



# Eswatini strengthens ties with Taiwan

By Noaba Ntshakala

AS part of her five-day visit to Taiwan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Pholile Shakantu, paid a courtesy call to President-elect Lai Ching-te on Wednesday, January 31st, 2024.

The meeting underscored the strong diplomatic ties between the two nations and their commitment to continued cooperation.

Minister Shakantu extended her considerations on behalf of Their Majesties and the nation.

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## Ministers impressed by Nhlangano– Siphambanweni Water Project

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Stories By Ncaba Ntshakala

... Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Pholile Shakantu meets President-elect Lai in courtesy call as part of her five-day visit to Taiwan

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The meeting underscored the strong diplomatic ties between the two nations and their commitment to continued cooperation. Minister Shakantu extended her consideration on behalf of Their Majesties and the nation.

“I greet you, bringing with me the warmest wishes and kindest considerations of His Majesty, King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, the Government and the People of the Kingdom of Eswatini,” said the Minister as she delivered her remarks.

### Hospitality

“It is an honour to be in Taipei, paying a visit to our dearest friends, brothers, and sisters, the People of Taiwan. Allow me to praise the welcome given to us and the extraordinary hospitality bestowed upon us, by our hosts, the Republic of China (Taiwan).”

The Minister further conveyed the nation’s congratulations to President-elect Lai on his victory in the nation’s recent Presidential elections where his Democratic Progressive Party won the majority votes.

Minister Shakantu said: “Standing before you, there is no better place for me to begin my remarks other than with the heartiest of congratulations to Taiwan on the successful elections carried out on 13th January 2024.”

She further added, “As the new Parliamentarians for Taiwan are



▲ Taiwan President elect Lai Ching te with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Pholile Shakantu during a courtesy visti to the president.

being sworn in today, and electing their new Speaker, it is worth mentioning and an occasion worth celebrating. We look forward to the culmination of this process on 20th May 2024 when the electoral process shall have been completed.”

The Minister further reaffirmed the two nations’ shared values and partnership, highlighting the importance of their strong bilateral relationship. “The Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan) have enjoyed a firm and lasting friendship since 1968,” expressed the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

“Throughout these times, our relationship has been based on a mutual respect for one another

underpinned by common values, goals and aspirations for our People and Mankind as a whole. It is an opportune moment for me, to unreservedly affirm the position of Eswatini as a firm ally of Taiwan. We look forward to an enduring friendship and, indeed, heightened relations with you as the incoming President.”

President-elect Lai warmly welcomed Minister Shakantu and the Eswatini delegation and he reiterated Taiwan’s unwavering commitment to supporting Eswatini’s development goals.

He expressed his desire to further strengthen their bilateral cooperation and looks forward to future collaborations and support. “We appreciate your enduring

support for our country and look forward to advancing our bilateral cooperation in the years ahead,” said President-elect Lai.

For decades, Eswatini has remained one of Taiwan’s formal diplomatic allies in Africa. Their partnership encompasses numerous joint projects in various sectors, contributing to the development and well-being of both nations.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs further outlined activities that are obtained as a result of the collaboration and support of the two nations.

These include the agreement that was signed between OIDC (Overseas Investment and Development Corporation) DC

and ENPC (Eswatini National Petroleum Company) that was to facilitate the construction of the Strategic Oil Reserve in Eswatini, which is a project that is underway.

Another is the Women’s Empowerment Program under the patronage of Her Majesty Indlovukazi which seeks to achieve the economic empowerment of women in Eswatini.

The Minister also highlighted the Taiwan ICDF Technical Mission in Eswatini. This entity seeks to assist emaSwati in the development of competence in farming, with the ultimate goal of transforming the agricultural industry in Eswatini.

Moreover, Minister Shakantu commanded the Taiwan Medical Mission which seeks to transform the health sector in Eswatini through the provision of quality health care to the most vulnerable.

### Activities

She also added that these are not the only activities that are obtained through the partnership and collaboration of the two nations.

“This is not an exhaustive list of our fields of cooperation Your Excellency, merely illustrative of what can be done when we collaborate as friends and partners,” asserted the Minister.

“In turn, the Kingdom of Eswatini shall continue to be a strong advocate for the recognition of Taiwan and the full participation of the Nation in multilateral and related platforms. We believe that attempts to harness all our resources through the attainment of Agenda 2063 and meeting the SDGs can only be enhanced by Taiwan being allowed to engage as an equal on these matters.”

## Countries strengthen ties with joint declaration

### ... reaffirming decades of friendship

THE Kingdom of Eswatini and Taiwan further solidified their long-standing relationship with the signing of a joint declaration on Thursday. This declaration marks more than five decades of diplomatic ties between the two nations.

Taiwan’s Foreign Minister Joseph Wu and Eswatini’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Pholile Shakantu, currently on a five-day visit to Taiwan, signed the historic document.

### Commitment

This reaffirms their mutual commitment to cooperation and support across various sectors. Taiwan’s Foreign Affairs Minister said that the declaration was a testament to the impeccable relationship

that the two countries have.

“Today’s joint declaration once again highlights our long-cherished friendship,” Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said before signing the pact with Minister Shakantu in Taipei.

### Valued

“By signing it, Eswatini is reiterating highly valued diplomatic ties with Taiwan, and renewing its commitment to advocate for Taiwan’s participation in the international community,” Wu added.

Minister Shakantu said: “The Kingdom of Eswatini wishes to reiterate its firm, constructive and sustainable alliance with Taiwan, and Eswatini is looking forward to working closely with Taiwan to deepen fraternal relations.”



▲ Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Pholile Shakantu and Foreign Minister Joseph Wu shake hands after signing a joint declaration in Taipei on Thursday.



# Eswatini Legal Aid amplifies outreach efforts

## ... reaching hundreds with legal access support

By Noaba Ntshakala

ESWATINI Legal Aid (ELA) is taking decisive steps to ensure everyone understands their right to legal representation and access to justice.

Over the past five months, the office has launched a comprehensive outreach campaign, engaging with stakeholders and the public to raise awareness about its vital services. This was shared by the Director of Legal Aid, Lungile Magagula.

Through targeted meetings and events, ELA has connected with over 37 entities, including civil society organizations, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, government departments, parastatals, and the Law Society. These strategic engagements aim to foster collaboration and ensure a cohesive approach to legal aid provision across the nation.

The outreach efforts haven't stopped there. ELA has actively reached out to the public, connecting with 379 individuals through various avenues. Trade fairs, roadshows, and even walk-in clients at the office have served as platforms to directly introduce ELA's services and address immediate legal needs.

"The Office has placed significant emphasis on engaging with stakeholders and conducting outreach activities to effectively communicate its mandate," said Director Magagula. "Over the past five months, the office has held meetings with more than 37 entities which includes civil society organisations, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, government entities, parastatals,

CMAC and the law society to name just a few."

The Director asserted that the main aim was to ensure that ELA introduced its services and mandate and identify potential opportunities for collaboration.

Magagula further viewed that at the moment, the ELA office's biggest challenge is the absence of a conducive legislative framework which includes the amendment of the Legal Practitioner's Act as well as the enactment of a Legal Aid legislation to facilitate representation in court as well as establish a legal aid fund. "There are also limited resources to operate and support community outreach and decentralisation of services." Added the Director. "ELA is focusing on 4 thematic areas namely legal information and awareness, advice and referrals, mediation and legal assistance (which includes representation). However, representation is still not offered pending amendment and enactment of a conducive legislative framework."

Eswatini Legal Aid is an office under the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs which was opened in August last year as a response to the fact that many people, particularly the poor and marginalised, face difficulties when encountering the justice system because of its complexity. For instance, the justice system can be challenging to understand and navigate because of obstacles such as lack of financial resources, inadequate awareness of how to access services, insufficient command of the legal language and long distances to service providers.



▲ Eswatini Legal Aid Director Lungile Magagula who has expressed the impeccable efforts done by the office to reach emaSwati



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# Ministers impressed by near-complete Nhlangano-Siphambanweni Water Project

Stories by Noaba Ntshakala

MINISTER of Natural Resources Prince Lonkhokhela and Minister of Economic Planning and Development Dr Thambo Gina were visibly impressed during a tour of the Nhlangano-Siphambanweni Water Project, currently nearing completion at 90 per cent.

Accompanied by Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) Managing Director Jabulile Mashwama and officials, the Ministers inspected one of the three water reservoirs at Zombodze Emuva and a pump station, gaining firsthand insight into the project's significant progress.

Minister Lonkhokhela lauded EWSC for this magnificent project addressing the long-standing water challenges faced by the Shiselweni region. He commended the impeccable progress achieved by Inyatsi Construction, the appointed contractor, stating,

"This is a very commendable work done by the EWSC. Government is committed to ensuring equitable access to water, both in urban and rural areas." He further said that he commends the government for its decentralization policies which have enabled it to stretch to rural areas and provide basic services.

"Water is very important in life and without water, there is no life," said Minister Prince Lonkhokhela. "Our visit was asked by emaSwati during Sibaya when they appealed to His Majesty that government must be visible on the ground. His Majesty then said that we must be on the ground and ensure that emaSwati are well."

According to EWSC, ensuring access to clean water and proper sanitation services remains a priority for the Government of Eswatini. Through the implementation of various sustainable water projects, the Government of Eswatini seeks to reduce the number of people without access to clean water and ultimately reach 100% coverage.

The project was done by the Government to strengthen water security in the Shiselweni Region through the integration of existing water network systems and the



▲ Ministers Prince Lonkhokhela, Dr Thambo Gina and EWSC MD Jabulile Mashwama posing with officials in one of the reservoirs in Zombodze Emuva

construction of new water infrastructures. Before the Nhlangano-Siphambanweni Water Project, Eswatini Water Services Corporation was only operating two distinct water systems (Lavumisa-Siphambanweni Water Network) and the (Masibini-Nhlangano Water Network). This project will integrate the two systems.

Locals expressed their deep appreciation for the project and the Ministers' visit. Indvuna Yenkhundla Samuel Lushaba said, "We have struggled with water for years. This project and the Ministers' presence show government cares." The Chief's representative, Mgezeni Zwane, conveyed their gratitude to His Majesty King Mswati III for the initiative, which will not only provide water but also enable them to cultivate small gardens for sustenance.

The Project Coordinator Zandisile Mamba revealed that each reservoir has a capacity of 4 megalitres, equivalent to 4 million litres. EWSC Managing Director Jabulile Mashwama explained that the project is divided into three packages with a total cost of E640 million, funded by the World Bank and the Eswatini government. Two reservoirs are located in Zombodze Emuva, with the third in Hluti.



▲ Ministers with EWSC MD listening while Project Coordinator explains

Also Present during the tour was Principal Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources Dorcas Dlamini, Eswatini Electricity Company Managing Director Ernest Mkhonta, members of the Department of Water Affairs, Zombodze Emuva Member of Parliament Ntando Mkhonta and officials from Eswatini Environmental Authority.

**Project to be completed by 2025**

THE Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) shared that the Nhlangano-Siphambanweni Water Project, currently at 90% completion will be fully completed by 2025.

This was shared by EWSC during the Minister's tour to one of the reservoirs at Zombodze Emuva.

## Indvuna Yenkhundla appeals for more development, calls for factories to address unemployment

WHILE expressing gratitude for the Nhlangano-Siphambanweni Water Project, Indvuna Yenkhundla Samuel Lushaba used the opportunity to appeal for further development initiatives in his constituency, particularly focusing on job creation.

During the tour of the water project by Ministers and officials, Lushaba highlighted the ongoing struggle with unemployment in the area. "We are grateful for the water project, it will bring much-needed improvement," he acknowledged. "However, the bigger challenge for us remains the lack of employment opportunities."

Lushaba specifically called for the establishment of factories, citing them as a potential solution to the unemployment crisis. "Factories and firms would provide much-needed jobs for our people, especially the youth," he explained. "This would not only improve their livelihoods but also contribute to the overall development of our community."



▲ The Minister climbing a scaffolding to inspect the top of the reservoir.



▲ Ministers inspecting the reservoir



JUDICIAL COMMISSION INQUIRY TOLD

‘Ex-wife stole my adopted parents’ estate’

By Nokunceda Magagula  
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PATRICK Mhlanga, who had gone before the Master’s office inquiry committee to seek help regarding his multimillion estate which belonged to his adopted parents, has alleged that his ex-wife stole the estate.

According to Mhlanga, he began living with Carol La Grange who was the owner of a thousand-square-meter farm in Malkerns, when he was at primary school. He says he was not legally adopted by La Grange, however, he lived with her and she would pay for his school fees from primary until High School.

He narrated that as he grew up, La Grange gave him a small piece of land on the farm where he built a two-room house which he later shared with his wife Thabile Mkhaliphi and their children. However, he later got employed by Tibiyo Takangwane and his wife who is a nurse at Zakhele Psychiatric Center remained at their house with their children. He said at that time La Grange lived alone in her house at the same farm.

In 2010, July La Grange died, he said after her death he began looking for La Grange’s relatives because her husband and daughter had passed on prior, so she had no immediate relative who could inherit her estate. He searched and found letters that La Grange would write to her relatives who are in the

United Kingdom, he tried writing letters to those relatives, but no one responded. He further asked for the Ministry of Home Affairs’ intervention.

Seeing that there was no response they went on with the funeral arrangements together with people from La Grange church that she used to attend in Malkerns, Mhlanga went to create a death certificate at Manzini, however his wife by that time Mkhaliphi also went to create a death certificate for La Grange in Mbabane without Mhlanga’s knowledge. Which then made Mhlanga question why would his wife do such.

**Proceeded**

They proceeded with the burial which was done 20 days after La Grange’s death. Mhlanga mentioned that at that time his marriage was on the rocks. After the burial they proceeded to the Master’s office to check if La Grange had a will, however, they found that she did not have any.

