

De Guru said: "My wife will go back to Real Housewives of Durban when she's ready, she is now committed to other business errands that need her undivided attention. De Guru

explained why he is in financial doldrums.

"I did what most club owners won't do: when my manager died, I took care of his children, but today, when I turn my back, people are busy tarnishing my name left and right. I normally won't talk to the media, but now I feel I need to say my piece because people want to see me out in the cold and I can see they don't respect my family", said the angry De Guru.

Frustration

A week ago, one of De Guru's resident DJs, DJ Wobbly, posted his frustration on social media due to non-payment by the businessman.

"Wobbly and I are relatives; he knows my house and he could have at least come by to find out how his situation can be made better. What's happening to him it's partly not

my fault as I'm also a victim here."

De Guru explained further: "Last year my club was robbed of R750 000 and I asked my employees questions about how this happened, only to learn later that one of them or a group of them came in the club with a speed point from another business and swapped it with my club's speed point and stole money. It has been happening since the busy weekend of Durban July. It's heart-breaking what happened to my businesses," he said.

He continued: "Jealousy and envy are the root of all this mess. People can say whatever they want to say, but it's a problem when their statements get into my household."

"Before Easter weekend, all my nightclubs will be operating in full swing, that I can promise."

(Sunday World)

The Lion King Auditions draw large crowds of aspiring singers

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE second leg of the Lion King Theatre talent search programme has drawn a large crowd of hopefuls currently gathered at The South African State Theatre in Pretoria.

The auditions started over the past weekend and will end on Tuesday, January 30, 2024. Led by the legendary South African producer, filmmaker and playwright Duma Ndlovu, the auditions started over the past weekend at The Market Theatre in Johannesburg.

They have now moved the Pretoria in Tshwane (and later to Ekurhuleni) to continue the search for the best voices to join the cast of the internationally acclaimed theatre production for a minimum period of a year.

Those who impress the judges will be called back for further auditioning tomorrow, Tuesday, 30 January 2024 wherein the shortlisted ones will join the group to audition in front of the World Disney team later this year.

The longest-running Broadway musical production having opened its doors in 1997, The Lion King, has been performed in more than 25 countries worldwide and is currently running in about 7. Every year, about 20 South Africans get hired and placed at these, from the ongoing auditions.

Lion King is an internationally acclaimed and award-winning theatre production that has captivated audiences in over 25 countries worldwide. Known for its stunning performances and breathtaking visuals, Lion King continues to set the standard for excellence in the entertainment industry.



▲ The Lion King auditions started over the past weekend and will end on Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

Drip Footwear risks liquidation for failure to settle R20m debt

A Johannesburg-based company has applied for the liquidation of popular sneaker brand Drip Footwear for failing to pay it more than R20-million.

WideOpen Platform filed the papers in the high court in Johannesburg, seeking an order to wind up Drip, saying the company is insolvent and unable to service its debts.

The company also intends to file a lawsuit against Drip owner Lekau Sehoana for failing to pay the debt after signing a surety agreement for the entity.

In the papers, which we have seen, WideOpen Platform managing director Tomer Cohen says Drip should be liquidated in terms of the Companies Act, citing its inability to pay for advertising services rendered to the sneaker brand.

"The respondent is currently indebted to the applicant in the sum of R20 442 285.06 with interest thereon at the prevailing prime interest rate calculated from 1 June 2023 to the date of payment, both days inclusive," read the court papers.

"The respondent's indebtedness to the applicant arises out of certain advertising

agreements concluded between the parties."

Cohen claimed Sehoana signed an acknowledgement of debt (AD) after neglecting to send money.

Drip and Lekau admitted that they owed WideOpen the enormous sum in relation to the AD.

Both Drip and Sehoana undertook to pay a total of over R3.6-million in three instalments of over R1.2-million from June 30 last year.

They also made a commitment to pay just under R6-million in three instalments of under R1.9-million from September 30, and promised to pay almost R12-million in three instalments of under R4-million from December 31. They further committed to fork out more than R6.9-million in three instalments of R2.3-million from the end of this month.

"The full balance outstanding in respect of the principal debt shall be paid in full on or before 30 April 2024," read the papers.

(Sunday World)



▲ Lekau Sehoana Drip Footwear faces liquidation if he doesn't settle debt.

BIPOLAR disorder is a mental health condition marked by large shifts in mood from mania to depression.

Although bipolar disorder can be challenging to manage, many effective treatments and strategies are available.

Bipolar disorder isn't a rare condition. In fact, the National Institute of Mental Health says that 2.8 per cent of U.S. adults — or about 5 million people — have a bipolar disorder diagnosis. The condition used to be known as manic depression and bipolar disease.

Key symptoms of bipolar disorder include:

- ▶ episodes of mania, or extremely elevated mood
- ▶ episodes of depression, or low mood

These episodes may last from a few days to several weeks or longer. If you're living with bipolar disorder, the following treatment options can help you learn to manage mood episodes, which can improve not only your symptoms but also your overall quality of life.

