



▲ His Majesty King Mswati III giving orders as he commissioned the hunting expedition at Emalahleni.

ENPF PENSION CONVERSION:

PSPF will be
E7 billion in the
red in 5 years

By Lwazi Dlamini
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The Eswatini National Provident Fund Pension Bill of 2025, in its current form, if turned into an act of Parliament, would leave the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF) a staggering E7 billion in the red. The PSPF’s current deficit stands at E5 110 943, while the net assets stand at E37 589 103 and the liabilities stand at E42 700 042.

SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

Archbishop Duncan-Williams Ignites WAW Conference in Matsapha

Page 3



FNB Eswatini rewards shoppers with cashback

Page 4



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By Thokozani Mazibuko

HIS Majesty King Mswati III on Wednesday commissioned the continuation of the Butimba hunting expedition, leading thousands of regiments in a spirited march to Emalahleni.

The warriors, dressed in their traditional regalia, marched with enthusiasm and pride despite the scorching summer heat. Singing and dancing echoed across the landscape as the King led his regiments in one of the most celebrated cultural events of the Swazi nation.

Butimba, a traditional hunting ceremony, is a centuries-old practice that brings together warriors from across the Kingdom. It is not only a test of endurance and bravery but also a reaffirmation of unity, culture, and loyalty to the throne. Selected wild game is hunted during the exercise, symbolizing both the sustenance and the collective strength of the nation.

Addressing the regiments through his leadership, His Majesty reminded warriors of the sacredness of the occasion, encouraging them to preserve the cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Observers noted the high spirits among the warriors as they braved the long march, some chanting victory songs, while others performed war dances. The energy and vibrancy of the regiments underscored the deep cultural significance of Butimba to emaSwati.

The hunting expedition, which began earlier this week, will continue in selected game reserves under the guidance of His Majesty. Beyond its cultural importance, the event also serves to strengthen bonds of brotherhood among regiments while reviving traditional practices that form the cornerstone of Eswatini's identity.

It should be noted that the Butimba remains one of the most symbolic

King commissions Butimba hunting expedition at Emalahleni



▲ Prince Majaha joined by warriors, as they answered the King's call to the traditional hunting ceremony, Butimba.

● Butimba, a traditional hunting ceremony, is a centuries-old practice that brings together warriors from across the Kingdom. It is not only a test of endurance and bravery but also a reaffirmation of unity, culture, and loyalty to the throne



▲ Warriors in song and dance at the Butimba.

ceremonies in the royal and national calendar, highlighting the enduring heritage of the Swazi people under the stewardship of the King.

By Lwazi Dlamini
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THE Eswatini National Provident Fund Pension Bill of 2025, in its current form if turned into an act of Parliament, would leave the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF) a staggering E7 billion in the red.

The PSPF current deficit stands at E5 110 943 while the net assets stand at E37 589 103 and the liabilities stand at E42 700 042.

“The administration costs will be doubled as it were if this goes ahead. If implemented now, it could carry as much as E2 billion in five years worse off in terms of deficit and we are currently at E5 billion, so in five years we would be E7 billion,” Vilakati explained.

Outlining why they are standing their ground on the ENPF Pension Bill in its current state with the inclusion of civil servants, PSPF CEO Masotja Vilakati told members of the Editor's Forum on Thursday evening at Ingcamu Building that the bill in its current form would systematically kill PSPF.

“Civil Servants must not be made worse off. Reducing PSPF contributions or including civil servants in the conversion will make members worse off. Pension rights are protected under both the Pensions Order and the Constitution of the Kingdom,” he said.

Vilakati re-emphasised that PSPF

supports the conversion of ENPF for its members, but excluding civil servants since government is not committing additional funds. He revealed that civil servants were excluded from ENPF as far back as 1974 and were catered for under separate legislation.

Vilakati further raised legal issues around the ENPF Pension Bill, saying that forcing civil servants into two statutory funds could be unconstitutional and financially unsustainable.

“There is no new budget allocation: Government has not provided fresh funds to support the conversion, which means contributions from the state as an employer would be reduced,” he added.

Vilakati highlighted that there is a deficit risk and any reduction in contributions would require reducing benefits, a move that is not legally supported and would push PSPF towards unsustainability.

“Civil Servants dedicate their lives to serving the nation. Their pensions are a promise of dignity after years of service and that promise must be protected,” Vilakati stressed.



▲ PSPF CEO Masotja Vilakati and Corporate Services Manager Elkan Makhanya fielding questions from the members of the Editor's Forum on Thursday evening at Ingcamu Building.

PSPF will be E7 billion in the red in 5 years!

By Thokozani Mazibuko

Archbishop Duncan-Williams ignites WAW Conference

THE atmosphere at Jesus Calls Worship Centre International was electrifying as Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams delivered a fiery sermon during the ongoing Women of Action and Warfare (WAW) Conference, themed “Entering the Season of Release.”

The event, hosted at the church’s first branch in Matsapha under the leadership of Bishop Robert Kasaro, has drawn hundreds of congregants and visitors from across the region. Known worldwide as the “Apostle of Strategic Prayer,” The Archbishop did not hold back as he declared that God was ushering His people into a new era of breakthroughs, restoration, and divine release.

“Every stronghold, every limitation, every barrier that has held you back must break,” he thundered to resounding shouts of Amen and applause.

The Archbishop emphasized the importance of prayer, faith, and persistence, urging believers not to relent in their pursuit of God’s promises.

The conference, which began on Thursday, features a line-up of renowned ministers, including Prophetess Sibongile Sithole and Dr Manzi Subira, who are expected to continue ministering throughout the sessions.

The gathering is seen as a spiritual

turning point, not only for the church but for many individuals who came seeking renewal and empowerment.

Bishop Robert Kasaro, host of the conference, expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming response and described the WAW Conference as a divine appointment.

“This is a season where God is shifting His people into greater dimensions. We are humbled to have great vessels of God such as Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams ministering here in Matsapha,” he said.

Jesus Calls Worship Centre International, founded by Bishop Kasaro, has rapidly grown in influence since establishing its first branch in Matsapha. The WAW Conference marks one of the biggest gatherings in the church’s calendar, attracting not only local congregants but also visitors from neighboring countries.

Delegates have described the sessions as life-changing, with testimonies already emerging of renewed hope, spiritual breakthroughs, and personal transformation.

The WAW Conference continues over the weekend with more powerful sessions expected as worshippers anticipate greater outpourings of what has been described as a “season of release.”



▲ Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams ministering the word of God.

By Kwanele Dhladhla

Public to weigh in on ENPF conversion, ban of gifts over E5000 for politicians

IN the quest to ensure dedication to transparency and participatory governance, Parliament has called upon members of the public to share their views on the proposed Leadership Code of Conduct Bill of 2025, which proposes that public officials should not receive gifts above E5000 and the conversion of ENPF to Eswatini National Pension Fund.

The conversion of the Eswatini National Provident Fund (ENPF) is contained in the Eswatini National Pension Fund Bill of 2025.

The call, which has been communicated by Clerk to Parliament Benedict Xaba, follows recent wide-ranging stakeholder engagements where a strong recommendation was made that, in the spirit of zero tolerance in the fight against corruption, pastors should also be compelled not to receive gifts above E5000 either from congregants, businesses, or individuals. There have also been mixed reactions from various stakeholders on the conversion of ENPF to the Eswatini National Pension Fund.

It has been explained by ENPF Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Futhi Tembe, that the conversion was a progressive step aimed at creating a more equitable society. She said the new pension system would not only include employees in the formal sector but also extend to workers in the informal economy and domestic workers who have long been excluded from such systems.

The CEO stated that this would broaden the fund’s scope, marking a pivotal moment for social security in Eswatini.

One of the key highlights of the conversion was the shift from the lump-sum payments offered under the provident fund

to monthly pensions for retirees.

ENPF explained that currently, when workers retire, they are provided with a lump sum, which could quickly run out, leaving them vulnerable to financial insecurity.

However, with the new pension system, retirees would receive consistent monthly payments, ensuring they have a steady source of income to support them throughout their retirement years. “This shift addresses the issue of income security, a challenge that many retirees face after leaving the workforce,” ENPF explained.

On another note, it has also been emphasised by stakeholders that it would be important for pastors as well to be incorporated in the list of public officials bound by the Leadership Code of Conduct Bill of 2025.

In terms of the legislation, public officials include Members of Parliament (MPs), Royal Trustees, executive leadership of all institutions that receive government subvention, and regional administrators.