As time went by his wife who at that time had divorced him, together with the Master’s office ran an advert in a newspaper seeking for La Grange’s next of kin. Seeing that advert Mhlanga said he went to the Master’s office in Manzini where he found a man identified as Mr Magagula to ask why they had opened a file for La Grange when they were still in the process of searching for her relatives.

Magagula responded by saying that when a person had passed away, it was their responsibility as the Master’s office to open a file and also told them that they should come

back on another date so that they appoint an executor.

On the day of appointing an executor, they went to the Master’s office in Manzini with the people from the late La Grange’s church. He said Magagula came carrying a file, his ex-wife also came with a lawyer Martin Dlamini, and six unknown people.

**Deceased**

During the meeting, his ex-wife claimed that she is La Grange’s family as she used to take care of the deceased when she was sick. Mhlanga highlighted that this claim made by his ex-wife was false, stating that when La Grange was ill she used to be taken care of by community members and later went to an old age home. He said his ex-wife and La Grange were never on good terms, so it shocked him that she was now claiming to be her family.

Mhlanga says he tried to explain to Magagula that his wife was not telling the truth, however, no one listened to him, and his ex-wife was made the executor of the La Grange estate.

He said he, later on, he tried to approach the Ministry of Justice to intervene because he was convinced that Magagula who worked for the Master’s office was working together with his wife to steal the estate, but the Ministry also could not help him.

He further sought services from Mdladla Attorneys who took the matter to court, where it was never heard. Later in 2012, his ex-wife began selling stakes of the land in the farm and also cars that belonged to La



▲ Patrick Mhlanga who claims that his ex - wife allegedly stole his parents’ estate. Grange.

Mhlanga emphasized to the committee that he is also not a beneficiary of the estate, however, he is seeking for them to remove his wife as the executor so that the rightful owners of the estate which are La Grange’s family in the UK can take over. “What my ex-wife did together with the Master at that time was wrong” Mhlanga said.

National Data Protection Awareness Day  
Take Control of Your Data  
28 January 2024



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

The Eswatini Data Protection Act came into force in March 2022 and espouses the Right to Privacy as enshrined in the Eswatini Constitution, 2005. The object of the Act is “to provide for the collection, processing, disclosure and protection of personal data; balancing competing values of personal information privacy and sector-specific laws and other related matters”. The Act designates the Eswatini Communications Commission as the Eswatini Data Protection Authority (EDPA) charged with the responsibility to enforce compliance thereto.

On Friday, 26 January 2024, Eswatini joined the world in commemorating the International Data Protection Day by hosting an event under the theme “Take Control of Your Data”. The Data Protection Day is internationally celebrated each year on 28 January, which marks the anniversary of the Council of Europe’s ‘Convention 108’ on the protection of personal information - the first legally binding international law on data protection which was open for signature in 1981.

However, other countries soon embraced the initiative, and now Data Protection Day is globally recognized. It is an international effort to create awareness about the importance of respecting privacy, safeguarding data, and enabling trust.

The National Data Protection Day is also a chance to catch up with new developments in the Data Protection area.

As the EDPA we recognise the week of 22-28 January as the National Data Protection Week, during which we urge entities (data controllers and data processors) and other actors to organise activities to raise awareness about the importance of data protection and to promote best practices with regards to processing personal information. Data protection concerns mainly individuals (the data subjects) whose personal information is processed by entities in their line of business. Still, many people lack knowledge about how their personal data is being collected, used, and shared.

As this year’s theme indicates, taking control of one’s data begins with the data subjects themselves. It is important to make informed and calculated decisions when sharing your personal data, especially with entities. Your personal data such as age, gender, data related to children, health records, National Identity number, financial records, purchase history, location have great value and may be used for unintended purposes. It is important to keep that in mind when deciding what you share and with whom.

Entities who in terms of the Act are data controllers and

data processors on the other hand need to make sure that they keep their customers’ data always protected and in accordance with the data protection principles and other applicable legal frameworks on data protection. Risk should always be managed, and to create trust, the entities should be transparent on how they are collecting, using, and sharing personal data. A data breach where an individual’s personal data is leaked or accessed by unauthorised persons can lead to a loss in both reputation and customer trust, in addition to potential financial sanctions which may be imposed by the EDPA.

In this regard we invite the public to join us as we create awareness and discuss important privacy-related topics to remind organizations and individuals why they should care about data privacy.

**ESCCOM Chief Executive**  
Mvilawemphi Dlamini





# Man defrauded E229 800 in precious stones deal

By Nokunoeda Magagula  
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NHLANHLA Dlamini has been arrested for allegedly defrauding Brendan Stewart E229 800 after promising to deliver precious stones to him in 2022.

According to Nhlanhla's charge sheet on December 1, 2022, at Ngabezweni in Matsapha, the accused unlawfully represented himself to Stewart that he sold precious stones and was willing to sell some to him. This led to Stewart allegedly paying the accused E229 800 and the complainant never received the stones.

Upon his arrest, the accused appeared at the Manzini Magistrate's Court where he was committed at the High Court and he has currently filed for bail.

In his affidavit, the accused states that on January 28, 2024, he was arrested by members of the Royal Eswatini Police based at Manzini Police Station and was charged with the offence of theft by false pretence and is currently kept at the Zakhele Remand Centre in Manzini.

He told the Court that he was innocent of the charge levelled against him, stating that he never committed the said offence and intends to plead not guilty at trial as he has a valid defence to the charge.

The accused explained his version of events, stating that on January 22, 2022, he was called by one Mlandvo Dlamini who informed him that they had received a tender to supply river sand and that they needed a person that owns trucks.

He said he told him that he did not



know anyone who owned or operated transportation trucks. The accused said at that time he did know the complainant.

The accused said Mlandvo then asked him to accompany him to a meeting with the complainant, stating that he would be of great assistance because of his skills in business.

They both drove to Lozitha where the complainant met them and from there

they drove to the Royall Villas. It is there that Mlandvo changed his tune and started talking about precious stones that were not known to him. Mlandvo took out the stones, showed the complainant and explained to him their value. He said he was surprised as he thought he was attending a meeting regarding the transportation of river sand.

The complainant sounded interested in the said stones and they concluded a deal

with Mlandvo to sell him the same stones. They exchanged details on how payment would be conducted and that was the last time he heard of the matter.

After some months the accused learned that Mlandvo and other gentlemen were arrested and charged with the offence of theft by false pretences in respect of this matter and this was around June 2023 and they are currently out on bail. The accused said he was not bothered because he was not involved in any payments in respects of this matter.

"I was, therefore, surprised when I was arrested, over six months after the arrest of the perpetrators, and charged with this offence. I submit that if admitted to bail there is no likelihood that I will abscond trial or that I will breach any of my bail conditions or skip the country as I am firmly rooted in the kingdom and my whole family is in Eswatini and I have no relative outside the country," the accused said.

The accused was granted bail fixed at E12 000.

● Mlandvo took out the stones, showed the complainant and explained to him their value. He said he was surprised as he thought he was attending a meeting regarding the transportation of river sand.

## Bogus lawyer accused of scamming client, applies for bail reduction

By Nokunoeda Magagula  
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A man who misrepresented himself, stating that he is a lawyer and induced E5 800 from a client has asked the Court to reduce his bail from E7 000 to E2 000.

The man is identified as Bongani Musa Dlamini and according to his charge sheet, he is charged with fraud.

His charge sheet further reads that in the month of January 2023, in Manzini, the accused unlawfully and intentionally misrepresented himself, stating that he was a lawyer admitted at the High Court to Sihle Wilton Ntando. The accused said he was in a position to represent Ntando on charges the latter faced, and was, therefore, in a position to represent him in a Court of law. The complaint then paid him E5 800 for his services.

The accused was arrested by the police on January 26, 2024, and after that, he was granted bail fixed at E7 000 at the Manzini Magistrate's Court. Through an affidavit, the accused appealed to the High Court for his bail to be reduced to E2 000. Dlamini states that he managed to raise a sum of E2 000 and can be in a position to secure sureties of E5 000 as a relative has agreed to put up his motor vehicle as surety.

Dlamini told the Court that he was innocent, stating that he never



misrepresented himself to be an Attorney at any point. He said he and the complainant, who is also his friend, were drinking at a spot when the complainant informed him of his legal issues and requested his assistance. "I am well acquainted with different attorneys and I made some suggestions to him as to where he could get assistance," he said.

The complainant informed the accused that he was not familiar with lawyers and gave the accused E5 000 to open a file for him with a lawyer as they were still drinking at the

drinking spot.

In the morning, the accused said he realised that he had misplaced the money. "I had even forgotten of our meeting with the complainant. When the complainant called me later that day, that is when I realised that during our drinking spree, I had misplaced his money. He seemed to understand that I would refund him and unfortunately, I have not been able to do so even though I still make an undertaking to do so," Dlamini said.

He said he is currently kept at the Zakhele Remand Centre in Manzini and has been

advised with belief that bail should be set at an amount that the accused person can afford; he also appreciates the seriousness of the offence that he is facing. However, he is not in a position to afford the sum of E7 000. Dlamini emphasised that the fact that he has been granted bail but is still in custody is a clear indication that he is not in a position to afford the cash sum of E7 000.

He further submitted that he does not have any relatives who are gainfully employed and who are willing to assist him in raising the sum of E7 000 and he is also unemployed but he was running a spaza shop prior to his arrest. "I come from a very impoverished family," Dlamini said.

The Court granted the accused his wish and reduced his bail to E2 000.

“

I am well acquainted with different attorneys and I made some suggestions to him as to where he could get assistance

”



BUSINESS  
SNIPPETS

Rand firms as dollar  
reverses gains

South Africa's rand firmed on Thursday, as the U.S. dollar reversed earlier gains despite the Federal Reserve's relatively hawkish position.

At 1651 GMT, the rand traded at 18,5700 to the dollar, about 0.6% stronger than its previous close.

The dollar was down about 0.5% against a basket of global currencies.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell on Wednesday pushed back against bets of early U.S. rate cuts.

Factory activity slumps  
in January

South African manufacturing activity slumped in January, with the headline Absa Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) falling to levels rarely seen.

The seasonally-adjusted PMI dropped to 43.6 points in January from 50.9 in December, falling far below the 50-point mark that separates expansion from contraction.

The index was partly dragged down by a sharp fall in the new sales orders sub-index, an indicator of demand.

Oil prices buoyed by US  
signals on rate cuts

NEW YORK, Feb 1 (Reuters) - Oil prices edged higher on Thursday, boosted by the U.S. Federal Reserve signalling a possible start to interest rate cuts in coming months.

Brent crude futures were up 61 cents at \$81.16 a barrel at 11:23 a.m. EST (1623 GMT). U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were up 62 cents to \$76.47.

(Reuters)

# 8 000 more beneficiaries for Eswatini Water Supply, Sanitation Access Projects

Stories By Silindzelwe Nxumalo  
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WITH over 2338 beneficiaries already under the Eswatini Water Supply and Sanitation Access Projects, the project has targeted 8000 beneficiaries in October 2024.

This was revealed by the Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela during his tour of these projects in the Shiselweni Region. The Minister was accompanied by Minister of Economic Planning and Development Dr. Tambo Gina where they began by touring EEC projects with a focus on rural electrification.

The Minister stated that to achieve universal access to electricity, the government launched the rural electrification programme, and the Shiselweni region was prioritized under the World Bank loan as it lags compared to the other regions.

Livelihoods

He stated that over the years the government has realized the importance of this program in improving livelihoods, education, health services, and the establishment of small to medium-scale income-generating projects in rural communities.

He said these projects are aimed at improving access to potable water in the country through investing in bulk water storage, rural water supply, waste treatment plants, and sewers.

"Furthermore, the ministry seeks to strengthen and guide developments in the energy sector. The ministry is hopeful that these projects will help realize sustainable development goals numbers 6 and 7," he said.

He added that the ministry is very grateful to the World Bank for extending the loan to the government, with this support, they expect that every liSwati will have access to potable water and electricity by 2030.



▲ Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela and the CEOs from EEC and ESWC posing with one of the families who benefited from the projects

Currently, access to potable water and electricity in the country stands at 75 per cent and 82 per cent, respectively.

The minister said access to clean water is not just a basic necessity, it is a cornerstone of public health, economic prosperity, and societal development, and it forms the foundation for thriving communities, fostering improved sanitation, reducing water-borne diseases, and enhancing overall quality of life.

"As minister of natural resources and energy, i am deeply committed to championing initiatives that ensure that emaSwati enjoy the fundamental right to reliable and safe water sources," he said.

He added that the Eswatini water supply and sanitation access project (EWSSAP) which we have toured today is anticipated to be completed by December 2025.

He said this project is set to improve access to clean water in the corridor between Nhlangano and Siphambanweni, benefiting over 38,233 emaSwati for sanitation and 11,000 for potable water.

"Remarkable progress has been achieved, and the prospect of witnessing the transformative impact on the people of Nhlangano and Siphambanweni is truly inspiring. As we navigate the final stages of this project, I encourage all stakeholders to maintain their dedication and collaborative effort," he said.

The minister stated that in the government's quest to achieve universal access to electricity by 2030, the ministry has launched the ready-board programme to assist the vulnerable and underprivileged members of the rural communities to also have access to electricity.

"The ministry has already identified more than 631 households to benefit from the ready-boards programme in the Shiselweni region," he said.

The Minister further stated that through this component, the ministry is finalizing the national multi-tier framework energy survey that will update the national access rate.

"To improve the quality of electricity supply by upgrading the electricity infrastructure. The infrastructure includes transformers, distribution

lines, and substations," he said.

According to the EEC website, they have several ongoing projects that are geared to improve Eswatini's citizen's access to electricity, and the current access rate stands at 82 per cent.

