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By Ncaba Ntshakala

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Master of High Court not computerized, difficult to trace files

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PM TELLS ITALY-AFRICA SUMMIT

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"This afternoon, I had the honour of addressing the Italy-Africa Summit in Rome, Italy, on behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III," Dlamini declared. "Our address, during the Energy Security and Transition session, underscored Eswatini's aspiration to be energy self-sustaining."

During the crucial Energy Security and Transition session, Dlamini emphasized the Kingdom's commitment to pursuing renewable energy sources and called on European partners to collaborate in fully exploiting these avenues.

Power

We highlighted our desire to pursue clean methods of generating power and called on potential European partners to support us in fully exploiting these platforms." Prime Minister Russell said. "Our end goal with regards to energy security is to generate enough power to attract significant investments in many sectors and industries as well as to be a net exporter of energy. It is such investments that will grow our economy and bring sustainable



▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini making his address during the Italy - Africa Summit.

jobs for emaSwati."

The Prime Minister underscored Eswatini's dedication to tackling climate change, reiterating the Kingdom's ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 5% by 2030. This commitment, he asserted, demonstrates Eswatini's active participation in addressing global environmental challenges. "We further reiterated our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 5% by 2030, once again underlining Eswatini's commitment to making

a meaningful contribution to the challenges that face the world," he added.

Looking beyond energy, Dlamini expressed Eswatini's hope that the Italy-Africa Summit will serve as a springboard for strengthening the existing strong ties between the two nations. He envisioned enhanced collaborations that translate into concrete investments and support programs directly impacting the lives of emaSwati. The Premier said, "Going forward, it is our hope that the Italy-Africa

Italy's PM pledges new partnership with Africa

ITALY'S PM Meloni pledges new partnership with Africa during Summit but funds limited

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni hailed a new partnership with Africa, unveiling a long-awaited plan aimed at boosting economic ties, creating an energy hub for Europe, and curbing immigration.

Hosting the one-day summit attended by more than two dozen African leaders and European Union officials, Meloni outlined a series of initiatives, pledging an initial E112 billion (\$5.95 billion), including state guarantees. Meloni said the summit had been a success that had produced many areas of potential cooperation, particularly with regards to energy.

"We are only at the beginning, there is a very long road ahead of us. This day is a re-start," she said in her closing remarks.

However, there was a note of discord from some of those present, with Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairman of the African Union Commission, saying he wished Africa had been consulted first on priorities and emphasising the need to honour commitments. (Reuters)

Summit will renew and strengthen the strong relationship that exists between Eswatini and Italy while further opening up more opportunities for investment and support that will directly improve the lives of emaSwati."

By Nokunceda Magagula
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ESWATINI recorded two Cholera cases between March and April last year – and successful treated them both.

This was revealed by the Minister of Health, Mduduzi Matsebula in a press statement released on Tuesday.

"Eswatini last recorded 2 confirmed cholera cases in March and April 2023 in two regions Manzini and Shiselweni respectively. Both cases were admitted and treated in isolation with successful outcomes. A success factor was that they presented early to the health facilities and were promptly diagnosed and treated" Matsebula asserted.

The Minister highlighted that since early 2023, the country has been positioning itself to be ready to respond to a cholera outbreak through the following Public Health Emergency Response interventions, which include weekly meetings of the National Public Health Emergency Management Committee (PHEMCO) to review response activities and surveillance data on cholera and other public health threats.

The ministry also has an in-country Cholera Multisectoral Coordination Committee that ensures coordination of cholera preparedness through involving all sectors.

Matsebula said the intervention also includes strong support and partnership with WHO, UNICEF, PEPFAR, and Africa CDC, who have all provided technical and financial assistance for cholera preparedness and response in terms of training, donations, and surveillance activities among others.

Eswatini 2 cholera cases treated successfully

He added that they also have a successful National Full Scale Simulation Exercise (SIM-EX) for cholera and public health threats that was conducted in November 2023 in one of the rural communities in the country, from which cases were identified and are being addressed.

Moreover, they have a pre-positioning of cholera test kits and stockpiling of drugs and supplies for cholera response has been conducted. The Kingdom of Eswatini remains vigilant against cholera and ensures that the following key interventions are prioritized by the Ministry of Health through working with development partners and donors;

The ministry also strengthens the component of Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH) through stronger in-country collaborations with other sectors responsible for WASH such as City Councils, Authorities, and relevant Ministries. Furthermore, they strengthen Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response systems at all levels, including for all diarrheal diseases in order to identify cholera quickly.

Engagements with neighboring countries to identify cross-border transmission risks and mitigate them is also part of the Ministries intervention, these include improved surveillance for cholera at informal entry points where cholera cases and dead bodies may come through.

Matsebula urged members of the public to be vigilant of cholera signs and symptoms and report to the nearest health facility immediately if they suspect them. Anyone with watery diarrhea should visit the nearby health facility where a diagnosis can be made in case the diarrhea is due to cholera disease.

On the ministry's commitment to monitoring the outbreak, Matsebula said, the Ministry of Health has been monitoring the cholera outbreak situation in the SADC Region over the past 12 months. In light of this, the SADC Secretariat convened a meeting for the Ministers of Health and Ministers of other sectors relevant to the response to the cholera outbreak in the region.

The Emergency Extra Ordinary Meeting of Health Ministers on the Cholera outbreak in the SADC Region was held on Saturday, 27 January 2024. During the meeting, Ministers were informed that the countries currently having a severe cholera outbreak in the Region included Zambia and

Zimbabwe, and this constitutes a public health concern to all member states.

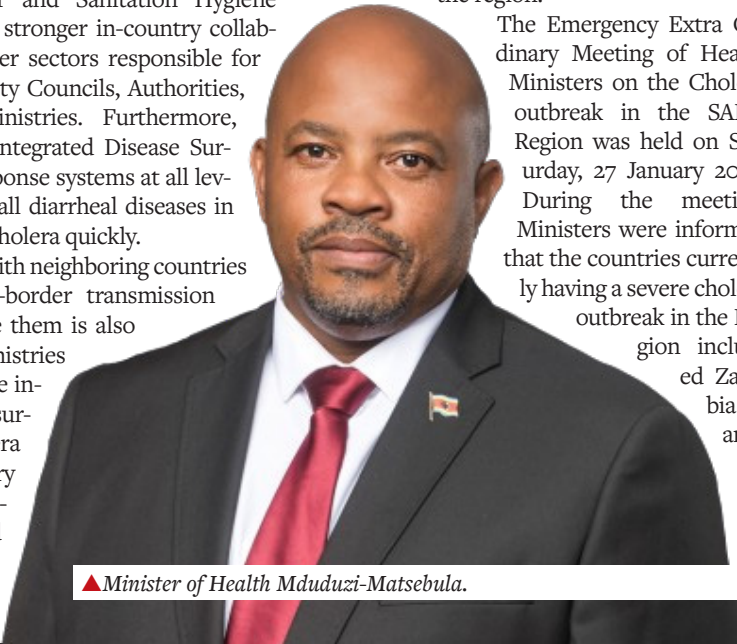
The Minister brought light on the current situation of cholera situation in the SADC region, stating that the cholera epidemic has affected several countries in the SADC Region in the year 2023 and continues to impact the region, placing additional strain on communities and healthcare facilities.

Minister Matsebula said since 2023, 13 countries in the African region have battled one of the worst cholera outbreaks to hit the region in years and as of 15 January 2024, more than 200 000 cases, including over 3 000 deaths, have been reported 2 cumulatively.

"Zambia reported the first cholera case in October 2023, and currently more than 9,500 people have been affected and 374 deaths registered, which represents a high death rate from the disease. Lusaka is the worst affected district in Zambia with over 90% of cholera cases diagnosed there" Matsebula said.

Turning to Zimbabwe he said, since the start of the outbreak in February 2023, more than 18,000 cases have been reported across all 10 provinces, with 71 confirmed deaths and more than 300 suspected deaths. Harare and Manicaland provinces are the most affected.

He stated that the greatest contributing factor to the cholera outbreak in the SADC Region includes heavy rains and flooding due to climate change and poor water and sanitation hygiene (WASH) systems in the affected countries.



▲ Minister of Health Mduduzi-Matsebula.

Master of High Court not computerized, difficult to trace files

Stories by Bahle Gama
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OLD files are very difficult to trace in the office of the Master of the High Court.

This is because the office does not have a computerized system that allows for storing files digitally making it easy and immediate to access files, despite the date the file was opened.

This was disclosed by Assistant Master Makhosazane Mdluli who was responding to a question before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry on Tuesday.

Mdluli said it was for that reason that files needed to be closed and an estate distributed timely.

She was at the inquiry to respond to a matter relating to a Mkhwanazi family that was

last tended to and left hanging by the office in 2011 and the file was not closed.

"By law, a file should be concluded, and the estate must be distributed to beneficiaries. It is hard for us to go back to a file that was not closed due to our system," she told the Commission.

She said it is only when dealing with special cases that the office goes back to look for a pending file.

According to Mdluli, unless one of the beneficiaries comes to the office to complain about the executor's inability to distribute the estate as expected, that file is left open and added to a pile.

"We are unable to trace progress unless a person complains, thus reviving the file, until then it remains pending and very difficult to trace. Not being computerized is one of the difficulties we are facing," she said.



▲ Judicial Commission of Inquiry.

Being executor doesn't make you property owner

WHEN a person is elected as the executor of an estate, it does not automatically make them the owner of the property.

Instead, they are expected to look after the property and ensure the estate is distributed to the rightful beneficiaries according to what is stated in a will if any.

This is according to Assistant Master Mdluli who confirmed to the Commission that a file was indeed opened after Sibusiso's death, and his wife Grace was selected as executor.

She said usually an executor is chosen by the family, but according to law. The legal spouse is elected automatically.

"Being chosen as an executor does not make a person the owner of the property. Instead, they need to ensure that the estate is distributed to the beneficiaries.

So even if Mkhwanazi's wife was chosen, it did not mean the property was hers. All she had to do was look after it and ensure the estate is distributed to its beneficiaries," she said.

She stated that in the event the beneficiaries are unhappy with the choice of executor, they can write to Master and express their concerns and reasons why they feel that way.

This was the same advice she gave to Mkhwanazi regarding his concern over his mother being the executor of his father's estate. When asked what stand the office takes when beneficiaries discover that not all assets have been listed in an inventory, she

said the Master calls the executor to clarify and explain themselves as to why such is the case.

"Until the matter is finalized, and the executor has responded to all inquiries regarding the inventory, none of the beneficiaries receive anything from the estate which makes the matter pending, resulting in an open file," she said.

'Mom has a Ben 10'

MKHWANAZI is alleging that his 90-year-old mother is in a love relationship with a 36-year-old man.

This he said upset him, knowing that a 'boy' even younger than him was coming in and out of his father's house willy-nilly, while they as the legitimate members of the family had been kicked out to the streets.

"I received word that he spends a lot of time at home, and I am not pleased with this information," he said.

Mkhwanazi said this was reason enough to remove his mother as executor of his father's estate.

He further alluded that his mother was in collusion with his older sisters and questioned how could have there been a distribution of assets when he was not present to sign off on such.

'Remove 90-year-old mom as executor'

A 49-year-old man has told the Commission that he is unhappy with his 90-year-old mother being the executor of his late father's estate.

Ndoda Mkhwanazi told the court that after the death of his father Sibusiso in 2003, five years later, his mother Grace decided to kick all the male children out of the homestead located at Mhlane, at Matsapha.

"Watsi asimushayise ngemoya ekhaya lakhe (she said she needed space)," he submitted.

Sibusiso reportedly left behind a shopping complex, vehicles, and cattle which Mkhwanazi alleges his mother did not list in full in the inventory.

Mkhwanazi who currently resides at Msunduzi, said he wanted to return to his parental homestead at Matsapha and needed for his mother to be removed as executor for that to happen.

He disclosed that of the seven children, three are boys and when their mother kicked them out, his older brother went to rent a house at Mahlabatsini whilst the younger brother decided to stay at home.

Adamant

Mkhwanazi alleges that the one who was adamant and remained at home has had a difficult life and his well-being was compromised, but he had nowhere to go and decided to endure it.

He on the other hand decided to go to Johannesburg, South Africa where he was in hiding after he was wanted by the police in association with 30-armed robbery charges.

He said that in 2014 whilst in SA, one of his sisters got married to a man who is employed at OR Tambo International Airport.

Because he had not seen his nieces and nephews for a while, he met up with his sister who told him one property had been sold to their mother and he would be getting his share soon.

"Indeed, the day arrived, and we met at Kempton Park bank where she gave me E11,000 and told me it was money that my father had left behind for me," he said.

Mkhwanazi said looking at his father's worth and the businesses/property he left behind, he questioned where the rest of the money was, and his sister told him he would get it from their money when he returned to Eswatini.

With the intent to confront the situation, he risked being apprehended by the police, returned to Eswatini and surrendered himself to find out what had happened to his father's property.

He went to confront his mother about the rest of his share, and she questioned if his sisters had not given him the money.

"I then went to Master and requested my father's file which I received and went through it. I found a lot of things were not listed in the inventory including the shops and cars my father owned. Only the renting property I got a share of was listed with my signature faked that I agreed to sell which was not the case," he said.

He said he was shocked to find the signature because he would not have agreed to such, especially after having been kicked out by their mother.

Due to financial constraints, he could not acquire the services of an attorney.

He told the Commission he has never received a cheque from Master, but only a call on Monday, January 30 when he was called to the inquiry.

When asked whether there had been a meeting post his father's death regarding the distribution of the estate, Mkhwanazi said there was none except for when his mother



▲ Ndoda Mkhwanazi during the inquiry.

was kicking them out of the family home.

"Even in that meeting she produced a handwritten will which she alleged was written by our father where she was getting three-quarters of the estate and the rest to the children," he said.

He admitted that when the file was first opened at Master, he refused to be associated because he saw that the estate was compromised.

"When he died, my mother never said anything until 2008 when she decided to kick all the boys out.

From the period between his death and 2008, they went to Master, my mother, and my sisters, but we were not officially informed of the decision, that was when I left," he said.

Pleaded

He pleaded that the office of Master starts the distribution process from scratch and has the estate distributed evenly and accordingly. He added that what has been sold would have to be bought back because no transaction was made legally.

"Only then can we all be at peace and maybe I can also be able to go back home," he said.

When asked which property he remembered to have been owned by his father when he died, Mkhwanazi listed rented flats at Sterksroom and Wilmar Park. Then at Sigodvweni, there is a complex called 'Sgudi Snays'.

"Before he died the shop was running and fully stocked, but my mother stopped its operations. There were four vehicles, a Mercedes, two vans, a Ford, and an Isuzu. The rest of the shops in the complex were rented out," he said.

Mkhwanazi further stated that he did not know how much his father had in his bank account when he died, but when he read the file at Master, he found he only had E550.

In terms of cattle, his sisters' bride price had been paid and they were taken to different ranches at Nkambeni and Siphofaneni, however, it is unknown where they ended up.

"I want Master to redistribute my father's estate, this will restore peace in the family. Anything that was sold should be brought back because anyone who made a purchase wasted their money," he emphasized.

PMS set to kick off in April – Minister Mabulala

Stories by Ncaba Ntshakala

THE Performance Management System (PMS) will finally begin operating across the public service on April 1st, 2024.

This has been announced by the Minister of Public Service Mabulala Maseko.

Dispelling concerns about employee burden, Maseko emphasized that the system aims to boost efficiency and service delivery, not add stress to government workers.

Launched in 2022 as a diagnostic tool for organizational deficiencies, the PMS has undergone extensive refining. The Ministry assures the public that its implementation will not compromise vital services.

“The PMS is not about punishment or micromanagement,” clarified Maseko. “It’s a comprehensive approach to tracking employee performance objectively and consistently, fostering an environment where everyone thrives.”

He further explained that the current appraisal system was deemed inadequate due to its subjectivity and lack of clarity. Supervisors held significant sway in the evaluation process, and employees often lacked clear expectations and performance criteria.

