



► His Majesty King Mswati III after commissioning the traditional Butimba (hunting expedition) at the Ngabezweni Royal Residence on Sunday, marking the continuation of one of Eswatini's long-standing cultural traditions. (SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 3)

## PSPF to increase retirement lump sum pay from 25% to 33%

By Lwazi Dlamini  
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# PSPF to increase retirement lump sum pay from 25% to 33%

By Lwazi Dlamini  
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**BARELY** a fortnight after announcing a 4.2 per cent pension increase for all its beneficiaries effective April 1, 2025, the Public Service Pensions Fund (PSPF) is proposing to increase the lump sum paid at retirement from 25 per cent to 33 per cent.

This is one of the proposals that PSPF has put on the table as part of the ongoing process to review the Public Service Pensions Order No. 13 of 1993.

On Thursday, August 14, 2025, the PSPF Board and Management team met with the Ministry of Public Service Portfolio Committee.

The presentation that lasted for about two hours was mainly centred on why the need to review the Public Service Pensions Order, areas that will be reviewed, and the proposed changes to the PSPF Rules.

Then on Friday morning, the Portfolio Committee was taken on a tour of the projects that are currently undertaken by PSPF to assess the progress. These projects were the ESASSCO Building in Mbabane, Paper Tech in Matsapha, and the Oncology Centre in Manzini.

“Since the review started, we engaged our stakeholders in various forums, including our Annual Stakeholder Forum, and most of these inputs we made are informed by the members through these engagements. The



▲ PSPF Board and Management engaging the Portfolio Committee.

reviews are done to ensure that we continue to deliver our mandate in an accountable, transparent and sustainable manner that ensures that we continue to offer an excellent, memorable retirement service experience to our members,” PSPF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Masotja Vilakati said.

When quizzed on why PSPF is reviewing the Public Service Pensions Fund order, Vilakati said mainly it is to separate the Act from the rules of the scheme.

“Also, to align the Act and the Rules to the Retirement Funds Act, 2005 and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini. To present to the Portfolio Committee about the consultations that were done with the members of the Fund and the Employer and further to ensure a seamless application of all relevant legislation and remove any con-

flicts,” he said.

He said the Areas of the Act that need to be reviewed include the following: -

- Recognition that the Fund is under regulation and supervision by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) and specifically under the Retirement Funds Act, 2005
- The Retirement Funds Act, 2005 provides a legal framework with respect to the appointment and removal of the Board of Trustees, appointment of the Principal Officer (CEO), reporting intervals, licensing of the pension fund, the expected standards for the conduct of officials of the fund, attachment of pension benefits, distribution of death benefits, etc
- The Retirement Funds Act, 2005, also provides definition of terms often used in

pension funds, such as dependent, annuity, etc. For instance, in Section 2 of the Retirement Funds Act, 2005, a “dependent” is defined as someone that the member of the retirement fund is legally liable to maintain, such as a spouse, including those in customary or religious unions; children, including posthumous, adopted, and illegitimate children. It also includes anyone else who would have been legally dependent on the member had they not died. Anyone not legally entitled to maintenance but who, in the opinion of the Board, was dependent on the member for support.

Vilakati further stated that areas of the Rules that need to be reviewed include the following: -

- Increase of the lump sum payable at retirement from 25 per cent to 33 per cent
  - Treatment of contract staff between the Fund and the employer
  - Portability of pensions, to allow members to transfer their pensions from one employer to the next, in case of resignation
- Calculation of the spousal annuity and eligibility in case the principal member dies
- “The presentation was, therefore, to acquaint the Portfolio Committee of the identified changes in both the Act and the Rules and ensure that they understand the rationale of the changes. The process to review the Public Pensions Order, 13 of 1993, is still at the Attorney General’s Office stage. PSPF is finalizing the amendments that were identified by the AG’s Office and will be submitted as soon as they are completed,” he added.

## Eswatini raises E1.2 billion under JSE Bond Programme

By Delisa Magagula

**THE Central Bank of Eswatini has confirmed that the Government’s E4 billion Protea Bond Programme, listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in 2024, has so far raised E1.186 billion.**

This update was delivered on Friday when Governor Dr. Phil Mnisi tabled the Central Bank’s 2024/2025 Integrated Annual Report.

The Protea Bond Programme was launched in May 2024 with the objective of broadening Eswatini’s sources of funding, diversifying debt instruments, and attracting a wider investor base through the South African capital market.

According to the Central Bank, the programme has made steady progress since its debut, with nearly 30 per cent of the full E4 billion target already secured.

The bonds were issued in tranches, each listed on the JSE, and have attracted participation from regional investors.

Governor Mnisi described the progress as part of a broader effort to strengthen financial resilience and improve market integration.

“We have made tangible strides across strategy, innovation, and support to our domestic economy,” Dr. Mnisi said.

The Protea Bond Programme was designed to meet several strategic objectives:

- Provide government with an alternative and reliable source of financing.
- Support fiscal sustainability and reduce reliance on short-term borrowing.
- Enhance Eswatini’s presence in regional capital markets.
- Create benchmarks that could improve the pricing of other government and corporate issuances.

The Central Bank explained that proceeds from the bond programme are being channelled towards financing government operations, including infrastructure and service delivery.

Beyond the bond programme, the Integrated Report outlined key economic and financial sector developments during the year under review.

Meanwhile, with the gross official reserves, the Bank reported that reserves increased from E7.8 billion in the previous year to E9.1 billion, equivalent to an import cover of approximately four months.

“Inflation rate eased to 3.9 percent compared to 4.7 percent recorded the previous year. This was attributed to stable food prices and improved supply conditions. The Bank strengthened its position in gold holdings, which remains an important component of Eswatini’s reserves portfolio,” reads the report in part.

It further states that the banking sector stability banks were reported to be well-capitalised, with strong liquidity positions and profitability sustained despite economic



▲ CBE Governor Dr. Phil Mnisi.

headwinds.

Governor Mnisi highlighted these indicators as evidence that the financial sector remained resilient.

The Central Bank also underscored the domestic impact of its operations. The Ezulwini Project, valued at E160 million, engaged over 30 local firms in construction, engineering, consultancy, and other services.

The Bank added that this direct involvement of local companies demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that major projects contribute to job creation and private sector growth.

The report detailed how the Central Bank had redefined its institutional strategy to focus on three central pillars: purpose, perfor-

mance, and realignment.

The Bank noted that these changes were designed to ensure that its activities remain relevant to Eswatini’s current and future economic needs. This included closer alignment with government policy priorities, enhanced transparency, and emphasis on measurable outcomes.

Governor Mnisi reported that during the year under review, the Bank also hosted several regional central banks for technical exchanges and knowledge-sharing engagements.

In terms of governance, the Bank reported progress in resolving legacy issues related to the Swaziland Women Economic Empowerment Trust (SWEET) and Diamond Africa.

The Governor said these matters were handled with the objective of safeguarding financial integrity and protecting stakeholders.

The Bank also highlighted the recognition it received for best practices in coin management and the design of commemorative banknotes. Staff members were also acknowledged internationally for their technical contributions to central banking.

The Integrated Report noted a milestone in financial inclusion with the licensing of Letshego Eswatini Bank as the first digital bank in the country. Letshego was granted a 12-month provisional license to roll out digital banking services, which the Central Bank described as a significant step toward expanding access to financial services.



▲ Lacwabetelako in high spirits as they get ready for the Butimba.

▲ His Majesty King Mswati III on Sunday commissioned the traditional Butimba (hunting expedition) at the Ngabezweni Royal Residence, marking the continuation of one of Eswatini's long-standing cultural traditions.

## King commissions Butimba

By Thokozani Mazibuko

**HIS Majesty King Mswati III on Sunday commissioned the traditional Butimba (hunting expedition) at the Ngabezweni Royal Residence, marking the continuation of one of Eswatini's long-standing cultural traditions.**

The Butimba is a royal-led event where warriors, under the guidance of the King, embark on a hunting expedition within a designated game reserve. The hunt is carried out with strict cultural protocols, and only

selected species of game animals are targeted and killed.

The expedition is not merely about hunting but carries deep cultural and symbolic significance. It is a tradition rooted in strengthening unity among the nation's warriors, fostering discipline, and connecting emaSwati with the ways of their forefathers.

Commissioning the event, His Majesty underscored the importance of cultural preservation and national pride, describing Butimba as a practice that reinforces the values of courage, responsibility, and respect for nature. "Through Butimba, we are not only reviving an important cultural practice but also teaching future generations the values

of togetherness, endurance, and respect for our environment," His Majesty stated.

The warriors, who will take part in the expedition, are expected to engage in traditional hunting methods under the King's leadership. According to cultural custodians, the selective hunting of game animals is carefully managed to ensure it does not pose a threat to conservation efforts, while maintaining the authenticity of the age-old practice.

Historians note that Butimba was historically a vital event in the Eswatini nation, serving as both a source of sustenance and a test of bravery and skill for warriors. Today, it stands as a cultural symbol that preserves

heritage while adapting to modern conservation standards.

The commissioning ceremony at Ngabezweni was accompanied by traditional songs and dances, with hundreds of emaSwati in attendance to witness the event. The atmosphere was charged with excitement and anticipation as warriors prepared to join the King on the expedition.

This year's Butimba precedes other significant cultural ceremonies such as the Umhlanga Reed Dance, reaffirming Eswatini's commitment to safeguarding its traditions while uniting the nation through shared heritage.

## Over 5 homes burnt down, ENFRES blames understaffing

By Thokozani Mazibuko

**OVER five homes including, umphakatsi burnt down over the weekend and fire-fighters are blaming being understaffed as the main reasons why they could not control the fires as most of them have been temporarily relieved from their duties to prepare for the upcoming Fire Day celebration.** According to sources within the Eswatini National Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Service (ENFRES), who chose to remain anonymous in fear of victimisation, they were understaffed as most of their colleagues have been allegedly excused to prepare for the upcoming Fire Day, whose date has unfortunately not yet been announced yet.

This, they alleged has resulted in them not being able to attend to fire accidents which break out across the country whenever they were called upon by members of the public to do so, a scenario which played itself out even last year during the preparations of the Fire Day.

They alleged that so serious was the situation such that only four fire-fighters would be deployed to a shift, with one of them working in the control room.

"This means that only three fire personnel would be actively available to put out fires on such instances. When we receive calls from members of the public at the same time, reporting different fire incidents that have broken out across the country, we



could only attend to one incident at a time, resulting in some structures burning down uncontrollable," alleged the sources.

They pointed out that testament to this was that over five homes, including umphakatsi were burnt down over the weekend and they could not attend to the incidents as they were thin on the ground.

They pointed out that at Esigangeni area, a grass fire broke out and burnt down three houses, while another one burnt a house at Bahai area.

They stated that Ekupheleni area an undisclosed number of houses were also burnt by grass fires as well as at Lushikishini Mankayane area, where umphakatsi and some homes were burnt down.

They pointed out that they were worried that their inability to attend to the fire incidents, despite being called upon to do so, will be misinterpreted by members of the public, who might think that they were

engaging on a go-slow strike due to their unpaid overtime. "Even though it is an open secret that we are aggrieved that we have still not received our overtime monies, however, we understand our mission and therefore, we will never gamble with people's lives and property by engaging on a strike while their properties were being destroyed by fires," said the sources.

The sources mentioned that apart from the fire incidents, they were mandated to attend to road accidents as well, something which becomes extremely difficult for them of late since they were extremely understaffed.

They pointed out that the situation was so serious such that at one fire station situated in the Lubombo region, a fire-fighter had to attend to a fire incident all by himself.

"He took a horse and trailer truck and went out to put out a fire on his own without the support of other fire-fighters," alleged

the sources. They mentioned that there was no need for their superiors to emulate police officers by calling upon fire-fighters to camp and prepare for the Fire Day.

This, they said, was because unlike the police force, fire-fighters were few in number and they did not have recruits like the police officers.

The fire-fighters mentioned that apart from being understaffed, the equipment's that they were using was worn out.

"For example, most of the trucks that we are using have broken down while those who still functional are old," said the sources.

ENFRES Public Relations Officer Mandla Dlamini confirmed that there were fire incidents which they could not attend to over the weekend.

However, he said this could not be blamed on ENFRES being understaffed due to the preparation of the Fire Day but rather he said members of the public were to be blamed for such unfortunate occurrences.

This, he said was because they discovered that most of the fires that they were attending to were because of members of the public's negligence and failure to adhere to safety precautions.

"Most of the fires that we had to attend to did not break out due to natural causes, but they were started by people, hence members of the public should try to cooperate with ENFRES by refraining from deliberately starting these fires, otherwise even if we could have 10 000 fire-fighters deployed at a fire station, they could not be able to attend to all these fires caused by people's negligence," he said.

# 'Marriage is still not outdated'

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

**"DESPITE the discouraging reports, marriage is not out dated."**

These sentiments were shared by Reverend Jabulani Msane during the 30th anniversary of the President of The Alliance Church in Eswatini (TACE), Reverend Patrick Mkhalipli and his wife Esther Mkhalipli.

The event which was a double thanksgiving service, as the president of TACE was also celebrating his 60th birthday, was held at The George Hotel in Manzini on Saturday.

When making his remarks, Msane, whose video clip did the rounds on social media platforms, pointed out that nowadays many young people were afraid to get married because of the high rate of divorce cases as reported by media outlets.

He mentioned that it was a pity that the news reporters were reporting only the cases of those who were getting divorced and omitting those couples that have stood the test of time in their marriages and ended up being together for so many years, just like the Mkhalipli family.

Msane mentioned that the years that the Mkhalipli family have spent together was proof enough that the institution of marriage was not out dated.

"Despite the discouraging reports, marriage is not out dated," he said.

Msane further advised young couples that if they wanted to spend many years in marriage just like the Mkhalipli family, they should make sure that they did not deny each other conjugal rights.

TACE Board member, Reverend Homeboy Dlamini, thanked Mkhalipli on behalf of the Board for choosing Alliance Church out of all the churches he could have chosen. He also thanked Mkhalipli's wife and children for supporting him in his journey.

Dlamini further thanked Mkhalipli for the sacrifices he has made for the church, while stating that they have learnt a lot from him during his tenure as president of TACE.

"We also like to appreciate you for serving the church diligently and with integrity since

you did not just become president of TACE, but you served in many positions within the leadership structure of the church before becoming the president," he said.

He mentioned that in a bid to honour him for his selfless service, the TACE National Church Board deemed it fit to present him with a mantle or coat, authorising him to preach not only locally, but to nations all over the world.

## Remarks

When making his remarks, Mkhalipli, who began by reading the Bible in the book of Psalm 32:8 where it says "I will instruct you. I will teach you the way that you should go. I will advise you as my eyes watch over you," thanked God for guiding them and helping them to live a holy life as a couple.

He said the aforementioned verse, where God assured him that he will instruct him and teach him the way that he should go, is what gave him the strength to fearlessly execute any task that he was entrusted with, regardless of how big it was.

He thanked his family, friends and colleagues, as well as the church for supporting him throughout his ministry.

When revealing the secret to their prolonged marriage, Mkhalipli mentioned that all they did was to minimise fighting against

each other as a couple.

"If you waste your energy and time fighting against each other as a couple, you will not have any strength left to fight the real enemy when he attacks you," he said.

He said they made it a point that they did not get angry at each other, but rather, they would iron out their differences before they went to bed, in the event they did not see eye to eye on a particular matter.

As a result, he said the longest fight they have ever had without resolving it, lasted for a period of three days.