TYPES OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

There are three main types of bipolar disorder: bipolar I, bipolar II, and cyclothymia.

BIPOLAR I

Bipolar I is defined by the appearance of at least one manic episode. You may experience hypomanic episodes, which are less severe than manic episodes, or major depressive periods before and after the manic episode. A person can also go through a long period of stable mood before experiencing either mania or depression.

This type of bipolar disorder affects people of all sexes equally.

BIPOLAR II

People with bipolar II experience one major depressive episode that lasts at least 2 weeks. They also have at least 1 hypomanic episode that lasts about 4 days. According to a 2017 review, this type of bipolar disorder may be more common in females.

CYCLOTHYMIA

People with cyclothymia experience some symptoms of hypomania and depression, but not enough to characterize an episode of hypomania or depression.

These episodes also involve symptoms that are shorter and less severe than the episodes associated with bipolar I or bipolar II disorder. Most people with this condition experience no mood symptoms for 1 to 2 months at a time.

Your doctor can explain more about what kind of bipolar disorder you have when discussing your diagnosis.

Some people experience distinct mood symptoms that resemble but don't align with these three types. If that's the case for you, you might get a diagnosis of:

- ▶ other specified bipolar and related disorders
- ▶ unspecified bipolar and related disorders

BIPOLAR DISORDERS SYMPTOMS

To receive a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, you must experience at least one period of

mania or hypomania.

These both involve feelings of excitement, impulsivity, and high energy, but hypomania is considered less severe than mania. Mania symptoms can affect your day-to-day life at work or home. Hypomania symptoms typically don't cause as much disruption, but they can still be distressing.

Some people living with bipolar disorder also experience major depressive episodes or "down" moods.

These three main symptoms — mania, hypomania, and depression — are the main features of bipolar disorder. Different types of bipolar disorder involve different combinations of these symptoms.

BIPOLAR I SYMPTOMS

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5), a diagnosis of bipolar I disorder requires the following:

- ▶ at least one episode of mania that lasts at least 1 week
- ▶ symptoms that affect daily function
- ▶ symptoms that don't relate to another medical or mental health condition or substance use

You could also experience symptoms of psychosis or both mania and depression (known as mixed features). These symptoms can have more impact on your life. If you have them, it's worth reaching out for professional support as soon as possible.

While you don't need to experience episodes

of hypomania or depression to receive a bipolar I diagnosis, many people with bipolar I do report these symptoms.

BIPOLAR II SYMPTOMS

A diagnosis of bipolar II requires:

- ▶ at least one episode of hypomania that lasts 4 days or longer and involves 3 or more symptoms of hypomania
- ▶ hypomania-related changes in mood and usual function that others can notice, though these may not necessarily affect your daily life
- ▶ at least one episode of major depression that lasts 2 weeks or longer
- ▶ at least one episode of major depression involving five or more key depression symptoms that have a significant impact on your day-to-day life
- ▶ symptoms that don't relate to another medical or mental health condition or substance use

Bipolar II can also involve symptoms of psychosis, but only during an episode of depression. You could also experience mixed mood episodes, which means you'll have symptoms of depression and hypomania simultaneously.

With bipolar II, though, you won't experience mania. If you have a manic episode, you'll receive a diagnosis of bipolar I.

CYCLOTHYMIA SYMPTOMS

A diagnosis of cyclothymia requires:

- ▶ periods of hypomanic symptoms and

periods of depression symptoms, off and on, over 2 years or longer for children and adolescents)

- ▶ symptoms that never meet the full criteria for an episode of hypomania or depression
- ▶ symptoms that are present for at least half of the 2 years and never absent for longer than 2 months at a time
- ▶ symptoms that don't relate to another medical or mental health condition or substance use
- ▶ symptoms that cause significant distress and affect daily life

Fluctuating mood symptoms characterize cyclothymia. These symptoms may be less severe than those of bipolar I or II. Still, they tend to last longer, so you'll generally have less time when you experience no symptoms.

Hypomania may not have a big impact on your daily life. Depression, on the other hand, often leads to more serious distress and affects day-to-day function, even if your symptoms don't qualify for a major depressive episode.

If you do experience enough symptoms to meet the criteria for a hypomanic or depressive episode, your diagnosis will likely change to another type of bipolar disorder or major depression, depending on your symptoms.

MANIA AND HYPOMANIA

An episode of mania often involves an emotional high. You might feel excited, impulsive, euphoric, and full of energy. You might also feel jumpy or notice your thoughts seem to race. Some people also experience





hallucinations and other symptoms of psychosis.

Manic episodes can involve behavior that's more impulsive than usual, often because you feel invincible or untouchable. Commonly cited examples of this kind of behavior include:

- ▶ having sex without using a barrier method
- ▶ misusing alcohol and drugs
- ▶ going on spending sprees
- But impulsiveness can also show up in plenty of other ways. Maybe you:
 - ▶ quit your job abruptly
 - ▶ take off on a road trip by yourself without telling anyone
 - ▶ make a big investment on a whim
 - ▶ drive much faster than usual, well above the speed limit
 - ▶ participate in extreme sports you wouldn't ordinarily consider

While there are many reasons why a person might engage in these behaviors, the key to mania is that these are not things you would choose to engage in periods of stable mood.