“The PMS introduces collaborative



▲ Minister of Public Service Mabulala Maseko who assured that the PMS will start operating in April.

goal-setting and regular feedback, empowering employees to take ownership of their performance and growth,” Maseko elaborated. “This transparency and accountability will ultimately benefit both individuals and the public service as a whole.”

The Ministry acknowledges that transitioning to a new system might entail initial challenges. They assure adequate training and support will be provided to ensure a smooth implementation process.



▲ Dimensions of performance management system illustrated in a scientific diagram.

Early FPE funds and stationery spark applause across schools, parents

ACROSS the Kingdom, classrooms are echoing with cheers, not just for academic achievements, but for the timely arrival of Free Primary Education (FPE) funds and the distribution of stationery.

This welcome development, witnessed during recent visits by Cabinet Ministers to schools nationwide, has garnered praise from both school administrators and parents.

“The early release of FPE funds is a huge relief,” expressed Ngcebo Hlophe, a teacher in one of the schools in Manzini. “All along, it has been strenuous for schools as sometimes they will even fail to do examination practicals due to lack of funds. This will allow schools to plan and budget effectively, ensuring essential resources are available from the start of the academic year.”

Parents, too, voiced their appreciation. “Having early payments and stationery read-

ily available for my children removes a significant financial burden,” shared Nomvula Gumedze, a parent of two primary school students. “Our government has helped us a lot. This will help my children. They can now focus on their studies without worrying about missing materials.”

Cabinet ministers embarked on a series of school visits across the nation, focusing on two distinct sets of institutions; those facing ongoing challenges after underperforming last year, and those struggling to recover from recent storm damage.

The FPE programme, established in 2010, covers school fees and provides essential learning materials for primary school students. It has played a crucial role in increasing access to education and reducing dropout rates in Eswatini. The timely release of funds ensures a smooth start to the academic year and guarantees uninterrupted learning for all children.



▲ Some Cabinet Ministers posing for a photo with teachers and learners during one of their visits in schools.

SOS Children’s Villages launches One Lilangeni Donation drive

The SOS Children’s Villages, a beacon of hope for vulnerable children in Eswatini, has launched a unique initiative to reach its E10,000 fundraising goal for individual givers; the One Lilangeni Campaign.

This innovative effort combines the power of individual donations with the thrill of a raffle draw, offering generous prizes to the most dedicated supporters.

The campaign’s driving force is the belief that even small contributions can make a significant difference. Every E1 donated, aptly named “One Lilangeni,” brings SOS closer to providing vital care and support for children in need. To add an extra layer of excitement, SOS partnered with Oukitel Eswatini, a generous smartphone and tech company, to offer a brand new smartphone as the grand prize in a raffle draw.

Encourage

To encourage more individual donors to donate towards the One Lilangeni Campaign, SOS Children’s Villages has launched a donation competition, whereby individuals who have donated the most money, will be eligible to receive prizes through a raffle draw. The organization sought out to get competition prize giveaways from corporates and companies and was lucky to have a successful engagement with Oukitel in Eswatini, who offered a gracious donation of a smartphone and further partnered with the One Lilangeni Campaign.

During a meeting held at the SOS Children’s Villages National Office, Esihle Dlamini, the marketing executive said, “We were touched to see the beautiful and meaningful work



▲ Some Cabinet Ministers posing for a photo with teachers and learners during one of their visits in schools.

done by SOS, in taking care of the vulnerable children of Eswatini. It was, therefore, our desire to donate a smartphone to the organization, for them to run a competition. Furthermore, 5 per cent of the sales for all our gadgets bought through the SOS network, be it individuals, Corporations, or NGOs, goes to SOS Children’s Villages”.

Excited

The Oukitel business analyst, Zanzi Nxumalo also added that they are excited with the collaboration and sponsorship. “We are happy to sponsor the One Lilangeni Campaign and we wish for a long-lasting relationship because we know that the children, they are raising will grow to understand the Oukitel brand and attach to it. For us, giving to SOS is a future investment and we are happy to do it.” Shared Nxumalo.

SOS Communication Coordinator Temalangi Dlamini expressed utmost appreciation for the partnership and urged many organisations to join the cause and support their village. “We are very happy to part-

ner with Oukitel and we hope that many other organizations can support the One Lilangeni Campaign, as it seeks to raise funds for the vulnerable children in our care.” Temalangi asserted. “We humbly request other organizations to sponsor the campaign with more giveaway prizes for the competition,” Dlamini said.

The One Lilangeni competition will run from 1st February -29th February 2024. The aim of the competition is to raise at least E 10 000.00 from individual givers, who will donate towards the campaign. High donors/givers will be evaluated at the end of the competition and will stand a chance to win the smartphone, through a raffle draw.

One Lilangeni campaign is a fundraising initiative aimed at improving the lives of children in need. It seeks to mobilize organizations (corporates, institutions, cooperatives, associations) and individuals to donate, at least, one Lilangeni to ensure that no child grows up alone.



CENTRAL BANK
OF ESWATINI
Umntsholi Wemaswati

Monetary Policy Statement

26 January 2024

Interest Rate 7.50%

The CBE maintained the interest rate at **7.50 per cent**.

Inflation 4.3%

Headline inflation decreased to **4.3 per cent** in December 2023 from **4.7 per cent** in the previous month.

What does this mean?

Banks are expected to maintain the prime lending rate on loans extended to individuals and businesses at **11.0 per cent** until the next monetary policy meeting.

What to expect?

The CBE expects the cost of goods and services to increase moderately in 2024. The CBE marginally revised down its inflation forecasts for 2024 to **4.9 per cent** (from 5.2 per cent forecasted in November 2023).

Economic Activity

Economic activity, as measured by the Quarterly Gross Domestic Product grew by a slower 7.7 per cent year-on-year (seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter of 2023, down from a revised growth of 8.2 per cent in the second quarter of 2023.

On the 26th January 2024, the Central Bank of Eswatini (Bank), together with the Monetary Policy Consultative Committee (MPCC) held a meeting to consider the appropriate monetary policy stance. Taking into consideration relevant global, regional, and domestic economic factors; as well as the price and financial stability mandate, the Bank decided to maintain the discount rate unchanged at 7.5 per cent.

On the global front, the ongoing effects of tighter monetary policy, the restrictive credit conditions and the intensifying geopolitical tensions are weighing down on growth prospects. Economic growth in advanced economies is subdued whilst growth in Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs) with strong fundamentals is improving. The US economy grew by an annualized 3.3 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2023 from 4.9 per cent in the previous quarter whilst the UK and the Eurozone contracted by 0.1 per cent each in the third quarter of 2023. China grew by 5.2 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2023, compared to the 4.9 per cent recorded in the previous quarter. Inflation in advanced economies and EMDEs remain persistent and above target, and monetary conditions remained at restrictive levels.

Regionally, the South African economy shrank by 0.2 per cent in the third quarter of 2023, after a revision downward to 0.5 per cent in the second quarter. The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) marginally revised down its growth forecast for 2023 to 0.6 per cent (from 0.8 per cent forecasted in November 2023) whilst the forecasts for 2024 and 2025 remain unchanged at 1.2 per cent and 1.3 per cent, respectively. The South African inflation decreased to 5.1 per cent in December 2023 from 5.5 per cent the previous month, recording an average of 6.0 per cent in 2023. The SARB left its inflation forecast for 2024 unchanged at 5.0 per cent whilst the forecast for 2025 was marginally revised up to 4.6 per cent (from 4.5 per cent). The SARB maintained the repo rate unchanged at 8.25 per cent in its 25 January 2023 meeting.

On the domestic front, economic activity as measured by the quarterly GDP, grew by a slower 7.7 per cent year-on-year (seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter of 2023, down from a revised growth of 8.2 per cent in the second quarter. The primary and secondary sectors recorded slower increases (on a year-on-year basis) in the quarter under review, whilst the tertiary sector remained resilient on double digit growth. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, economic activity grew by 3.0 per cent (seasonally adjusted) in the quarter under review, from a revised growth of 1.3 per cent in the previous quarter.

The country's annual headline inflation declined further to 4.3 per cent in December 2023 from 4.7 per cent in November 2023. The slowdown is attributed to a decrease in prices for; 'food & non-alcoholic beverages' which grew by a slower 7.1 per cent in December 2023 from 8.4 per cent the previous month; 'furnishing & household equipment' which grew by 3.9 per cent in December 2023 compared to 4.1 per cent in the previous month, and 'transport' which fell by 0.5 per cent in December 2023 following a zero growth in November 2023. These decreases were counteracted by increases in the price indices for; 'clothing & footwear' which rose by 6.5 per cent in December 2023 from 6.0 per cent the previous month and 'miscellaneous goods & services' which grew by 0.2 of a percentage point to 9.6 per cent in December 2023. The country's headline inflation averaged 5.0 per cent in 2023. The Bank revised down its inflation forecasts to 4.9 per cent (from 5.2 per cent forecasted in November 2023) for 2024 and the forecast for 2025 is at 5.1 per cent. Risks to the inflation outlook include elevated crude oil prices, a weaker exchange rate and higher food prices, amongst others.

Credit extended to the private sector declined by 0.9 per cent month-on-month to E18.8 billion at the end of November 2023. Accounting for the slowdown in credit to the private sector were decreases in the credit extended to "other sectors of the domestic economy" and "households and NPISH". These sectors decreased by 16.6 per cent month-on-month to settle at E1.0 billion and 0.1 per cent month-on-month to E8.3 billion at the end of November 2023 respectively. Credit extended to businesses on the other hand grew by 0.5 per cent to E9.4 billion at the end of November 2023. The banking sector's total non-performing loans (NPLs) fell by 4.1 per cent in November 2023 compared to the previous month to settle at E1.1 billion. Consequently, the NPL ratio declined by 0.3 of a percentage point month-on-month to 6.9 per cent at the end of November 2023.

As at 19 January 2024, gross official reserves stood at E11.1 billion an equivalent to import cover of 3.5 months. Total public debt increased by 1.0 per cent to E34.7 billion in December 2023 from E34.3 billion the previous month. At this level, public debt is equivalent to 40.9 per cent of GDP.

The Bank will continue to monitor international and domestic developments that influence the movements of inflation and will act appropriately in line with its mission to foster price and financial stability that is conducive to the economic development in Eswatini.

Dr. Phil Mnisi
GOVERNOR

Two men sentenced to 20, 17 years for 16 counts of robbery worth E2 million

Stories By Nokunceda Magagula
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A reign of terror on innocent citizens has come to an end after Phumlani Magongo and Neliswa Malaza were sentenced 20 years and 17 years imprisonment.

The two men were sentenced at the Mbabane Magistrate's Court on Tuesday by Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi. Principal Magistrate stated that accused number 1 Magongo will spend 17 years in prison or pay E18 000 fine and accused 2, Malaza will spend 20 years in prison or pay E36 000 fine.

This comes after the accused were found guilty for 16 counts of robbery. During their mitigation Magongo mitigation statement, explaining to the court why leniency should be considered in sentencing.

In a voice filled with remorse, Magongo said he is asking the court to exercise leniency when handing down his sentence, "I regret what I have done, however, I committed these offences because I had to provide for my family, since I have a child and all my parents have died" Magongo asserted.

Magongo made it known that crime became his only option due to unemployment. Additionally, Magongo's co-accused, Nel-



▲ Gift Magongo who was sentenced with his co-accused Neliswa Malaza.

iswa Malaza, presented a mitigation statement through legal representative Sivesonkhe Ngwenya of Sivesonkhe Attorneys.

Ngwenya requested leniency from the court in sentencing, urging for a concurrent sentence for the accused. He emphasized that the accused, who is currently unem-

ployed, has children to care for.

Among the crimes for which the accused were found guilty is the theft of a Mercedes Benz valued at E800,000 and two cell-phones belonging to a South African national visiting eSwatini.

When delivering the judgment, Principal Magistrate Nhlabatsi stated that Magongo forcibly took the car at gunpoint in Ezulwini. During the testimony of the South African national, it was revealed that Magongo forced him into the car, and they drove to Mbabane. In the car, Magongo struggled with changing gears and sought assistance from the victim, who complied. Upon reaching Mbabane, the car owner was forcibly removed from the vehicle, managing to rush to the nearest police station.

The South African national successfully identified Magongo as the perpetrator who stole the car. Principal Magistrate Nhlabatsi stated that she found the accused guilty, citing evidence that in another robbery, to which he pleaded guilty, Magongo had testified about stealing a car and abandoning it because he couldn't drive it.

Nhlabatsi said that Magongo's inability to drive the car, as evidenced by his failure to change gears, supports the conclusion that he was indeed the person driving the Mercedes Benz. Additionally, the investigation officer testified that the car keys were

discovered at Magongo's residence in Qobonga. Despite Magongo pleading not guilty and providing an alibi claiming to be at home during the robbery, Nhlabatsi found him guilty based on the compelling evidence presented by the witness.

Count 3, Malaza faced the charge of housebreaking with intent to steal and theft. He pleaded guilty and did not contest the evidence presented by the complainant. As a result, Nhlabatsi convicted him and found him guilty of the charges.

Count 4 involved charges of housebreaking with intent to steal and theft for both accused. They both pleaded guilty to the charges and were subsequently found guilty based on their admissions.

Both accused were charged with count 5, where they were accused of housebreaking with intent to steal and theft since they also pleaded guilty to the count, they were again found guilty.

In Count 6, both accused faced charges of the theft of a motor vehicle, which was discovered abandoned near Bahai High School and damaged. They both pleaded guilty to this charge, and as a result, were found guilty in accordance with their plea.

From count 7 to 16 both accused are charged with house breaking and they both pleaded guilty to the charge and they were found guilty as per their plea.

Ngwenya murder case: I had to intention of killing Bongani – suspect

MANGALISO Dlamini who is charged with the murder of Bongani Nkhambule who he allegedly clapped with an open hand once on the cheek and died.

Dlamini said the above in his bail application affidavit, "I submit before this honorable court that I had no intention of killing Nkhambule but I was angry when he tried to intervene in a serious situation, I just wanted him to mind his own business and let me sort out my car problem" Dlamini said.

In his affidavit the accused explained what occurred on the fateful day of the accident, he said that in January 21, he was at Oshoek visiting his friends when an unknown man crashed into his car from the back. Upon realizing how badly damaged his car was, he confronted him and that is when the deceased approached the scene of the accident and tried to intervene in the situation at hand.

Mistake

The deceased argued that it was a mistake and that he would fix the accused car, however, the accused told him not to intervene as he needed the person who had crashed into his motor vehicle to have it fixed as soon as possible.

Dlamini said while still trying to address the person who had hit his car, the deceased forcefully came in between himself and this unknown person since he was intoxicated. In the heat of the moment, the accused slapped the deceased person and he fell down on the concrete ground



▲ Mangaliso Dlamini during his court appearance.

and started nose bleeding.

Nkhambule remained on the ground and the accused continued confronting the unknown person who had crashed into his car until they reached common ground about having his car fixed.

Bleeding

"I then asked my friends, Mlungisi and Mvikeli to help me carry the deceased into the car upon realizing that he was nose bleeding. We took him to Mvikeli's house where he spent the night and the next day in the morning, I went to check up on him. He was still breathing but struggling to utter any words and I asked Mvikeli to help me rush him to the hospital" Dlamini said.

Upon our arrival, they were attended to by nurses at the Mbabane Government Hospital and the de-

ceased was admitted only for up to 45 minutes and he passed on.

The accused said he sent a delegation from his family to the deceased family to apologize for the incident and to cater for the burial of the deceased. "I am advised and verily believe that for purposes of the present application, the above defense suffices as a full one to the charge I am facing will be traversed at trial. I further submit that it will not be in the interests of justice to refuse my admission to bail and allow my detention to continue because there is no likelihood that if I am released on bail I may endanger the safety of the public or any particular person," Dlamini said.

The accused was granted bail fixed at E15 000. He was ordered to pay E3 000 cash and E12 000 as surety.

Couple arrested for assaulting each other

THE adage, the law favours everyone, holds true as the police have recently arrested a couple who assaulted each other.

According to sources close to the matter, Zinhle Dube and Mbuso Zondo are a couple who are in an intimate relationship. On January 24, 2024, Dube and Zondo engaged in a fight, however, it is unclear what caused the fight. Dube is said to have hit Zondo with a beer bottle on the hand and a slipper shoe on the mouth.