Other public officials who will not be expected to accept gifts or benefits that may influence their duties include school principals and their deputies, and lawyers affiliated with the Law Society of Eswatini.

Xaba explained that the bills are being reviewed by the House of Assembly and the House of Senate.

The leadership code of conduct stipulates that a public official shall not receive any gift or benefit or hospitality in kind of the value of E5,000.

The legislation stipulates that a gift or donation to a public official on any public or ceremonial occasion, or commission to a public official on any transaction, would be treated as a gift or donation or commission to the gov-

ernment or institution represented by that public official, and such donation is to be declared to the commission or institution concerned. The commission shall keep an inventory of any gift.

“Where a public official is in doubt as to the need for a declaration or the appropriateness of accepting an offer of a gift, hospitality, or other benefit, that public official shall consult the Commission for advice. The minister may, from time to time, prescribe the type, value of the gifts, donations, or benefits in kind. A public official who fails to comply with the provisions of this section contravenes this code and is liable to forfeit the benefit equivalent to the gift, hospitality, or benefit to the government or institu-

tion, and shall stand warned; or (b) be warned in writing,” reads the act in part.

The Clerk to Parliament announced that the public would be allowed to submit their views in writing or orally.

He mentioned that those interested in making oral submissions should notify the designated Parliament Portfolio Committee Clerks on or before September 12, 2025.

Director of Communications at the Anti-Corruption Commission, Jabu Phakathi, recently called for zero tolerance towards any form of corruption. He warned that allowing any form of gift would be tantamount to acknowledging that corruption exists in the kingdom.

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You have read the rest, now read the best

▲ ENPF CEO Futhi Tembe.

By Thokozani Mazibuko

FNB Eswatini rewards shoppers with cash back in Matsapha

SHOPPERS at Spar and Mica in Matsapha Lifestyle had an exciting surprise yesterday as First National Bank (FNB) Eswatini awarded several customers with instant cash back rewards simply for swiping their bank cards.

In a statement, the bank explained the promotion under the banner “Swipes For The Win”, an initiative aimed at encouraging customers to make use of card payments instead of carrying cash. More than 10 lucky customers walked away with the exact value of their purchases refunded on the spot. “Why pay cash when your next swipe could

win you your money back? Some lucky customers were rewarded with their cash back on the spot just for swiping their FNB card at Spar and Mica in Matsapha Lifestyle on Thursday. #SwipesForTheWin #HelpChangesEverything,” read the official statement.

The campaign comes as part of FNB’s broader drive to promote safer, convenient, and more rewarding banking practices. By choosing to swipe, customers not only avoid the risks associated with handling physical

cash but also stand a chance to benefit from exciting promotions like these.

Customers at the Matsapha Lifestyle Centre were visibly thrilled by the initiative. Shoppers who were reimbursed instantly expressed delight at the unexpected savings, while many others expressed renewed interest in using their cards more frequently for purchases.

The bank has indicated that such cashback promotions will continue to roll out at selected outlets across the country,

further incentivising card use in everyday transactions.

FNB Eswatini emphasized that digital banking solutions, including card swipes and mobile banking, are central to their mission of making financial services more accessible and rewarding for their customers.

It should be noted that this latest move adds to the bank’s reputation for innovation in customer engagement, highlighting how simple daily habits such as swiping a card can transform into rewarding experiences.



▲ Shoppers at Spar and Mica in Matsapha Lifestyle had an exciting surprise yesterday as First National Bank (FNB) Eswatini awarded several customers with instant cash back rewards simply for swiping their bank cards.

ETVA tightens grip on TV licence defaulters

By Kwanele Dhladhla

TELEVISION viewers in the past who did not honour their TV licence payment obligation will soon be haunted by their action.

The Eswatini Television Authority (ETVA) intends to introduce a new TV license management system to counter significant gaps in TV license revenue collection.

In the quest to achieve this objective, the television station has issued an expression of interest to invite technologically capable service providers to express interest in designing, developing, integrating, and deploying a TV License Management System (TLMS) that is capable and but not limited to, accurately registering and billing TV owners, handling applications, and issue of TV trading licenses.

It has been explained that the desired system should also handle applications and the issuing of TV together with decoder import permits.

When unpacking what prompted the development of a new management system, ETVA recounted that it had been experiencing significant gaps in TV license reve-



nue collection due to fragmented data systems, untracked TV imports, and limited enforcement mechanisms.

“Currently, there is no efficient, unified system that helps to reconcile customer data records with licensing compliance, therefore hindering both revenue collection and regulatory compliance,” ETVA explained in the expression of interest issued by the Eswatini Public Procurement Regulatory Agency (ESPRRA).

The state-owned broadcaster added that it was embarking on a national initiative to enhance TV license compliance and revenue collection. IT was stated that this would be achieved through the development and integration of a centralized management system that would integrate with third-party systems.

“This system aims to streamline the management of TV licensing, billing, and compliance,” it was added.

Ex-MPs launch drone project

TINTFUNGO Consortium has launched a project of renting out drones for spraying or fertiliser spreading purposes to sugar cane and general farmers.

Tintfungo Consortium is an investment company established and registered by former members of the 11th Parliament.

It was formed after the 2023 general elections, after a group of 24 ex-Members of Parliament (MPs), came together to establish a business company to invest some of their gratuity in wealth creating projects.

The company is registered and operating from Tshaneni office with another satellite office in Manzini.

The shareholders’ meeting was held on Wednesday at Asante Guest House in Manzini. During the meeting, the Board also presented the first drone purchased by the company.

On Wednesday, the company received their first agricultural drone which will take part in the sugar industry and any general farming in need of spraying or fertiliser spreading.

The drones aim to provide a safe and cheaper option compared to using aerial spraying with aeroplanes that are expensive and environmentally unfriendly.



▲ Former Member of Parliament Lutfo Dlamini inspecting one of the drones.

Beside this, members of the consortium are eligible to get soft funding from Tintfungo Consortium to finance their small side business, since it would be difficult for them to access bank loans, given that as ex-politician’s normally struggle to get financing support.

The aim is to create wealth for Tintfungo members as they have been selflessly serving the people in their constituencies as MPs.

“We are proud to introduce this innovation to the kingdom and we look forward to the support of the local farmers currently spending a fortune renting aeroplanes for spraying crops,” said the Chairman of Tintfungo Consortium and former Ndzingeni MP Lutfo Dlamini.

Dlamini mentioned that they are a commercial company rooted in the Tinkhundla philosophy of growing their own economy.

The group boasts of cross cutting expertise from the Board members and the shareholders.

The Board of Directors are as follows;

- Lutfo Dlamini – Chairman
- Roy Fanaroukis – Vice Chairman
- Sibusiso Scorpion Nxumalo - General Manager and Board Secretary.
- Sandla Fakudze
- Musa Ngcobo
- Masimula
- Nokucenda Bhujela

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

Elderly man brutally murdered in Macetjeni

A GRUESOME murder has shocked the Macetjeni community in the Kholwane area after a 64-year-old man was brutally hacked to death inside his home on Tuesday night.

According to a police statement issued by the Deputy Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, the incident occurred on 26 August 2025 at around 8:00 p.m.

The victim, whose name is being withheld until his next of kin are officially informed, was attacked with an unknown sharp object by yet-to-be-identified assailants. He sustained multiple deep wounds on the head, one between the shoulders, and a fatal slit across the neck.

Assistant Superintendent Mnguni described the incident as “a disturbing act of violence” and confirmed that police have launched an intensive investigation to track down the suspect(s).

“This is a serious case, and we are appealing to members of the public to come forward with any information that may assist investigators,” she said.

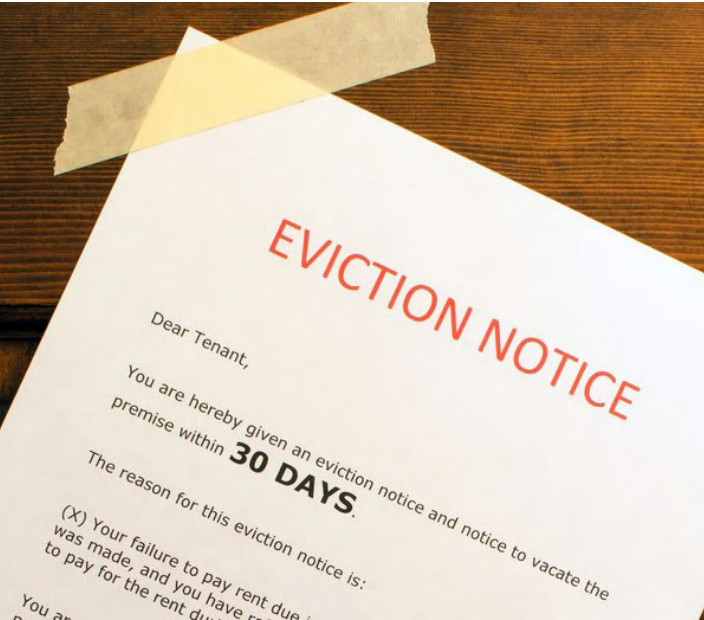
The motive behind the brutal killing re-

mains unknown at this stage, though authorities have not ruled out the possibility of personal disputes, robbery, or other criminal elements.

