



KING JETS OFF TO CAPE TOWN FOR AU WATER INVESTMENT SUMMIT



▲His Majesty King Mswati III leaves for Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, to participate in the African Union's Water Investment Summit 2025, taking place from August 13 to 15, 2025. The King is accompanied by Inkhosikati Make LaMashwama.

EEC faces financial strain amid rising procurement costs

By Siphesihle Dlamini

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THE Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) is navigating a complex financial landscape as it strives to balance customer service with the rising costs of electricity procurement. With a customer base of nearly 299,000, including 277,312 domestic users and 20,582 small commercial enterprises, the EEC is poised to play a pivotal role in the nation's economic stability.

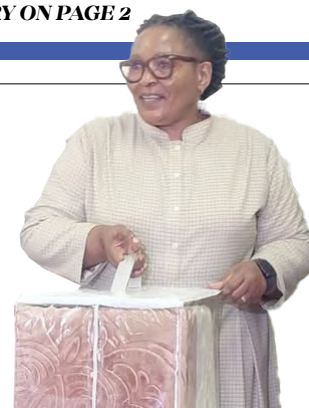
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Minister launches future pioneers STEM Mentorship programme to empower youth

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Kwakitsi Foundation delivers blankets to Mankayane Old Age Home

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Kids' Finds



A collage of children's products. On the left, a stack of books including 'Learn to Read' and 'Farm'. In the center, a pink cat-shaped bag and a pink cat-shaped backpack. To the right, a white easel, a 'NOW OPEN' sign, and a colorful pinwheel.

Party & home essentials



A collage of party and home essentials. On the left, a stack of colorful towels. In the center, a bath set with a brush, soap, and a towel. To the right, a duster, a pair of slippers, and several gift bags.

Find us at Corporate Place Ground floor (Opposite Sweet Corner)

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▲ Managing Director of the Eswatini Electricity Company, Ernest Mkhonta.

EEC faces financial strain amid rising procurement costs

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) is navigating a complex financial landscape as it strives to balance customer service with the rising costs of electricity procurement.

With a customer base of nearly 299,000, including 277,312 domestic users and 20,582 small commercial enterprises, the EEC is poised to play a pivotal role in the nation’s economic stability.

However, the financial projections for the upcoming fiscal year reveal significant challenges that could impact both operations and customer tariffs.

Ernest Mkhonta, Managing Director of EEC, stated, “As we look ahead to the 2024/25 financial year, we anticipate energy sales reaching 1,181 GWh, which is crucial for sustaining our operations and meeting the growing electricity demand.”

The current national population is estimated at 1.231 million, and with electricity access having increased to 82 per cent by

March 2024, the EEC is focused on expanding this access to 88 per cent by March 2025. Despite these optimistic projections, the financial outlook for the EEC raises concerns.

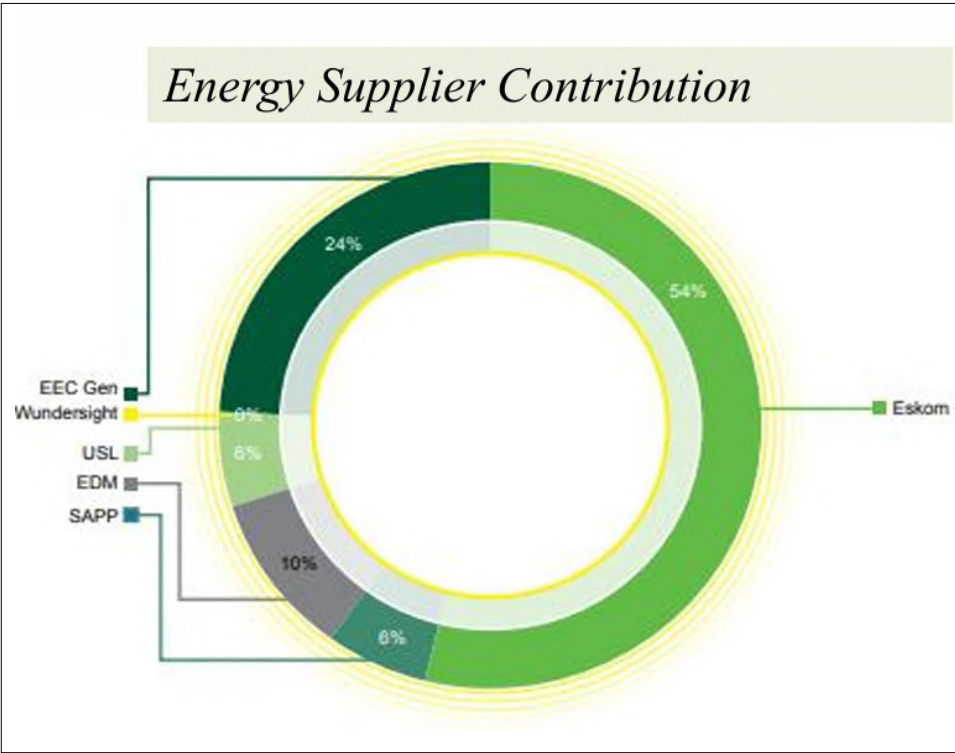
The company expects the National Transmission System Charge Account (NTSCA) bill to surpass E200 million monthly, while total power procurement costs are projected to be around E235 million.

Mkhonta elaborated on this, saying, “Our monthly sales revenue averages E252 million, but with procurement costs soaring, we are facing a cash position that will be highly overdrawn in the coming months.”

The financial strain is evident in the projections that indicate a significant decline in the company’s bank balance, which is expected to drop from E48 million in June 2025 to a staggering deficit of over E292 million by September 2025.

This alarming forecast underscores the need for immediate strategic adjustments.

In its unaudited figures for 2024/25, EEC reported energy sales of 1,181 GWh and a sales revenue generation of E2.95billion. However, the reliance on imported power, which constitutes 1,084 GWh of total energy



supply, raises questions about sustainability and cost-effectiveness. Mkhonta emphasised, “While local power generation stands at 280 GWh, our dependence on imports makes us vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy prices.”

To address these financial challenges, the EEC has proposed tariff increases exceeding 25% per year.

However, the government has only approved increases of 8 per cent for FY2025/26 and 7 per cent for FY2026/27, which Mkhonta acknowledged as insufficient.

“The approved tariff increases do not align with our operational costs and the necessary investments in infrastructure,” he noted. This discrepancy could lead to further financial strain on the company and potentially

affect service delivery to customers.

The company’s commitment to large commercial clients remains strong, as they are viewed as the backbone of Eswatini’s economy. Mkhonta stated, “We recognise the importance of our large customers and are dedicated to providing them with reliable electricity, which is essential for their operations and the overall economic growth of the country.”

As the EEC prepares for the upcoming financial year, the focus on maintaining and expanding electricity access while managing costs will be critical. With nearly 803 employees and an additional 1,050 contractors, the company is not only a significant employer but also a vital component of the nation’s infrastructure.



▲ A section of the audience.

Fuel prices expected to drop in September

By Thokozani Mazibuko

MOTORISTS in South Africa could see some relief at the pumps next month, with early forecasts pointing to a reduction in petrol prices for September 2025.

According to the Central Energy Fund (CEF), indicators suggest that petrol prices may drop by between five and 10 cents per litre. The announcement, published on the CEF’s website, comes as part of ongoing updates based on global oil price movements and the rand-to-dollar exchange rate.

If confirmed, the decrease would mark the continuation of a downward trend in fuel prices, a welcome development for consumers grappling with persistent high living costs.

The reduction could ease financial pressure on households, particularly those reliant on private transport and businesses with fuel-dependent operations.

Economic analysts note that while the projected drop is relatively modest, even small reductions can have a cumulative impact, especially when combined with previous price cuts. They also caution that market



volatility, geopolitical factors, and fluctuations in international oil prices could still affect the final adjustment before it is officially announced by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE).

The official September fuel price changes are expected to be confirmed at the end of August, with the new prices taking effect on the first Wednesday of the month.

Alleged Goje township murder accused in fresh bail fight

By Thokozani Mazibuko

DEPUTY Sheriff Vusi Mncina, accused of killing four women in Ezulwini in 2023, is back in court seeking bail, arguing that delays in his trial amount to ‘new facts’ that should secure his release.

Mncina is facing multiple counts of murder after the shooting incident at Goje Township in 2023, where his girlfriend and three other women were killed during the early hours of the morning.

The women were reportedly attending a gathering when the accused allegedly opened fire.

Following the incident, Mncina handed himself over to the police. His arrest and the nature of the charges drew widespread public attention due to both his position as a Deputy Sheriff and the number of victims involved.

In his latest bail application, Mncina’s defence team told the court that the prolonged delay in bringing the matter to trial was infringing on his constitutional right to a speedy trial.

They submitted that the stalled proceedings constituted new facts, and that the accused should be granted bail under these changed circumstances.



▲ Deputy Sheriff Vusi Mncina, accused of killing four women in Ezulwini in 2023.

The Crown opposed the application, arguing that no substantive new evidence had been presented to alter the court’s previous bail ruling.

Prosecutors maintained that the seriousness of the offences, the potential flight risk, and the need to ensure justice for the victims justified continued detention.

The prosecution also pointed out that while delays had occurred, they were not unusual in complex murder cases involving multiple victims and witnesses.

The court is expected to hand down its ruling on the application at a later date.

The killings occurred at Goje Township, Ezulwini, in 2023. It is alleged that Mncina confronted his girlfriend and the other women over accusations of infidelity before fatally shooting them.

Police said at the time that the victims were pronounced dead at the scene. Superintendent Phindile Vilakati of the Royal Eswatini Police Service had not responded to a questionnaire on the case at the time of publication.

Minister launches future pioneers STEM Mentorship programme to empower youth

By Delisa Magagula

THE Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Savannah Maziya, has officially launched the Future Pioneers STEM Mentorship Programme aimed at equipping Eswatini’s youth with skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), innovation, and leadership.

Speaking during an event earlier this month, Minister Maziya emphasized the programme’s role in preparing young people to take active roles in shaping the nation’s digital future.

“This initiative is designed to nurture talent and provide mentorship opportunities that will allow our youth to lead innovation locally and beyond,” she said.

The programme will offer participants guidance from industry professionals, training workshops, and practical opportunities to develop their

skills. Registration is currently open to young Eswatini nationals eager to explore careers in STEM fields.

Minister Maziya noted that empowering young people with these skills is critical as Eswatini moves toward a knowledge-based economy.

“Investing in our youth through programs like Future Pioneers will position Eswatini competitively in the global digital landscape,” she added.

The initiative also aims to bridge the gap between education and employment by linking mentees with potential employers in technology and innovation sectors.

Interested youths are encouraged to register via the online application form provided by the Ministry, with slots available for various mentorship tracks.

“This program is a gateway for the youth to not only dream but to actively participate in building a modern, innovative Eswatini,” Minister Maziya concluded.



Kwakitsi Foundation delivers blankets to Mankayane Old Age Home

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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A HEARTWARMING ceremony held at the Mankayane Old Age Home and Facility for Persons with Disabilities saw Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla, alongside the Kwakitsi Foundation, officially hand over a generous donation of blankets to the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

This initiative, graciously supported by Lizinyane Princess Temtsimba, is part of a broader effort to uplift vulnerable groups in the community, aligning with the Nkwe Mandate issued by His Majesty King Mswati III.

The event began with a warm welcome from the Mayor of Mankayane Township, who expressed profound appreciation for the Deputy Prime Minister's presence. The mayor described the visit as a significant blessing for the Mankayane community, highlighting the importance of such initiatives in fostering a spirit of care and solidarity among residents.

Nomalungelo Dladla, a representative of the Kwakitsi Foundation, took the opportunity to commend the ongoing work at the facility. She acknowledged the dedication of



▲ Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla having a moment with one of the elderly people.

the staff who tirelessly support the residents and emphasised that assisting the government in uplifting vulnerable populations is a shared national responsibility. Her remarks resonated with the audience, reinforcing the idea that community support is essential for the well-being of all members, especially those in need.

In her keynote address, Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla underscored the critical importance of caring for the elderly. She poignantly stated, "Bantfu labadzala abanakekelwe," which translates to "our elderly must be cared for." Her words highlighted the commitment of the government to ensure that the needs of the elderly are met, and she noted the positive transformation in the quality of life for residents at the

facility. Many essential needs are now being addressed, contributing to a more dignified and comfortable living environment.

The Deputy Prime Minister also took the opportunity to call upon the Ministry of Health to enhance its focus on mental health issues affecting the elderly. She specifically advocated for increased support in diagnosing and managing conditions such as dementia, which is becoming increasingly prevalent among older populations. This call to action reflects a growing recognition of the importance of mental health care as a vital component of overall health and well-being.

Dladla acknowledged that the Mankayane Old Age Home has become a sanctuary for many residents, providing them with a sense

of comfort and belonging. She noted that while some residents have successfully recovered and returned to their families, others have unfortunately passed away due to chronic conditions. Regardless, the facility has served as a haven for those in need, and the Deputy Prime Minister expressed her commitment to ensuring that such facilities continue to thrive.

Looking to the future, the DPM announced plans to open a new home in Mbabane, aimed at increasing the capacity for caring for and protecting vulnerable groups. This initiative reflects a proactive approach to addressing the growing needs of the elderly and disabled populations in the country, ensuring that they receive the care and support they deserve.

Speaking on behalf of the residents, Gogo Thoko Simelane expressed heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty King Mswati III, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Kwakitsi Foundation for the generous donation and ongoing care. She shared her reflections on how the home has become a place of comfort and dignity for the residents, despite being away from their original homes. Gogo Simelane's words resonated deeply with everyone present, highlighting the profound impact that such initiatives have on the lives of individuals who often feel marginalised.

RESC donates spaza containers to empower youth in rural communities

By Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Sugar Corporation (RESC) has taken a significant step towards youth empowerment and community upliftment by donating 10 spaza shop containers to neighbouring communities.

According to a statement shared on the company's official Facebook page, the beneficiaries include Khuphuka, Dvokolwako, Manzana, Nkambeni, and Mnjoli, each receiving two units. The total value of the donation stands at E70,000.

The spaza shops, constructed by a local supplier from KaMjekuza, are intended to provide young entrepreneurs with an opportunity to start and sustain small businesses, thereby creating income streams and pro-

moting economic self-reliance.

RESC emphasised that the initiative not only fosters entrepreneurship but also strengthens the local economy by supporting home-grown suppliers and creating sustainable livelihoods.

"This is part of our commitment to contributing positively to the communities around us. We believe that by equipping young people with the means to start their own businesses, we are building stronger, more resilient communities," the corporation stated.

Community leaders from the beneficiary areas have praised the donation, saying it will help address unemployment among young people and bring essential goods closer to residents.

