



## NDMA, ESWACAA MoU enhances disaster readiness

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# DPM guns for parents abandoning children

...Promises to publicly shame dumpers on national TV, radio

By Bahle Gama  
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IMAGINE a situation where you are 'enjoying' your life in the urban area and the EBIS and Eswatini TV crews arrive with your child or parent you abandoned in the rural area for you to answer why you did such.

This is what will happen to every liSwati that has abandoned their children and parents in the rural areas to fend for themselves, whilst they live their 'best' lives in the urban areas.

► SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

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# DPM guns for parents abandoning children

...Promises to publicly shame dumpers on national TV, radio

By Bahle Gama  
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IMAGINE a situation where you are ‘enjoying’ your life in the urban area and the EBIS and Eswatini TV crews arrive with your child or parent you abandoned in the rural area for you to answer why you did such.

This is what will happen to every liSwati that has abandoned their children and parents in the rural areas to fend for themselves, whilst they live their ‘best’ lives in the urban areas.

Deputy Prime Minister Thuli Dladla disclosed that a TV and radio programme will be created to locate everyone responsible for neglecting and abandoning their children and elderly parents.

Dladla said on Wednesday morning, she received a phone call from a concerned citizen who reported that an elderly woman was residing with a child who could not be admitted in Form 1.

“This citizen told me that this elderly woman was left to stay with the child by her son and his wife. The concerned citizen made a temporary pin for the child which expired when they got to Grade 7. A new one is now required for the child to be admitted in Form 1 and



▲ Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla.

the parents are needed for that, yet they are nowhere to be found,” Dladla said.

The DPM expressed her disapproval to the minor’s parents for doing such.

She disclosed that the citizen stated that the child was left by their mother with the elderly woman when they were six months old. Later on, the elderly woman’s son followed, and she

only heard from people that they (the child’s parents) were residing around Matsapha.

### Consequences

Dladla said the office spoke to the Minister of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) about creating a programme which will be on national radio and TV.

She said people who were abandoning their

children and elderly parents needed to be found immediately. She said they would recreate a similar show to one that airs in South Africa where people write to seek assistance to track down their relatives.

“There is one show on SABC called Khumbul’ekhaya, but we will not plagiarize, we will create ours and find all these people to face the consequences of their actions,” she said.

The DPM said the programme will provide a platform for the children to confront their parents for abandoning them and the elderly would be afforded the same opportunity to confront their children who have forsaken them and been put through the same fate by their children.

Dladla emphasised that Eswatini is a small country and vowed to find all the people doing such. She further stated that people cannot bring their children into the world just to abandon and leave them with elderly people, who also need to be cared for in all aspects.

She encouraged people with children left with their parents to make it a habit to visit and check on their families, and not apportion the responsibility to the elderly because they are also vulnerable and old to be babysitting and doing parental duties.

“Sometimes it is not about the money. Showing up to check on the child you have left at home shows responsibility. These children have parents, stop birthing children for your parents and grandparents,” she said. According to the DPM, the difference with the Eswatini show is that it will be calling emaSwati to order and ensuring they take responsibility for their actions and assume their parenting duties.

Similarly, South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) has Khumbul’ekhaya, a heartwarming television series dubbed as the truth and reconciliation process of the soul.

## UNICEF donates 156 school supplies to Maphiveni Primary

Stories by Ncaba Ntshakala

IN a timely contribution to the newly established Maphiveni Primary School in the Lubombo Region, UNICEF Eswatini donated 156 sets of school shoes and bags to equip vulnerable learners for their educational journey.

The donation was presented to the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office and received by Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla. UNICEF asserted that such signifies its commitment to supporting every child’s right to education, especially during significant initiatives like the Year of Education in Africa.

“UNICEF is pleased to donate this year when Africa recognises 2024 as the year of education,” stated Amina Mohammed, UNICEF Representative in Eswatini.

“This gesture is to ensure that every child learns, including the most vulnerable, and has the opportunity to reach their full potential.” The newly established Maphiveni Primary School caters to a community with high vulnerability, where many children previously lacked birth certificates and access to education. The school was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo. The school currently has 48 learners doing Grade One.



According to UNICEF, this donation addresses a crucial need, ensuring that students can attend school with the necessary supplies and focus on their learning journey.

Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla acknowledged the valuable contribution and expressed her appreciation for UNICEF’s continuous support in promoting access to quality education for all children in Eswatini.

This collaboration between UNICEF and the government highlights the collective effort to achieve the goals of the Year of Education in Africa, emphasizing the right to education and its transformative power for individuals and communities.



▲ Some of food hampers donated by KaZakhali Private School teachers to the Only God knows charity Organisation.

### Valentine’s Day takes on a charitable twist as...

## Organisations shower love to the vulnerable with food hampers

WHILE traditional Valentine’s Day celebrations often focus on romantic love, many organisations in Eswatini are choosing to spread a different kind of love this year; compassion and care for the most vulnerable members of society.

KaZakhali Private School teachers stepped up to make a heartwarming contribution. With a generous donation of E2 000 worth of food hampers, the school’s teachers partnered with Only God Knows Charity Organization.

This collaboration ensured the hampers reached vulnerable and disabled children in Kwaluseni, bringing joy and essential nourishment to those who need it most.

Mxolisi Nkambule, the founder of Only God Knows Charity Organization, expressed

his gratitude for the donation. “We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of KaZakhali Private School teachers,” he said.

“Their donation provides much-needed support to children who often face challenges in accessing necessities. It is truly heartwarming to see such acts of kindness on Valentine’s Day.”

Nkambule further said that KaZakhali Private School’s initiative is just one example of the many ways organizations are choosing to celebrate Valentine’s Day differently this year. Other 175 children at Sitjeni in Lobamba received food hampers and clothes from the Eswatini National Trust Commission which collaborated with Taiwan Embassy to donate necessities to the children to spread love.





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Sunday**



By Ncaba Ntshakala

THE National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority (ESWACAA) to enhance disaster preparedness in the country.

According to NDMA, the collaboration marks a significant milestone in NDMA's ongoing efforts to enhance disaster preparedness and response in Eswatini.

NDMA expressed that the MoU signifies a commitment to exchange knowledge, expertise, and resources between the two organisations. It will play a crucial role in strengthening disaster preparedness and response, ultimately contributing to the well-being and safety of the nation.

Delivering his remarks during the signing of the MoU, NDMA Acting CEO, Victor Mahlalela stated that disasters strike unexpectedly, leaving devastation in their wake. "The ability to respond swiftly and effectively can mean the difference between life and death. It is better to be overly prepared than to be caught unprepared," Mahlalela said.

He said the NDMA has placed preparedness at the top of the agenda on its new strategy for the next five years. By joining forces with ESWACAA, NDMA said that they aim to enhance disaster response capabilities, increase operational efficiency, and ultimately, save more lives.

Mahlalela also added that by joining forces, NDMA further aims to strengthen a collective capacity to effectively manage and mitigate the impact of disasters on the aviation sector and the broader community. ESWACAA Airports Director Bongani Lukhele said the signing of the MoU will be a tool that will assist in safeguarding the safety of their customers. He also mentioned that last year there was a plane crash at Bhunya, within the forestry industry, which could have easily escalated into a national disaster, had it not been that it was managed quickly.

"Working together closely with NDMA, we will strengthen disaster management capabilities, improve preparedness, and enhance the ability to respond swiftly and

# NDMA, ESWACAA MoU enhances disaster readiness



▲ NDMA and ESWACAA officials posing after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will enhance the country in disaster management and preparedness.

efficiently to any unforeseen events," Lukhele said. Furthermore, Lukhele stated that this partnership will enable ESWACAA and NDMA to ensure that the aviation sector remains secure, resilient, and well-prepared in the face of potential disasters.

## Statement

In a statement shared by NDMA Communications Officer Wandile Mavuso, the agency asserted that the partnership would foster closer cooperation in areas such as risk assessment, emergency management planning, training, and

information sharing. The two entities will work towards ensuring the safety and resilience of the aviation infrastructure and the well-being of the citizens of Eswatini. Furthermore, the collaboration will have a positive impact on disaster management efforts.

The Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority (ESWACAA) is a statutory body as provided for by Section 5 (1) of the Civil Aviation Authority Act No. 4 of 2022 and became operational on December 7, 2009.

The Authority is a renowned safe

and secure aviation industry regulator, an airport operator and an air navigation services provider that facilitates economic development. As civil aviation is a very technical and heavily regulated global industry, it became necessary to establish an autonomous body that would focus on the growth and professional management of the industry and have the Ministry of Public Works and Transport as its oversight. ESWACAA manages King Mswati III International Airport, Matsapha Airport and the Nhlanguano Airstrip.

## MTN Bushfire media accreditation now open

By Silindzelwe Nxumalo  
silindzelwen@rubiconmedia.group

MEDIA accreditation for the 17th edition of MTN Bushfire, taking place from May 31 - June 2, 2024, is now open.

MTN Bushfire Director Jiggs Thorne said journalists, photographers, videographers, and bloggers from established and reputable national, regional, or international newspapers, magazines, wire and news services, radio and television stations, and networks, including relevant online publications, are invited to apply for media accreditation for this year's festival.

He stated that travel writers, stringers, and freelancers are also encouraged to apply.

Thorne said applications can be made through the press accreditation page on the MTN Bushfire website, where they will be required to fill out an application form from the Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology before the festival can accredit them.

"Media accreditation applications will close on Friday, May 17, 2024," he said.



▲ MTN Bushfire Director Jiggs Thorne has announced that media accreditation for this year's installation of MTN Bushfire is now open.

He explained that accredited media will be able to attend media press conferences,

request interviews with artists, and have access to the front of the stage for photos

and videos. "The designated media centre, equipped with power and wireless internet, is the festival hub for media information and interviews, and journalists are encouraged to make use of it," he said.

He added that it should be noted that media accreditation does not include any travel or accommodation unless specifically pre-arranged with MTN Bushfire.

"Journalists should ensure they book accommodation soon, as nearby lodgings fill up quickly. Accredited journalists may want to consider purchasing camping passes," he said.

Named "Top African festival" by the BBC and hailed by CNN as one of the "7 African music festivals you have to see," MTN Bushfire is looking forward to reigniting the fire in the beautiful farmlands in the valley of Malkerns, Eswatini, for a family-friendly, eclectic celebration of some of the finest music in Africa and beyond.

With its roster of international talent, innovative, environmentally sustainable, and socially inclusive programming, as well as its amazing spirit of diversity and celebration, MTN Bushfire is a major media event that attracts media practitioners and journalists from around the world.

Media queries may be directed to [karla@redflag.co.za](mailto:karla@redflag.co.za).



# PM jets out to join leaders at AU Summit in Ethiopia

By Ncaba Ntshakala

PRIME Minister, Russell Dlamini has jetted out of the country on Thursday morning to represent His Majesty King Mswati III at the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU).

The Prime Minister departed from the King Mswati III International Airport, embarking on a crucial mission to champion Eswatini's voice and interests on the continental stage. The AU Summit, taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, brings together leaders from across Africa to discuss pressing issues facing the continent.

This year's theme, "Strengthening Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on the African Continent: By post-Covid-19 Recovery, Building Forward Better," underscores the critical need for collective action to address food insecurity and build sustainable food systems.

The Prime Minister is in the company of Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Pholile Shakantu, Minister of Health Mduduzi Matsebula, and Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry Mancoba Khumalo who is already in Ethiopia. Khumalo left earlier to attend the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.

**Key role**

As His Majesty's representative, the Prime Minister is expected to play a key role in the summit's deliberations. He is likely to advocate for policies that promote regional food security, address climate change challenges, and foster economic development across Africa. The Prime Minister's participation also highlights Eswatini's commitment to pan-Africanism and its active engagement in shaping the continent's future.

This trip comes at a pivotal moment for Eswatini, as the nation works to navigate its own economic and social development challenges. The Prime Minister's presence at the AU Summit provides an opportunity to showcase Eswatini's progress and forge strategic partnerships with other African nations.

Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini is one of the 34 African leaders and heads of international institutions expected to attend the upcoming African Union (AU) Summit.

The AU has announced that the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government is scheduled to be held in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa on Feb. 17-18. The 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, which brings together African ministers of foreign affairs, began on February 14 - 15, 2024.

Meles Alem, spokesperson for the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while briefing the media last week, said more than 34 African leaders and higher officials are expected to take part in the upcoming AU summit, and the number could increase in the coming days.

According to Alem, among the high-level dignitaries are 24 presidents, two prime ministers, a king, five vice presidents, and two leaders represented by their foreign ministers.



▲ The Prime Minister will attend the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government scheduled to be held in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa.

He said among notable heads of international organizations who are expected to attend the summit include United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of Arab League Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Workneh Gebeyehu, as well as heads of different UN agencies and representatives of other organizations.

According to the AU, the upcoming summit will have several agendas, which include continental peace and security, trade and integration, education and skills, agriculture and climate change, governance, and human rights, as well as gender and youth empowerment. Noting that the plan incorporates monitoring, controlling, and accountability systems in detail, the Spokesperson pointed out that the plan puts in place a system for Africa's development stakeholders and international development partners to work together.

**“**This trip comes at a pivotal moment for Eswatini, as the nation works to navigate its own economic and social development challenges. The Prime Minister's presence at the AU Summit provides an opportunity to showcase Eswatini's progress and forge strategic partnerships with other African nations.**”**

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▲Menzi Motsa and Bongani Ndzinisa (sitting down) were arrested for fraud and forgery.