"Eswatini is ranked number 3 in the Southern African region on this measure. Ongoing projects under the rural electrification project stand to benefit about 18,000 homesteads, which will further increase our access rate." Read the website.

The website highlighted that funding comes from their esteemed partners which include, the Rural Development Fund (RDF), Micro Projects, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, the World Bank, and the Rural Electricity Access Fund.

The website further highlighted that the Network Reinforcement and Access Project is a World Bank loan-funded project that is divided into four components. Component one is desired at Hluthi, Matsanjeni, and Lavumisa.

"Component 2 of the project is aimed at increasing access to construct an 87km 132kV overhead transmission line from Nhlangano to Lavumisa together with three substations of electricity in the Shiselweni Region as part of the Eswatini government's initiative to attain universal access to electricity through the Rural Electrification Programme," read the website.

The website also stated that the beneficiaries in Component 2 will be about 8000 homesteads that will be connected to grid electricity by the end of the implementation of this project. Component 3 of the project is aimed at providing the government with the technical support required to implement various programmes to improve the conditions for the electricity industry in Eswatini.

## Ministry of Agriculture calls for climate change project proposals

ESWATINI Dairy Board has awarded a tender worth E 143 000 to I-Smart Business Solutions (PTY) LTD Trading as Samkho Consulting for the provision of consultancy services for the formulation of the 2023 - 2028 strategic plan.

According to the intention to award issued by ESPPRA on their website, Samkho Consulting was awarded in terms of section 45 of the Public Procurement Act No. 7 of 2011 (the Act), following a competitive bidding process where they scored 86.93 per cent, beating six other competitors.

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

According to the Request for Proposals



(RFP), the board seeks to engage a reputable consultancy firm that will provide consultancy services to the Eswatini Dairy Board for the formulation of the 2023 - 2028 strategic plan.

The RFP stated that the purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to establish a service agreement to cover one year.

The RFP stated that the broad scope of work entails management will compile the

departmental reports detailing performance for the 5 years of the previous Strategic Plan and submit them to the consultant to analyze and put together as part of the performance report.

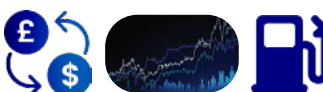
It is also stated that the project awardee will have to prepare a report of stakeholders' inputs to the Strategic Plan and present the same to management, conduct a stakeholder validation workshop, and analyze critical progress made, together with Management and the Board and prepare a draft five (5) year period Strategic Plan on yearly basis to be first considered by Management and ultimately Board at its retreat in December 2023.

"The consultant will also be expected to work with Management, particularly the Finance Department to link the draft 2023/28 Strategic Plan to the budget for the year 2023/2024 and attend and facilitate fully the Board's strategic retreat to be held within Eswatini attended by the Board and Management," read the RFP.



FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	18.2950	18.7579
G.B. Pound	23.0861	23.7701
EURO	19.7393	20.3461
Bank Rate	(July 2023)	7.50%
Prime Rate	(July 2023)	11%
Inflation	(July 2023)	4.5%
Petrol	E20.50/Litre	
Diesel	E20.50/Litre	
Paraffin	E16.75/Litre	





# Magomba Coal Mining takes first step towards being fully operational

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo  
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

A month later after the Mining Board and Magomba Coal Mining (Pty) Ltd signed the mining lease agreement, the mine has taken first steps towards being fully operational.

The new mine has called Mpaka residents for the environmental and social impact assessment scoping meeting.

According to the notice issued by the mine, as they seek to establish and operate a coal mine in the Mpaka area, and as per the requirements of the Eswatini Environment Assessment Regulations (2022), they are inviting members of the public, interested, and affected parties to a Scoping Meeting where their views and concerns about the project will be aired.

The notice stated that the meeting would ensure that these concerns are included and addressed in the planning of the mine and thermal power plant and subsequently in the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA).

“The meeting will be held on February 10, 2024, at Dvokodweni Inkhundla at 10 A.M,” read the statement.

The signed mining lease agreement will have emaSwati get over 800 jobs once the mine starts operating, and it was signed after the court order issued by the High Court Judge Zonke Magagula that ordered the commissioner of mines, Robert Biyela, to countersign the notarial mining lease agreement.

This was after the mining company took the commissioner of mines to court to compel him to countersign the notarial mining lease.

## Grant

During the signing, which was held at the Royal Villas on December 9, Mining Board Chairman Prince Guduza said His Majesty King Mswati III was happy to grant the agreement to the current directors of Magomba Coal Mining.

“We hope through this signing we are unlocking job opportunities for the Mpaka community and the nation at large,” he said.

One of Magomba Coal Mining’s Directors Wandile Hlatshwayo said the signing of the lease agreement was proof of God’s favour, especially after all the challenges they have faced towards the finalisation of the signing.

Hlatshwayo stated that this signing of the agreement also gave Magobha a challenge presented by the King for them to participate in the economic development of the country by migrating the mining industry.

“This is a huge assignment that we are being given and we will work to excel in it,” he said.

He added that they were also expected by the community members at Mpaka and the nation to say that these minerals need to be ensured that they have a better quality of life now and into the future.

He explained what was required from them now was diligence in conduct and the realization of the work of the mine.

He also stated that the signing of this lease also kickstarts a lot of discussions with other stakeholders whom they have already started to work with which include the technical aspects whom they will work with first.

“We will see through the technical aspects



▲ Mining Board Chairman Prince Guduza (in traditional attire) posing with the mining lease agreement with Magomba Mining directors.

as to which different careers will be realized through this mine,” he said.

Previously, Magomba Coal Mining was awarded a prospecting mining license as a prelude to the signing of the notarial mining lease to mine coal at Mpaka. In terms of the notarial lease agreement, the Commissioner of Mines, Robert Biyela, was to facilitate the countersigning of the lease agreement.

Magomba Coal Mining, according to its Director, Fei Zheng, was being sent from pillar to post on the signing of the notarial lease agreement without any lawful basis at law. He said as a result of the countersigning not being attended to, the mining company, with each passing day, was losing millions of Emalangenis from investments.

Other directors of the mining company are Wandile Hlatshwayo, James Mathebula, and Brian Figueiredo. Shu and Shengquan indicated that they would join the proceedings and that they were to file their application for joinder. The attorney general had told the court that he would abide by the decision of the court.

## Grant

In the court papers, Zheng had told the court that the commissioner of mines had failed to advance any cogent reasons why he was refusing to facilitate the countersigning of the notarial lease agreement. He said the purported refusal to facilitate the signing of the agreement constituted administrative injustice to the mine, which stands to suffer irreparable harm if the countersigning is not performed.

Zheng said Magomba Coal Mining had already signed mining personnel agreements with the likes of Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) and other multinational corporations in Mozambique and other SADC States and abroad, with specific timelines already agreed on the processing of the coal and the generation of electricity for the country.

Zheng had also informed the court that the mining license formed an integral part of the Lubhuku Coal Thermal Power



▲ Magomba Coal Mining Directors Wandile Hlatshwayo signing the agreement.

Generation Plant. He said the mine would suffer irreparable harm if the commissioner of mines did not convene the meeting for the countersigning of the lease agreement.

He had previously pointed out that if the countersigning of the lease agreement did not happen, the mine would have no alternative remedy in law, as the notarial mining lease could be revoked by the Head of State.

Moreover, Zheng had said to the court that the companies involved, which have already signed agreements with Magomba Coal Mining for the generation of electricity and fuel supply, would sue the mine for breach of contract, in circumstances where the latter were not at fault.

He alleged that this would be a result of the commissioner of mines frustrating the facilitation of the countersigning. The director had argued that they were justified

to approach the High Court with urgency.

Zheng had stated that the court had the power to require an authority to perform a mandatory statutory duty imposed upon it by law where it was wrongly refusing to perform such duty.

“The applicant risks being sued for breach of contract in that, without the notarial mining lease agreement being signed, no earthworks can commence yet, third parties have already been engaged and are on site in anticipation of the counter-signing of the notarial mining lease, having already been awarded the provisional mining license,” Zheng informed the court.

Hasso Magagula of Dynasty Inc. Attorneys appears for Magomba Coal Mining. He stated that Magomba Coal Mining’s companies had tried without success to have the commissioner of mines sign the agreement by a demand letter sent to him.





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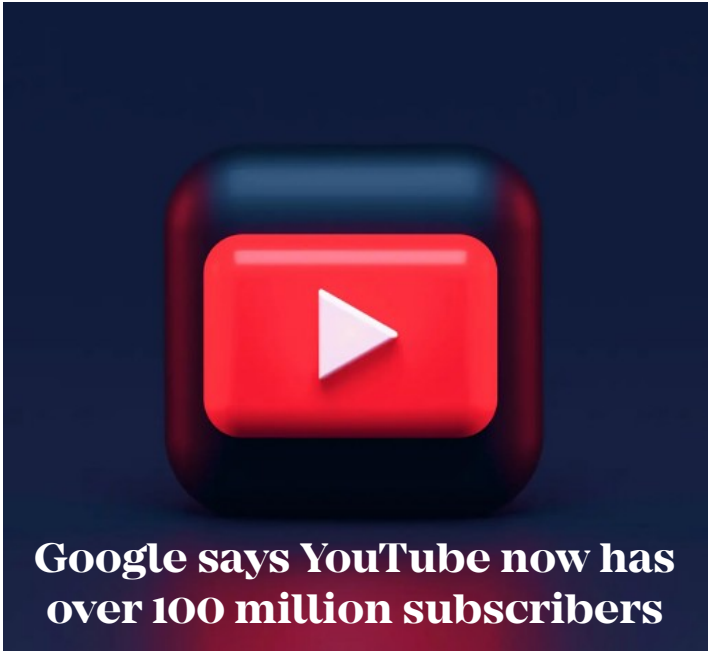
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f t y in O





GOOGLE said today that YouTube now has more than 100 million paid users across YouTube Music and YouTube Premium. This number is up from the 80 million paid users the company mentioned in November 2022.

Earlier this week, during its Q4 2023 earnings call, Sundar Pichai said that Google's subscription business — which includes YouTube's paid plans — has now crossed \$15 billion annually.

The search giant first launched

YouTube Music in 2015. At that time, YouTube offered a \$9.99 per month Red subscription for ad-free viewing that also allowed users to access Play Music. In 2018, the Red subscription was rebranded to YouTube Premium.

In the past year, YouTube has cracked down on ad blockers by saying that these tools violate its terms of service. The video streaming service started to show a warning about preventing them from watching videos unless they disable ad blockers.

(TechCrunch)

# Over a third of EU firms adopt AI, bringing digital goals in reach

STOCKHOLM : More than a third of European businesses adopted artificial intelligence in 2023 as use of generative AI surged, a report commissioned by Amazon Web Services found. The European Commission, the EU executive, in 2021 presented its 2030 Digital Decade vision to transform the region, with 80 per cent of the population acquiring basic digital skills, 5G connectivity everywhere and 75 per cent of EU companies using cloud services.

**Risk**

In 2022, however, only a quarter of EU businesses had adopted AI and a report last year estimated the European Union was at risk of falling behind its Digital Decade goals by ten years unless the governments focused on bridging the skills gap.



▲ A section of the Manzini-Mbadlane Blue Highway is one of the roads that were constructed by Inyatsi Construction.

“Last year was pivotal; from Malmo to Milan, the accessibility of generative AI created an appetite for experimentation among consumers and businesses,” Tanuja Randery, Managing Director at AWS, told

Reuters. “The accelerated uptake of AI last year has helped put Europe on track to meet its Digital Decade goals,” she said. (Reuters)

## Epic–Apple antitrust saga isn’t over yet

FORTNITE maker Epic Games is preparing to fight Apple in court over how Apple has chosen to comply with a court order that required the tech giant to change its App Store rules.



In the antitrust case filed by Epic Games, a district court judge in

Northern California ruled that app developers should be able to point their users to links or buttons that connected to their websites, where their customers could learn about other ways to pay for apps beyond Apple's in-app purchase.

Apple agreed to allow such links,

but said it would still take a 27% commission on those sales — a decision that Epic dubbed a case of “malicious compliance.”

The injunction on Apple's “anti-steering rule,” as it's called, came about after both parties appealed the district court's ruling. (TechCrunch)



### NOTICE

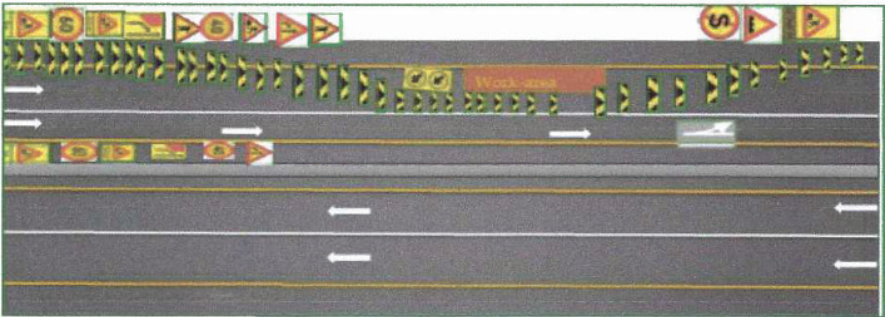
#### ANTICIPATED TRAFFIC FLOW INTERRUPTION ALONG THE MR3 MANZINI - MBADLANE HIGHWAY

The General Public is advised that from the 29th of January 2024, Inyatsi Construction Ltd will be working on the Manzini to Mbadlane lane of the blue Highway, beginning just after the recently constructed Golf Course interchange. The construction works are expected to continue until the 8th of February 2024.

For the duration of the construction, the Contractor shall ensure that:

- Temporary (Roadworks) Signage informing road users of the on-going construction works are in place.
- Floggers are stationed to assist in the safe flow of traffic on the affected portion of the MR3 public road.