It should be noted that the RESC's gesture aligns with national development goals focused on youth empowerment, poverty alleviation, and community development.



▲ The spaza shops, constructed by a local supplier from KaMjekuza, are intended to provide young entrepreneurs with an opportunity to start and sustain small businesses.

Woman stabs her allegedly cheating husband

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

A WOMAN has been arrested for stabbing her husband with a sharp object. Ntombifuthi Shabangu appeared on Monday before Principal Magistrate Florence Msibi at the Manzini Magistrates Court.

She was charged with contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act after she allegedly stabbed her husband, Senzo Shabangu.

She was not made to plead during her court appearance, but rather, she was remanded in custody until August 19, 2025.

She applied for bail and was granted a fine fixed at E2 000.

Meanwhile, according to statements recorded and submitted before the court, Ntombifuthi alleged that she committed the offence in self-defence following her husband's alleged extramarital affair.

She alleged that her husband was in love with a certain teacher and had a tendency to invite her girlfriend to family gatherings from



time to time and some of the family members would advise him to desist from doing so, but their counsel would fall on deaf ears.

She alleged that on the day the offence was committed, they had a family event that was taking place and as per his custom, her husband allegedly invited his girlfriend to attend.

Ntombifuthi alleged that she then called the brother of her husband's girlfriend in a bid to try and reason with him to intervene by rebuking his sister to stop seeing her husband,

since he was a married man.

She claimed that her husband, who overheard her talking to the brother of the girlfriend in question over the phone, summoned her to the house, where he allegedly asked her if she still remembered that she was a married woman, before choking her.

She alleged that in a bid to defend herself, she picked up a nail and used it to stab Senzo, who then rushed to the police station to lay charges against her.



▲ PICO Phindile Vilakati.

Unidentified man found hanging in Mankayane

POLICE are investigating the death of an unidentified man who was found hanging from a tree in the Mabovini bushes on Monday morning. Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, the Chief Police Information and Communications Officer, confirmed the incident, stating that it was reported to authorities on 11 August 2025 at about 10:05 hours.

Vilakati said officers attended the scene where the body was discovered and initiated an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the death. The man's identity has not yet been established, and police are appealing to members of the public who may have information to come forward.

It should be noted that the

discovery adds to a growing number of reported suicide cases in the country in recent months, with several incidents involving people of various ages being found hanged or dead under unexplained circumstances. Police have repeatedly urged communities to be alert to signs of distress among friends, relatives, and neighbours, and to seek help early.

The REPS say investigations will focus on establishing whether foul play was involved and gathering any evidence that may help identify the deceased.

Vilakati reiterated the importance of public cooperation in both identifying the man and supporting ongoing efforts to address the rising incidence of suspected suicides.

Somalis detained, wait for deportation in prison

WHILE Eswatini received five deportees from the U.S last month, the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an order to have two Somali nationals who were staying in the country illegally deported to their home country.

In a letter signed by the Minister of Home Affairs, Princess Lindiwe, it is stated that Ehmed Usuf (36) and Abdi Fatah (30), both from Somalia, shall be immediately detained at a correctional facility, pending their deportation to their home country.

"They will, thereafter, be prohibited from entering this territory without prior application and approval of entry," the letter further read.

The deportation order was enforced by Magistrate Philisiwe Simelane on Tuesday at the Manzini Magistrates Court.

During court proceedings, Usuf pleaded with the court to at least deport him to South Africa, where he claimed he had a status as an asylum seeker. He also pointed out that his wife and children were residing in the neighbouring country (South Africa).

However, magistrate Simelane informed him that the law dictates that he should be deported to his home country, where, upon arrival, he can then come back to South Africa, if he so wishes.

Meanwhile, the two Somali nationals were deported after contra-



▲ Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an order to have two Somali nationals who were staying in the country illegally deported to their home country.

vening the Immigration Act 17/1982, in that not being EmaSwati citizens, they unlawfully entered into and stayed in the Kingdom of Eswatini without valid passports or permits.

They both pleaded guilty to the offence and they were found guilty as charged.

Usuf mitigated for a lenient sentence on the grounds that he had six children who were dependent on him.

He further stated that he was not employed in the country and, as such, the Somali community would assist him with food and shelter from time to time during his

stay in the country. "I came to this country seeking a job. I just need the necessary documents to stay in this country," he said.

Fatah, on the other hand, pleaded for a lenient sentence since he had a family back home.

"It has not been long since I came here, and I was provided for by the Somali community. I came here looking for a better life," he said.

They were both sentenced to five months in prison with an option of a fine of E500.

According to the judgment, they will be deported to their home country upon serving their sentences.



15-year-old found dead in Mahlabaneni

A 15-year-old boy was found dead on Monday evening after being discovered hanging from the rafters inside a house in the Mahlabaneni area.

Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, the Chief Police Information and Communications Officer, confirmed the incident, stating that it occurred on 11 August 2025 at about 20:30 hours. She said police officers responded to the scene after the matter was reported.

According to Vilakati, preliminary information indicates that the boy was found by individuals at the residence, who then alerted authorities. The scene was

attended by police investigators to gather evidence and establish the sequence of events leading to the incident.

Vilakati said investigations are still ongoing, and police will determine whether there was any foul play involved. She urged members of the public to allow the investigation process to proceed without speculation.

No additional details, including the identity of the deceased, were released at the time of going to press, pending notification of the boy's next of kin.

Police stated that once investigations are complete, findings will be communicated through the appropriate channels.



Duo caught inside church after break-in

Stories by Delisa Magagula

TWO men accused of breaking into Mpolonjeni Evangelical Church and stealing property worth E8 500 have been remanded in custody while awaiting sentencing. Sibonele Mkhweli and Siphosethu Dlamini appeared before the Mba-

bane Magistrate's Court facing charges of housebreaking and theft. The court heard that on the day of the incident, Pastor Sibusiso Mthembu was contacted by two church members, alerting him that they had found people inside the church premises. When Mthembu arrived, he discovered the accused hiding in the toilet. One attempted to flee but was apprehended. The church's main door and an internal door had been forced open. Stolen items included a bass guitar valued at E4,500, copper cables, and wiring materials worth about E4,000. The prosecutor told the court that the men were caught at the scene and could not explain their presence. Both pleaded guilty and offered no mitigating factors. Magistrate Xolile Nxumalo remanded them until Thursday for sentencing.

Drunk-driver crashes car into house

A 23-year-old man has been convicted on three charges under the Road Traffic Act after crashing a car into a house while spinning it in the early hours of Sunday. Ntokozo Shongwe appeared before the Manzini Magistrate's Court, charged with driving under the influence, refusing to give a breath specimen, and reckless driving. Police testified that Shongwe staggered when walking, smelled strongly of alcohol, and was spinning a Toyota sedan before losing control and hitting a veranda pillar.

He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to four years in prison or a fine of E5,000 for drink-driving, six months or E800 for refusing a breath test, and six months or E800 for reckless driving. In a separate incident, bus driver Sandile Gama (43) was arrested for driving a Tata bus while intoxicated along the MR3 public road. His breath specimen measured 0.71mg/l, almost double the legal limit. He told the court he had five children to support and claimed the offence was a mistake. He was sentenced to four years in prison or an E5,000 fine.



Man gets 26 years for girlfriend's Murder

A 46-year-old man has been sentenced to 26 years in prison for the murder of his girlfriend, a teacher, in what the High Court described as a "callous and senseless" act. Judge Bongani Sydney Dlamini found Sifiso Pirrie Dlamini guilty of murder with direct intent for the shooting of Angel Shongwe in January 2023 at Othandweni, Lubombo region. Evidence showed she was shot at close range. The defence argued that the couple's relationship was troubled and clouded by mistrust and property disputes. They claimed Shongwe had threatened the accused and that he acted under emotional distress. The judge acknowledged that Dlamini, a father of six and sole breadwinner, had no prior convictions and cooperated with authorities. However, he stressed that no hardship justified taking a life. The court backdated the sentence to January 2023, the date of arrest.



Man fined for carrying knife to church

A MAN who was found in possession of a knife inside a church in Ezulwini has been fined E500 or, alternatively, sentenced to three months in prison. Bandile Mzini was arrested inside the All Nations Church after members discovered he was carrying a weapon. The knife, which was later presented in court as evidence, was seized during his arrest. The incident occurred after Mzini's vehicle was reportedly taken by police officers. He told the court that he had been forced to walk on foot and, feeling tired and in need of shelter, he entered the church to rest. Mzini insisted that he had no intention of causing harm or disturbing the congregation. "I was only looking for a place to rest. I was not there to create any chaos," he explained. However, the presiding magistrate questioned the logic of his actions, noting that bringing a dangerous weapon into a place of worship raised serious concerns about safety and public order. When asked why he had the knife, Mzini offered no clear justification beyond saying it was in his possession when he entered the premises. During mitigation, Mzini apologised for his actions and pleaded for leniency, stating that he had children who depended on him for support. He said he regretted the incident and assured the court that it would not happen again. In handing down the sentence, the magistrate emphasised the importance of ensuring that places of worship remain safe spaces for all who attend. The court noted that, regardless of intent, carrying a weapon into a public gathering could cause alarm and pose a potential threat. Mzini was given the option of paying the fine immediately or serving his prison sentence.





Ex-Shop worker among trio accused in E8 000 theft

A WOMAN and two men have been charged with breaking into a shop and stealing goods valued at over E8,000. Former shop employee Khulile Gamedze (32) is accused of leading Sibonelo Maziya (29) and Ndumiso Dlamini (37) into the break-in at a Big-Bend store owned by Nhlanhla Maziya. The stolen goods reportedly included groceries and cash totalling E8 470. All three opted to represent themselves in court. They were remanded in custody pending the trial date. In a separate matter, the same court heard the case of Philani Mkhabela (31), who assaulted Zinhle Ndzabandzaba at a drinking spot. He admitted guilt, saying the victim provoked him by taking his alcohol and insulting him. Mkhabela was sentenced to two years in prison or a fine of E2 000.

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

72% of Eswatini's Agriculture driven by rural area activity

MINISTER of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka says 72 per cent of the country's agricultural activity is generated in rural areas, describing the figure as the result of deliberate national policy. Speaking ahead of the Eswatini Agriculture Business and Investment Forum 2025, Tshawuka said the rural sector remains the backbone of the country's agri-food systems and a key focus for development initiatives.

SA to offer US a revised trade deal

SOUTH Africa will submit a revised offer for a trade deal to Washington on Tuesday, the trade minister said, in an effort to lower the 30 per cent tariff rate U.S. President Donald Trump imposed on exports to the United States last week. The government of Africa's biggest economy has tried for months to negotiate a U.S. trade deal but failed to reach agreement before Trump's deadline.

Rand steady before local mining and jobs data

JOHANNESBURG — The South African rand was steady in early trade on Tuesday before the release of domestic mining output and unemployment figures. At 0618 GMT, the rand traded at 17.74 against the dollar, about 0.2 per cent firmer than Monday's close. Statistics South Africa will publish June mining production numbers and second-quarter unemployment data at 0930 GMT on Tuesday.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	17.3032	17.7664
G.B. Pound	23.2485	23.9332
EURO	20.0858	20.6985
Bank Rate (July 2023)		7.50%
Prime Rate (July 2023)		11%
Inflation (July 2023)		4.5%
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90/Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	

EEC reports over E200 million loss

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI Electricity Company (EEC) Managing Director (MD) Ernest Mkhonta has revealed that the company recorded a loss of more than E200 million in the 2024/25 financial year, warning that its financial position is under pressure.

Speaking during the EEC media stakeholder breakfast meeting held at the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel, Mkhonta said the utility faces the challenge of providing electricity at an affordable price while dealing with reduced revenue.

"The company's financials are not looking good. In the past years, the tariff increases we applied for were not granted according to our projections, and this has contributed to the unhealthy financial performance," he said.

Mkhonta said the losses have been compounded by rising operational costs and the need to invest in infrastructure to meet the growing electricity demand across the country.

The MD confirmed that EEC is continuing to explore geothermal energy as a potential long-term solution for the kingdom's power needs.

"Under the surface lies geothermal energy, a power source that is sustainable and does not run out or flood. It provides a steady supply of electricity for the future, but the costs of developing it are significant," Mkhonta said.

He revealed that millions of emalangeni have already been spent on studies to assess the viability of tapping into geothermal resources.

"This is not a small investment, but we believe it is important to secure our energy future," he said.

Mkhonta also highlighted the continued growth in electricity demand, which puts additional strain on the company's workforce and resources.

"We currently serve almost 299,000 customers with just over 800 employees and more than 1,000 contractors. This shows the scale of work required to meet demand and maintain service quality," he said.

He added that population growth, urbanisation and industrial expansion are driving increased power consumption.



▲EEC Managing Director Ernest Mkhonta.

By Delisa Magagula

ADDRESSING the ongoing load shedding in the country, Mkhonta explained that the main cause is a combination of peak-hour demand and reduced electricity imports.

"Our peak periods are from 6 am to 8 am and from 5 pm to 8 pm. During these times, demand shoots up and pushes the grid to its limits. To meet this demand, we have to import electricity, which is very expensive," he said. He said the situation is worsened by regional supply constraints.

"Drought has affected major hydroelectric plants in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique. Their output has been reduced, which means there is less power available for purchase in the Southern African Power Pool," Mkhonta said.

According to Mkhonta, the combination of higher costs and reduced availability has forced EEC to implement load shedding to protect the stability of the national grid.

Meanwhile, during the question-and-answer session, one editor raised concerns about the declining purchasing power of E200 for electricity units and asked where levies on electricity purchases are directed.

Mkhonta said the issue goes beyond electricity pricing and is linked to inflation.

"E200 will no longer buy you as many electricity units as before. It is the same situation with groceries, what you could buy

... Load shedding explained

with that amount three years ago is not the same today," he said.

He explained that the value of money has decreased, which affects how much electricity customers can afford. Mkhonta said inflation affects the cost of producing and delivering electricity, including expenses such as fuel, maintenance, and imported power.

"The reduction in the value of money means the same amount today buys less electricity because our costs have increased," he said.

He emphasised that tariffs are regulated and that EEC applies for adjustments through the Eswatini Energy Regulatory Authority (ESERA).

Despite the financial challenges, Mkhonta said EEC is continuing with strategic projects aimed at improving supply reliability. These include:

1. Upgrading transmission lines to handle higher capacity.
2. Expanding rural electrification to meet government targets.
3. Exploring renewable sources such as solar and wind in addition to geothermal.

"We are committed to finding sustainable ways to meet the growing demand without compromising service quality," he said.

Mkhonta said the company is focusing on maximising efficiency with its limited staff.

"With just over 800 employees, supported by more than 1,000 contractors, we have to ensure our operations are streamlined. We have a

responsibility to deliver value to our customers despite the challenges," he said.