## Bogus CBE employee, friend charged with fraud, forgery

Stories By Bahle Gama  
bahlegama@rubicon.co.sz

A man masquerading as an employee of the Central Bank of Eswatini and his friend have been arrested and charged with fraud and forgery.

Menzi Magolide Motsa (38) and Bongani Ace Ndzinisa (42) were arrested on February 14 and charged with three counts including fraud, forgery, and contravening the Counterfeit and Currency Order.

The duo's charge sheet states that on February 13 at the Mbabane city centre, both of them acting jointly in furtherance of a common purpose unlawfully possessed three E100 counterfeit notes.

By so doing they contravened Section 3(1) (C) as read with Section 2 (A) of the Counterfeit and Currency Order of 1974.

They were further charged with fraud after they allegedly misrepresented to a South African man Sifiso Elliot Maduna and told him if he could invest a sum of E85 000, they would purchase a chemical that would be

used to wash tainted money amounting to E4 million. In return, Maduna would receive an undisclosed reward.

Unfortunately, Maduna did not have the said amount immediately and he was about to give the suspects E3 800 when the police arrived and arrested them and charged them with fraud.

It was further uncovered that when misrepresenting to Maduna, one of the accused persons, Ndzinisa showed him a fake Central Bank identification card claiming to be an employee of the entity.

They were charged with forgery and uttering for this offence.

During their appearance at the Mbabane Magistrate's Court before Magistrate Innocent Motsa, the first accused person Menzi pleaded guilty to the crime, while his co-accused Ndzinisa pleaded not guilty.

The crown applied for a trial date and did not oppose bail to which the suspects moved an application.

Magistrate Motsa granted the suspects bail at E2 000 each. They are expected to return to court on April 29 for trial.

## 21 years imprisonment for housebreaking and theft

A 24-year-old man has been sentenced to 21 years in prison for housebreaking and stealing about E50 000 worth of items.

Themba Dengezi Dlamini was on Thursday sentenced by Magistrate Sifiso Vilakati to the mentioned years with an option of a fine of E21 000 after he was arrested and charged with seven counts of housebreaking and theft.

Dlamini who was reportedly terrorising and targeting students residing around Nkwalini, Mahwalala, and surrounding areas was found to have committed these crimes dating back to April 2023.

On April 11, 2023, he broke into Thembele Mdluli's house at Nkwalini Zone 4 and stole items valued at E7 450. The following month on May 24, Dlamini went on a 'spree' as he broke into four houses the same day at Mahwalala Zone 5.

The first house he broke into was Bongiwe Mdluli's where he stole items worth E5,700, then proceeded to Gugulethu Mabuza's



house and stole E5 600 worth of items.

From there he went to Tenele Ndwandwe's house where he stole items worth E4 180 and Sizolwethu Gamedze's house where he stole items valued at E3107.

The following month on June 19, 2023, he broke into Ncedo Simelane's house at Mahwalala Zone 5 and stole items valued at E11,380.

In handing down the sentence, Magistrate Vilakati suspended half of Dlamini's sentence for a period of 18 months.

Part of the sentences were ordered to run concurrently, and his sentence was backdated to August 6, 2023, where he spent 14 days in custody before posting bail.

## Man arrested for threatening 11-year-old with rape

A 22-year-old is looking at jail time after he was arrested for allegedly threatening to rape a 11-year-old girl.

The suspect Simengaye Cebisa Dlamini of Mchaphozini area was arrested and charged with contravening Section 6 of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act 15 of 2018.

According to his charge sheet, on February

10, in KaMvubu area, Dlamini wrongfully and unlawfully allegedly sexually violated the juvenile by inspiring the belief that she would be sexually assaulted.

He made his first court appearance before Magistrate Innocent Motsa on Thursday, February 15 where he was remanded back to police custody pending committal at the High Court.

## Eswatini joins global effort as Prince Lonkhokhela launches 2024 Earth Hour

By Ncaba Ntshakala

THE Kingdom of Eswatini officially joined the global movement for environmental action with the launch of the 2024 Earth Hour initiative.

Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, Prince Lonkhokhela, spearheaded the launch ceremony held at Sibane Sami Hotel in Ezulwini.

Earth Hour, a worldwide event observed across nations and communities, encourages individuals and organizations to switch off their lights for one hour as a symbolic gesture towards energy conservation and environmental protection.

### Emissions

This year's theme, "Give an Hour for Earth," underscores the significance of collective action in addressing climate change and achieving net-zero emissions – a crucial target in mitigating the detrimental impacts of global warming.

Speaking at the launch, Prince Lonkhokhela applauded Eswatini Electricity Company and other Earth Hour partners for the initiative. "I extend my heartfelt appreciation to EEC and all esteemed earth hour partners gathered here today for your unwavering dedication to this initiative, which serves as a beacon of hope in our quest for a sustainable



▲Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela speaking during the launch of the Earth Hour initiative at Sibane Sami Hotel.

future." said minister Prince Lonkhokhela. "We urge more partners to join us in this vital endeavor, to protect nature, our life support system, which is in danger."

The minister also highlighted that the recent storms around the country which caused property damage; are a big indicator that nations are very vulnerable to climate change. "These events followed the windstorms in August 2023," stated the minister. "The windstorms are an uncommon phenomenon. This

experience is a lesson to all of us that it is important to protect the environment as well as to mitigate the effects of climate change"

Minister of Natural Resources expressed that he is certain that a formidable team can implement changes to rejuvenate the planet. The Minister said, "I am certain that together, we can implement small yet impactful changes to rejuvenate our planet. The theme of this year's event focuses on assessing our progress towards achieving net-zero emissions,

a crucial step in combating climate change."

During the launch, it was shared that a recent global climate action assessment showed that current global energy production contributes significantly to carbon emissions and global warming. The current trends show that the temperature is far above the target of keeping the global temperature increase at 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels to mitigate severe climate risks.

The Minister also said that Eswatini's pledge at COP28 highlighted the country's commitment to increasing renewable energy and improving energy efficiency. of note is that the local power generation is 100 per cent renewable. Eswatini participated in the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference COP28 which was convened last year December in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"We must promote cross-sector collaboration and embrace stewardship in our national climate action agenda. every individual, household, policymaker, and business have a role to play in combating climate change." Further remarked the minister as he officially launched the Earth Hour initiative.

The minister urged emaSwati to join EEC and its partners during Earth Hour which will be on March 23, 2024. "Let us demonstrate our commitment by turning off non-essential lights and appliances. Remember, our dedication to the environment extends beyond the hour it is a lifelong commitment." the minister said.



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### BUSINESS SNIPPETS

**SA's budget to consolidate more slowly**  
JOHANNESBURG - South Africa's budget deficit will narrow at a slower pace in coming years than October estimates predicted, put off course by poor mining tax receipts, according to a Reuters poll which also showed the central bank would delay interest rate cuts. The consolidated budget deficit will narrow to 5.0% of gross domestic product (GDP) in the fiscal year that begins in March, a poll of economists taken in the past week showed.

**Rand steady in early trade**  
At 0637 GMT, the rand traded at 19.0600 against the U.S. dollar, within touching distance of the previous day's close of 19.0550. With no major local economic data releases expected on Thursday, the focus could be on President Cyril Ramaphosa, who will respond to a parliamentary debate on his state of the nation address (SONA) and answer questions from journalists.

**Oil eases as IEA flags slower demand growth**  
LONDON - Oil prices fell slightly on Thursday as the International Energy Agency (IEA) flagged slowing demand growth this year while a larger than expected jump in U.S. crude inventories also weighed. Brent crude futures fell 17 cents, or 0.2%, to \$81.43 a barrel by 1324 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down 16 cents, or 0.2%, at \$76.48. (Reuters)



▲Acting Minister of Commerce Dr Tambo Gina (C) and PS Siboniso Nkambule and representatives from the EU and Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany posing for a group picture while displaying the policy booklet.

# Eswatini launches industrialization roadmap to enhance transformation

Stories By **Silindzelwe Nxumalo**  
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ESWATINI has aligned itself with other SADC countries in officially launching the Eswatini National Industrial Policy (2023-2033) following the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-63.

The policy was formulated by the Investment Climate Reform (ICR) Facility and co-funding provided by the European Union (EU), the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the British Council.

Acting Minister of Commerce Industry and Trade Dr Tambo Gina said the implementation of the Industrial Policy holds immense promise, stressing that it is a strategic roadmap designed to ensure the production of high-quality goods that meet international standards, thereby enhancing the country's competitiveness in global markets.

Gina stated that competitiveness will also help Eswatini promote its export-led strategy and earn significant foreign currency for exponential economic growth.

"Implementing this industrial policy seeks to promote value addition across various sectors of our economy, thereby strengthening both national and regional value chains, and enabling regional and global integration," he said.

The Acting minister said the country's policy implementation strategy is geared towards diversifying both its products and markets.

He stated that this diversification is essential to minimize the risks associated with global economic uncertainties safeguard our economy against volatility and build economic resilience," he said.

The Minister highlighted that the policy is a blueprint for economic resilience, growth, and prosperity. He said as the country embarks on the journey towards structural economic transformation, it



▲Acting Minister of Commerce Industry and Trade Dr Tambo Gina making his remarks during the presentations.

must garner support from all stakeholders.

He also appealed to government agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations, and the broader community to actively participate and fully commit to the implementation of the National Industrial Policy.

"Together, we can harness the full potential of this framework to drive inclusive growth, create jobs, and improve the livelihoods of our people," he said. SADC Directorate of Industrial Development and Trade Noel Lihiku stated that they are pleased and excited to note that the development of Eswatini Industrial Policy 2023-33 considered regional development initiatives such as capacity building on the development of national industrial policies through Strengthening of National-Regional Linkages Programme (SRNL) and Enhancing the Quality of Industrial Policies (EQuIP) Methodology.

He said these interventions ensure the alignment of national with regional and or continental industrial policies.

Lihiku stated that the development of a policy can only be effectively completed when the implementation of the same is done as articulated in the policy.

He also urged the Kingdom of Eswatini led by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Trade to champion the implementation of this Industrial Policy.

Meanwhile, German Ambassador to South Africa, Eswatini, and Lesotho Representative Dr Axel Bayer emphasized the significance



▲European Union (EU) Head of Cooperatives Delegation to EU to Eswatini Eva-Maria Engdahl making her speech during the presentations.

of the successful collaboration between the German Government, through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), through the Strengthening National Regional Linkages in SADC Programme (SNRL), in supporting the capacity-building training provided to officials from the Ministry and the development of this new Industrial Policy.

Bayer this collaboration underscores the unwavering commitment of both Germany and Eswatini towards supporting the sustainable development and progress of SADC member states. "It is through such partnerships that we can leverage our collective strengths and work towards achieving our shared vision of a prosperous and integrated region," he said.

He stated that through the German Government's partnership with SADC through GIZ, they have been privileged to support Eswatini's efforts towards the development and alignment of national policies that are aligned to key SADC regional integration protocols and strategies.

"We firmly believe that regional development is not only a national endeavor but also a collective responsibility. Germany has been supporting SADC since 1992 with over EUR 500 million," he said.

He said one focus of cooperation is on trade and industrialization to increase value creation within the region, and by investing in Eswatini's progress, they are investing in the prosperity and stability of the entire SADC region.



### FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	18.6064	19.0713
G.B. Pound	23.2893	22.9733
EURO	19.95687	20.5663
Bank Rate	(July 2023)	7.50%
Prime Rate	(July 2023)	11%
Inflation	(July 2023)	4.5%
Petrol	E20.80/Litre	
Diesel	E23.40/Litre	
Paraffin	E18.05/Litre	







▲ FINCLUDE and ESNAU officials and some of the youth farmers posing for a group photo after the launch.

# 94 youth farmers to benefit from the E1.2m FINCLUDE, ESNAU Programme

By **Silindzelwe Nxumalo**  
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ABOUT 94 youth farmers will benefit from the Financial Inclusion and Cluster Development (FINCLUDE)-Eswatini National Agricultural Union (ESNAU) Youth Step Up Programme phase two worth E1.2 million.

This was announced by the CFI during the launch of the second phase of the programme held at Esibayeni Lodge on Thursday.

FINCLUDE Project Manager Phumzile Nhleko-Mtetwa said the programme is aimed at pre-positioning youth farmers in vegetable, poultry, pig production and non-farm enterprises mainly input supply for access to markets and finance across the four regions.

She stated that it has been ascertained that the youth farmers continue to be excluded from possible access to finance and related products. She explained that to remove the barriers, the project in partnership with ESNAU has developed a step-up youth programme to jointly support youth and women farmers to develop a graduation path to enable them to meet minimum banking requirements for accessing basic services.

The Project Manager said this service includes opening bank accounts, establishing risk management tools and loan insurance products.

She stated that in the previous year 2022/2023, the project successfully implemented phase one of the programme, and the input support was valued between E4 500 and E5 500 per individual farmer.

She added that a total of 80 youth farmers in vegetable and poultry production were selected and supported with over E385 000 in input subsidy to increase their production.

“The project continued to provide business mentorship and capacity building to these farmers to build resilience and ensure the sustainability of the delivered interventions,” she said.

The Project Manager highlighted that there were 326 applications for screening where 80 farmers were selected, and

Category of farming:	Number of beneficiaries:
1. Vegetables	40
2. Poultry	30
3. Pig production	20
4. Input supply	4

the selected farmers all have investment pathways developed for their enterprises and 16 (42 per cent) of the farmers have been linked to financial institutions which include Imbita, EswatiniBank, Junior Achievement (JA), and Youth Fund, and 43 farmers have been assisted with bank accounts opening with various financial institutions.

She stated that a notable improvement has been observed in production practices from the farmers that were supported through the phase one programme.