Community members of Macetjeni expressed fear and shock following the murder, calling for increased police patrols in the area. “We are terrified because this happened inside a home, where one is supposed to feel safe. We hope the police will bring the killer to justice,” said one resident.

The body of the deceased was taken to the morgue as investigations continue. Police have urged anyone with information to contact the nearest station or use the Crime Stop line.

It should be noted that this latest incident adds to the growing concerns about violent crime in rural areas, where residents often feel vulnerable due to isolation and limited security.



Landlord applies for eviction order against owing tenant

A LANDLORD has taken a tenant, who owed rent for many months to the small claims court.

The plaintiff, Vukani Mpandze from Matsapha, informed the Small Claims Court Commissioner Phetsile Dlamini that he has rental houses at Matsapha and the defendant, Themba Mbhamali was a tenant in one of the one-room rented houses and as per the lease agreement, he was supposed to pay a sum of E500 per month in respect of rent.

He stated that however, Mbhamali has defaulted payment of the rent for some many months, resulting in his debt accumulating to E3 500.

He mentioned that he was therefore, claiming the sum of E3 500 from Mbhamali.

“I am also praying for an eviction order against the defendant as he has breached our lease agreement,” he said.

It is worth mentioning that Mbhamali did not attend the

court session despite a summons having being issued to him to that effect and as a result, commissioner Dlamini issued a judgement, in Mbhamali’s absentia, ordering him to pay Mpandze the sum of E3 500.

Commissioner Dlamini further issued an ejectment order against Mbhamali.

An ejectment order is a court order directing someone to vacate real property because they are occupying it without the owner’s permission, and it is typically used when there is no landlord-tenant relationship. Unlike an eviction, which usually involves a tenant, an ejectment action is for situations like a squatter occupying land or a tenant who has stayed after a lease has ended or breached. The property owner must prove their rightful ownership and that the occupant has no valid right to be there to obtain an order for the occupant to leave.

Man gets 15 years in jail for raping 11-year-old girl

A 30-year-old man has been sentenced to 15 years in prison without an option of a fine for raping an 11-year-old minor.

Mcoeleni Shongwe of Bhahwini area was sentenced by Principal Magistrate Florence Msibi on Thursday at the Manzini Magistrates Court.

This comes after he was charged with contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act, following his inhumane act of forcefully having sexual intercourse with a minor.

He committed this offence on March 22, 2025 at Bhahwini area.

According to the charge sheet, the rape was accompanied by aggravat-

ing factors in accordance with the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, in that he did not use a condom during the commission of the offence, thus exposing the minor to sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

When the survivor, who is doing grade VI in one of the primary schools in Manzini, was called into the witness dock to lead evidence in order to prove the commission of the offence, she told the court that on the day the offence was committed, she was washing her grandmother’s blanket when Shongwe approached her and requested that they should go behind one of the houses within

the family compound because he wanted to see how her private part looked like.

“I refused to heed to his directive, and he pulled me towards a rondavel house which was fortunately locked. He then pulled me towards the kitchen in one of the houses within the family yard, where he proceeded to rape me,” she said.

Even though Shongwe had pleaded not guilty to the charge, after overwhelming evidence implicating him to the offence, he was found guilty as charged and had the sentence meted against him.



Stories by Delisa Magagula

SURVIVORS of convicted serial rapist Carlos Nhabombe told the High Court that they were able to identify him through his distinctive facial scar and unusual way of speaking.

Judge Mbutfo Mamba read testimonies in which survivors consistently described a man of medium height and build, dark in complexion, with short hair and a beard.

The court heard that Nhabombe's speech was mainly in Siswati but carried a different accent which immediately stood out.

Survivors said his voice, along with a scar on his face, became defining features that helped them remember and eventually point him out.

Another tactic used by Nhabombe, according to the indictment, was to terrify survivors by claiming that if they screamed, other men hiding in the bushes would join in the assault. This psychological threat, combined with strangulation and the use of a knife, often paralysed his victims with fear.

The High Court this week confirmed that Nhabombe was guilty of raping 12 minors and young women, in cases stretching back

Serial rapist identified by survivors through scar



▲ Judge Mbutfo Mamba read testimonies in which survivors consistently described a man of medium height and build, dark in complexion, with short hair and a beard.

more than a decade. Initially facing 18 charges, he was acquitted on three and convicted on 12 counts.

Judge Mamba said full written reasons for the judgment would be handed down on September 9.

Meanwhile during submissions, Crown Counsel Precious Dlamini argued that the crimes were ag-

gravated by several factors: most of the survivors were minors, violence was repeatedly used, threats of death were made, and the accused deliberately refused to use protection, exposing survivors to the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

The Crown called on the court

to impose the harshest sentence possible, noting that Nhabombe's actions displayed a calculated and predatory pattern that spanned years.

"He endangered an entire community of women and girls," Dlamini submitted, emphasising that the repeated nature of the attacks showed clear disregard for human dignity and life.

Judge Mamba pointed out that under the law, each count with aggravating circumstances carries a minimum sentence of nine years.

If the Crown's plea is upheld, Nhabombe could face a cumulative sentence of over 100 years behind bars. When asked if he understood the implications, Nhabombe responded in the affirmative.

The indictment outlined a chilling timeline of attacks which mentioning that on June 23, 2010, a 16-year-old was raped in Mbabane after being strangled and threatened with a knife. On March 31, 2012, a 13-year-old was raped repeatedly in a single episode, which the Crown described as one of the

most brutal incidents. On May 13, 2012, another survivor, aged just 11, was attacked. On March 16, 2012, yet another 13-year-old was raped.

Worth mentioning is that, several other counts involved young women aged 19 and 20 who were strangled, threatened with death, and raped multiple times.

In total, the Crown listed more than a dozen incidents marked by extreme violence, psychological manipulation, and intimidation.

The court also heard that some charges had to be abandoned because survivors were too traumatised to testify.

In certain instances, children broke down crying uncontrollably when recounting their experiences. For others, the memories remained fresh years later, causing what Judge Mamba called scars invisible to the court but deeply entrenched in their lives.

He warned the media to report carefully and sensitively on the matter, given the ages of the survivors and the lifelong trauma they carry.

Kombi conductor arrested for alleged rape of toddler

IN a separate case, a kombi conductor has been arrested for allegedly raping a 15-month-old toddler in the Shiselweni region.

Police confirmed that Nduduzo Dlamini (18) of Ndubazi was taken into custody after the child's mother discovered the assault on Monday.

The accused had been living with the family after being taken

in by the toddler's father, who is a kombi driver.

Sources said the incident unfolded while Dlamini was playing with the child. The mother reportedly noticed the toddler did not have her diaper on and went inside to fetch a new one.

When she returned, suspicions were raised and the matter was immediately reported to police.

The child was taken to hospital

for medical examination. Dlamini has been charged under the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act and appeared in the Nhlanguano Magistrate's Court, where he was remanded in custody pending trial.

Under Section 3(1) of the Act, rape of a child under 14 carries sentences of up to 35 years for a first conviction, and up to 40 years if aggravating factors are proven.



Man fined for assaulting ex-girlfriend

A 38-year-old man from Khuphuka has been sentenced after assaulting and threatening to kill his former girlfriend, whom he accused of aborting his child. The accused, Vusi Sicucumba Mantimakhulu, appeared before Principal Magistrate Florence Msibi at the Manzini Magistrates Court, facing two counts under the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act.

According to court evidence, Mantimakhulu physically assaulted his former girlfriend, Temaswati Dlamini, hitting her several times with open hands and fists.

The assault, the court heard, caused harm and imminent danger to Dlamini's safety, health and well-being.

On the second count, Mantimakhulu intimidated Dlamini by threatening to kill her.

When narrating events leading to the offence, Mantimakhulu told the court that he had acted after learning from a friend of his ex-girlfriend that she had allegedly aborted his child.