On the other hand, Zondo is said to have hit Dube with an axe twice on the right hand. After the incident, Dube went to open a criminal case of assault against Zondo at the Mbabane police station. Zondo also went to the same police station to open a criminal case of assault against Dube.

The police then arrested both of them charging them with assault. In court, Dube was the first one to be called to the accused dock. Dube's charge sheet read she is charged with contravening Section 77(1) of the Sexual Offenses and Domestic Violence Act of 2018. "On January 24, 2024, at Nkwadini zone 4 in the Hhohho region, the said accused did unlawfully assault her boyfriend with a slipper shoe on the month and a beer bottle in the hand" the charge sheet reads.

The crown applied that Dube



▲ Zinhle Zondo who allegedly assaulted her boyfriend.

should be remanded out of custody until February 9, 2024 for the setting of her trial date. The court ruled that she shall come back to court on the said date.

Zondo followed and entered the accused dock, the charge sheet reads that the accused is also charged with contravening the same Act. "On January 24, 2024, at Nkwadini Zone 4 in the Hhohho region, the said accused did unlawfully assault his girlfriend with an axe twice on the right hand" the charge sheet reads. He was also remanded out of custody until February 9, 2024, pending the setting of his trial date.

The crown council explained that the accused cases will not be attended by the same Magistrate, so one will be given another Magistrate to preside over their case.

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Pepkor's sales up 7.2% in Xmas quarter

JOHANNESBURG — South African discount retailer Pepkor Holdings reported on Tuesday a 7.2 per cent rise in sales in the Christmas quarter from a year earlier despite the negative impact on stock inflows from port congestion at home.

The PEP and Ackermans clothing brands owner said group revenue rose to 26 billion rand (\$1.38 billion) in the three months to Dec. 31, its fiscal first quarter.

Black Friday, holiday sales spur demand at Shoprite

JOHANNESBURG — Shoprite South Africa's biggest supermarket group, reported on Tuesday a nearly 14 per cent jump in its half-year sales, supported by a record Black Friday and festive season as cash-strapped shoppers and upmarket consumers went after food deals. The retailer, with more than 2,900 stores across Africa, said group sales for the six-month period ended December 31 rose to 121.1 billion rand (\$6.44 billion).

Oil up on Middle East tensions

LONDON — Oil prices edged higher on Tuesday following a more than 1 per cent drop in the previous session as escalating tensions in major producing region the Middle East fuelled supply concerns, though a bleak Chinese economic outlook limited gains. March Brent crude futures, which are due to expire on Wednesday, rose 8 cents, or 0.1 per cent, to \$82.48 a barrel by 1059 GMT. The more active April contract rose 13 cents, or 0.2 per cent to \$81.96. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude was up 24 cents, or 0.3 per cent, at \$77.02 a barrel.

Eswatini Railways issues out Power Locomotive tender



▲ ESR is in the market for a high tractive power locomotive.

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

THE Eswatini Railways (ESR) has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to engage a competent and suitable manufacturer to supply a high tractive power locomotive.

The power locomotive has to operate within the axle load limit of 18.5 tons/axle whilst hauling a gross tonnage load of 2700 tons on a track gradient of 1:80.

According to the RFP, the locomotive must be highly fuel efficient and be adaptable to alternative fuel sources such as hydrogen or

upgradable to alternative electricity generation mechanisms such as hydrogen fuel cells.

The RFP stated that the radio on the 450-470 MHz Range, and Tait Radio are preferred as it has both Data and Voice Radio to send GPS Signals, Data, and Voice Signals on a Triton Aerial that has to be installed on top of the Locomotive that also enable communication with Cab Units and the Rear Unit Telemeters.

According to the RFP, it shall close punctually at 10:30 am on January 31, 2024, in the tender box located at the main entrance of the Eswatini Railways Head Office in Mbabane at Reception.

"The documents should be submitted in a plain sealed envelope clearly marked "Tender

No.02-2024 – Supply of A Locomotive" and must not bear any name or mark, which would identify the Tenderer," read the RFP.

Eswatini Railways is a parastatal organization that provides transport services for import and export commodities as well as transit cargo. It is rated one of the best railways in the SADC region in terms of transit time, reliability, and predictability.

It links Swaziland's main industrial centres with the railway systems of South Africa, Mozambique, and other SADC countries that trade with overseas markets. This railway owns and maintains the infrastructure, and rolling stock and operates a 301km rail network.

Pigg's Peak Pig Farmers invited to free training

THE Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with Feed Master has invited Pigg's Peak Pig Farmers for free training.

According to the notice issued by the ministry, the pig farmers are required to register before the day of the training which is set for February 6, 2024. The notice stated that there would be different speakers and topics to be deliberated on during the training.

It is said that the farmers will be trained on piggery unit setup, efficient pig nutrition, proper handling and use of pig vaccines, pork processing, and market, and access to finance.

The notice stated that these topics would be discussed by the region's extension officers, Umbuluzi Valley sales processing and marketing unit, and Eswatini Bank's business advisor.

The training will be held at the Pigg's Peak DC Conference room next to the post office.

Ministry of Agriculture Principal Secretary (PS) Sydney Simelane said as a ministry they were going to continue with these trainings to ensure that they maintain the pork quality and quantity in the country.

Simelane stated that as a country we have reached a point where we are self-sufficient and can produce enough pork locally without the help of imports.

"We have a place in Mafutseni where, as a ministry, we produce the baby pigs and let local farmers buy them from us and grow them so they can produce pork," he said.

He stated that such training is very essential



▲ Pig farming facility.

for them as a country as they can determine the gaps within the pig farming industry and ensure that the country maintains its self-sustaining position. The PS further thanked Feedmaster for their continued partnership with them in ensuring that such training is a success.

He also encouraged the different pig farmers in the country to always be on the lookout for when these trainings with be in their regions.

According to their website, Feedmaster is the leading animal feed manufacturer in Namibia and other South African countries, and their strategic intent is to be the leading supplier of technologically advanced animal feed products and value-added services, through skilled and committed staff.

According to the website, founded in 1983, Feedmaster is the leading animal feed manufacturer and part of the Namib Mills Investments Group (NMI) in Namibia.

"Our strategic intent is to be the leading supplier of technologically advanced animal feed products and value-added services through

our skilled and committed staff," read part of the website.

Based in Windhoek and surrounding areas, Feedmaster, with its three feed mills, provides its customers with a wide range of scientifically proven animal feed products, developed especially for Namibian conditions. Our team of technical nutritionists and advisors is highly skilled, and we pride ourselves on the fact that our product specifications are based on local research.

Our website features a blog that focuses on news, research, and success stories and serves as a toolkit for the education of Namibian farmers. The Feedmaster website also showcases technical product information and serves as a source for the latest prices on meat and grain commodities for the Namibian meat industry.

As a socially responsible business, Feedmaster is also involved in various activities focusing on social investment training and education in the agricultural community.



FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	18.4732	18.9371
G.B. Pound	23.3653	24.0493
EURO	19.9801	20.5904
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	



EWSC invites sealed bids for office furniture for Nhlangano WWTP

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

THE Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) hereby invites sealed bids for the supply and delivery of office furniture for Nhlangano WWTP.

According to the Request for Proposal (RFP), the deadline for submission of bids is February 23, 2024, at 12.00 noon at which time they shall be opened physically in the presence of bidders who elect to attend.

“Late, telegraphic, emailed and faxed tenders shall not be accepted,” read part of the RFP. The RFP also stated that bids not accompanied by the required documents will not be evaluated, and payment will only be made upon delivery of all required items.

It is also stated that prices are to include all relevant taxes, transport, and delivery charges, and there will be no advance/upfront payments.

The RFP said the Procuring Entity indicated in the Tendering Data Sheet (TDS), issues these Tendering Documents for the supply of Goods and Related Services incidental thereto as specified in Section VI, Schedule of Requirements.

“The name and identification number of this Open National Tendering (ONT) procurement are specified in the TDS. The name, identification, and number of lots are provided in the TDS,” read part of the RFP.

EWSC looking for Lab equipment supplier

The Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) is looking for a tenderer to supply and deliver laboratory equipment for Nhlangano WWTP.

According to the Request for Proposal

(RFP), the deadline for submission of bids is February 23, 2024, at 12.00 noon at which time they shall be opened physically in the presence of bidders who elect to attend.

“Late, telegraphic, emailed, and faxed tenders shall not be accepted. Bids shall be valid for 90 days after bid opening and must be hand delivered to a designated tender box in a sealed envelope,” read the RFP.

The RFP stated that all the goods and related services to be supplied under the contract and financed by the government may have their origin in any country in accordance with Section V, Eligible Countries.

“For purposes of this Clause, the term “goods” includes

commodities, raw materials, machinery, equipment, and industrial plants, and “related services” includes services such as insurance, installation, training, and initial maintenance,” read part of the RFP.

EWSC looking to update its supplier's dashboard

The Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) has invited suitably qualified and reputable service providers to provide sealed applications for the supply and delivery of various goods, works, and services for the Corporation.

According to the Request for Proposals (RFP) shortlisted service providers shall be engaged as the Corporation's service providers and included in the Corporation's new supplier database for two years beginning April 1, 2024, and ending March 31, 2026.

The RFP stated that the pre-qualification is open to all service providers of goods, works, and services including companies owned by EmaSwati, youth-owned, people with

disability, small and medium enterprises, and international companies.

“The tender document is divided into two distinct categories which include local which is those

companies that are owned by EmaSwati and where at least 60 per cent shareholding is owned by EmaSwati, and international which is those companies that are owned by foreign nationals,” read part of the RFP.

The RFP stated that preference shall be given to locally owned companies and part EmaSwati-owned companies in that local companies where at least 60 per cent shareholding is held by EmaSwati shall be given 15 points during the evaluation, international companies which enter into a joint venture with local service providers shall be given 15 points during the evaluation, and International companies where at least 40 per cent shareholding is held by EmaSwati shall be given 15 points during the evaluation.

The RFP also stated that each service provider shall only provide submissions for a maximum of two categories, and any additional submissions shall be rejected.

The Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) is a body corporate duly established under the Water Services Corporation Act No.12 of 1992 as the sole provider of water services in the urban areas (water supply, and sewage treatment and disposal) and to control the abstraction of raw water from boreholes in those areas for which it is responsible. EWSC is a category ‘A’ Public Enterprise in terms of the Public Enterprise (Control and Monitoring) Act No.8 of 1989 and therefore it is wholly owned by the government.

The Eswatini Water Services Corporation has an obligation to reduce the number of people without access to clean water and proper sanitation irrespective of its commercial objective.

It also has an economic obligation to provide water and sewer services to stimulate economic development where there are socio-economic benefits irrespective of business or financial viability. Concerning access to good quality water, Vision 2022 envisages 100 per cent coverage for the country.



South African rand edges lower after budget balance, money supply

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa's rand edged lower on Tuesday after local budget balance and money supply figures, as investors braced for the Federal Reserve's monetary policy decision later this week.

At 1605 GMT, the rand traded at 18.8500 against the dollar, about 0.2 per cent weaker than its previous close.

The dollar index was last up 0.05 per cent against a basket of currencies.

Global attention this week is on the U.S. central bank's interest rate decision on Wednesday, at which it is expected to leave rates unchanged. Investors will focus on any clues about the likelihood of a rate cut in March. South Africa's budget surplus

decreased to 19.47 billion rand (\$1.03 billion) in December from 44.97 billion rand in the same month a year earlier, National Treasury data showed.

However, growth in money supply and credit extension ended the year stronger than expected, said Nedbank Group Economic Unit.

M3 money supply growth accelerated to 7.63 per cent year-on-year in December, and credit growth accelerated to 4.94 per cent year-on-year, central bank figures showed.

On the stock market, both the Top-40 index and the broader all-shares closed about 0.3 per cent higher.

South Africa's benchmark 2030 government bond was weaker, with the yield up 1.5 basis points to 9.780 per cent. (Reuters)



▲ South African rand coins are seen in this illustration.

Discount retailer Pepkor's sales up 7.2% in Xmas quarter



▲ Women walk past a PEP Home store in Johannesburg, South Africa.

JOHANNESBURG — South African discount retailer Pepkor Holdings reported on Tuesday a 7.2 per cent rise in sales in the Christmas quarter from a year earlier despite the negative impact on stock inflows from port congestion at home.

The PEP and Ackermans clothing brands owner said group revenue rose to 26 billion rand (\$1.38 billion) in the three months to Dec. 31, its fiscal first quarter.

Group merchandise sales increased by 5.5 per cent and like-for-like sales rose by 4.1 per cent.

Sales benefited from new store openings and demand for baby, younger children's and school clothing as well as adult wear. The tech division maintained sales levels amid a generally weak durables market,

Pepkor said.

Pepkor, which also has operations in the rest of Africa and Brazil, said the significant disruption to port operations it reported in November continues to have a negative impact on stock inflows.

"The group's merchandise and logistics teams have been proactive in addressing delays and implementing solutions to expedite and advance stock inflows," the retailer added.

The challenging backdrop has also hit upmarket rivals Truworths, TFG and Woolworths and discounter Mr Price.

South African state-owned logistics company Transnet has said backlogs at ports were due to factors including adverse weather and under-investment in equipment and maintenance. (Reuters)



▲ Shoppers leave the Shoprite store in Daveyton, South Africa .

Black Friday, holiday sales spur demand at S.Africa's Shoprite

JOHANNESBURG — Shoprite South Africa's biggest supermarket group, reported on Tuesday a nearly 14 per cent jump in its half-year sales, supported by a record Black Friday and festive season as cash-strapped shoppers and upmarket consumers went after food deals.

The retailer, with more than 2,900 stores across Africa, said group sales for the six-month period ended December 31 rose to 121.1 billion rand (\$6.44 billion).

Sales in the company's second quarter, which include November and the Christmas holiday period, rose 14.6 per cent.

Cash-strapped shoppers, hit by high interest rates and inflation, are spending less on discretionary items like clothes and shoes and more on food and essentials.

"Sustained high level of execution and continued customer momentum together with record Black Friday and

festive season trade has extended the period of uninterrupted market share gains achieved by our core South African supermarket brands to 58 months," the retailer said.

The group's core business, Supermarkets South Africa, which contributes about 80.5 per cent to the topline, witnessed a 14.6 per cent jump in sales, also benefiting from the acquisition of 94 stores bought from Walmart-owned Massmart. Like-for-like sales climbed 6.3 per cent.

Sales in rest of its stores in Africa rose 6.2 per cent in South African rand terms and by 20 per cent in constant currency.

Like its peers, Shoprite is grappling with severe rolling power cuts, forcing it to crank up diesel generators and spend more on back-up power supplies, adding to soaring costs for raw materials, transport and packaging.

The power outages resulted in diesel expenses of 500 million rand in the reported period. (Reuters)

Oil up on Middle East tensions, China economy worries limit gains

By Ahmad Ghaddar

LONDON — Oil prices edged higher on Tuesday following a more than 1 per cent drop in the previous session as escalating tensions in major producing region the Middle East fuelled supply concerns, though a bleak Chinese economic outlook limited gains.

March Brent crude futures , which are due to expire on Wednesday, rose 8 cents, or 0.1 per cent, to \$82.48 a barrel by 1059 GMT. The more active April contract rose 13 cents, or 0.2 per cent to \$81.96. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude was up 24 cents, or 0.3 per cent, at \$77.02 a barrel.

Both contracts fell more than \$1 on Monday as a deepening real estate crisis in China fuelled worries about demand the world's biggest crude consumer, after a Hong Kong court ordered the liquidation of property company China Evergrande Group.

Meanwhile, Washington vowed to take "all necessary actions" to defend its troops following a deadly drone attack in Jordan by Iran-backed militants, the first U.S. military deaths since the Israel-Gaza war began, putting markets on edge.

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"If U.S.-Iran tensions escalate, particularly through a direct confrontation, the risk rises that Iran's oil supply is adversely impacted," said Commonwealth Bank of Australia analyst Vivek Dhar. "Iranian oil exports are likely the most vulnerable via potentially greater enforcement of sanctions."