“The programme has created an appetite for more young farmers to participate in the project hence the project deemed it fit to upscale and launch phase two of the Step-Up Program to reach more young farmers. The support will continue to be in the form of inputs with no cash disbursement to beneficiaries,” she said.

### Supply

Furthermore, she stated that this year the project aims to add two more commodities which are pig production and input supply.

“This category (input supply) aims to stimulate off-farm businesses where input shop has been identified as an opportunity for the youth. The support is targeting 94 youth farmers, wherein the FINCLUDE project has identified 760 youths in the 48 chiefdoms where the project is being implemented,” she said.

She said that the project aims to assist youth farmers in poultry, vegetables, pig production, and input supply, and the project this year has increased its support to E1.2 million, input support will be capped at E7 000 per farmer for horticulture and pig production.

The project manager explained that the poultry beneficiaries will be in two categories where Category One will receive inputs for E6 000 benefiting 22 farmers and Category Two will receive inputs worth E18 000 benefiting 8 farmers.



▲ ESNAU President Dumisani Masondo delivering his speech.

“This is an increase from phase one due to an increase in the cost of inputs. The competition is open from 15-29 February 2024 for youth farmers between the ages of 18-35, application forms can be downloaded on [www.cfi.org.sz](http://www.cfi.org.sz) or [www.esnau.co.sz](http://www.esnau.co.sz),” she said.

ESNAU President Dumisani Masondo said the programme is not only a step up as they have seen a lot of different interventions from the project bring solutions to farmers’ problems such as infrastructure development dams’ construction and linking farmers to access to finance.

“As one of the partners of the FINCLUDE project, we highly appreciate for trusting us with this programme, we assure you that this support will be given to young farmers who qualify to be beneficiaries of this support,” he said.

Masondo further thanked the youth for being champions and choosing farming as most of the young people in the country find farming as a retirement career.

“I humbly request that you use this opportunity to improve your businesses. I am told that this programme is meant to assist you to grow your businesses- and step



▲ FINCLUDE Project Manager Phumzile Nhleko-Mtetwa making her remarks.

up. In the next six months, we want to see improved production and profits. We trust that you will send this information to your colleagues to also benefit from the project,” he said.



# South Africa's budget to consolidate more slowly, rate cuts delayed

JOHANNESBURG - South Africa's budget deficit will narrow at a slower pace in coming years than October estimates predicted, put off course by poor mining tax receipts, according to a Reuters poll which also showed the central bank would delay interest rate cuts.

The consolidated budget deficit will narrow to 5.0% of gross domestic product (GDP) in the fiscal year that begins in March, a poll of economists taken in the past week showed. That is 0.4 percentage point less than previously thought in National Treasury estimates.

Further delays are expected in following fiscal years, with deficits narrowing to 4.6% and 4.2% of GDP for the subsequent two years from government estimates of 4.2% and 3.6% in October.

"We are coming off a high base in terms of mining receipts, you will recall 2022 was a very good year with a windfall in mining taxes

and very favourable commodity prices, unfortunately last year we had a slump in coal prices and also export volumes," said Isaac Matshego, a senior economist at Nedbank.

This year's deficit is now expected to have widened to 5.3% of GDP compared with Treasury estimates of 4.9%.

The survey further suggested the actual gross debt-to-GDP ratio accumulated by South Africa will be 76.6% of GDP in the new fiscal year before averaging around 78% in the next three fiscal years.

South Africa's economy is expected to grow 1.1% this year, 0.1 percentage point slower than predicted last month, a recurring theme of increasingly disappointing growth figures and hampering the country's ability to raise taxes.

The South African Reserve Bank is now expected to wait until the third quarter of this year before it cuts 50 basis points to 7.75%



▲ Newly-manufactured cars from a nearby plant are seen before being loaded on a cargo ship at a port, in East London, in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa.

between July and/or September. In a January poll it was expected to cut by 25 basis points in May.

David Omojomolo, Africa economist at Capital Economics, wrote he still expects South Africa's economy to start performing a little better over the course of 2024.

"The issues at ports have eased and load-shedding (power shortages) at the start of this year, has overall been less intense compared to last. At the same time, fiscal policy will become more supportive as the election closes in and we also expect the SARB to eventually start lowering interest rates," added Omojomolo.

(Reuters)

## Rand steady in early trade

At 0637 GMT, the rand traded at 19.0600 against the U.S. dollar, within touching distance of the previous day's close of 19.0550.

With no major local economic data releases expected on Thursday, the focus could be on President Cyril Ramaphosa, who will respond to a parliamentary debate on his state of the nation address (SONA) and answer questions from journalists.

Ramaphosa is due to speak in parliament from around 1200

GMT, after which he will interact with the press club.

The president used the SONA speech to play up his party's achievements in an election year, but he gave little new information about plans to address major challenges like power shortages and a logistics crisis.

South Africa's benchmark 2030 government bond was stronger in early deals, the yield down 5 basis points to 10.115%.

(Reuters)



▲ South Africa's benchmark 2030 government bond was stronger in early deals.

## Nigeria's new Dangote refinery to export first fuel cargoes

Nigeria's Dangote oil refinery has issued tenders to sell two fuel cargoes for export, the first from the newly commissioned refinery, trading sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

The refinery, Africa's largest with a nameplate capacity of 650 000 bl/d, was built on a peninsula on the outskirts of the commercial capital Lagos by the continent's richest man Aliko Dangote.

Nigeria has for years relied on expensive imports for nearly all the fuel it consumes but the \$20-billion refinery is set to turn it into a net exporter of fuel to

other West African countries, in a huge potential shift of power and profit dynamics in the industry

Dangote declined a Reuters request for comment.

The first cargo is 65 000 metric tons of low-sulphur straight run fuel oil, which Dangote has awarded to Trafigura and is due to load at the end of February, three of the sources said. Trafigura declined to comment.

At least one refiner said they had been offered the cargo by Trafigura without elaborating further.

(Reuters)



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

# Oil eases as IEA flags slower demand growth

LONDON - Oil prices fell slightly on Thursday as the International Energy Agency (IEA) flagged slowing demand growth this year while a larger than expected jump in U.S. crude inventories also weighed.

Brent crude futures fell 17 cents, or 0.2%, to \$81.43 a barrel by 1324 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down 16 cents, or 0.2%, at \$76.48.

The IEA's monthly oil market report on Thursday said that global oil demand is losing momentum, prompting the agency to trim its 2024 growth forecast to 1.22 million barrels per day (bpd) from 1.24 million bpd.

On the supply side, the IEA estimated that supply will grow by 1.7 million bpd this year, up from its previous forecast of 1.5 million bpd.

Both oil benchmark contracts lost more than \$1 a barrel on Wednesday, pressured by the rise in U.S. crude inventories as refining dropped to its lowest levels since December 2022.

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) said U.S. crude inventories jumped by 12 million barrels to 439.5 million barrels in the week to Feb. 9, far exceeding the rise of 2.6 million barrels expected by analysts in a Reuters poll.

**Inventories**

"This uptick in inventories is attributed to a further decrease in refinery operations and relatively softer demand for petroleum products," said SEB analyst Ole Hvalbye.

Offsetting the larger than expected crude supplies, the EIA data showed that gasoline and distillate stocks fell more than forecast. Gasoline stocks dropped by 3.7 million

barrels to 247.3 million barrels, compared with expectations of a 1.2 million barrel draw.

Distillate stockpiles declined by 1.9 million barrels to 125.7 million barrels, against expectations of a 1.6 million barrel drop.

News that two major economies fell into recession also weighed on prices.

Britain fell into recession in the second half of 2023 when gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by 0.3% in the three months to December, having shrunk by 0.1% between July and September, official data showed.

Japan unexpectedly slipped into recession at the end of last year, surrendering its title as the world's third-biggest economy to Germany.

(Reuters)



NVIDIA's bet on smaller AI firms from healthcare companies Nano-X Imaging and Recursion to chipmaker Arm Holdings boosted their shares in premarket trading on Thursday.

Nvidia, the biggest winner of the AI boom, revealed its new stakes in the firms as of Dec. 31 in a 13-F filin with the U.S. SEC late on Wednesday.

Fellow chip designer Arm Holdings drew the biggest investment from Nvidia, worth \$147.3 million. The British company has said its processors complement Nvidia's chips for AI work in data centers.

Arm shares gained 2.6% on Thursday after surging more than 60% in value since its strong quarterly forecast last week.

Shares of biotech company Recursion Pharmaceuticals, opens new tab, in which Nvidia invested nearly \$76 million, gained 16.5%. About eight months ago, Nvidia said it would invest in Recursion to speed up training of the biotech firm's AI models for drug discovery.

The Silicon Valley megacap firm also invested nearly \$3.7 million in voice AI platform SoundHound AI opens new tab, sending its shares 72% higher.

It bought shares of Israel-based medical device company Nano-X Imaging which uses AI software to analyze reports. Nano-X shares rose 42.5% higher.

# Arm, SoundHound AI shares jump as Nvidia builds stake

Autonomous driving technology TuSimple Holdings which delisted from Nasdaq last week, also drew \$3 million in capital from the chipmaker.

Shares of other small-cap chipmakers rose in tandem, with C3.ai Inc adding 1.5% and BigBear.ai Holdings gaining 8.9%.

Nvidia overtook Alphabet and Amazon.com this week to become the third most valuable U.S. company.

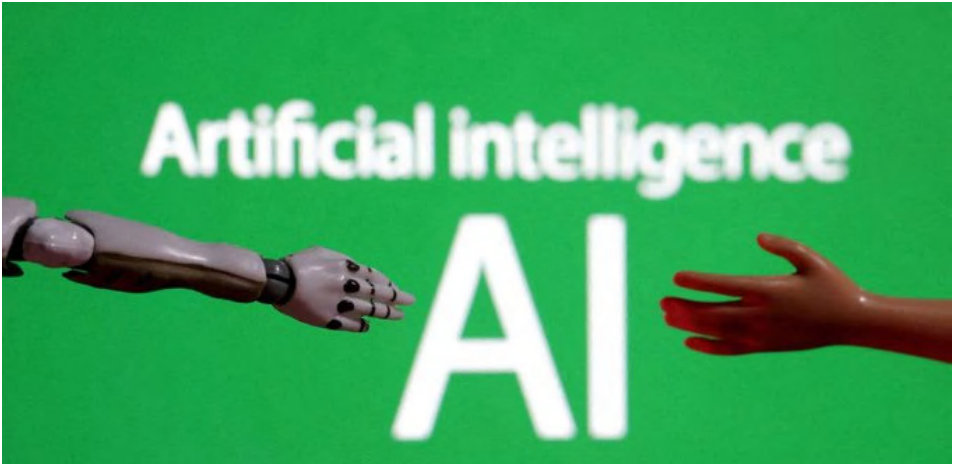
(Reuters)

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▲Japan's ruling party will propose that the government introduces a new law regulating generative artificial intelligence technologies within 2024, the Nikkei business daily reported on Thursday.

## Japan's ruling party pushes for AI legislation within 2024

JAPAN's ruling party will propose that the government introduces a new law regulating generative artificial intelligence technologies within 2024, the Nikkei business daily reported on Thursday.

To address issues surrounding AI such as disinformation and rights infringement, the Liberal Democratic Party's AI project team will draft preliminary rules, including penal regulations, for foundation model

developers such as Microsoft-backed OpenAI, the Nikkei said.

The European Union earlier this month moved a step closer to adopting rules governing the use of AI models after EU countries endorsed a political deal reached in December.

Other governments including the United States and China are exploring ways to regulate the technology.

(Reuters)

## TikTok launches a 'reimagined' app for the Apple Vision Pro

TIKTOK has launched a native and "reimagined" app on the Apple Vision Pro, the company announced on Thursday.

The Vision Pro launched on February 2 and already has over 1,000 apps specifically designed for the new device, and now one of the most popular social platforms is one of them.

Although you could watch TikTok videos via your browser on the Vision Pro, the new native app allows for a more immersive viewing experience.

In the TikTok Vision Pro app, the navigation bar and like button are moved off-

screen to allow for full video viewing, while the comment section and creator profiles appear as expansions on the side of the feed.

When you click on the comments section on the mobile app, they appear on top of the video, and clicking on someone's profile takes you to a full page. However, with the Vision Pro, you can view all of these things at once. TikTok says that since the Vision Pro gets rid of screen size and spatial boundaries, it allows for a much more immersive content experience. As a result, you can watch a video while scrolling through comments without having your view cut off, unlike on the mobile app. (Reuters)

## Tinder, Match and other dating apps encourage 'compulsive' use

STUCK in a dating app loop with no date in sight?

A lawsuit filed Wednesday against Match Group claims that is by design.

Tinder, Hinge and other Match dating apps are filled with addictive features that encourage "compulsive" use, the proposed class-action lawsuit claims.

The lawsuit filed in federal court in the Northern District of California on Wednesday — Valentine's Day — says Match MTCH, +2.05% intentionally designs its dating platforms with game-like features that "lock users into a perpetual pay-to-play loop" prioritizing profit over promises to help users find relationships.

Suit

This, the suit claims, turns users into "addicts" who purchase ever-more-expensive subscriptions to access special features that promise romance and matches.