All road users are urged to drive cautiously on the affected road sections and adhere to all warning and regulatory road signage on site to avoid any accidents. Any inconvenience caused by the planned works is regretted.



Principal Secretary  
Ministry of Public Works and Transport  
Thulani Mkhalihi

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# Minister Pandor slams Israel for deviating from ICJ ruling

ISRAEL has ignored the ruling by the U.N.'s top court last week by killing hundreds more civilians in a matter of days in Gaza, South Africa's foreign minister said Wednesday, adding that her country has asked why an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has not been issued in a case South Africa filed at the separate International Criminal Court. Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said South Africa would "look at proposing other measures to the global community" in a bid to stop Israel from killing civilians during its war in Gaza against Hamas militants, but didn't go into details.

The preliminary ruling by the U.N.'s International Court of Justice in South Africa's case accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza ordered Israel to do all it can to prevent death, destruction and any acts of genocide against Palestinians in the territory. It stopped short of ordering a cease-fire. It also ruled Israel must urgently get basic humanitarian aid to Gaza and submit a report on steps taken to abide by the ruling within a month.

A top official in South Africa's foreign ministry has said the country hopes that Friday's ruling, and whether Israel is abiding by it, will be discussed on a wider level at the United Nations, possibly as early as Wednesday.

Since the ruling, Israel has continued its military offensive, which it says is aimed at Hamas, and hundreds more Palestinians have been killed, according to figures from the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. The ministry said Wednesday that 150 people were killed in the territory in the last 24 hours, bringing the total number of Palestin-



▲ Minister Naledi Pandor has slammed Israel for failing to comply with the ICJ ruling.

ian deaths in the war to more than 26,700.

The Health Ministry's count does not differentiate between combatants and civilians. It says the majority of the dead are women and children.

"I can't be dishonest. I believe the rulings of the court have been ignored," South Africa's foreign minister said. "Hundreds of people have been killed in the last three or four days. And Israel believes it has a license to do as it wishes."

Pandor said there was a danger of the world doing nothing to stop the civilian casualties in Gaza and said similar inaction contributed to the horrific death toll in the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 when more than 800,000 people were slaughtered in the East

African country.

"We are allowing this to happen again, right before our eyes, on our TV screens,"

The court's ruling is binding on Israel, and the country could face U.N. sanctions if it is found to be breaching its orders, although any sanctions may be vetoed by its close ally the United States.

Netanyahu has said that Israel "will continue to do what is necessary to defend our country and defend our people." Israel says the offensive is aimed at destroying Hamas after its Oct. 7 attacks on Israel that killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians.

Israel says it has abided by international law and is doing its best to minimize civilian casualties in Gaza. It says it has killed more

than 9,000 militants and accuses Hamas of embedding in civilian areas, making it difficult to avoid civilian casualties.

South Africa's governing party, the African National Congress, has long compared Israel's policies in Gaza and the West Bank to its history under the apartheid regime of white minority rule, which restricted most Black people to "homelands" before ending in 1994.

Pandor also said South Africa was eager to pursue the case it has lodged with the separate International Criminal Court, an indication the country will continue its legal pressure on Israel. In the ICC case, South Africa accuses Netanyahu of war crimes and asks the court to order his arrest.

The ICJ and ICC are both based in The Hague but deal with different cases. The ICJ is a U.N. court that decides disputes between countries. The ICC prosecutes individuals.

A South African delegation met with the ICC court president and prosecutor while in The Hague last week for the ICJ ruling, Pandor said, and stressed "our concern at the slow pace of action on matters that we referred to them as urgent matters."

South Africa filed its case against Netanyahu at the ICC in November. The ICC is the same court that issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin last year over alleged war crimes relating to the removal of children from Ukraine.

"The (ICC) prosecutor assured us the matter is in hand and being looked at by his office," Pandor said of South Africa's allegations against Netanyahu. "What I felt he didn't answer me sufficiently on was, I asked him why he was able to issue an arrest warrant for Mr. Putin while he is unable to do so for the Prime Minister of Israel. (Africanews)

## Former Zambian president Calls for early election

ZAMBIA'S ex-President, Edgar Lungu, has urged citizens to demand an early election, alleging that his successor, Hakainde Hichilema (HH), has mismanaged the nation's economy.

Lungu also criticized Hichilema for his handling of the cholera outbreak, which has claimed nearly 600 lives since October. Addressing the public on Wednesday, Lungu emphasized the need for Zambians to exert pressure on President Hichilema, stating that an early election is "imperative." He urged citizens to vocalize their demand for Hichilema's resignation and the initiation of early elections.

Responding swiftly to Lungu's statements, government spokesperson Cornelius Mweetwa dismissed the allegations, urging Zambians to afford the president sufficient time to fulfil his campaign promises. Mweetwa also accused the former president of damaging the country's economy during his six-year tenure.



▲ Zambia's ex-President, Edgar Lungu.

Lungu, who announced his political comeback in October, faced the consequence of the government withdrawing his retirement benefits.

Having retired from politics in 2021 following a significant defeat in the presidential election, Lungu's return sets the stage for a potentially contentious 2026 presidential race. (Africanews)

## 'Cult an organised criminal group after starvation deaths'

KENYAN authorities on Wednesday proscribed the church of a religious leader who ordered his followers to starve themselves and their children to death so that they could go to heaven, as an organised criminal group.

Paul Mackenzie, head of the Good News International Church, is currently facing charges of murder, child torture, and "terrorism" after last April's discovery of hundreds of bodies of his followers who had starved to death on his instructions. In an official gazette document published on Wednesday, the Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki declared the church an "organised criminal group", paving the way for further investigation and possible prosecution of members deemed to have aided Mackenzie.

More than 400 bodies were uncovered over months of exhumations across tens of thousands of acres of the Shakahola forest near Kenya's coast, making this one of the world's worst cult-related tragedies in recent history.

Prosecutors have said they will charge 95 people in total, on counts of murder, manslaughter, terrorism,



▲ Self-proclaimed pastor Paul Nthenge Mackenzie, left, walks surrounded by Kenya police officers and other defendants as he appears at the Shanzu Law Courts in Mombasa

and torture. They have attributed delays in bringing charges to the delicate task of locating and exhuming so many human remains and performing autopsies. Some of Mackenzie's other followers were rescued, emaciated, from the forest.

People with knowledge of the cult's activities told the Reuters news agency last year that Mackenzie planned the mass starvation in

three phases: first children, then women and young men, and finally the remaining men.

A former taxi driver in the coastal city of Mombasa, he forbade cult members from sending their children to school and from going to hospital when they were ill, branding such institutions as satanic, some of his followers said.

(Reuters)



# EU summit agrees on \$54 billion Ukraine aid



▲ Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban attends a European Union leaders summit, in Brussels, Belgium.

BRUSSELS - European Union leaders unanimously agreed on Thursday to extend 50 billion euros (\$54 billion) in new aid to Ukraine, the chairman of the summit said, overcoming weeks of resistance from Hungary.

Before the summit started, EU leaders piled pressure on Hungary to lift its block, telling Prime Minister Viktor Orban he had to pick sides in the existential challenge posed by Russia's war.

"We have a deal. Unity," said European Council President Charles Michel in a post on X. "All 27 leaders agreed on an additional 50 billion euro support package for Ukraine within the EU budget."

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy welcomed the agreement, saying the aid would strengthen long-term economic and financial stability of his country as the war with Russia approaches its third year.

Ukraine's dollar bonds gained on the news. Kyiv, which relies heavily on Western aid as it fights Moscow, said it expected to receive the first tranche of 4.5 billion euros from the EU in March.

The agreement comes after weeks of wrangling with Orban, who vetoed the aid package last December.

Diplomats told Reuters that, in exchange for the green light from Hungary for the Ukraine aid, the bloc did not commit to releasing any of the billions of euros of EU funds intended for Hungary but frozen by Brussels over concerns about human rights and the rule of law in the country.

They said the deal included a yearly discussion of the package and the option to review it in two years "if needed" but no veto rights for Budapest.

Leaders of Germany, Poland, Belgium and Finland were among others arriving at the summit to say it was crucial the 27-nation bloc agreed as one to offer aid to Kyiv from their joint budget through 2027.

Orban, who has cultivated close ties with Moscow, has stepped up criticism of the EU's strategy to prop up Ukraine with financial and military aid as Russia's war against

its neighbour nears the two-year mark.

On Thursday, Orban did not speak to journalists on arriving at the summit to decide on EU strategy on the biggest conflict in Europe since World War Two.

Instead, he posted pictures of himself on social media walking around tractors ahead of a farmers' protest in Brussels on Thursday. There was no immediate comment from Hungary on the deal.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz had made clear what the expectation of the other 26 EU countries was on Thursday, saying the EU was "a community in which all stand in solidarity." Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk agreed: "As a community, we cannot give up on this. Today is the moment when

Prime Minister Orban needs to see time for his games is over. He has to consider if he is in, or out," he told reporters.

The EU's decision comes at a time of uncertainty over the future of U.S. aid to Ukraine. Some EU officials said that, without fresh budget support, Kyiv would run out of cash in March.

Orban has had many bitter run-ins with the EU, haggling over billions of euros earmarked for Budapest in the shared EU budget but frozen over concerns about democratic backsliding. The Hungarian prime minister has also criticised Western sanctions against Russia since Moscow went to war in Ukraine, the biggest conflict in Europe since World War Two. (Reuters)

## EU aid approval will boost Ukraine's economy - Zelenskiy

KYIV - President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Thursday the EU's approval of an aid package to Ukraine would strengthen long-term economic and financial stability as the war with Russia approaches its third year.

"It is very important that the decision was made by all 27 leaders, which once again proves strong EU unity," Zelenskiy said on the X social media platform.

"Continued EU financial support for Ukraine will strengthen long-term economic and financial stability, which is no less important than military assistance and sanctions pressure on Russia," he said.

Ukraine expects to receive the first tranche of 4.5 billion euros (\$4.9 billion) from the EU facility in March, the economy ministry said.

Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko said that 39 billion euros out of the 50 billion euro four-year facility would be channelled to cover Ukraine's budget needs.

Ukraine critically depends on financial support from its Western allies. Since the start of Russia's invasion on February 24, 2022, Kyiv has received about \$73.6 billion in international financial aid, including \$27.5 billion from the European Union. (Reuters)

## World Court dismisses much of Ukraine's case against Russia

THE HAGUE - Judges at the top U.N. court on Wednesday found that Russia violated elements of a U.N. anti-terrorism treaty, but declined to rule on allegations brought by Kyiv that Moscow was responsible for the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014.

In the same ruling, judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found that Russia had breached an anti-discrimination treaty by failing to support Ukrainian language education in Crimea after its 2014 annexation of the peninsula.

The decisions were a legal setback for Kyiv. The court rejected Ukraine's requests to order reparations for both violations and only ordered Russia to comply with the treaties.

Ukraine's representative Anton Korynevych stressed the judgment was important for Kyiv because it did establish Russia violated international law.

"This is the first time that officially, legally Russia is called a violator of international law," he told journalists after the ruling.

Ukraine had filed the lawsuit at the ICJ, also known as the World Court, in 2017, accusing Russia of violating an anti-terror-

ism treaty by funding pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine.

The court's judges said Moscow violated the U.N.'s anti-terrorism treaty by not investigating plausible allegations that some funds were sent from Russia to Ukraine to possibly fund terrorist activities.

The 16-judge panel ordered Russia to investigate any plausible allegations of terrorism financing but turned down a request by Kyiv for reparations.

The court declined to rule on the downing of MH17, saying violations of funding terrorism only applied to monetary and financial support, not to supplying weapons or training as alleged by Ukraine.

Ukraine had argued that Russia supplied the missile system that shot down the aircraft, but it had not alleged financial support in that instance.

In a hearing at the court in The Hague last June, Russia dismissed Ukraine's allegations that it funded and controlled pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine as fiction and "blatant lies".

In the case, which has taken almost seven years, Kyiv had accused Russia of equipping and funding pro-Russian forces, including rebels who shot down MH17 in July 2014, killing all 298 passengers and crew. (Reuters)

## Donald Trump's lawsuit thrown out by UK court

LONDON - Donald Trump's lawsuit against a British private investigations firm over a dossier which alleged ties between Trump's campaign and Russia was thrown out by London's High Court on Thursday.

Trump, the frontrunner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, had brought a data protection lawsuit against Orbis Business Intelligence about claims in a dossier written by its co-founder, former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele.

Judge Karen Steyn ruled that the former U.S. president's case could not continue, saying in a written ruling that "there are no compelling reasons to allow the claim to proceed".

Trump said in a witness statement made public in October that he brought the case to prove claims in the so-called Steele dossier, published by the BuzzFeed website in 2017, that he engaged in "perverted sexual acts" in Russia, are false.

Many of the allegations were never substantiated and lawyers for Trump, 77, said that the report is "egregiously inaccurate" and contained "numerous false, phoney or made-up allegations".

Steyn noted that Trump said the allegations are untrue, adding: "I have not considered, or made any determination, as to the accuracy or inaccuracy of the (allegations)."

Orbis argued that Trump brought the



▲Manzini-Mbadlane Blue Highway constructed by Inyatsi

claim simply to address his "longstanding grievances" against the company and Steele.

Steyn said in her ruling that she did not need to decide that because Trump has "no reasonable grounds for bringing a claim for compensation or damages".

The London lawsuit is one of many legal cases involving Trump, who faces four separate criminal prosecutions in the United States. (Reuters)





FEB

# ulous week!

By Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

THE first week of the fabulous month of love is here. Lace up your dancing shoes.

Well, why not, for the Janu-worries are over. Eswatini Daily News has got the best gig guide for shows around your place.