Hypomania, generally associated with bipolar II disorder, involves many of the same symptoms, though they're less severe. Unlike mania, hypomania often doesn't lead to consequences at work, school, or in your relationships. Episodes of hypomania don't involve psychosis. They typically won't last as long as episodes of mania or require inpatient care.

With hypomania, you might feel very productive and energized, but you may not notice other changes in your mood. People who don't know you well may not, either. Those closest to you, however, will usually pick up on your shifting mood and energy levels.

MAJOR DEPRESSIVE EPISODES

A "down" change in mood can leave you feeling lethargic, unmotivated, and sad.

Bipolar-related episodes of major depression will involve at least five of these symptoms:

- ▶ a lasting low mood marked by deep sadness, hopelessness, or feelings of emptiness
- ▶ loss of energy
- ▶ a sense of feeling slower than usual or persistent restlessness
- ▶ lack of interest in activities you once enjoyed
- ▶ periods of too little or too much sleep
- ▶ a sense of guilt or worthlessness
- ▶ trouble concentrating, focusing, and making decisions
- ▶ thoughts of death, dying, or suicide
- ▶ changes in appetite or weight

Not everyone with bipolar disorder experiences major depressive episodes, though many people do. Depending on your type of bipolar disorder, you might experience only a few symptoms of depression but not the full five needed for a major episode.

It's also worth noting that sometimes, but not always, the euphoria of mania can feel enjoyable. Once you get treatment for mania, the symptom-free mood you experience might feel more like a "down" shift, or a period of depression, than a more typical mood state.

While bipolar disorder can cause a depressed mood, bipolar disorder and depression have one major difference. With bipolar disorder, you might have "up" and "down" mood states. With depression, though, your mood and emotions might remain "down" until you get treatment.

Healthline

WHAT IS HEART DISEASE?

HEART disease is a term that describes a group of medical conditions involving disease of the heart or blood vessels.

The Mayo Clinic identifies the following conditions as heart disease:

- ▶ coronary artery disease
- ▶ heart failure
- ▶ arrhythmia, such as atrial fibrillation
- ▶ congenital heart defects
- Other diseases of the heart include:
 - ▶ heart infections
 - ▶ heart valve disease
 - ▶ cardiomegaly (an abnormally enlarged heart)
 - ▶ cardiomyopathy (a disease of the heart muscle).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF HEART DISEASE?

Chest pain from the heart muscle because it doesn't have adequate oxygen and nutrient-rich arterial blood flow, also called angina, is a common symptom of heart disease. Angina causes you to feel discomfort in your chest. Some people experience tightness or a squeezing sensation around their breastbone. The pain may radiate to the neck, down the shoulder and arms or upper abdomen, or into the upper back.

If you're very tired or have difficulty catching your breath after minor exertion, you may have symptoms of heart disease. These symptoms typically ease with rest.

Women often experience different symptoms than men. For example, women may have:

- ▶ nausea
- ▶ vomiting
- ▶ back pain
- ▶ jaw pain
- ▶ cold sweats
- ▶ paleness
- ▶ dizziness
- ▶ shortness of breath
- ▶ lightheadedness
- ▶ fainting episodes

Women may not recognize the symptoms of heart disease. This is because their symptoms may also occur with other illnesses. Women also tend to have other risk factors, such as depression, stress, and menopause.

ATHEROSCLEROSIS

The symptoms of heart disease depend on the type of heart problem you have.

Atherosclerosis is a hardening and stiffening of blood vessels due to blood vessel injury from accumulation of fatty plaque deposits. The symptoms can include chest pain and shortness of breath in coronary artery atherosclerosis.

Additional symptoms include:

- ▶ unusual pain
- ▶ coldness
- ▶ numbness
- ▶ weakness in your arms and legs

These symptoms are due to a lack of arterial blood supply to the extremities.

ARRHYTHMIAS

Arrhythmias, also known as abnormal

Heart Disease Symptoms



heart rhythms, have different symptoms. An arrhythmia may be accompanied by a heartbeat that's too fast or too slow. It can make you feel like your heart has a flutter, a racing heartbeat, or an unusually slow pulse.

An arrhythmia also may cause:

- ▶ chest pain
- ▶ lightheadedness
- ▶ dizziness
- ▶ fainting spells

CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS

Congenital heart defects are heart problems that typically occur during fetal development and are present at birth. Doctors usually diagnose them at birth or in early childhood. Sometimes people don't receive a diagnosis until adulthood, depending on the severity of symptoms. These include:

- ▶ shortness of breath
- ▶ blue-tinged skin
- ▶ tiring easily
- ▶ swelling of the extremities

In general, the more severe the congenital defect, the earlier it's apparent.