"If you go to bed angry at each other as a couple, facing the opposite direction, a demon sleeps in between the two of you and it ends up destroying your marriage," he said.

He said the reason why they decided to host the double thanksgiving service was to thank God for preserving their lives thus far in spite of the challenges they had to endure as a couple.

Mkhalipli mentioned that his wife miraculously survived many car accidents and two of them were very serious, hence they had every reason to thank God.

He said what was so strange about the accidents was that they were occurring at the same time of the year and at the same place.

"The accidents were occurring on October



▲ TACE President Patrick Mkhalipli of the Alliance Church in Eswatini.

15 and in one of them the car which my wife was driving, rolled over several times whilst she was inside but surprisingly she survived and she never bled," he said.

Moreover, he said he and his wife survived the deadly Covid-19 virus though God's grace.

## 8Bet spends E70 000 on Customers

By Sibusiso Masilela  
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### CARING for customers.

8 Bet has invested E70 000 in customers. The local betting company handed over groceries amounting to E3 000, Petrol vouchers, Water bills, and electricity vouchers worth all worth E15 00 to 15 customers under the 8Bet Cares theme.

The customers participated in various betting games.

8 Bet Marketing Officer Mngqobi Tsabedze said the event was part of their corporate social responsibility during the presenta-

tion held at their offices on Friday.

"We are pleased to present the vouchers to our customers. This is a way of interacting with customers and giving back to the community," he said.

Tsabedze further revealed that the company promotes responsible betting.

"Our platform is open for citizens who are 18 years and above. We will continue serving the nation with the best products and look forward to the 2025 8Bet Trade Fair cup," he said.

The presentation was also attended by the company's Chief Operations Officer, Belinda Motsa. Meanwhile, the company's customers expressed satisfaction over the



company's products. This was revealed by one lucky customer, Bethu Msibi, during the recent presentation. "We are happy with 8 Bet products and services. The company always makes us a priority, and we will continue supporting them. We are grateful for the vouchers, which are a sign that the company serves the people," she said.

8 Bet has pumped in E2.5 million towards the 2025 Bet Trade Fair.

## Only 8 OVCs throughout the country have made it to tertiary - Dr Huber's Foundation

**EIGHT destitute children have made it to tertiary institutions across the country, through support from Dr Huber's Foundation, with one of them having already graduated.**

This was revealed by Nomahlubi Dlamini, the Dr Huber's Foundation's Secretary.

According to Dlamini, since it started operating in 2012, the orphanage has changed and shaped the future of the children, who have lived and were currently living there.

"We are situated at Malindza, Mayaluka. We have seen so much progress especially with our children's education. So far, we have one that graduated at the Eswatini Co-operative Development College (ECO-DEC) in 2023. One girl is studying at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA), another girl is at the Institute of Development Management (IDM) College and one boy is pursuing his studies at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT)," she said.

She said their recent major breakthrough was four boys, who got admitted at Mpaka Vocational Centre.

"They did not meet the higher universities requirements, but we are so thrilled that this

did not discourage them and as such, they did not quit," Dlamini said.

She mentioned that the four boys will be pursuing four different courses namely; Electrical, Carpentry, Plumbing as well as Refrigeration and Air-conditioning.

Dlamini stated that all these children joined them while attending primary school and they have made it this far.

She mentioned that while they appreciate the government's efforts of ensuring that every Liswati has access to tertiary education, none of the students from the orphanage received a government scholarship, but the foundation paid their school and tuition fees, accommodation and food.

Dlamini highlighted that most of the youth in Malindza ended up not finishing school due to different reasons and therefore, they were happy to see their children dedicating themselves to education.

She mentioned that the Director of the Foundation, Dr Bernhard Huber, who was recently in the country, expressed his eagerness to continue supporting children in the country.

"He mentioned that he is motivated to even do more for them," Dlamini said.



▲ The Dr. Huber's Foundation recently donated food hampers to the less privileged.

## Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has reported a surge in arrests across the country during the past week, with a total of 15 individuals taken into custody in connection with various serious offences.

Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, confirmed the arrests in a statement, highlighting cases that range from murder, attempted murder, theft, fraud, and drug-related crimes.

**Pigg's Peak: Murder case**

In Pigg's Peak, a 40-year-old man from Mgobodzi was arrested and charged with murder after he allegedly shot a 50-year-old man of Vusweni with a 12-bore shotgun on 19 August 2025 at about 12:15 hours. The victim sustained gunshot wounds to the right hand and upper back and was certified dead upon arrival at the Pigg's Peak Government Hospital.

**Lavumisa: Drug trafficking bust**

Four men aged 26, 34, 38, and 48, hailing from kaKholwane, kaBhekinkhosi, Maphungwane, and Ngculwini, respectively, were arrested at the Lavumisa border. They were found in possession of 123.39 kilograms of dagga, which had been concealed between planks inside a truck. The suspects face charges of contravening the law on prohibited substances.

**Mbabane: E500,000 theft at Ngwenya Mine**

Police in Mbabane arrested three suspects aged 31, 32, and 44, from Thunzini and Mafutseni, for their alleged involvement in a theft case at Ngwenya Mine. On 18 August 2025, industrial metal components valued at E500,000 were dismantled and stolen. Following investigations, all the stolen components

# 15 people arrested across the country in one week



were successfully recovered.

**Nhlangano: attempted murder**

In Nhlangano, a 46-year-old man of Hotelela was arrested after allegedly shooting his 32-year-old nephew in the neck with a pistol. The incident occurred on 15 August 2025 at around 17:30 hours. The victim survived the attack and reported the matter to the authorities, leading to the suspect's arrest.

Hlathikhulu: 170kg of dagga seized

Two men aged 31 and 48, both from Eku-phumleni, were arrested at Buseleni area along the MR9 public road while transporting 170 kilograms of dagga in a Nissan van. The suspects failed to produce a licence or permit for possession of the substance.

**Hluthi: fraud at Buy Cash Hardware**

At Hluthi, three individuals were arrested for fraud. A 37-year-old man of Zameya, along with two women aged 29 years from kaMfishane and Luve, were charged after allegedly defrauding Buy Cash Hardware of E208,040 between February and June 2025. The fraud is suspected to have been carried out internally by employees.

**Siphofaneni: brutal murder**

In Siphofaneni, a 52-year-old man of Themba area was arrested in connection with the murder of a 45-year-old man from the same community. The incident occurred on 12 August 2025, when the victim was allegedly kicked and stamped on the chest and stomach multiple times. He later died while undergoing treatment at Sithobelweni

Health Centre.

**Police call for vigilance**

Senior Superintendent Vilakati commended officers for their swift response in ensuring that perpetrators of violent crimes and economic offences are brought to book. She further urged members of the public to remain vigilant, cooperate with the police, and continue reporting suspicious activities within their communities.

**TOTAL ARRESTS THIS WEEK:**

Pigg's Peak - 1  
Lavumisa - 4  
Mbabane - 3  
Nhlangano - 1  
Hlathikhulu - 2  
Hluthi - 3  
Siphofaneni - 1

## 116 drunk driving cases recorded over the weekend

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has raised concern following a spike in cases of drunk driving, with 116 motorists arrested over the past weekend alone.

According to the Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, traffic officers across the country mounted several roadblocks and patrols targeting motorists suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol.

The arrests were made as part of ongoing efforts to curb road carnage and promote road safety. "The figures are alarming and a clear indication that some drivers continue to disregard road safety laws. Driving under the influence is one of the leading causes of accidents in Eswatini. We will continue to intensify operations to ensure that offenders face the full might of the law," Vilakati said.

The spike in cases comes at a time when road accidents remain a pressing concern. Statistics from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport show that alcohol-related crashes account for a significant percentage of fatalities and serious injuries on Eswatini's roads.

Police have repeatedly appealed to motorists to avoid drinking and driving, emphasizing



ing that not only do they endanger their own lives, but they also put passengers, pedestrians, and other road users at risk.

Drunk driving in Eswatini is a criminal offence punishable by heavy fines, possible

imprisonment, and suspension or revocation of a driver's license. The police warned that those arrested over the weekend will be taken through the courts without delay. "We urge the public to take responsibility. The

law is clear, and anyone caught driving under the influence will face prosecution. There will be no leniency," Vilakati added.

Stakeholders in road safety, including transport associations and non-governmental organizations, have joined the police in urging drivers to adopt responsible behaviour. They have called for greater investment in awareness campaigns, especially targeting young drivers and frequent road users.

Some have suggested the introduction of stricter penalties, routine breathalyser checks at public events, and the expansion of safe transport alternatives such as late-night public transport services and taxi-hailing systems.

It should be noted that with festive seasons and long weekends often associated with high alcohol consumption, authorities have pledged to intensify road safety campaigns and enforcement operations. Police say their main goal is not only to arrest offenders but also to prevent avoidable loss of life on the roads.

Senior Superintendent Vilakati concluded her statement with a strong warning: "Drunk driving is not just a violation of the law—it is a death trap. We urge every driver to think twice before getting behind the wheel after drinking."

Stories by Delisa Magagula

# Civil servant among 5 arrested in Mbabane fraud syndicate

THE Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) has dismantled a fraud syndicate operating in Mbabane, arresting a government employee and four alleged accomplices.

The group, accused of forging official government documents, was taken into custody on Wednesday by the REPS Financial and Economic Crimes Unit. Their office, based at the Commercial Centre in Mbabane, was raided during the operation.

The accused are, Sifiso Sibusiso Kunene (49), a civil servant at the Mbabane revenue office, Sanele Phishaphisha Lukhele (39) of Sitseni, Ndumiso Kaizer Dlamini (44) of Mahwalala, Mhlonishwa Phila Mkhathshwa (23) of Sandla; and Thulani Mphuzi Dlamini (49) of Corporation.

The State alleges that Kunene, identified as the ringleader, stole government stationery and official stamps used to produce fraudulent vehicle registration certificates, bail receipts, and other falsified documents.

Prosecutor Muzi Nxumalo told the Mbabane Magistrate's Court that the five face two counts of fraud and forgery, with more charges expected.

"The offences were serious and preju-

duced the Treasury Department. The accused should be granted bail at no less than E5 000," Nxumalo argued.

The charge sheet indicates that the syndicate issued a fake bail receipt to one Jewel Chauke for the release of Fortune Shongwe from Sidwashini Correctional Services.

This allegedly defrauded the Treasury of E5 000. In another instance, they are accused of fabricating motor vehicle registration certificates and government receipts with intent to defraud.

The accused, through their lawyers, pleaded for leniency, citing family responsibilities. Magistrate Sifiso Vilakati granted bail at E2 000 each. They are due back in court on August 29, with trial scheduled for November 18.

Chief Police Information and Communications Officer Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati praised the breakthrough.

"This case demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding the integrity of public institutions and ensuring accountability. We encourage the public to report suspicious activity," she said.



## Man fined for assaulting wife with belt

A MBABANE man has been fined for assaulting his wife with a belt, drawing a stern rebuke from the court.

Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi sentenced Luke Dlamini of Mangwaneni to five years' imprisonment or a fine of E5 000 after convicting him of contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act.

Delivering the sentence, Magistrate Nhlabatsi reprimanded Dlamini for failing in his responsibilities.

"Men must not start families if they are not prepared to act responsibly. A real man does not take a belt and assault his wife," she said.

The court heard that Dlamini attacked his wife, Zwakele Vilakati, following a dispute about her visit to her parental home.

Dlamini admitted to the assault but claimed he objected to her leaving without his consent. He alleged she later went drinking with a cousin, which escalated the disagreement.

In mitigation, Dlamini asked for leniency, saying he loved his wife and regretted his actions. He added that he had taken her for medical care after the assault.

Magistrate Nhlabatsi noted that Dlamini had previously appeared before her on a similar matter. As part of the sentence, E3 000 of the fine and three years of imprisonment were suspended for three years on condition that he does not reoffend.

The court stressed the importance of protecting women from domestic violence and reiterated that repeat offenders would face harsher penalties.

## Man fined E3 000 for robbery in Siphocosini

A LOCAL man has been arrested and fined E3,000 for his involvement in a robbery that occurred in the Siphocosini area.

The incident, which drew the attention of both law enforcement and the local community, involved the theft of items valued at E2,000, in addition to E1,500 in cash.

Police reports indicate that the suspect forcibly entered a residence in Siphocosini, where he took various household items along with cash belonging to the occupants.

The theft was reported promptly, and law enforcement quickly launched an investigation. Through their efforts, the suspect was identified, arrested, and charged with robbery.

During the court proceedings, evidence presented by the prosecution included testimonies from the victims and a detailed account of the stolen property.

According to the police, the suspect did not resist arrest and cooperated with authorities during the investigation.

The magistrate, after reviewing the case, imposed a fine of E3,000 on the offender. This fine serves both as a punishment for the crime committed and a deterrent to prevent similar offenses in the community.

While the value of the stolen items and cash totaled E3,500, the court opted for a



monetary penalty rather than a custodial sentence, citing the circumstances of the case.

Community members expressed relief at the swift resolution of the case, noting that crimes of this nature can significantly im-

pact the sense of safety and security in the area.

Local law enforcement reiterated its commitment to ensuring the protection of residents and urged the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities.

**The Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority (ESWACAA) has issued a warning to drone users, cautioning against illegal operations that could result in heavy fines or imprisonment.**

According to ESWACAA, there has been a surge in the use of drones, formally known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) or Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), across the country. Management stated that failure to comply with aviation safety regulations carries strict penalties.

"Repeat offenders face imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or fines of up to E100 000," the authority said in a statement released on Tuesday.

Citing Section 54 of the Civil Aviation Act, 2022, ESWACAA reminded the public that

## E100k fine for using drone

no person is permitted to operate, maintain, or service aircraft or related services without the required aviation safety instrument. A first offence may attract a fine not exceeding E50 000 or imprisonment of up to five years.

"To operate legally, individuals or companies must ensure that UAV or RPAS operators are authorised," ESWACAA advised.

The authority thanked compliant drone operators for adhering to rules and urged the public to report unauthorised operations.

"For requirements and reporting of UAV/RPAS activities, please contact ESWACAA at wakhile.nxumalo@eswacaa.co.sz," the statement concluded.





BUSINESS BRIEFS

Investors zero in on Nvidia results as US tech stocks waver

NEW YORK — A wobble in U.S. technology shares has raised the stakes for Nvidia Corp's quarterly results on Wednesday, with earnings from the semiconductor giant posing a crucial test for the scorching AI trade. The heavyweight tech sector slumped 1.6 per cent on the week after a huge run for the group, dragging on key indexes.

Coca-Cola exploring sale of Costa Coffee, reports

U.S. soft drinks company Coca-Cola is working with investment bank Lazard to review options, including a potential sale, of British coffee chain Costa, which it acquired in 2018 for over \$5 billion, Sky News reported on Saturday. Reuters could not immediately verify the report. Coca-Cola, Costa, and Lazard did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Atlanta-headquartered Coca-Cola has held initial talks with a small number of potential bidders for Costa, including private equity firms, Sky News reported, citing unidentified sources.