"Match's business model depends on generating returns through the monopolization of users' attention, and Match has guaranteed its market success by foment-

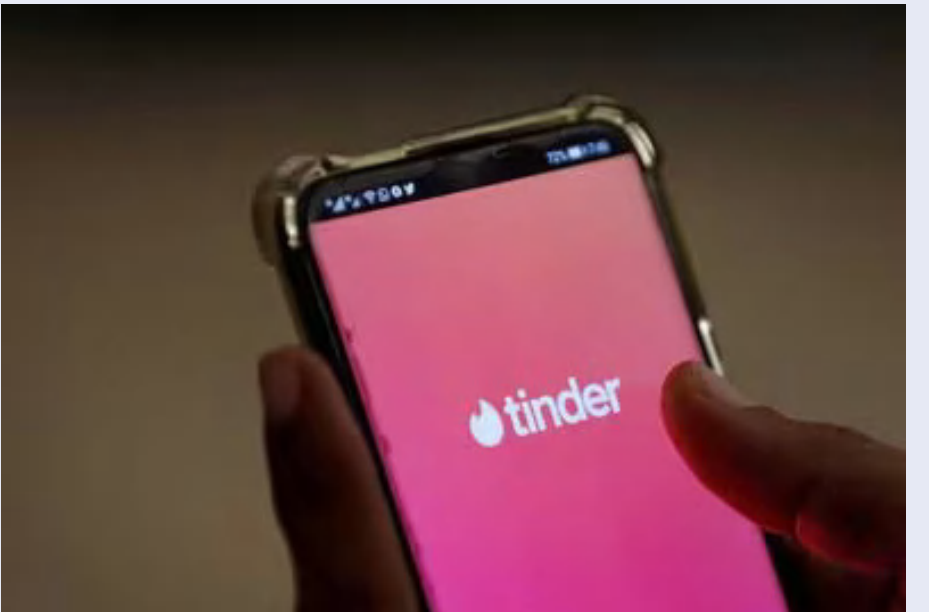
ing dating app addiction that drives expensive subscriptions and perpetual use," the lawsuit says. It was filed by six dating app users and seeks class action status.

Representatives for Dallas-based Match did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Though it focuses on adults, the lawsuit comes as tech companies face increasing scrutiny over addictive features that harm young people's mental health. Meta Platforms META, +2.86%, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, for instance, faces a lawsuit by dozens of states accusing it of contributing to the youth mental health crisis by designing features on Instagram and Facebook that addict children to its platforms.

Match's apps, according to the lawsuit against the company, "employs recognized dopamine-manipulating product features" to turn users into "gamblers locked in a search for psychological rewards that Match makes elusive on purpose."

(Reuters)



▲Tinder, Hinge and other Match dating apps are filled with addictive features that encourage "compulsive" use, the proposed class-action lawsuit claims.



# Erratic weather fueled by climate change will worsen locust outbreaks, study finds

EXTREME wind and rain may lead to bigger and worse desert locust outbreaks, with human-caused climate change likely to intensify the weather patterns and cause higher outbreak risks, a new study has found.

The desert locust — a short-horned species found in some dry areas of northern and eastern Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia — is a migratory insect that travels in swarms of millions over long distances and damages crops, causing famine and food insecurity.

A square kilometer swarm comprises 80 million locusts that can in one day consume food crops enough to feed 35,000 people. The U.N.’s Food and Agriculture Organization describes it as “the most destructive migratory pest in the world.”

The study, published in Science Advances on Wednesday, said these outbreaks will be “increasingly hard to prevent and control” in a warming climate.

Xiaogang He, author of the study and an assistant professor at the National University of Singapore, said more frequent and severe extreme weather events due to climate change could add unpredictability to locust outbreaks.

But he hoped that the study could help countries understand and address “the impacts of climate variability on locust dynamics, particularly in the context of its repercussions on agricultural productivity and food security” and urged better regional and continental cooperation among countries and control organizations to respond quickly and build early warning systems.

To assess the risk of locust outbreaks in Africa and the Middle East and the connection to climate change, scientists analyzed incidents of desert locust outbreaks from 1985 to 2020 using the Food and Agriculture Organization’s Locust Hub data tool.

They created and used a data-driven framework to examine the insects’ patterns to find out what may cause outbreaks to happen across long distances.

They found that 10 countries, including



▲ Extreme wind and rain may lead to bigger and worse desert locust outbreaks, with human-caused climate change likely to intensify the weather patterns and cause higher outbreak risks, a new study has found.

Kenya, Morocco, Niger, Yemen, and Pakistan, experienced the majority of locust outbreaks among 48 affected nations.

The worst outbreak of desert locusts in 25 years struck East Africa in 2019 and 2020, when the insects ravaged hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland and damaged crops, trees and other vegetation, impacting food security and livelihoods.

Elfatih Abdel-Rahman, a scientist at International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology who wasn’t part of the study, said widespread desert locust outbreaks due to climate change will substantially threaten livelihoods in the affected regions due to reduced food production and increase in food prices.

The researchers also found a strong link between the magnitude of desert locust outbreaks and weather and land conditions like air temperature, precipitation, soil moisture, and wind. Desert locusts are more likely to infest arid areas that receive sudden extreme

rainfall, and the number of the insects in an outbreak is strongly impacted by weather conditions.

El Nino, a recurring and natural climate phenomenon that affects weather worldwide, was also strongly tied to bigger and worse desert locust outbreaks.

University of Delaware entomology professor Douglas Tallamy, who wasn’t part of the research, said erratic weather and rainfall trigger spurts in vegetation and therefore fuels enormous population growth in locusts.

“As such variability increases, it is logical to predict that locust outbreaks will increase as well,” said Tallamy.

The study is “yet another example of what should be a very strong wake-up call that societies across the globe need to come together to reduce climate change and its impacts but also to implement strategies in response to global events such as increasing threats of desert locusts,” said Paula Shrewsbury, an

entomology professor at the University of Maryland. Shrewsbury was not involved in the study.

The study found that especially vulnerable locations like Morocco and Kenya remain high-risk but locust habitats had expanded since 1985 and projects that they will continue growing by at least 5% by the end of the 21st century, predictably to west India and west central Asia.

It gives the example of the Rub’ al Khali, or Empty Quarter, a desert in the southern Arabian Peninsula, as a place that was historically uncommon for desert locust outbreaks but then became a hotspot. The desert experienced locust outbreaks in 2019 after uncontrolled breeding following cyclones, which filled the desert with freshwater lakes.

Major locust outbreaks can have huge financial impacts. It cost more than \$450 million to respond to a locust outbreak that happened in West Africa from 2003 to 2005, according to the World Bank.(Africanews)

## South African military: 2 soldiers killed, 3 wounded on Congo mission

JOHANNESBURG - The South African military said on Thursday two of its soldiers were killed and three wounded by a mortar bomb that landed inside a military base in Democratic Republic of Congo, where its troops are helping to fight armed groups.

South Africa said earlier this week that it would send 2 900 troops as part of its contribution to a force deployed by southern African regional bloc SADC to help Congo address deteriorating security in its restive eastern region.

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) said in a statement posted on X that the mortar bomb landed inside one of the South African contingent’s military bases on Wednesday.

“As a result of this indirect fire, the SANDF suffered two fatalities and three members sustained injuries. The injured were taken to the nearest hospital in Goma for medical attention,” the statement said.

An investigation into the incident will be conducted, the SANDF added.

(Reuters)



▲ The South African military said on Thursday two of its soldiers were killed and three wounded by a mortar bomb that landed inside a military base in Democratic Republic of Congo, where its troops are helping to fight armed groups.



# Putin says he prefers ‘more predictable’ Biden over Trump

LONDON - Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an interview broadcast on Wednesday that he preferred Joe Biden over Donald Trump but was willing to work with any U.S. president.

Putin was asked by interviewer Pavel Zarubin who was “better for us” out of Biden, a Democrat, and Trump, a Republican.

Putin replied without hesitation: “Biden. He is a more experienced, predictable person, a politician of the old school.”

Smiling slightly, he added: “But we will work with any U.S. president who the American people have confidence in.”

It was the first time Putin had publicly commented on the 2024 U.S. election race in which Biden and Trump are expected to face each other for the second successive time.

At a time of high political uncertainty in the U.S., and with relations between the two countries at their lowest point for more than 60 years, his comments were more likely to be perceived as mischief-making than taken at face value.

Biden has led the Western response to Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, including the expansion of the NATO alliance, the imposition of successive waves of sanctions on Moscow and the provision of billions of dollars’ worth of aid and weapons to Kyiv.

Based on Trump’s reluctance to criticise Putin in his first term and his more recent comments - including a weekend interview where he said he would encourage Russia to attack NATO members that failed to spend enough on their own defence - his many critics believe he would give the Kremlin leader a much easier ride.

Putin allowed himself to opine on the two candidates, and even to discuss the sensitive issue of Biden’s mental fitness, despite



▲ Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an interview broadcast on Wednesday that he preferred Joe Biden over Donald Trump but was willing to work with any U.S. president.

saying it would be wrong to interfere in the campaign.

“When I met with Biden in Switzerland - true, that was several years, three years ago - people were already saying he wasn’t up to it. I didn’t see anything of the kind,” Putin said.

While appearing to defend Biden, he brought up an episode that embarrassed the U.S. leader, when he banged his head while getting out of a helicopter in June last year.

“Well, which of us hasn’t banged his head somewhere?” Putin said.

Trump, he said, “has been called a non-systemic politician; he has his own view on the topic of how the United States should develop relations with its allies.”

Putin has been in power as president or prime minister since 1999, but at 71 he is a decade younger than Biden and six years younger than Trump. He is certain to win a

new six-year term in an election next month, from which two candidates who opposed the war in Ukraine have been disqualified for presenting invalid documentation.

In 2020, a report by the U.S. Senate intelligence committee found Russia had tried to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election in order to help Trump, who defeated Hillary Clinton.

(Reuters)

## UN aid chief warns of possible spillover of Gazans into Egypt

GENEVA - The United Nations aid chief warned on Thursday of the possibility of a spillover of Palestinians amassed in Rafah into Egypt if Israel launches a military operation against the border town.

More than one million Palestinians are crammed into Rafah at the southern tip of the Gaza Strip, on the border with Egypt. Many are living in tent camps and makeshift shelters after fleeing Israeli bombardments elsewhere in Gaza.

The Israeli military says it wants to flush out Islamist militants from hideouts in Rafah and free hostages being held there after the Hamas rampage in Israel on Oct. 7, but has given no details of a proposed plan to evacuate civilians.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces growing international pressure to hold off on the planned assault, has given no indication as to when the offensive might take place.

“The possibility of a military operation in Rafah, with the possibility of the (border) crossing closing down, with the possibility of spillover... a sort of Egyptian nightmare ...is one that is right before our eyes,” Martin Griffiths told diplomats at the United Nations in Geneva.



▲ United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths speaks during a press conference on the situation in Gaza, at UN Building in Geneva

ed Nations in Geneva.

He said the notion that the people of Gaza could evacuate to a safe place was an “illusion”.

“We must all hope that friends of Israel and those who care about Israel’s security give them good counsel at this moment,” Griffiths said.

The United Nations has said an Israeli offensive on Rafah could “lead to a slaughter”. Speaking at the same meeting as Griffiths, Mirjana Spol-

jaric, head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said the absence of a clear evacuation plan, including for the sick and elderly, would bring suffering to a new level. “The suffering on both sides, the carnage we have seen since the 7th of October will reach unimaginable depths if operations on Rafah are intensified the way they have been announced,” Spoljaric said.

(Reuters)

## ‘Russia close to creating cancer vaccines’

MOSCOW - President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russian scientists were close to creating vaccines for cancer that could soon be available to patients.

Putin said in televised comments that “we have come very close to the creation of so-called cancer vaccines and immunomodulatory drugs of a new generation”.

“I hope that soon they will be effectively used as methods of individual therapy,” he added, speaking at a Moscow forum on future technologies.

Putin did not specify which types of cancer the proposed vaccines would target, nor how.

A number of countries and companies are working on cancer vaccines. Last year the UK government signed an agreement with Germany-based BioNTech to launch clinical trials providing “personalised cancer treatments”, aiming to reach 10,000 patients by 2030.

Pharmaceutical companies

Moderna and Merck & Co are developing an experimental cancer vaccine that a mid-stage study showed cut the chance of recurrence or death from melanoma - the most deadly skin cancer - by half after three years of treatment.

Licensed

There are currently six licensed vaccines against human papillomaviruses (HPV) that cause many cancers, including cervical cancer, according to the World Health Organization, as well as vaccines against hepatitis B (HBV), which can lead to liver cancer.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Russia developed its own Sputnik V vaccine against COVID-19 and sold it to a number of countries, although domestically it ran up against widespread public reluctance to get vaccinated.

Putin himself said he had taken Sputnik, in a bid to assure people of its efficacy and safety.

(Reuters)





# Live, laugh and love!

**Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini**  
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IT is still the 'Love Weekend', and most events are still adhering to the theme.

Eswatini Daily News has prepared a weekend gig preview.

## ▶▶ GET CUFFED OR GO HOME

**When: Friday**  
**Where: Mega Lounge**  
**Fee: Free**

It is set to be an unforgettable night of excitement and potential love connections as Mega Lounge presents the third edition of Get Cuffed or Go Home. This unique event promises to be a thrilling mix of groove culture and Valentine's Day romance, making it a must-attend for fun-loving individuals seeking a memorable night out. Get Cuffed or Go Home offers an innovative approach to mingling and matchmaking. Attendees will be encouraged to participate in a colour-coded cup system, allowing them to signal their relationship status and openness to potential connections. Singles will be equipped with green drinking cups, indicating their availability and desire to meet new people. Taken individuals will proudly display red cups, signalling that they are already in a committed relationship. For those who fall somewhere in between, blue cups will signify "it depends on who is asking," while yellow cups will represent the complicated nature of their current relationship status. The event organisers have carefully curated an atmosphere that blends the excitement of a social gathering with the romantic ambience of Valentine's Day. Get Cuffed or Go Home is not only an opportunity to meet potential partners but also a chance to enjoy an evening of non-stop entertainment and celebration.