CARDIOMYOPATHY

Cardiomyopathy occurs when the heart muscle becomes diseased. It has several possible symptoms that may be difficult to immediately link to heart disease. These symptoms include:

- ▶ shortness of breath
- ▶ swollen lower legs, ankles, or feet
- ▶ bloating
- ▶ fatigue
- ▶ a pounding or fluttering pulse

HEART INFECTIONS

The three main types of heart infection are infectious pericarditis, myocarditis, and endocarditis. They affect different parts of the heart and may have slightly different symptoms.

The symptoms of a heart infection may be similar to those of cardiomyopathy but may

also include a fever, chest pain, a skin rash, or a cough that won't go away.

RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

Common risk factors for heart disease include:

- ▶ being overweight
- ▶ being inactive
- ▶ smoking tobacco
- ▶ eating a high-fat, high-sodium, and high-carbohydrate diet
- ▶ having diabetes mellitus
- ▶ having high blood pressure
- ▶ having high cholesterol
- ▶ having a family history of heart disease

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Trusted Source reports that about 47 percent of Americans have one or more of the three "key" risk factors for heart disease, which are high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and tobacco smoking.

Heed your doctor's advice if they've warned you that you're at risk for heart disease.

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

It can be difficult to interpret the symptoms on your own. Swollen lower extremities, fatigue, irregular heart rhythm, and other symptoms can indicate any number of heart issues or other illnesses. It's wise to develop a relationship with a doctor who's familiar with your family and personal history. A doctor who knows your habits and lifestyle will be better able to diagnose your illness. See your doctor before you experience the symptoms of heart disease. Get regular checkups, and listen to your doctor's advice for living a healthier lifestyle. In addition to seeing a doctor regularly, you should also make positive changes to your lifestyle. This includes the following:

- ▶ Stop smoking tobacco.
- ▶ Be physically active.
- ▶ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ▶ Manage your stress.

Healthline

The world in pictures



▲An Israeli soldier signals to a tank, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, at the Israeli border with Gaza.



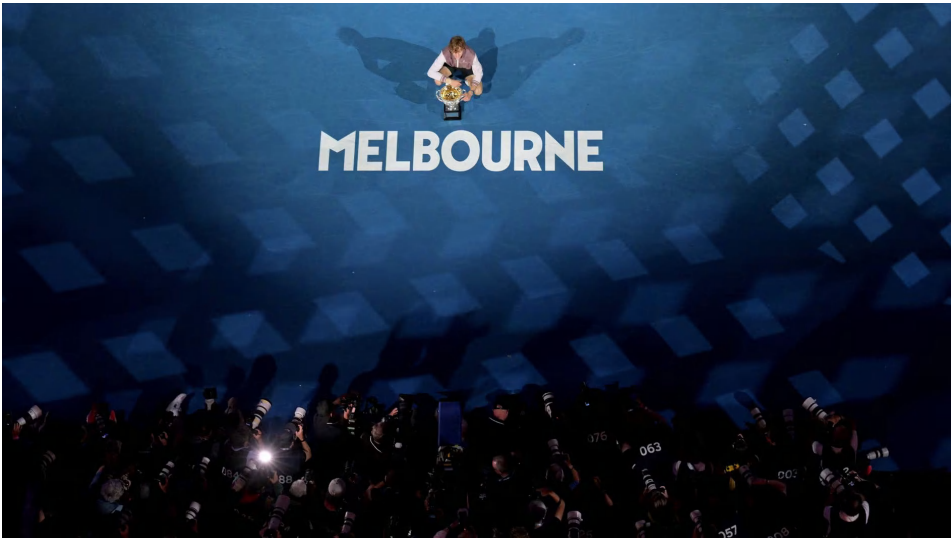
▲Cubans mark birth of icon Jose Marti with torchlit procession, in Havana
Smoking torches lie on the pavement after the March of Torches which is held annually in celebration of the birth anniversary of Cuba's independence hero Jose Marti, in Havana, Cuba



▲Devotees offer prayer by rolling on the ground during the month-long Swasthani Brata Katha festival at the bank of Hanumante river in Bhaktapur, Nepal.



▲Masked revellers take part in the Venice carnival in St. Mark's Square in Venice, Italy.



▲Jannik Sinner celebrates with the trophy after winning the final against Russia's Daniil Medvedev at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia,



▲Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas, the largest cruise ship, in the world sets sail for its inaugural voyage with passengers, in Miami



▲French farmers use their tractors to block the A1 highway near a highway toll station as they protest over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, grievances shared by farmers across Europe, in Chamant, near Paris, France.



▲Palestinian women fleeing Khan Younis, due to the Israeli ground operation, move towards Rafah, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas.

VIRGIL VAN DIJK has thrown his Liverpool future into doubt following Jurgen Klopp's announcement that he will step down as manager. The centre-back has just 18 months remaining on his contract and he refused to commit his long-term future to the club.

Van Dijk, 32, was asked if he will be part of the next era at Anfield after Klopp leaves at the end of the season.