► **LUCT OPENING**  
When: Friday  
Where: Mega Lounge  
Fee: Free

It's time to put on those dancing shoes and get ready for a night of non-stop fun as Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT) prepares to kick off the new academic year with a bang. Students at LUCT have every reason to be excited as Mega Lounge, the hottest venue in town, will be hosting their highly anticipated University Opening Party. The lineup for the event is nothing short of sensational, promising an unforgettable night for all attendees. With a diverse range of talented artists set to take the stage, the party is guaranteed to be a hit. Among the headliners are Zulu D, Ash, Jalisto, Sgitha, De Wolf, President, The Bishops, Mzoro, Selby, and DJ Skhu. These artists are known for their electrifying performances, and they will undoubtedly bring the house down with their infectious energy and incredible music.

► **FRIDAY GROOVE**  
When: Friday  
Where: IF's Lounge  
Fee: Free

Yamkela, a rising star in the local music scene, is set to celebrate his birthday in style by headlining the sensational Friday Groove that promises to be an unforgettable experience. The event, taking place at IF's Lounge, will feature an incredible lineup of DJs, including Mistosoul, Skeezy, Acoustic Soul, and Junior the DJ. The anticipation for Yamkela's birthday celebration is reaching fever pitch, as music enthusiasts eagerly await this electrifying event. With a reputation for delivering energetic performances that leave audiences in awe, Yamkela's headline performance is expected to be the highlight of the night.

► **ESWATINI CREATORS AWARDS**  
When: Saturday  
Where: Sharma House  
Fee: E150

With the awards ceremony set to take place at Sharma House in Ezulwini on Saturday, attendees can expect an evening filled with celebration and recognition. Eswatini's very own Zindzi Thwala and PhD have been announced as the hosts for the awards. Embracing the theme of 'African Bling,' guests are encouraged to showcase their cultural pride and elegance through their attire. The organizers have spared no expense in creating an atmosphere that truly captures the essence of the nation. As soon as guests step foot into Sharma House, they will be transported into a world of African splendor, where creativity reigns supreme. The Eswatini Creators Awards go beyond mere glitz and glamour; they serve as a platform for the nation's talented creators to shine and receive the recognition they deserve. From fashion designers to musicians, models to influencers, this event is a celebration of diversity and inclusivity. It provides every citizen and resident with an opportunity to showcase their unique talents and be appreciated by a wider audience.

► **BAKERS CONFERENCE**  
When: Saturday  
Where: EEC Manzini Regional Office  
Fee: E500

It is set to be a sweet treat for cake professionals as Manzini is set to become the hub of all things cake-related with the eagerly anticipated inaugural Bakers Conference. The venue for this exciting event is the EEC Manzini Regional Office, which will provide a conducive and professional environment for attendees to network, learn, and grow. This event promises to be a game-changer for aspiring and established cake professionals, students, and retail bakers alike. One of the highlights of the conference will be the presence of renowned local motivational speaker and entrepreneur, Jumbo Khumalo. With his wealth of knowledge and experience, Khumalo is expected to inspire and empower attendees with his insightful keynote address. In addition to Jumbo Khumalo, the stage will be graced by other notable names in the industry. Attendees can look forward to engaging with industry experts such as Mtera Thwala, Sir Cakes from South Africa, Cakes by Charmaine, and Theoscakes. The Bakers Conference aims to provide a platform for cake enthusiasts to establish, manage, and grow their businesses. With a focus on topics such as marketing and branding, as well as financial management, attendees will gain valuable insights into the business side of the cake industry.

► **LOVE EXPERIENCE**  
When: Saturday  
Where: Sondelani Wine and Malt  
Fee: E30

Partygoers are set to be fascinated as South African 'SiSwati singing' sensation, Passion Master, takes the stage at Sondelani Wine & Malt for a night of unforgettable music. February 3, 2024, will be the big day for the event, which promises to be a fiery affair, with more supporting acts to be revealed soon. Vusi Thulane Mazibuko, widely known by his stage name 'Passion Master,' hails from the town of Bhuga in South Africa. His musical journey began in 2004 while he was still a student at Tshwane University of Technology.

► **SATURDAY CHILLOUT VIBES**  
When: Saturday  
Where: IF's Lounge  
Fee: Free

Prepare to unwind and let the good vibes wash over you as IF's Lounge presents the highly anticipated Saturday Chillout Vibes event. With an incredible lineup of talented artists and a relaxed atmosphere, this event is set to be a beautiful experience for all attendees. Taking center stage for the evening is none other than the sensational local female DJ, It's All Blaq. Known for her infectious beats and captivating performances, It's All Blaq is guaranteed to keep the crowd grooving throughout the night. Her unique style and ability to read the crowd make her one of the best DJs in the local music scene. Supporting It's All Blaq on this memorable evening is a lineup of equally talented artists. Mistosoul, Lamentic Soula, Wacko, and Yamkela will all take turns on the decks, ensuring that the music never stops, and the energy remains high. With their diverse musical styles and impeccable mixing skills, these artists are sure to create an unforgettable atmosphere that will have everyone on their feet.

► **ANGISAT NGITSIN**  
When: Saturday  
Where: Polar Rest and Bar  
Fee: Free

It is set to be giggles galore and attendees are in it for a laughter treat as the dynamic duo, Bongiswa, and Darren, prepare to take the stage at Polar Rest and Bar for the highly anticipated show, 'Angisat Ngitsin.' This comedic extravaganza is scheduled to take place on February 3, 2024, starting at 4 pm, promising an evening of non-stop entertainment. Joining Bongiswa and Darren on stage will be the sensational Snap King. To keep the beats pumping throughout the night, Polar Rest and Bar's resident DJs will be spinning the latest tunes, ensuring a lively atmosphere that will have everyone on their feet. The event promises side-splitting laughter, unforgettable moments, and an evening of pure entertainment.





# ‘Growing Up with S’lwane’ show back

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

AFTER a brief hiatus since 2021, the highly anticipated return of the beloved show ‘Growing Up with S’lwane’ is finally here.

Hosted by the renowned local comedian, S’lwane, this show promises to be bigger, bolder, and funnier than ever before. Since its last episode in 2021, fans have eagerly awaited the show’s comeback. And now, their patience will be rewarded as ‘Growing Up with S’lwane’ makes its triumphant return next week Monday. In an exclusive interview, S’lwane expressed excitement about the show’s revival, assuring fans that it is back with a bang.

The premise of the show remains the same - S’lwane will engage in candid

conversations with successful celebrities and businesspeople, delving into their secrets of success. The previous episodes of this show featured the late iconic comedian, Smallz and entrepreneur Illa Penboy. The show will be live streamed on Gogo Eswatini’s Facebook and YouTube channels, allowing a wider audience to join in on the laughter and inspiration.

In an interview, S’lwane revealed that the show’s aim goes beyond just entertaining viewers with hilarious jokes. He said with this show, they want the audience to be motivated, to learn valuable lessons, and to gain insightful perspectives from the accomplished guests.

S’lwane and Gogo, are as busy as a woman selling fat cakes on a cold, as they will also be co-hosting a brand-new show called ‘Tea Talk with Gogo and S’lwane.’

This show will tackle serious and controversial topics. It will feature thought-provoking discussions with high-profile individuals, as S’lwane and Gogo will fearlessly

ask the questions that others shy away from. ‘Tea Talk with Gogo and S’lwane’ will be live-streamed every Friday on Gogo Eswatini’s Facebook and YouTube Channel.

In addition to these thrilling developments, Gogo’s popular show, ‘SiSwati Sami, Bungani Bami- Ligcabho Lami, also made a resurgence last Wednesday. This show aims to educate and entertain audiences about the rich Swati culture and traditions.

► Comedian  
S’lwane.



▲ Musician Sands.

## Sands to set the stage ablaze at Sibane Sami Hotel

IT will be a romantic encounter and couples will be blown away with local music sensation Sands slated to render an iconic performance at Sibane Sami Hotel.

The ‘Love Night Dinner’ event, hosted by Sibane Sami Hotel, which will feature a special performance from Sands will be held on the most romantic day of the year, February 14, 2024. This event promises an unforgettable evening of love, music, and enchantment.

Starting at 6 pm and running until late, the ‘Love Night Dinner’ is set to be a celebration of love and togetherness. With a package priced at E405.00 per person and E810.00 per couple, attendees will be treated to a night of indulgence and romance. The package includes welcome drinks, a delectable buffet menu, roses for the ladies, and chocolates for the gentlemen, ensuring a truly memorable experience for all.

Taking the stage as the headliner of the evening, Sands, a multi-award-winning musician, and gold-selling artist, is set to captivate the audience with his soulful voice and mesmerising melodies. With his viral hit song, ‘Tigi,’ Sands has become a household name, capturing the hearts of music lovers across the nation. His unique blend of Afro-pop and soulful rhythms has garnered him a dedicated fanbase and critical acclaim.

Sands’ performance at the ‘Love Night Dinner’ promises to be a highlight of the evening, as he serenades the audience with his enchanting tunes. Known for his captivating stage presence, Sands has a natural ability to connect with his audience, creating an intimate and immersive experience for all those in attendance. His soul-stirring lyrics and heartfelt performances are sure to leave a lasting impression on the hearts of music enthusiasts.

## Free haircuts for Eswatini Creators Awards nominees

ESWATINI Creators Awards Top 5 nominees across all categories are in for a treat and will look neat as it has been announced that they will receive free stylish haircuts of their choice.

Thanks to the generosity of The Godfather, a local barbershop, nominees can look forward to looking their best on the red carpet.

With the awards ceremony set to take place at Sharma House in Ezulwini on Saturday, attendees can expect an evening filled with celebration and recognition. Priced at E150, tickets promise an unforgettable experience for all who attend. Eswatini’s very own Zindzi Thwala and PhD have been announced as the hosts for the awards.

Embracing the theme of ‘African Bling,’ guests are encouraged to showcase their cultural pride and elegance through their attire.

The organisers have spared no expense in creating an atmosphere that truly captures the essence of the nation. As soon as guests step foot into Sharma House, they will be transported into a world of African splendour, where creativity reigns supreme.

The Eswatini Creators Awards go beyond mere glitz and glamour; they serve as a platform for the nation’s talented creators to shine and receive the recognition they deserve. From fashion designers to musicians, models to influencers, this event is a celebration of diversity and inclusivity. It provides every citizen and resident with an opportunity to showcase their unique talents and be



appreciated by a wider audience.

More than just an awards ceremony, the Eswatini Creators Awards have become a symbol of unity, bringing together creators from all walks of life. In a world where social media plays a significant role, these awards leverage this connectivity to foster a vibrant community of artists and innovators.

By sharing and engaging with each other’s work, they create a sense of camaraderie that transcends borders and unites the nation in its creative endeavours.

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



# Lady Zamar ready to usher in a new era

## ... with first album release in five years

Lady Zamar’s fans have been eagerly awaiting the release of her next body of work and the award-winning singer from Tembisa is finally giving the people what they want.

After nearly five years after the release of ‘Monarch’, Lady Zamar is ready to usher in a new era with the release of her 2024 album, ‘Rainbow’.

From multiple vocal surgeries to starting again from scratch midway through the process – the creative journey saw Lady Zamar tackling a number of stormy challenges.

“The journey to ‘Rainbow’ started around 2020. It was Covid, I had just released my previous full-length album, ‘Monarch’ and it had performed extremely well. I got back to the drawing board, and I started with a lot of tracking,” shared the singer.

In 2021 after going through vocal training she created an entire album but it wasn’t what Lady Zamar and her team wanted it to be and started afresh.

“We worked and worked, tried more things that didn’t work until eventually we created the song that would become ‘Castles’. It then became the cornerstone of the album and now we had a clearer direction of where we were going.”

Creating the album, was a cleansing process for the singer, making sure she had the right energy around her in order to create. “I think it’s been an empowering process because I feel like I’ve reclaimed my identity in this process.”

On this album fans can expect to hear how Lady Zamar’s voice has grown. “I’ve tried to create a really great balance with my voice.

“I’ve played around with some lush and beautiful tones, it goes from husky to angelic, I really feel proud of the versatility I showed with my vocals.”

Describing the album, Lady Zamar explains that it’s a very fun one and the lyrics tell a story: “There’ll be great stories, sensational vocals and some memorable tracks for everyone.”

(IOL)



▲After nearly five years after the release of ‘Monarch’, Lady Zamar is ready to usher in a new era with the release of her 2024 album, ‘Rainbow’.

# Alec Baldwin pleads not guilty to involuntary manslaughter charge

ACTOR Alec Baldwin has pleaded not guilty to manslaughter charges over the death of a young woman who was fatally shot on the set of a budget Western, US court documents showed Wednesday.

Baldwin, a producer and star of the film, was charged in January for his role in the 2021 death of Halyna Hutchins during the filming of period piece “Rust” in New Mexico.

He was holding a Colt .45 when it discharged, killing Hutchins and wounding director Joel Souza.

Baldwin has repeatedly denied responsibility, insisting he did not pull the trigger on the gun, which should not have been loaded with a live round.

The incident sent shockwaves through Hollywood and led to calls for a tightening of the rules around the use of firearms on movie sets.

### Accusations

But it also led to accusations of sloppy management, with some in the industry saying regulations were already tight, and that they had simply not been properly followed during the making of “Rust”.

Baldwin’s lawyers Luke Nikas and Alex Spiro have filed a request for a quick trial in order to “minimise public vilification and suspicion and to avoid the hazards of proving his innocence that often arise after a lengthy delay in prosecution”.

Baldwin had been due to appear virtually at the state district court in Santa Fe, New Mexico for an arraignment on Thursday, but his lawyers submitted a waiver that also contained his plea of not guilty.

Initial manslaughter charges against

65-year-old Baldwin were dropped in April last year, due to what prosecutors called “new facts” that demanded “further investigation and forensic analysis”.