"I was told by her friend that she had aborted my baby. I approached her and she confessed in the presence of my parents that she had indeed aborted the baby," he claimed.

After considering the evidence, Princi-



pal Magistrate Msibi found Mantimakhulu guilty on both counts.

In mitigation, Mantimakhulu pleaded for leniency, stating that he was unemployed and survived through odd jobs. He also expressed remorse for his actions.

The court sentenced him to one year imprisonment with an option of E3,000 for the assault charge. On the intimidation charge, he was cautioned and discharged.

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You have read the rest, now read the best

BRIEFS

Truworths' profit falls

SOUTH African upmarket fashion retailer Truworths reported an 8% decline in full-year profit on Thursday, citing the impact of big discounts that followed delayed deliveries of winter stock.

Headline earnings per share, the main profit measure in South Africa, fell to 752.1 cents for the year ended June 30 from 817.9 cents the previous year.

Truworths' profit falls after big discounts

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Dangote, Ethiopia to build fertiliser plant

ETHIOPIA has signed an agreement with Nigeria's Dangote Group to build a \$2.5 billion fertiliser manufacturing plant, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said on Thursday in a post on social media platform X.

The investment is part of Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote's efforts to end Africa's fertiliser imports.

(Reuters)

Govt extends input subsidy with new reforms to strengthen food security

By Delisa Magagula

THE Government of Eswatini has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening national food security and supporting livelihoods through the continuation of the Input Subsidy Programme for the 2025/26 farming season.

The programme, which will open for payments on September 1 and close on September 30, 2025, or once the budget has been exhausted, introduces several reforms aimed at tightening eligibility and ensuring the subsidy benefits the most vulnerable and productive farmers.

The Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with the National Maize Corporation (NMC) announced on Thursday that, the scheme will maintain its co-financing structure, under which government and farmers share the cost of input packages.

The arrangement is intended to lower the financial burden on producers while promoting accountability and shared responsibility in food production.

According to the Minister Mandla Tshawuka the cost of a white maize input package remains set at E12,000, with government and the farmer each contributing E6,000.

"Similarly, red speckled beans are priced at E12,000 per package, split equally between the farmer and the state at E6,000 apiece. Sorghum is valued at E6,400, with each party contributing E3,200," said the Minister.

Tshawuka further noted that, by halving the upfront cost for producers, the subsidy effectively doubles farmers' purchasing power and makes vital inputs more accessible.

He highlighted that the pricing structure was designed to encourage broader participation, particularly among small and medium-scale producers.

Payments for the subsidy can be made through Eswatini Bank, MTN MoMo, and Eswatini Mobile's e-Mali platform, with no changes to the payment systems used in previous years.

Farmers are urged to pay early to secure their packages, as disbursements will be made on a first-come, first-served basis until the allocation is depleted.

The tractor hire component of the programme also remains in place, with government continuing to subsidise E180 per tractor hour.

Farmers will pay E400 per hour, compared to the full cost of E580. However, once the allocated budget is exhausted, farmers will be required to cover the entire rate.

The Ministry noted that the tractor hire subsidy has been particularly valuable for smallholder farmers who lack access to mechanisation. By keeping this provision in place, the programme aims to preserve affordability and ensure timely land preparation ahead of planting.

Following sustained public criticism that the subsidy disproportionately benefited larger and wealthier farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture, working with NMC, has revised the eligibility criteria.

These reforms are intended to direct benefits more effectively to vulnerable households and ensure greater transparency in programme administration.

The key changes effective for the 2025/26 season include:

Farmers must now apply to be part of the pro-



▲National Maize Corporation CEO Mavela Vilane and Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka during the subsidy Program press conference.



▲Minister of Agriculture Mandla Tshawuka has launched the input Subsidy Programme.

gramme, rather than accessing packages automatically.

Applicants must demonstrate that soil analyses have been conducted by presenting test results not older than three years, or proof that soil samples have been submitted for laboratory processing.

Farmers with stable incomes exceeding E12,000 per month will not qualify for the subsidy.

Cultivation

Input allocation will be guided by agro-ecological zoning, ensuring that crops are distributed in areas best suited for their cultivation.

Beneficiaries of other government farming programmes, such as Hamba Ubuye, will not be eligible for the input subsidy.

Each nuclear family will be limited to one beneficiary, preventing duplication within households.

Beneficiaries will remain in the programme for a maximum of three years, after which they will graduate to make room for other applicants. This count begins with the 2025/26 season.

In addition, farmers with as little as 0.5 hectares are now eligible to participate. These smaller producers will be allowed to purchase input packages proportionate to their land size, either 0.5 hectares or one hectare.

The new threshold is expected to broaden participation by accommodating subsistence and semi-commercial farmers who were previously excluded.

A further adjustment is that bean input payments will not be required in September. Instead, a short payment window will be available in January, aligning the schedule more closely with the planting season for beans.

The Minister emphasised that the reforms are aimed at balancing inclusivity with accountability.

"This programme is a cornerstone of our national food security strategy. By refining eligibility and expanding access to smallholders, we are ensuring that support reaches those who need it most while protecting the integrity of the subsidy," he said.

The Minister added that the three-year graduation system is designed to prevent long-term dependency and encourage farmers to transition toward self-sufficiency.

"We want to empower farmers, not create reliance. By setting a three-year limit, we are providing a ladder for many to climb, while opening the door for others to benefit in future seasons,"

Agriculture remains a critical sector for Eswatini's economy, supporting both livelihoods and industrial supply chains.

Analysts note that the subsidy programme has the potential to stabilise rural incomes, stimulate local demand for inputs and services, and reduce the country's reliance on imported grains and legumes.

By lowering the cost of production, the scheme is expected to improve profitability margins for participating farmers.

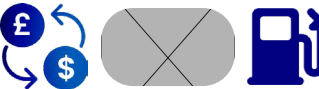
This in turn may enhance food availability in local markets and contribute to price stability for staple commodities.

Furthermore, the inclusion of smallholder farmers with plots as small as 0.5 hectares is seen as a step toward more inclusive agricultural growth. The expansion is anticipated to increase aggregate production levels, particularly in maize, which is the country's primary staple.



FX RATES

Notes/Cash		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	17.2979	17.7637
G.B. Pound	22.3323	24.0100
EURO	20.1525	20.7751
Bank Rate (July 2023)	7.50%	
Prime Rate (July 2023)	11%	
Inflation (July 2023)	4.5%	
Petrol	E20.20/Litre	
Diesel	E19.80/Litre	
Paraffin	E14.55/Litre	



By Delisa Magagula

Raiffeisen House launched as new hub for Cooperative innovation

ESWATINI'S cooperative movement marked a major milestone this week with the official launch of the Raiffeisen House, a new centre for cooperative development and digital transformation established through the German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation (DGRV).

The inauguration of the Raiffeisen House in Mbabane was hailed as a symbol of enduring cooperation between Eswatini and Germany, underscoring the role of international partnerships in strengthening local institutions.

Speaking at the launch, the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Honourable Manqoba Khumalo, described the initiative as a hub of innovation, collaboration, and services a place where ideas become solutions and where members of cooperatives will find new opportunities for growth.

The establishment of the Raiffeisen House was made possible through the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), working with DGRV.

Since 2021, Germany has provided technical guidance, capacity building and sustained investment to bolster cooperative systems in Eswatini and across Southern Africa.

Under the SUCOSA II Project (Strengthening Cooperative Economic Cycles in Rural and Semi-Urban Areas), DGRV has committed more than E30 million between 2025 and 2027 to Eswatini's cooperative roadmap.

This investment will focus on developing a strategy for the establishment of a Cooperative Central Bank to deepen financial inclusion.

It will also support the modernization of the cooperative legal framework and be a capacity building for cooperative leaders at grassroots and national level, among other things.

Meanwhile Veit Gesenhues the Regional Program Director for Southern Africa at DGRV noted that the launch of the Raiffeisen House reflects both history and future.

He traced the roots of the cooperative movement back to 19th-century Germany, where pioneers Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch and Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen laid the foundation of solidarity, self-help, and shared responsibility principles that continue to guide global cooperatives today.

"The Raiffeisen House is not just a building. It is a platform for digitalisation, innovation and resilience. It demonstrates the confidence in Eswatini's cooperative movement



▲ The Minister of Commerce Manqoba Khumalo and his team during the launch.

and it's potential to drive inclusive growth," said Gesenhues.

The new facility will also house a Cooperative Digitalisation Centre, designed to help cooperatives embrace technology and adapt to a rapidly evolving economy.