He replied saying: "That's a big question. I don't know."

"The club will have a big job on their hands. To replace not only the manager but the whole staff, there are so many things that will change."

"I'm very curious which direction that will go in but when that will be announced we will see our situation. I can't say much about it."

"Obviously it will be the end of Jurgen Klopp's era. I am very glad that I am still part of it. That is why I don't like to speak about it. I am still part of it."

"That is my main focus and we will see at the end of the season. Hopefully, we have the success that we all dream of and fight for each day and, by then, there will probably be more clarification for what the club wants for the future and then we will see."

Several key figures are set to leave the club including sporting director Jorg Schmadtke and coaches Pep Lijnders, Peter Krawietz and Vitor Matos.

It appears Van Dijk is waiting to see who arrives as their replacements before deciding his future.

But he was adamant the squad's

Virgil van Dijk throws Reds future in doubt

mentality is still the same following Klopp's decision to step down.

He added: "Nothing has really changed. Obviously things will change at the end of the season and in the new season but at the moment it doesn't and we have to keep doing the same things."

"It's easier said than done but I sense the rest of the boys think like that as well and it is the job for me to ensure we keep it that way. Today [Norwich match] was a good day. The manager said it in his press conference: ask everything there and then we go back to focusing on what we want to achieve."

"That's how I see it as well. We can speak about the situation about what will happen next year every week but it doesn't change. It's noise we don't need and that's why we focus on getting the job done and that's why I feel nothing has changed."

"It is still the same but at the end of the season there will be different things happening of course but that is for the club to sort out."

Former Red Xabi Alonso is the favourite to take over at Anfield following his success with Bayer Leverkusen, guiding the German club to the Bundesliga summit.

While Brighton boss Roberto De Zerbi and Tottenham's Ange Postecoglou are also understood to be on Liverpool's radar.

(The Sun)



LIVERPOOL

2023 - 24 - EPL



VIRGIL VAN DIJK

CENTRAL DEFENDER

GAMES	19
MINUTES PLAYED	1648
TACKLES	26
FOULS	13
PASSES	1457
GOALS	1
TACKLES WON	13

Hatton signs with LIV Golf

ENGLAND's Tyrrell Hatton has signed with LIV Golf ahead of the circuit's third season, The Telegraph reported on Monday.

Currently No 16 in the Official World Golf Ranking, the 32-year-old Hatton reportedly landed a deal in the \$65 million range.

Hatton is listed in the field for this week's AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am on the PGA Tour but is expected to withdraw in order to tee it up at LIV Golf Mayakoba, this

weekend's season-opening event in Mexico.

Hatton earned one title on the PGA Tour at the 2020 Arnold Palmer Invitational.

He recorded a T14 at The Sentry and a T13 at the Sony Open earlier this month.

Hatton's best finish on the PGA Tour last season was a runner-up showing at The Players Championship in March. He also tied for second at the BMW PGA Championship on the DP World Tour in September.

(Supersport)



▲ Currently No 16 in the Official World Golf Ranking, the 32-year-old Hatton reportedly landed a deal in the \$65 million range.



▲ It is the first time the Windies have won in Australia in 27 years.

Windies' 1st win in Australia in 27 years

SPEEDSTER Shamar Joseph has taken seven wickets as Australia collapsed at the Gabba to hand West Indies their first Test victory, by just eight runs, in Australia for 27 years.

Chasing 216 to seal a 2-0 series victory, the hosts were cruising at 2-113 in the first session of the fourth day in front of just 3,162 fans in Brisbane on Sunday.

Second-gamer Joseph (7-68) then broke the Test open, defying a toe crushed by a Mitchell Starc yorker a night earlier to take six wickets in an incredible 10-over spell.

Steve Smith (91 not out) carried his bat in

his second Test as an opener and launched an audacious rescue mission.

But Joseph was not to be denied, bowling Josh Hazlewood for his seventh wicket and running towards the boundary in incredible scenes as the series was drawn 1-1.

Peaking at around 150km/h, Joseph immediately found life with an old pink ball that had earlier caused Australia's batters few troubles.

He bowled Cameron Green (42) and Travis Head with consecutive balls to begin the collapse.

(Daily Mail)



Cape Verde edge Mauritania

... to claim AFCON quarterfinal berth

CAPE Verde edged Mauritania 1-0 in a 2023 Africa Cup of Nations round of 16 match at the Felix Houphouet Boigny Stadium in Abidjan on Monday night. A late penalty from Ryan Mendes saw the Blue Sharks claim a deserved victory, as they moved into the quarterfinals to match their best-ever Afcon showing, while the Lions of Chinguetti bow out after an historic first progression beyond the group stage. Mendes threatened twice in the opening 10 minutes, with a shot deflected just wide of the target and an attempted lob which nearly caught out Mauritania goalkeeper Babacar Niasse. Mauritania's first effort in anger came from Bodda Mouhsine, who whipped a shot just wide direct from a free kick in the 15th minute. The Lions of Chinguetti suffered an injury blow and were forced to replace Omare Gassama with Guessouma Fofana in the 35th minute, while the half closed out with the teams still locked at 0-0. The teams traded chances in the opening phase of the second half, and just before the hour mark Mauritania created the clearest opportunity of the