That led to the empaneling of a grand jury, which ultimately handed down the indictment he is now facing — and could see him jailed for up to 18 months, if convicted.

Baldwin faces two alternative counts of involuntary manslaughter — one involving “negligent use of a firearm” and one of acting “without due caution or circumspection”.

It will be up to the jury to decide whether to convict him on one or the other, or neither (but not both).

The charges relate to the action, not to the oversight of the movie, meaning he is being held culpable as an actor, not in his capacity as producer.

Actors’ union SAG-AFTRA criticised the charges, which it said were based on “an incorrect assessment of the actual duties of an actor”.

“An actor’s job is not to be a firearms or weapons expert,” the union said.

“Firearms are provided for use on set under the guidance of multiple expert professionals directly responsible for the safe and accurate operation of that firearm.”

Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, the film’s armourer — the person responsible for supplying and maintaining weapons — is set to go on trial this the month on charges of involuntary manslaughter and tampering with evidence.

(Bang Showbiz)



▲Actor Alec Baldwin.

# Prince Kaybee’s beliefs on owning masters have changed

IF there is one topic that never dies out when it comes to the music industry, it’s the ownership of masters, locally and internationally.

This topic has once again resurfaced thanks to producer and artist DJ Maphorisa’s recent Instagram Live, where he spoke about how he gets to be the owner of the original sound recordings of music done by other producers.

“When you record music on my computer, my studio, with my electricity. That sh\*t is mine. It belongs to me. You guys don’t know anything. I’m the one who buys food, I’m the one who buys water and all those things. So what do you own? Why must you own things you didn’t come with?” he said.

“You must understand when you work in someone’s studio, that sh\*t is not yours. Go buy your own studio, buy plug-ins, FruityLoops, a microphone and whatever, then make music and release it. Then those will be your masters.”

Maphorisa’s sentiments certainly sparked quite the debate on X with many upcoming and established artists weighing in, even Prince Kaybee shared his views.

The DJ and music producer has previously stated that he does not own his masters but in his recent views seems to have had a change of heart thanks to some growing up.

Kaybee explained that he now believes in everyone who contributed to a song, earning their fair share. “I now believe in working together on creative projects is about the IP sharing.

“So someone must write a song, produce a beat and craft it and you own everything cause you bought Nando’s and lights?”

### Ideas

DJ Maphorisa and Kaybee are no strangers to having different ideas, they have previously taken each other on and it seems history never fails to repeat itself, as DJ Maphorisa hit back at the ‘Gugulethu’ hitmaker throwing “porn star and sex man” words his way.

Kaybee wasn’t moved by the porn star narrative being thrown his way and argued that he could use the allegations of Maphorisa hitting a woman but that’s not the argument and was simply disagreeing with his view.

(IOL)



▲ Prince Kaybee and DJ Maphorisa.





IT'S no surprise that the big and little stresses of life can have a significant impact on your overall health and well-being — no matter who you are.

But for Black women, stress and its health effects can be amplified.

LIVED EXPERIENCES

While all women face stressors, “the inequities in the impact of stress on the health and well-being of Black women cannot be ignored,” says Linda Goler Blount, president of the Black Women’s Health Imperative (BWHI). The lived experiences of Black women speak to the overwhelming stress in their lives.”

COVID-19

The Covid-19 pandemic encapsulated and exacerbated the historical and systemic stress Black women have experienced and continue to experience.

In a 2022 study, researchers reviewed and analyzed the lived experiences of 72 Black women during the pandemic. The women shared their stories via the University of Connecticut’s Pandemic Journaling Program.

In reviewing the women’s stories, the researchers identified a few patterns. The women typically:

- Held “essential employee” positions
- Juggled being caregivers to multiple generations within their family structure
- Felt that connectedness to their support networks weakened, or was even eliminated, due to pandemic protocols like physical distancing.

These situations and others caused the women overwhelming psychosocial stress.

You may say to yourself that everyone experienced challenges during the pandemic — and they did. But for Black women, the pandemic compounded existing feelings of chronic stress caused by lived experiences.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Blount also points to high stress levels as a possible reason for higher maternal mortality rates in Black women.

In 2018, the Center for American Progress published a report that focused on the disparities Black women face during pregnancy and childbirth. It highlighted research findings indicating that stress related to racism and gender discrimination plays a significant role in maternal mortality outcomes.

In addition, according to the Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, stress caused by systemic and interpersonal racism can increase the risk of maternal mental health conditions in Black women.

Though there’s more research into the disparities that Black women face — especially in pregnancy and childbirth — in recent years, there are still critical information gaps.

“There simply isn’t enough research on the true physical and mental impacts of stress on Black women across the entire life cycle,” Blount says.

BWHI is working to further understand

# How stress affects black women, tips for how to manage



these impacts, collecting the responses of 60,000 Black women ages 21–69 and publishing them in a 2019 report, IndexUS: What Healthy Black Women Can Teach Us About Health.

WEIGHT OF THE WORKPLACE

For most people, a day at the office means fulfilling their work responsibilities, taking breaks like having lunch, and heading home at the end of the day.

For Black women, it’s regularly a much different experience. It’s typically a day filled with challenges that take a toll on their well-being.

Their workday is more likely to involve microaggressions, being made to feel that they don’t measure up to their colleagues, and feeling that they need to consistently overachieve to be seen, heard, or simply maintain employment.

According to Dr. Jameta N. Barlow, director of undergraduate studies and assistant professor of writing, health policy, and the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at George Washington University, “Stress in the workplace for Black women decreased with remote work as an option.

“Many Black women are experiencing less stress and trauma from the workplace (micro)aggressive behaviors that have been increasing with the changing socio-political landscape.”

There are no criteria like limitations or boundaries for where these moments and events take place. They’re happening in Hollywood, the sports world, local businesses in your community, and academia.

We recently witnessed the struggles Black women face in academia through what Dr. Claudine Gay and Dr. Antoinette “Bonnie” Candia-Bailey faced. And tragically, it became too much for Candia-Bailey, who died by suicide.

The doorway to hope opened slightly when many businesses embraced diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs following the murder of George Floyd.

But recently, we’ve seen that door closing at many businesses, and in some instances, it’s like an invisible deadbolt lock was added to keep the idea of DEI securely locked away.

PROCESSING STRESS

In talking about the stressful and traumatic experiences of Black women, we would not do justice to the conversation without talking about the added challenges they face in coping with those experiences.

It’s a coping process that also includes the added pressure of an increased risk of worsening mental and physical health conditions and potentially receiving new diagnoses.

A 2010 study found that Black women may process and internalize stress differently

than white women. The research findings suggest that stressors may be responsible for increased biological aging in Black women, a process known as weathering.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Black women have a life expectancy that is, on average, 3 years shorter than that of white women, and some of the root causes may be related to stress.

“We know that 1 out of 2 Black women suffers from some type of heart disease, per the American Heart Association (AHA) — much caused by stress related to race, gender, or income,” Blount says. “Stress is killing us.”

From a mental health perspective, research shows that stress can lead to increased diagnoses of anxiety, depression, and even post-traumatic stress syndrome.

CHRONIC STRESS AND ITS IMPACT

Humans naturally produce a stress hormone called cortisol, the same hormone that causes the fight-or-flight response we feel when reacting in the moment to danger.

But the stress that causes the most negative effect on Black women is chronic, or ongoing, stress. As a result, Black women’s bodies may produce more cortisol continually over time.

Research from 2022 vividly describes the causes and effects of the adverse relationship Black women involuntarily have with stress.





The compounding effects of stressful events further escalate cortisol production.

Long-term exposure to elevated cortisol levels can increase Black women's risk of:

- heart disease
- anxiety
- depression
- obesity

For Black women already living with chronic health conditions, stress can worsen those conditions. And when stress is not managed well, its effects on the body increase.

Black women are 50% more likely to receive a high blood pressure diagnosis than white women. "Black women die from strokes due to high blood pressure at higher rates than white women. And we know there are strong links between stress and high blood pressure," Blount says.

#### MANAGING STRESS IN THE MEANTIME

It's impossible to completely prevent stress. Juggling bills and income, family relationships, and employers and co-workers can all be stress-inducing for Black women.

The news and social media also bring stress and feelings of anxiety right into our homes.

But there are steps Black women can take to reduce daily stress and create a coping process that works well for them.

Black women making self-care a priority isn't selfish — it's necessary and can be lifesaving.

A good first step can be checking their stress level, which they can do with the BWHI stress test.

Next, they can consider these supportive processes to nurture their overall well-being:

- Ask for help.
- Learn how and when to say no.
- Learn how to effectively set boundaries.

Build and lean into a strong support network of trusted individuals to help place and keep stress in perspective.

Barlow reminds us of the importance of allies in Black women's support networks. She states, "Others can support Black women by being true allies and understanding that Black women's allostatic load is high when subjected to increased and ongoing stressors."

If you're an ally to Black women — or would like to be — consider the following steps to help support them:

- Be an active listener. Learn how to listen to learn rather than only listening to respond.
- Commit to not dismissing their concerns and their contributions.

► Create safe spaces where they can feel seen, heard, and supported.

► Develop equitable and inclusive hiring, recognition, and promotion criteria.

Healthline

66

We know that 1 out of 2 Black women suffers from some type of heart disease, per the American Heart Association (AHA) — much caused by stress related to race, gender, or income. Stress is killing us

22

# Premature birth rate rose 12 per cent, A doctor shares what to know

PRETERM and early-term births in the US have increased from 2014 to 2022, raising risks to babies, according to new data from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

Data released Wednesday from the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics shows the preterm birth rate — meaning delivery before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy — rose 12 per cent during that time period, while early-term birth rates, at 37 to 38 completed weeks, rose 20 per cent.

This is compared to full-term births, which are those delivered at 39 to 40 weeks. Using data from the National Vital Statistics System, the analysis only looks at singleton births, since multiple births like twins and triplets tend to be born at earlier gestational ages, the authors note.

"Gestational age is a strong predictor of short- and long-term morbidity and early mortality," the authors write. "Births delivered preterm are at the greatest risk of adverse outcomes, but risk is also elevated for early-term compared with full-term births."

On "CBS Mornings" Wednesday, Dr. Céline Gounder, a CBS News medical contributor and editor-at-large for public health at KFF Health News, said this shift toward earlier births is concerning.

"If a baby is born early term, not preterm but even early term, there can be complications," she explains. "The lungs may not be fully developed, that baby may not be able to regulate their temperature or their blood sugar as well. They may not have that suckling reflex that allows the baby to feed, and so that means staying in the hospital for longer so the baby has a support to survive."

#### WHAT IS CAUSING THIS SHIFT IN EARLIER BIRTHS?

While there's no question that some of this is due to early induction and early cesarean sections, Gounder says, the trends of those have actually been going down.

"While still too high, the trend has been going down over the last 10 to 15 years," she said.

One factor is that more women are having babies at an older age, which raises the risk of preterm birth, but the increase was seen across all age groups.

"But age aside, obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes — all of those increase the risk of these kinds of issues with earlier preterm birth," Gounder said.

While obesity itself doesn't cause early births, there are complications associated with obesity, like preeclampsia, that can.

"These are the reasons women are having to deliver earlier for their own health as well as for the health of the pregnancy," Gounder said. "If you wait

● Births delivered preterm are at the greatest risk of adverse outcomes, but risk is also elevated for early-term compared with full-term births



until you get pregnant to address or think about these issues, in some ways, it's too late. You really want to go into pregnancy already being as healthy as you can."

#### WHAT SHOULD PREGNANT PEOPLE LOOK FOR?

Gounder says if you're pregnant, you should see your doctor sooner if you're having any of the following issues:

- Headaches
- Changes in your urination
- Increased blood pressure
- But a big part of this is access to health care, Gounder adds.

"About two-thirds of people have health insurance through their job. That leaves about a third who don't," she notes. Those without it may be able to sign up through the Affordable Care Act, marketplace plans or get care through Medicaid.

"If you're eligible and you could be getting that kind of access, you should and get yourself a primary care doctor," she says.

CBSHealth

66

If a baby is born early term, not preterm but even early term, there can be complications. The lungs may not be fully developed, that baby may not be able to regulate their temperature or their blood sugar as well

22



# Around the world in pictures



▲Meta’s CEO Mark Zuckerberg reacts as he testifies during the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on online child sexual exploitation at the U.S. Capitol in Washington.



▲Residents with their dog walk in front of a canoe sitting on a cracked ground at a Sau reservoir, as the Iberian peninsula is at its driest in 1,200 years, in Sant Roma De Sau, Spain.



▲ A bird flies with smoke rising from the North Gaza in the background, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, as seen from Israel.



▲U.S. President Joe Biden and U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) attend the annual National Prayer Breakfast at the U.S. Capitol in Washington.



▲A view shows the extent of the aftermath of a fire near Pringle Bay, as firefighters remain on high alert amid dry, hot, and windy weather in Western Cape, South Africa.



▲Labourers move a cart loaded with spice sacks at a wholesale market, a day before Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government presents its final budget, ahead of the nation’s general election, in the old quarters of Delhi, India.



▲Municipal workers sweep up straw during a protest by farmers over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, grievances shared by farmers across Europe, in Paris, France.



▲Greek university students clash with riot police amid tear gas, during a demonstration against a planned bill which opens the way for the operation of private universities, in Athens, Greece.



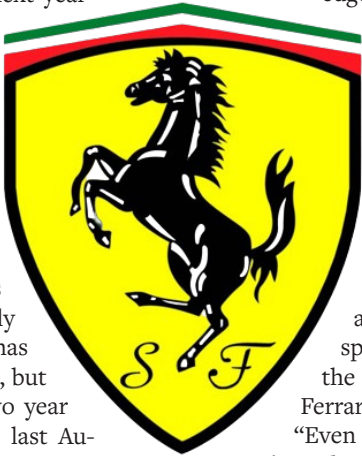
LONDON - Seven times Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton is set for a shock switch from Mercedes to Ferrari in 2025 as replacement for Spanish driver Carlos Sainz, according to multiple media reports on Thursday. Mercedes and Ferrari declined to comment on speculation that would be by far the most sensational driver move of the so-called 'silly season'.