The MD noted that Eswatini remains reliant on imports from neighbouring countries for part of its electricity supply and is working within the Southern African Power Pool to secure affordable power.

"We are engaging with our regional partners to explore flexible supply agreements that can help reduce costs," he said.

On geothermal development, Mkhonta said feasibility studies are progressing and will guide the next steps.

"This is a long-term project, but we have to start now if we want energy security in the future," he said.

Once developed, geothermal can provide a stable and clean power source for decades, he said. The company is also looking into small-scale renewable energy initiatives to complement the main grid.

Mkhonta acknowledged that finding the balance between keeping tariffs affordable and investing in infrastructure is one of the company's greatest challenges.

"We cannot stop investing in the network because demand is growing. At the same time, we know customers are already feeling the impact of higher living costs," he said.

Closing his address, Mkhonta said EEC is committed to transparency and engaging with the public on energy issues.

"We appreciate the feedback we receive from stakeholders. We want to keep the lights on for the nation, but it requires a collective understanding of the challenges we face," said Mkhonta.



72% of Eswatini's Agriculture driven by rural area activity



▲Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka.

By Delisa Magagula

MINISTER of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka says 72 per cent of the country's agricultural activity is generated in rural areas, describing the figure as the result of deliberate national policy.

Speaking ahead of the Eswatini Agriculture Business and Investment Forum 2025, Tshawuka said the rural sector remains the backbone of the country's agri-food systems and a key focus for development initiatives.

"Seventy-two per cent of agricultural activity comes from rural areas by design. Our policies are aimed at empowering rural farmers, improving infrastructure, and ensuring that communities have access to markets," he said.

He said the contribution from rural communities includes smallholder crop production, livestock rearing, and horticulture, as well as participation in value chains for sugarcane, cotton, maize, and fresh produce.

"Rural households depend heavily on agriculture for their livelihoods. By strengthening these systems, we also address

food security and income generation," he said.

Tshawuka said government programmes such as irrigation schemes, mechanisation support, and training initiatives are being implemented to increase productivity in rural areas.

"These interventions are not accidental. They are targeted investments to ensure rural areas remain active participants in the national economy," he said.

The minister also noted that the agricultural sector employs a significant portion of the population, with rural farmers playing a central role in supplying both domestic and export markets.

"From the maize fields of the Highveld to the horticulture projects in the Lowveld, rural farmers are keeping Eswatini's food systems running," he said.

He added that partnerships with private companies, development agencies, and farmer associations are essential to improving market access and production capacity in rural areas.

"We are committed to building resilient rural economies that can adapt to climate change, compete in regional markets, and contribute to food sovereignty," he said.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Agriculture will host the second Agriculture Business and Investment Forum from Wednesday to Thursday this week, bringing together stakeholders to discuss investment opportunities in the agri-food sector.

Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka said the event will take place from August 13-14, 2025, starting at 9:00 a.m. each day.

The theme is Mobilising Investments in Agrifood Systems for Youth Empowerment and Food Sovereignty.

"This is a key platform to drive transformation in our agri-food systems. We want to connect potential investors, development partners, and local agripreneurs to explore how agriculture can be a sustainable source of livelihoods for young people," Tshawuka said.

The forum is organised by the Ministry in partnership with agencies including FAO Eswatini, Namboard, Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise, Eswatini Cotton Board, and the National Maize Corporation.

Tshawuka said the event is by invitation only, but the Ministry will provide a live broadcast on its Facebook page to allow the public to follow discussions in real time.

"This way, farmers, students, and other stakeholders can participate from wherever they are," he said.

The minister said topics to be covered include investment opportunities in value chains, financing for youth-led agribusiness, sustainable water use, and strategies for improving food sovereignty.

"We will also look at how to strengthen rural-urban linkages in agricultural markets and how technology can improve productivity," he said.

According to the Ministry, the forum will feature presentations, panel discussions, and

networking sessions between policymakers, investors, and farmer representatives.

Tshawuka said the event aligns with the government's long-term agricultural strategy, which places emphasis on youth empowerment and innovation.

"Our young people must see agriculture as a viable career and business opportunity, not just subsistence farming," he said.

He added that food sovereignty, the ability of the country to produce enough for its own needs, is central to Eswatini's agricultural agenda.

"The forum is not just about increasing production. It is about building systems that are self-sustaining, environmentally sound, and inclusive," he said.

The Ministry expects participation from local agribusiness owners, farmer cooperatives, international investors, and regional development partners.

"This gathering is an opportunity to create partnerships that will have a lasting impact on the sector," Tshawuka said.

Worth noting is that the inaugural Eswatini Agriculture Business and Investment Forum, held in 2023, brought together government officials, development agencies, private investors, and farmer representatives to explore ways of boosting the country's agri-food systems. Hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, the event focused on unlocking investment opportunities in agriculture, with particular emphasis on smallholder farmers and emerging agripreneurs.

Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka said at the time that the forum was designed to bridge the gap between farmers and markets while also creating linkages between local producers and potential financiers.

Agric Business and Investment Forum to focus on Food Sovereignty



Key topics included improving access to agricultural finance, strengthening value chains for crops such as maize, cotton, and horticultural produce, and upgrading irrigation infrastructure to mitigate the impact of drought.

Presentations were delivered by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Namboard, and the Eswatini Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise, among others.

Participants discussed the need for youth-targeted funding schemes, better rural road networks to connect farms to markets, and investment in agro-processing facilities to add value to raw produce.

According to the Ministry, the 2023 forum resulted in several follow-up initiatives,

including pilot projects for youth-run vegetable farms, partnerships to expand cold-storage capacity for perishable goods, and feasibility studies for renewable energy use in farming operations.

Tshawuka described the event as a starting point for building the investment momentum needed to transform agriculture into a driver of national growth.

The Ministry said lessons from the inaugural forum have informed the structure of this year's event, which will continue to focus on youth empowerment, food sovereignty, and sustainable water management.

"We are carrying forward the conversations from last year and turning them into concrete projects," Tshawuka said.

SA to offer US a revised trade deal



▲South African Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Parks Tau.

By Nellie Peyton

SOUTH Africa will submit a revised offer for a trade deal to Washington on Tuesday, the trade minister said, in an effort to lower the 30 per cent tariff rate U.S. President Donald Trump imposed on exports to the United States last week.

The government of Africa’s biggest economy has tried for months to negotiate a U.S. trade deal but failed to reach agreement before Trump’s deadline.

South African exports to the U.S. were hit with the highest tariff rate in sub-Saharan Africa.

“Cabinet has approved that South Africa submits a revised offer as a basis for negotiations with the U.S.,” Parks Tau told a press conference. The revised offer was expected to be submitted on Tuesday, he said.

“The new offer substantively responds to the issues the U.S. has raised in the 2025 National Trade Estimates Report,” Tau said,

adding that South Africa had addressed some sanitary and phytosanitary issues from the report. He did not provide further details on the offer.

Containers of poultry and pork were to be shipped from the U.S. to South Africa in two weeks’ time, showing that these issues had been resolved, Tau said.

Agriculture Minister John Steenhuisen had previously said that Trump’s team felt South Africa’s initial offer for a trade deal was not ambitious enough.

Steenhuisen, also leader of the second-biggest party in the coalition government, said the new offer was a “broad, generous and open offer that I think meets the ambition criteria.”

“If one was to look at this through the trade and tariff perspective, I think this offer represents something that would be good for the United States and also good for South Africa,” he said.

In an interview with Reuters on Monday, Steenhuisen said there was a risk the 30 per cent tariffs would remain unless South Africa’s government changed some domestic race policies such as affirmative action, which Trump has criticised. (Reuters)

Rand steady before local mining and jobs data

JOHANNESBURG — The South African rand was steady in early trade on Tuesday before the release of domestic mining output and unemployment figures.

At 0618 GMT, the rand traded at 17.74 against the dollar, about 0.2 per cent firmer than Monday’s close.

Statistics South Africa will publish June mining production numbers and second-quarter unemployment data at 0930 GMT on Tuesday.

Mining production rose 0.2 per cent year-on-year in May, and economists polled by Reuters expect it to have risen by 1.4 per cent this time around.

The unemployment rate of Africa’s most industrialised economy was estimated to have picked up to 33.0 per cent in the second quarter from 32.9 per cent in the previous quarter.

Also in focus is a U.S. inflation report due at 1230 GMT, which could offer further



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

insight into the Federal Reserve’s rate-cut trajectory.

The rand, like other risk-sensitive currencies, often takes cues from global drivers such as U.S. policy and economic data.

The dollar last traded flat against a basket of currencies.

South Africa’s benchmark 2035 government bond was also little changed in early deals, with the yield up half a basis point at 9.675 per cent. (Reuters)

Oil steadies as US, China announce tariff extension

By Ahmad Ghaddar

LONDON — Oil prices were broadly steady on Tuesday as the United States and China extended a pause on higher tariffs, easing concerns an escalation of their trade war would hit oil consumption.

Brent crude futures lost 2 cents to \$66.61 a barrel by 0904 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures eased 10 cents, or 0.2 per cent, to \$63.86.

U.S. President Donald Trump extended a tariff truce with China to November 10, staving off triple-digit duties on Chinese goods as U.S. retailers prepared for the critical end-of-year holiday season.

This raised hopes that an agreement could be attained between the world’s two largest economies and avert a virtual trade embargo between them. Tariffs risk slowing global growth, which could sap fuel demand and drag oil prices lower.

Oil’s gains have also been supported by fresh signs of softness in the U.S. labour market, which have boosted expectations for a Federal Reserve rate cut in September, said Priyanka Sachdeva, senior market analyst at brokerage Phillip Nova.

Also on the radar is U.S. inflation data later in the day, which could shape the Fed’s rate path. Interest rate cuts typically boost economic activity and oil demand.

Potentially weighing on the oil market, Trump and Russian President Vladimir



▲A pump jack operates near a crude oil reserve in the Permian Basin oil field near Midland, Texas, U.S.

Putin are due to meet in Alaska on Friday to discuss an end to the war in Ukraine.

The meeting comes as the U.S. steps up pressure on Russia, with the threat of harsher penalties on Russian oil buyers such as China and India if no peace deal is reached. Trump set a deadline of last Friday for Russia to agree to peace in Ukraine or have its oil buyers face secondary sanctions, while pressing India and China to reduce purchases of Russian oil.

“If Friday’s meeting brings a ceasefire or even a peace deal in Ukraine closer, Trump could suspend the secondary tariffs imposed on India last week before they come into force in two weeks,” Commerzbank said in a note.

“If not, we could see tougher sanctions against other buyers of Russian oil, like China”. (Reuters)

European Union awaits US follow-up on trade deal promises



▲The container ship MSC Ronit R, which departed the French port of Le Havre arrives at the Port Newark Container Terminal in Newark, New Jersey, U.S.

BRUSSELS — The European Union could not say when a joint statement on tariffs with the United States would be ready, nor when the White House would issue an executive order on European car import duties, a spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The EU and U.S. reached a framework trade agreement at the end of July but only the 15 per cent baseline tariff on European exports had so far come into effect, as of last week.

EU officials previously said a joint statement would follow the deal “very soon” along with executive orders from U.S. President Donald Trump on key carve-outs.

“It is an agreement that we believe is strong and the best we could have ... Of course, we expect the U.S. to take further steps that are part of this agreement but I don’t believe at this stage we can put a timeline on these engagements,” the European Commission spokesperson said.

The carve-outs include a reduction of the current 27.5 per cent U.S. import tariff on EU cars and car parts to 15 per cent.

While duties on pharmaceuticals and semiconductors are currently zero, if they rise as a result of a U.S. probe into imports of those products, Trump assured these would not exceed the 15 per cent ceiling.

As part of the deal, the EU and U.S. are still finalising a list of products where tariffs would go down to zero on both sides, such as on aircraft, while other products would revert to a much lower most-favoured-nation rate. Separately, negotiations on rates for spirits and wine are expected to drag into the autumn.

Europe still faces tariffs of 50 per cent on steel and aluminium exports to the U.S. but the two sides have agreed to set a quota system and a “metals alliance” that would later lower duties. In the interim, however, EU smelters are under pressure as U.S. tariffs have led to a surge in exports of their main input, scrap metal. (Reuters)

EMI – Your first choice for every processed meat

By Nontsikelelo Dlamini

Eswatini Meat Industries (EMI) has earned its place as the undisputed No. 1 supplier of processed meat products in the Kingdom of Eswatini, not only for the unmatched breadth of its range but also for its unwavering commitment to quality, safety, and national growth.

At the heart of EMI's operations is its state-of-the-art processed meat plant. A specialized facility where raw meat is transformed into value-added ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook products through various preparation, preservation, and packaging processes. This facility is equipped with modern technology, operated by skilled professionals, and driven by innovation.

At EMI's processed meat plant, hygiene is non-negotiable. The facility operates under strict Hazard guidelines and international food safety standards. All equipment is sanitized regularly, staff follow protective clothing protocols including hairnets, and production areas are kept at controlled temperatures to prevent contamination. Regular swab tests, deep cleans, and safety audits ensure that every product leaving the plant is not only delicious but also safe,

wholesome, and of the highest quality. Supporting National Policy & Local Growth The Ministry of Agriculture has introduced a quota system to limit the volume of imported processed meats entering Eswatini. This strategic move was designed to boost local production, strengthen food security, and support home-grown industries. EMI stands as a pillar in this policy's success, ready to meet the demand with locally produced products that are affordable, safe, and trusted by Emaswati.

The Ingwenyama's Vision of a First World Eswatini is a call for the Kingdom to achieve world-class standards in every sector. At its core, the vision is about building a strong, self-reliant nation that competes on a global stage while ensuring prosperity for its people.

The EMI processed meat plant is a direct contributor to this national ambition. By producing a wide variety of safe, high-quality processed meats locally, the plant reduces dependence on imports, strengthens food security, and keeps value creation within Eswatini's borders.

A Wide Range of Products

EMI's processed meat plant produces the widest selection of processed meats in the country, meeting diverse consumer needs and preferences. Our range includes:

- Braai wors
- Sausages
- Russians
- Viennas



▲ High hygiene and food safety standards are practiced.

- Burgers
- Polonies
- Ham
- Mince
- Bacon

This plant has the production capacity to supply the nation's largest wholesalers, retail supermarket chains, SMEs, and individual households. Whether it's for a family braai, school canteen, small business, or national retail shelf, EMI has the scale and capability to deliver, consistently and on time.

By choosing EMI, customers aren't just buying meat; they are investing in local jobs, local farmers, and the national economy. Every pack purchased helps reduce reliance on imports, ensuring that the value chain: from farm to fork; remains firmly within Eswatini.

Phephisa Emndeni Wakho Ngenyama Lepotjoliwe



► Production Manager Mandla Mamba using the disinfectant footbath.