## ▶▶ TRAFFIC LIGHT VALENTINE'S PARTY

**When: Friday**  
**Where: House on Fire**  
**Fee: E120**

Neon Love at Traffic Light! This year's Traffic Light Valentine's Party theme is Neon Love, and attendees

are encouraged to stand out with an outfit that's fun, colourful, bold, striking, and above all – bright. The House on Fire's first big event of the year, the ultimate Traffic Light Valentine's Party will be a chance to dress up, with attendees donning their Traffic Light colours and going wild. The night will feature games based on the classic theme of Valentine's Day and Love. Valentine's Day isn't just a day for lovers. Whether single or in a relationship, anyone can enjoy a night of memorable fun and meeting new people. Keeping the atmosphere alive and the energy high will be a line-up of some of Eswatini's finest DJs including It's All Blaq, Ash, Baybash, Nelsonx, and MK72. Now in its thirteenth successful year, this Valentine's themed event continues to deliver a host of exciting games and a sizzling line-up of some of Eswatini's most talented DJs. House On Fire and official Traffic Light Party sponsor, Castle Lite are pulling out all the stops to make this a night to remember. At this party, guests get to dress up in the Traffic Light colour of their choice to indicate their relationship status. The colour green signifies that one is 'single and ready to mingle'. Red means that one is in a relationship, or not looking for one, while orange/yellow may mean "unsure" or "maybe" or could be, well, 'it's complicated'. For those who need to get into Love's fast lane, Red, Green, and Orange Traffic Light wristbands will also be available at the door.

## ▶▶ ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE

**When: Friday**  
**Where: Bethesda, Nhlanguano**  
**Fee: E100**

Love is in the air, and what better way to celebrate than with an enchanting evening of soul-stirring music? South African Gospel artist Mpumi Mtsweni is ready to serenade the hearts of music lovers at the Atmosphere of Love event. Alongside her, the talented Eswatini Gospel musician Shekinah Motsa will grace the stage, promising an unforgettable night of uplifting melodies and heartfelt performances. Mpumi Mtsweni can connect with listeners on a deep emotional level, and she has become a beloved figure in the Gospel music scene. Her songs, filled with messages of love, hope, and faith, have touched the hearts of many. Joining Mpumi Mtsweni is Shekinah Motsa, one of Eswatini's most talented Gospel musicians. Organised by the Vineyard School of Ministry, the Atmosphere of Love event aims to create a celebration

of love and faith through the power of music.

## ▶▶ FRIDAY GROOVE

**When: Friday**  
**Where: IF's Lounge**  
**Fee: Free**

IF's Lounge, known for its vibrant atmosphere and unforgettable parties, is set to host the highly anticipated "Friday Groove" event this week. With an exciting lineup of talented DJs and a special birthday celebration for Lamentic Soula and Mayas, this promises to be a night to remember. The event will kick off with a bang as Mistosoul, Wacko, and Yamkela take the stage, ready to showcase their exceptional skills on the decks. These supporting acts are known for their ability to keep the crowd energised and dancing throughout the night. They will create an electrifying atmosphere that will have attendees grooving all night long. However, the real highlight of the evening will be the birthday celebration for Lamentic Soula and Mayas. It is important to note that this event is strictly for attendees over the age of 18.

## ▶▶ MISTOSOUL & FRIENDS

**When: Saturday**  
**Where: Ehawini Lifestyle**  
**Fee: Free**

Ehawini Lifestyle is about to experience an explosion of music and excitement as Mistosoul takes centre stage at the highly anticipated fifth edition of "Mistosoul & Friends" this Saturday. With the talented Soulsticks also gracing the decks, this event promises to be bigger and better than ever before. The event will kick off in style, with Mistosoul showcasing his exceptional skills and captivating the audience with his unique blend of beats. Known for his ability to seamlessly mix different genres and create an electrifying atmosphere, Mistosoul is set to deliver a performance that will leave attendees in awe. Soulsticks will also be present, ready to deliver a mesmerising set that will keep the crowd dancing throughout the night. What's more, the event offers an incredible deal for early birds. Attendees can enjoy free entry before 3 pm, but afterwards, the entry fee is only E30.

## ▶▶ MEGA SATURDAYS

**When: Saturday**  
**Where: Mega Lounge**  
**Fee: Free**

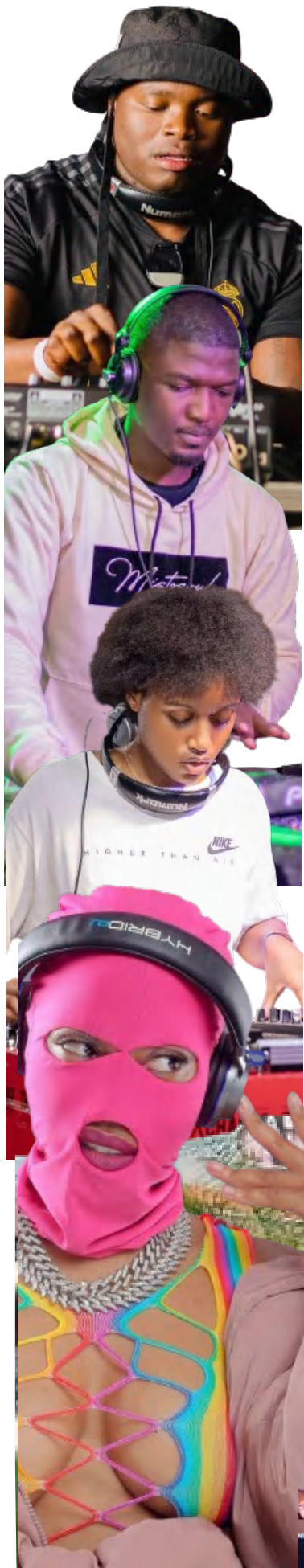
In a much-anticipated event that promises to be the highlight of the weekend, DJ Obsession is set to take the stage at the renowned

Mega Lounge for their weekly event, 'Mega Saturdays.' With an electrifying performance that is guaranteed to keep attendees on their feet all night long, DJ Obsession is ready to deliver a fire set that will leave the crowd wanting more. Known for his unmatched talent and ability to read the crowd, DJ Obsession has built a reputation as one of the most sought-after DJs in the industry. To ensure that the audience is well-enticed, Mega Lounge has curated a lineup of their resident DJs, known as the Mega Lounge All-Stars. For those planning to attend this extraordinary event, it is important to note that there will be a cover charge of E40 for latecomers arriving after 9 pm. However, the show is free for all those who arrive earlier.

## ▶▶ MDZIMBA VIEW WEEKEND GIG GUIDE

**When: Weekend**  
**Where: Mdzimba View Shisanyama**  
**Fee: Free**

Mdzimba View Shisanyama, the ultimate destination for food, music, and good vibes, is gearing up for a weekend of non-stop entertainment that is sure to leave attendees wanting more. With a lineup of events designed to cater to a variety of tastes, Mdzimba View Shisanyama promises an unforgettable experience for all who step through its doors. Kicking off the weekend on Friday is the Afterwork Chillout, a night dedicated to providing the perfect ambience for attendees to unwind and enjoy the start of the weekend. Saturday brings Simple Saturdays to the forefront, a night that promises to have patrons dancing the night away. On Sunday, Mdzimba View Shisanyama invites families to come together and enjoy quality time during their Family Sunday event. With a chilled and relaxed atmosphere, families can indulge in delicious food while being entertained. Throughout the weekend, resident DJs including Slimdeep, MaWillies, MaTenTen, DJ Baba, Sbuda, and Castle, will take turns behind the decks, ensuring a seamless flow of music that will keep the dance floor packed.





# ‘Tigi’ used as intro song for SA Netflix production

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
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LOCAL artist Sands’ hit track ‘Tigi’ has been used as the intro music for a South African Netflix production, ‘A Soweto Love Story.’

The Eswatini musician said he was thrilled about the recognition received for his song on such a global platform. He expressed gratitude for the recognition, acknowledging that having ‘Tigi’ featured on Netflix signifies that his song is not only recognised but also deserving of global acclaim.

The Netflix movie

‘A Soweto Love Story’ was released on Wednesday, February 14, 2024.

He commended the producers of ‘A Soweto Love Story’ for selecting his track, emphasising the significance of being associated with Netflix, a platform that reaches audiences far beyond Southern Africa. He added that after the song was used as an intro for the Netflix production, he has already witnessed the impact of this exposure, with ‘Tigi’ gaining momentum on digital streaming platforms like Spotify.

‘Tigi’ first captured the hearts of listeners back in 2016 when it became a crossover song on Eswatini Broadcasting and Information Services (EBIS) and various stations in South Africa’s Mpumalanga province, where the siSwati language, which Sands sings in, is spoken. The single has only grown in popularity since then, especially with the release of its music video.

Renowned for his unique sound, Sands has become a multi-award-winning musician and gold-selling artist. His album ‘Sands of Time’ achieved gold status, making him



◀ Eswatini musician Sands.



one of Eswatini’s most celebrated artists. Tracks like ‘Vuma’ have resonated deeply with audiences.

Sands’ journey as an artist began during his high school years when his brother-in-law gifted him a guitar and taught him a few chords. This humble beginning sparked a passion within Sands, leading him to pursue music and develop his skills.

With a hunger for growth, Sands honed his craft and gained confidence through his studies in music. He started performing around campus, but fate intervened and brought him together with Qibho Intalektual.

Sands’ undeniable talent has not gone unnoticed, as he has had the privilege of collaborating with industry giants such as the late music legend Tselo Tshola and Loyiso Bala.

## ‘Dream: Liphupho’ cinematic masterpiece on the horizon

FILM lovers should be prepared to be swept away by the enchanting ‘Dream: Liphupho,’ a short film that promises to be a visual feast for all cinema lovers.

This masterpiece is poised to grace the silver screen in the future. At the heart of this short film lies a poignant tale that follows the journey of a young boy, plagued by doubt, as he dreams of becoming a professional actor.

Set against the backdrop of his challenging reality, the protagonist’s unwavering hope and perseverance shine through, illuminating the screen with a powerful message of resilience. ‘Dream: Liphupho’ delves into the realm of dreams, career choices, and the indomitable spirit of young individuals who dare to chase their aspirations.

In an interview, producer Siphosethu Sibandze shed light on the creative process behind this cinematic gem, revealing the hurdles they faced, including limited transportation and other logistical challenges. Despite these obstacles, the production’s little yet dedicated crew poured their hearts and souls into the project.

Sibandze took on the roles of

writer and director, while Sibusile Dlamini served as the assistant director. The skilled cinematography was masterfully handled by Luyanda Motsa, with Sanele Mazibuko operating the second camera. Bahle Shongwe ensured impeccable sound quality, and Clifford Dlodlu expertly managed the lighting as the gaffer. Sibandze expressed profound admiration and gratitude for the remarkable efforts displayed by the crew, acknowledging their instrumental contributions to the film’s success. He said the cast, too, played an integral role in bringing the story to life, making the filmmaking process a seamless and enjoyable experience.

### Premiere

To build anticipation for the film’s release, a grand pre-launch event is scheduled for next month. Before this eagerly awaited occasion, a poster will be unveiled, providing eager audiences with further details about the film and its upcoming premiere. Sibandze extended a warm invitation to emaSwati, urging them to join in this thrilling journey and support the local film industry.

The realization of ‘Dream: Liphupho’ would not have been possible without the invaluable collaboration and support of various entities. Ayeye Entertainment, in association with



Luda Films Production, Lenscope\_Isp, Bigtime Beat, Silverspoon Pictures, and Alliance Française de Mbabane, has played a pivotal role in bringing this cinematic marvel to fruition.



▲ Emagagu, Percy P pictured during the shoot of ‘Lutsandvo’ visualiser.

## Emagagu, Percy P drop ‘Lutsandvo’ visualiser

TALENTED local duo Emagagu and Percy P, have released stunning visuals for their latest single, “Lutsandvo.”

Directed by the multi-talented Milton B, who also mixed and mastered the song and edited the video, these visuals are a treat for the eyes.

In an exclusive interview with Percy P, he expressed excitement about sharing the visuals with their fans as a Valentine’s Day gift.

According to Percy P, the process of creating the visuals was an amazing experience. They decided to keep it simple and focused on the performance of the song rather than shooting multiple scenes. The video was shot at Ticantfwin, in Manzini, adding a touch of local flavour to the visuals.

‘Lutsandvo’ is a romantic Swati love song that beautifully captures the emotions of a man deeply in love with his partner. It showcases his willingness to take their relationship to the next level and commit to a lifelong bond. The song is a heartfelt expression of love and appreciation.

Emagagu shared that while wrapping up a previous project released in December, they realised the need to include a love song to bring balance to their work. They wanted to explore the theme of love and the importance of relationships amidst the challenges of life and personal growth.

Emagagu further urged fans to stream the audio on all digital stores and watch the video on their YouTube channel, Percy P worldwide. They also encourage fans to use the song on TikTok to create engaging content.

● ‘Lutsandvo’ is a romantic Swati love song that beautifully captures the emotions of a man deeply in love with his partner. It showcases his willingness to take their relationship to the next level and commit to a lifelong bond.



THE second phase of the investigation into corruption within the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) is 90% completed and new findings have been made.

The investigation in its totality is worth approximately R1.4 billion, which the State and the NLC have allegedly lost due to corruption at the organisation.

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) appeared before Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry on Wednesday, to give an update on the investigation.