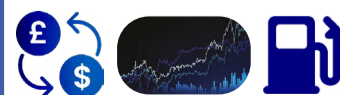
Foreign workers have boosted euro zone economy, ECB's Lagarde says

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming — An influx of foreign workers has given the euro zone's economy a boost in recent years, helping offset shorter working hours and lower real wages, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde said on Saturday. Migration into the European Union pushed its population to a record last year despite declining births but governments are placing curbs on new arrivals in response to domestic discontent.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	17.3083	17.7776
G.B. Pound	23.2551	23.9390
EURO	20.1731	20.7875
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	



# Bunye Betfu Savings dividends go up to 14%

By Delisa Magagula

**BUNYE Betfu Savings and Credit Cooperative Society (SACCO) members gathered over the weekend at the Manzini Metropolitan Church, where they were informed of a dividend increase to 14 per cent**

The announcement was made by the SACCO's Secretary, Fortunate Lukhele, during the meeting. Lukhele reported that the dividends for members had risen from 13 per cent the previous year to 14 per cent, a development warmly received by those in attendance.

According to Lukhele, the 14 per cent dividends reflected the co-operative's continued growth and financial stability.

"We are pleased to share that the society has been able to declare dividends of 14 per cent this year. This indicates strong performance

and commitment to our members," she said.

Members expressed satisfaction with the financial services they receive from Bunye Betfu. Several noted that the society's support had enabled them to access loans when needed, thereby improving their personal and business finances.

One member stated that the SACCO had been a lifeline, allowing them to meet urgent financial obligations through accessible loans.

Another member highlighted that beyond dividends, the cooperative's structure and support systems had given them a sense of financial security.

They said the ability to borrow money at reasonable terms was one of the most appreciated benefits of belonging to Bunye Betfu. The annual meeting served as both a platform to review the SACCO's performance and an opportunity for members to engage with leadership on the society's direction.

Members commended the leadership for

transparency in presenting the financial report and for ensuring that the cooperative remained responsive to the needs of its community.

During the discussions, it was noted that the growth in dividends was a product of prudent financial management and careful investment strategies.

The management team reassured members that Bunye Betfu would continue to prioritise sustainability while balancing growth with the provision of quality services to its members.

Members present expressed optimism for the future, noting that the increase in dividends reinforced their confidence in the SACCO.

The leadership encouraged continued participation and contributions, stressing that the society's success depended on collective commitment and unity.

The 14 per cent dividend marks a significant milestone in Bunye Betfu's history, further strengthening its reputation as a reliable and member-focused financial cooperative.

## Cooperatives in Eswatini record over E3.5bln in assets

By Delisa Magagula

**COOPERATIVES in Eswatini have achieved a major financial milestone, with assets now exceeding E3.5 billion, according to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Honourable Manqoba Khumalo.**

Speaking during the International Day of Cooperatives celebrations held last month, Minister Khumalo said the growth of cooperatives demonstrates their vital role in promoting financial inclusion, strengthening livelihoods, and creating wealth for ordinary Emaswati.

"Cooperatives present a wealth of investment and growth opportunities for the people of Eswatini. With assets now exceeding E3.5 billion, members are proud shareholders of thriving institutions," Khumalo told attendees.

The minister noted that cooperatives have evolved into key players in the national economy. Through Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS), Emaswati now have access to over E2.6 billion in savings solutions and more than E3 billion in loans.

These services, he said, are not only enhancing financial independence but also enabling ordinary citizens to access capital for education, housing, entrepreneurship, and personal development.

Minister Khumalo stressed that cooperatives are uniquely positioned to address the financial needs of communities, particularly in rural areas where access to formal banking remains limited.

"Through SACCOS, members are gaining financial dignity. These tailored services continue to enhance financial inclusion, promote empowerment, and improve livelihoods across all corners of our society," Khumalo said.

Many members testified that cooperative loans and savings solutions have allowed them to pay for children's education, expand businesses, and build homes.

Others credited the societies with provid-



▲ Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo during a Cooperatives celebration.

ing financial relief during times of crisis, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many families struggled to meet basic needs.

This year's celebrations were held under the global theme: 'Cooperatives: Driving Inclusive and Sustainable Solutions for a Better World'

Minister Khumalo explained that the theme is in line with the United Nations' International Year of Cooperatives and echoes key global development platforms, including the UN High-Level Political Forum and the Second World Summit for Social Development.

He said the theme also reflects Eswatini's shared aspirations for resilience in the face of global challenges such as inequality, climate change, and economic instability.

"Cooperatives are not just enterprises, they are people-driven institutions that put community before competition and dignity before profit. They are opening doors to savings and credit, empowering farmers, uplifting women, creating opportunities for the youth, and revitalising local economies," Khumalo remarked.

Statistics presented during the event underscored the growth of the cooperative movement in Eswatini. Membership across different societies has steadily increased, with thousands of Emaswati now part of registered cooperatives nationwide.

This growth has contributed significantly to the more than E3.5 billion in assets, making cooperatives one of the strongest grassroots financial networks in the country.

Analysts have described them as a people's bank, offering services tailored to local realities and needs.

The minister applauded the sector's ability to create self-sustaining opportunities, pointing out that by pooling resources, members are not only building collective wealth but also strengthening community bonds.

Minister Khumalo also extended gratitude to Eswatini's international partners for their role in supporting cooperative development.

He cited the contribution of Deutsche Genossenschafts-und Raiffeisenverband (DGRV) and Taiwan ICDF, which have assisted the country with governance, digital transformation, and youth-focused initiatives within the cooperative sector.

"We acknowledge and celebrate all those who are shaping and strengthening the cooperative landscape in Eswatini and beyond. The support of partners such as DGRV and Taiwan ICDF has been instrumental in advancing governance structures, promoting digitalisation, and empowering young people within cooperatives," Khumalo said.

# Prices rise as hotels and restaurants show decline

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, through the Central Statistical Office (CSO), has released the Rebased Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Report highlighting inflation movements for July 2025.

The report shows that while overall inflation dipped slightly, the hospitality sector recorded a decline, pointing to mixed price signals across the economy.

According to the CSO's National Accounts Unit, inflation slowed to 2.8 per cent in July compared to 2.9 per cent in June. This represents a significant decline from the 4.2 per cent rate recorded in the same period last year.

The report stated that prices for goods rose by 3.1 per cent, while prices for services increased at a slower pace of 2.4 per cent.

Officials explained that this gradual easing of inflation was accompanied by a 0.1 per cent monthly fall, giving consumers temporary relief in overall spending costs. However, the July report also pointed to sharp differences in price movements across key sectors.

The most striking development in the July data was the performance of the hotels and restaurants category. The CSO noted that the sector showed a year-on-year decline following a surge in the previous month.

"The index for hotels and restaurants recorded a significant change, moving from an increase of 5.1 per cent in June to a decline in July," the report stated.

According to the Ministry, this was largely driven by reduced demand for accommodation and food services after the June peak. Officials observed that the decrease in July reflected changing consumption patterns, with fewer people spending on dining out or lodging.

The report added that seasonal factors also played a role in the decline, noting that the slowdown was expected after June's unusually high activity.

While hospitality services weakened, other categories put upward pressure on inflation. Food and non-alcoholic beverages recorded mixed trends.

The CSO explained that fresh produce and mineral water prices declined, resulting in an inflation rate of -0.6 per cent for this group.

In contrast, alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics recorded one of the sharpest increases. The report stated that this category more than doubled its inflation rate compared to the same period last year, with beer prices highlighted as a key driver of the surge.

Similarly, the miscellaneous goods and services group, which includes personal care items and hairdressing services, saw slower price growth, moderating to 3.8 per cent.

Officials pointed out that while the growth was lower, the category still contributed to overall inflationary pressures. The Ministry of Economic Planning and Development noted that the July figures reflected an uneven price landscape.

Goods inflation, particularly from alcohol-related products, pushed costs upward, while services inflation slowed due to de-



clines in hospitality and personal care categories.

"July's overall inflation remains relatively stable; however, the composition of price changes reveals that households continue to experience varying pressures depending on spending patterns," the report mentioned.

Officials explained that consumers spending more on groceries and fresh produce may have benefited from the price declines, while those spending on alcohol or other goods faced increased costs.

On the other hand, households that usually spend on hotel and restaurant services may have experienced less financial pressure in July due to the sector's decline.

Looking at longer-term movements, the Ministry highlighted the fall in the inflation rate from 4.2 per cent in July 2024 to 2.8 per cent in July 2025 as evidence of broader price moderation. The report attributed this to easing global supply pressures and domestic adjustments.

"The 1.4 percentage point decline over the year reflects a slowdown in the pace of price increases across major categories," the CSO noted.

However, it warned that the pace of decline differed widely among sectors. For example, while fresh produce prices have helped reduce food inflation, alcohol and tobacco have consistently exerted upward pressure.

Similarly, hotels and restaurants have displayed irregular patterns, with sharp swings between months.

The Ministry also underscored the importance of understanding how these trends affect household budgets.

The report observed that although overall inflation fell slightly, families still face difficult trade-offs between goods and services with varying price movements.

An official from the National Accounts Unit explained that the decline in hotels and restaurants may provide relief for those who spend regularly in this category, but the in-



▲ Minister of Economic Planning and Development Tambo Gina.

crease in alcohol and tobacco is a burden for households consuming these products.

Food prices, although easing, remain sensitive to seasonal changes. The Ministry added that monthly inflation declined by 0.1 per cent between June and July, offering some short-term relief.

However, it cautioned that the persistence of price rises in some categories would continue to influence household spending patterns.

As the year progresses, the Ministry emphasized the need to monitor sector-specific trends closely. The report stated that while July reflected easing inflation overall, categories such as alcohol, tobacco, and narcotics were expected to remain volatile.

"Future inflation trends will depend on developments in both domestic and inter-

national markets, particularly food supplies, energy prices, and consumer demand in the hospitality industry," the report stated.

The report concluded that despite the dip in July's headline inflation, households would continue to experience uneven impacts depending on their expenditure habits.

In summary, July 2025 brought a slight easing in inflation to 2.8 per cent from 2.9 per cent in June and 4.2 per cent a year earlier. Goods inflation stood at 3.1 per cent, while services inflation slowed to 2.4 per cent.

The hospitality sector recorded a decline after sharp increases in June, reflecting reduced demand and seasonal effects. Meanwhile, alcohol and tobacco drove price increases, while food and non-alcoholic beverages saw some relief from falling produce prices.



# Investors zero in on Nvidia results as US tech stocks waver

By Lewis Krauskopf

NEW YORK — A wobble in U.S. technology shares has raised the stakes for Nvidia Corp's quarterly results on Wednesday, with earnings from the semiconductor giant posing a crucial test for the scorching AI trade.

The heavyweight tech sector slumped 1.6 per cent on the week after a huge run for the group, dragging on key indexes. The sector's weekly decline moderated on Friday as stocks broadly rallied after comments from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell appeared to pave the way for imminent interest rate cuts.

Analysts said possible reasons for recent tech stock weakness include cautionary AI industry developments, including comments from OpenAI CEO Sam Altman that investors may be getting overexcited about AI. Also, a study from researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology cast doubt on returns from AI investments.

Nvidia's results will close out a second-quarter U.S. corporate earnings season that has largely surpassed expectations and helped support equities. S&P 500 company earnings are on track to have climbed 12.9 per cent from the year-earlier period, up from an expected 5.8 per cent rise on July 1, according to LSEG IBES.

Goldman Sachs strategists pointed to particular earnings strength so far for the "Magnificent Seven" -- the group of megacap companies that includes Nvidia as well as Apple and Microsoft. Including estimates for Nvidia, the Magnificent 7 are on track to have increased earnings by 26 per cent compared



▲ Traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York City, U.S.

with 7 per cent for the remaining 493 stocks in the index, the Goldman strategists said in a note.

Nvidia is expected to post a 48 per cent rise in earnings per share on revenue of \$45.9 billion for its second fiscal quarter, according to LSEG data.

Megacap tech companies focusing on AI have recently increased their estimates for capital spending, which should be favorable for Nvidia, said Paul Roach, portfolio manager at Allspring Global Investments.

Nvidia's "commentary on the demand side... should be more bullish just because their largest customers have all kind of

upped their capex guidance over the last few quarters," Roach said, adding that demand for Nvidia's products is also broadening beyond the largest tech companies

## Economic data

Investors will also focus on U.S. economic data in the coming week, including on consumer sentiment and inflation.

Despite the latest tech declines, the S&P 500 eked out a gain on the week and is up about 10 per cent this year, around record-high levels. The Dow Jones Industrial Average notched a record high close on Friday.

As tech shares fell this week, some investors rotated into other areas of the market that have not been as strong in recent weeks, such as healthcare and consumer staples.

But major equity indexes will be hard-pressed to keep moving higher if tech falters, given its heavy presence in those indexes, Maley said. Tech is by far the largest of the S&P 500's 11 sectors, with a 33 per cent weight. Nvidia alone has a nearly 8 per cent weight in the index.

"If these tech stocks continue to fall, that means the indexes will continue to fall," Maley said. "No way around it." (Reuters)



▲ Cans of Coca-Cola are seen at a grocery store.

## Coca-Cola exploring sale of Costa Coffee, reports

U.S. soft drinks company Coca-Cola is working with investment bank Lazard to review options, including a potential sale, of British coffee chain Costa, which it acquired in 2018 for over \$5 billion, Sky News reported on Saturday.

Reuters could not immediately verify the report. Coca-Cola, Costa, and Lazard did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Atlanta-headquartered Coca-Cola has held initial talks with a small number of potential bidders for Costa, including private equity firms, Sky News reported, citing unidentified sources.

The report said indicative offers are expected in early autumn, while noting that

Coca-Cola may ultimately choose not to proceed with a sale.

Costa Coffee operates in 50 countries, with more than 2,700 coffee shops across the UK and Ireland and over 1,300 more outlets globally, according to its website.

Coca-Cola acquired the chain more than six years ago to strengthen its push into healthier beverages and compete with Starbucks and Nestle in the global coffee market.

In the United States, food companies are seeking healthier substitutes as they respond to Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s Make America Healthy Again campaign. In July, President Donald Trump said Coca-Cola had agreed to use real cane sugar in the United States. (Reuters)

## Foreign workers have boosted euro zone economy, ECB's Lagarde says

By Seher Dareen

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming — An influx of foreign workers has given the euro zone's economy a boost in recent years, helping offset shorter working hours and lower real wages, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde said on Saturday.

Migration into the European Union pushed its population to a record last year despite declining births but governments are placing curbs on new arrivals in response to domestic discontent.

Lagarde listed a rise in the number of workers from outside the 20 countries that share the euro as a factor that supported the bloc's economy despite a growing preference for fewer working hours and a fall in living standards in some sectors.

"Although they represented only around 9 per cent of the total labour force in 2022, foreign workers have accounted for half of its growth over the past three years," Lagarde said in a speech at the U.S. Federal Reserve's annual

symposium in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. "Without this contribution, labour market conditions could be tighter and output lower."

She said gross domestic output in Germany would be around 6 per cent lower than in 2019 without foreign workers and added Spain's strong economic performance since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic also owed much to the contribution of foreign labour.

The EU's population rose to a record 450.4 million people last year as net immigration offset a natural population decline for the fourth straight year.

But this has come at a cost of political backlash from local voters, who have increasingly turned to far right parties.

Germany's new government, for example, has suspended family reunification and resettlement programmes as it seeks to regain support from voters drawn to the Alternative for Germany.

In the United States, President Donald Trump has stepped up arrests of immigrants in the U.S. illegally, cracked down on unlawful border crossings and stripped legal status from hundreds of thousands of migrants since his inauguration. (Reuters)



▲ European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde.

# US to take 10% equity stake in Intel, in Trump's latest corporate move

**PRESIDENT Donald Trump said on Friday the U.S. would take a 10% stake in Intel (INTC.O), opens new tab under a deal with the struggling chipmaker that converts government grants into an equity share, the latest extraordinary intervention by the White House in corporate America.**

The deal puts Trump on better terms with Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan, after the president recently said the CEO should step down due to conflicts of interest. It will ensure that the chipmaker will receive about \$10 billion in funds for building or expanding factories in the U.S.