ESWATINI MEAT INDUSTRIES



Eswatini's Supplier of Processed Meat Products

Embiveni Has the Widest Range Processed Meats. Your **One-Stop Shop**



Hurry in Store! Available in all Embiveni Meat Markets

Making Meal Times Special



WHEN Ritz-Carlton opens its first safari lodge on Friday in Kenya's Maasai Mara reserve, guests will pay nightly rates starting from \$3,500 per person for tented suites with private decks overlooking a river crossed by migrating wildebeest.

But the director of a Maasai conservation institute and researchers say the true cost of those sublime views will run much higher by damaging one of the world's most renowned ecosystems.

On Tuesday, Meitamei Olol Dapash from the Institute for Maasai Education, Research and Conservation (MERC) filed a lawsuit in a Kenyan court against Ritz-Carlton, its owner Marriott (MAR.O), opens new tab, the project's local developer Lazizi Mara Limited and Kenyan authorities to try to block the scheduled opening.

Dapash alleges in the lawsuit that the 20-suite camp, which boasts plunge pools and personalised butler service, obstructs a crucial migration corridor between Maasai Mara and Tanzania's Serengeti. Researchers say migration allows wildebeest to find food and maintain genetic diversity among herds.

The lawsuit also says there is no evidence an environmental impact assessment was conducted. Dapash's lawyers asked the Environment and Land Court in Narok to suspend the lodge's opening and hear the case on a priority basis.

Marriott, which entered into a franchise agreement with Lazizi, said in a statement it was committed to respecting the environment and that Lazizi had obtained all necessary approvals.

Lazizi's managing director, Shivan Patel, said Kenyan authorities conducted an environmental impact assessment, which had established that the site was not a wildlife crossing point.

The Narok County government and National Environment Management Authority, which are also named as respondents in the lawsuit, did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

The dispute is the latest flashpoint in East Africa's grasslands between luxury tourism and Maasai herders who say that the sector's development is harming their habitats and ways of life.

In Kenya, local communities have complained about what they say are land grabs by wealthy investors. In Tanzania, protests

Kenyan activist tries to block new Ritz-Carlton safari lodge opening



▲ Rangers and visitors stand at the Talek gate in the Maasai Mara game reserve, in Narok county, Kenya.

against the eviction of tens of thousands of Maasai to make way for hunting lodges have led to deadly clashes with police.

Dapash, who founded MERC in 1997 as a grassroots network of Maasai leaders, said the Ritz-Carlton's development was the latest in a long list of lucrative tourism projects that government officials have green-lighted at the expense of local wildlife and people.

"Without the county government regulating the tourist behaviours, the tourist activities, we saw the habitat, the environment degraded so badly," he told Reuters.

County officials have acknowledged that over-tourism has harmed Maasai Mara's natural environment but have said that focusing on "high-value tourism" can help address this by bringing in more money at less environmental cost.

MIGRATION PATH

Announcing the new Ritz-Carlton in February, Marriott said it would offer a "front-row seat" to the annual Great Migration of

millions of wildebeest, zebras and gazelles.

The lodge lies along the Sand River, an important water source for animals from elephants to birds, that snakes back-and-forth across the border between Kenya and Tanzania.

Hotel staff declined to let Reuters reporters enter the property.

Dapash, who is a PhD candidate in sustainability education at Prescott College in the United States and has run unsuccessfully for parliament several times, said the lodge sits on a wildebeest crossing point well-known to locals.

Joseph Ogutu, a Kenyan researcher at the University of Hohenheim in Germany who has studied wildlife migration in Maasai Mara, said the new construction would deal a further blow to fauna in the reserve. Many species' populations in the reserve have shrunk by over 80% since the 1970s, according to Kenyan government data.

"It is highly ill-advised to build a lodge on

one of the most critical paths of the Great Migration," he said.

Grant Hopcraft, an ecologist at the University of Glasgow, said the project would "likely have large and long-term ecological implications for the migration". Neither Hopcraft nor Ogutu are party to the lawsuit.

Lazizi's Patel said it was the county government that proposed the site to him. And he questioned why Dapash had only started raising objections to the project in recent weeks.

"The project has been ongoing for a year," he told Reuters. "We pushed it so hard to ... avoid any disruption, damage to the environment."

Dapash said he only learned of the project in May because it is far from the main population centre.

The lawsuit questions whether a required environmental impact assessment was ever conducted.

Under Kenyan law, the National Environment Management Authority must publish a summary of the assessment in the official gazette indicating where it may be inspected.

Reuters could not find any such notice in the official gazette. Patel said he could not share the assessment for confidentiality reasons and referred Reuters to NEMA. NEMA did not respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit also says the project violated a management plan for Maasai Mara adopted by the Narok County government in February 2023, which calls for "no new tourism accommodation developments" before 2032.

Patel disputed this, saying the project was built at an "existing" site that had already been in use for many years. He did not say how it had been used. Narok County did not respond to requests for comment.

Dapash said the public needed answers.

"The preservation of wildlife migration for us is a treasure that we cannot afford to lose," he said. "We need to see that due diligence was done."

(Reuters)

South African jobless rate rises, highlighting coalition challenge



▲ Job seekers wait beside a road for casual work offered by passing motorists in Eikenhof, south of Johannesburg, South Africa.T

SOUTH Africa's unemployment rate rose for the second quarter in a row, official data showed on Tuesday, highlighting one of the biggest challenges faced by the country's year-old coalition government.

The official unemployment rate stood at 33.2% in April-June, up from 32.9% in January-March (ZAUNR=ECI), opens new tab, one of the highest rates worldwide.

The coalition government formed after the African National Congress lost its parliamentary majority in the 2024 election has struggled to achieve a meaningful drop in the jobless rate, despite making that a priority.

Statistics South Africa said the number of unemployed people increased to 8.367 million in the second quarter (ZAUEMP=ECI), opens new tab, though there was a slight drop in an expanded definition of unemployment, which includes those discouraged from seeking work.

Six of the 10 industries tracked by the statistics agency recorded employment decreases, while four had increases in the latest three-month period.

The most jobs were lost in community and social services, agriculture and finance.

Top statistics official Risenga Maluleke

said it was too early to tell whether U.S. tariffs were having an effect on the jobs data.

South African exports to the U.S. were hit with a 30% tariff last week, the highest rate in sub-Saharan Africa.

Maluleke dismissed criticism by the former head of major local bank Capitec (CPI-J.J), opens new tab that the statistics agency was underestimating the number of people with informal jobs.

He told a press conference his agency had always measured that and made its numbers available, adding that South Africa would be making "a big mistake as a country if we want to assume that we do not have an unemployment challenge".

Desiree Manamela, chief director of labour statistics, said updates to the way Statistics SA collects unemployment data that will be rolled out in the next quarter were unlikely to significantly affect the official jobless rate.

But they should allow the agency to include additional measures of the health of the economy in its reports, she said.

(Reuters)

EU leaders say Ukraine should have freedom to decide its future



▲ Service members of the 58th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces stand next to a BTR-4 armoured personnel carrier during military exercises at a training ground, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kharkiv region, Ukraine

UKRAINIANS must have the freedom to decide their own future, European Union member states said on Tuesday, weighing in ahead of talks between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, opens new tab on Friday.

European leaders and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy plan to speak with Trump on Wednesday, before the summit in Alaska, amid fears that Washington, hitherto Ukraine's leading arms supplier, might dictate unfavourable peace terms to Kyiv.

"The path to peace in Ukraine cannot be decided without Ukraine," the leaders of

Russia makes sudden advance in Ukraine before Trump-Putin summit

RUSSIAN forces have made a sudden thrust into eastern Ukraine near the coal mining town of Dobropillia, a move that may be designed to increase the pressure on Kyiv to give up land as the U.S. and Russian presidents prepare to meet.

Ukraine's authoritative DeepState war map showed on Tuesday that Russian forces had advanced by at least 10 km (six miles) north in two prongs in recent days, part of their drive to take full control of Ukraine's Donetsk region.

The advance is one of the most dramatic in the last year. DeepState said the Russians had surged forward near three villages on a section of the frontline associated with the Ukrainian towns of Kostyantynivka and Pokrovsk, which Moscow is trying to encircle by exploiting Kyiv's lack of manpower.

"The situation is quite chaotic, as the enemy, having found gaps in the defence, is infiltrating deeper, trying to quickly consolidate and accumulate forces for further advancement," DeepState said on its Telegram channel.

U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin are expected to discuss a possible deal to end the war in Ukraine when they meet in Alaska on Friday. Unconfirmed media reports say Putin has told Trump he wants Ukraine to hand over the part of the Donetsk region that Russia does not control.

There was no immediate comment on the advance from Moscow. Ukraine's top mil-

itary commander, Oleksandr Syrskyi, had ordered reinforcements to be deployed "to detect and destroy enemy sabotage groups that penetrate the line of defence," Andriy Kovalov, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian army, told Interfax-Ukraine.

He said Russia was using its numerical superiority to try to infiltrate Ukrainian defence lines in small groups and had made 35 attempts to push back Ukrainian units, suffering heavy losses in the process. Viktor Trehubov, another Ukrainian military

all EU countries except Hungary said in a joint statement, adding that any peace deal must respect international law, including Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity.

RUSSIA ADVANCES IN EASTERN UKRAINE

Trump has said any peace deal would involve "some swapping of territories to the betterment of both" Russia and Ukraine, prompting consternation in Kyiv and European capitals as virtually all the territory in question is Ukrainian.

Russian forces have made a sudden thrust

further into eastern Ukraine near the coal mining town of Dobropillia, a move that may be designed to increase the pressure on Kyiv to cede land as the U.S. and Russian presidents prepare to meet.

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Sergei Markov, a former Kremlin adviser, said the Russians had been able to advance due to "a partial collapse in the front" caused by Ukraine's shortage of soldiers.

"This breakthrough is like a gift to Putin and Trump during the negotiations," Markov said, suggesting it could heighten pressure on Kyiv to yield territory under any deal.

Kyiv's military meanwhile said it had retaken two villages in the eastern region of Sumy on Monday, part of a small reversal in more than a year of slow, attritional Russian gains in the southeast.

Russia, which launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, has mounted a new offensive this year in Sumy after Putin demanded a "buffer zone" there.

Kyiv and its European allies fear that Trump, keen to claim credit for making peace and seal new business deals with Moscow, could in effect reward Moscow for its 11 years spent in efforts to seize Ukrainian territory, the last three in open warfare.

EUROPEANS LINK UKRAINE TO OWN SECURITY

The EU statement stresses that a Ukraine capable of defending itself effectively is an integral part of any future security guaran-

tees, adding that EU nations were ready to contribute further to security guarantees.

"Ukraine cannot lose this war and nobody has the right to pressure Ukraine into making territorial or other concessions, or making decisions that smack of capitulation," Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said.

"I hope we can convince President Trump about the European position," he told a government meeting.

Zelenskiy welcomed the EU statement, adding in a message on X that Russia was preparing new offensive operations.

"Indeed, we all support President Trump's determination, and together we must shape positions that will not allow Russia to deceive the world once again," he said.

However, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Putin's principal ally in Europe, mocked the statement from his EU counterparts.

"The fact that the EU was left on the sidelines is sad enough as it is. The only thing that could make things worse is if we started providing instructions from the bench," Orban said on X.

Trump had been recently hardening his stance towards Moscow, agreeing to send more U.S. weapons to Ukraine and threatening hefty trade tariffs on buyers of Russian oil in an ultimatum that has now lapsed.

Even so, the prospect of Trump hosting Putin on U.S. soil for the first U.S.-Russia summit since 2021 has revived fears that he might put narrow U.S. interests ahead of the security of European allies or broader geopolitics.

have also been reported near Dobropillia proper," he wrote on X.

RUSSIA MAY GAIN LEVERAGE FOR TRUMP TALKS

Tatarigami_UA, a former Ukrainian army officer whose Frontelligence Insight analysis tracks the conflict, posted:

"In both 2014 and 2015, Russia launched major offensives ahead of negotiations to gain leverage. The current situation is serious, but far from the collapse some suggest."

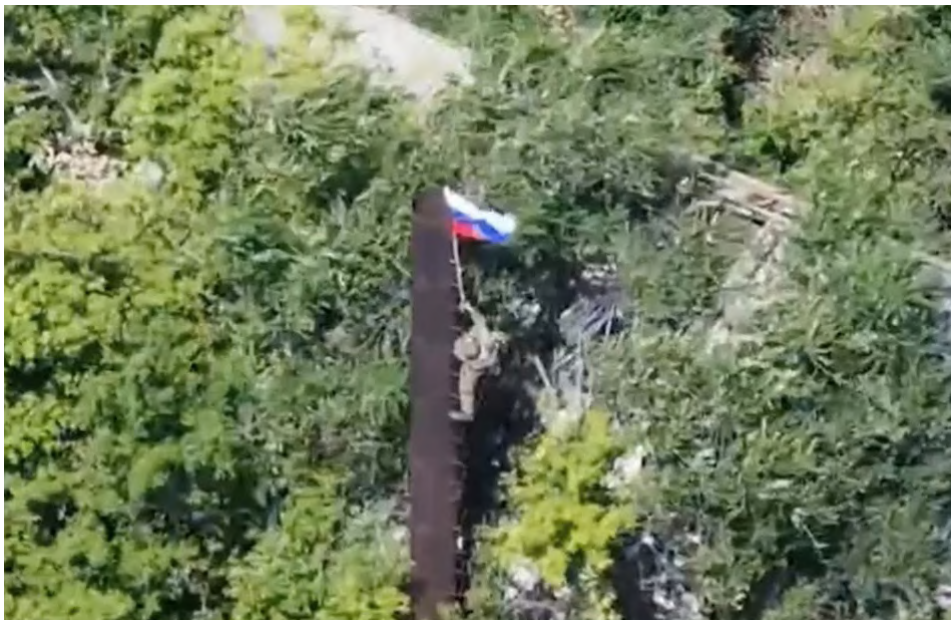
Sergei Markov, a former Kremlin adviser, said the Russians had been able to advance due to "a partial collapse in the front" due to Ukraine's shortage of soldiers.

"This breakthrough is like a gift to Putin and Trump during the negotiations," Markov said, suggesting it could increase pressure on Kyiv to cede some land to prevent the Russian army eventually taking the rest of Donetsk by force.

To do that, though, Russian forces would first need to take control of Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Druzhkivka and Kostiantynivka - which Russian military analysts call "fortress cities".

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has publicly pushed back against the idea of ceding territory to Russia, saying any peace deal must be a just one.

Bohdan Krotevych, former chief of staff of Ukraine's Azov brigade and a National Guard lieutenant colonel, took to X late on Monday to warn Zelenskiy of the threat, saying the frontline in the area was "a complete mess".