▲ Cape Verde scored late to move into the quarter-finals. game via a powerful run from Bouna Amar, but Souleymane Anne blazed a shot wide with only the goalkeeper to beat. The next major goal threat came from the Blue Sharks on 78 minutes, with Jovane cutting in from the left flank and firing off a shot which required a sharp save from Niasse. The Mauritania 'keeper made an even better save shortly thereafter, reacting superbly to palm away Mendes' glancing header from a corner kick. (Supersport)

Burkina Faso expects 'different' tie against Mali

BURKINA Faso head coach Hubert Velud believes the Stallions are in for a tough evening when they face Mali in a crucial Round of 16 tie at the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, with the game set to commence at the Amadou Gon Coulibaly Stadium on Tuesday night. Mali head into their next game on the back of a 0-0 draw against Namibia, as Brave Warriors coach Collin Benjamin conducted a defensive masterclass against Eric Chelle at Stade Laurent Pokou on

the 24th of January. The stalemate saw Mali top Group E ahead of their Round of 16 qualification. Burkina Faso on the other hand finished second in Group D after their 2-0 defeat against Angola at Stade Charles Konan Banny de Yamoussoukro on the 23rd of January. The Stallions claimed a 1-0 win over Mauritania in their opening game at the tournament, while a 2-2 draw against Algeria saw them accumulate enough points to advance to the Round of 16. Both Mali and Burkina Faso reported no injury concerns ahead of their all-important Round of 16 clash in Korhogo and are expected to field their strongest starting XIs. "We needed a turnover and a change of system because I saw a lot of fatigue in my players so I had to deal with all that," Mali coach Eric Chelle said after his side's 0-0 draw with Namibia. "We started well but afterward it was difficult because we were facing a regrouped block which proceeded against. "And they were dangerous. I wanted this first place but it is not done. The important thing is our qualification. (Supersport)



▲ Burkina Faso players in jubilation after a match.

Bafana Bafana gear up to face mighty Atlas Lions

SOUTH Africa will be making their bid to qualify for the quarterfinals of the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) when they go up against Morocco in their Round of 16 tie at the San Pedro Stadium on Tuesday. Bafana Bafana faced a loss in their opener against Mali but redeemed themselves with a stunning performance against Namibia, where they won 4-0. They played to a goalless draw against Tunisia and ultimately secured their qualification for the Round of 16 by finishing second in Group E. The Atlas Lions started off their Afcon campaign on a winning note, comfortably beating Tanzania 3-0. Their next match in Group F saw them draw 1-1 with Congo, who have just registered their spot in the quarterfinals. Their final group match ended with a 1-0 win over Zambia. Morocco's head coach, Walid Regragui, will return to the touchline after his two-match suspension was lifted following an appeal. Hakim Ziyech is a doubt for Morocco after suffering an ankle injury against Zambia. The winger sat on the bench with an ice pack on his ankle as he was taken off and it remains to be seen whether he will recover in time for the clash. South Africa was concerned about Khuliso Mudau's fitness after being forced off at half-time against Tunisia due to an ankle injury. However, he is making good progress in his recovery and may feature. Hugo Broos, Bafana Bafana's head coach, is also optimistic that Mothobi Mvala will be available after receiving a knock in the same match. Bafana Bafana coach Hugo Broos believes that if they can beat Morocco, the team will have a path to the final of the tournament. "If we beat Morocco then we know we have a big chance to play in the final. And I don't want to underestimate Cape Verde or Mauritania but it's still a difference from playing those teams than against a side like we are playing on Tuesday," said Broos. "So we know that if we can [beat Morocco] we take a big step towards what we all wanted — playing in the final and maybe winning it." Atlas Lions head coach Walid Regragui is targeting a win and hopes his nation will get their hands on the Afcon trophy since they had a solid run in the 2022 World Cup, making it to the semifinal. "What we did at the World Cup was historic and when people recognise this talent, it means so much to me and everyone on the team. It was an unbelievable achievement at the World Cup. We put Africa on the world map," he said. "But now, we have a different mindset. The Africa Cup of Nations is very, very tough but we are going with the same spirit and Inshallah, if we do our very best, we are going to win this trophy." (Supersport)



▲ Percy Tau and Themba Zwane celebrating a goal.

INGWENYAMA CUP LAST 8 DRAW IN PICTURES



▲ Teams representatives show off their kits they will wear during the Ingwenyama Cup quarter-finals.



▲ Ingwenyama Cup Management Committee (MC) pose during the quarter-final draw on Monday at SMVAF Offices, Mbabane.



▲ Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima hands over Mbabane Swallows replica kit to PRO Knowledge Ngwenya.



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs PRO Mnotfo Dlamini receives their kit from Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima.