Under the agreement, the U.S. will purchase a 9.9% stake in Intel for \$8.9 billion, or \$20.47 per share, which represents a discount of about \$4 from Intel's closing share price of \$24.80 on Friday.

The purchase of the 433.3 million Intel shares will be made with funding from the \$5.7 billion in unpaid grants from the Biden-era CHIPS Act and \$3.2 billion awarded to Intel for the Secure Enclave program, also awarded under Trump's predecessor, Democratic President Joe Biden.

Intel stock rose roughly 1% in the extended session on Friday after closing up 5.5% during regular trading.

Trump met with Tan on Friday, a White House official said. That followed Trump's August 11 meeting with the Intel CEO after Trump demanded that Tan resign over his ties to Chinese firms.

"He walked in wanting to keep his job and he ended up giving us \$10 billion for the United States. So we picked up \$10 billion," Trump said on Friday.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said on X that Tan had struck a deal "that's fair to Intel and fair to the American People."

## PLAYING CATCH UP

The Intel investment marks the latest unusual deal with U.S. companies, including a U.S. government agreement allowing AI chip giant Nvidia NVDA.O to sell its H20 chips to China in exchange for receiving 15% of those sales.

Other recent deals include an agreement for the Pentagon to become the largest shareholder in a small mining company, MP Materials (MP.N), opens new tab, to boost output of rare earth magnets and the U.S. government's winning a "golden share" with certain veto rights as part of a deal to allow Japan's Nippon Steel (5401.T), opens new tab to buy U.S. Steel.

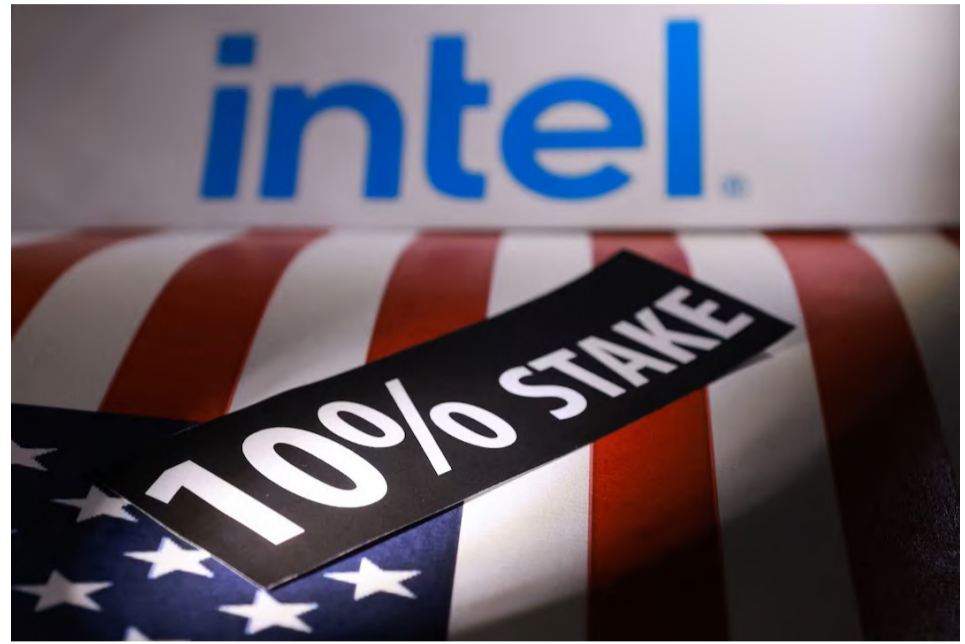
The federal government's broad intervention in corporate matters has worried critics, who say Trump's actions create new categories of corporate risk.

Ahead of the U.S. deal with Intel, Japan's SoftBank (9984.T), opens new tab agreed to take a \$2 billion stake in the chip maker on Monday.

Some industry observers still question Intel's ability to surmount its problems.

Daniel Morgan, senior portfolio manager at Synovus Trust, said Intel's problems are beyond a cash infusion from SoftBank or equity interest from the government, singling out Intel's contract chip manufacturing business, known as its foundry unit.

"Without government support or another financially stronger partner, it will be difficult for the Intel foundry unit to raise enough capital to continue to build out more Fabs at a reasonable rate," he said. Intel "needs to



▲ U.S. flag, Intel logo and words "10% stake" are seen in this illustration.

catch up with TSMC from a technological perspective to attract business," he added.

The government's stake is to be passive ownership and does not include a board seat, Intel said. The government will be required to vote with Intel's board when shareholder approval is necessary, with "limited exceptions." Intel did not specify the exceptions.

The equity stake also includes a five-year warrant at \$20 a share for an additional 5% of Intel stock, which the U.S. can use if Intel loses control of the foundry business.

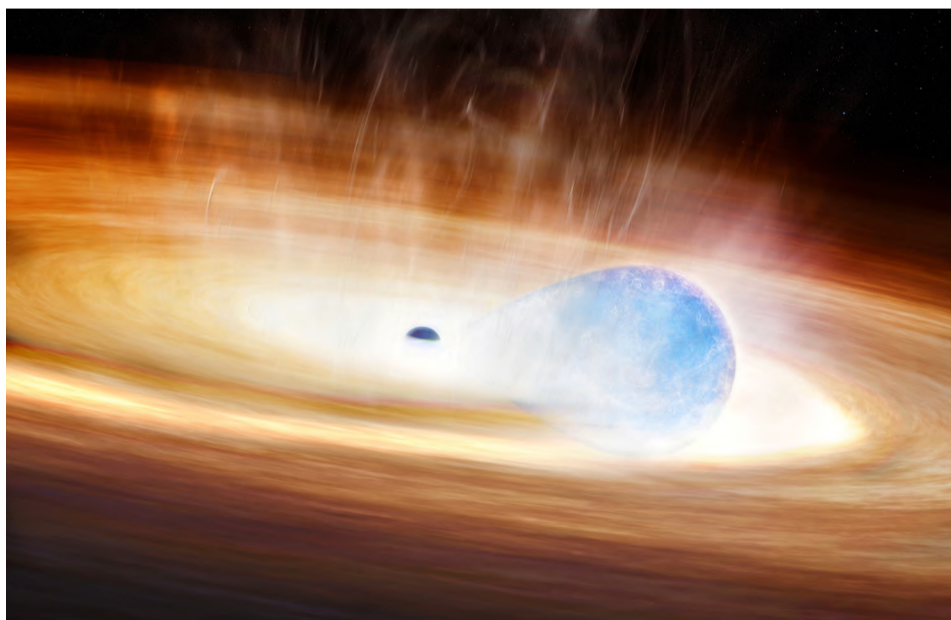
Federal backing could give Intel more breathing room to revive its loss-making foundry business, analysts said, but it ceded the AI market to Nvidia and has lost market

share to Advanced Micro Devices (AMD.O), opens new tab in its central processor business for several years. It has also faced challenges in attracting customers to its new factories.

Tan, who became CEO in March, has been tasked to turn around the American chip-making icon, which recorded an annual loss of \$18.8 billion in 2024 - its first such loss since 1986. The company's last fiscal year of positive adjusted free cash flow was 2021.

(Reuters)

## New type of supernova detected as black hole causes star to explode



▲ An artist's conception shows a massive star being stretched by the gravitational forces of a nearby black hole prior to the star's supernova explosion, in this undated handout image.

**Astronomers have observed the calamitous result of a star that picked the wrong dance partner.**

They have documented what appears to be a new type of supernova, as stellar explosions are known, that occurred when a massive star tried to swallow a black hole with which it had engaged in a lengthy pas de deux.

The star, which was at least 10 times as massive as our sun, and the black hole, which had a similar mass, were gravitationally bound to one another in what is called a binary system. But as the distance separating them gradually narrowed, the black hole's immense gravitational pull appears to have distorted the star - stretching it out from its

spherical shape - and siphoned off material before causing it to explode.

"We caught a massive star locked in a fatal tango with a black hole," said astrophysicist Alexander Gagliano of the U.S. National Science Foundation's Institute for AI and Fundamental Interactions located at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, lead author of the study published this week in the *Astrophysical Journal*, opens new tab.

"After shedding mass for years in a death spiral with the black hole, the massive star met its finale by exploding. It released more energy in a second than the sun has across its entire lifetime," Gagliano added.

The explosion occurred about 700 million

light-years from Earth. A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km).

"The gravitational pulls of the two objects were actually similar because we think they had similar masses. But the star was much larger, so it was in the process of engulfing the black hole as the black hole pulled material off of it. The star was large but puffy, and the black hole was small but mighty. The black hole won out in the end," Gagliano said.

The researchers are not certain of the exact mechanism that caused the supernova.

"It's unclear if the distortion triggers an instability that drives the collapse of the star, and then the leftover stellar material gets rapidly eaten by the black hole, or if the black hole completely pulls the star apart before it goes supernova," said Harvard University astrophysicist and study co-author Ashley Villar.

"The star has been pulled and morphed by the black hole in complex ways," Villar added.

The binary system started out with two massive stars orbiting each other as cosmic companions. But one of the two stars reached the end of its natural life cycle and exploded in a supernova, and its core collapsed to form a black hole, an extraordinarily dense object with gravity so strong that not even light can escape.

"This event reveals that some supernovae can be triggered by black hole companions, giving us new insights into how some stars end their lives," Villar said.

Stars that are at least eight times as massive as the sun appear destined to end their lives with a supernova. Those with a mass

at least 20 times that of the sun will form a black hole after the explosion.

An artificial intelligence algorithm designed to scan for unusual explosions in the cosmos in real time first detected the beginnings of the explosion, providing an alert that enabled astronomers to carry out follow-up observations immediately. By the time the explosion was completed, it had been observed by numerous ground-based and space-based telescopes.

"Our AI algorithm allowed us to launch a comprehensive observational study early enough to really see the full picture for the first time," Gagliano said.

Observations of the star dating to four years before the supernova revealed bright emissions that the astronomers believe were caused when the black hole guzzled material sucked off the star. For instance, the star's outer hydrogen layer appears to have been ripped off, exposing the helium layer below.

The researchers observed bright emissions in the explosion's aftermath as the black hole consumed leftover stellar debris. In the end, the black hole became more massive and more powerful.

Systems grouping two or more companions are quite common. Some of these multiples have a black hole as one of the companions.

"Our takeaway is that the fates of stars are incredibly impacted by their companion - or companions - in life. This event gives us an exciting window into how dramatically black holes can impact the deaths of massive stars," Gagliano said.

(Reuters)



## Thousands demand union rights and civic freedoms in large Tunisia protest

THOUSANDS of members and supporters of Tunisia's powerful Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) protested in the capital on Thursday over what they called a decline in union rights and civic freedoms.

It was one of the largest political demonstrations Tunisia has seen recently, and comes amid a deepening standoff between the UGTT and President Kais Saied.

Last month, a UGTT strike over wages and working conditions disrupted transport services across the country and piled pressure on Saied to deal with a deepening economic crisis. In response, hundreds of Saied's supporters staged a rally out-

side the UGTT headquarters early this month to urge the president to suspend the union.

Thursday's protest started in front of the UGTT headquarters in Tunis and passed through Habib Bourguiba Avenue, the site of mass protests that led to the downfall of President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 and sparked the Arab Spring uprisings across the Middle East.

Demonstrators chanted slogans including, "The right to struggle is a duty" and decried increasing poverty and hunger and called for the protection of workers' rights.

UGTT Secretary-General Nouredine Taboubi decried what he called "threats and smear campaigns"

against the union and called on authorities to release political prisoners and provide fair trials.

"The union will not deviate from the path of struggle and will adhere to its social and national role to guarantee workers' rights," he said in a speech.

There was no immediate comment from authorities on the protest.

Saied assumed sweeping powers in 2021, shut down the elected parliament, started ruling by decree, suspended the Supreme Judicial Council and sacked dozens of judges in a move the opposition described as a coup.

(Reuters)

## ECOWAS team leaves Guinea-Bissau after threat of expulsion

A mission from the West African Regional bloc, ECOWAS, has left Guinea-Bissau saying the president had threatened to expel it. The team was sent to the country last month to help it reach a "political consensus" on how to conduct elections this year.

It said it had "prepared a draft agreement on a roadmap for elections" and had started presenting it to the stakeholders for their consent.

But the team decided to leave early on Saturday morning after President Umaro Sissoco Embaló's threat.

It says it will now present its report to the ECOWAS president, including a proposal for an agreement leading to "inclusive and peaceful elections".

Embaló has not responded to the bloc's accusation.

There has been heightened tension in the country over when his five-year mandate

ends.

The opposition say his term as president expired last week, but the Supreme Court of Justice ruled that it ends on 4 September.

A new round of general elections was due to take place last November, but Embaló postponed them and has since announced they will take place on the 30 November this year.

The opposition has opposed the delay.

Guinea-Bissau has experienced several military coups since independence in 1974, and there have been two attempts to overthrow Embaló, the latest in December 2023.

This led him to dissolve the opposition-dominated parliament.

The opposition last Thursday called for a nationwide strike, on the day they said the president's term was expiring,

(Reuters)



▲ Guinea-Bissau's President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, left, and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

## African Union Urges Adoption Of World Map Showing Continent's True Size

THE African Union has backed a campaign to end the use by governments and international organisations of the 16th-century Mercator map of the world in favour of one that more accurately displays Africa's size.

Created by cartographer Gerardus Mercator for navigation, the projection distorts continent sizes, enlarging areas near the poles like North America and Greenland while shrinking Africa and South America.

"It might seem to be just a map, but in reality, it is not," AU Commission deputy chairperson Selma Malika Haddadi told Reuters, saying the Mercator fostered a false impression that Africa was "marginal", despite being the world's second-largest continent by area, with 54 nations and over a billion people.

Such stereotypes influence media, education and policy, she said.

Criticism of the Mercator map is not new, but the 'Correct The Map' campaign led by advocacy groups Africa No Filter and Speak Up Africa has revived the debate, urging organisations to adopt the 2018 Equal Earth projection, which tries to reflect countries' true sizes.

"The current size of the map of Africa is wrong," Moky Makura, executive director of Africa No Filter, said. "It's the world's longest misinformation and disinformation campaign, and it just simply has to stop."

Fara Ndiaye, co-founder of Speak Up Africa, said the Mercator affected Africans' identity and pride, especially children who might

encounter it early in school.

"We're actively working on promoting a curriculum where the Equal Earth projection will be the main standard across all (African) classrooms," Ndiaye said, adding she hoped it would also be the one used by global institutions, including Africa-based ones.

Haddadi said the AU endorsed the campaign, adding it aligned with its goal of "reclaiming Africa's rightful place on the global stage" amid growing calls for reparations for colonialism and slavery.

The AU will advocate for wider map adoption and discuss collective actions with member states, Haddadi added.

The Mercator projection is still widely used, including by schools and tech companies. Google Maps switched from Mercator on desktop to a 3D globe view in 2018, though users can still switch back to Mercator if they prefer.

On the mobile app, however, the Mercator projection remains the default.

'Correct The Map' wants organisations like the World Bank and the United Nations to adopt the Equal Earth map. A World Bank spokesperson said they already use the Winkel-Tripel or Equal Earth for static maps and are phasing out Mercator on web maps.

The campaign said it has sent a request to the UN geospatial body, UN-GGIM. A UN spokesperson said that once received, it must be reviewed and approved by a committee of experts.