▲ A still image, taken from footage released by the Russian Defence Ministry, shows what it said to be a Russian soldier raising a flag following the capture of Ukraine's Yablumivka (Yablonovka) settlement in the Donetsk region in the course of Russia-Ukraine military conflict.

itary commander, Oleksandr Syrskyi, had ordered reinforcements to be deployed "to detect and destroy enemy sabotage groups that penetrate the line of defence," Andriy Kovalov, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian army, told Interfax-Ukraine.

He said Russia was using its numerical superiority to try to infiltrate Ukrainian defence lines in small groups and had made 35 attempts to push back Ukrainian units, suffering heavy losses in the process. Viktor Trehubov, another Ukrainian military

spokesperson, played down the development, saying the infiltration did not amount to a breakthrough.

Pasi Paronen, a military analyst with the Finland-based Black Bird Group, said the situation had escalated rapidly, with Russian forces infiltrating past Ukrainian lines to a depth of roughly 17 km (10 miles) during the past three days.

"Forwardmost Russian units have reportedly reached the Dobropillia - Kramatorsk road T0514 and Russian infiltration groups

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE highly anticipated fifth edition of the Divas Concert, a premier event celebrating women in music, has been postponed to a later date, which will be announced soon.

Originally scheduled for August 31, 2025, the concert will still occur at The Olive Country Lodge in Sidvokodvo, with organisers promising an even grander experience for attendees. Festival Director Thembinkosi Mthethwa addressed the postponement, emphasising that the decision was made with the best interests of fans in mind. “We have decided to postpone this year’s edition of the Divas Concert, but we promise it will be worth the wait. We’ll be announcing a new date very soon. The venue remains the same,” Mthethwa stated, reassuring fans that the concert’s essence will remain intact.

The extra time before the concert is intended to allow organisers to enhance the overall experience for attendees. Mthethwa explained, “From sound and staging to the line-up and overall atmosphere, we want every moment to be nothing short of spectacular.” This commitment to excellence reflects the concert’s reputation for showcasing powerful, genre-defying talent from Eswatini and beyond, while honouring the contributions of women in the music industry.

The Divas Concert has become a staple in the cultural calendar of Eswatini, celebrated not only for its entertainment value but also for its role in empowering female artists. The event has consistently spotlighted both established and emerging talents, creating a platform for women to shine in a predominantly male-dominated industry.

Headlining this year’s concert will be the renowned South African DJ Zinhle, whose electrifying performances have captivated audiences across the continent. She will be joined by an impressive lineup of Eswatini’s finest DJs, including Trend Twins, DJ Lady Cream, Ndumz_DJ, Ash, ItsAllBlaq, Lady Zee, Wassabee, and DJ

Divas Concert postponed

Expo. This diverse array of talent promises to deliver an unforgettable night of music and celebration.

In addition to the DJs, the concert will feature a stellar lineup of live performances from celebrated artists such as Siphokazi Maraqa, Nothando Hlophe, Floewe, Velemseni, Cleopatra, Originelle, and Sarnilo. Each artist brings a unique sound and style, contributing to the rich tapestry of musical experiences that the Divas Concert is known for.

For those who have already purchased tickets or arranged accommodation, the organisers have made provisions for refunds. Requests can be emailed to [\[newlife.ent18@gmail.com\]](mailto:[newlife.ent18@gmail.com]) (mailto:newlife.ent18@gmail.com), ensuring that fans are accommodated during this transition period. Mthethwa also hinted at possible surprises in store for concertgoers, encouraging the public to keep an eye on the official Diva’s Concert social media pages for the latest updates and announcements.

▲ South African artist Siphokazi Maraqa for Divas Concert.



‘Salukazana’ album listening session for Mbabane Library

ESWATINI music is set to experience another milestone as renowned musician Sancheziey prepares for the highly anticipated listening session of his upcoming album, ‘Salukazana.’

Scheduled for August 13, 2025, at Mbabane Library, this intimate event will accommodate only 40 attendees, emphasising the personal touch that Sancheziey aims to bring to his latest project. The dress code for the evening is traditional regalia, inviting guests to immerse themselves in the rich cultural heritage that the album represents. Following this event, the official release of the album will follow closely on August 16, 2025.

Sancheziey, who gained widespread acclaim with his hit single ‘Siyabonga Gogo,’ is poised to elevate his artistry with ‘Salukazana.’ This new album is described as a traditional Swati cultural Afropop project that masterfully intertwines authentic Swati sounds with Western melodies and African instrumentation. It promises to be a heartfelt exploration of themes surrounding love, relationships, and marriage, echoing the sentiments expressed in his previous work.

Reflecting on the impact of ‘Siyabonga Gogo,’ Sancheziey shared, “The song made

a statement, and its breakout was a defining moment for me musically. It brought out the best in me. The song didn’t have a backup, so I had to act fast because of the way people were consuming it; surely, it deserved a follow-up with the same sound.”

The collaborative nature of ‘Salukazana’ is particularly noteworthy, as Sancheziey has involved his family in the album’s creation. He emphasised the importance of their contributions, stating, “My family was too involved in the process, and their input was invaluable in shaping the direction of the album.”

At its core, ‘Salukazana’ is a celebration of love as depicted in traditional Swati culture. Sancheziey aims to encapsulate the enduring love often portrayed in films, highlighting the profound emotional connections that characterise Swati relationships. He believes that the love depicted in the album reflects what love should be in contemporary society, making it a relevant and timely exploration of this universal theme.

The album is expected to resonate deeply within the context of traditional Swati weddings, featuring songs that are particularly relevant to significant cultural events such as Lobola, Umtsimba, Umhlambiso, and Emalobolo. Sancheziey noted, “The sound of the album is crafted to



▲ Sancheziey’s ‘Salukazana’ art cover.

appeal to both older generations, who will appreciate the traditional messages and melodies, and the younger generation, who will enjoy how these original Swati sounds have been reimaged to remain relevant in today’s music landscape.”



▲ Attendees at the previous edition of the Eswatini Farmers Market.

Eswatini Farmers Market tickets fly off the shelves

THE Eswatini Farmers Market, a hallmark of cultural celebration and community spirit, is gearing up for its much-anticipated return on October 11, 2025.

Tickets for this vibrant event are selling rapidly, reflecting the enthusiasm of the public. Early bird VIP tickets have already sold out, and the early bird kid’s tickets have followed suit, leaving only the general tickets available at E250. The festival will take place at the picturesque Malkerns Country Club. Mbekezeli ‘Culolam’ Dlamini, the festival’s director, confirmed the details in an exclusive interview, expressing his excitement for this year’s market. “I am thrilled to announce the return of the Eswatini Farmers Market, and I can assure you that this year’s event will surpass all expectations. Get ready for a day filled with endless excitement and unforgettable moments,” he stated.

Community

The Eswatini Farmers Market is more than just an event; it is a cultural phenomenon that celebrates the rich heritage of Eswatini. Dlamini emphasised the festival’s role in fostering community bonds through music, food, and cultural exchange. “Every year, we aim to make the festival bigger and better, bringing in new ideas that will leave a lasting legacy and uniqueness for each year,” he remarked.

This year’s market promises a plethora of activities designed to engage attendees of all ages. Live music performances will feature local artists, showcasing the diverse musical talent of Eswatini. Additionally, there will be fun games and activities for children, ensuring that families can enjoy the event together.

Dlamini urged the public to secure their tickets early. “People should buy tickets as soon as possible, as this is for us Eswatini,” he stressed, highlighting the significance of community participation in making the event a success. The festival not only serves as a platform for local artists but also fosters a sense of pride and unity among the people of Eswatini.

Sibo Pilson for Swazi Rally

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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SOUTH African DJ Sibon Pilson is set to headline the 32nd Swazi Rally, a much-anticipated event in the motorcycling calendar in the Kingdom.

This annual celebration, known for its vibrant atmosphere and thrilling motorcycle activities, is set to be an unforgettable experience for attendees. The rally, scheduled to take place from August 29 to 31, 2025, at Riders Ranch in Sidvokodvo, has also confirmed the participation of renowned South African DJs Oskido and PH.

The early bird tickets for this exhilarating event are now officially on sale, priced at E300, generating excitement among fans eager to be part of this iconic celebration. Tickets can be conveniently purchased online, allowing enthusiasts to secure their spots for what is expected to be a spectacular weekend.

The announcement of Sibon Pilson as a headliner has further heightened the anticipation surrounding the event. Known for her electrifying performances and contributions to the South African music scene, Sibon Pilson's presence is sure to enhance the rally's festive atmosphere. Fans are eagerly awaiting the combination of thrilling motorcycle festivities and high-energy musical performances that will characterise this year's event.

Sibon Pilson, affectionately known as City Gogo, is a prominent figure in Mpumalanga's entertainment industry. She has made a name for herself as a radio and TV presenter, content creator, master of ceremonies, DJ, and public speaker. Her diverse talents and vibrant personality have



▲ Sibon Pilson.

endeared her to many fans, making her a fitting choice to headline such a significant event.

In a move to make the Swazi Rally even more inclusive, the organisers have introduced Kids' Day tickets, aimed at engaging the younger generation in the thrilling world of motorsports. Priced at E150, these tickets offer families an opportunity to enjoy an action-packed day at the Motorsports Arena, featuring the

exhilarating Jungle Rush FMX show.

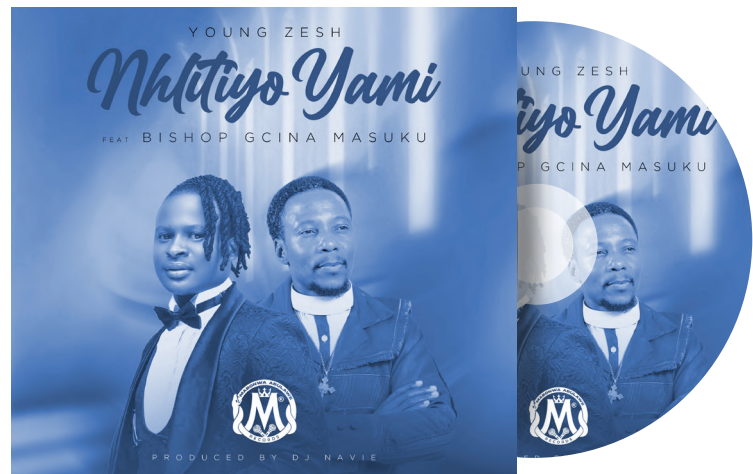
Since its inception in 1993, the Swazi Rally has evolved into a vibrant celebration of motorcycling culture, music, and camaraderie. Organised by Carlos Pavia and his wife, Sonia, along with a dedicated team, the event has become a staple on the Eswatini calendar. It draws thousands of participants and spectators not only from Eswatini but also from neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, and Botswana.

'Nhlitiyo Yami' soars to 15 000 views in just three days

TALENTED Eswatini music star Young Zesh has made waves in the local music scene with his latest single, "Nhlitiyo Yami," which has garnered an impressive 15,000 views on YouTube within just three days of its release.

The song also boasts an impressive 2,000 streams on Spotify. 'Nhlitiyo Yami' features a collaboration with the legendary gospel artist Bishop Gcina Masuku, adding a significant layer of depth and emotional weight to the track. Produced by the renowned DJ Navie and released under the label Mabonwa Abulawe Records, "Nhlitiyo Yami" delivers a powerful message wrapped in emotive melodies. The song has been expertly engineered by Sean Cast HQ and recorded at the Mabonwa Abulawe Studio in Mbabane, ensuring high-quality production that complements the heartfelt lyrics.

In an exclusive interview, Young Zesh described "Nhlitiyo Yami" as a deeply personal expression of his struggles with betrayal. He opened about the emotional turmoil he faced from those he once loved and trusted, stating, "This song is a personal cry from the heart. It reflects the deep pain of being betrayed by people who were close enough to touch your soul but chose to hurt



you instead of protecting you."

The lyrics of "Nhlitiyo Yami" delve into the complexities of human relationships, exploring themes of emotional scars and disappointment. Young Zesh elaborated, "The song captures the experience of being let down when your heart was open, honest, and pure. It's a reflection of the shock of realising that not everyone who claims to love you is loyal." The significance of the heart (iNhlitiyo) is central to the song's message. Young Zesh emphasised that it symbolises the inner pain that often goes unnoticed. "Betrayal leaves scars that are invisible to the eye but heavy on the soul,"

he remarked.

The collaboration with Bishop Gcina Masuku adds a layer of gravitas to the track. Masuku, a revered figure in Eswatini's gospel music scene, is known for his powerful vocals and spiritual messages. His contribution to "Nhlitiyo Yami" is expected to enhance the song's emotional resonance, bridging the gap between contemporary and traditional gospel music. Young Zesh is eager for fans to experience the song's message and has urged listeners to support it by streaming it on all digital platforms once it drops. "We are taking umculo weSiSwati to another level," he stated.



▲ EU Film Festival returns for its 4th edition.

EU Film Festival returns for its 4th edition

THE European Union (EU) Film Festival is returning for its highly anticipated fourth edition.

Set to take place at the Eswatini Theatre Club from September 11 to 13, 2025, this event promises to be a vibrant celebration of film, culture, and creativity, showcasing a diverse array of cinematic works from Europe alongside compelling narratives from Eswatini. Entry to the festival is free, making it accessible to all film enthusiasts, aspiring filmmakers, and the public.

This initiative aims to foster a love for cinema and provide a platform for dialogue and collaboration among creatives. The announcement was made via a post on the social media page of Alliance Française de Mbabane, generating excitement among the local artistic community.

"Lights, stories, action! Film enthusiasts, directors, and creators, mark your calendars for September 11-13, 2025, at the Eswatini Theatre Club for the 4th edition of the European Union Film Festival," the post enthusiastically declared. This year's festival is set to be a unique blend of captivating European cinema and bold storytelling from Eswatini, offering attendees an immersive experience in the world of film.

The festival is not only an opportunity to watch films but also serves as a hub for networking and collaboration. "Immerse yourself in a world of emotions, ideas, and inspiration, all in one place," the post continued. It emphasised the importance of creating a space where filmmakers, industry leaders, and storytellers can connect, share ideas, and grow their networks. This collaborative spirit is vital for the development of the film industry in Eswatini and the broader Southern African region.

Support

The EU Film Festival is made possible through the support of various partners, including the European Union in Eswatini, the Italian Embassy in Mozambique, the Finnish Embassy in Mozambique, the Swiss Embassy in South Africa, the Swedish Embassy in Mozambique, the French Institute in Pretoria, and the Embassy of Cyprus.

The festival will feature a selection of films that highlight the rich diversity of European cinema, showcasing genres ranging from drama and comedy to documentary and animation. Additionally, local filmmakers will have the opportunity to present their work, allowing audiences to engage with stories that reflect the unique cultural landscape of Eswatini.