One of the new findings is related to award-winning actress, Moiteri ‘Terry’ Pheto, unduly benefiting once again from the NLC grant funding.

The NLC approved grant funding of R5 million to Zibisibix Non-Profit Company for a chicken farm in December 2018.

According to the report, the farm was purchased for R850,000, and the SIU found that the former chairperson of the NLC board, Professor Alfred Nevhutanda signed the offer to purchase the farm in the Vaal area.

After receiving the R5 million, money moved from the account and payments were made into Terry, her sister Dimakatso Pheto and her designer friend Thula Sindi’s accounts.

Internet users have been reacting to the findings, and especially Terry being implicated once again, after her three-storey lavish house in Bryanston was auctioned last year.

The house was allegedly built with funds siphoned from the NLC.

Award-winning actor, Presley Chweneyagae has also been implicated in the report, after the South African Youth Movement (SAYM) applied for grant funding on behalf of the Presley Chweneyagae Foundation.

According to the report, the main purpose of the application was for the Take Back the Future Musical, Documentary and Poetry Arts programme. The NLC approved grant funding to the tune of R15 million.

Here are some of the reactions online:

Tweeps are digging up the designer’s old tweets and applying it to the current

# Terry Pheto, friend implicated in R5 million lotteries probe



▲A new finding is related to award-winning actress, Moiteri ‘Terry’ Pheto, unduly benefiting once again from the NLC grant funding.

situation.

@NomfusiLengs said: “Thula Sindi and Terry Pheto laughing for 7 hours after successfully securing Lotto money”.

Sindi’s tweet about hating corruption has also been used against him by X users.

@AmuEmperor said: “Black people like Terry Pheto and Thula Sindi are my reason for saying just because someone is black, it doesn’t mean they have your interests at heart.”

@Inenekazi1 said: “Yaz kodwa guys we must also steal and eat people’s money like abo Terry Pheto and Thula Sindi before corruption is taken seriously and people are arrested. We need a plan fast fast.”

(IOL)



▲Internet users have been reacting to the findings, and especially Terry being implicated once again, after her three-storey lavish house in Bryanston was auctioned last year.

## ‘Bob Marley: One Love’ biopic of an icon receives mixed reviews

WHILE reggae music legend Bob Marley died over four decades, his music continues to live on as he inspires modern-day musicians.

With the icon’s music played across the globe, almost 43 years after he died from cancer in May 1981, this week is the first time that Hollywood released its major reggae biopic based on the musical legend.

“Bob Marley: One Love” released in theatres worldwide on Valentine’s Day.

And while it was not the typical love story that movie-goers might have expected on the most romantic day of the year, his fans will finally get to see the man behind the music.

It stars Kingsley Ben-Adir, who previously portrayed another icon, Malcolm X, in Regina King’s “One Night in Miami”. The British actor also played one of the Kens in the “Barbie” movie, as well as making a cameo as Barack Obama, a few years ago, in the HBO drama “The Comey Rule”.

Ben-Adir said this was his biggest role to date, and that he had to conduct months of preparation before he could do the role justice.

He told “The Guardian” this included working with a music teacher for his singing



▲Kingsley Ben-Adir as Bob Marley and Lashana Lynch as Rita Marley in ‘Bob Marley: One Love’

in the movie, as well as trying to perfect Marley’s patois, the vernacular form of English spoken in Jamaica.

“Looking back, I may as well have been learning to play a part in French. I was building my understanding of Bob’s language from the ground up; the dialect, the flow, the intonation, the feel. Jamaican patois is deceptive.

“So much of the English language is in it, you think you know it. But it’s more confusing and complicated than that,” the actor said.

Ben-Adir also flew to Kingston in Jamaica to spend time with Marley’s family. He also consulted reggae legend’s surviving band mates and collaborators.

“Many of the people I spoke to in Jamaica

were wary of me when I first sat down. And rightly so,” he said.

“Who are you coming over here to do this? Who are you?” I would tell them: ‘If I was you, I’d feel the same. But I want to try my best to represent this properly. Listen, I’ve grown up with Jamaicans, believe me I’m not taking this lightly. I’ve agreed to do it, so I’m f\*\*\*\*\* going to try my best’.”

“Bob Marley: One Love” is directed by Reinaldo Marcus Green, whose last film, “King Richard”, bagged Will Smith an Oscar for Best Actor.

The biographical film also stars Lashana Lynch who plays Marley’s wife, Rita, as well as Michael Gandolfini, James Norton and Umi Meyers.

It is set in the aftermath of a 1976 shooting that wounded the reggae icon.

Much of the movie’s focus is also on Marley’s self-imposed exile in London, the recording of his 1977 album “Exodus”, him touring Europe and then ultimately receiving a diagnosis of cancer.

Marley’s major performance that bookends the film is his “One Love Peace Concert”, which was staged in Jamaica in 1978 as a way to heal the then divided and violent country. (Bang Showbiz)





RUNNING is a sport with millions of passionate, knowledgeable enthusiasts.

One major question elicits many different opinions among runners: Which is better, running on a treadmill or running outside?

Proponents of both approaches share a love of running. However, some outdoor runners believe treadmill running is monotonous and boring, while treadmill runners may prefer running in a controlled environment.

Fortunately, you can reap benefits from either type of running.

This article reviews the pros and cons of treadmill and outdoor running to help you decide which is best for you.

#### TREADMILL RUNNING

A treadmill is an exercise machine with a controllable rotating belt that you can walk or run on. Treadmills are available in most workout facilities, or you can purchase one yourself in stores or online.

##### Pros

One of the biggest advantages of using a treadmill is its accessibility. Since most treadmills are indoors, you can use it day or night and in any climate. This can make running more accessible for those who exercise at night or live in places with ever-changing weather.

Most advocates of treadmill running enjoy the various functions a treadmill can offer, such as precise control of their pace, incline, and intervals.

This is also helpful for those returning from an injury, as they can progress slowly on a treadmill in a more controlled environment.

For example, running outside may pose a greater risk to someone returning from an ankle injury because of factors like uneven ground and slippery sidewalks.

Finally, running on a treadmill may be better for your joints since most treadmills have cushioned belts to absorb some of the impact. In contrast, hard ground, especially sidewalks and roads, will not.

Contrary to popular belief, most research shows that neither form of running causes knee or joint damage.

##### Cons

Unlike outdoor running, during which you can be surrounded by forests or beautiful greenery, indoor treadmill running involves staying in a fixed place where the treadmill is located. Some say this can become boring over time.

However, many modern treadmills provide screens to simulate an outdoor run, which may make the experience more enjoyable. Nonetheless, many argue this will never live up to running outdoors.

Additionally, one study shows conflicting findings when looking at muscle activity during treadmill running compared to outdoor running. Some studies report lower muscle activity on the treadmill, whereas other studies find no difference. This may be due to the treadmill belt propelling you forward, making it ever so slightly easier for you to stay in motion.

Many runners report a less natural and shorter stride with treadmill running due to the limited parameters of the treadmill. However, this is controversial. A 2020 study found no significant differences in

# Is it better to run on a treadmill or outside?



VS



gait stride between treadmill and outdoor running.

Finally, one of the biggest downsides of treadmill running is the cost. Treadmills are available to use at the gym for \$10 or more per month, while purchasing your own treadmill can range from hundreds to thousands of dollars.

#### OUTDOOR RUNNING

Outdoor running involves running outdoors on a trail, path, sidewalk, or any other outdoor terrain.

##### Pros

Most runners find outdoor running far more enjoyable than treadmill running due to the changing scenery, fresh air, challenge of uneven ground, and unlimited options for running routes.

The increased variety can increase a person's motivation to continue exercising.

Though both treadmill and outdoor running bring health benefits, such as lower blood pressure, greater endurance, and lower risk of depression, outdoor running may give additional benefits simply by

helping you feel more connected to nature.

Interestingly, a 2016 study found that spending at least 30 minutes per week around outdoor greenery, such as parks and forests, could reduce rates of depression by 7% and high blood pressure by 9%.

Additionally, the various environments and barriers you may encounter while outdoor running can help you activate other muscle groups and develop better balance. Actions may include dodging other people on the trail, jumping over puddles, or running up hills.

Furthermore, research shows running outdoors can build stronger bones since you're running on harder surfaces. This allows for greater gravitational force and stress on the bones, which is important for bone metabolism.

Finally, outdoor running is completely free, if you exclude the cost of running shoes and workout gear. This makes running more accessible to people of all incomes.

##### Cons

It's best to run outdoors in dry, moderately warm temperatures. Meanwhile, it's less

ideal and riskier in the rain, snow, and extremely cold or hot temperatures. Though with proper clothing, training, and preparation, you can run outdoors in most weather conditions.

Additionally, running in the extreme cold or heat can increase your risk of dehydration. This can be life threatening if you're not wearing the proper clothing and rehydrating.

Finally, running at night increases the risk of injury and can be dangerous.

If you choose to run at night, be sure to wear reflective clothing and a headlamp to help you see. Tell a friend your route and when you expect to arrive home. Better yet, find a running buddy.

#### WHICH IS BETTER FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

The best exercise for weight loss is exercise that you enjoy.

Whether you prefer treadmill or outdoor running, regular aerobic exercise like running will burn calories to achieve a calorie deficit.

One 2016 study found that running a





few times per week led to increased fat loss. Interestingly, even though most participants experienced significant weight loss, they also gained muscle mass.

At least two different types of running may aid weight loss.

You can achieve weight loss with low to moderate intensity running, also called steady-state running. This means running at a continuous pace at the same intensity for a set period of time.

Alternatively, you could use high intensity interval training (HIIT). HIIT involves short, 30–90-second intervals of intense exercise, such as sprinting, followed by an equivalent period of rest, such as slow running or walking.

In a 2017 study, both HIIT and steady-state running helped people achieve fat loss. Weight loss depended on a person’s effort and enjoyment during the exercise, along with how often they exercised.

These results suggest it’s best to choose whatever type of running you can commit to.

Fortunately, you can do both HIIT and steady-state running on a treadmill or outdoors. However, if you’re sprinting outside, be sure to run on even ground to avoid injury.

Beyond weight loss, all forms of running can bring you numerous health benefits, such as reduced blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, depression, and anxiety.

If you’re new to running, be sure to speak with a healthcare provider first to make sure it’s right for you. It’s always best to start slow and gradually progress.

#### IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Whether you enjoy treadmill or outdoor running, it’s important to run safely.

Before trying a new exercise routine, speak with your healthcare provider, especially if you have a chronic condition, such as heart disease.

Starting exercise routines too aggressively can lead to injury or more serious but rare outcomes, such as a heart attack.

Furthermore, make sure you’re consuming enough calories.

Studies have shown that extreme distance runners and those on severely low calorie diets have weaker bones, likely due to prolonged damage and lack of calories needed for proper bone repair.

Therefore, whether you run on a treadmill or outdoors, it’s essential to consume enough calories and allow yourself enough rest between runs for healthy recovery.

#### Recommendation

Running is best when you enjoy it and can do it long term.

Whether you prefer treadmill or outdoor running, you’ll experience many benefits, such as a lower risk of chronic disease and improved mental health.

Choosing which type of running best suits you depends on your budget, environment, and overall preferences. If you’re unsure, give both outdoor and treadmill running a try, or alternate between the two.

Either way, running is extremely beneficial for your health and well-being.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

Running on a treadmill and running outside each have their advantages and disadvantages.

Whether you choose to run outside or on a treadmill, it’ll benefit you both physically and mentally.

The best running for you is the type you enjoy and will stick to long term.

#### Healthline

# Why being flexible is great for your health

**STRETCHING** your body to become more supple and flexible offers many physical benefits.

Such training allows for easier and deeper movements while building strength and stability. Stretching your muscles and joints also leads to greater range of motion, improved balance, and increased flexibility.

#### 1. FEWER INJURIES

Once you develop strength and flexibility in your body you’ll be able to withstand more physical stress. Plus, you’ll rid your body of any muscle imbalances, which will reduce your chance of getting injured during physical activity. Correcting muscle imbalances requires a combination of strengthening the underactive muscles and stretching the overactive (tight) ones.

#### 2. LESS PAIN

Your body is likely to feel better overall once you work on lengthening and opening your muscles. When your muscles are looser and less tense, you’ll experience fewer aches and pains. Plus, you may be less likely to experience muscle cramps.

#### 3. IMPROVED POSTURE AND BALANCE

When you focus on increasing muscular flexibility your posture is likely to improve. Working out your body allows you to have proper alignment and correct any imbalances. Plus, with an increased range of motion you may find it easier to sit or stand in certain ways. Yoga has been shown to improve balance.

#### 4. A POSITIVE STATE OF MIND

Regularly engaging in poses that stretch and open up your body can bring about feelings of relaxation. The physical benefits can extend to a relaxed state of mind. You may find it easier to unwind once your body feels better.

#### 5. GREATER STRENGTH

It’s important to increase strength as you become more flexible. This ensures your muscles will have the right amount of tension so that they’re strong enough to support you and your movements, allowing you to become more physically fit.

#### 6. IMPROVED PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

Once you increase your flexibility to allow greater movement in your body you’ll be able to perform better physically. This is in part because your muscles are working more effectively.

#### HOW TO BECOME MORE FLEXIBLE

Practice these poses as often as possible to increase flexibility. They can be done as part of a workout routine or on their own at any time throughout the day. Make sure your body is properly warmed up before doing any of these exercises. Do these exercises at least 4 times per week for 10–20 minutes at a time.