Advertisement

Other regions are backing the AU's efforts.



Dorbrenne O'Marde, Vice Chair of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Reparations Commission, endorsed Equal Earth as a re-

jection of the Mercator map's "ideology of power and dominance".

(Reuters)

# Israel pounds Gaza City suburbs, vows to press on with offensive

ISRAELI planes and tanks pounded the eastern and northern outskirts of Gaza City overnight Saturday to Sunday, destroying buildings and homes, residents said, as Israeli leaders vowed to press on with a planned offensive on the city.

Witnesses reported the sound of explosions non-stop overnight in the areas of Zeitoun and Shejaia, while tanks shelled houses and roads in the nearby Sabra neighbourhood and several buildings were blown up in the northern town of Jabalia.

Fire lit the skies from the direction of the explosions, causing panic, prompting some families to stream out of the city. Others said they would prefer to die and not leave.

The Israeli military said on Sunday that its forces have returned to combat in the Jabalia area in recent days, to dismantle militant tunnels and strengthen control of the area.

It added that the operation there "enables the expansion of combat into additional areas and prevents Hamas terrorists from returning to operate in these areas."

Israel approved a plan this month to seize control of Gaza City, describing it as the last bastion of Hamas militants. It is not expected to begin for a few weeks, leaving room for mediators Egypt and Qatar to try and resume ceasefire talks.

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz on Sunday vowed to press on with the offensive on the city where famine has been declared, which has raised alarm abroad and objections at home. Katz has said that Gaza City will be razed unless Hamas agrees to end the war on Israel's terms and release all hostages.

## Ukraine drone hits Russian nuclear plant, sparks huge fire at Novatek's Ust-Luga terminal

UKRAINE launched a drone attack on Russia on Sunday, forcing a sharp fall in the capacity of a reactor at one of Russia's biggest nuclear power plants and sparking a huge blaze at the major Ust-Luga fuel export terminal, Russian officials said.

Despite talk of peace by Russia and Ukraine, the deadliest European war since World War Two is continuing along the 2,000 km (1,250 mile) front line accompanied by missile and drone attacks deep into both Russia and Ukraine.

Russia's defence ministry said at least 95 Ukrainian drones had been intercepted across more than a dozen Russian regions on August 24, the day that Ukraine celebrates its declaration of independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

The Kursk nuclear power plant, just 60 km (38 miles) from the border with Ukraine, said that air defences shot down a drone that detonated near the plant just after midnight, damaging an auxiliary transformer and forcing a 50% reduction in the operating capacity at reactor No. 3.

Radiation levels were normal and there were no injuries from the fire which the drone sparked, the plant said. Two other reactors are operating without power generation and one is undergoing scheduled repairs.

The United Nations' nuclear agency, the International Atomic Energy Agency, said it was aware of reports that a transformer at the plant caught fire due to military activity and stressed that every nuclear facility should be protected at all times.

A thousand km north, on the Gulf of

Hamas said in a statement on Sunday that Israel's plan to take over Gaza City showed it wasn't serious about a ceasefire.

It said a ceasefire agreement was "the only way to return the hostages", holding Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responsible for their lives.

The proposal on the table calls for a 60-day ceasefire and the release of 10 living hostages held in Gaza and of 18 bodies. In turn, Israel would release about 200 long-serving Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

Once a temporary ceasefire begins, the proposal is for Hamas and Israel to begin negotiations on a permanent ceasefire that would include the return of the remaining hostages. On Thursday, Netanyahu said that Israel would immediately resume negotiations for the release of all 50 hostages - of whom Israel believes around 20 are still living - and an end to the nearly two-year-old war but on terms acceptable to Israel.

### 'HUNGRY AND AFRAID'

Around half of the enclave's two million people currently live in Gaza City. A few thousand have already left, carrying their belongings on vehicles and rickshaws.

"I stopped counting the times I had to take my wife and three daughters and leave my home in Gaza City," said Mohammad, 40, via a chat app. "No place is safe, but I can't take the risk. If they suddenly begin the invasion, they will use heavy fire."

Others said they will not leave, no matter what.

"We are not leaving, let them bomb us at home," said Aya, 31, who has a family of eight, adding that they couldn't afford to buy a tent or pay for the transportation, even if they did try to leave. "We are hungry, afraid



▲ Palestinian father Mahmoud Abedrabo mourns over the body of his son Hamada, who was killed in an Israeli strike, according to medics, at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

and don't have money."

A global hunger monitor said on Friday that Gaza City and surrounding areas are officially suffering from famine that will likely spread. Israel has rejected the assessment and says it ignores steps it has taken since late July to increase aid.

On Sunday, the Gaza health ministry said eight more people died of malnutrition and starvation in the enclave, raising deaths from such causes to 289 people, including 115 children, since the war started. Israel dis-

putes fatality figures by the health ministry in the Hamas-run strip.

The war began on October 7, 2023, when Hamas-led gunmen burst into southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people, mainly civilians, and taking 251 hostages.

Israel's military offensive against Hamas has since killed at least 62,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, according to the Gaza health ministry, left much of the territory in ruins and internally displaced nearly its entire population. (Reuters)



▲ A view shows the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) in the course of Russia-Ukraine conflict, as seen from the town of Kurchatov in the Kursk region, Russia

Finland, at least 10 Ukrainian drones were downed over the port of Ust-Luga in Russia's northern Leningrad region, with debris sparking fire at the Novatek-operated terminal - a huge Baltic Sea fuel export terminal and processing complex, the regional governor said.

### PLUME OF BLACK SMOKE

Unverified footage on Russian Telegram

channels showed a drone flying directly into a fuel terminal, followed by a huge ball of fire rising high into the sky followed by a plume of black smoke billowing into the horizon.

"Firefighters and emergency services are currently working to extinguish the blaze," Alexander Drozdenko, governor of Russia's Leningrad region, said. There were no injuries, he added.

According to Novatek (NVTK.MM), opens new tab, the Ust-Luga complex, which opened in 2013, processes gas condensate into light and heavy naphtha, jet fuel, fuel oil and gasoil, and enables the company to ship oil products as well as gas condensate to international markets.

Novatek produces mostly naphtha for Asia, including China, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia, as well as jet fuel with delivery to Istanbul.

Rosaviatsia, Russia's civil aviation authority, said flights were halted for hours on end at several Russian airports overnight, including at the Pulkovo airport in the Leningrad region.

Ukrainian drones also attacked an industrial enterprise in the southern Russian city of Syzran, the governor of the Samara region said on Sunday. A child was injured in the attack, according to the governor, who did not specify exactly what had been attacked.

Earlier this month, the Ukrainian military said it had struck the Syzran oil refinery. The Rosneft-owned (ROSN.MM), opens new tab refinery was forced to suspend production and crude intake after the attack, sources told Reuters.

There was no immediate comment from Ukraine. Kyiv has said its strikes inside Russia are in response to Russia's continued attacks on Ukraine and are aimed at destroying infrastructure deemed crucial to Moscow's overall military efforts.

(Reuters)

## Eswatini's Shepard Brothers to headline Pitbull MCC in SA

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
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THE dynamic Eswatini musical group Shepard Brothers is set to headline the highly anticipated 3rd Annual Pitbull MCC event.

The event is scheduled for September 7, 2025, at Sophia Park in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. This performance marks a significant milestone for the group, as it will be their debut in the Eastern Cape, expanding their footprint across the country's diverse musical landscape.

The Pitbull MCC event, known for attracting motorcycle enthusiasts and music lovers alike, has become a celebrated annual gathering that blends the thrill of biking culture with electrifying live performances. This year, including Shepard Brothers as headliners highlights the event's commitment to showcasing exceptional talent from across Southern Africa.

Shepard Brothers have steadily carved out a name for themselves in the music industry by fusing traditional Eswatini rhythms with contemporary sounds. In a recent interview, the group expressed enthusiasm about the upcoming event. "We are happy to be part of the show. It's an incredible opportunity for us to share our music with a wider audience," they said.

The Shepard Brothers attribute much of their success to building a strong network of international relationships, which they describe as the "ladder" to their achievements. "We just keep on putting



▲ Shepard Brothers.

and connecting the dots to move to the next point," they explained.

Their insights into securing international gigs reveal a disciplined and thoughtful strategy. "There are so many things we do that are not secrets; maybe other artists

take them lightly or are not aware of how powerful they are," the brothers shared. This statement hints at a combination of professionalism, consistency, and relationship-building as key factors behind their expanding reach.



▲ Zee Nxumalo's 'Mamma' music video artwork.

## Zee Nxumalo drops new hit single 'Mamma'

ESWATINI-born singer and songwriter Zee Nxumalo has once again captured the hearts of music lovers worldwide with the release of her latest single, 'Mamma.'

The track, which features South African artists Skillz and Skyes, is already making waves across digital platforms, amassing over 120,000 views on YouTube alone within days of its release. The new single marks another milestone in Zee Nxumalo's rapidly ascending career. Known for her soulful voice and infectious rhythms, Nxumalo has become a formidable presence in the South African and global music scenes.

'Mamma' is available on all major streaming services, including Spotify, Apple Music, and Deezer, allowing fans across the globe to experience the vibrant energy and emotional depth that Zee brings to her music. The collaboration with Skillz and Skyes adds a dynamic edge to the track. This release follows the phenomenal success of Zee Nxumalo's previous hit, 'Ngisakuthanda,' featuring TBO. The single recently achieved triple platinum certification, having sold over 120,000 units.

### Achievements

In addition to her solo achievements, Zee Nxumalo has also joined forces with fellow Eswatini-born global sensation Uncle Waffles for their first-ever studio collaboration. The partnership between these two powerhouse artists has excited fans and critics alike, promising fresh and innovative sounds that push the boundaries of contemporary African music.

Zee Nxumalo's journey from her roots in Eswatini to becoming a celebrated "Jozi baby" in Johannesburg is a testament to her talent and determination. At just 21 years old, she has already made significant strides in the South African music industry. Her 2023 breakout single was 'Pholile,' which featured renowned artists Azana and Mlindo The Vocalist. Following 'Pholile,' Zee Nxumalo continued to build momentum with hit tracks like 'Funk 55,' 'Shayimoto,' and 'Nguwe.'

## Jumbo Festival rebrands to Eswatini Lifestyle Awards

ESWATINI'S beloved Jumbo Festival has officially rebranded as the Eswatini Lifestyle Awards.

This transition marks a strategic evolution aimed at amplifying the recognition of outstanding individuals and entities across a broad spectrum of lifestyle sectors in the country. Event director Jumbo Khumalo announced the change with enthusiasm, emphasising the new direction. "We are thrilled to announce the rebranding of the Jumbo Festival to Eswatini Lifestyle Awards. This exciting new chapter reflects our commitment to celebrating the best of Eswatini's praiseworthy personalities across all fraternal of lifestyle like business, leadership, corporate, culture, fashion and creativity."

Since its inception, the Jumbo Festival has been a vibrant showcase of talent and innovation, spotlighting individuals who contribute significantly to Eswatini's dynamic lifestyle landscape. The festival has grown to become a platform where emerging and established figures in various fields are celebrated for their achievements and impact. However, as the event matured, the organisers recognised the need to place a stronger emphasis on the awards aspect, which led to the decision to incorporate "Awards" into the event's name. Khumalo explained, "The Jumbo Festival has been

a staple of Eswatini's lifestyle scene, showcasing talented individuals across various categories. As we continue to grow and evolve, we have recognised the need to intensify the awards part of the concept henceforth the resolution to have the word 'awards' in the event name."

### Mission

The rebranding is more than a nominal change; it signifies a broader and more focused mission to honour excellence across diverse fields including corporate leadership, business innovation, music, arts, fashion, and cultural creativity. The Eswatini Lifestyle Awards aim to offer a prestigious platform where both emerging talents and prominent personalities can gain recognition and celebrate their contributions to the nation's cultural and economic fabric.

By expanding the scope and visibility of the awards, the organisers hope to inspire greater participation and engagement from the community, encouraging a spirit of excellence and innovation. This shift also aligns with Eswatini's broader goals of promoting local talent and fostering a vibrant cultural economy. The Eswatini Lifestyle Awards will continue to build on the legacy of the Jumbo Festival, maintaining its celebratory atmosphere while enhancing the prestige and impact of the recognition it offers.



▲ Jumbo Khumalo.

# Siyanda Maphumulo for Mlawula Campfire Festival Comedy Night

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
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TOP South African comedian Siyanda Maphumulo is set to headline the highly anticipated Mlawula Campfire Festival Comedy Night.

The comedy section will feature Gogo & S'lwane, Bongiswa & Darren, Monkey Man, and Christian Dude. Now in its sixth edition, the festival is renowned for its blend of adventure, community spirit, and the stunning backdrop of the Mlawula Nature Reserve. Scheduled for September 26-28, 2025, the festival will take place at Siphiso Campsite, nestled within the lush confines of the Mlawula Nature Reserve. This picturesque setting provides the perfect environment for a weekend filled with camaraderie and celebration, attracting both seasoned outdoor enthusiasts and families looking for a unique escape into nature.

The Mlawula Campfire Festival has established itself as a must-attend event, drawing participants from across the region to experience the magic of the wilderness. This year, the festival aims to deepen its connection with nature and community, offering a diverse range of activities and entertainment that cater to all ages and interests.

Siyanda Maphumulo is the 8th SATMA award finalist in the best indigenous comedian category; he is a young renowned stand-up comedian based in Durban. Siyanda is now one of the regulars in the well-known comedy show 99 per cent Zulu comedy. Participants can look forward to invigorating hikes through the reserve's stunning landscapes, providing an opportunity to witness the rich flora and fauna that thrive in this protected area. Guided by knowledgeable local experts, these hikes will not only showcase the natural beauty of the reserve but also



▲ South African comedian Siyanda Maphumulo.

educate attendees about the importance of conservation.

For those seeking a more relaxed experience, the festival will offer yoga and aerobics sessions set against the tranquil backdrop of the reserve. These sessions are designed to help participants unwind and

rejuvenate, fostering a sense of well-being and connection to nature. In addition to physical activities, the festival will feature workshops and demonstrations that highlight local crafts, cuisine, and cultural practices, allowing attendees to engage with the rich heritage of Eswatini.

## DJ Tibza celebrates chapter 45 with 'Urban & Pantsula' theme

TUBUKO "Tibza" Nxumalo, widely known as DJ Tibza, is set to mark a significant milestone in his life and career by celebrating his 45th birthday with a unique event themed "Urban & Pantsula."

The celebration will take place on Friday, August 29, 2025, at the newly revamped 23:28 Lounge in Mbabane Business Park, promising an unforgettable night of music and style. The announcement was made by Thembinkosi Mthethwa, owner and CEO of 23:28 Lounge, who expressed excitement about hosting such a landmark event. The party will kick off at 6 pm with a soulful Old School R&B set, setting the tone for an evening that blends nostalgia with contemporary urban vibes.

The main event will showcase a stellar lineup of Eswatini's finest musical talents, including Cybos, Jazzinsoul, Crooks, and Wicked. These artists are known for their high-energy performances and are expected to keep the crowd energised throughout the night, delivering a dynamic fusion of beats that celebrate the kingdom's rich musical heritage.

For DJ Tibza, the "Urban & Pantsula" theme is deeply personal and reflective of his artistic journey. "As a creative, style

and fashion have always been central to my craft. I've always been driven by cutting-edge urban culture with a Pantsula twist, so the theme will embody what I stand for, being authentic and comfortable in your own skin," he explained. Although his birthday was on August 12, the timing of this event allows for a grand celebration with friends, fans, and fellow artists.