Emtee apologises to Mshini Lekwadu

MSHINI Lekwadu, a content creator and Big Brother Mzansi season five contestant, recently responded to the leaked Instagram messages that featured her and rapper Mthembeni Ndevu, better known by his stage name Emtee.

In response, Mshini said in a media statement that the screenshots are misleading and lack context, and that Emtee should share the entire conversation.

She clarified that because she enjoys Emtee’s music, she publicly supported him while she was living in the Big Brother Mzansi house.

Screenshots are misleading
“After the show, he reached out to me via direct messages [DM] to express his appreciation for my support,” wrote Mshini.

“I responded by telling him [that] I am a fan and that I would love to be part of one of his music videos.” She clarified that after some time, the two had a brief conversation through Instagram DMs, during which he had enquired about her residence and the best time to visit.

“I responded with my address under the impression that our conversation was strictly business-related and in line with my support for his music.

“The screenshots shared publicly only show the part where I sent my address without full context.

“This is misleading and does not reflect the nature of our conversation. My intention was purely professional, and I take my brand, my supporters, and my reputation very seriously,” wrote Mshini.

Plan was to thank Mshini
In a statement released on Tuesday, Emtee said that although he does not personally know Mshini, he had seen her on Big Brother Mzansi and saw how she supports his career.

“I know I’m not perfect, very far from it, but I have a heart and empathy. I intended to meet her personally and thank her,” wrote Emtee.

“She has been nothing but kind to me, and I appreciate that. I did not post the conversations.”

He went on to apologise to Mshini, her team, and her loved ones and to state that he would never intentionally divulge their conversations in a way that would endanger her safety.

(Sunday World)



▲ South African rapper Mthembeni Ndevu, better known by his stage name Emtee.



▲ Seasoned actress Linda Sokhulu recently revealed on The Relebogile Mabotja podcast that having children was not something that was pressing for her.

Having children has never been a part of my plans

SEASONED actress Linda Sokhulu recently revealed on The Relebogile Mabotja podcast that having children was not something that was pressing for her.

A recent report by Statistics South Africa has shown that the fertility rate has steadily declined over the years, from an average of 2.78 children per woman in 2008 to 2.21 in 2025.

The total fertility rate is the average number of children a woman would have in her lifetime if she had children at the current rates for each age group.

More recent data show that births have been dropping since 2020.

Information from health facilities, birth registrations, child grant access, and school enrolments supports this downward trend. The 48-year-old actress, who has been in the industry for over 20 years, is one of the few individuals who remain fiercely private.

Different interpretation

She expressed that she will become a mother if it is her destiny, but it has never been a part of her plans.

“One thing that I know is that unlike some people who are parents and just waited for the moment to happen all their lives, it was not something that was pressing. I guess I always had a different interpretation of what being a parent is,” said Sokhulu.

Sokhulu said she doesn’t know how it feels to have kids, so she can’t say there’s a void. She added that not sharing with the public about her private life has always been intentional.

“We have got to be mindful about the people we are talking about that have got absolutely nothing to do with the work that we do.

“I wake up to go to work before anything else, and my relationships are mine.”

(Sunday World)

Cristiano Ronaldo and Georgina Rodríguez announce their engagement

CRISTIANO Ronaldo put a (huge) ring on it.

The soccer superstar has gotten engaged to his longtime girlfriend Georgina Rodríguez. Rodríguez shared the engagement news on Instagram Monday, posting a picture of a gigantic diamond ring on her left hand.

“Yes, I do,” Rodríguez wrote in a caption translated from Spanish. “In this and in all lives.”

Ronaldo and Rodríguez met in 2016 at a Gucci store in Madrid, Spain, where Rodríguez worked at the time. They began

dating shortly after, going public with their relationship in 2017.

The couple welcomed their first child, daughter Alana, in November 2017. They then had twins, daughter Bella and son Ángel, in April 2022, but Ángel trag-

ically died at birth. Rodríguez has also helped raise Ronaldo’s three other children — Cristiano Jr., who was born in June 2010, and twins Eva and Mateo, a daughter and son born via surrogate in June 2017.

Ronaldo, 40, is entering his fourth season with Saudi Pro League club Al-Nassr. The former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus star is a five-time Ballon d’Or winner who’s hoisted five Champions League trophies. He also won a European championship with Portugal in 2016.

Ronaldo is soccer’s all-time leading goal scorer at both the international level with 138 goals and overall with over 930 combined career goals between club and country.



▲ Cristiano Ronaldo put a (huge) ring on it.





EATING a low sodium diet can be easy and delicious when you know what type of recipes to make.

If a health professional has advised you to follow a low sodium diet, it may be challenging to find meals that are not too high in salt. Many popular foods, including restaurant meals and packaged foods, can be high in sodium.

Making homemade meals with whole ingredients and non-salt seasonings can help you reduce the amount of sodium you eat. To make low sodium eating a reality, it's helpful to have a list of recipes on hand.

How we define low sodium

We define a low sodium meal as a meal with 500 milligrams or less of sodium per serving. If you're looking for a low sodium snack, look for a snack with 250 milligrams or less of sodium per serving.

Roasted lamb with mint pesto and spiced carrots & potatoes

This low carb, high protein dinner consists of seared lamb loin and roasted carrots and potatoes. The lamb is topped with a mint pesto sauce made with garlic, mint leaves, pistachios, lemon juice, and olive oil.

This recipe recommends salting the lamb, vegetables, and pesto to taste, so there is no set amount of salt. However, each serving contains 247 milligrams (mg) of sodium. Since this recipe makes four servings, you may consider measuring out around 1,000 mg of salt to ensure that each serving contains around the estimated amount.

Sloppy joe with cabbage noodles

While traditional sloppy joes are usually made with hamburger buns, this low carb version uses cabbage as noodles. However, if you don't like cabbage, you can replace it with the low carb noodles of your choice, such as zucchini noodles or spaghetti squash.

Each serving contains 197 mg of sodium. It doesn't call for a specific amount, so you may want to measure out around 800 mg to ensure each serving contains around 197 mg. This recipe uses only salt for the cabbage noodles. However, it also calls for butter; ensure that the butter is unsalted.

Turkey taco bowl with rice

This balanced taco bowl contains brown rice, ground turkey, cherry tomatoes, jalapenos, red onions, corn, lime juice, and feta cheese. The turkey is cooked in a skillet, and the rice is cooked according to package directions. The rest of the toppings are arranged on top of the turkey and rice.

Each serving contains 0 mg of sodium, as no salt is called for in this recipe.

Almond-crusted trout with Brussels sprout salad

This recipe calls for coating the trout with egg and a mixture of almond flour and dill and pan-frying it until flaky. It is served with a side salad made with arugula, Brussels sprouts, and tomatoes.

Each serving contains 202 mg of sodium. Salt is used in the almond flour mixture to coat the fish, in the salad dressing, and on the fish itself. Since each step does not call for a specific amount, you may want to measure out around 800 mg of sodium so that each serving ends up with around 200 mg.

12 low sodium recipe ideas



Tilapia tacos with peach salsa

Both the coating for the fish and the peach salsa are salted to taste. Each serving contains around 135 mg of salt, so you may consider measuring out around 500 mg of salt to divide between the fish and the peach salsa. Consuming peaches may help reduce your risk of heart disease.

Coconut sweet potatoes with creamy kale and salmon

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends consuming two servings of fatty fish, such as salmon, per week. This is because they contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are good for your heart.

The mixture used to glaze the salmon and the vegetables is salted to taste, and more salt is needed to finish the dish. Each serving contains 368 mg of sodium, so you may want to measure out around 1400 mg of salt so that each serving contains around 368 mg.

Avocado tartine with spring veggies

A tartine is a French open-faced sandwich. This vegan tartine is essentially two pieces of avocado toast topped with grilled asparagus and arugula.

The asparagus and avocado are salted to taste. Each serving contains 264 mg of salt, so you may consider measuring out around

1,000 mg to use in the recipe to ensure each serving has around 250 mg.

Rice noodles with broccoli-almond pesto

The pesto in this vegan recipe is made with boiled broccoli, almonds, basil, garlic, olive oil, and lemon juice. The sauce is mixed with rice noodles, which are then topped with more broccoli and almonds.

Each serving contains 46 mg of sodium, so you may wish to measure out around 160 mg of salt. Salt is only called for to be added to the pesto in this recipe.

Red beans and sesame salad

This vegan, high fiber salad contains kidney beans, cucumbers, yellow onions, avocados, cherry tomatoes, lettuce, and alfalfa sprouts. It is important to choose low sodium kidney beans and rinse them if they come in a can, as this can remove excess salt.

Consuming kidney beans may reduce the risk of high blood pressure and promote better kidney health, especially for individuals who are monitoring their sodium intake.

Each serving contains 237 mg of sodium.

Autumn stew with pumpkin and chickpeas

This vegan recipe may have autumn in the name, but it can be a satisfying dish in

any season. It is made with carrots, onions, chickpeas, pumpkin puree, vegetable broth, orzo, nutritional yeast, and sage.

► Canned pumpkin is high in vitamin A, which can help support your heart health. Each serving contains 365 mg of sodium.

Vegetarian skillet

This recipe is packed with whole foods, including onions, black beans, tofu, cherry tomatoes, spinach, and dill. Everything is cooked in the skillet, and the recipe is ready in 20 minutes.

► Tofu may lower your risk of heart disease.

► Each serving contains 255 mg of sodium.

Sweet potato chana masala

Chana masala is an Indian chickpea curry. This dish features sweet potatoes, onions, and crushed tomatoes and is seasoned with cumin, coriander, and garam masala.

Each serving contains 322 mg of sodium.

The takeaway

Eating a low sodium diet may seem difficult at first, especially since many popular foods are high in sodium. However, it can be easy and delicious when you know what type of recipes to make.

You can try one of the recipes on this list to make nutritious, low sodium food at home. **Healthline**



ACCORDING to new research, unhealthy lifestyle habits could contribute to premature aging of the heart.

A new research letter unveiled a “heart age” calculator that suggests most Americans’ hearts are aging faster than their chronological age.

Other cardiologists have developed a method for measuring the heart’s “functional age” to help predict complications like heart disease.

Physical activity and eating heart-healthy foods are some of the best ways to preserve your heart’s biological age.

The concept of trying to understand heart health by determining its biological “age” relative to chronological age has become a topic of interest among cardiologists, researchers, and physicians.

Assessing the heart’s age could offer a simple, clear way to understand its overall health. It might also predict cardiovascular risks that could be minimized by making heart-healthy lifestyle changes.

Now, researchers have developed a new tool to calculate “heart age.” Using heart health measures like blood pressure and cholesterol levels, cardiologists say the heart age of most Americans is “older” than their chronological age.

In a research letter published on July 30 in JAMA Cardiology, scientists introduced the PREVENT heart age calculator that can predict long-term cardiac health. They say the estimate can be used by physicians during routine primary care visits to assess patients’ heart health.

Cardiovascular risk factors like a person’s age, sex, blood pressure, cholesterol, kidney health, smoking status, and comorbid conditions like diabetes, are fed into the calculator to determine future cardiac events.

Researchers say the PREVENT calculator uses contemporary data from a broader population compared to an older model that was introduced in a 2008 study and based on the well-known Framingham Heart Study.

In another recent study published in the European Heart Journal, researchers from the University of East Anglia in England published the results of a trial introducing a novel way to measure “functional heart age” using cardiac magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans. This “game-changer,” the researchers said, could help detect signs of heart disease earlier.

As these new research models suggest, the biological heart age of those with chronic health conditions like obesity and diabetes, or those with unhealthy lifestyles, may be higher than their chronological age.

Determining ‘heart age’ vs. biological age

To better understand the heart’s functional age, University of East Anglia researchers measured the amount of blood remaining in the heart’s left atrium after completing a contraction phase and examined the fraction of blood ejected from the left atrium with each heart contraction.

The method was validated using 366 heart patients with known cardiac risk factors.

Participants’ heart ages were older compared to healthy controls, and were significantly higher in people with conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, atrial fibrillation, and obesity.

“In healthy people, we found that heart age was similar to chronological age. But for patients with things like diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and atrial fibrillation — their functional heart age was significantly higher,” lead researcher Pankaj Garg, MD, from UEA’s Norwich Medical School and a consultant cardiologist at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, said in a press release.

“By knowing your heart’s true age, patients

Unhealthy lifestyles linked to faster heart aging

● Here’s what can help



could get advice or treatments to slow down the aging process, potentially preventing heart attacks or strokes. It could also be the wake-up call people need to take better care of themselves — whether that’s eating healthier, exercising more, or following their doctor’s advice. It’s about giving people a fighting chance against heart disease,” he added.

Jayne Morgan, MD, a cardiologist with Hello Heart, said that chronological age may not always be consistent with biological age. “The aging process is uneven throughout one’s life span,” she told Healthline. Morgan wasn’t involved in the new research.

Cheng-Han Chen, MD, medical director of the Structural Heart Program at MemorialCare Saddleback Medical Center in Laguna Hills, CA, who was likewise not involved in the research, told Healthline there is not yet an agreed-upon definition of “heart age.”

“This research is a good first step toward evaluating whether an imaging-based assessment of ‘heart age’ can provide clinically useful prognostic information,” Chen said.

Signs of heart aging

As people age, common heart changes may occur, even among healthy individuals with no prior history of heart problems.

For instance, the heart may begin to produce extra beats or occasionally skip a beat. This is not generally a problem unless it becomes persistent. If the heart is frequently racing or fluttering it may be a sign of arrhythmia. In addition, the heart’s chambers — its ventricles and auricles — may grow larger with age. As their walls thicken, the amount of blood they can hold decreases. The risk of arrhythmias, such as atrial fibrillation (AFib), increases, with the accompanying risk of stroke, particularly

among older adults.

Similarly, the valves controlling the flow of blood as it passes between the heart’s chambers may thicken and become stiffer, limiting the flow of blood.

Heart valves may also develop leaks, which could lead to fluid buildup in the lungs, feet, abdomen, or legs.

What causes premature heart aging?

As indicated by the new study, people with certain health conditions may have a higher risk of premature heart aging.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), four common factors that may lead to premature heart aging include:

► High blood pressure (hypertension)

— With higher blood pressure, the heart has to work harder to pump blood throughout the body. This can cause the lower left ventricle, the lower left chamber, to thicken and enlarge, increasing the likelihood of heart attacks and heart failure.

► Diabetes

— Research has found that having high blood sugar can damage blood vessels in the heart, leading to a buildup of fatty deposits there. It is associated with a greater likelihood of heart disease.

► High LDL cholesterol

— This causes a plaque buildup of a waxy, fat-like substance in arteries that can decrease blood flow to the heart, as well as the brain, kidneys, and other parts of the body.