Sky Sports television said it understood Mercedes principal Toto Wolff would brief the team before a formal announcement later on Thursday.

Hamilton, 39, has been with Mercedes since 2013 and won his first title with McLaren in 2008. His current contract is due to expire at the end of next year and a move to Ferrari would surely extend that into the sport's new engine era in 2026.

The Briton has been linked with Maranello repeatedly during his career, particularly when his contract has been up for renewal, but he signed a new two year deal with Mercedes last August.

Despite his loyalty to Mercedes, Hamilton has remained close to Ferrari boss Fred Vasseur after



# Hamilton set for shock switch to Ferrari in 2025

winning Formula Three and GP2 (now Formula Two) championships with the Frenchman's ART team as a junior in 2005 and 2006.

Vasseur said last August that he talked to Hamilton at every race weekend.

In 2019, Wolff said Hamilton and Mercedes had discussed the possibility of the driver one day racing for Ferrari and such a move would be no drama.

"You have to simply acknowledge that probably it's in every driver's head to drive at Ferrari one day," the Austrian said then.

"It's the most iconic, historic Formula One brand out there and I totally respect if a driver has the desire to drive at Ferrari.

"Even within the team we have discussed it and with Lewis we have discussed it and we have agreed on the topic."

The most successful Formula

One driver of all time, with a record 103 wins and 104 pole positions in a career that started in 2007, Hamilton has not won a race since December 2021 as Mercedes struggled to match Red Bull and Max Verstappen.

Verstappen has won the last three titles and starts 2024 as favourite for a fourth. The Dutch 26-year-old has a contract to the end of 2028.

Hamilton would join Charles Leclerc at Ferrari, with the Italian team announcing a week ago that the Monegasque had signed on for several more seasons.

McLaren also ensured Lando Norris, who had been seen by some as a possible future replacement for Hamilton, was off the market by announcing a new deal on Friday.

A move to Ferrari would likely be Hamilton's Formula One swansong and a calculated risk, with the 2026 rule changes leaving everyone entering new territory.

The possibility of a record eighth title, if not with Mercedes this season, with a third team would also be a sensational step.

(Reuters)



▲ Seven times Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton is set for a shock switch from Mercedes to Ferrari in 2025 as replacement for Spanish driver Carlos Sainz



▲ The napkin on which 13-year-old Lionel Messi signed his first contract with Barcelona will be auctioned in March for a starting price of 300,000 pounds (\$381,000).

## Napkin Messi signed to join Barcelona goes to auction

THE napkin on which 13-year-old Lionel Messi signed his first contract with Barcelona will be auctioned in March for a starting price of 300,000 pounds (\$381,000), British auction house Bonhams said on Wednesday.

The napkin was signed in December, 2000 when Carles Rexach, then Barca's sporting director, agreed with Jorge Messi, Messi's father, and agent Horacio Gaggioli to recruit the Argentine teenager who went on to become the club's all-time top scorer.

The pivotal moment in football history happened after Rexach invited Messi senior to have lunch over his concerns at the lack of response following his son's initial trials at the Spanish club.

"In Barcelona, on 14 December 2000 and in the presence of Messrs Minguella and Horacio, Carles Rexach, FC Barcelona's sporting director, hereby agrees, under his responsibility and regardless of any dissenting opinions, to sign the player Lionel Messi, provided that we keep to the amounts agreed upon," is written on the napkin from the Pompeia tennis club.

The agreement, ratified by then club president Joan Gaspart, was formally signed that same night and a month later Barcelona completed the signing of Messi to begin his 20-year stay at the Catalan club.

The eight-times Ballon d'Or winner helped Barca win 35 titles, making a record 782 appearances and scoring 674 goals. (Reuters)

## Football Australia investigating 'possible data breach'

MELBOURNE - Football Australia are investigating a possible data breach following a report in a cybersecurity publication that players' passports, contracts and other personal information may have been leaked online.

The report, published by Cybernews.com on Wednesday, said the soccer governing body had also potentially exposed ticket buyers' personal data and that "human error" was the most likely reason for the leak.

"Nevertheless, the mistake represents a critical data exposure incident," it said.

Football Australia said in a statement on Thursday it was aware of the reports of a "possible data breach" and was investigating the matter as a priority.

"Football Australia takes the security of all its stakeholders seriously," the statement said.

"We will keep our stakeholders updated as we establish more details."

The report in Cybernews, which describes itself as an independent, online publication which discloses cybersecurity threats, said Football Australia had enabled access to 127 "digital storage containers", including one which was left completely unprotected and contained players' passports and contracts.

It said Football Australia had fixed the issue after being alerted by Cybernews.

The Australian men's football team is currently playing at the Asian Cup in Qatar where they face South Korea in the quarter-finals. Coach Graham Arnold said the data breach was not a distraction for the Socceroos.

"Obviously we're aware of it but it's no distraction at all. The FA are on to it and we're just here to focus on the tournament," Arnold told reporters ahead of Friday's game.

(Reuters)



▲ Football Australia are investigating a possible data breach.



# Financial rules keep teams quiet in January window

NEWCASTLE United have been quiet in the January transfer window despite their desire to sign a midfielder, but having to sell to buy amid tighter financial regulations and trepidation over the threat of points deductions has limited activity for most teams. England's top clubs splashed out £15 million on players in January last year - almost double the amount in the same month of 2022.

This January clubs had laid out just over £50 million by the eve of the deadline. "The war chest days are gone," Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said recently. "Every club is doing what we're doing. The summer may well be the same in the sense that it's a different way of doing transfer business now for football clubs."

The climate has changed because of the Premier League's clampdown via its Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSR).

PSR was introduced in 2013 to level the playing field and prevent clubs with rich ownership groups, such as Newcastle, spending vast sums on players. It means clubs are permitted to lose a maximum of £105 million over a three-year period.

Newcastle, who have been decimated by injuries this season, could have used an infusion of talent before the window closes at 2300GMT on Thursday as they languish seventh in the Premier League after their fourth-place finish last season.

The wealth of Newcastle's Saudi-backed Public Investment Fund owners puts the north-east club among the world's richest soccer outfits and they have spent big since



▲ Newcastle United have been quiet in the January transfer window despite their desire to sign a midfielder, but having to sell to buy amid tighter financial regulations and trepidation over the threat of points deductions has limited activity for most teams.

the ownership change in 2021, leaving them near their PSR limit.

"We don't want to breach FFP (Financial Fair Play)," said Howe. "That is where I will support the decisions that are made for the long term and that will benefit the club."

"It's a complex situation. I don't think anything is clear-cut. All eventualities can happen."

While Newcastle benefited financially from playing in this season's Champions League group stage before their exit, they look unlikely to be back among Europe's elite next term.

Dan Plumley, a soccer finance expert at

Sheffield Hallam University, told Reuters that the Magpies may have to offload players before they can strengthen their squad.

"It's not beyond the realm of possibility that Newcastle could be looking to sell a couple of players to then free up the funds to do something else, maybe in the summer perhaps as a longer-term plan to invest in the squad, which we've seen them do (since) the new owners took over," he said.

Al-Shabab have been linked with Newcastle's Paraguay midfielder Miguel Almiron but the Saudi club reportedly failed to meet his £30-million price tag. (Reuters)



▲ Jannik Sinner said that winning the Australian Open has not changed him and he now has ambitions to be No 1 in the world.

## Sinner the same 'ragazzo' as before

JANNIK Sinner said on Wednesday that winning the Australian Open has not changed him and he now has ambitions to be No 1 in the world.

"I'm the same boy I was before I won the title," he insisted on his return to Rome. "Feeling the warmth of the people, their enthusiasm, that pleases me, but I'm the same 'ragazzo' (lad) I was a fortnight ago," said the first Italian to win the Australian Open at a press conference at the headquarters of the Italian Tennis Federation.

His dramatic win over Daniil Medvedev on Sunday, which saw him come back from two sets down to win in five, sparked a wave of 'Sinnermania' in Italy but the 22-year-old is keeping his feet firmly on the ground.

"I'm taking this popularity in my stride," he said.

"I'm happy to share all these emotions but it was only one tournament, and it's possible that my results won't be as good" in the future, smiled the man who ended a 48-year Grand Slam drought for Italian men's tennis.

He is the first Italian man to win a major since Adriano Panatta - the only man to beat Bjorn Borg on the red clay of Roland Garros - beat Harold Solomon in the final of the 1976 French Open.

Since arriving in Rome from Melbourne on Tuesday, Sinner has met with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. He will be received by President Sergio Mattarella on Thursday with the Italian team that won the 2023 Davis Cup.

The demands on his time mean that the world No 4 has withdrawn from next week's Marseille tournament although he has passed on an invitation to the prestigious Sanremo Italian Song Festival in early February.

"After my stay here, Australia's over, we'll have to look ahead and get back to training," he said.

"The aim (of this season) was to get slightly better results in the Grand Slams than last year when I reached the semifinals at Wimbledon.

"The first Grand Slam of the year (Australia) went well but there are still three more, so the season doesn't end here.

"My dream has always been to win a Grand Slam. Now I know what it means and the emotions it brings. I can't wait to get back to work and try to feel that again."

Having beaten Novak Djokovic in Melbourne as well as Medvedev, Sinner now has his sights set on becoming the best player in the world, although he recognises that may take some time yet.

"To be No 1 in the world? There's a big difference between being in the top five and being in the top three," he said.

"It's the same between being top three and world No 1. You have to take things one step at a time. (Reuters)

## Why White furious with Arsenal teammate Zinchenko

The real reason behind the bust-up between Oleksandr Zinchenko and Ben White after the final whistle in Arsenal's 2-1 win over Nottingham Forest has been revealed, according to reports.

The Gunners secured a hugely important victory on the road in a replay of the game last May that officially confirmed Manchester City as Premier League title-winners, ending Arsenal's own bid.

Second-half goals from both Gabriel Jesus and Bukayo Saka had the visitors heading for a routine win after a tense opening 45 minutes.

However, with the clock edging closer to the red zone, Taiwo Awoniyi - who scored in the 1-0 meeting in May - struck to trigger a more nervous ending than Mikel Arteta will have been hoping for.

His side would eventually hold out for the three points, but at the final whistle there was a surprising exchange of words between Zinchenko and White, with both players seemingly incensed despite the victory.

According to Sky Sports reports, the players were both furious about the concession late in the game.

Awoniyi's strike prompted a VAR check for offside on the position of Gonzalo Montiel on the attacking right flank, but it was a quick one with the Argentina international clearly onside.

The check highlighted, though, that Zinchenko was a yard or so behind the rest of his defensive line, playing the Forest star on and thereby allowing the goal, where the



▲ Ben White and Oleksandr Zinchenko were caught up in a furious bust-up after the final whistle on Tuesday night

rest of his team-mates had stepped up well.

This is thought to be the source of White's fury at the final whistle, as he reportedly made his feelings known.

While most managers might try to play down any talk of dressing-room strife - public or otherwise - Arteta was quick to praise his charges' actions.

"I love it, they demand more from each other and they are not happy with the way they concede that and they are trying to resolve it," he said.

"It was a bit heated, but that means it is not enough playing the way we played, the result has to be bigger.

"That's pushing each other and being not



happy conceding and I have to encourage that and promote it in the right way and a respectful way.

"Sometimes after the game, it's emotional and heated but I love that the players are pushing each other and demanding excellence. 'We wanted to generate some momentum in the league and I thought we did that. The performance was very good, we completely dominated the game.

"We had to be patient but we always had an eye to the opponent, we didn't allow them to run. We generated chances in a number of ways. I think we showed a lot of maturity to deal with the game in the way we had to."

(Mail sport)





## AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS Côte d'Ivoire 2023



# Nigeria have superb quarterfinal record

Nigeria will head into their Africa Cup of Nations quarterfinal against Angola on Friday full of confidence that they can advance deeper into the tournament ... and history is very much on their side.

Angola have proven a tough opponent in the past, with Nigeria edging the head-to-head 3-2 and a further five draws. But it should be said that the Super Eagles have never lost to Palancas Negras outside of Luanda.

But more than that, Nigeria have proven in the past that when they get to the quarterfinals, 90 per cent of the time they advance.

The side have progressed in nine of their 10 previous clashes in the last-8, with just one blemish in 2008. We take a look at their 10 past quarterfinal matchups.

### 1992 – NIGERIA 1-0 ZAIRE

Prior to 1992 the Cup of nations had either a second group stage or went straight to semifinals, so Nigeria's first clash in the quarterfinals of the competition was this one against Zaire. It was settled by a lone goal from the late, great Rashidi Yekini midway through the first half. The Super Eagles finished third this year.

### 1994 – ZAIRE 0-2 NIGERIA

The same two side met in the quarterfinals two years later and again it was Yekini who proved the difference. This time he scored a brace in the second half, the second goal from the penalty spot. Nigeria lifted the title as they beat Zambia's rebuilt national side 2-1 in the final in Tunis. For the second tournament in a row Yekini won the Golden Boot.

### 2000 – NIGERIA 2-1 SENEGAL

Nigeria did not appear in the next two finals after 1994 but returned in 2000 and faced Senegal in the quarterfinals. Khalilou Fadiga gave the Lions of Teranga an early lead, but Julius Aghahowa equalised with five minutes remaining and then added a second in early in extra-time to give the Super Eagles safe passage. They lost on penalties to Cameroon in the final.

### 2002 – NIGERIA 1-0 GHANA

A clash of west African giants in the quarters, but Nigeria prevailed as Garba Lawal handed them the win with a goal 10 minutes from fulltime. Nigeria lost to Senegal in the semis but finished with the bronze medal.