▲ Madlenya PRO Comfort Jele (l) and Young Buffaloes CEO Sandile Gwebu with their kits. They will face each other in the quarter-finals of the Ingwenyama Cup.



▲ The Ingwenyama Cup quarter-final draw.



▲ PLE Development Manager Banele Masondo and Zandile Nkonyane conduct the draw.



▲ (l to r) PLE CEO Kenneth Makhanya, Lenhle 'Makawosi' Masuku and Sandile Nxumalo.



▲ The Ingwenyama Cup quarter-finals team with Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima.

Ghanaian international for Leopard

ROYAL Leopard have beefed up their squad with the services of Ghanaian striker Felix Tetteh .

Stories By Sibusiso Masilela
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The West African player has penned a short-term deal with the police side after impressing the Leopard technical bench headed by former national Under 17 coach Edwin Matsebula.

Leopard Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Frank Hurube confirmed the news.

“It’s true that we have secured the services of Felix Tetteh until the end of the season where we will review his contract. We are confident that he will add value to the team,” he said.

Tetteh has joined the likes of Sibonelo ‘Jekwa’ Simelane, Banele Shongwe, among others in the list of new signings for the police side for the current campaign.

Hurube further stated their target for the season is to win the league title.

“Our mandate is clear which is to win the league title and we will do our level best to deliver the trophy to the entire Leopards family at the end of the season,” he added.

‘Ingwe mabalabala’ are currently sitting at the summit of the MTN Premier League with 28 points after 15 matches.



▲ Royal Leopard new signing Felix Tetteh.

The police services side is on the verge of clinching E300 000 worth technical

sponsorship with Italian company Macron and the club donned their new jersey during

their recent 1-0 win over Madlenya on Saturday at the Prince of Wales Ground.



▲ Volleyball delegates during the recent meeting held at OlympAfrica Centre.

VOLLEYBALL teams have called for the re-introduction of the national league.

This is part of the resolution taken by clubs during the recent Eswatini National Volleyball Association Special meeting recently held at olymp Africa Centre.

ENVA vice Secretary Nobuhle Dlamini confirmed the updates when giving updates on the association.

Proposals

“We are currently working on the proposals that were recently submitted by members. Several ideas on how the league could be run without a sponsor were also discussed in an event we fail to get a league sponsor. We will update clubs once we conclude discussions on their concerns,” she said.

The last national volleyball league was staged in 2017 featuring elite males and

females teams .

The mother body recently sent the four-member national team to the 2024 African Games qualifiers in Botswana where the country lost out both in the male and female categories over the weekend.

The defeats ended the country hopes of qualifying for the volleyball finals during the continental spectacle scheduled for March in Ghana.

Proposals

The males duo of Nduku Masangane and Mlamuli Simelane lost all their pool matches against South Africa, Mozambique and Namibia.

The ladies side comprising of Nonhlanhla Khoza and Nokulunga Kunene suffered the same ordeal as they went to down to Botswana,Mozambique and Angola.

Boxing national team for Mandela Cup

THE Boxing national team is set to attend the 2024 Nelson Mandela Cup scheduled for April in Durban.

The international boxing tournament will be possibly staged at the Durban International Convention Centre featuring several continental countries.

This will be third international squad for the national side this year including the African Games and the 2024 Olympic Games, among others.

The Eswatini Boxing Association (EBA) recently named a seven-member tentative squad for the 2024 African Games which include top two boxers Thabiso Dlamini and Zweli Dlamini.

EBA President Webster Lukhele confirmed their participation in the international assignment.

“We will certainly attend the Mandela

Cup in April and we are still waiting for the logistics of the tournament from the organizers. We are currently working on the training program for the tentative national team for all the upcoming international tournaments,”he said.

He further mentioned that they were in the process of establishing a national league.

“We will soon kick off a national league that will be played by boxers within the various categories. The new tournament is aimed at keeping our boxers active so that we can be able to identify champions for the different categories. We are still currently in talks with a potential sponsor for the new league,”he said.

EBA have previously sent boxers to various international tournaments such as the 2023 World championships and the African Games which were staged in Uzbekistan and Senegal respectively.



▲ The Boxing national team during an international assignment.

THE FULL TENTATIVE SQUAD	
Mphile Dlamini	- Under 54kg
Khaya Shongwe	- Under 57kg
Zweli Dlamini	- Under 60kg
Sibongiseni Shongwe	- under 60kg
Khaya Mkhabela	- Under 63.5kg

The epic Green battle

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
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BUCKLE up for an exciting Ingwenyama quarter-finals action.

Defending champions Green Mamba will take on cup specialists Nsingizini Hotspurs in the biggest last eight encounter of the prestigious knockout tournament.

The two teams were pitted against each other during the quarter-final draw conducted at SMVAF boardroom on Monday.

Green Mamba last tasted glory of the richest knock-out tournament in 2019 and they have to overcome the Shiselweni based side to keep their title defence hopes alive.

There is a lot to play in this match as 'Inyoka eluhlazana' recently claimed the scalp of Hotspurs by 4-0 during the two teams recent league meeting.