#### Downward-Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

Muscles worked:

- hamstrings
- gluteus maximus
- deltoids
- triceps
- quadriceps

##### TO DO THIS:

- Come onto all fours with your hands under your wrists and your knees under your hips.
- Press into your hands as you tuck your toes under and lift your knees, keeping your heels lifted.
- Extend through your spine and lift your sitting bones up toward the ceiling.
- Bend your knees slightly and press into all of the parts of your hands.
- Bring your head in line with your upper arms or relax your neck and tuck your chin into your chest.
- Focus on stretching and strengthening your body.
- Hold this pose for up to a minute at a time.
- Do the pose 3–5 times after a short rest or in between other poses.

#### Triangle Pose (Trikonasana)

Muscles worked:

- latissimus dorsi
- internal oblique
- gluteus maximus and medius
- hamstrings
- quadriceps

##### TO DO THIS:

- Bring your feet apart so they’re wider than your hips with your right toes turned to the right and your left toes slightly turned to the right.
- Lift your arms so they’re parallel to the floor with your palms facing down.
- Hinge at the right hip to extend forward, reaching out through your right fingertips.
- Then, lower your right hand to your

leg, a block, or the floor.

- Extend your left arm up toward the ceiling with your palm facing away from your body.
- Turn your gaze to look in any direction.
- Hold this pose for 30 seconds.
- Do the opposite side.

#### Two-knee spinal twist

Muscles worked:

- erector spinal
- rectus abdominis
- trapezius
- pectoralis major

##### TO DO LIST

- Lie on your back and bring your knees to your chest.
- Extend your arms to the side with your palms facing down.
- Slowly drop your legs down to the left side, keeping your knees together.
- You can use a cushion under your knees or in between your knees.
- Your gaze may be in any direction.
- Breathe deeply and focus on letting go of tension.
- Hold this pose for 3–5 minutes.
- Do the opposite side.

#### Extended Puppy Pose

Muscles worked:

- deltoids
- trapezius
- erector spinae
- triceps

##### TO DO THIS:

- Come onto all fours in a tabletop position.
- Bring your hands forward slightly and come onto your toes with your heels lifted.
- Sink your buttocks halfway down toward your heels.
- Keep your arms active and your elbows lifted.
- Place your forehead on the floor or a blanket.
- Hold this pose for 3–5 minutes.

#### Healthline



# AROUND THE WORLD IN PICTURES



▲ People pass by a light decoration during Valentine’s Day in Tirana, Albania.



▲ A vendor reacts as she poses for a photo at Adderley Street Flower Market on Valentine’s Day, in Cape Town, South Africa.



▲ Fans leave the area after shots were fired after the celebration of the Kansas City Chiefs winning Super Bowl LVIII in Kansas City, Missouri.



▲ Filipino students dance to take part in the One Billion Rising global campaign to end violence against women and advance gender equality, at St Scholastica’s College in Manila, Philippines.



▲ A Ukrainian serviceman carries a portrait of Diana Savita Wagner, a German combat medic, who joined Ukrainian Armed Forces as a volunteer and was killed by Russian troops in the country’s East, during her funeral ceremony in Kyiv, Ukraine.



▲ Denmark’s Annika Bornebusch trains before the women’s 20m semi final at the World Aquatics Championships in Doha, Qatar.



# Chelsea mini-revival faces Man City reality check

CHELSEA's revival faces the ultimate test on Saturday when Mauricio Pochettino's team attempt to put the brakes on Manchester City's express train.

Two late goals earned the London side a 3-1 victory at Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Monday to back up a superb 3-1 win over Aston Villa in an FA Cup fourth-round replay. Chelsea remained in 10th place, 20 points behind leaders Liverpool and 18 adrift of champions City, but those two results have changed the mood at Stamford Bridge.

Pochettino was coming under increasing fire as he struggled to blend a youthful but hugely expensive squad.

A 4-1 drubbing at Liverpool at the end of January was stark evidence of how far Chelsea are from challenging at the top of the table, but they may go to City with added belief.

City boss Pep Guardiola will certainly be wary of a side coached by Pochettino – a manager he often found troublesome when Pochettino was in charge of Tottenham Hotspur.

“Now it is Chelsea. They played really well against Aston Villa and yesterday, in the hotel, we watched the game against Crystal Palace,” Guardiola said after his team's Champions League last-16 win over FC Copenhagen on Tuesday.

“They played with huge personality. Now

we recover and focus on Chelsea.”

City did not emerge unscathed from their trip to Denmark with Jack Grealish and Bernardo Silva suffering injuries that are likely to rule them out against Chelsea while defender Josko Gvardiol is also out with an ankle ligament injury.

Injuries rarely throw City off track as they proved when coping with the absence of Erling Haaland and Kevin de Bruyne and with that duo back in harness few will be expecting a Chelsea surprise at The Etihad Stadium on Saturday evening.

That said, City could find themselves under more pressure as Liverpool kick off the weekend action at Brentford on Saturday knowing a win will put them five points clear of the champions.

Third-placed Arsenal can also climb above City on Saturday if they win at Burnley.

Arsenal showed in an away 6-0 hammering of West Ham United last weekend that they are very much in the title race and they should notch a fifth successive league wins against a Burnley side fighting to escape the relegation zone.

Fourth-placed Tottenham Hotspur and



▲ Chelsea's revival faces the ultimate test on Saturday when Mauricio Pochettino's team attempt to put the brakes on Manchester City's express train.

Aston Villa are only seven and eight points behind Liverpool and technically still outside contenders for the title.

Realistically, however, they appear set for a scrap for fourth place that could also involve Manchester United.

Tottenham host Wolverhampton Wanderers on Saturday while Villa are at Fulham while Manchester United, six points behind

fourth-placed Tottenham, travel to Luton Town on Sunday.

Bottom club Sheffield United will seek to build on their win over Luton as they host Brighton & Hove Albion on Sunday while third-bottom Everton face a crucial clash against fellow strugglers Crystal Palace on Monday.

(Reuters)

## Nadal aims to play at French Open, Olympics

RAFA Nadal hopes to compete at this year's French Open and the Olympics, the former world number one said on Wednesday.

The 37-year-old Spaniard has won 22 Grand Slam singles titles, including a record 14 French Open crowns.

“I don't know which events I have left to play but between you and me, it's not going to be many,” Nadal said in an interview with Spanish broadcaster La Sexta.

“(Roland Garros) will be one of my goals”, he added when asked whether he would play in his favourite Grand Slam tournament in May.

“I'd like to play at the Olympics as well. It's not something I can confirm right now, but I hope I will... I think I will.”

Nadal, sidelined by injury for most of 2023, pulled out of next week's Qatar Open on Wednesday, postponing his return to competitive tennis as he has not recovered from a torn muscle he suffered in Brisbane last month.

Nadal also spoke about his ties with Saudi Arabia after being appointed ambassador of the country's Tennis Federation last month.

“They pay me, yes, do I need the money? Not at all, it will not change my life. I have not signed a super contract, like other fellow athletes who are there and I totally respect them,” he said.

Nadal reached an agreement with the Middle East country for a long-term commitment to help grow the sport and inspire a new generation of tennis players and he plans to create a Rafa Nadal Academy in the country.

“My commitment is to promote tennis and try to achieve my goals. I don't think Arabia needs me to wash its image. It is not my objective. People tend to give their opinions without asking questions,” Nadal said.

“It goes without saying that when I accepted, I knew what would happen. I think my team made a mistake in communication and that I should have come out to explain it,” he added.

Saudi Arabia has invested billions in global sport, including football, cycling, motor racing and golf, drawing heavy criticism from people who call it an attempt to distract attention from the country's human rights violations. (Reuters)



▲ Rafa Nadal hopes to compete at this year's French Open and the Olympics, the former world number one said on Wednesday.

## PGA Tour negotiations with Saudi Arabia's PIF ongoing

LOS ANGELES - Tiger Woods said the PGA Tour's negotiations with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund are ongoing but that the Tour is “in a great position” after securing a \$3 billion investment last month from a consortium of U.S. sports team owners. The deal with Strategic Sports Group (SSG) allows for co-investment with the Public Investment Fund (PIF), which controls LIV Golf, but those talks continue to drag on. “SSG, we have solidified our agreement with them and PIF is still ongoing and we're still negotiating,” Woods told reporters the day before he makes his first start of the PGA Tour season at the Genesis Invitational at Riviera Country Club.

“Ultimately, we would like to have PIF be a part of our tour and a part of our product. Financially, we don't now.

“We're in a great position and hopefully we can make our product better in the short term and long term.” Oil-rich Saudi Arabia, which U.S. lawmakers have criticized for human rights violations, divided the world of golf when it launched LIV Golf in 2022.

Players like American major winners Phil Mickelson and Dustin Johnson jumped ship for a massive payday while others including Woods and Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy remained loyal to the PGA Tour.

Last June, the PGA Tour, PIF and Europe-based DP World Tour surprisingly announced a framework agreement to house their commercial operations in a for-profit entity called PGA Tour Enterprises and tensions between the players began to cool. As talks with the PIF failed to reach a quick conclusion, however, outside investor interest in the PGA Tour heated up.

SSG, a consortium led by Fenway Sports Group, will invest an initial \$1.5 billion and work to maximize revenue generation for the benefit of players and on finding opportunities to enhance golf around the world.

Woods, a 15-times major winner, said the tour was looking at different models to re-



▲ Tiger Woods said the PGA Tour's negotiations with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund are ongoing but that the Tour is “in a great position” after securing a \$3 billion investment last month from a consortium of U.S. sports team owners.

unify the sport by welcoming back players who lost their tour cards when they joined LIV Golf. “Trust me, there's daily, weekly emails and talks about this and what this looks like for our tour going forward,” he said.

Woods will play alongside Justin Thomas and Gary Woodland in the first two rounds of the Genesis Invitational, his first PGA Tour since last April's Masters.

(Reuters)



# Kylian Mbappe set to leave PSG this summer

KYLIAN Mbappe is nearing the end of his time at Paris Saint-Germain, and he's told his club as much according to David Ornstein.

Mbappe's contract expires on June 30 and he's now signaled that he's not open to a new deal to stay with PSG in Ligue 1, where he's played the entirety of his career.

The 25-year-old superstar has long been linked with a move to Real Madrid, but The Athletic says that is no longer a certainty due to the offer coming from the Spanish club.

Still, there are very few clubs who can afford Mbappe and it's difficult to imagine who is going to be able to sign him if Real isn't giving him his expected terms.

Mbappe has already won the World Cup and helped his clubs to six Ligue 1 crowns, five with PSG and one with Monaco. He's a four-time Ligue 1 Player of the Year, a three-time FIFPRO World 11 player, and four-time UEFA Champions League Team of the Season member.

He captains France and has 46 goals and 30 assists in 75 caps, while among generational peers only Erling Haaland can compete with his club goal scoring marks at such a

young stage in a career.

A move to France seems inescapable unless... unless there's movement with another big piece at another club — or if you're of the belief a player of Mbappe's ilk would take the legacy-altering decision to join a Saudi or MLS club for all the riches possible.

So if not Real — and it really does seem like it'll be Real — who could meet his terms? Premier League clubs could come calling but even that would have to come with big changes. Man City might afford Mbappe, but certainly not while also paying Erling Haaland, for example. Imagining Mbappe at Arsenal is mouth-watering, but that club's already going to have to pay increasingly big deals to Bukayo Saka, Martin Odegaard, and Declan Rice as their resumes grow even stronger.

Barcelona's in dire straits, Chelsea has to sell to buy, Liverpool has managerial uncertainty, Bayern Munich just spent big on Harry Kane, and Manchester United may not be able to promise the Champions League.

It really does feel like Real or bust. (MSN)



▲ PSG striker Kylian Mbappe.

## Bellingham 'lined up for huge Champions League transfer

LAZIO are reportedly targeting a double raid on Sunderland for Jobe Bellingham and Jack Clarke.

The Italian giants, managed by ex-Chelsea boss Maurizio Sarri, are on the hunt for some bargains this summer.

And Gazzetta claims they have identified two of the Black Cats' top stars as major transfer targets.

Bellingham, 18, is the younger brother of Real Madrid and England star Jude.

The midfielder only joined Sunderland from Birmingham

last summer.

But he has quickly become a key player and already has five goals in 33 matches this season.

As for Clarke, he was reportedly the subject of a failed £13.5million bid from Lazio in January.

The flying winger, 23, is in his third season at Sunderland after moving from Tottenham.

And he has hit an incredible 14 goals in 34 outings from wide positions.

Sunderland are desperate to keep both players, especially if they win promotion to the Premier League. (The Sun)



▲ Sunderland midfielder Jobe Bellingham.

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▲ Travis Kelce is being slammed as insensitive after he was spotted posing for a selfie with two police officers hours after the deadly Kansas City Chiefs victory parade.

## Kelce slammed for taking selfies holding beer hours after shooting

CHIEFS tight end Travis Kelce has been slammed as insensitive for posing for selfies with police officers while holding a beer outside a bar hours after the team's deadly Super Bowl victory parade.

Kelce was pictured dressed in a red tracksuit and white baseball hat, throwing up the peace sign as he posed for a selfie with a pair of cops outside a restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri, on Wednesday evening.

After posing for the picture, the three-time Super Bowl champ heads into Granfalloon Restaurant And Bar, where he joined other teammates, according to TMZ.

Superstar quarterback Patrick Mahomes also attended the private event at the restaurant hours after the shooting, the outlet reported.

Mahomes was the one who rented the place for the team, and police officers were on site for crowd control, according to TMZ.

Many called out Kelce on social media for his supposedly ill-timed act.