DJ Tibza's influence in Eswatini's music scene is well established. Earlier this year, he performed at the prestigious Bushfire Festival in May 2025, a highlight that reinforced his reputation as one of the kingdom's most versatile and sought-after DJs. His ability to blend different genres and create immersive musical experiences has earned him a loyal following.

Beyond his solo career, DJ Tibza is also known for his collaborative work with his brother, DJ Lungstar. Together, they co-founded 'Urban Elements' in 2006, a brand synonymous with iconic events that have shaped Eswatini's nightlife culture. Their journey began at the legendary Mhlambanyatsi Club and continues with a monthly residency at Happy Valley Hotel's Soul Oasis in Ezulwini, where they consistently deliver soulful and vibrant experiences.



▲ DJ Tibza.



▲ Mawecele.

## Mawecele joins star-studded Umuthi Fest 2025 lineup

THE excitement surrounding the second edition of Umuthi Fest continues to build as Johannesburg-born singer-songwriter Mawecele has been officially added to the festival's lineup.

Scheduled for October 18, 2025, at Mavuso Trade Centre, Umuthi Fest is set to be an electrifying event. Mawecele's inclusion alongside renowned acts such as the popular South African duo Blaq Diamond, the soulful Mlindo The Vocalist, and the talented Naledi Aphiwe significantly elevates the festival's appeal.

Ticket sales have been robust, reflecting the growing anticipation for the event. Early bird general admission tickets are priced at E150, with pre-sale tickets available at E200 and gate tickets at E250. For those seeking premium experience, VIP tickets are offered at E400 for early birds, E500 during presale, and E600 at the gate.

Mawecele's journey into music is a compelling story of passion and perseverance. Raised in the Vaal region, he discovered his musical talents early, learning to play the piano from his father at the age of 11. By 12, he was already singing in church choirs and performing with local groups, laying the foundation for his future career.

His breakthrough came during the national lockdown when his cover videos gained widespread attention, notably catching the eye of Afro-pop sensations Blaq Diamond. This exposure propelled him into the spotlight, culminating in the release of his hit single 'All My Life,' featuring the acclaimed rapper Kwesta. The track's success cemented Mawecele's reputation as a rising star in the Afro Pop and R&B genres.

Throughout his career, Mawecele has collaborated with several prominent artists, including Kwesta, Blaq Diamond, Aubrey Qwana, and Naledi Aphiwe. His music is characterised by its healing and inspirational qualities. In addition to his earlier achievements, Mawecele recently released a series of projects that showcase his artistic evolution. These include the singles 'Naledi' and 'Romeo & Juliet,' a collaboration with Naledi Aphiwe, as well as his latest album 'Time.'

# Cops 'kidnap' colleague for DJ Sumbody evidence

**ASSOCIATES of KwaZulu-Natal police commissioner Lt-Gen Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi allegedly kidnapped a fellow cop to retrieve evidence in the DJ Sumbody murder case.**

These new details have emerged in the ordeal of Captain Itumeleng Makgotloe, a senior SAPS ballistics expert who was allegedly held hostage in January by rogue Special Task Force operators to obtain crucial evidence at the police's Silverton forensics laboratory.

The alleged incident, detailed in a sworn statement for the Independent Police Investigating Directorate (IPID) investigation, is set to be examined at the hearings in the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry, starting next month. Makgotloe's nightmare began during what was supposed to be a routine period of leave.

Instead, he was surprised and whisked away to Loate Police Station, where he was interrogated by Special Task Force members for three hours. Their true motive, he revealed, quickly became apparent. "All their questions were about the Vereeniging and Bramley cases. They wanted to know from me, 'Where are the reports? When will they be finished? Where are the case files?' Their main concern was to have access to the case file," Makgotloe said.

The grilling session, he claims, was unlawful and ended only when the officers insisted on accompanying him to the Silverton Forensic Science Laboratory, prolonging his ordeal for eight harrowing hours.

At the heart of this frenzied quest for information are two murder investigations that have sent shock waves through the country.

The Vereeniging case, still under tight wraps, revolves around the murder of engineer Armand Swart in April last year, a killing reportedly carried out in a case of mistaken identity after Swart's company exposed a corruption syndicate.

Crucially, the same alleged perpetrators, including Katiso Molefe and his associates, are also at the centre of the Bramley docket: the assassination of Pretoria's music mogul, DJ Sumbody, real name Oupa Sefoka. The sprawling investigation has unearthed links to other deadly hits, including those on DJ Vintos and Don Tindleni, and reaches into a separate attempted murder case involving TV star Tebogo Thobejane, who survived an ambush near Sandton last October.

Charges in that matter have ensnared private security boss Vusumuzi "Cat" Matlala, while two of Molefe's accused co-conspirators, Musa Kekana and Tiego Floyd Mabuse-la, also appear in the Thobejane docket.

Investigators believe a critical ballistics thread binds these cases together. The same SAPS forensic evidence, which Makgotloe oversees, is said to be pivotal in knitting together the multiple dockets. Insiders claim it is the reason task force members allegedly went rogue, in a desperate bid to get their hands on sensitive documents and forensics reports that could make or break prosecutions.

While minding his own business on a Tuesday afternoon on January 7, having a braai with his family, Makgotloe received a call from a specific sergeant colleague.

The sergeant told Makgotloe that he needed to make corrections on a 212 statement and sign it at the instruction of a prosecutor.

When Makgotloe informed her that he was on leave and could only assist when he returned from leave, the forceful sergeant insisted that the assistance was needed immediately.

The two eventually agreed to meet up at Loate police station. At about 18h00, the two met, but the sergeant had a surprise for the cooperating Makgotloe.

"I drove to Loate, and when I arrived, I phoned the sergeant to ask where she was, and she answered by saying, 'Come to the Mercedes Benz V-class, black in colour,' and I went. "She came out from the car, with two men armed with rifles and others with small guns on their waist belts," Makgotloe wrote in a police statement.

"All the men were not wearing police uniforms; they were in civilian clothes. And one of the men issued an instruction that we must go inside the police station, and we all did."

In the police station, the sergeant and her heavily armed company started firing questions at Makgotloe about two specific cases, demanding access to the case file.

After three long hours of being cooked with all sorts of questions, Makgotloe wrote in his police statement that he was confused and felt that he was under interrogation, and it was like he was being grilled in a court of law as a suspect.

At around 21h00, the sergeant and her crew told Makgotloe to take them to the laboratory in Silverton, to which he responded that it was protocol that the laboratory only operated during normal office hours.

"They said they must provide feedback to their commander (Mkhwanazi) before midnight."

Makgotloe requested to call her superior, one Brigadier Mkhabela, who informed the sergeant and her men that the laboratory was closed and informed them he would

phone "their commander" (Mkhwanazi).

Another Lt-Col Lesu, who is responsible for ballistics case management, called and informed the kidnapers that the case files they were looking for had been sent to ballistic KZN for further examination. Determined, the kidnapers told Makgotloe they were driving to KZN with him, but along the way the one asked if he had keys to his office at the laboratory, to which he responded in the affirmative.

Changing direction, they drove straight to the laboratory.

The female sergeant and the other three men forced Makgotloe to open his work computer and put in the security code and open files about two

specific cases about Vereeniging and Bramley and demanded he print copies immediately.

"Sergeant Mbele took one statement and said 'this is the statement I want.' Then the three men said, 'You and Mbele must stay behind and talk.'

"After two minutes, the three men returned, and the one with the rifle stood by the door."

The officers guarding the lab premises from the gate phoned Makgotloe to enquire about his safety, and he passed the phone to his hostages, who refused to communicate with the person on the other end of the line.

"One of the guys said to me, 'working on these kinds of cases, I will die for shit,' and suddenly the guy who was standing by the door was pushed inside the office by police officers, and then there were many police in the building.

"I went out, as one Col Shole, who I worked with, was the one who came to my rescue at about 02:00.

"I did not give any permission (to my kidnapers) to take me by force; I request the police to investigate the matter further." The determined group of rogue investigators left but returned later that day during working hours and demanded Makgotloe's laptop.

By that time, Makgotloe, the line manager, was at work, and his attempt to reason with the group that confiscating the laptop would compromise thousands of reports pertaining to other serious cases involving dangerous suspects was having no effect.

They were adamant that they were taking the laptop, as they were investigating a fraud matter.

No search and seizure warrant was produced, but they took the laptop, which was only returned after two weeks.

Police spokesperson Brigadier Athlenda Mathe had not responded to questions at the time of going to print.

(Sunday World)



▲ The late Nandi Nyembe.

## Veteran actress Nandi Nyembe dies

**A GIANT tree has indeed fallen with the passing of this veteran actress who had been battling poor health for some time.**

The Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Gayton McKenzie, has confirmed the passing of actress Nandi Nyembe at the age of 75.

Nyembe died just days after her birthday on 19 August. "It is with profound sorrow that the Nyembe Family, together with the National Department of Sport, Arts and Culture [have] to announce the passing of one of South Africa's most treasured icons of the arts, Mam' Nandi Nyembe," McKenzie said.

The Nyembe family expressed their sadness in a statement.

"Our hearts are broken as we share the loss of our beloved mother and grandmother, Nandi Nyembe," they said.

Her grandson, Jabulani Nyembe said, "To the world, she was a gifted actress; to us, she was our everything. Her love, laughter, and strength will stay with us always. We are so grateful for the outpouring of love, prayers, and support during this time."

Film organisation, Actors Spaces, called her death a great loss.

"The loss of a giant will be felt far beyond what we can see or explain," the organisation shared.

"Nandi Nyembe's contribution is imprinted in our theatres, sets and books, a thespian of note and a true joy to be around. We stand in applause for your final curtain call. Your impact lives always."

### Poor health

Nyembe was wheelchair-bound and had been struggling to make ends meet.

Last year, she sought donations for her medical bills. She called for help from supporters and the government. "I now know how it feels to beg people for money. But I'm not that kind of person," she said at the time. "I can't have people feeling pity for me because I believe I can do things myself. I don't believe I need handouts."

Her financial issues were mainly due to spending over R88,000 on medical treatment for her son. She stated, she was not looking for handouts and was willing to work. The former Isibaya actress had suffered issues with her spinal cord and had surgery on her right knee while awaiting surgery on the left knee. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she stated that she did not receive any relief funds. (Sunday World)



▲ The late Dj Sumbody.



# Health benefits of Lemon

## What Are Lemons?

THE lemon is a bright yellow citrus fruit. It has its distinctive sour taste and fresh scent because it's rich in citric acid.

It comes from the flowering plant family Rutaceae, and its scientific name is Citrus limon. The lemon's unique flavor makes it a popular ingredient in drinks, desserts, and meals. Almost all parts of a lemon can be used in cooking.

Lemons can also be used for cleaning. The citric acid in lemon juice can kill bacteria and other germs.

Exactly where lemons came from isn't known. But there's documented evidence of its value from almost 2,000 years ago. The lemon tree grows in subtropical and tropical areas and can grow 10-20 feet tall. Most are grown in Mediterranean countries, as well as China, India, Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. They also grow in California, Arizona, Texas, and Florida in the U.S. You can find fresh lemons year-round in supermarkets.

Lemon juice has many uses, from culinary to medicinal. Lemons are used all over the world in desserts, drinks, sauces, dips, and as a garnish for meat and fish dishes. Lemon juice is a natural cleaner and stain remover. Lemon oil provides the fragrance for perfumes, soaps, and skin creams.

## Are lemons a fruit?

Yes. In biology, a fruit is the part of a plant with seeds.

## Types of Lemons

The most commonly grown lemon in the U.S. is the Eureka lemon. The Lisbon lemon is also popular.

You may also come across the Meyer lemon, a smaller, sweeter lemon that may have gotten its start as a cross between a lemon and a mandarin orange. These can make good house plants, but you'll need to bring them inside in the winter if you're not in a tropical climate.

When you buy lemons, look for those that are bright and have an even color and a smooth, blemish-free surface. Lemons should be firm but not too hard. Those with thinner skin tend to be juicier. You can tell if your lemon is ripe by checking its weight. It's ripe when it feels heavy for its size.

While you can find lemons year-round at your grocery store, peak seasonality in the U.S. is late winter to early spring and summer depending on the variety and the climate where they're grown. Store them in the refrigerator so they'll last longer than at room temperature.

## Health Benefits of Lemons

The vitamins, fiber, and plant compounds in lemons can be part of a healthy diet. It's not common to actually eat a fresh lemon--they're too sour for most people's tastes--unless you're using preserved lemons. But you can also eat lemons with a variety of foods. Lemons can also provide important health benefits like:

### Vitamin C

Lemons contain about 35 milligrams of vitamin C, which is over half the amount of vitamin C needed in your daily diet. Vitamin C is an antioxidant, which helps protect cells from damage. Vitamin C also helps your body make collagen for your skin, helps your body absorb iron, and supports your immune system. Citrus fruits are some of the best food sources of vitamin C.

Lemon also contains a high level of dietary fiber, but you don't get fiber from juice.



### Weight management

The pectin fiber found in lemons expands once it is ingested, making you feel full sooner and longer. Lemon water is often touted as an effective tool in weight loss and weight management. While there's nothing wrong with drinking water, there's nothing magical about adding lemon to water for weight control. Also, drinking water may keep you full and help you avoid snacking as effectively as sipping lemon water.

### Anemia prevention

Lemon can help your body absorb more iron from plant-based foods in your diet. Maintaining proper iron levels helps prevent anemia. Anemia is a lower-than-average number of red blood cells, which often happens as a result of iron deficiency.

### Kidney stone prevention

Lemons get their sour taste from their abundance of citric acid. Some studies show that citric acid may help prevent the formation of kidney stones.

### Enhances your complexion

The vitamin C in lemons helps to form collagen, a protein that supports your skin. The vitamin C, folic acid, vitamin B, and minerals in lemon may help to improve your acne, oily skin, blackheads, and dandruff.

Vitamin C is also a powerful antioxidant.

Antioxidants help to prevent cell damage caused by oxidative stress, which can enhance skin health. Early research suggests that drinking a beverage made with lemon juice may improve your complexion and slow the aging of your skin.

You can get these benefits by eating lemons or applying lemon directly to your skin. Lemon is a common ingredient in many cosmetics products--you can also make your own but check with your doctor first.

### Reduced risk of heart disease

Research links consuming lemons with lowering your risk of stroke and heart disease. The flavonoids in citrus fruits may help reduce the risk of ischemic stroke (when blood flow to your brain is reduced or blocked) in those assigned female at birth. Plant compounds found in lemons--namely limonin, hesperidin, and diosmin--have also been found to lower your cholesterol levels.

### Antibacterial effects

Lemon juice has antibacterial and antifungal properties. The plant compounds in lemon juice concentrate effectively inhibited the growth of salmonella, staphylococcus, and candida infections in one study. It was also effective against one particular antibiotic-resistant bacteria that causes pneumonia and blood infections.

### Cancer prevention and treatment research

Lemon juice is a valuable source of nutrients called flavonoids. These are antioxidants, which help protect cells from damage that could lead to cancer. But lemon juice hasn't been studied for cancer prevention in people. While a healthy diet may help lower the risk of cancer, no one food has been shown to prevent cancer.

Lemon juice is not part of cancer treatment. But scientists have found tiny nanoparticles in lemon juice that--in lab tests on cells--inhibited cell reproduction and activated cancer cell death. This is extremely early research that's more about searching for new cancer treatments and isn't based on the lemon juice you'd get in your diet.