This will include training, access to digital tools, and shared services to improve governance, record-keeping, and financial management.

According to DGRV, the centre will focus on ensuring that cooperatives whether in agriculture, finance or trade are equipped to compete in an increasingly digital world while remaining member-owned and community-driven.

Minister Khumalo emphasised that the success of the Raiffeisen House will depend on collective responsibility.

"We must ensure that this becomes a living centre of excellence using digitalisation not only as a tool for efficiency, but as an enabler of inclusion and participation, especially for women and young people," he added.

The government also acknowledged the role of local partners in sustaining the cooperative movement.

These include the National Federation of Eswatini (NCFE) and the three apex organisations ESNYCA, ESWAMCU, and ESASC-CO.

"These bodies represent the backbone of the sector, every system we build and every innovation we introduce must ultimately be handed over to them, so that the movement remains self-reliant and sustainable," said Khumalo.

Analysts note that the launch of the Raiffeisen House comes at a crucial time for Eswatini's economy, where cooperatives play a key role in supporting rural livelihoods, promoting savings and credit, and driving agricultural productivity.

The initiative is expected to have spill over benefits for regional integration as well.

From its bases in Pretoria, Mbombela and now Mbabane, DGRV has been working with cooperative structures across Southern Africa to foster knowledge exchange and capacity building.

With the introduction of the Raiffeisen House, Eswatini is now positioned as a focal point for cooperative innovation in the region.

Priorities for the coming years include accelerating digital adoption, supporting the establishment of a cooperative bank, promoting youth participation, and ensuring cooperatives play a central role in climate adaptation strategies.

"Cooperatives are not just about economic participation. They are about building inclusive communities, creating opportuni-



▲ Veit Gesenhues - regional program director for Southern Africa at DGRV making his remarks.

ties, and preparing our people for the future. The Raiffeisen House stands as a beacon of what can be achieved when we combine solidarity with innovation,"

The launch closed with renewed commitment from both governments and development partners to continue strengthening the cooperative sector as a pillar of sustainable economic development in Eswatini.

SWATE Quality Awards to drive global competitiveness launched

By Delisa Magagula and Taonga Nkhata

THE Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo, has officially declared the 2025 SWATE Quality Awards open, calling on companies and organisations across Eswatini to participate in the national programme designed to promote quality, competitiveness, and sustainable business practices.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Minister Khumalo underscored that the Quality Awards were more than a recognition exercise they are a strategic tool to strengthen Eswatini's position in domestic, regional, and international markets.

"Quality enhances access of products and services in the domestic, regional, and international markets," Khumalo said.

The Minister emphasised that the awards are grounded in internationally recognised benchmarks that contribute directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By aligning their operations with quality assurance systems, Eswatini's businesses not only gain competitiveness but also contribute to sustainability.

He pointed to global frameworks such as ISO 22000 for food safety management, ISO 42000 for environmental management, and ISO 15189 for medical laboratory standards.

"These standards are designed to protect human and animal life, safeguard health, and preserve the environment. Adopting them into business practices signals a commitment

to quality, safety, and responsibility," Khumalo noted.

The Minister urged companies from all sectors of the economy to take part in the 2025 awards, saying broad participation was essential if the programme was to reflect the true diversity and innovation of Eswatini's private sector.

"For this event to make sense, we need participation from manufacturing, services, agriculture, exports, and beyond," he said

The 2025 SWATE Quality Awards will recognise achievements across six distinct categories:

1. SWATE Company or Organisation of the Year - awarded to a business that demonstrates overall excellence in quality management.

2. SWATE Product of the Year - recognising an outstanding product that meets international standards.

3. SWATE Service of the Year - celebrating innovation and reliability in service delivery.

4. SWATE Exporter of the Year - honouring businesses that excel in bringing Eswatini-made goods and services to the global market.

5. SWATE Quality Ambassador of the Year - recognising individuals or organisations that champion quality and inspire others.

6. SWATE Conformity Assessment Body of the Year - awarded to institutions that play a vital role in upholding and certifying standards.

According to the Ministry, the Quality Awards are expected to build momentum around Eswatini's on-going efforts to improve competitiveness and stimulate economic growth through export-led strategies.

American Bitcoin, backed by Trump sons, aims to start trading in September

SIBANYE Stillwater reported a narrower first-half loss on Thursday, as production credits at its U.S. palladium business and the restructuring of its South African mines partly offset big writedowns at its U.S. and Finnish operations.

The Johannesburg-based miner posted a loss of \$211 million, for the six months to June 30, down from a \$372 million loss the year before, when it booked a \$407 million impairment on its U.S. operations after cutting its forecast for palladium prices.

Under the Inflation Reduction Act enacted in 2022, the U.S. offers credits as an incentive for the domestic production of critical minerals, including palladium.

“The positive financial outcomes from solid operational management and decisive restructuring were amplified by the incorporation of Section 45X credits in terms of the Inflation Reduction Act,” Sibanye said in a statement.

Sibanye said a total \$285 million of combined estimated credits from the 2023 financial year had been recognised, boosting profitability for the first half of 2025. Cash payments are expected in 2026, it added.

However, the company said the produc-

tion credits would be phased out from 2031 and terminated in 2034 under U.S. President Donald Trump’s signature spending law. That prompted Sibanye to book another 3.8 billion rand impairment of its U.S. business due to the expected decrease in future cash flows.

Sibanye on July 31 petitioned the U.S. to impose a tariff on Russian palladium imports to support the long-term viability of U.S. supplies. Russia’s Nor Nickel is the world’s largest palladium producer with a 40% share of global mined output.

A final decision on the petition is expected within 13 months.

“The preliminary duties and determinations are expected in the next three to five months,” Charles Carter, Sibanye’s chief regional officer for the Americas, said during a results call.

U.S. imports of palladium from Russia jumped 35% from 2022 to 2024, and increased by another 50% in the first quarter of 2025, Carter added.

Sibanye also wrote down 5.4 billion rand from the value of its Keliber lithium project in Finland, citing a decrease in the long-term price forecast for the battery mineral.

(Reuters)



▲ The Johannesburg-based miner posted a loss of \$211 million, for the six months to June 30, down from a \$372 million loss the year before, when it booked a \$407 million impairment on its U.S. operations after cutting its forecast for palladium prices.



▲ Headline earnings per share, the main profit measure in South Africa, fell to 752.1 cents for the year ended June 30 from 817.9 cents the previous year.

Truworths’ profit falls after big discounts and weaker Africa sales

SOUTH African upmarket fashion retailer Truworths reported an 8% decline in full-year profit on Thursday, citing the impact of big discounts that followed delayed deliveries of winter stock.

Headline earnings per share, the main profit measure in South Africa, fell to 752.1 cents for the year ended June 30 from 817.9 cents the previous year.

By 1436 GMT, the Johannesburg-listed stock was trading down 6.7% to 60.54 rand, while the wider index was flat.

“Late deliveries of winter merchandise in the prior period due to port congestion and global shipping disruptions, combined with the delayed onset of winter in 2024, dampened seasonal demand,” Truworths said in a

statement.

It said, it had had to increase “in-season promotional activity” to manage inventory levels. Group trading profit decreased by 31.4% to 2.9 billion rand (\$165.12 million) while the gross profit margin decreased to 53.1% from 52.3%.

Group sales increased by 2.7% to 22 billion rand with growth hindered by Truworths Africa, the group’s biggest business that reported a sales decline of 0.4% to 14.5 billion rand.

The group’s UK-based shoe retailer Office, however, reported sales growth of 9.7% to 7.5 billion rand.

Truworths declared a final cash dividend of 170 cents per share, a 13% drop from last year. (\$1 = 17.5632 rand)

(Reuters)

Nigeria’s Dangote and Ethiopia to build \$2.5 billion fertiliser plant

ETHIOPIA has signed an agreement with Nigeria’s Dangote Group to build a \$2.5 billion fertiliser manufacturing plant, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said on Thursday in a post on social media platform X.

The investment is part of Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote’s efforts to end Africa’s fertiliser imports.

To be located in Gode town in Ethiopia’s southeast, the plant will produce 3 million metric tons of fertiliser a year, Abiy said.

The agreement was signed by state-owned Ethiopian Investment Holdings (EIH) and Dangote Group.

Ethiopia will have a 40% stake in the venture while Dangote Group will own 60%, EIH Chief Executive Brook Taye said at the signing ceremony in Addis Ababa.