► Obesity

— Obesity has been associated with both hypertension and high LDL cholesterol levels.

How to keep your heart young

There are currently no universal measurements for determining heart age, but the Australia Heart Foundation’s online Heart Age Calculator can provide you with a quick estimate.

“We are still in the early stages of understanding how best to determine a ‘heart age’ and how such a calculation could help us to better take care of patients,” Chen noted.

To preserve heart health and its functional age, following the American Heart Association’s Life’s Essential 8 is a great place to start. Here’s a closer look at how lifestyle factors influence heart health.

Exercise regularly

There is widespread consensus that 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise combined with strength training two days a week is the optimal amount for optimal heart health.

Leading a sedentary lifestyle has been consistently linked with an increased risk of heart disease and related deaths.

“A sedentary lifestyle causes circulation to slow. The heart muscle weakens, and leads to weight gain, high blood pressure, and insulin resistance,” Christopher Berg, MD, board certified cardiologist at MemorialCare Heart and Vascular Institute at Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, CA, explained to Healthline. Berg wasn’t involved in the study.

“Sitting for extended periods of time also promotes inflammation and poor arterial function, and as a result raises your risk of heart disease,” he said. “Even those who exercise can be at risk if they are sedentary for most of the day.”

Beyond exercise, there are ways to enjoyably add more movement to one’s day, including:

- taking walks
- standing up and briefly getting away from one’s desk
- doing yoga
- parking a longer distance from the door
- dancing
- engaging in any sport
- taking the stairs instead of the elevator when going up or down just a few floors
- gardening and doing housework

Eat a healthy, balanced diet

Build meals from healthy, unprocessed foods as much as possible, with an emphasis on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, beans, and nuts.

For protein, emphasize lean animal proteins. These include skinned poultry, fish, seafood, and low-fat dairy. Alternately, go with plant-based proteins such as beans, nuts, and lentils, tofu (soy), or seitan (wheat gluten). Prepare your healthy ingredients with plant-based oils. These include extra-virgin olive oil and avocado oil.

Try to avoid fast foods, processed meats, and other ultra-processed foods that tend to be high in trans fats that can damage the heart. **Healthline**

News In Pictures



▲ President of the Chamber of Deputies Hugo Motta sits in his chair after the end of a protest by allies of former president Jair Bolsonaro that blocked the resumption of sessions after the mid-year recess in protest against the house arrest of Bolsonaro



▲ A servicewoman of the 65th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces attends a military drill near a frontline in Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine.



▲ People try to extinguish a wildfire in the northwestern city of Canakkale province, Turkey.



▲ Maria Claudia Tarazona, wife of Colombian Senator Miguel Uribe Turbay who was shot in the head at a campaign event on June 7, stands next to his coffin, at a posthumous tribute in Colombia's Congress, in Bogota, Colombia.



▲ Protesters shout “cheaters” and gesture as the House of Representatives adjourns after Democratic lawmakers left the state to deny Republicans the opportunity to redraw the state’s 38 congressional districts, in Austin, Texas.



▲ U.S. President Donald Trump gestures as he speaks about Javelin anti-tank missiles next to U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi during a press conference about deploying federal law enforcement agents in Washington to bolster the local police presence.



▲ A flak jacket and a Palestinian flag are placed on the body of Al Jazeera journalist Anas Al Sharif, during the funeral for him, Mohammed Qreiqeh, Ibrahim Zaher, Mohammed Noufal and another colleague, who were killed in an Israeli strike, in Gaza City.

Chiefs finally announce Velebayi signing

KAIZER Chiefs have confirmed the signing of 22 year-old winger Asenele Velebayi.

Velebayi signs on a free transfer after being declared a free agent this week by a Premier Soccer League Dispute Resolution Chamber (DRC).

Chiefs' new man

"We would like to announce the signing of Asanele Velebayi," read a Chiefs statement.

"The Cape Town-born winger has signed a long term contract with the club."

"We are happy to finally have Asanele with us," added Chiefs sporting director Kaizer Motaung Jr.

"He is a great addition, and we believe he will add significant value because he is a perfect fit for our game model and the culture we have here at the club."

Chiefs have been pursuing the signature of Velebayi since before the start of the 2024/25 Premier Soccer League campaign.

At that stage Cape Town Spurs reportedly put a price tag of R12 million on his head. Spurs were relegated from the Motsepe Foundation Championship at the end of last season.

And Chiefs looked to seize an opportunity, believing they could sign the player as a free agent, with Spurs demoted to amateur status.

Spurs contested this, but this week Velebayi was declared a free agent, sparking outrage from the Mother City club.



▲ winger Asenele Velebayi.

'A legal and logical catastrophe'

"While on the surface it appears to be a victory for player freedom, the ruling is a legal and logical catastrophe – one built on contradictory reasoning and a wilful ignorance of contractual law. More alarmingly, it has fired a fatal shot into the heart of football development, threatening to make long-term investment in young talent an unsustainable, and ultimately pointless endeavour."

It remains to be seen if Spurs appeal the decision, but for now it seems Velebayi is free to play for Chiefs. Amakhosi's next match is a DStv Premiership clash with Polokwane City at FNB Stadium on Wednesday night.

Chiefs are also hoping to sign former Spurs forward Luke Baartman, with a similar case still awaiting an outcome.

(The Citizen)

Rassie full of praise for Joe Schmidt, talks up Wallabies' chances in Rugby Championship

SPRINGBOK coach Rassie Erasmus said the Wallabies will be out to honour their coach, Joe Schmidt, with an emphatic display in the Rugby Championship, adding that it is in their hands to win it all.

Erasmus expressed his own admiration for the outgoing coach, having worked with Schmidt during his time in Ireland.

Rassie: Wallabies are clicking

The Wallabies take on the Springboks in their first two Rugby Championship matches, first in Johannesburg this Saturday and then in Cape Town the following weekend.

Australia have not won at Ellis Park since 2009 but they are coming from an encouraging performance in their home series against the British & Irish Lions. They lost the series 2-1 but only due to a controversial refereeing decision in the dying minutes of the second game. The Wallabies won the final match emphatically, 22-12, and have spoken about carrying that momentum into the Rugby Championship.

Erasmus, who in a friendly wager with his fellow coaches thought the Wallabies would win the second Lions Test, was again full of praise for their resurgence in world rugby, after they came last in the last two Rugby Championships and failed to reach the World Cup quarter-finals for the first time in 2023.

"We are under no illusions that the moment you start clicking, start understanding each other and the real belief is there – it is not plastic belief – people don't just talk it up but they play it up," Erasmus said, after naming his squad for the first match.

"I think they are currently playing it up on the field. So I think this Rugby Champion-

ship is very open to all four teams."

Still, the Springbok coach said it was hard to know the level an opposition team was at physically and mentally until they actually played them.

Springbok coach lauds work done by Schmidt

Erasmus applauded the work done by Schmidt, who will be replaced by Les Kiss next season.

He said that while coaching Munster from 2017 to 2019, he actually reported to Joe Schmidt, who was coaching Ireland at the time, because of the organisational structure in Irish rugby.

"Joe is a great coach. He is a very particular guy, a very detail-driven guy. He certainly knows what he wants."

Erasmus said Schmidt would like to finish on a high, and the Wallabies have respect for him.

"Everyone is talking about the belief he brought back. The fight for the jersey is back. We have a lot of respect for that and also the squad he is building."

"Sacha and Handre will probably play in Cape Town, so we are just trying to spread the load a bit there. And we know Damian (Willemse, on the bench) can play flyhalf, so we feel we are well covered," said Erasmus on Monday after naming his team for the match on Saturday. Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus has backed Manie Libbok as his starting flyhalf for the team's Rugby Championship opener against Australia at Ellis Park on Saturday, but that does not mean he is necessarily ahead of Handre Pollard and Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu in the No 10 queue.

Also, captain Siya Kolisi will start a Test

Poland manager says Lewandowski wants to return to national team

ROBERT Lewandowski wants to play for his country again, Poland manager Jan Urban said on Tuesday, after the Barcelona striker quit the national team amid a row over the previous coach's decision to replace him as captain.

Urban was named in July to replace Michal Probiez, who resigned in June amid the spat over his decision to take the captain's armband away from Poland's all-time top scorer and hand it to Inter Milan's Piotr Zielinski.

Poland sit third in their World Cup qualifying group behind Finland and the Netherlands and Lewandowski is widely seen as vital to their hopes of reaching next year's tournament.

"I spoke with Robert Le-

wandowski by phone and asked if he wanted to come back," Urban told private broadcaster RMF FM.

"He said yes. So we've taken a step forward."

Asked whether Lewandowski would become captain again, Urban said discussions on the topic were ongoing.

"I wouldn't just like to talk to Robert, but also to those involved - Piotr Zielinski and the players on the team council. The decision will be mine, but I'd like to listen to the players and find out what they think."

Poland's next World Cup qualifier is against the Netherlands away on 4 September before they host Finland three days later.

Lewandowski, 36, has scored 85 goals in 158 appearances for Poland. (Supersport)



▲ Robert Lewandowski



▲ Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus.

for the first time at No 8, while Cheslin Kolbe and Damian de Allende miss out due to injuries.

"We felt we needed to have a 13 cover, Damian (de Allende) usually covers there, so that's why Canan (Moodie) is on the bench ahead of Handre and Sacha.

"We know Damian (de Allende) is world class, but he has a bit of a niggle and Andre (Esterhuizen) has never dropped us there. Jesse (Kriel), Canan and Ethan (Hooker) are all at Test match level, but Jesse is our most experienced."

(The Citizen)

PSG sign Ukrainian defender Illia Zabarnyi from Bournemouth

European champions Paris Saint-Germain said on Tuesday they have signed Ukrainian centre-back Illia Zabarnyi from Premier League club Bournemouth.

British media reports said the deal was worth around £57 million (\$76.7 million, €66 million).

“Paris Saint-Germain are excited to welcome Illia Zabarnyi,” PSG said in a statement, adding he would be the first Ukrainian ever to play for the club.

The arrival of Zabarnyi, 22, could jeopardise the place of Brazilian stalwart Marquinhos in the starting line-up.

Zabarnyi had an impressive 2024-2025 season in England when Bournemouth finished ninth and the club’s supporters voted him their player of the season in the previous campaign.

Bournemouth have now sold three of their first-choice defensive line-up from last season after Milos Kerkez moved to Premier League champions Liverpool and Dean Huijsen was transferred to Real Madrid.

Qatar-owned PSG, who thrashed Inter Milan 5-0 to win the Champions League for the first time in May, also signed highly-rated Lille goalkeeper Lucas Chevalier last Saturday, a move that appears to herald



▲ Ukrainian centre-back Illia Zabarnyi. the possible departure of Gianluigi Donnarumma.

The Italian international keeper has not been included in the squad for Wednesday’s European Super Cup final against Europa League winners Tottenham in Italy.

The absence of the 26-year-old,

who was outstanding in PSG’s march to European glory, could ignite interest from the Premier League heavyweights.

Manchester United and Chelsea are reportedly both interested.

(Supersport)

Alcaraz battles as Shelton, Zverev race into Cincinnati third round

CARLOS Alcaraz fought through a second-set slump to post a “rollercoaster” 6-1, 2-6, 6-3 victory over Damir Dzumhur in his opening match Sunday at the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Open. The Spaniard, playing his first tournament since losing to Jannik Sinner in the Wimbledon final, raced through the first set but completely lost his way in the second, dropping his serve twice against the 33-year-old Bosnian.

Alcaraz regained his intensity and cut down his errors in the third as a seventh ace took him to a match point that was converted when Dzumhur fired wide.

“It was just a rollercoaster,” said the second seed, who was winning his 12th straight match at the Masters 1000 level after taking the titles in Monte Carlo and Rome.

“Lots of good feelings, bad feelings, back to the good ones. I am happy to get the win at the end. I know that I have chances to do better.”

Alcaraz committed 44 unforced errors and said conditions in Cincinnati, where he was runner-up in 2023, were always tricky.

“The ball flies a lot, goes super fast,” he said. “You have to be ready to be in a good position for each shot and that is really difficult to do.”



▲ Tennis player Carlos Alcaraz.

Third seed Alexander Zverev found things more straightforward, winning 6-3, 6-3 against US wild card Nishesh Basavareddy in the night session.

Zverev needed just 66 minutes to get past Basavareddy, a 20-year-old ranked 109th in the world.

The German put 41 of his 50 first serves in play and didn’t face a break point. Basavareddy saved one match point with a blistering service return but Zverev secured the win with his

12th ace.

American Ben Shelton, coming off his first Masters 1000 title in Toronto, eased through 6-3, 3-1 when Camilo Ugo Carabelli retired with a knee injury.

Shelton’s early night was a boon after a draining Toronto tournament which only ended on Thursday night.

(Supersport)

Steely Sinner advances amid Cincinnati power-failure chaos

JANNIK Sinner ignored power failure interruptions and a blaring alarm to defeat Gabriel Diallo 6-2, 7-6 (8/6) on Monday’s day of distractions at the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Open. The top seeded defending champion got down to business against a Canadian ranked 35th who was plagued by eight first-set double-faults and 49 unforced errors in the match as he faced the best in the world.

Sinner recovered smoothly from an early break down and had his hands full on his way into the fourth round, sending over an ace on match point after saving a set point in the tie-breaker.

Play was stopped briefly with Sinner leading 4-2 as the audio portion of the electronic line-calling system suddenly failed.

Earlier, both players had to deal with flickering LED screens directly behind them courtside.

The pair agreed to soldier on without the system, with the chair umpire temporarily relaying the algorithm’s decisions – which he saw on his chair’s tablet – to the players when necessary as a re-boot was undertaken.

That minor malfunction came two hours after the chaos of a widespread power outage which completely stopped play around the grounds for 75 minutes.

Five minutes later, with Sinner leading 1-0 in the second set after winning the first, the chaos continued with an alarm going off somewhere in the stadium and play suspended for the third time.

Sinner and Diallo continued to carry on with the distraction blaring somewhat faintly in the background before it finally halted after another game.

Sinner polished off victory for his 23rd consecutive hard-court win in under two hours.

“It was a very difficult day at the office,” the Italian said. “You have to find the balance against these big servers. I struggled with that at times today.

“But I need tough matches

like this, I’m happy I got one before the Grand Slam... I’m happy about today, but I know I can do things better.”

US fourth seed Taylor Fritz endured a one-hour delay after the first set before defeating Lorenzo Sonego 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 for a 21st win in 25 matches.

“I can play better, but there has been no time to really train and get ready,” Fritz said. “I’m looking forward to fine tuning the week before the US Open.”

Compatriot Frances Tiafoe advanced past Ugo Humbert of France 6-4, 6-4 in 82 minutes and lines up next against Holger Rune, who beat Alex Michelsen 7-6 (7/4), 6-3.