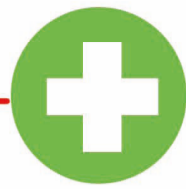
### Immune system support

One lemon can offer about half of your recommended daily value of vitamin C, which contributes to immune system defense and may help the body fight infection. Lemons also contain citrus flavonoids. These antioxidants fight free radicals, have anti-inflammatory effects, and can reduce your risk of brain disease and other degenerative diseases.

### Lower blood pressure

Physical activity helps to control high blood pressure, strengthen your heart, and reduce stress. Studies have found that the flavonoids in lemon help lower your blood pressure as well. Additional research showed this effect enhances the heart-healthy benefits of physical activity.





### Reduced risk of diabetes

Lemons contain a natural compound called hesperidin that may lower blood sugar levels, decreasing your risk of diabetes. In addition, the citric acid in lemons slows the conversion of starch to sugar, helping reduce blood sugar spikes and aiding in weight management.

### Lemon Nutrition Facts

Lemons are an excellent source of:  
Vitamin C  
Dietary fiber  
Citric acid  
Iron

Nutrients per serving  
A half-cup serving of lemon contains:  
Calories: 31  
Protein: 1 gram  
Fat: 0 grams  
Carbohydrates: 10 grams  
Fiber: 3 grams  
Sugar: 3 grams

### Side Effects of Lemons

Lemons have a high acid content. In excess, this citrus fruit can cause discomfort or worsen symptoms of certain medical conditions, including:

### Citrus allergies

If you're allergic to grass pollen or citrus fruits like oranges, grapefruit, or limes, you may also be allergic to lemons. The most common reactions are itching, burning, or swelling of the mouth and throat. Some people can have headaches or gastrointestinal distress.

### Migraines

Lemon juice is high in the amino acid tyramine. If you are sensitive to tyramine, drinking lemon juice can trigger migraine headaches.

### Aggravate acid reflux

Lemons can worsen heartburn symptoms in people with gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). In high amounts, lemon juice can also irritate your stomach and cause nausea.

### Tooth decay

In high concentrations, the acid in lemon juice can wear down your tooth enamel and cause cavities. Make sure to add enough water to lemon tea to dilute this acidity.

### Canker sores

Lemons may trigger canker sores or irritate existing ones, which can cause discomfort and make them take longer to heal.

### Medication interactions

While research specific to lemons is inconclusive, some citrus juices interact with certain cholesterol and blood pressure medications.

### Portion Sizes

Lemon juice is a flavorful and healthy addition to many recipes. Like all fruits, it contains natural sugar -- but not very much. Use it as a recipe directs.

### WebMd

# How can I prevent dehydration?

**DEHYDRATION** happens when your body loses or uses more fluids than it takes in.

When it happens, your body isn't able to do all the things it's supposed to. It's especially dangerous in older people and young children.

### Be Aware of Fluid Loss

The best way to avoid dehydration is to drink plenty of fluids, especially if you're in a hot climate or you're playing or working in the sun. Be aware of how much fluid you're losing through sweat and when you pee. Drink enough to keep up with what you're getting rid of.

You can also lose necessary fluids more quickly than normal when you have a high fever, diarrhea or are throwing up. As your body loses fluids, it also loses electrolytes. These are minerals in your blood and body fluids that affect how your muscles and nerves work.

When you lose electrolytes, you need to replace them. There are many over-the-counter products for doing this. Most people get these through their regular meals by eating meats, vegetables and fruits. But there are also sports drinks, gels, candies and gummies you can take. There's even a tablet that you can dissolve in water and drink.

If you're planning outdoor activities, try to schedule them for the cooler parts of the day. Make sure that you're dressed in light, cool clothing when the weather is warm.

### Prevention for Babies and Young Children

Children lose fluids and electrolytes just like adults do, so make sure your child has access to plenty of water and other fluids, especially if they're very physically active or if it's a warm day. And make sure your child eats plenty of fruits and veggies -- that contain lots of water.

If your infant or young child is dehydrated, you can try the "baby" version of a sports drink, like Pedialyte or Equalyte. If an over-the-counter solution isn't available, give them small sips of water. Don't try to make up your own homemade version. Be sure to check with your pediatrician if your child doesn't get better quickly.

### Prevention for Older Adults

Dehydration is especially dangerous for older adults because their bodies store less



water. Some points to remember:

- ▶ Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink. Make sure you're drinking fluids all day whether you're thirsty or not.
- ▶ Make sure water is within easy reach day and night.
- ▶ Have between 6 and 8 cups of fluids a day. If temperatures are high or you have a fever, drink more.
- ▶ Don't skip meals. You typically get much of your fluids from regular meals.
- ▶ Drink sports drinks, milk, and broth, but avoid high-protein drinks and alcoholic beverages. They can dehydrate you.
- ▶ Eat a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables. They contain large amounts of water, salt, and vitamins and can help prevent dehydration.
- ▶ Limit coffee, alcohol, and caffeinated

drinks. They are actually diuretics, so they leach water out.

### Prevention During Exercise

Anyone who exercises, no matter what age or skill level, needs to make sure they get enough fluids:

- ▶ Drink a cup of water about 4 hours before you exercise.
- ▶ Have another half-cup of water every 10 to 15 minutes while you're exercising.
- ▶ Drink water after you're done. If your body is producing plenty of light-colored urine, that's a good sign.

Following these general rules for exercise will not only help you stay hydrated, it'll also keep your heart rate and body temperature from getting too high, and your performance will improve. **WebMD**

# News in pictures from around the world



▲ Unitree Robotics humanoid robots compete in a kickboxing match at the inaugural World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, China.



▲ Palestinian woman Saja Hamad lies trapped under the rubble of a house hit in an Israeli strike, in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip.



▲ Surfers enter the Atlantic Ocean as Hurricane Erin churns offshore producing dangerous rip currents and waves up to 20-foot high, in Long Beach, New York.



▲ Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks during a meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.



▲ A car burns during the wildfire, in Meda, Portugal,

# Marquez wins Hungarian GP for seventh straight sprint-race double

DUCATTS Marc Marquez delivered a masterclass at the Balaton Park Circuit on Sunday, winning the first Hungarian Grand Prix in 33 years to secure his seventh straight sprint-race double and stretch his championship lead to a commanding 175 points.

KTM's Pedro Acosta and Aprilia's Marco Bezzecchi joined Marquez on the podium as reigning champion Jorge Martin came fourth - his best finish on the Aprilia since his return from injuries.

Gresini Racing's Alex Marquez, second in the championship behind his brother, could only manage 14th place after an early fall.

Against the picturesque backdrop of the largest lake in central Europe, polesitter Marquez lost the lead on lap one to drop out of the podium positions but his tyre strategy proved decisive.

Having clinched his 13th sprint victory of the season on Saturday, Marquez had another good launch to lead into turn one.

But Bezzecchi took the lead on the next turn, as Marquez made contact with the Aprilia and lost speed to drop to fourth.

"Luckily, for both of us, I was able to save the crash and he just continued his way. But from that point the race changed a bit," Marquez said.

Bezzecchi and second-placed Franco Morbidelli were on soft rear tyres while Marquez was on the medium compound, with the Spaniard easily climbing to second once his



▲ Marc Marquez.

tyres were fully warmed up.

Acosta also made a smooth overtake on Morbidelli to move up to third but he had a gap of nearly two seconds to Marquez, who had virtually erased Bezzecchi's lead as they constantly exchanged overtakes.

## MARQUEZ POUNCES

Marquez patiently bided his time, staying on Bezzecchi's rear wheel. The inevitable moment came on lap 11 when he pounced, using the Aprilia's slipstream to reclaim the lead before streaking away.

"When I saw that the soft rear tyres started to drop, I was with the medium, I start-

ed to attack," he said. "I had a super nice rhythm. I was flowing on the track."

Five laps later, Acosta attacked Bezzecchi on the same straight heading into turn one, guiding his KTM past the Aprilia on the inside and carrying that momentum into the next turn to take second.

"I needed the extra grip from the soft (tyre) in braking so I risked it with the soft. But for us, maybe it was better (to use) the medium," said Bezzecchi.

Although Acosta had Marquez in his sights, (Supersport)

## Kaizer Chiefs striker gets first international call-up

NEW Kaizer Chiefs signing Flavio Silva, who has yet to play a match for the club, has been named in Guinea Bissau's squad to take on Sierra Leone and Djibouti in World Cup qualifiers this month.

Flavio Silva is a former Portugal under-16 and under-19 international but has since switched his international allegiance to Guinea Bissau, where he was born.

This is his first call-up by Guinea Bissau, whose new coach Emiliano Te named a 40-man preliminary squad for the two Group A qualifiers, to be both played at home.

They take on Sierra Leone in Bissau on Thursday, 4 September and then Djibouti on Monday, 8 September.

Guinea Bissau have little chance of qualifying for the World Cup as they sit 10 points behind leaders Egypt with only four games left.

But they could force second place in the group if other results go their way and put themselves in contention for November's playoffs.

Flavio Silva was signed by Chiefs from Persebaya Surabaya in Indonesia during the off-season and went with the club on their pre-season tour to the Netherlands.

But he has not played in any of the club's opening three matches of the new Betway Premiership campaign because he has been awaiting his work permit, which Chiefs said had now arrived,

(Supersport)

## Kambala keeps his spot in Mozambique squad

Polokwane City midfielder Manuel Kambala has retained his berth in the Mozambique squad for next month's World Cup qualifiers, but there is no place for the veteran captain Dominguez in the squad named for the key encounters.

Coach Chiquinho Conde has picked 25 players for the Group G games against Uganda in Kampala on 5 September and then at home to Botswana in Maputo on 8 September.

Mozambique are only three points behind leaders Algeria and still have high hopes of securing a first-ever place at the finals in North America next year.

The 34-year-old Kambala, who missed Polokwane City's first two games of the new season through injury, made a return to the Mambas line-up

for the friendly international against South Africa in Polokwane in June.

It was his first appearance for his country in two years, and he did enough to convince the coach to keep him in the squad.

But Dominguez (Elias Pelembe), who was a former Premier Soccer League Player of the Season while at SuperSport United, looks to have come to the end of his international career as he was again left out.

The 41-year-old skipped Mozambique through a successful Africa Cup of Nations qualifying campaign late last year, but when he failed to hand in his passport in time to get a visa for the key World Cup qualifier against group leaders Algeria in March, he was criticised by the coach for his tardiness and dropped.

(Supersport)



▲ Polokwane City midfielder Manuel Kambala Minnesota.

## Moyes sees big step forward after Everton win stadium opener

David Moyes said he was building the foundations of a brighter future for Everton after they beat Brighton 2-0 to begin a new era at the Hill Dickinson Stadium on Sunday.

Jack Grealish was the star of the show with two assists on his first start for the Toffees as Iliman Ndiaye and James Garner struck either side of halftime.

Jordan Pickford then saved a Danny Welbeck penalty to ensure a crowd of just under 52 000 could celebrate a momentous day for Everton.

The club remain a work in progress on the field with Moyes desperate to make more additions to his squad in the final week of the transfer window.

But the green shoots of a brighter future were on show on a day that has been years in the making.

Only four clubs have won more English top-flight titles than Everton's nine.

However, they have not won a major trophy for 30 years and spent their final seasons at Goodison Park, the club's home since 1892, battling relegation.

"For the next 100 years there'll be different managers sitting here, but the stadium will be here and what we need to do now is start the building of a of a strong team," said Moyes.

"I don't know if we can get it done immediately, but we're going to try and. We're trying to find a way of getting moving the club on. I think this is a big step forward for Ever-



▲ David Moyes.

ton."

Grealish has so far been the marquee new addition to Moyes' squad on a loan deal and showed glimpses of the talent that saw Manchester City pay Aston Villa £100 million for him four years ago.

"We've been looking for different attacking options and flair and he gave us something a little bit different today," added Moyes.

"We all want the Jack Grealish, which we all know."

## NDIAYE MAKES MORE HISTORY

Ndiaye scored the final goal at Goodison Park against Southampton in May and made more history with the first goal at Everton's new home.

Grealish was the creator with a drilled left foot cross that Ndiaye timed his run perfectly to meet at the back post on 23 minutes.

Brighton should have been well ahead by that point and will be wondering how they left Merseyside empty handed.

Kaoru Mitoma struck the bar after an outlandish flick over James Tarkowski before volleying towards goal.

Welbeck then skewed over with the goal gaping from Yankuba Minteh's cross.

Even after the blow of conceding, the visitors could have gone in ahead at halftime.

(Supersport)

# Arteta backs Eze to create ‘magic moments’ at Arsenal

**NEW** recruit Eberechi Eze will create “magic moments” and take Arsenal to a different level, according to Gunners manager Mikel Arteta.

Eze was presented to the Emirates crowd shortly before Arsenal’s 5-0 thrashing of Leeds that took the north London club to the top of the Premier League table early in the season.

The England international has signed a four-year contract in a deal that could be worth up to £68 million (\$92 million) after Arsenal scuppered his proposed move to their arch north London rivals Tottenham Hotspur.

The 27-year-old did not arrive in time to face Leeds, but with both Bukayo Saka and Martin Odegaard sustaining injuries in Arsenal’s second win in as many matches, Eze could be handed his Gunners debut against reigning champions Liverpool at Anfield next Sunday.

“He (Eze) has the capacity to create these magic moments,” said Arteta.

“He can do it from different positions, different situations. He’s got that flair and he’s got that charisma about him that is very contagious.

“It shows how much we want to take this club to a different level. His talent is unquestionable. He’s experienced in this league. The personality is unbelievable.

“He can play different positions. We know

he can play as an attacking midfielder, right or left. He doesn’t care. And you can tell that what happened on that pitch (before the game) meant the world to him so I am delighted to have him.”

Eze becomes Arsenal’s seventh signing of a summer transfer window where they have now spent some £250 million following the arrivals of Viktor Gyokeres, Cristhian Mosquera, Martin Zubimendi, Kepa Arrizabalaga, Christian Norgaard and Noni Madueke.

‘MORE EQUIPPED’

Arsenal have finished second in the Premier League for each of the past three seasons and last won a trophy five years ago.

But Eze’s signing is a further indication of their determination to end a 22-year wait for the Premier League title.

His return to boyhood club Arsenal comes with Eze assured of a place in Crystal Palace history after scoring the winning goal in the Eagles’ FA Cup final victory against Manchester City in May to secure the south London club’s first major trophy.

Saka and Odegaard sustained hamstring and shoulder injuries respectively against Leeds.

Saka missed three-and-a-half months of last season after surgery on his right hamstring -- on Saturday he injured his left hamstring -- while club captain Odegaard was also absent for 12 matches with an ankle problem as injuries derailed Arsenal’s quest



▲ New recruit Eberechi Eze.

for silverware.

The duo will undergo scans on Sunday to discover the extent of their latest setbacks, with Arteta adding: “You just have to see the amount of minutes that the team played in 2023/24. You could name the starting XI.

“Last year, it was a bit different because of

the amount of injuries we had and the start to this season has not been great in that sense.

“But we are much more equipped, without a doubt – and that’s necessary. If you want to compete at this level and be very dominant, there is not any other option.” (Supersport)

# Noren secures second British Masters title

Alex Noren ended a seven-year wait for his 11th DP World Tour title as he fought off Nicolai Højgaard and a charging Kazuma Kobori to win the Betfred British Masters hosted by Sir Nick Faldo by one shot.

Noren, who also won this event in 2016, started the day one shot off the lead but took over at the top early in his final round before getting locked in a fierce battle with Dane Højgaard.