### 2004 – CAMEROON 1-2 NIGERIA

Another heavyweight clash in the quarters as legendary Cameroon



▲ Nigeria have proven in the past that when they get to the quarterfinals, 90 per cent of the time they advance.

striker Samuel Eto'o gave his side the lead just before the break, but there was still time for Jay-Jay Okocha to equalise before halftime. John Utaka found a winning goal on 73 minutes.

### 2006 – NIGERIA 1-1 TUNISIA

The first time Nigeria needed penalties in the quarterfinals, they took an early lead against Tunisia through Victor Obinna, but Karim Haggui equalised for the north Africans early in the second half. Both teams missed two penalties in the shoot-out in the first five, before Riadh Bouazizi could not convert in sudden death and Nigeria won 6-5. Didier Drogba's goal for Ivory Coast put Nigeria out in the semifinals.

### 2008 – GHANA 2-1 NIGERIA

The Super Eagles' only quarterfinal loss came against hosts Ghana 16 years ago, despite taking the lead through a Yakubu penalty on 35 minutes. But Michael Essien equalised just before halftime and powerful forward Junior Agogo netted the winner with seven minutes remaining.

### 2010 – ZAMBIA 0-0 NIGERIA

The Soper Eagles edged Zambia 5-4 on penalties after the teams played to a goalless draw but lost 1-0 in the semifinals to nemesis

Ghana. The Zambians showed they were building something with this performance and two years later lifted the title, when Nigeria failed to qualify for the finals in Gabon.

### 2013 – IVORY COAST 1 NIGERIA 2

A young team under the late coach Stephen Keshi took on Ivory Coast's Golden Generation and won 2-1. Emmanuel Emenike, who has started his professional career in host country south Africa, gave Nigeria the lead, but Cheick Tiote, who sadly passed away in 2017 aged 30, equalised. Sunday Mba had the final say 12 minutes from the end though as Nigeria went on to lift the trophy by beating Burkina Faso in the final.

### 2019 – NIGERIA 2-1 SOUTH AFRICA

Nigeria were favourites for this one but were given a scare by a Bafana Bafana side that had ousted hosts Egypt in the last-16. Samuel Chukwueze put Nigeria in front in the first half, but when Bongani Zungu equalised it looked as though the game would go to extra-time. But William Troost-Ekong profited from a goalkeeper error to score a minute from the end and send Nigeria through. They lost to eventual champions Algeria in the semis.



# Angola on the brink of history

It has already been a record-breaking tournament for the side in several different ways, and now they seek a first ever semifinal place when they take on Nigeria in the last-8 in Abidjan on Friday.

Here is a look at some of their achievements this campaign.

ous record. Their highest tally previously was the six goals in four games they managed in 2010, while in total they had 30 goals from their 26 games prior to this year. One more against Nigeria and they will have scored a third of that number in these finals alone.

### HOT SHOTS

### MULTIPLE WINS

Angola have been to nine Cup of Nations finals in all, but never before this one had they claimed victory in more than one game. In the Ivory Coast they have three wins already, shattering that record. They managed pool stage success against Mauritania (3-2) and most impressively Burkina Faso (2-0), before a 3-0 win in the last-16 against Namibia. In fact, before this tournament, Angola had only managed four wins in 26 finals matches, a figure they can match in just five games in the ivory Coast.

### UNBEATEN RUN

Angola are currently on a four-game unbeaten run in the Cup of Nations, including their opening 1-1 draw with Algeria in the Ivory Coast. It is the first time in their history they have won three games on the trot. Their best run of unbeaten games is five (W2 D3) straddling the 2006 and 2008 tournaments, a number they can match against Nigeria on Friday.

### MOST GOALS AT A FINALS

Angola have already scored nine times in their four games to date in these finals, smashing their previous

### FIRST QUARTERFINAL WIN

Should Angola advance against Nigeria it will be their first time past in the last-8 of the Cup of Nations. They lost 2-1 to eventual champions Egypt in 2008 despite Manucho equalising in the first half, and then went down 1-0 to Ghana on home soil in 2010. Asamoah Gyan got the only goal after 15 minutes. Can this side go one better?



▲ Angola have been to nine Cup of Nations finals in all, but never before this one had they claimed victory in more than one game.



# Lactalis Eswatini sponsors #Resolution Run with E70 000

Stories by Ntokozo Magongo  
ntokozom@rubiconmedia.group

LACTALIS Eswatini (Formerly Parmalat) has sponsored the annual #Resolution Run with E70 000. The sponsorship will go towards assisting the Big Games Park in hosting a successful event on February 17. The #Resolution Run features 21km, 10km and 5km and it is held in Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary.

Presenting the sponsorship was Lactalis Marketing Officer Lucky Phiri on Thursday at noon at the 23:28 Lounge in Mbabane, Checkers. He said E45 000 is in monetary while the balance is their products that will be enjoyed by the runners during the event.

Lactalis increased the sponsorship from last's year package as they contribute E55 000, with E40 000 in cash and E15 000 in stock.

“We are happy to be part of such an event that seems to promote healthy and active living. We are proud of the years we have been supporting this initiative and we are happy that we are contributing positively to the country,” he said.

Phiri said the stock they will be handing out to the runners are Cabana and Steri Stumpie which is good for athletes and people of all ages. Phiri said the support they were getting from the nation was positive and that is the reason they are also giving back to the nation.

“The event also contributes to uplifting communities. We urge companies and the corporate to also bring their teams as we will lead by example by coming with our team to be part of the event. This event also assists in terms of team building and wellness,” he said.

66

Lactalis increased the sponsorship from last's year package as they contribute E55 000, with E40 000 in cash and E15 000 in stock.

99



▲ Lactalis Eswatini (Formerly Parmalat) has sponsored the annual #Resolution Run with E70 000.



▲ Lactalis Eswatini Marketing Officer Lucky Phiri Big Games Park Sales and Marketing Manager Xolani Gama and Athletics Eswatini Communications Officer Victor ‘Mavikane’ Dlamini.



Registration and starting times:  
Event Entry fee Starting time  
21km E230 5:30am  
10km E140 6am  
5km E100 6:40am

▲ Lounge owner Thembinkosi Mthethwa during the launch.

## 700 runners in Lactalis #Resolution Run

THE Big Games Parks and the Athletics Eswatini (AE) target about 700 runners for the Lactalis #Resolution Run.

Already there are over 400 runners registered for the event including athletes from internationals, coming from countries including Mozambique, South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK).

Big Games Park Sales and Marketing Manager Xolani Gama said it is unfortunate that Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary where the race will be held is already fully booked. She said they had visitors from the United Kingdom who would be taking part in the race.

The annual race will feature 21km, 10km and 5km.

“Registration for the event is

still open and people can visit our website for registration while they can also visit The Gables, Ezulwini and Pick’n Pay, Mbabane where they will scan a bar code for registration,” she said.

The website [www.biggamespark.org/event](http://www.biggamespark.org/event).

Gama added that they will also be available at Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary two days before the event for registration. She said it where the runners will also be given their goodie bags and race numbers.

“The registration fee includes the conservation fee. Those who will be coming to the event but not registered will have to pay the conservation fee of E65 for locals,” she said.



By Sibusiso Masilela  
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HUB giants Manzini Wanderers are working around the clock to secure the services of veteran midfielder Xolani ‘Papi’ Sikhondze.

The well-travelled anchorman is set to sign a short term with the crowd pullers ahead of the second transfer window this evening.

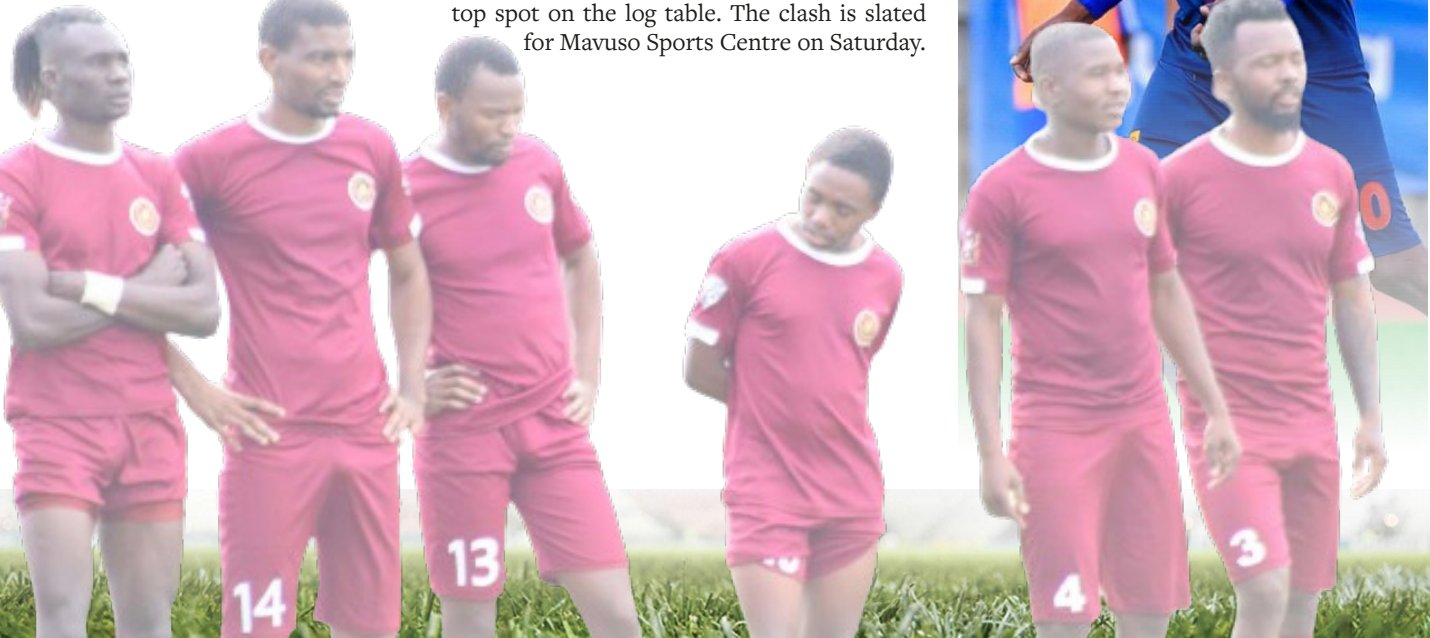
He once had a stint with crowd pullers between 2009 -2011.

The maroon and white ensemble have already secured the services of Royal Leopard striker Sidumo Dlamini on a short-term deal until the end of the season.

The ex-Mhlume Peacemakers is the third player to join the ‘Weslians’ on from the police side after National Under-20 left back Majahandzile Nhlabatsi and playmaker Lindelwa Dlodlu.

Other Wanderers new signees include strikers Simanga Shongwe, Banele ‘Banny’ Mdluli and ex-Highlanders midfielder Sibusiso Mkhonta.

However, Dlamini will be ineligible to make his Wanderers



▲ Manzini Wandereres players. (Inset) Xolani ‘Papi’ Sikhondze.

Sundowns defender, Mthunzi Mamba for ‘Bull’

By Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

MBABANE Highlanders have completed the services of Denver Sundowns fullback Mthunzi Mamba.

The player has joined the capital city giants after being declared as a free agent by the Eswatini Football Association player’s status committee following a dispute with his former team on Tuesday.

Other new signees for the ‘Black Bull’ include former Vovovo FC goalkeeper Mncedisi Dlamini and Nyanyali Celtics defender Thabiso Ngwenya.

A source close to the matter revealed the players are now part of the ‘Black Bull’.

“The team is working around the clock to register the three players ahead of the Ezulwini United as they have all agreed personal terms with the team,” the source said.

Highlanders Public Relations Officer (PRO) Kenneth Dlamini could not be reached for comment on the matter.

The three players are set to debut for Highlanders during tomorrow’s MTN Premier League clash against Ezulwini



◀ Denver Sundowns defender Mthunzi Mamba. ▲ Mbabane Hihlanders players.

United on Saturday at Mavuso Sports Centre. The black and white ensemble recently parted ways with several veteran players such as Mandla Palma, Mxolisi Dlamini, Musa Dlamini and the South

African duo of Matamela Ndou and Noko Molwekwane, among others.

Ngwenya is eligible to play in the Ingwenyama Cup as he has already played for his former team in the same tournament.



▲ PLE’s Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Makhanya.

Another employee leaves PLE

By Siphesihle Dlamini  
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THE Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) has bid farewell to yet another invaluable member of its team.

Sibusiso Salelwako, the PLE’s accountant, has officially resigned from his position, leaving a void that the organisation is determined to fill.

Effective January 31, 2024, Salelwako’s departure comes hot on the heels of Lindelwa Dlamini’s exit in November 2023, who held the position of PLE Branding and Marketing Manager.

These back-to-back resignations have left the PLE management in a state of urgency, as they scramble to find suitable replacements to ensure the seamless continuation of their operations.

“The PLE is working tirelessly to fill this position as soon as possible, to minimise any potential impact on PLE operations,” said PLE’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kenneth Makhanya.

Notably, the search for a new Branding and Marketing Manager is still ongoing, as the PLE has recently issued a vacant post for this crucial position.

“The PLE is working tirelessly to fill this position as soon as possible, to minimise any potential impact on PLE operations







**Why White  
furious with  
Zinchenko**

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**Denver  
Sundowns'  
Mthunzi for Bull**

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**Eswatini Daily News** *Friday 2 February, 2024*

**Sport**

**‘Papi’ back  
at Weslians**

**... Hub giants Manzini Wanderers set to reunite with former midfielder Xolani ‘Papi’ Sikhondze and have signed Leopard striker Sidumo Dlamini as they stave off relegation worries. *Page 23***