Iran exported 1.2-1.6 million barrels per day of crude oil through most of 2023, Dhar added, representing 1-1.5 per cent of global oil supply. Limiting the gains, however, were concerns about the outlook for China's economy, and any potential fall out from Evergrande's liquidation order, analysts said.

"[The] ramifications of a possible collapse in China's property sector makes moot any authority stimulus and will have very negative global shockwaves," PVM analyst John Evans said.



▲ An aerial view shows tugboats helping a crude oil tanker to berth at an oil terminal, off Waidiao Island in Zhoushan, Zhejiang province, China.

On the supply side, while an OPEC+ meeting on Feb. 1 was unlikely to see a decision on the oil policy the group's oil policy for April, analysts are hoping it could still shed some light on production plans.

Aramco, the state oil company of the world's biggest producer Saudi Arabia, in an indication for the future demand outlook,

said it had received a directive from the energy ministry to maintain its maximum sustainable capacity at 12 million barrels a day, and not to continue increasing it to 13 million barrels per day.

"It may be to save money. But most likely it implies that it sees no need for this extra oil in the global market," said SEB analyst Bjarne Schieldrop. (Reuters)

Man who served longest wrongful conviction in U.S. history files lawsuit against police

THE man who served the longest wrongful conviction in U.S. history is now suing the law enforcement officials whose investigation of a murder nearly 50 years ago led to him spending most of his life in prison.

Attorneys for Glynn Simmons filed a lawsuit in federal court Friday against two former Oklahoma police detectives and their respective departments alleging the two hid evidence that would have proven Simmons' innocence in a 1974 fatal shooting.

A judge ordered Simmons' release from prison last year after he served 48 years for his wrongful conviction in the death of Carolyn Sue Rogers, the clerk of a liquor store Simmons was accused of robbing in Edmond, a city around 15 miles north of Oklahoma City.

Innocence

Simmons' legal team alleges that retired Oklahoma City detective Claude Shobert and late Edmond detective Sgt. Anthony Garrett hid evidence that would have proven Simmons' innocence during an Edmond liquor store robbery. Convicted of murder in 1975, Simmons has always maintained he did not commit the crime and insisted he was in Louisiana at the time of the shooting, but he spent 48 years in prison until an Oklahoma County judge ordered him released in 2023 and then determined Simmons to be



▲Attorneys for Glynn Simmons filed a lawsuit in federal court Friday against retired Oklahoma City detective Claude Shobert, the estate of late Edmond detective Sgt. Anthony Garrett and the investigators' respective cities.

"actually innocent" later that year.

Simmons' lawyers argue that his constitutional rights were violated because investigators withheld a police report showing that eyewitness Belinda Brown — who was also shot in the head but survived — did not actually identify Simmons during a lineup. The attorneys point to Brown's participation in several other lineups and her identification of at least five different individuals as further proof of Simmons'

innocence. They also allege that investigators falsified reports to cover up inconsistencies from Brown, who herself told Garrett in early January 1975 that her memories "would get all jumbled up."

"Garrett and Shobert suppressed the fact that they fabricated evidence and manipulated Brown's identification; they never disclosed this information to (Simmons), his counsel, or the prosecutors," the attorneys wrote in the lawsuit.

"(Simmons') arrest was based solely on the evidence suppressed and fabricated by Defendants Garrett and Shobert. There was never any probable cause to suspect (him) of the liquor store robbery and murder."

The lawsuit was filed Friday in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. Simmons is being represented by attorneys Jon Loevy, Jordan Poole and Elizabeth Wang of Loevy & Loevy, a national civil rights law firm headquartered in Chicago. Simmons also is being represented by Joe Norwood, his Tulsa-based attorney for several years, and John Coyle, of the Oklahoma City-based Coyle Law Firm.

Norwood and Coyle successfully advocated for Simmons' release and formal exoneration in 2023. The attorneys said Simmons needed to be found "actually innocent" in Oklahoma County court in order to begin officially pursuing financial compensation for the decades he spent wrongfully incarcerated.

"He's pursuing whatever a jury will award him, which we are certain, if this case goes to a jury trial, will be much more than \$10 million," Wang told The Oklahoman, part of the USA TODAY network, Friday. "Oklahoma City has an ordinance that provided that they're required to indemnify up to \$10 million. That's what they're required to do."

(The Oklahoman)

WHAT better time to start fixating on your biggest worries than 11 p.m. when you're trying to fall asleep?

As soon as your head hits the pillow, maybe you start dwelling on an unresolved argument with your partner or keep replaying that awkward thing you said to your boss. Or perhaps you're anxious about the future, obsessing about tomorrow's schedule, or haunted by existential dread.

No matter the specifics, ruminating on negative experiences can keep you wide awake, Rebecca Robbins, PhD, sleep researcher and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, tells SELF.

That's because "focusing on things that are stressful might spike your cortisol [the "stress hormone"] or blood pressure," Dr. Robbins says. Basically, when you have anxious thoughts, even if you're safe and snuggled up in bed, your body can go into high-alert mode, making it impossible to relax, as SELF previously reported.

That doesn't mean you're destined for a night of tossing and turning, though. Below, Dr. Robbins shares her top three strategies for quieting your mind when you start overthinking at bedtime.

If you're worrying about stuff you have to do the next day, write it down

Maybe you can't stop thinking about finishing that project, responding to those emails, and preparing for a presentation by the end of the day tomorrow. Or, you suddenly realize that you forgot to do laundry and get groceries—so now you're trying to work out how you can possibly fit those extra chores into your hectic morning schedule.

"Sometimes, our to-do lists can keep us awake," Dr. Robbins says. When looming tasks are weighing on your mind, she suggests putting them on paper to get them out

3 things to do when you can't fall asleep ... Because you're overthinking... eeverything



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of your head. This might sound counterintuitive (Won't writing out my worries make me focus on them more?), but one study published in 2017 suggests that jotting down the stuff you need to do can decrease anxiety and help you fall asleep faster.

There isn't much research on why, exactly, this works, but Dr. Robbins has a couple theories. For one, taking a few minutes (time you would have spent ruminating anyway) to organize your scattered thoughts in a notebook (or your phone's notes app) might help you realize your schedule isn't as daunting as it seemed. Plus, listing tomorrow's tasks may signal your mind to stop worrying now that there's a concrete plan in place, she adds. (The study above found that the longer the list, the quicker participants dozed off, so try to get specific.)

Count your blessings instead of sheep

Writing down (or even just mentally noting) what you're thankful for—like your health, your loved ones, or even small things, like achieving a PR on your morning 3-mile run or receiving a compliment about your hair from that random person at Starbucks—can also halt bedtime overthinking, Dr. Robbins says. In the moment, this exercise can interrupt your stressful thoughts with more calming ones, which can shift your focus and help you relax, she explains. And regularly practicing gratitude has also been shown to decrease rumination and worry and increase sleep quality.

If you want to take the writing route, jot

down a few things you're grateful for in a journal every night before bed, or even just one positive highlight from your day, if that feels more manageable, Dr. Robbins suggests.

This might prevent you from getting into a negative headspace in the first place, research shows, and you can also refer back to your list if overthinking strikes after lights-out. And again, if mental (or voice) notes are more your style, that works too. (Here are a few more practical ways to practice gratitude, if you're interested.)

Try "cognitive shuffling"... or another mindfulness exercise

Speaking of counting sheep, there actually is some truth to this age-old remedy, Dr. Robbins says, since you're distracting your brain from whatever's making you anxious or overwhelmed.

There's certainly no harm in tallying up those fluffy creatures and seeing if it works for you, but because opinions on this method are pretty mixed, we've got some alternative exercises to test out. Dr. Robbins suggests counting down from 100 to zero, for example. Another option is doing a body scan, where you pay attention to the sensations (like tightness, tingling, maybe coldness) in each area of your body, starting at the bottoms of your feet, then your toes, then the tops of your feet, your heels, your ankles... you get the point. Personally, what works for me is a cognitive shuffle—I think of random, unrelated words (like cat...golf ball...jungle) until I doze off, without even realizing it.

(self.com)

ITALIAN Premier Giorgia Meloni on Monday unveiled Italy's big development plan for Africa at a summit of the continent's leaders, aiming to stem the numbers of migrants, diversify sources of energy and forge a new, non-predatory relationship between Europe and Africa.

Meloni declared the summit a successful first step, and top European and United Nations officials said the Italian plan, with an initial endowment of 5.5 billion euros (\$5.95 billion), would complement initiatives already under way focusing on climate adaptation and clean energy development in Africa.

But the African Union Commission was more cautious, telling the summit that African countries would have liked to have been consulted beforehand and didn't want more empty pledges.

The government's plan, named after Enrico Mattei, founder of state-controlled oil and gas company Eni, seeks to expand co-operation with Africa beyond energy and amounts to a new philosophy and method, Meloni said.

Asked at a closing news conference about the lack of consultation with African leaders, Meloni acknowledged she may have "erred" in being too specific in describing pilot projects in her introductory speech.

But she said the summit provided African leaders with a preliminary outline of Italy's philosophy backed by concrete examples, that will be brought forward in a shared partnership. "The summit is fundamental for sharing not only the strategy but also, in short, the final definition of the project," she said. Two dozen African leaders, top EU and U.N. officials and representatives from international lending institutions were in Rome for the summit, the first major event of Italy's Group of Seven presidency.

Italy unveils its plan for the development of Africa



▲ Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Council Charles Michel, President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola, Chairperson of the African Union Azali Assoumani, Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat and Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Amina J. Mohammed attend the Italy-Africa summit, inside the Madama Palace (Senate) in Rome, Italy

Italy, which for decades has been ground zero in Europe's migration debate, has been promoting its development plan as a way to create jobs and opportunity in Africa and discourage its young people from making dangerous migrations across the Mediterranean Sea. The plan involves pilot projects in areas

such as education, health care, water, sanitation, agriculture and energy infrastructure. Meloni, Italy's first hard-right leader since the end of World War II, has made curbing migration a priority of her government. But her first year in power saw a big jump in the numbers of people who arrived on Italy's

shores, with about 160,000 last year. As the summit got underway, the International Organization for Migration reported that nearly 100 people had died or gone missing in the Mediterranean so far this year, twice as many as in the same period of last year, which was the deadliest since 2016. (Reuters)



▲ Zimbabwe on Monday launched a cholera vaccination campaign to immunize over 2 million people against the waterborne disease, amid an outbreak that has killed hundreds since early last year.

Zim launches door-to-door cholera vaccination campaign

HARARE - Zimbabwe on Monday launched a cholera vaccination campaign to immunize over 2 million people against the waterborne disease, amid an outbreak that has killed hundreds since early last year. Cholera had killed 452 people and infected a total of 20,446 in the southern African country as of Jan. 24, since the outbreak started in February 2023, according to health ministry statistics. About half of the cases have involved children.

Zimbabwe will receive a total of 2.3 million vaccine doses from UNICEF

and the World Health Organization to be deployed to 29 of the hardest-hit districts. More than 892,000 doses have already been dispatched, the health ministry said.

The cholera vaccine roll-out campaign was launched in Kuwadzana, a township about 15 km (9 miles) from central Harare.

Health workers administered the first vaccines to schoolchildren amid calls for residents to participate. They have also started going door-to-door offering vaccines to households.

Cholera is spread by contaminated food or water and often occurs in

crowded urban areas with poor sanitation facilities.

The campaign uses the Euvi-chol-Plus vaccine, produced by Eu-Biologics (206650.KQ), opens new tab, which is administered orally and protects against cholera infections for at least six months.

In November, the Zimbabwean government moved to restrict public gatherings and food vending and monitor burials in areas affected by cholera after cases spiked.

"The introduction of the cholera vaccine is another tool to prevent the further spread of the disease," the health ministry said. (Reuters)

12 sentenced to life imprisonment for lynching Ghana soldier

A Ghanaian court has sentenced 12 people to life imprisonment for the murder of army officer Major Maxwell Mahama seven years ago.

The High Court in Accra found them guilty of murder, conspiracy, and abetment in the lynching that took place in Denkyira Obuasi in May 2017.

Among the convicted is a local politician accused of inciting the community to attack the soldier while he was jogging. Two suspects were acquitted.

Major Mahama, 32, was attacked by a mob over false allegations of being an armed robber while on duty to protect a local mine.

The incident sparked national outrage, leading to the arrest of over 50 suspects, with 14 facing prosecution.

The government posthumously promoted Major Mahama to the rank of major and gave him a state burial in Accra.

In 2019, a statue was unveiled in Accra as a national campaign against mob action.

(Reuters)



▲ A Ghanaian court has sentenced 12 people to life imprisonment for the murder of army officer Major Maxwell Mahama seven years ago.

ISLAMABAD - A Pakistan court sentenced Imran Khan to 10 years' jail on Tuesday for leaking state secrets, his party said, the harshest sentence against the former prime minister and cricketer in multiple cases coming just days before national elections.

The special court found Khan guilty of making public the contents of a secret cable sent by Pakistan's ambassador in Washington to the government in Islamabad, his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party said. Former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was also sentenced to 10 years in the same case.

The jail term is the second conviction for Khan in recent months, and ensures the popular politician will remain out of the public spotlight ahead of next week's parliamentary vote which will also lead to the nomination of a new prime minister.

The court was due to issue its written verdict later.

The PTI said it would challenge the decision. "We don't accept this illegal decision," Khan's lawyer, Naeem Panjutha, posted on social media platform X.

Khan aide Zulfikar Bukhari told Reuters that the legal team was given no chance to represent him or cross examine witnesses, adding that the proceedings were carried out in jail.

Another of Khan's lawyers, Ali Zafar, told ARY television that given the circumstances of the trial and sentencing, the chances of the case being quashed on appeal was "100%".

Bukhari called the conviction an attempt to weaken support for Khan. "People will now make sure they come out and vote in larger numbers," he told Reuters.

Khan was previously sentenced to three years in a corruption case, which had already ruled him out of the election next week.

However, his legal team was hoping to get him released from jail, where he has been since August last year, but the latest conviction means that is unlikely even as the charges are contested in a higher court.

The party of three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Khan's main political opponent, said the verdict was not harsh enough.

"I think, based on his carelessness and

Pakistan court jails ex-PM Imran Khan for 10 years days ahead of polls

crime - pertaining to important national interests - this is a very light sentence," Ahsan Iqbal, a senior Sharif aide, said in a TV interview.

MULTIPLE CASES

Analysts believe Sharif's party is the front-runner to form the next government following the polls.

The sentencing just before the polls will "raise questions about the elections' credibility", said Mazhar Abbas, a Karachi-based analyst.

Pakistan's recovery from economic crisis depends on political stability. The election comes as Pakistan is navigating a tricky recovery path under a \$3 billion International Monetary Fund bailout that helped the country narrowly avert a sovereign default last year.

Khan has been fighting dozens of cases since he was ousted from power in a parliamentary vote of no confidence in 2022.

Khan says the secret cable mentioned in the case was proof of a conspiracy by the Pakistani military and the U.S. government to topple his government in 2022 after he visited Moscow, just before Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Washington and the Pakistan military deny the accusations.

The former prime minister has previously said the contents of the cable appeared in the media from other sources.

Khan's PTI, which won the 2018 elections, suffered a major setback earlier this month when a court upheld the Election Commission's decision to strip the party of its traditional election symbol, the cricket bat.

His candidates are now contesting as independents, many of them on the run amid what the party calls a crackdown backed by



▲ A Pakistan court sentenced Imran Khan to 10 years' jail on Tuesday for leaking state secrets.

the military. The military denies this.

Khan's media team posted a message from the jailed leader on X in the moments that led up to the verdict.

"These people want to provoke you by giving me a harsh sentence in this case so that you go out on the streets and protest, then add unknown people to the crowd and then do another false flag operation," the post said.

In May last year, the first time Khan was arrested, his supporters were accused of ri-

oting and ransacking military installations, including a high-ranking general's home. Khan denies his supporters were part of the mob.

He called on his supporters to make sure they came out in numbers to vote for candidates backed by him.

"This is your war and this is your test that you have to take revenge for every injustice by your vote on February 8 while remaining peaceful," the post added.