New Zealander Kobori stormed into contention late on with an eagle and four birdies in his final six holes to set the clubhouse target at 15 under par.

But Swede Noren produced a big finish of his own, picking up birdies at the 15th, 16th and 17th to take a two-shot lead to the 18th tee.

He suffered a late scare as an errant tee-shot at the last cost him a shot there but he finished the week on 16 under to return to the winner’s circle for the first time since the 2018 Open de France.

Kobori and Højgaard finished in a tie for second, while Nicolai Højgaard’s twin brother Rasmus became the sixth and final player to qualify for the European Ryder Cup Team after finishing in a tie for 13th on eight under.

Noren started brightly on Sunday, setting up a tap-in birdie at the second with a delightful approach to take the outright lead before making it back-to-back gains from close



▲ Alex Noren.

range at the par-five third.

He created further chances on the front nine, with his long-range birdie try at the fifth narrowly missing the hole, but could not increase his advantage.

And after bogeying the ninth, the 43-year-old found himself two shots back at the turn.

But he responded with two consecutive birdies from around 15 feet at the tenth and 11th to grab a share

of the lead before reeling off a hat-trick of gains from the 15th to give himself a two-shot cushion going down the last.

There were late nerves as Noren only found the 18th green with his fourth shot but he showed his mettle by holing from seven feet for a bogey which was good enough to earn him victory.

(Supersport)

# Raducanu cruises to first US Open win since 2021 triumph

Emma Raducanu bagged her first US Open victory since her fairytale 2021 title triumph on Sunday with a straight sets demolition of Japanese qualifier Ena Shibahara.

The Briton was in complete control throughout, breaking Shibahara’s serve routinely on her way to a 6-1, 6-2 drubbing on the Louis Armstrong Stadium showcourt.

The win was Raducanu’s first at the US Open since she made history four years ago, winning the championship as a little-known unseeded qualifier at the age of 18.

She was knocked out in the

US Open first round in 2022, missed the 2023 tournament due to injury, and exited in the first round again in 2024.

“I’m very very pleased to have won that match,” Raducanu said in an on-court interview.

“It’s my first win here since 2021 so it’s extra special. The first round is always difficult so I’m very happy to come through that.

“I’m very pleased with how I managed myself through that match.”

The unseeded Raducanu will face either 24th seed Veronika Kudermetova or Indonesia’s Janice Tjjen in the second round.

(Supersport)



▲ Emma Raducanu.



By Chris Dlamini

WHAT a day for the youngsters! Wingo Sports Academy ensured that young and upcoming footballers had a day of competition at Ezulwini Sports Ground on Saturday. At least 14 teams of different age categories from various academies participated.

The age groups were under-10s, under-13s and under-15s. Wingo Sports Academy is former Mbabane Swallows and senior national team star, Wandile 'Wawa' Mazibuko-owned and based in Ezulwini. Mazibuko hosted his first development tournament since starting his academy dream last year. He invited other local academies to the tournament in which medals and trophies were handed to winning teams.

"This was Wawa's vision and I'm glad to see it come to fruition. This is our first academy tournament but I'm even out of words. I thank God for all of it because it's an overwhelming success and thanks to the parents who came in their numbers to support the children," said Mazibuko.

Such parents included local football legends like Sicelo 'Wire' Mazibuko, Berger 'Hotline' Nxumalo, and Eswatini Football Association (EFA) Finance Officer Sine-mandla Mavuso among others.

Also coming with teams from their own academies were Denver Sundowns defender Jimoh Moses, former Moneni Pirates and Swallows defender Thabo Vilakati and Mbabane Highlanders' Trevor 'Malone' Shongwe and ex-Highlanders defender Bongani 'Rhee' Ncongwane, while other ex-elite stars

## Youngsters thrill in 'Wawa's Academy Tourney

like Stanford Ncube and Mbongeni Motsa are part of the technical team working with Wawa under Wingo Sports Academy, supported by the Wandile Mazibuko Foundation.

### Wingo wins U10 category

Excitement was written all over the young boys as silverware was handed to them.

The top three teams per age category received silverware. The champions got trophies and gold medals, while it was silver and bronze for second and third place.

Of all the age groups, parents took more interest in the under-10s where four teams competed from the various local academies.

The teams were Little Kickers, Shooting Stars, Wingo Sports Academy and Young Eagles.

Wingo were crowned the champions after a penalty shootout win against a resilient Little Kickers from Mbabane. It was 1-1 in regular time, then 3-1 in the shootout as Wingo goalkeeper Onalenna Thulo (7), proved their hero after saving two spot kicks.

Third place went to Young Eagles who won 2-0 in a penalty shootout as well. The other age groups were still playing at the time the under-10s were crowned.

However, more reports on the event will follow in tomorrow's edition of the Eswatini Daily News (EDN).



▲ Little Kickers finished second on the day.



▲ Former Manzini Wanderers General manager Berger Nxumalo with his son Zwide and daughter Lungelo.



▲ Wingo Academy Onalenna Thula with his mother.

# SADC countries for regional half-marathon



▲ ANOCA Zone VI Secretary Maxwell Jele making his presentation.

**By Sibusiso Masilela**  
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## A SIGNIFICANT occasion awaits athletes from the SADC region.

Runners from various countries will compete in the 2025 Region V Half Marathon, scheduled for October 12, 2025, in Tshwane.

The international regional event will have athletes compete in four categories: 1.5km, 5km, 10km, and 21km.

This was revealed by Region V Chief Executive Officer Stanley Mutoya during the 2025 Confederation of African Athletics Annual General Meeting held on Saturday in Kempton Park, Johannesburg.

“We will stage the regional half-marathon in October, and each country will send eight athletes. We strongly believe that the race will improve the standard of the sport in the region,” he said.

The Zimbabwean administrator addition-

ally pledged support for the development of the sport in the region.

“We will continue supporting Athletics regional programs in the region, both at the development and elite categories. We look forward to the next edition of the Region v youth games in Mozambique in December next year,” he said.

ANOCA Zone VI Secretary Maxwell Jele is also committed to supporting the regional athletics body.

“We will continue to assist in the development of Athletics in the region through the introduction of programs such as the anti-doping workshop that will take place before the end of the year,” he said.

CAA SADC president Zakhele Dlamini thanked the two regional bodies for their continued support.

“We are grateful for the support of the two bodies, and their assistance plays a major role in the development of the sport in the region,” he said



▲ Olymp Africa director Thoba Mazibuko.

## Thoba in SADC Athletics Technical Committee

**By Sibusiso Masilela**  
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### ESWATINI Olympic Africa director Thoba Mazibuko has landed an international regional athletics post.

Mazibuko has been appointed as a member of the South African Confederation of Athletics, formerly known as the Confederation of African Athletics SADC wing.

This was revealed by the regional athletics body president, Zakhele Dlamini, during their annual General Meeting held on Saturday.

The committee is chaired by Zimbabwean coach Tendai Tangara.

“This is a crucial committee that we believe would contribute immensely to the development of our region. They will develop coaching and technical officiation programs, set regional competition standards, and be responsible for all technical and development components of our region,” he said.

Dlamini said they have managed to revive

programs over the years despite facing financial challenges.

“In pursuit of our endeavour and dedication to revive the region, despite the lack of funding, we continued to forge strategic partnerships with competition organizers to host two competitions in Botswana and South Africa,” he said.

Dlamini, who is also the Athletics Eswatini president further said the change of name will enhance the development of the sport in the region.

“This is a new era for the association and an opportunity to develop its corporate identity and foster new partnerships,” he said.

Athletics Eswatini’s Chief Operations Officer, Mathokoza Dlamini, also attended the meeting.

#### The full technical committee

- Tendai Tagara (Zimbabwe)-Chairman.
- Justice Dipepa (Botswana) – Coaching.
- Thoba Mazibuko (Eswatini) – Administration.
- Enias Nhoru (Zimbabwe) – Information & Technology.
- Norrie Williamson (RSA) – Route Measurer.

## Kelly retains cycling presidency

**By Sibusiso Masilela**  
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### ESWATINI Cycling Association president William ‘Tiger’ Kelly has retained the hot seat.

Kelly was re elected unopposed during the cycling mother body’s annual General meeting held at Manzini Club.

Other returning committee members include Treasurer Mduduzi Mkhabela and Secretary Mxolisi Shongwe.

Kelly said he was humbled by the reappointment.

“I am happy that members of the cycling family have shown trust in my leadership skills. I will continue working towards the

development of the sport in the region,” he said.

The re-elected executive committee will lead the women’s national team to the 2025 World cycling championships scheduled for Kigali, Rwanda.

Eswatini will be represented by Newcomm Wheels rider Mandiswa Fakudze following the withdrawal of Nontsikelo Mdlovu from Team G due to injury.

The national team is under the guidance of internationally recognised coach Artwell Ndzinisa.

They are two main domestic races that will take place before the end of the year, including the Kusekhaya Lubombo Lowveld challenge and MTN Khemani road classic, among others.



▲ ECA president William Kelly and Tree Tops Resort director Silungile Dlamini presenting a Mozambique rider with her prize during the recent 2 Fast 2 Furious race.

Stories by Benjamin Nyirenda

# More woes for Mbabane Highlanders players in SA

AS the fight for the legitimate owner of Mbabane Highlanders FC between Bheki 'Rubber' Simelane and Shauwn 'MaMkhize' Mkhize continues in the courts, it's the players who are feeling the pinch of all the back and forth going on.

One unnamed player who is part of the team currently in their pre-season training camp in Maritzburg, KZN, South Africa has expressed dissatisfaction with the way they are being treated in Maritzburg.

In a message linked to Eswatini Daily News, the unnamed player expresses his unhappiness with the way they are being treated in South Africa and he is ready to part ways with the club.

"Kute umuntfu lengimkhumbulise kwa babe Simelane (Bheki Rubber) ne management yakhe together with the Highlanders supporters. Solo sefika kute ngisho cent lesiwutfolako kutsiwa asijime kuphela (I really miss Mr Simelane and the whole Mbabane Highlanders management and the supporters. Since we arrived here, we haven't even been paid a cent. I don't even have toiletries as we speak. They say we must just train. I don't even want to be



▲ Mbabane Highlanders AM defender Vusi Vilakati during their friendly match against Midlands Wanderers.

registered by this team. It's just that the transfer window period is far. I don't want to play for this team anymore," said the player.

Meanwhile, another source very close to the club, privy to reliable information,

further disclosed to Eswatini Daily News that over 20 players have over stayed in South Africa after the 30 days visiting period has expired.

"As we speak now, most of the players

who went with the team around the 21st of July are staying there illegally now, as they have overstayed. The 30 days is gone, and it will be hard coming back as they didn't have working visas or visitor visas and not even work permits. It's hard for the players and even other officials. Most of them have overstayed," the source told Eswatini Daily News.

Eswatini Daily News contacted former Highlanders official Mandla Simelane for comment on the issue, but he said that the matter is currently in court and there is nothing he can say about it now.

"At the moment, you know the matter is still in court and there is nothing much I can say.

You also know the players are no longer in our care now until the matter is settled in court. But if that's the situation, then we feel for the players and their families. Let's hope things will be sorted much quicker for the sake of the well-being of the players," Simelane told Eswatini Daily News.

## ... Players to sign contracts on Monday – MaMkhize

WITH some of the unnamed Mbabane Highlanders FC players making claims that they are not being treated well under Shauwn MaMkhize Mkhize in Pietermaritzburg, KZN, South Africa, the businesswoman has responded.

In an exclusive interview with Eswatini Daily News, the Durban-based businesswoman said that at the moment, there is no player that has a contract with them, as they were still assessing them.

She told the Eswatini Daily News that they will only sign official contracts on Monday,

August 25, 2025.

"We don't have players who are currently contracted to Highlanders FC AM. They had contacts with Bheki Simelane in which they were being paid per game and since there is no game that we have played and won, there have been no payments.

### Contracts

Their contracts stipulated that they get paid by winning a game. You must know that we haven't signed or registered any player. We are only signing contracts on Monday and that's when we will have our

players. Not every player that is here will remain. We have been assessing players and we have already released a few of them who didn't meet our criteria. So until Monday, we haven't signed any player yet. People should give me an opportunity to build the team," Mkhize said.

The former owner of Royal AM FC added that there is no player who has overstayed in South Africa, as they know what they are doing.

"No one has overstayed. If they have overstayed at the border, they will be arrested

and detained. We have kept quiet about what we are doing. As a businesswoman I can't be that reckless and let people overstay, which I know is breaking the law. No one has overstayed. We do everything above board and everyone is in good standing here," MaMkhize concluded.

The battle for Mbabane Highlanders FC is currently in court, where previous director Bheki Rubber Simelane is seeking compensation before MaMkhize can fully start running the club, though the court has given MaMkhize a go ahead to manage the team during the Trade Fair tournament, as the case has been postponed.

## 'Swallows (PTY) Ltd fans need a business forum'

By Chris Dlamini

MBABANE Swallows (PTY) Ltd faction president Princess Lungile says the club supporters need a business forum.

The Director said the forum can mentor the supporters to understand football business. This was during the official handover of the club shares to the supporters in a meeting held at St Mark's High School Hall on Sunday.

"The supporters need to undergo a business forum to properly run the club and make it self-sustainable. The orientation will enlighten you with business ideas that can generate money for the club for many years to come," she said.

The widow of the late former president Victor 'Maradona' Gamedze further urged the supporters to create savings for players.

"It is important for players to have savings while active, as they can help them at the end of their careers. I used to have this scheme during my reign as the club president, where I used to deduct money from their salaries as an investment," she said.

Princess Lungile once ran the club successfully during the 2018/19 season after the demise of his husband and former



▲ Princess Lungile with some supporters during the meeting held at St Mark's High School Hall.

Premier League of Eswatini Chairman.

The capital city giants is currently rocked by a power struggle between the Princess Lungile faction and the Absalom Ngwenya regime over the ownership of the crowd pullers. The dispute is set to be heard by the newly established Eswatini Football Association Tribunal committee.

The Princess recently announced a management committee chaired by Bongani Dlamini and legend Wonder 'Samba Jive' Nhleko.



▲ Swallows supporters following proceedings.

## PLE agrees new league deal

By Chris Dlamini

A new league sponsorship agreement has been reached.

The Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) Chairman Polycarp Dlamini gave member teams good news about the league which had its three-year sponsorship deal run out at the end of last season. This meant a re-negotiation between PLE and MTN Eswatini for a new deal. Impeccable sources had claimed a new three-year agreement worth around E20 million was proposed. However, speculation time will soon be over as Dlamini announced the deal was done. "As you are aware, the 2024/25 season marked the conclusion of our three-year sponsorship agreement with MTN Eswatini. We are pleased to report that we have concluded negotiations with MTN Eswatini and we anticipate signing the new agreement in the coming days," said the PLE Chairman.

### Sponsor

Dlamini said they deeply appreciated the league sponsor for the continued support, and they were looking forward to building a more solid foundation as they enter a new deal.

"On this note, we would also like to congratulate the 2024/25 league champions Nsingizini Hotspurs while also doing the same to Malanti Chiefs for being champions of the National First Division League 2024/25 season," he said. Dlamini did not forget to congratulate the Ingwenyama Cup 2024/25 champions Royal Leopards.



**Moyes sees big step forward after Everton win**

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**'Swallows (PTY) Ltd fans need a business forum'**

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**... as players overstay in Pietmaritzburg and claim dissatisfaction with the way they are being treated in camp. *Page 23***