An EIH statement on X quoted billionaire Dangote as saying that the investment represented a “shared vision to industrialise Africa and achieve food security across the continent”. (Reuters)



▲ Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed addresses parliament members on the current situation of the country at the parliament building in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

American Bitcoin, backed by Trump sons, aims to start trading in September

American Bitcoin, the bitcoin miner backed by two of U.S. President Donald Trump's sons, has locked in crypto and traditional investors to back an all-stock merger that will allow the firm to soon start trading on the Nasdaq, the company's largest investor said.

The unlisted firm's merger with Gryphon Digital Mining (GRYP.O), opens new tab is set to be finalised shortly, and the goal is to start trading in early September, according to Asher Genoot, the CEO of Hut 8 (HUT.O), opens new tab, which holds 80% of American Bitcoin.

Anchor shareholders in the listing have been finalised, he said, adding crypto exchange Gemini's co-founders Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss had invested in the new firm. Gemini did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

American Bitcoin's co-founder, Eric Trump, his brother Donald Trump Jr and Hut 8 (HUT.O), opens new tab, will own a combined 98% of the newly formed entity, which will retain the name American Bitcoin and trade under the stock code ABTC.

"Instead of going public directly via IPO, we thought that there was a lot more advantages to financing if we had an existing company that already had access to different financing too," Genoot told Reuters at the Bitcoin Asia conference in Hong Kong.

Eric Trump is also in Hong Kong and will travel to Tokyo at the weekend for an event for Metaplanet, a Japanese bitcoin treasury firm, Genoot said.



▲ Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump gesture outside the Nasdaq building after ringing the opening bell to celebrate the closing of ALT5's \$1.5 billion offering and adoption of its \$WLF1 Treasury Strategy at the Nasdaq Market, in New York City, U.S.

American Bitcoin is hunting for crypto assets to buy in Hong Kong and Japan to build out its global business, the Financial Times reported two weeks ago.

Genoot said American Bitcoin could take stakes in companies outside the U.S. to give people access to publicly listed bitcoin assets, as some investors were prevented

from buying Nasdaq-listed stocks.

"Right now it's very early. So we haven't been committed to anything," he said.

Launched in March 2025 by Hut 8, together with Eric Trump and Donald Trump Jr, American Bitcoin has vowed to become "the world's largest, most efficient pure-play bitcoin miner."

The creation of the firm comes as the U.S. accelerates crypto-related legislation to support the growth of the industry under President Donald Trump.

Genoot said the new firm would accumulate the cryptocurrency through both mining and buying.

"Instead of just a treasury strategy where companies raise money to buy bitcoin or just a mining company... we ebb and flow between which one is the best return at different times," he said.

Miami-based Hut 8 was also a crypto miner but has shifted its focus to energy infrastructure and data centers after launching American Bitcoin with the Trump sons.

Hut 8 will lease data centers to American Bitcoin, Genoot said.

President Trump's critics have accused him of conflicts of interest in promoting the crypto industry at a time when his family is involved in the sector, allegations which the White House has brushed aside.

Genoot said American Bitcoin's business had nothing to do with government, and Eric Trump was mainly involved in strategy, such as in relation to bitcoin mining, new site development and treasury strategy.

Separately, at the same conference, Nakamoto Holdings, a bitcoin treasury company led by crypto advocate David Bailey, said it was looking across Asia's crypto startup scene and planned to support early-stage companies to grow the crypto ecosystem.(Reuters)

Nvidia CEO says AI boom far from over after tepid sales forecast

NVIDIA opens new tab CEO Jensen Huang on Wednesday dismissed concern about an end to a spending boom on artificial intelligence chips and said opportunities will expand into a multi-trillion-dollar market over the next five years.

Despite Huang's upbeat view on AI demand, shares of the chip designer clocked losses triggered by a tepid third-quarter sales forecast that excluded potential revenue from China. The stock was down nearly 2% at \$178.43 in early trading on Thursday.

Keeping China out of its forecast underscored the uncertainty caused by Sino-U.S. trade tensions despite Nvidia striking a deal with President Donald Trump for export licenses in exchange for 15% of China sales of its H20 AI chips.

Huang on Thursday also indicated that Nvidia would be open to giving the U.S. government a cut of sales from new Blackwell chips for China if it is allowed to sell them to Beijing, a Fox Business reporter said in a post on X.

Following the earnings report, Huang had sought to reassure investors rattled by indications of slowing growth at the chipmaker at the center of the investment frenzy.

The founder and CEO's bullish outlook contrasts with recent signs of fatigue in AI-focused stocks and comments from industry leaders about overheated investor enthusiasm.

"A new industrial revolution has started. The AI race is on," Huang said. "We see \$3 trillion to \$4 trillion in AI infrastructure spend by the end of the decade."

While Nvidia shares have outpaced a roughly 10% gain in the broader market (.SPX), opens new tab, AI-facing stocks have shown signs of fatigue. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman set off alarm bells this month

when he said investors may be "overexcited" about AI.

On Wednesday, Huang sounded unperturbed.

"The more you buy, the more you grow," Huang said, arguing that Nvidia's technological advances allow customers to process increasing amounts of data while using less energy. "The buzz is: everything sold out."

Case in point: A customer outside China bought \$650 million worth of Nvidia's H20 reduced-capability chip aimed at the Chinese market in the latest quarter, the chipmaker said.

For China, Nvidia has been working to get a variant of its latest Blackwell chips approved for sale in the region, after Trump suggested he might allow the company to sell a scaled-down version.

HOME TURF DEMAND

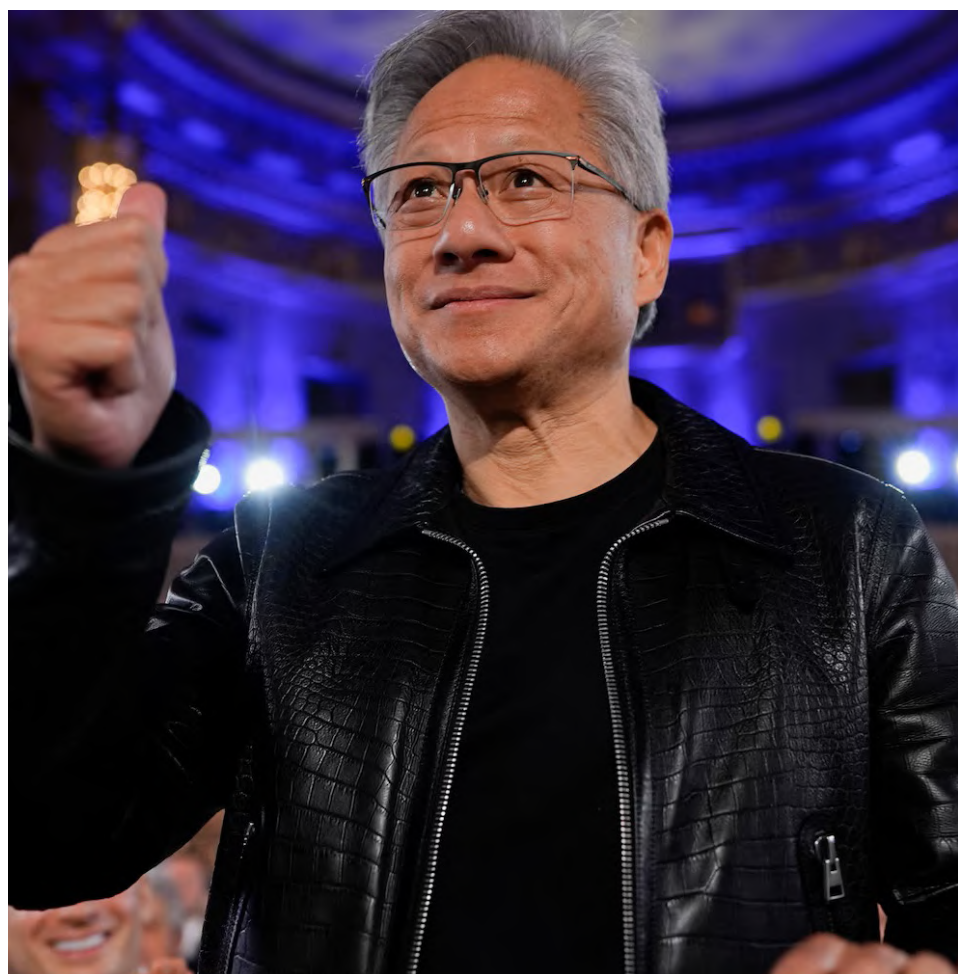
Besides China, expectations of demand from Big Tech and data center owners known as hyperscalers have pushed up Nvidia's shares over the last two years ago.