NO 1 SABALENKA WINS

In the WTA event, top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka fought through a three-hour battle to hold off an inspired Emma Raducanu 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 7-6 (7/5) for a fourth-round spot in a repeat of a victory from the Wimbledon third round in July.

Defending champion Sabalenka endured a struggle but finished with two aces in the closing stages.

“I’m happy to get through this difficult match,” Sabalenka said. “I just hope tomorrow is a day off. I need time to recover from such a great battle.”

British No 1 Raducanu survived a 25-minute eighth game of the final set, which went to 13 deuces, with Raducanu saving four break points before finally holding for 4-all and eventually into a tiebreaker.

Sabalenka squeezed out victory with a sixth ace for 5-4 in the breaker and delivered her seventh on her second match point to win in three hours and nine minutes.

“It was all about momentum,” Sabalenka said. “I took some risks at the end, went for crazy shots, went to the net.”

Sabalenka is bidding for her 10th trophy at the 1000 level and second this season after winning at Madrid.

“I can take lessons from this,” Raducanu said. “With work and practice I think I can hold my level higher for longer.

(Supersport)



▲ Jannik Sinner

Stories by Chris Dlamini

THERE is money on the pool tables. Week in, week out, pool players have some cash to make through various competitions.

The Mvutjini Pool Room was one of the arenas to be in over the past weekend, with a host of big names countrywide battling it out in a Seniors Knockout Tournament.

Over 20 players took part in the competition that had a grand prize of E1,200 for the champion. It all started in the morning and continued until the afternoon.

Some of the big names in the tournament include David ‘Mdavu’ Masuku, Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula, and Dumsani ‘Dinho’ Malindzisa. The best of the day made it to the top four.

Champion Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi took home the E1 200 after defeating Romeo Da Silva Cunha 7-4 in the final. As runner-up, Romeo earned himself E800.

It must be mentioned that getting to the final was no walk in the park for Nhlabatsi and Romeo as they had to edge past tough rivals in Dodge and Mandlenkosi ‘Steering’ Mabaso.

Nhlabatsi narrowly won 4-3 against Dodge, while it was 5-3 for Romeo against Steering. The two losing semi-finalists received E500 apiece for their efforts. The prizes did not end with the top four but extended to the top eight as listed in the article.

Prizes and winners:

- 1. Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi - E1 200
- 2. Romeo Da Silva Cunha - E800
- 3. Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula - E500
- 4. Mandlenkosi ‘Steering’ Mabaso - E500
- 5. Dumsani ‘Dinho’ Malindzisa - E250
- 6. Mballi Dlamini - E250
- 7. Aviator - E250
- 8. Nqaba - E250

REPS’ ‘Mabura’ wins Mvutjini Seniors KO



▲ Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula lost out in the semi finals of the Mvutjini tournament.



▲ REPS Pool club star Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi receiving his E1 200 prize money.



‘Sphana’ E10 000 for Mnz. Teams Pool KO

PAY E300 and stand to win E5,000 in the Sphana Investments E10,000 Manzini/Matsapha Pool Teams Knockout Tournament.

This is all possible to achieve in only four days of blackball action on the pool tables of Manzini Pool Club (MPC) and Matsapha Police Academy. Each team under the Manzini/Matsapha Zonal League, sponsored by Sphana Investments, is expected to part with an E300 joining fee for the four-day pool action.

The dates for this competition are August 16 and 17 for the preliminary round, then August 18 and 19 for the final rounds of the tournament. This is effectively two weekends, the first being this weekend.

The tournament is also compulsory for all

teams under the Sphana Investments Pool League, with E500 set as the fine for failure to participate. Registration is ongoing through Dumsani ‘Dinho’ Malindzisa at 7674 4049 via MoMo, Unayo or ewallet. For those to use MoMo, withdrawal charges are to be included.

Meanwhile, the runners-up will pocket E3,000, then E1,000 apiece for the semi-finalists.

Prize Breakdown:

- 1. Champions - E5,000
- 2. Runners-up - E3 000
- 3. 3rd Place - E1 000
- 4. 4th Place - E1 000



▲ Manzini Pool Club.

Artwell Ndzinisa named cycling national team coach



▲ National team coach Artwell Ndzinisa with male riders Kwanele Jele and Muzi Shabangu.

By Sibusiso Masilela
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VETERAN cycling coach Artwell Ndzinisa has been named the cycling national team coach.

The MTN Khemani mentor will lead the national team during the 2025 World Cycling Championships, set to take place between September 21-24, 2025.

The national team comprises of two female riders, Nontsikelelo Mdlovu and Mandiswa Fakudze.

Ndzinisa’s appointment has been confirmed by the squad’s General Manager and Chef de Mission, Mduduzi Mkhabela.

“We are pleased to announce the national team coach and strongly believe that he is the right man for the position. Ndzinisa is

already training the team in preparation for the international assignment,” he said.

Ndzinisa is among the internationally trained coaches, which include Mbusi Motsa, William Kelly and Mandisa Matsebula among others.

Meanwhile, Mdlovu said she is geared up for the international championships.

“I am looking forward to the race, and I will do my level best to finish the course. This is a perfect opportunity for one to showcase her talent and a perfect platform for growth,” she said.

The championships will feature various categories, including Junior, Under-23, and elite races, with a special focus on women’s Under-23 events.

The road race will cover a challenging 267.5-kilometre course with an accumulated elevation of 5,500 metres, including steep climbs such as the wall of Kigali.

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE African Union Sports Council Region has displayed commitment towards the development of basketball in the country.

The regional sports body announced the donation of 3-on-3 basketball floor and 290 balls to Eswatini. The equipment includes 290 basketballs for the 3x3 and conventional categories. The donation was announced by Region V Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Stanley Mutoya announced the news on Tuesday at the Ministry of Sports, Culture, And Youth Affairs offices, where he is having a consultative meeting with local sports bodies.

This includes the Eswatini Sports and Recreation Council and Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOCGA). The Zimbabwe seasoned sports administrator said the donation was part of their commitment to uplift sports in the region.

“We are pleased to announce the donation of the equipment to Eswatini, which will be delivered in due course. We are pleased with the progress made by Sporting in the various sporting codes,” he said.

Minister of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima thanked the regional body for continuous support.

“We are grateful for the support from Region V, which plays a key role in the development of sports in the country and regionally,” he said.

Region V donates basketball equipment to Eswatini



▲ Region V CEO Stanley Mutoya with local sports officials led by Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima.



▲ Lucky Dlamini presenting medals to Manzini Central’s Mduduzi Ginindza.

ESSA Treasurer for Lubombo top post

By Sibusiso Masilela
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ESWATINI Schools Sports Association (ESSA) Treasurer Lucky Dlamini is eyeing a top football position.

Dlamini has been nominated for the Chairman position in the upcoming Lubombo Regional Football Association elections scheduled for August 24, 2025, at a venue still to be confirmed. He has been nominated alongside incumbent vice Chairman Thokozani Shongwe, and the successful candidate

will replace Nchomedus ‘Ace’ Mashwama .

The nominations were confirmed by Chairman of the Ethics Committee Siphosini Dlamini. The Chairman said the elections will be conducted smoothly and fairly.

“The committee shall endeavour, without exception, to observe general good governance principles, such as independence, transparency, and the obligation to avoid situations of conflicts of interest throughout the entire electoral process,” he said.

It’s a two-horse race in the vice president position between female administrator Phumzile Dlamini and Thulani Malaza.

Dlamini is also nominated for the

executive member and women’s seat in the Eswatini Football Association elections.

Dvokodweni member of Parliament and former Chairman Sifiso Shabalala has been nominated for the executive member position.

The full nominations

Chairman — Thokozani Shongwe, Lucky Dlamini

Vice Chairman — Phumzile Dlamini, Sifiso Dlamini

Member position — Lucky Dlamini, Thulani Malaza, Simo Sikhondze, Patrick Mkhathshwa, Zweli Ndzimandze, Sokubongwa Sikhondze, Mfanzile ‘Fash’ Simelane, Sifiso Shabalala, Duma Nyawo



Patrons hit back at ‘Rubber’

By Sibusiso Masilela
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MBABANE Highlanders patrons have hit back at the club’s former President, Bheki ‘Rubber’ Simelane.

The capital city giants’ veterans, through their Chairman Thembinkosi Mamba, says the termination of Simelane’s 18-month contract was lawful.

This is contained in his answering affidavits prepared by their lawyer Emmanuel Shabangu from Robinson & Bertrams Attorneys.

Simelane took the Patrons to court demanding his reinstatement as the

capital city giants’ President following the termination of his 18 months contract.

“The termination of the management contract was lawful and the contract to the application assertion was never reinstated,” the Patrons said.

Mamba further averred that Simelane breached his contract after he allegedly failed to pay the players’ salaries during the 2024/25 season.

“This was, in essence, a contract for personal service because it entailed administering the club, paying salaries, and looking after the welfare of persons associated with the club. It is established that parties to a personal service contract of this nature have at common lawful the

law the right to terminate a contract. In the present Instance, the respondents terminated the management agreement on Grounds of breach,”Mamba said.

Simelane is also challenging the appointment of South African businesswoman Shauwn Mkhize as the capital city giants’ President. He is represented by SM Jele Attorneys.

Mkhize has been cited as the third respondent on the matter, and she is represented by Nkosingivile Dlamini from Dynasty Inc. Attorneys.

Other respondents include the Premier League of Eswatini and the Eswatini Football Association. The matter has been postponed to August 21, 2025, by Judge Titus Mlangeni.



▲ Disqualified EFA elections candidate Peter ‘Touch’ Magagula.

‘Touch’, Bhekani withdraw appeals

By Sibusiso Masilela
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DISQUALIFIED Eswatini Football Association elections candidates Peter ‘Touch’ Magagula and Bhekani Khumalo have both gracefully accepted their fate in the EFA elections.

The two administrators were both discarded in the executive committee positions through the vetting process conducted by the Ethics Committee, ahead of the highly anticipated elective General Assembly scheduled for August 17, 2025 at Hilton Garden Court. Magagula and Khumalo had challenged their disqualification through the EFA appeals board. Magagula confirmed the latest news. Magagula stated: “I will not pursue the appeal in the interest of the sport and in the spirit of fair play.”

Magagula is a former Chairman of the Premier League of Eswatini and once served as vice president of the mother body by virtue of his previous position. He is also a member of the EFA Technical Committee.

Affirmed

Khumalo also affirmed the latest developments. Khumalo stated, “I have decided not to proceed with the appeal in respect of the sport.”

Khumalo is a former Chairman of the Shiselweni Regional Football Association and ex member of the EFA Safety Committee.

Simelane is vying for a second term as EFA president. He is competing with his deputy, Mashumi Shongwe, in the hot seat ahead of the elective General Assembly scheduled for August 17, 2025, at Hilton Garden Court.

It’s a five-horse race in the vice president position between the incumbent Steve Horton, Nichomedus ‘Ace’ Mashwama, Sonnyboy Mabuza, Simaga Nhleko, and Nkhosingiphile Shongwe. The executive member position battle will be between Sicelo Nene, Musa Mamba, Aaron ‘Katalala’ Mavimbela, Sibusiso ‘Scorpion’ Nxumalo, and Phumzile Dlamini.

Dlamini is also contesting with Sindi Dlodlu for the Women’s executive member position.



▲ Disqualified EFA elections candidate Bhekani Khumalo.

Nsingizini, Leopard dominate Sihlangu squad

By Sibusiso Masilela
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CAF envoys Nsingizini Hotspurs and Royal Leopard are dominating the Sihlangu squad for the two FIFA World Cup qualifiers against Libya and Cameroon.

The Confederation Cup bound Leopard has got the highest number of players, with six of players being called up by Croatian coach Zdravko Logarusic for the back-to-back fixtures between September 4-8, 2025.

The squad will report for full time camp between August 18-September 11, 2025.

The players called up from the Edwin Matsebula club include Mlamuli Makhanya, Ayanda Kunene, Mzwandile Mabelesa, Junior Magagula, Gift Gamedze, and Simanga Masangane. Meanwhile, reigning MTN Premier League champions have five players in the squad, such as Kwakhe Thwala, Neliswa ‘Tiger’ Dlamini, Nkhosingiphile Shongwe, Thubelihle Mavuso, and Khanyakwezwe Shabalala.

The league’s 2024/25 player of the season, Yekisizwe Khumalo from Nsingizini Hotspurs, has been left out of the 20-men squad together with two veteran strikers Sabelo ‘Sikhali’ Ndzinisa (Green Mamba) and Felix ‘Fela’ Badenhorst (Royal Leopard).

The two sides will represent the country in the 2025 CAF interclub competitions with Nsingizini set to take on Zimbabwean side Simba Bhora in the champions league while Leopard will take on Namibia’s Young Africans between September 21-28, 2025.



▲ Sihlangu Semnikati.

Buffaloes have three players in the squad; Innocent Dlamini, Bongwa Matsebula, and Siphosethu Mabilisa. The squad is contained in a document sent by EFA Chief Executive Officer Frederick Mngomezulu to the Premier League of Eswatini also in possession of this publication.

The nation’s pride is sitting at the bottom of Group D with two points in the ongoing qualifiers.

The full squad

Goalkeepers

- ▶ Khanyakwezwe Shabalala - Nsingizini
- ▶ Mlamuli Makhanya - Royal Leopard

Defenders

- ▶ Philiso Newman - Mbabane Swallows
- ▶ Gift Gamedze - Royal Leopard

- ▶ Siphosethu Mabilisa - Young Buffaloes
- ▶ Mxolisi Manana - Green Mamba
- ▶ Nkosingiphile Shongwe - Nsingizini
- ▶ Mthobisi Zwane - Moneni Pirates

Midfielders

- ▶ Junior Magagula - Royal Leopard
- ▶ Mzwandile Mabelesa - Royal Leopard
- ▶ Simanga Masangane - Royal Leopard
- ▶ Ayanda Kunene - Royal Leopard
- ▶ Kwakhe Thwala - Nsingizini Hotspurs
- ▶ Thubelihle Mavuso - Nsingizini Hotspurs
- ▶ Neliswa ‘Tiger’ Dlamini - Nsingizini
- ▶ Bongwa Matsebula - Young Buffaloes
- ▶ Innocent Dlamini - Young Buffaloes

Strikers

- ▶ Philani Mkhonto - Sea Birds
- ▶ Mayibongwe Mabuza -Sea Birds
- ▶ Joseph Gibonga-Sea Birds



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Eswatini Wednesday 13 August, 2025
Daily News
Sport

Patrons **hit back** at 'Rubber'

... Mbabane Highlanders Patrons, in Court papers, say estranged club President Bheki 'Rubber' Simelane breached his contract by allegedly failing to pay players salaries during the 2024/25 season. **Page 23**