"Kelce was so distraught that he went out for beers after the shooting," one critic wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Another wrote, "Travis Kelce seen in a bar having a beer after parade shooting adds to his continued success as being an incredible a\*\*hole."

"Did Travis get to the hospital?" a third questioned, adding, "No he went to a bar with a beer in hand." (The Sun)



# ‘Pirates will always have a special place in my heart’

THEMBINKOSI Lorch has thanked Orlando Pirates chairman Dr Irvin Khoza following his high-profile switch to Mamelodi Sundowns three weeks ago.

As fate would have it, the former PSL Footballer of the Season is in line to make his debut against his former club in a DSTv Premiership clash at Loftus Versfeld on Saturday evening. Flanked by his coach Rulani Mokwena, a visibly emotional Lorch made a rare appearance at the club’s media day on Thursday to publicly utter his first words as a Brazilian.

“First of all, I’d like to thank my former team Orlando Pirates, especially Dr Irvin Khoza for allowing me to play for a team like Pirates,” the soft-spoken midfielder said.

“I remember, I signed for Pirates when I was 22 and left as a 30-year-old. I’m grateful for the opportunity he gave me and Pirates will always have a special place in my heart. I also want to thank the president of Sundowns for bringing me to this beautiful club and I’m looking forward to giving my best.”

In his short address, Lorch also shared what the first few weeks have been like at the Chloorkop-based side.

“The team has welcomed me well. The spirit in the team is good and everyone wants to play against Pirates because it’s a big team and it is a big game,” he added when asked



▲ Thembinkosi Lorch has thanked Orlando Pirates chairman Dr Irvin Khoza following his high-profile switch to Mamelodi Sundowns three weeks ago.

how he’s settling in at his new club.

“The coach will decide who plays, it’s up to him. It’s difficult to play my first game, especially against my former team but we need to move on and I’m hoping I will start at the weekend and do my best.”

### Bafana walking wounded

Meanwhile, Mokwena painted a bleak picture of the readiness of his returning Bafana Bafana players who only arrived back in South Africa on Wednesday from the Africa Cup of Nations in Côte d’Ivoire.

“With Bafana players, we’ve got a few concerns, we’ve got a couple of players that returned with injuries and that might delay their return,” he said.

“We have some concerns with (Mothobi) Mvala (Thapelo) Maseko, Mshishi (Themba Zwane) Teboho (Mokoena) and Khuliso Mudau has an ankle injury. We’re also concerned about Ronza (Ronwen Williams) with his shoulder but let’s see.”

(The Citizen)

## Bafana move back into top ten in Africa

BAFANA Bafana is ranked among the top ten sides on the continent, after winning the bronze medal at the Africa Cup of Nations finals in the Ivory Coast.

World footballing body Fifa on Thursday released their latest rankings, and South Africa has moved up eight places to 58th in the global rankings. In the rankings for African teams, they are now in 10th.

This is Bafana’s best global ranking since 2015, when they recorded a highest ranking of 52nd in the world.

Hugo Broos’ side got themselves some good ranking points at the AFCON, beating Africa’s number one ranked team Morocco in the last 16, and holding Tunisia, Nigeria, Cape Verde and DR Congo.

Nigeria did knock Bafana out in the AFCON semifinals via a penalty shootout, but Fifa still records the match as a draw.

Soaring Elephants and Eagles

The Ivory Coast’s victory over Nigeria in the AFCON final has helped catapult them ten places up the world rankings into 39th, while Nigeria has jumped 14 places to 28th on the globe despite losing the final 2-1 to the Elephants.

If Bafana can continue to push its way up the rankings it will increase its chances of getting better seeding. (Sunday World)



▲ Bafana Bafana is ranked among the top ten sides on the continent, after winning the bronze medal at the Africa Cup of Nations finals in the Ivory Coast.



▲ Bafana Bafana captain Ronwen Williams still can’t quite believe what his side achieved at the Africa Cup of Nations finals.

## AFCON bronze still hasn’t ‘sunk in’ – Ronwen Williams

BAFANA Bafana captain Ronwen Williams still can’t quite believe what his side achieved at the Africa Cup of Nations finals.

“It has not quite sunk in yet,” said Williams, upon the side’s arrival at OR Tambo International Airport on Thursday.

Bafana won the bronze medal at the AFCON, and Williams won Goalkeeper of the Tournament. The Mamelodi Sundowns shot-stopper kept five clean sheets in seven matches and to top that off, he saved six penalties across two penalty shootouts in the knockout stages.

In the quarterfinals against Cape Verde, Williams became the first goalkeeper at a Fifa-recognised tournament to save four of the first five penalties in a shootout.

“It still feels unreal what

we have achieved over the last few weeks,” added Williams.

“We have seen all the messages (from back home), and all the records broken, but in the moment, you are just thinking about the next game. I am just proud of the boys for the brotherhood they have shown. “From day one the spirit was good and I think that is one of the reasons we were successful. It has been amazing to see and made things so easy for me as captain, just seeing the spirit through good and bad. “When we lost to Mali (in Bafana’s opening AFCON match), no one’s head dropped. We were sad but the guys said ‘We can still go out there and get to the final’. It just shows the resilience and the intelligence to keep going and keep fighting.”

(The Citizen)

## Arrows keen to sign Downs keeper on permanent deal

Golden Arrows are trying to secure a permanent move for goalkeeper Ismail Watenga, who is on loan at the club from fellow DSTv Premiership side Mamelodi Sundowns, a source at the KwaZulu-Natal outfit has revealed. Watenga has been on the books of Sundowns since 2020, but, the Uganda Cranes goalkeeper has spent most of his time away from the club – having had loan spells at Chippa United and Marumo Gallants, before being shipped to Arrows at the beginning of the current season. According to a source, Arrows is preparing to make an offer

to Sundowns for Watenga.

“Watenga is currently the number one keeper at the club and he has done well. Having someone with international experience like him in the team is a big boost because it makes other goalkeepers work hard and fight for the number one spot. I think that is why the club wants to sign him. He has that competitive spirit that makes you also want to work extra hard. That’s what he has brought to the team,” said the source.

“They will prepare to make a deal to Sundowns soon, plus it’s not like they (Downs) are short of quality keepers in their squad.”

(The Citizen)



# Figareido back in action in SA

Stories By Ntokozo Magongo  
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International player Justice Figareido will be back in action after a month due to the Africa Cup of National (AFCON).

The DStv Premiership was on a short break as the South African national team, Bafana Bafana were competing in the tournament that ended last Sunday.

### Club

His club, Richard's Bay will face Sekhukhune on Saturday at 3:30 pm.

Richard's Bay are second from the bottom of the table with 13 points and is just ahead of bottom loggers, Cape Town Spurs who

have amassed only four points after the same number of matches.

Figareido highlighted on his social media pages that it was back to work as he posted his picture hard at training.

### International

The former Denver Sundowns and Mbombela United are among the four international players who are playing outside the country. The others are Lindo Mkhonta who plays for Zesco United, and Banele 'Stiga' Ndzabandzaba who signed for Police XI in Botswana with Mcolisi Mkhonto for Botswana's Jwaneng Galaxy.

► Eswatini international Justice Figareido will be back in action for Richard's Bay in the DStv Premiership.



▲ Ayanda Gadlela.



▲ Siyabonga Zwane.

## Contract extensions for Siyabonga, Ayanda at 'Birds'

THEIR hard work had not gone unnoticed by Mbabane Swallows as they have had their contracts extended.

That is the duo of Siyabonga Zwane and Ayanda Gadlela who extended their contracts by three years.

The two players have been behind Swallows's success in the current season having reached the semi-finals of the Ingwenyama Cup and are third on the MTN Premier League log.

"Mbabane Swallows is proud to announce successful contract negotiations with Ayanda Gadlela and Siyabonga Zwane. We are excited to have officially secured the two players' commitment to the club for the foreseeable future," read a statement from the club.

The statement added that in

celebrating the extension of the two players' contracts, the club showed commitment to its goal of facilitating transition and the revitalization of the club from its previous excellent squad by injecting youthful, exciting and committed players into the squad, to ensure progress towards the goal of excellence we aim to achieve.

### Youthful

"Ayanda and Siyabonga are undoubtedly two of the best in the league's current crop of youthful players and are perfect examples of the club's future-oriented vision, having remained with the club and gained experience with it through turbulent times.

The club is forever grateful to all its supporters for their commitment to

staying with the club, even through these difficult times. We are very grateful to all vital sponsors and stakeholders keeping the club afloat through financial assistance – we greatly appreciate your assistance Arch Bishop B. Lukhele," read the statement in part.

Swallows continued to ask for support as they move forward and are excited to see the vision they have coming together.

"Soon it will bear positive fruits and Mbabane Swallows will once again return to the top of local soccer," ended the statement.

Swallows will play Nsingizini Hotspurs in their next MTN Premier League match. The game is billed for King Sobhuza II Memorial Stadium on Sunday, kick-off is at 2:30 pm.

## Symposium for athletics technical officials

THE Athletics Eswatini (AE) will be empowering their technical officials during the Symposium billed for the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) Technical Centre at Lobamba.

AE Communications Officer Victor 'Mavikane' Dlamini said they will also be welcoming those who are aspiring to be technical officials in athletics.

The symposium will start at 8 am and end at 4:40 pm. Officiating during the symposium is Zimbabwe's Enios Nhoru who is highly experienced.

"Thanks to the Eswatini Olym-

pic and Commonwealth Games Association and the Eswatini Sport and Recreation Council for their financial support in organising the symposium. We are confident that this will improve the standard of officiating during competitions," he said.

Dlamini said after the symposium, the technical officials will also be able to officiate in international competitions. He said this is one step forward.

The practical part of the symposium will be held at the newly refurbished Somhlolo National Stadium.



▲ AE Communicatios Officer Victor 'Mavikane' Dlamini.



# Sihlangu unmoved in FIFA World Rankings

Stories by Ntokozo Magongo  
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THE national team, Sihlangu remains unmoved in the latest FIFA World Rankings after being out of action for three months. The Dominic Kunene-led side remains at 149 of the 209 countries ranked by the Football International Federation Association (FIFA) and the Confederation of Africa (CAF). The latest rankings were released on Thursday. The latest rankings were released after the completion of the African Cup of National (AFCON) which Sihlangu failed to qualify for and the AFC Asian Cup. Both tournaments ended last Sunday.

The next FIFA/Coca-Cola Men's World Ranking edition will be published on 4 April. Sihlangu is behind Lesotho, who are ranked 148. The national team will be back in action next month in the 2025 AFCON qualifiers and in June in the 2026 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers where they face five teams Libya, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Angola and Mauritius. In June, Sihlangu will face Angola in the return of the World Cup 2026 qualifiers. They will then play Mauritius a week later. Some of the countries that improved their rankings were those involved in the ended AFCON that was won by the hosts Ivory Coast who beat Nigeria 2-1 in the finals. According to fifa.com, CAF and AFC nations are the main movers and shakers. Angola and Qatar make the biggest strides. Amongst the African sides, Côte d'Ivoire



▲ The national team, Sihlangu remains unmoved in the latest FIFA World Rankings after being out of action for three months.

(39th, up 10) reap the rewards of their continental triumph on home soil, secured following an eventful tournament campaign. Beaten finalists Nigeria (28th, up 14) make significant strides but are no match for the

Angola side they ousted in the last eight (93rd, up 24), who are the biggest climbers in the latest instalment of the global ranking. Other impressive performers are Equatorial Guinea (79th, up 9), South Africa (58th, up

8), Cape Verde (65th, up 8), Namibia (107th, up 8) and Mali (47th, up 4). The next edition of the World Ranking will be published on April 4 and Sihlangu would not have played any match.



▲ The football fraternity is mourning the passing away of former Mbabane Highlanders Management Committee (MC) member Sifiso Mnisi.

## Former 'Bull', Matsapha MC member dies

THE football fraternity is mourning the passing away of former Mbabane Highlanders Management Committee (MC) member Sifiso Mnisi. He passed away on Wednesday evening after an accident that occurred along the Mafutseni-Luve road. Mnisi also served in the now defunct Matsapha United where he was Logistic Manager. A source close to the matter confirmed that Mnisi died on the spot during the acci-

dent. Mnisi made headlines when he joined the team alongside Celucolo 'Dino' Dlamini from Mbabane Highlanders. A football official who requested to comment on the condition of anonymity said this was a sad loss for football as Mnisi was still open to serving in any football club in the country. He said he was behind the success of Matsapha United where he made his name in the football circles. Currently, Mnisi is not serving in any elite club.

## Personal Best for Siwakhile in World Aquatics Championships

THE country's swimmers currently representing the country in the ongoing World Aquatics Championships are thriving. Siwakhile Dlamini also clocked a Personal Best (PB) on Thursday when she clocked 1:06:32 minutes in the women's 100m freestyle. Chad Ning also achieved the same when he competed in the 100m breaststroke on Sunday.

### Accompanied

The World Aquatics Champions are held in Doha, Qatar where the swimmers are accompanied by Coach Mark Hoare and Nozipho Mahlalela who is the Manager. It is not only the swimming team that is outside the country but Luca Fraser is also set to compete on Friday in the Swimming Open Championships that are taking place in Dubai where he is accompanied by Coach and Eswatini Swimming Interim President Welcome Nhlabatsi.



SIWAKHILE  
DLAMINI





**Mbappe tells PSG Directors he plans to leave**

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**Figareido back in action in DStv Premiership**

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**Daily News**  
**Sport**



**Sihlangu **unmoved** in World Rankings**

... National team, Sihlangu Semnikati remains stuck on position 149 out of 209 countries after being out of action for close to three months now. *Page 23*