Hotspurs have earned themselves the cup specialists tag after clinching back-to-back MoMo Cup titles.

Another intriguing quarter-final is between 2018 champions Young Buffaloes and giant slayers Madlenya who recently sent hub-giants Manzini



▲ The last 8 teams pose with their replicas after the Ingwenyama Cup quarter-finals draw.

Wanderers packing during the last 16.

Capital city giants Mbabane Swallows and Mbabane Highlanders have been handed tricky draws against Pigg's Peak Rangers and Ezulwini United respectively.

The quarter-finals matches are set to take place on the weekend of February 10 -11.

Green Mamba Chief Executive Officer Mandla Sibiba said they were looking forward to the match.

"This is going to be a tough match and

we won't underestimate even though we managed to beat them in the recent league meeting," he said.

Nsingizini Public Relations Officer (PRO) Mnotfo Nkhosi said they were not intimidated by the opponents.

"We are ready to rewrite history books by beating Green Mamba and we want to avenge our recent league defeat against them. We will do our level best to win this match," he said.

...Buffaloes won't stand in our way — Madlenya FC

GIANT-slayers Madlenya have vowed to kill another giant in the Ingwenyama Cup in Young Buffaloes.

The Siphofaneni-based side recently knocked out hub giants Manzini Wanderers during the last 16.

Madlenya Public Relations Officer (PRO) Comfort Jele said they want to maintain their goal for the tournament which is to reach the semi finals.

"Our target for the tournament is very clear, which is to reach the last four and we will not afford to spoil it by losing to Buffaloes. We will give the opposition a run for their money," he said .

Buffaloes Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sandile Gwebu said they were going to hammer the opponents.

"Madlenya's journey in the tournament has come to an end. We will hammer them like we did to other teams. Our mandate for this tournament is clear which is to win the tournament and we cannot afford a slip in the tournament," Gwebu said.

THE FULL QUARTER-FINALS DRAW

Buffaloes	vs	Madlenya
M.Highlanders	vs	Ezulwini United
Green Mamba	vs	Nsingizini
M.Swallows	vs	PP. Rangers

Ingwenyama Cup committee request to use Somhlolo

By Ntokozo Magongo
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THE Ingwenyama Cup Committee has sent a request to the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs to avail the venue for the quarter-finals games.

The refurbished stadium is still not officially available to host games as it is yet to be made available. It hosted the grand opening of the tournament on January 7. The Ingwenyama Cup has reached the quarter-finals stage with eight teams remaining.

The Managing Committee (MC) Chairman, Dr Comfort Shongwe said he was happy that the quarter-final draw was attended by the Sports Minister, Bongani Nzima, Principal Secretary Prince Mlayeto and the Director of Sports Lucky Sihlongonyane.

"We are hoping that Somhlolo National Stadium will be available for these games as they are now at a crucial



▲ Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima making his remarks before the draw.

stage. We are happy with the behaviour we have seen so far in the games.

Good behaviour

The good behaviour of both teams and the supporters attracts sponsors," he said.

Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kenneth Makhanya



▲ Part of the Ingwenyama Cup committee following proceedings.

also shared the same sentiments.

Somhlolo National Stadium was closed in 2021 as it was being renovated and it has only hosted the 55/55 double celebrations and the Ingwenyama Cup grand opening.

The venue is yet to be assessed by the Confederation of Africa Football and

the Football International Federation Association (FIFA) if it does meet the international standard to host international matches. When it is officially opened, it will be able to host local games and this will be a sigh of relief for PLE as they are facing venue challenges.



▲ The late Bongani 'Ndezi' Masangane.

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE cruel hands of death have robbed the country of a football icon in former Mbabane Highlanders and Black Leopards defender Bongani 'Ndezi' Masangane.

He has joined the likes of Kwanele Dlamini and Mukelo Nkhambule , among others in the list of local footballers who passed away in the last month or so.

The ex-Sihlangu right back succumbed to an undisclosed illness while undergoing

treatment at Mbabane Government Hospital on Monday. The late Masangane uncle Mduduzi Nkhambule confirmed the news.

"It's true that my nephew is no more even though we are still going to inform the entire family. We will announce further details in due course," Nkhambule said.

Masangane played for the Limpopo based side between 2003 and 2005 together with Sibusiso 'Spoko' Dlamini and Wonder 'Samba Jive' Nhleko.

He then rejoined Highlanders in 2006 before his retirement.

He had a couple of caps with the senior national side.

● Masangane played for the Limpopo based side between 2003 and 2005 together with Sibusiso 'Spoko' Dlamini and Wonder 'Samba Jive' Nhleko



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**Eswatini
Daily News**

Tuesday 30
January, 2024

Spo



Buckle up for...

**The epic
Green
Battle!**

... Ingwenyama Cup defending champions, Green Mamba face tough-as-teak Nsingizini Hotspurs in the pick of the 2024 Ingwenyama Cup quarter final draw. Both teams wear green and white. **Page 23**