"The mega caps are the ones propelling a lot of the capex that Nvidia is benefiting from. But obviously Nvidia still is growing, is able to sell," said Matt Orton, head of advisory solutions at Raymond James Investment Management.

"If anything, this just highlights that there's a lot of durability to this (AI) trade... The businesses of these hyperscalers can continue to accelerate, and you're not seeing any sort of sign of a slowdown being reflected in the results of Nvidia."

Huang based his forecast in part on the \$600 billion he expects for data center capital spending this year from major customers such as Microsoft, opens new tab and Amazon, opens new tab.

For a data center costing as much as \$60 billion, Nvidia can capture about \$35 billion, Huang said.



▲ Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang attends the "Winning the AI Race" Summit in Washington D.C., U.S.

Nvidia and Huang, however, see little reason for AI chip profit growth to slow as second-quarter net income surpassed the fiscal third-quarter profit of Big Tech peer Apple opens new tab.

The company's high-end Blackwell chips are largely spoken for based on 2026 forecasts from its biggest customers. Its earlier-generation Hopper processors are being

snapped up too.

"When you have something that is new, and it's growing as fast as it is, and with all of the huge capex announcements from the hyperscalers, it's evidence that we're in the early stages" of the AI boom, said Globalt Investments portfolio manager Thomas Martin.

(Reuters)

AT least four African countries will run out of specialised life-saving food for severely malnourished children in the next three months due to shortages caused by aid cuts, Save the Children said on Thursday.

Supplies were getting dangerously low in Nigeria, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan of high-energy biscuits, peanut-based Plumpy'Nut paste and other treatments known as Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), the British-based aid group said.

"At a time when global hunger is sky-rocketing, the funding that could save children's lives has been cut because of recent aid cuts," Yvonne Arunga, the charity's regional director for East and Southern Africa, said.

Save the Children did not name specific donors or funding reductions in its statement. Under President Donald Trump, the U.S. has slashed humanitarian assistance this year, and other Western powers have also been cutting funding as part of longer-term reductions.

Trump has said cuts to humanitarian aid are needed to ensure that grants align with his "America First" agenda and that other countries shoulder more of the burden.

Some clinics in the four African countries were turning to less-effective treatments for malnourished children, Save the Children said.

In Kenya, where an estimated 2.8 million people are estimated to have experienced high levels of acute food insecurity during this year's March-to-May rainy season, stocks are expected to run out in October, it added.

The statement said RUTF supplies in Nigeria, Somalia and South Sudan would run out within three months.

Government officials from the four coun-



Four African states running out of special food for starving children

tries did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Globally, funding cuts are expected to cut off nutrition treatment this year to 15.6 million people across 18 countries, including 2.3 million severely malnourished children, Save the Children said.

Cuts by the Trump administration left 60,000 to 66,000 metric tons of food, in-

cluding 1,100 tons of fortified biscuits, stranded in warehouses for months earlier this year, Reuters reported in May.

The U.S. government later agreed to hand over 600 tons of the biscuits to the U.N. World Food Programme but said it would have to destroy nearly 500 tons which expired last month.

Earlier this month, the U.S. State Depart-

ment announced it would provide \$93 million for RUTF supplies to treat more than 800,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition in 13 countries, including Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Democratic Republic of Congo.

(Reuters)

Egusi soup in space? Nigerian seeds launch into orbit

A staple of Nigerian cuisine, egusi soup, could one day be consumed on the Moon or on Mars after melon seeds from which the thick, fragrant dish is made orbited the Earth for seven days and returned to be studied by space scientists.

The egusi seeds were transported to the International Space Station by a capsule that launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida this month, as part of a project to study how they react to conditions in space.

"The goal is that in the next couple of decades, when people are living on the Moon, on Mars, and they're looking at growing food ... foods that are native to Africa would be part of that," said Temidayo Oniosun, who selected the seeds for the mission.

"So even in 50 years' time, if Africans are living on the Moon, we want them to be growing and planting egusi," said the Nigerian entrepreneur, founder of intelligence company Space in Africa.

Egusi seeds, an excellent source of protein, were packed into specialised test tubes on the Crew-11 space capsule launched on August 1 along with some heritage seeds from Costa Rica, Guatemala, Armenia and Pakistan.

University of Florida scientist Wagner Vendrame, one of the researchers involved in the project, said that future astronauts would



▲ Egusi (melon) seeds are displayed at a market in Lagos Nigeria.

need a better variety and quality of foods than the ultra-processed freeze-dried meals that are currently space staples.

"Being able to grow their own, let's say, lettuce, tomatoes, or melons in space, is not only important for nutrition, for their health, but also it has psychological effects when you eat a melon that is fresh versus something that is processed," he said.

Oniosun, who picked the space-travelling egusi seeds from markets in the southwestern Nigerian state of Oyo, said the choice was motivated not only by the seeds' nutritional properties but also by culture and symbolism.

"Everybody in Nigeria eats egusi, and even other people in some West African countries and Africans in the diaspora, so this (mission) is something they could identify with," he said. "Egusi is the seed that tells our story."

The seeds that were in orbit are now being distributed to researchers. Vendrame said they would be propagated in vitro and studied for genetic changes triggered by their time in orbit.

"By looking at the changes in the plants and the seeds themselves, we can tell - are those plants still the same? Would they still provide the same level of nutrition to astronauts?" (Reuters)

Valterra Platinum plans to start underground trial mining in late 2026

VALTERRA Platinum, opens new tab will start trial mining at an underground pit at its Mogalakwena open-pit mine in South Africa late next year, an executive said on Wednesday.

Mogalakwena in Limpopo province, north of Johannesburg, is the world's largest open-pit platinum group metals (PGM) mine, comprising five open pits. The ore body of its Sandsloot pit, where the underground mine is being developed, has higher grades of ore.

Platinum miners in South Africa have faced declining ore grades for years. To keep production going, companies have had to mine deeper underground, which makes operations more expensive and risky. The mine is the crown jewel of Valterra's portfolio, contributing about 50% of the company's PGM production. The project to develop the Sandsloot underground mine is a nod of confidence in the future of PGMs, used primarily in autocatalysts and jewellery.

Prices of the white metals have mostly slid in the past two years, with demand hit by the rise of battery electric vehicles, which don't require them, leading miners to cut supply.

In July, the company said it has begun the feasibility study for the underground project with a targeted completion and investment decision in the first half of 2027.

"We're also envisioning a trial mining ... in the back end of 2026," Martin Poggiolini, executive head of corporate strategy told reporters during a media tour of the mine on Wednesday.

"If it meets our capital allocation we will be able to truck the first ore out of the top part of the ore body to the surface," Poggiolini said, adding that ramping up to a 3.6 to a 4.5 million tonne a year operation was possible beyond 2030.

With the underground mine, Valterra hopes to achieve its targeted 10% to 50% overall increase in Mogalakwena concentrate production, it said in July.

Poggiolini and Agit Singh, Valterra's head of processing operations, said the company is scaling up demand across existing markets such as hydrogen production and fuel-cell electric vehicles and creating demand in new segments.

"So we have really good confidence in the fundamentals around the PGM sector in the short term and certainly in the longer term," Singh said.

Russian missiles pound Ukraine, damage EU and British offices

RUSSIA pounded Ukraine with deadly missiles and drone strikes early on Thursday in a sweeping attack that President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said was Moscow's answer to diplomatic efforts to end its war.

At least 18 people, including four children, were killed in the capital, officials from the city administration said. As the sun rose, rescuers dug through a wrecked block on Kyiv's left bank and pulled at least two bodies from the rubble.

The strikes damaged the European Union's mission and British Council offices in the city, officials said. The European Union and London summoned Russian envoys to protest. There were no reports of casualties at either site.

"Russia chooses ballistics instead of the negotiating table," Zelenskiy said on X, calling for new sanctions on Russia. "It chooses to continue killing instead of ending the war."

Russia said its attack had hit military industrial facilities and air bases, and that Ukraine had also attacked Russian targets. The Kremlin said it was still interested in pursuing peace talks.

Moscow has regularly denied targeting civilians. Ukrainian officials say scores of civilians have died in Russian strikes on densely populated areas over the recent months, and thousands since the start of the war.

During the attack on Kyiv, explosions rang out as clouds of smoke rose into the night sky. Drones whirled overhead.

Mayor Vitali Klitschko described it as one of the biggest attacks on the city in recent months. At least 38 people were wounded in the hours-long assault which damaged buildings in all city districts, officials said.