(Reuters)

'Pentagon not seeking war with Iran after Jordan attack'

WASHINGTON - U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Monday vowed the U.S. would take "all necessary actions" to defend its troops after a deadly drone attack in Jordan by Iran-backed militants, even as President Joe Biden's administration stressed it was not seeking a war with Iran.

The attack on Sunday killed three U.S. soldiers and wounded more than 40 troops. It was the first deadly strike against U.S. troops since the Israel-Hamas war erupted in October and marks a major escalation in tensions that have

engulfed the Middle East.

"Let me start with my outrage and sorrow (for) the deaths of three brave U.S. troops in Jordan and for the other troops who were wounded," Austin said at the Pentagon.

"The president and I will not tolerate attacks on U.S. forces and we will take all necessary actions to defend the U.S. and our troops," Austin added at the start of meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Pentagon.

"As the president said yesterday, we will respond and

that response could be multi-leveled, come in stages and be sustained over time," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said.

But officials across the Biden administration said they did not want the situation to escalate. The Pentagon suggested Iran didn't want a war either.

"We certainly don't seek a war and frankly we don't see Iran wanting to seek a war with the United States," Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told reporters. She added that the Pentagon believed Iran did not want a war either.

"We are not seeking a conflict with the regime in the military way," White House national security spokesman John Kirby said, adding that Biden was working his way through response options.

The United States is trying to determine exactly why the nearly 350 troops at the base in Jordan, known as Tower 22, were unable to stop the drone.

Two officials said a U.S. drone was approaching the base around the same time the attack drone was incoming. One of the officials said the attack drone was also flying low, factors that may have contributed to it being missed by base defenses.

The U.S. military released the names of the victims, the youngest of which was a 23-year-old Army Reserve specialist, Breonna Alexsondria Moffett.

U.S. troops have been attacked over 160 times in Iraq, Syria and Jordan since Oct. 7 and warships been attacked in the Red Sea as well. Houthi fighters in Yemen have been firing drones and missiles at them on the Red Sea.

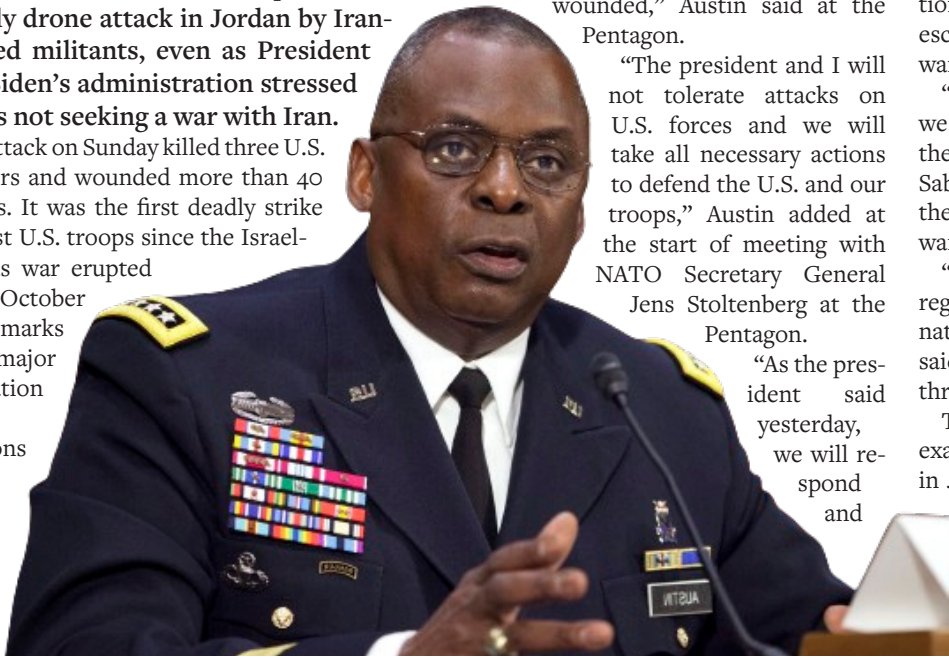
The attacks are piling political pressure on Biden to deal a blow directly against Iran, a step he has been reluctant to take out of fear of igniting a broader war.

Biden met with Austin and other members of his national security team in the White House Situation Room on Monday morning to discuss the latest developments regarding the attack, the White House said.

The president's options could include targeting Iranian forces outside or inside Iran and opting for a more cautious retaliatory attack solely against the Iran-backed militants responsible, experts say.

"Iran continues to destabilize the region, this includes backing terrorists who attack our ships in the Red Sea," Stoltenberg said.

(Reuters)



▲ U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin vowed the U.S. would take "all necessary actions" to defend its troops after a deadly drone attack in Jordan by Iran

Swazi Rally returns with thrilling biking experience

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

BIKING lovers are ready to rev their engines and experience the ride of a lifetime as the highly anticipated Swazi Rally makes its grand return from August 30- September 1, 2024.

Fun lovers from across Africa are gearing up for an adrenaline-fueled weekend filled with breathtaking scenery, heart-pounding action, and unforgettable moments. Taking place at the iconic Riders Ranch in Sidvokodvo, this annual affair brings together biking enthusiasts from far and wide to indulge in a weekend of thrilling experiences. With each passing year, the Swazi Rally continues to captivate attendees, and this year promises to be an absolute showstopper.

Last year's event featured the talented Oscar Mbo as the headliner, setting the stage on fire with his electrifying performance. Additionally, attendees had the chance to participate in a bike giveaway competition, with the grand prize being a sleek and powerful Suzuki Boulevard M109R, sponsored by Xtreme Trading.

The Swazi Rally has become a cherished tradition in the biking community, drawing enthusiasts from all corners of Southern Africa. Founded 30 years ago by Carlos Paiva, alongside his wife Sonia and a dedicated team, the rally was born out of a vision to create an unparalleled event for bikers in the region. Since its inception, the Swazi Rally has grown into one of Eswatini's oldest and largest



▲ Fun lovers pictured at a previous edition of Swazi Rally.

biking gatherings, earning a well-deserved reputation for its thrilling experiences and strong sense of camaraderie.

Event

What began as a modest gathering at the Somhlolo National Stadium with just a few hundred bikers has evolved into a massive event that attracts over 10 000 participants each year. Bikers and non-bikers alike flock to Eswatini to immerse themselves in a community built on brotherhood and a rich history of giving

back.

The Swazi Rally has become a melting pot of cultures and a celebration of the biking lifestyle. Bikers from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Eswatini converge on the rally grounds, transforming the entire site into a vibrant hub of excitement and camaraderie. From thrilling bike stunts to live music performances, delicious food stalls, and a wide range of activities, the Swazi Rally offers something for everyone.

Bless LePoet, Ninefourbeats collaborate with Zambian artist

ESWATINI wordsmith Bless LePoet and producer Ninefourbeats have joined forces with Zambian artist Wayesu Zambia to create a powerful song titled 'Ningam'khaleli', which can be translated as 'Don't sympathise with her'.

This unique collaboration brings together the talents of these artists to shed light on important social issues and advocate for change. 'Ningam'khaleli' is a mesmerising fusion of poetry and music, beautifully crafted in the SiSwati and Nyanja languages. The lyrics, which will be translated into English upon its release on Genius, tell the poignant story of a young girl who, despite the warnings and concerns of those around her, finds herself facing the consequences of unwanted pregnancy and the subsequent health challenges that follow.

This powerful song aims to raise awareness and advocate for the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, early marriages, and depression among young girls and the entire African community. Bless Lepoet and Ninefourbeats, along with Wayesu Zambia, hope to inspire the youth to listen to their parents or guardians

during their adolescent stage, emphasising the importance of making informed decisions and prioritising their well-being.

The track is produced by the talented duo Shykid and NineFourBeats. The collaboration between these artists brings together their unique styles and creative energies.

Passion

Bless LePoet, a gifted poet hailing from Phonjwane, discovered his passion for poetry in 2021. His journey began during his time in Form 3, and since then, he has dedicated himself to honing his craft and captivating audiences with his evocative words and thought-provoking performances. Now, he takes his talent to new heights with this collaboration, using his poetic prowess to shed light on pressing social issues.

Meanwhile, Ninefourbeats, also known as Sanele Dlamini from Bhunya, has established himself as a multifaceted artist, music producer, and songwriter. His musical journey began in 2014 when he started selling beats to earn pocket money. Over the years, he has evolved into a force to be reckoned with in the music industry, consistently pushing boundaries and creating music that resonates with listeners.



▲ Bless LePoet.



War Words 4 venue revealed

FUN lovers will be mesmerised as the fourth edition of War Words takes centre stage at Bethel Court, as confirmed by the event organisers, OGF.

The highly anticipated event, scheduled for March 23, 2024, promises an afternoon of poetic brilliance that will leave the audience in awe. The doors to this poetic battleground will open at 1:30 pm, with tickets priced at E130. Attendees are encouraged to dress in casual black and camouflage or opt for an all-black ensemble, setting the tone for an atmosphere charged with intensity and creativity.

War Words 4 is set to deliver a battle of punchlines that will reverberate through the hearts of the audience, evoking emotions and sparking inspiration. It will be a battle of wordplays that will leave the audience snapping their fingers just like Thanos in The Avengers and nodding their heads in awe.

Expectations

Anthonimass, the event's director, promised that this year's War Words will surpass all expectations. With each passing year, the event has grown in popularity, attracting poetry lovers from far and wide. It has become a staple in the local events calendar, cementing its position as one of the country's premier poetry shows.

War Words 4 is not just about showcasing the talent of seasoned poets but also provides a platform for emerging voices to shine. Anthonimass emphasised the event's inclusivity, celebrating the diversity and creativity within the poetry community. This unique blend of both novice and seasoned poets ensures a dynamic and captivating show, where new perspectives intertwine with established artistry.

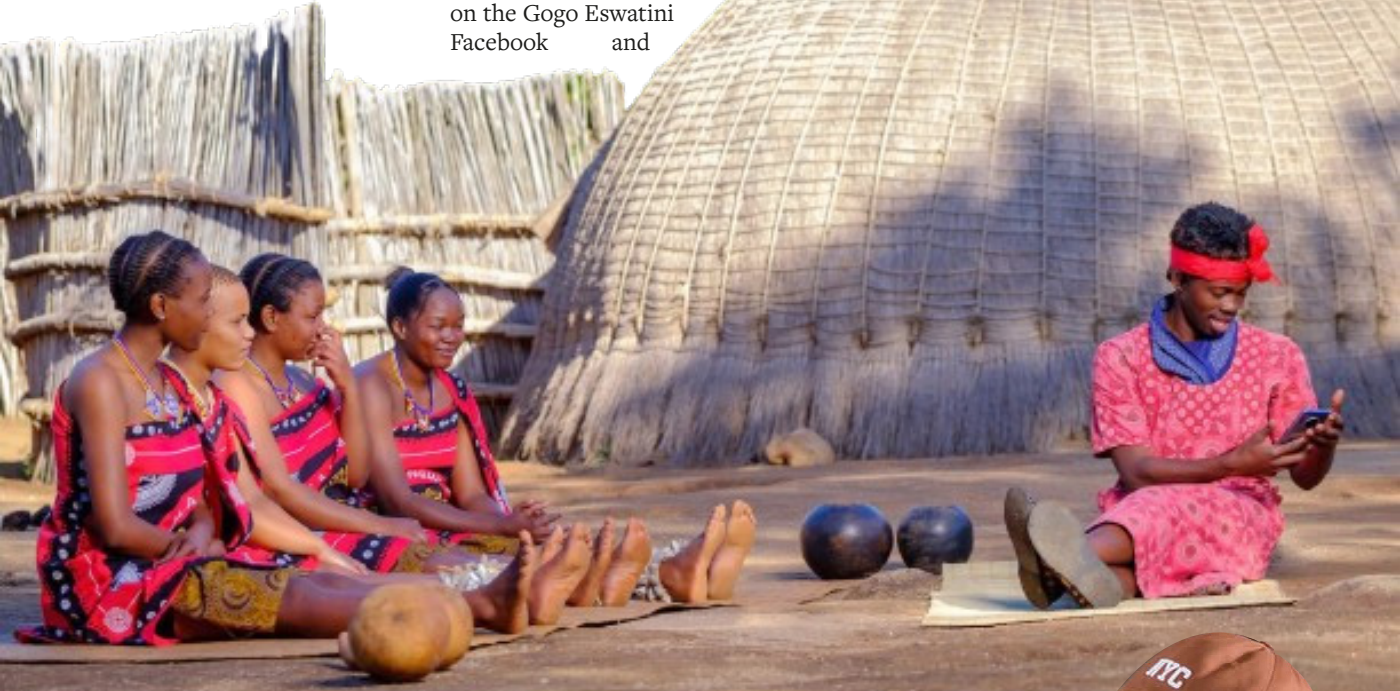
● War Words 4 is set to deliver a battle of punchlines that will reverberate through the hearts of the audience, evoking emotions and sparking inspiration.

‘SiSwati Sami, Bungimi Bami’ show returns

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

AFTER a brief hiatus, the beloved online show, ‘SiSwati Sami, Bungimi Bami-Ligcabho Lami,’ is making a triumphant comeback, ready to educate and entertain audiences about the rich Swati culture and traditions.

In an exclusive interview with the show’s host, the talented comedian Gogo, he expressed excitement about the show’s return. “We are back, and we are here to stay,” Gogo declared. Although this week’s episode won’t feature any guests, he assured fans that upcoming episodes will showcase a diverse range of knowledgeable and respected guests. In



▲ Gogo’s show ‘SiSwati Sami, Bungimi Bami-Ligcabho Lami’ is back.

Carrency to host the ‘Love Month Tour’

LOVE will be in the air as local musician Carrency prepares to take his fans on a romantic journey with his upcoming tour, aptly named the ‘Love Month Tour.’

This exciting event promises to spread love, joy, and kindness throughout the towns of Manzini, Big Bend, Siteki, Nhlanguano, Ezulwini, and Mbabane. Fun lovers will gather with their loved ones and be swept off their feet by Carrency and his talented companions.

In an exclusive interview, Carrency expressed excitement about the tour, stating that February, being the month of love, is the perfect time to celebrate and promote love and affection. With a line-up of talented artists and DJs such as ZaiMarn, Knoxman, Eimsofly, and Mafaka joining him, the Love Month Tour is set to be an unforgettable experience for fans.

Carrency also revealed that he will be treating his audience to brand-new music in 2024, with the tour serving as the perfect platform to launch his latest singles. The first confirmed show of the tour will take place at Platinum 24 on February 24,

the past, the show has already welcomed princes and senators as guests, adding a touch of prestige to the programme.

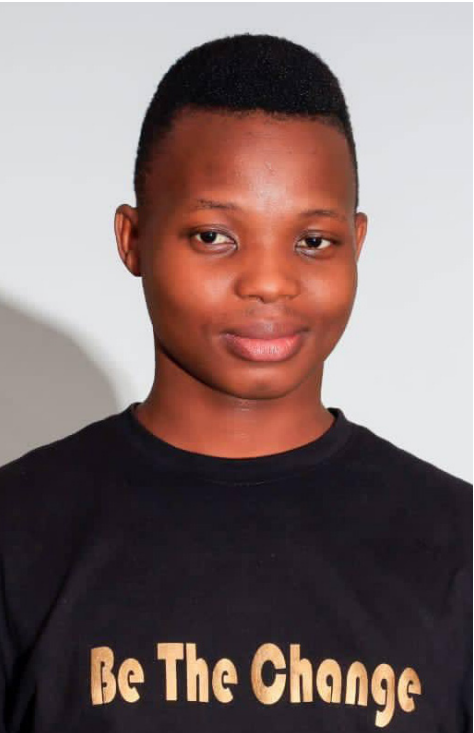
SiSwati Sami, Bungimi Bami is more than just a show, but a platform dedicated to teaching and preserving the Swati culture and language. Gogo explained that with fewer Swati homes and the gradual decline of the language, it is crucial to ensure its survival.

The show aims to bridge the gap by providing valuable insights into Swati customs, traditions, and language. Gogo emphasised that they also cater to school-going children, incorporating topics from their syllabus to aid in their cultural education.

To reach a wider audience, the show will be broadcast live every Wednesday on the Gogo Eswatini Facebook and

YouTube channels. Viewers can tune in from the comfort of their homes and engage in a captivating exploration of Swati culture. This week’s episode will delve into the topic of divorce, shedding light on the intricacies of ‘Kwehlukana kwendvodza nemfati’ (divorce in Swati custom).

SiSwati Sami, Bungimi Bami invites everyone, Swati or not, to join them on this enlightening journey. By embracing the Swati culture and preserving the language, the show aims to foster a deeper appreciation for Eswatini’s heritage.



▲ Emalovulovu Poetry Show organiser Caregiver.

‘Emalovulovu’ to serenade UNESWA students

IN a celebration of love and poetry, the UNESWA Poetry Society (UPS) is prepared to host a mesmerising event called ‘Emalovulovu’.

Taking place on February 14, 2024, at the Commerce Lecture Theatre, Kwaluseni Campus, this poetry event promises to be an unforgettable experience for all who attend. With February being the month of love, the event organiser, known as Caregiver, emphasised that Emalovulovu is primarily dedicated to love. However, he was quick to mention that the show welcomes all poetry enthusiasts, regardless of their relationship status. “We want everyone who appreciates the beauty of poetry to join us,” Caregiver expressed.

Starting at 6:30 pm and continuing late into the night, Emalovulovu aims to serve a delightful blend of heartfelt verses and romantic ambiance. Caregiver revealed that the inspiration behind the show stemmed from the month of love itself. “People have an inherent love for poetry, and what better way to celebrate love than through the power of words,” he shared.

Anticipation

Anticipation is high as the organisers have promised a spectacular line-up for Emalovulovu. While Caregiver refrained from revealing specific names, he hinted at the presence of renowned poets from the industry. Additionally, the show will feature talented poets from the UNESWA Poetry Society, including Words, Albas King, and himself. To ensure a seamless experience, Gcinimiyalo ‘Proff’ Ntuli has been chosen as the MC for the evening.

Caregiver assured attendees that the performers are working tirelessly to deliver exceptional sets, promising an evening filled with love, laughter, and inspiration. The organisers are going above and beyond to bring the audience’s favourites to the stage, ensuring an unforgettable experience for all.

Caregiver urged students and outsiders alike to come in large numbers and be part of this enchanting celebration. Emalovulovu is a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in the magic of poetry and embrace the essence of love.



▲ Rappper Carrency.

Snoop Dogg now says he has ‘nothing but love and respect’ for Trump

RAPPER Snoop Dogg did a U-turn on his opinion about Donald Trump, saying he has “nothing but love and respect” for the former president following years of staunch criticism.

In an interview with London’s The Sunday Times over the weekend, the “Gin and Juice” rapper was asked about his thoughts on the GOP front-runner in the upcoming presidential election. He replied by praising Trump, mentioning the former president pardoned Michael “Harry-O” Harris, a former associate of Suge Knight.

Pardoned

“Donald Trump?” Snoop Dogg said. “He ain’t done nothing wrong to me. He has done only great things for me. He pardoned Michael Harris.”

Knight, alongside Harris and Dr. Dre, co-founded the Death Row Records record label in the 1990s, which signed Snoop Dogg early in his career.

Harris was convicted of conspiracy to commit first-degree murder but was pardoned by Trump in 2021 after serving 30 years of a 25-year-to-life sentence, according to USA Today. Before leaving office, Trump

pardoned Harris, along with 69 others.

“I have nothing but love and respect for Donald Trump,” Snoop added.

The rapper’s latest sentiments are in stark contrast to what he has expressed in the past.

In a 2016 interview with Rolling Stone, Snoop Dogg said he had “never seen a motherf---er” like Trump, asking, “How could we have someone as reckless as him running our country?”

In 2018, Snoop Dogg also heavily criticized Trump and fellow rapper Kanye West, who is an open Trump supporter.

Stunts

The rapper is also known for his previous controversial stunts to condemn the former president, such as shared an EP cover on social media in 2017 that shows him standing over Trump’s dead body. In a 2018 visit to the White House, he smoked a blunt outside of the building.

In one of his most controversial moves, Snoop Dogg is seen in a music video shooting a clown dressed as Trump with a toy gun.

(Hollywoodunlocked.com)



▲Former US President Donald Trump and rapper Snoop Dogg.

DJ Zinhle feels ‘helpless’ for being unable to help Kairo Forbes deal with AKA’s death

IT’S been almost a year since legendary rapper Kiernan “AKA” Forbes was shot and killed, leaving his family, friends and the “Megacy”, grief-stricken ever since.

Most of all, his daughter, Kairo Forbes, whom he shared a close relationship with, has been having a difficult time processing her emotions.

DJ Zinhle, Kairo’s mom, took to Instagram to say how hard it’s been for the 8-year-old, in the lead up to AKA’s 36th birthday, which was on Sunday, January 28.

The “Umlilo” hitmaker said that although she wanted to “heal and celebrate” AKA, it was just “too soon” for Kairo.

“Kairo had a tough week leading up to Kiernan’s birthday, as a mother, I want her to heal & celebrate her dad but it’s too soon,” she said.

X users compare DJ Zinhle’s Era bag to cheaper Shein version DJ Zinhle celebrates two decades in male-dominated industry

DJ Zinhle said the past year had been a roller-coaster ride and that she felt “helpless” because she can’t help Kairo deal with her pain.

She thanked her husband and popular musician, Mörda, for putting aside his pride and protecting the family.

“@murdahbongz thank you for holding us close & protecting us. My prayer is that we never fail Kairo, that we always allow love & kindness to flow into her life so she never feels lost without Kiernan.



▲DJ Zinhle and her daughter Kairo. (Left) Slain rapper AKA.



“I know that will take time but I trust God, it might not be now but God knows you’ve put pride aside for your family & I am grateful for you.

“Imagine if I was dealing with a child who lost her dad alone but instead we have each other,” she said.

DJ Zinhle thanked her family, the Jiyanes, the Mohosanas, the Forbes and AKA’s girlfriend, Nadia Nakai, for sharing the load with Mörda and herself.

(IOL)

Mbali Miya is the first to be evicted from ‘Big Brother Mzansi’ season 4

“BIG Brother Mzansi” got off to a dramatic start with the eviction of the the first housemate coming within the first week of the show airing.

On Sunday, January 28, Them-bisa Bolt driver and club hostess Mbali ‘Mali’ Miya had to exit the house. Before leaving, she told Big Brother: “It was so much fun, so much positivity. The housemates where such great people, so I really had a good time. So I would say that my week has been really great.”

At the live show, Mali said that she was bummed to be out so early and that she was a bit overwhelmed by the big personalities in the house when she went in and did not show up fully.

“I am happy, though, that I stayed true to who I am. I want to take this moment to give thanks to everybody that voted for me. Thank you guys for the love. Thank you for the support. I wouldn’t have done

it without you, thank you so much, guys.”

The eviction took everyone by surprise as it has not been the norm for any housemate to be evicted in the first week of the show but, with the season’s shake-up, the game throwing out the rule book.

The first week came with drama, excitement and some contestants already taking shots.

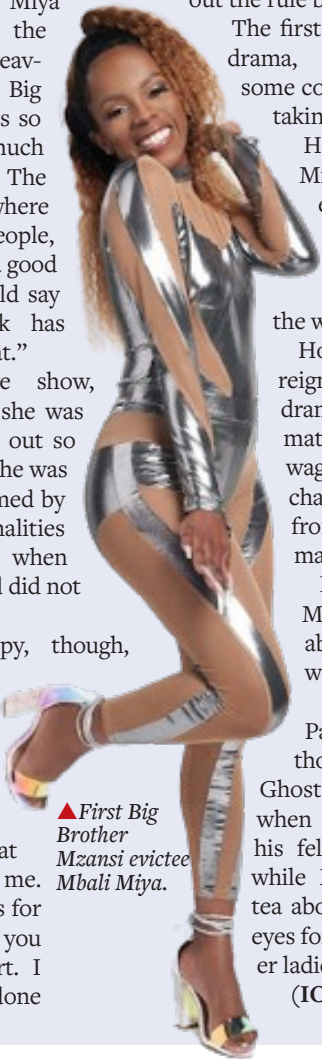
Head of House, Mich, was safe from eviction and so was Sammy M, who won immunity during the week.

However, Mich’s reign was not without drama as the housemates lost their first wager and also faced challenges of confrontational housemates.

Host Lawrence Maleka heard about the first week experiences.

McJunior and Pale shared their thoughts on Papa-Ghost being intense when working with his fellow housemates, while Mpumi gave the tea about Jared having eyes for her and the other ladies in the house.

(IOL)



▲First Big Brother Mzansi evictee Mbali Miya.

WE all know the age-old advice: load up on fruits and veggies to build a healthy plate.

While it's clear that eating leafy greens and steering clear of junk food can lead to lasting benefits - from boosting brain health to weight loss - there are tricks to unlocking even more nutrients inside of them.

Dietitians have revealed easy tips for getting the most out of your healthy foods.

For instance, did you know that leaving raw onions and garlic peeled and chopped on the counter for a few minutes could release enzymes shown to lower cholesterol and blood pressure?

And don't toss that white watermelon rind - it's packed with fiber, which will keep you fuller for longer, and help reduce cravings.

Read on for dietitians' top tips for making the most of your food.

KEEP YOUR NUTS AND SEEDS CHILLED

It's obvious that perishables like milk and cheese should be kept in the fridge.

But dietitians have suggested that even nuts and seeds benefit from this.

Marc O'Meara, a senior nutritionist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, told DailyMail.com that chilling your nuts prevents the fats in them from oxidizing, or deteriorating in quality.

'I tell all my patients to put their nuts in the fridge,' he said.

He also noted that oxidized fats have been linked to several health issues, including a greater risk of heart disease by increasing LDL (bad) cholesterol.

Nuts kept in the pantry will also taste worse after a while.

'You'll notice right away that it doesn't taste good,' Mr O'Meara said. 'If anyone ever notices this, they should stop eating that food right away.'

LEAVE YOUR GARLIC AND ONION OUT FOR A FEW MINUTES

Garlic and onion are good for more than just making your kitchen smell good.

These aromatics are packed with B vitamins, vitamin C, potassium, and antioxidants that have been shown to boost immune health and lower inflammation.

Much of this benefit is from an amino acid called alliinase, which activates when onion and garlic are chopped, minced, or crushed.

When it's exposed to air, alliinase becomes allicin, a compound that has been linked to lower cholesterol and blood pressure.

One 2020 study, for example, found that adults with high blood pressure who took garlic supplements lowered their systolic blood pressure (the top number in a blood pressure reading) by eight points and their diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number) by five points on average.

Michele Wisla, a culinary health coach in Hong Kong, told the South China Morning Post that leaving garlic and onions out for a few minutes after chopping can cause more allicin to form.

COOK YOUR TOMATOES FIRST

Raw tomatoes are rich in vitamin C, fiber, and minerals like magnesium, phosphorus,

Dietitians reveal hacks that add nutrients to food

- Dietitians revealed their top tips for making the most of your healthy foods
- Tips include ditching raw tomatoes and, oddly, eating watermelon rind



and potassium.

These are vital for bone health, blood pressure, sleep, anxiety, muscle health, and cell repair.

However, Mr O'Meara said that cooking them first takes them a step further.

'When you cook tomatoes, the lycopene, which is the major nutrient that's in tomatoes, is much more easily absorbed in our bodies,' he said. Lycopene is an antioxidant that's been shown to lower inflammation throughout the body, lowering the risk of major health issues like heart disease and certain types of cancer.

Lycopene has also been shown to lead to weight loss.

In a study published in the journal Nutrition, for example, found that participants who drank a daily glass of tomato juice containing lycopene lost about 1.6 centimeters in waist circumference and one pound of weight.

DON'T GET RID OF THAT WHITE WATERMELON RIND

Most people tend to ditch the rind before sinking their teeth into a slice of watermelon.

However, this might be one of the best parts.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, watermelon rind has less sugar and more fiber than the more fleshy parts of the fruit.

This means it passes slowly through the digestive system, keeping you full and reducing the risk of hunger pangs.

They rinds also contain citrulline, an amino

acid made naturally in the liver and intestines that helps the body cycle out waste and harmful substances.

In the body, citrulline turns into L-arginine, which widens blood vessels and helps lower blood pressure. This has also been shown to improve exercise performance.

A meta-analysis of eight studies, for example, suggests that supplementing six to eight grams of citrulline about an hour before exercise led to users being able to complete more reps.

It could even make you better in bed.

One study from researchers in Italy found that men who took citrulline supplements were able to have longer lasting erections than the control group.

STEAM, DON'T ROAST YOUR VEGETABLES

It's clear that vegetables are packed with a variety of nutrients, namely vitamin C.

Vitamin C is known for its immune-boosting properties, as well as its ability to aid in wound healing and skin health.

However, Mr O'Meara cautioned that cooking vitamin-C rich veggies like spinach, kale, and broccoli could strip them of the vitamin's benefits.

'Vitamin C is a nutrient that's highly broken down during cooking processes,' he said.

'So if somebody's trying to get more vitamin C absorbed in their body, they'd want to eat more raw foods or very lightly cooked foods

just because it breaks down so easily.'

'It's okay to cook it. You just don't want to cook it for a long time.'

Instead of baking a sheet pan of broccoli, for example, Mr O'Meara recommends steaming them or roasting them for just a few minutes.

PAIR YOUR VEGGIES WITH HEALTHY FATS

In addition to not overcooking your vegetables, pair them with healthy fats like olive oil and avocado, Mr O'Meara said.

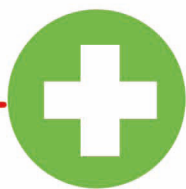
This is because leafy greens in particular are packed with vitamins A, E, and K, among others.

These are fat soluble, meaning that they need to be eaten alongside fats to be absorbed in the body.

'Even if you're cooking vegetables, make sure that there's some form of healthy fat like olive oil or avocado mixed in with the foods because those healthy fats can help you absorb a lot of the fat soluble vitamins,' Mr O'Meara said. He also suggested pairing a salad with an olive-oil based dressing.

Olive oil and avocado are both omega-3 fatty acids, which have long been linked to weight loss. A review published in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics found that introducing omega-3s like olive oil could 'induce modest reductions in body weight and composition.'

MailOnline



FORGET doing crossword puzzles, Sudoku, word search or reciting the alphabet backwards, one of the most powerful ways to protect yourself against dementia as you get older is by ensuring you get a good night's sleep.

We have known for some time that when we are in deep sleep, our body begins to do essential repairs, and fluid is released in our brains which helps wash out toxins that have been linked with Alzheimer's disease.

Last year, new research found that deep sleep is so important that even a small reduction can lead to a big increase in dementia risk. What makes this even more worrying is the fact that our sleep quality naturally tends to drop off with age.

The amount of time we spend each night in deep sleep shrinks from a luxuriously rejuvenating two hours to more like 30 minutes, which is why it is so important to do whatever you can to protect and enhance the quality of your sleep as you move through life.

As a long-term insomniac, I've spent many years studying sleep and, more recently, I've been involved in a major clinical study at a leading sleep research centre testing the best ways to combat insomnia.

WHAT TO DO IN WEEK FOUR

In my book, I describe how, over the first three weeks of my sleep plan, you will build a set of healthy lifestyle habits that should ring-fence good sleep. As part of the plan, you may want to try bedtime restriction therapy where, for a few weeks, you cut the amount of time you spend in bed.

This is a well-proven way of curing insomnia and boosting your sleep efficiency — the percentage of time you spend in bed asleep, rather than tossing and turning.

SAY GOODBYE TO WEEKEND LIE-INS

Like eating a big bar of chocolate, having a long weekend lie-in might feel good at the time, but it won't do your body and brain any favours in the long-term.

Lie-ins mess up the body's natural rhythms (your circadian rhythms) and reduce your sleep drive, so when you get to Sunday night you may struggle to sleep.

The urge to sleep is driven, at least in part, by a chemical in the brain called adenosine. It binds to receptors in your brain and causes those familiar feelings of drowsiness. The longer you are awake, the higher your adenosine levels rise and the sleepier you are likely to feel. If you have a long lie-in, there is less time for adenosine to rise, so you are unlikely to feel tired at bedtime.

This might not be a problem when you're young, or if you are lucky enough to sleep well, but if you're prone to insomnia, this shortfall could be enough to tip you into a run of bad nights.

That's why, unless you are doing bedtime restriction therapy, I recommend you stick to a regular sleep window, going to bed and waking up at the same time seven days a week — weekends included.

You should also aim to exercise

How to sleep more soundly to reduce your dementia risk

● The amount of time we spend each night in deep sleep shrinks from a luxuriously rejuvenating two hours to more like 30 minutes, which is why it is so important to do whatever you can to protect and enhance the quality of your sleep as you move through life.



regularly and work to keep a lid on your stress levels by practising mindfulness and breathing exercises whenever you can.

BOOST YOUR MICROBIOME

Over the past few years, scientists have become fascinated by the activities of the microbiome — these are the trillions of microscopic bacterium, fungi and viruses which live in our gut.

New research is emerging all the time, and I have been very excited to discover that studies show some of our microbes actually produce 95 per cent of the body's serotonin and dopamine — natural chemicals that make us happy, calm and which aid restful sleep.

We now know that a poor diet of highly processed food depletes these microbial populations, and that they thrive on a fibre-rich Mediterranean diet, which is one that contains oily fish (such as salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines and herring), nuts, olive oil and a wide variety of fruit, vegetables and pulses.

If you've been closely following my plan, you will have already been increasing the vegetables and fibre in your diet.

At week four, it's time to call in the reinforcements! If you've managed to build a good army of fibre-munching microbes, you can now start topping up your 'good bacteria' by eating fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir and kombucha.

These foods deliver fresh populations of helpful bacteria into your gut to boost the number that are already present.

A word of warning, however — if you haven't tried fermented foods before, start slowly. Although these foods are great at helping to

boost the beneficial bacteria in your gut, they can be an acquired taste and may produce gas!

MAKE THE MOST OF NATURAL LIGHT

If you are an owl — someone who perhaps struggles to fall asleep before midnight — I recommend going out into the early morning light each day to help reset your internal body clock and increase the chance of good sleep that night.

During the long, dark winter, it can be difficult to get enough light, and 30 minutes every morning in front of a light box can help.

Light levels in your house or at the office are more likely to be a miserable 25 to 50 lux (a measure of light intensity), but a good light box can produce 10,000 lux, which is similar to the sunshine on a bright spring morning.

Extreme larks, on the other hand, who wake very early and struggle to stay awake at night, might benefit from a blast of light in the early evening to wake them up.

The same is also true for anyone who does night shifts.

PUT YOUR PHONE TO BED FIRST

You've probably heard this before, but at night it is best to keep your phone out of reach as you will otherwise be tempted to pick it up and start scrolling.

According to Google Trends, the most popular time of day for people to search for the word 'insomnia' is at 3am (presumably that is when people are doom-scrolling on their smartphones).

I recommend putting your phone or tablet

on the other side of the bedroom or even in another room altogether.

SLEEP TO BOLSTER YOUR IMMUNITY

Good sleep is essential for helping you to fight off infections, because that is when your body makes many of the essential components of your immune system.

Studies show that if you regularly sleep for fewer than six hours a night, this makes you four times more likely to develop a cold than someone who sleeps for seven hours or more.

Similarly, if your sleep efficiency (the percentage of time you spend in bed asleep) is less than 90 per cent, you are nearly six times more likely to develop a cold.

TRY NOT TO WORRY ABOUT IT

One of the main things that keeps people awake at night is worrying about the terrible consequences of not getting to sleep.

Irrational thoughts like: 'I won't get to sleep and if I don't, then I'll be exhausted at work tomorrow and I might lose my job' go round and round in a loop.

But it's important to realise that these thoughts are not real.

At night, your filters are down, and you are more vulnerable to inner demons, so any thoughts you might have will inevitably be less rooted in reality than any negative thoughts you might have during the day.

If you find yourself lying in bed at night ruminating, try imagining what a sympathetic friend would say if you were to share your concerns with them, or try giving your negative thoughts a silly name, such as 'Donald'.

Then, as soon as you notice those irrational worries starting to kick in, you can say to yourself: 'That is just Donald sounding off again.' This might sound crazy, but give it a try. The process helps you to look at your thoughts dispassionately and allows the stressful associations to slip away.

SHOULD I TAKE MELATONIN?

As we get older, our brains tend to produce less of a key hormone called melatonin, which is released in the evenings to help co-ordinate the parts of the brain that tip you into sleep. Lower levels of melatonin could partly explain why sleep deteriorates with age.

In the U.S., controlled-release melatonin is the recommended first-line treatment for older adults with insomnia, and you can buy tablets at the chemist. It seems to be safe with very few side-effects.

But in the UK, Australia and much of Europe, you can only get melatonin on prescription. It is perfectly legal to buy online, but there is no guarantee of quality, so be careful.

Studies show that a 2 mg dose is safe for people over the age of 55 to take around one to two hours before bedtime.

MailOnline

● The urge to sleep is driven, at least in part, by a chemical in the brain called adenosine. It binds to receptors in your brain and causes those familiar feelings of drowsiness

Around the world in pictures



▲Members of the Taiwan Air Force look on as an E-2K aircraft flies past during a demonstration for the media at the Pingtung air base in Pingtung, Taiwan.



▲Police use water cannons to disperse demonstrators during a protest against the steep Tax increase due to the economic crisis, in Colombo, Sri Lanka.



▲A stuffed toy sits on a tractor blocking a highway during a protest over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, grievances shared by farmers across Europe, in Chennevières-les-Louvres, near Paris, France.



▲Pensioners compare their walking sticks in a street in Ronda, Spain.



▲A man paddles board in silhouette under the Folly Beach Pier at sunset in Folly Beach, South Carolina.



▲A woman pulls a child sitting on a bag as smoke rises in the background during an Israeli ground offensive in Khan Younis, as seen from Rafah, southern Gaza Strip.



▲Britain's King Charles leaves the London Clinic with Queen Camilla after receiving treatment for an enlarged prostate in London.

Haaland to make Man City return against Burnley

MANCHESTER, England - Manchester City will finally have striker Erling Haaland back in the squad when they play Burnley in the Premier League on Wednesday, manager Pep Guardiola said on Tuesday. Haaland is the joint-top goalscorer in the league this season with 14, level with Liverpool's Mohamed Salah, but has not played since fracturing a bone in his foot in a 1-0 loss to Aston Villa on Dec. 6.

"Apparently he will be selected, yeah. The first time he's back," Guardiola told reporters. "We have all the squad (fit), we are stronger. He is an important player for us."

Haaland's return could prove pivotal for holders City, who are second in the Premier League standings and trail leaders Liverpool by five points but have a game in hand. City also have Champions League and FA Cup fixtures in February.

The 23-year-old Norwegian has 19 goals in 22 games in all competitions this season.

Four days after Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp shocked the football world with news he would leave the club at the end of the season, Guardiola was asked if he is thinking about leaving City.



▲ Manchester City will finally have striker Erling Haaland back in the squad when they play Burnley in the Premier League on Wednesday, manager Pep Guardiola.

"I have everything that a manager could dream (of)," he said. "(The club) have supported me. We've changed a lot of players in the last few years but they've always been

supportive.

"I still feel good and, of course, one day it is going to finish, but I don't think about that right now." (Reuters)

Rakitic leaves Sevilla to sign with Saudi's Al-Shabab

FORMER Croatia midfielder Ivan Rakitic has left Sevilla following a second spell at the club ahead of his move to Saudi Arabia's Al-Shabab, the LaLiga side said on Tuesday.

The player's contract was set to expire at the end of the campaign. "We have agreed a deal with Saudi Pro League side Al-Shabab Club for the transfer of Ivan Rakitic, who will bring his second spell with us to a close," Sevilla said in a statement.

Rakitic, who first played for the Spanish club from 2011-2014 following a move from Bundesliga side Schalke 04, returned to Sevilla in September 2020 after six years at Barcelona.

Last year he helped Sevilla win a record-extending seventh Europa League title, after winning his first in 2013-14 during his first spell with the club.

Rakitic, until now a vice-captain for the team, became the foreigner with the most official matches in Sevilla's history and the only one to have surpassed 300 games with the club (323).

During his time at Barcelona, Rakitic won the Champions League in 2014-15, followed by the Super Cup and a Club World Cup. He was also



▲ Former Croatia midfielder Ivan Rakitic has left Sevilla following a second spell at the club ahead of his move to Saudi Arabia's Al-Shabab.

a four-times LaLiga champion, four-times Spanish Cup winner and won two Spanish Super Cups.

The 35-year-old earned more

than 100 caps for Croatia between 2007-2019, helping his country to a runners-up finish at the 2018 World Cup. (Reuters)

Order issued for Gabuza's arrest after he skipped court date

A warrant of arrest has been issued for former Bafana Bafana striker Thamsanqa Gabuza after he failed to appear at the Alexandra magistrate's court on Monday.

Gabuza was scheduled to make his fourth appearance in court for a charge of malicious damage to property.

The matter was previously postponed for an alternate dispute resolution (mediation), which was set to take place on Monday between Gabuza and the complainant.

However, the 36-year-old Gabuza, who is currently out on R3 000 bail, failed to show up.

Gabuza, a former Orlando Pirates and SuperSport United striker, is currently plying his trade with Premier Soccer League club TS Galaxy.

No sign of Gabuza

The court proceedings started at about 9.30am when the state prosecutor, advocate Tshiego Dekka, called Gabuza to step into the dock.

There was no sign of Gabuza, as neither he nor his lawyer, Themba Ngobeni, came to the courtroom. The complainant, Zikhona Zode, was present in

the courtroom.

Dekka asked magistrate Lindokuhle Lubisi to stand down so that she could contact Ngobeni and find out where Gabuza was.

When the matter resumed at about 11.45am, Dekka called Gabuza again to step into the dock, but again, Gabuza was nowhere to be found.

Ngobeni did not come to the courtroom as well.

Dekka informed Lubisi that she had contacted Ngobeni, who told her that he had no clue where Gabuza was.

Warrant of arrest

Lubisi issued a warrant of arrest for Gabuza and ordered that his bail be revoked and forfeited to the state.

She then postponed the matter to February 15 for Gabuza's appearance and for possible mediation.

Gabuza is required to appear in court on February 15 and provide an explanation for his absence from the January 29 court date due to the issuance of the stayed arrest warrant.

Failure to do so will result in the police going out to look for him and resulting in his arrest.

Shortly before 1pm, Ngobeni entered the courtroom for a separate matter. (Sunday World)



▲ The 36-year-old TS Galaxy player is out on R3 000 bail for malicious damage to property.

US consortium set to invest billions in PGA Tour

THE PGA Tour, which organizes professional golf tournaments primarily in North America, is close to finalizing an investment from a U.S. consortium, Bloomberg News reported, opens new tab on Monday citing people familiar with the matter.

The initial investment from Strategic Sports Group could be about \$3 billion, with an additional tranche from the Saudi Public Investment Fund, according to the report.

The deal could value PGA Tour Enterprises — the for-profit entity created to

house the Tour's commercial interests — at about \$12 billion, the report added.

Point72, a fund run by Steve Cohen, Marc Lasry's Avenue Capital Group and a spokesperson for PGA Tour did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

In September Reuters reported, citing a source, that Endeavor Group (EDR.N), opens new tab and Boston Red Sox owner Fenway Sports Group had expressed interest in investing in the PGA Tour.

Any potential transaction would rival PGA's deal with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund. (Reuters)



▲Bafana Bafana players doing the victory dance after knocking Morocco out.

Bafana knock Morocco out

EVIDENCE Makgopa and Teboho Mokoena scored second-half goals as South Africa shocked Morocco with a 2-0 victory to dump the World Cup semi-finalists out of the Africa Cup of Nations at the last-16 stage in San Pedro on Tuesday.

Morocco, who had Sofyan Amrabat

sent off late on, were among the favourites at the tournament in the Ivory Coast, but their continental curse continues and they remain without a Cup of Nations title since 1976, this time undone in the muggy heat of the Laurent Pokou Stadium.

South Africa led in the 57th minute when midfielder Themba Zwane, so often the creative fulcrum of the side, slipped a pass through to

tall striker Makgopa and he calmly slid the ball past goalkeeper Yassine Bounou, before Mokoena fired in a superb late free kick.

Morocco had a chance to level with the score at 1-0 when they were awarded a penalty, but Achraf Hakimi hit the crossbar and it will be South Africa who play Cape Verde in the quarter-finals in Yamoussoukro on Saturday. **(Supersport)**

Mali edge Burkina Faso in thrilling round of 16 clash

MALI are through to the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023 quarter finals after a nail-biting 2-1 win over Burkina Faso on Tuesday in Korhogo.

An unfortunate own goal by Edmond Tabsoba along with a second half strike by Lassine Sinayoko were enough for the Eagles to soar over the Stallions at a packed Amadou Gon Coulibaly Stadium.

It took just 3 minutes for Mali to take the lead after a powerful Amadou Haidara header came off the woodwork, but instead of it being cleared away, Edmond Tabsoba was unfortunate to see his clearance go into his own net.

Minutes later, Kamou-
mo-

ry Doumbia, who was a handful for the Burkinabe defense almost doubled his side's lead after a great build up saw him through on goal, but his effort was denied by the advancing Kouakou Koffi.

A golden opportunity fell the way of the in-form Sinayoko to double the lead after doing well to turn his marker to unleash a powerful effort that was denied by the alert Koffi in the 35th minute.

Carried by the momentum, the Eagles continued surging forward but wasted numerous opportunities as they took the slender lead into the break.

Returning from the recess, Sinayoko capitalized on a lapse of concentration after beating the offside trap to

face the keeper and comfortably slot home with just minutes into the re-start.

A lifeline was given to the Stallions after Mohamed Konate's headed effort came off the arm of Boubacar Kouyate for VAR to award the penalty that was converted by skipper, Bertrand Traore in the 57th minute.

The Stallions eventually gained their rhythm and piled on the pressure, but a resolute Mali defense kept them at bay, as the Eagles soar into the quarter-finals to face tournament hosts, Cote d'Ivoire on Saturday, 3 February in Bouake.

(Super-sport)



▲Mali edged Burkina Faso 2 - 1 in a thrilling Last-16 match.

Fae eyes further glory after Senegal upset

COTE d'Ivoire caretaker coach Emerse Fae says his team "must not stop here" after their monumental penalty shootout victory over Senegal in the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations last 16.

The tournament hosts eliminated the reigning champions 5-4 on penalties on Monday following a 1-1 draw after extra time to book their spot in the quarter-finals.

In front of a raucous home crowd at the Stade Charles Konan Banny in Yamoussoukro, Senegal made a blistering start and took the lead just four minutes in.

A superb cross from Sadio Mane found Habib Diallo, who calmly chested the ball down before firing a rocket into the top corner.

Unfazed

Cote d'Ivoire were unfazed and continued pressing and when the game turned on a pivotal 86th minute moment when the host nation was awarded a penalty as Pepe was clumsily brought down by Edouard Mendy.

After VAR reviewed the incident, Franck Kessie coolly sent Mendy the wrong way from the spot to equalize.

In the shootout, Kessie stepped up to smash home the winning kick and send the home crowd into ecstasy.

It capped a remarkable turnaround for the Elephants after a disastrous group stage

saw them suffer two defeats, including a humiliating 4-0 loss to Equatorial Guinea.

"We had a difficult start, conceding an early goal, but I told the players at halftime to keep playing the same way, not get confused," said Fae.

Unlike under previous coach Jean-Louis Gasset, Fae took full responsibility for tactical decisions during the match.

"It was my decision on what needed to be done. With Gasset, I would give an opinion and he would make the decision," Fae explained.

The interim boss admitted he was under intense pressure before the Senegal showdown.

"There was a lot of pressure before the match, and match day was too long for me. I couldn't nap as usual, thinking about all scenarios. If I said there was no pressure, I would be lying," Fae confessed.

But scraping through the group stage boosted belief before facing the champions.

"Qualifying after Morocco's win gave us confidence. We beat Senegal and eliminated them; morale is good," said Fae. With a place now booked in the quarter-finals, Fae stressed the team cannot get carried away by this result as tougher tests lie ahead.

"We must not stop here; we must continue working, maintain this morale, and keep playing match by match," the coach asserted.

(Cafonline)



▲ Cote d'Ivoire caretaker coach Emerse Fae.

Two Olympic qualifying tournaments for Thabiso

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
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LOCAL boxer Thabiso Dlamini still has two chances to qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games.

The Matsapha boxing club will be competing in two qualifying tournaments in Italy and Thailand in March and May.

Dlamini first assignment will be in Italy where he will be competing in the 63.5kg category between March 4 and 12 under the auspices of the International Boxing Association (IBA).

The boxer lost out in the 2023 African championships which also served as a qualifier for the global event.

The boxer confirmed the two assignments when speaking to Eswatini Daily News on Tuesday.

“I will be attending two Olympic qualifiers in Italy and Thailand. I am confident that I will do well in both competitions so that I can qualify for the Olympic games. The recent local tournament has certainly boosted my confidence ahead of the two international assignments,” he said.

He further promised to deliver good performance for the country in the African Games slated for March.

This follows his inclusion in the seven-member national team for the conti-

nental assignment which was recently announced by the Eswatini Boxing Association (EBA).

“I want to reward my country investment in me with some performances in the African Games. I have been getting overwhelming support from the local sports bodies such as EOCGA and EBA,”he said.

The seasoned boxer spent 2023 on a one-year training programme in Russia which was facilitated by EOCGA and the International Boxing Association.

He previously represented the country in two international assignments such as the 2023 World championships and African championships, among others.



▲ Local boxer Thabiso Dlamini still has two chances to qualify for the 2024 Olympic Games.



▲ Taekwondo players during a recent knockout tournament.

Taekwondo National team for Olympic qualifers

THE Eswatini Taekwondo Federation (ETF) has confirmed the country’s participation in the 2024 Olympic Games qualifying tournament between February 10-11 in Dakar, Senegal.

The country will be represented by four athletes in Wandile Maziya, Mfanawekhaya Dube, Carlota Munave and Nonhle Maduma in the country’s quest to qualify for the global spectacle scheduled for Paris, France between July 26, and August 8.

The team will be under the tutelage of internationally recognized local coach Manco-ba Motsa during the assignment.

ETF President Zakhele Dlamini said preparations for the qualifiers were proceeding smoothly.

“We will certainly attend the Olympic

games qualifiers and we will be represented by four athletes. We are confident that the team will eventually qualify for the Olympic games. We are currently on the budget with the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOCGA),” he said.

Other upcoming taekwondo international assignment include the 2024 African Games ,2024 World championships and 2024 Region youth games,among others.

Dube and Munave recently attended the 2023 World championships which were held at Uzbekistan in May.

Dube further reached the quarterfinals of the 2023 African championships together with Masuku in Ivory Coast.

The Mozambique based Masuku did not make to the Olympic team after losing out in the recent local qualifying tournament.

455 runners registered for Yellow Epilepsy Charity Half Marathon

By Ntokozo Magongo
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THE Yellow Epilepsy Charity Half Marathon is set to be bigger and better as already over 455 runners have registered for the event.

The race that will comprise of three events will be held on Saturday, starting and finishing between Olymp Africa Centre and Somhlolo National Stadium.

The first race, which is the 21km, will start at 6am. Athletics Eswatini (AE) Communications Officer Victor ‘Mavikane’ Dlamini said they are happy with the numbers as they have improved from the 370 that competed last year in Sikhuphe. He said they were still hoping to meet the 600 targets with three days remaining.

“Manual registration is still open for runners, and we played people to come in their numbers as they will benefit a lot. Early registration was closed on January 15 and the late registration which is now manual will be closing on Friday end of business,” he said.

The manual registration can be done at Eswatini Epilepsy Organization offices in Mbabane, at the Deputy Prime Minister offices, The Fitness Zone in Ezulwini and Manzini and Futis branches in Mbabane, Matsapha, Manzini, Nhlengano, Siteki and Siphofaneni.

Dlamini said the runners who will be competing in the race will be contributing to the Eswatini Epilepsy Organization. Dlamini said this was a good course and it needs Emaswati to support it. He said they are expecting government officials to also grace the event as to continue preaching healthy living.



▲ The Yellow Epilepsy Charity Half Marathon is set to be bigger and better as already over 455 runners have registered for the event.



▲Lindokuhle ‘Ntolo’ Fakudze.

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

THE cat is finally out of the bag.

Three ex-premier leagues stars in Mathokoza ‘Tokyo’ Tfwala (ex-Royal Leopards), Lindokuhle ‘Ntolo’ Fakudze (ex-Highlanders and Manzini Wanderers) and Mbuso Dladla (ex Nsingizini Hotspurs) are part of the 2023 Ingwenyama Cup surprise package Piggs Peak Rangers.

The trio have already helped the northern Hhohho based outfit reach the quarterfinals of the prestigious knockout tournament where they will face capital city giants and three times winners Mbabane Swallows.

Rangers General Manager Mpemba Dlamini confirmed the presence of the trio in their camp.

“The three players are part of our team, and they are professional players who are

pushing hard to ensure that the team reaches greater heights,” he said.

Dlamini further stated that they were geared up for the quarterfinal encounter against the ‘Beautiful Birds’.

“ We will do our level to cause an upset in the quarterfinal like we did in the last 32 where we knocked out moneni Pirates . We urge residents of Piggs Peak to rally behind the team during our next Ingwenyama Cup match,”.

The team is already E115 000 richer for reaching the last eight of the prestigious knockout tournament as they receive E75 000(quarterfinal prize money) and the E40 000 national First Division/super league best finisher.

Rangers have already knocked Moneni Pirates and National First Division compatriot’s Milling Hotspurs in the tournament that blends football with culture.



▲Mphumelelo ‘Flamengo’ Gamedze.

‘Flamengo’ joins ABC
Mpumalanga Motsepe side

ESWATINI legend Mphumelelo ‘Flamengo’ Gamedze has found new at Mpumalanga ABC side Ehlanzeni United.

The Wits University and Manzini Wanderers playmaker is now a co-coach with former Orlando Pirates coach Reason Chiloane at the South African third tier outfit.

The club announced the acquisition of Gamedze on their website.

“We are pleased to announce our new co coach Mphumelelo ‘Flamengo’ Gamedze as our co-coach. He comes with a wealth of experience, and he is a CAF License C holder. We are confident that he will take the team to greater heights,” he said.

Gamedze also confirmed the move. “It’s true that I am now part of Ehlanzeni

United and I will work with everyone in the team to transform the brand,” he said.

Gamedze once had a brief stint with current National First Division side Malanti Chiefs during his playing days and he has couple of Sihlangu caps.

He has joined Mbabane Highlanders legend Abel ‘Chacklas’ Shongwe (Ferneie Battalion) in the list of Emaswati coaching in the Motsepe league.

Other local coaches who have previously coached in the same league include Illovo FC coach Zwelibandzi ‘Botsotso’ Khoza (Sivutsa Stars) and current Denver Sundowns mentor Milton Dlamini (Destiny College), among others.

Dlamini worked together with the legendary Dennis ‘Yuki’ Masina, who was one of his assistants during his stint with Mbombela based side last season.

Draw for culture
competition in
Ingwenyama Cup

By Ntokozo Magongo
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THE Ngwenya Cup culture committee has set a new trend in the competition.

This follows the introduction of the culture competition draw in the ongoing edition of the prestigious tournament that blends football with culture.

This was announced by culture spokesperson Sandile ‘Msandi’ Nxumalo when announcing the new dates for the competition during football quarterfinals draw held on Monday at the sponsor’s premises, Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (SMVAF).

“Due to other national duties, the dates for the culture competition have been changed. We have also introduced a draw

for the competitions where the competing culture teams will be drawn against each other before the competitions,” he said.

The culture competition will resume on February 24 at King Sobhuza II Stadium for Shiselweni Region. Manzini will be next the following day at Mavuso Sports Centre while Hhohho is third on the line on March 2 at Buhleni Sports Ground and Lubombo will be last the following day.

The final competition for the culture will be held same day with the football finals slated for end of March.

Nxumalo then also announced the songs that will be competed for. He said Lutsango will be competing by singing the song ‘Live liyafana’ while Sibhaca will compete with the song, ‘Sambamba tsekwane inyoni yemasoka elunyaweni igidvwa njengalonyaka. Ingadla will be competing on the song ‘Ligcebesha LeNgwenyama lisemaveni.



▲Culture is an important part of the Ingwenyama Cup.

The full list of the culture songs and categories
Lutsango: Live liyafanana
Sibhaca: Sambamba tsekwane
Ingadla: Ligoebesha LeNgwenyama lisemaveni
Timbongi: Tibonga Emakhosi Lakhona (Praise singing)
Emajaha: song to be announce soon

The new dates:		
Region	Venue	Dates
Shiselweni	King Sobhuza II Memorial Stadium	February 24
Manzini	Mavuso Sports Centre	February 25
Hhohho	Buhleni Sports Ground	March 2
Lubombo	Siteki Sports Ground	March 3

SA's Black Leopards, 'Bull' mourn 'Ndezi'

By Sibusiso Masilela
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SOUTH Africa's Motsepe Championship Black Leopards and Mbabane Highlanders have mourned the passing of their legend Bongani 'Ndezi' Masangane.

Masangane passed away on Monday afternoon while undergoing treatment at Mbabane government hospital joining the likes of Kwanele Dlamini and Mukelo Nkhambule in the list of local footballers who recently passed away. The South African First Division side President David Thidiela said they have been saddened by the demise of the former Sihlangu defender.

"We have been deeply saddened by the passing of Bongani who was one of our outstanding Swazi players together with Sibusiso 'Spoko' Dlamini and Wonder Nhleko. We will forever cherish his contribution to the team and our sincere condolences to his family and the Eswatini football fraternity," he said.

Highlanders Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Musa Masuku also joined Thidiela by mourning the passing of the player.

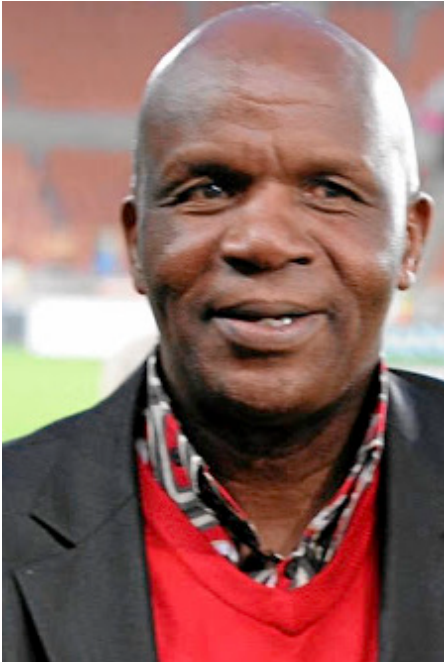
"On behalf of the entire Mbabane family, we have been shattered by the passing of 'Ndezi' who is one of legends and exports



▲ The late Bongani 'Ndezi' Masangane.

who represented us proudly in South Africa. Masangane had an undying love for our team as he even rejoined us after his stint with Leopards without a problem,"

Meanwhile, Masangane uncle Mduduzi Nkhambule said they were still going to announce the funeral logistics for the late player. The late Masangane played for the



▲ Black Leopard President David Thidiela.

Limpopo-based side between 2003 and 2005 together with Sibusiso 'Spoko' Dlamini and Wonder' Samba jive' Nhleko.

He rejoined Highlanders in 2006 before his retirement.

He had a couple of senior national team caps under the guidance of the late Zambian coach Francis Banda.



▲ Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima.

Manzini South folks urged to exercise regularly

By Sports Reporter

MINISTER of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima has challenged residents of Manzini South Inkhundla to adopt a culture of regular exercise to enhance their well-being.

The Minister was speaking at the conclusion of his first Shukuma Eswatini activation held at Zakhele Sports Ground under Manzini South Inkhundla on Saturday.

"I now hope that I will see a lot of you jogging every morning along the road. Exercising doesn't take a lot and I hope that what we have started here will now become culture at Manzini South," he said.

The well-attended activation began with a 5km walk which was followed by an intense aerobics' session. After that, sporting associations including Teqball, Boxing, Cycling, Cricket and Taekwondo ran demonstrations in line with Shukuma's objective of decentralising all sporting codes to all communities of the Kingdom.

Also present during the activation were Minister of Education and Manzini South Member of Parliament (MP) Owen Nxumalo and Ministry of Sports' House of Assembly Portfolio Committee Chairperson MP Sifiso Shabalala.

Shukuma Eswatini is a national flagship program under the Eswatini Sport and Recreation Council (ESRC).

“I now hope that I will see a lot of you jogging every morning along the road. Exercising doesn't take a lot and I hope that what we have started here will now become culture at Manzini South.”

Ezulwini United to play 'Bull' twice in one week

By Ntokozo Magongo
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MBABANE Highlanders and Ezulwini United will play against each other twice in a space of a week in the MTN Premier League and Ingwenyama Cup quarterfinals respectively.

The two teams will first clash in the MTN Premier League week 16 this week on Saturday at Mavuso Sports Centre before meeting each other in the Ingwenyama Cup last eight on the weekend of February 10 and 11.

United recently acquired the services of former Mbabane Swallows, Manzini Wanderers and Mbabane Highlanders defender Mandla Palma who debuted for the team in the 1-all draw against Nsingizini in the MTN Premier League on Saturday.

Palma will be out of the Ingwenyama Cup clash as he is cup tied after playing for his former team (Highlanders) in the same tournament during their 2-0 win over Piggs Peak Black Swallows in the last 32. Other MTN Premier League matches will also see log leaders Royal Leopard playing relegation-threatened Manzini Wanderers at Mavuso Sports Centre, Saturday at 4:30pm.

A double header is also billed for Sunday at King Sobhuza II Stadium where Manzini Sea Birds will host Nsingizini Hotspurs at 1pm while Rangers will take on the on form Young Buffaloes.

Meanwhile, Mkhuzweni Technical Centre will host the first MTN Premier League game between Mbabane Swallows and Madlenya.



▲ Ezulwini United players.

MTN Premier League week 16 fixtures:				
Saturday				
Mkhuzweni Technical Centre				
M. Swallows	vs	Madlenya	3pm	
Mayaluka Stadium:				
Illovo	vs	Green Mamba	3pm	
Mavuso Sports Centre				
Ezulwini	vs	M. Highlanders	2pm	
M. Wanderers	vs	R. Leopard	4:30pm	
Tambankulu Stadium				
D. Sundowns	vs	M. Pirates	3pm	
Sunday:				
King Sobhuza II Stadium:				
M. Sea Birds	vs	N. Hotspurs	1pm	
Rangers	vs	Y. Buffaloes	3:30pm	

MTN National First Division:				
Saturday:				
Prince of Wales Sports Ground:				
S. Dreams	vs	M. Hotspurs	3pm	
Killarney Sports Ground:				
PPK. Rangers	vs	T. Callies	3pm	
Manzini Club:				
L. Killers	vs	M. Chiefs	1pm	
L. Spurs	vs	CK Survivors	3:30pm	
Tambankulu Stadium:				
T. Celtics	vs	U. Flyers	3pm	
Sunday:				
Mayaluka Stadium:				
Sisonke	vs	Louis XIV	3pm	
Manzini Club:				
Nyanyali	vs	PP. B. Swallows	3pm	



**Bafana
knock
Morocco out**
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play Bull twice
in one week**
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Sport



**SA's Black
Leopards, 'Bull'
mourn 'Ndezi'**

... Former teams, South Africa's Black Leopards and Mbabane Highlanders have paid a glowing tribute to dearly departed defender, Bongani 'Ndezi' Masangane who passed away on Monday after a short-illness at Mbabane Government Hospital. *Page 23*