Across the country, Ukraine's military said Russian attacks struck 13 locations. National



▲ Rescuers work at the site of an apartment building which was hit by Russian missile and drone strikes, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.

grid operator Ukrenergo said energy facilities were hit, causing power cuts.

A push by Kyiv and its allies to end the invasion that Moscow launched in February 2022 has yielded little, despite meetings between U.S. President Donald Trump and his Ukrainian and Russian counterparts.

Russia has stepped up air strikes on Ukrainian towns and cities far behind the front line and pushed a grinding offensive across much of the east in a bid to pressure

Ukraine into giving up territory.

"This is another grim reminder of what is at stake. It shows that the Kremlin will stop at nothing to terrorize Ukraine, blindly killing civilians and even targeting the European Union," EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told reporters in Brussels.

She said two missiles had struck near the office within 20 seconds of each other.

EU countries would soon come up with a 19th package of sanctions against Russia and

were advancing work on how to use frozen Russian assets to help Ukraine, she added.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the assault, which he said had damaged the British Council building. "Putin is killing children and civilians and sabotaging hopes of peace," he wrote on X.

Ukraine's military said air defences had downed 563 of nearly 600 drones and 26 of 31 missiles launched by Russia across the country.

One attack damaged a railway hub in central Ukraine's Vinnytsia region, where officials said a strike on critical infrastructure had left 60,000 residents without power.

Ukrainian officials have warned that Russia would step up strikes on the country's energy grid as winter approaches.

Russia's Defence Ministry said Russian air defences destroyed 102 Ukrainian drones overnight in at least seven regions.

Ukraine's drone force said it had struck the Afipsky and Kuybyshevskiy oil refineries as part of that attack.

Russia added that its forces had used an unmanned speedboat to hit and sink a Ukrainian reconnaissance boat on Thursday in the mouth of the Danube River.

Dmytro Pletenchuk, a spokesperson for Ukraine's navy, said the attack killed one person and several others were wounded or missing. He did not comment on the strike location.

The Danube ports are critically important for Ukraine, serving as an alternative to the Black Sea ports through which fuel and other critical cargoes are imported into the country.

(Reuters)

In Chicago, locals prepare for Trump's possible deployment of National Guard

WHEN U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to flood Chicago with National Guard troops and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents earlier this month, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker said the president lacked the legal authority.

But privately, Pritzker and Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson began discussing what they could do to shield Chicago from a federal deployment like those underway in two other Democrat-run cities with Black mayors, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. Their conclusion: not much.

As Trump has amped up the threat of a federal deployment in the nation's third-largest city in recent days, public officials and community organizers said they are doing what they can to get ready, however.

The offices of Pritzker and Johnson are closely coordinating. The state's attorney general, Kwame Raoul, said on Monday he was developing a legal strategy to execute if troops arrived. Immigrant advocates are stepping up legal training.

While some locals have expressed support for Trump's decision, many in the heavily Democratic-voting city are appalled.

Some community group leaders who work in Chicago neighborhoods most affected by violent crime said the presence of National Guard troops could undermine efforts to build trust. So would the appearance of co-operation between Chicago police officers and ICE, Chicago Police Superintendent Larry Snelling said.

At a press conference on Thursday, Snelling said that officers would not assist with federal law enforcement, but would not interfere with it either.

"We know people are living in fear," he said, "and working with ICE, it does nothing to help those relationships and in fact, it hurts. We're not going to ask for anyone's immigration status, we don't care. We're going to continue to stand up for the people in our city to make sure that they're safe."

On Monday, Pritzker spoke on the riverfront in downtown Chicago, flanked by Johnson and the state's most powerful Democrats.

"Mr. President, do not come to Chicago. You are neither wanted here nor needed here," he said.

CHICAGO CRIME

Trump has justified his decision by painting a bleak picture of crime in Chicago, calling it a "disaster." Illinois Republicans have echoed that description, and are increasingly speaking up in support of Trump's pledged intervention.

Families "need leaders who will finally make Chicago safe," state Senator Neil Anderson said in a statement to Reuters.

Chicago has long had a reputation as a city with an elevated crime rate, particularly around gun violence. There have been 1,229 shootings so far this year, including a high-profile drive-by shooting in July targeting a rap artist.

However, the city has made marked progress since the end of the pandemic, accord-



▲ Federal police vehicles belonging to the Department of Homeland Security sit parked next to the Federal Plaza in Chicago, Illinois, U.S., August 26, 2025. U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that the U.S. military might deploy to Chicago.

ing to Chicago crime data. Fatal shootings fell 36% from January 1 through August 25 compared to the same period a year ago. Its July homicide rate, opens new tab of 1.66 per 100,000 residents ranks it below Washington, New Orleans, Kansas City and Little Rock, Arkansas, among other cities.

The falling crime trend mirrors other U.S. cities, reflecting the impact of hundreds of millions of federal dollars allocated in recent years for teachers, police and social workers

– the people likely to influence at-risk youth most vulnerable to gun violence, said John Roman, a senior fellow at the research organization NORC at the University of Chicago.

Some of those funds, including \$158 million in grants for violence prevention programs across the U.S., were cut in April as part of the Trump administration's reshaping of government.

(Reuters)



By Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE weekend has arrived, the ideal time to relax, recharge, and embrace new adventures.

To help you make the most of your days off, Eswatini Daily News has handpicked a lineup of the top events happening around town. Grab your favourite drink, gather your friends or family, and get ready for a weekend full of fun and good vibes.

►► LADIES NIGHT

When: Friday

Where: Mdzimba View Shisanyama

Fee: E100

Fans of South African reality television, Sweet Guluva, the charismatic winner of Big Brother SA Season 5, is poised to make a grand appearance at Mdzimba View Shisanyama. The highly anticipated event, named 'Ladies Night,' is scheduled for August 29, 2025. Sweet Guluva, whose real name is Akhonamathemba Mbele, has taken the nation by storm since his victory on the popular reality show, where he not only showcased his vibrant personality but also walked away with the impressive E2 million grand prizes. The 'Ladies Night' event will feature an impressive lineup of South African faces Slick Widit, Afrikan Papi. Attendees can also look forward to electrifying sets from talented artists including Slim Deep, Castle, Baba, and Bandora, ensuring that the night will be filled with diverse musical offerings. For those looking to join in on the festivities, general tickets are available for E100, while VIP tickets can be purchased for E200, providing fans with an opportunity to experience the event in style. The combination of Sweet Guluva's star power and the impressive lineup of performers makes this event a must-attend for anyone looking to enjoy a night out filled with fun and entertainment.

►► TIBZA'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

When: Friday

Where: 23:28 Lounge

Fee: Free

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 Skool 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. They 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.

►► ALL BLACK PARTY

When: Friday

Where: Ocean Cuisine

Fee: Free

South African entertainment and business icons Andile Mpisana and Shauwn "Mam' Mkhize" Mkhize are set to headline a highly anticipated event at Ocean Cuisine, promising an unforgettable night for fans and partygoers alike. Scheduled for August 29, 2025, the 'All Black Party' will showcase a vibrant mix of music, fashion, and celebrity glamour, with both stars bringing their unique flair to the occasion. The event's name, 'All Black Party,' reflects its stylish dress code, where attendees are encouraged to don all-black attire, creating an atmosphere of elegance and unity. The night will feature an impressive lineup of South African musical talent including Sbu De Drum DJ, Bandora, Paris, Cnatra, and Bisto, ensuring a diverse and energetic soundtrack that spans genres and appeals to a wide audience.

►► CEDRIC & FRIENDS

When: Friday

Where: Molly's House of Grills

Fee: E50

Molly's House of Grills is set to be electrified as the highly anticipated comedy show, 'Last Friday Gags with Cedric & Friends,' takes centre stage. Scheduled for August 29, 2025, at 7:01 pm, this third edition of the monthly comedy night will be an evening brimming with laughter, delectable cuisine, and an impressive lineup of comedic talent. With a mission to cultivate a consistent platform for local comedians, 'Last Friday Gags' aims to unite comedy enthusiasts and foster a community

centred around humour and entertainment. This month's show will feature a stellar lineup, headlined by the charismatic Cedric. Joining him on stage will be a trio of talented comedians Bongiswa, Darren, Ntsetselelo and Mdura. Each performer is known for their distinct comedic style and perspective, ensuring that audiences will be treated to a diverse array of jokes and storytelling that resonates with various tastes and sensibilities. In an exclusive interview, Cedric shared his vision for 'Last Friday Gags,' emphasising the importance of reviving the comedy culture at Molly's. "We want to bring back that magic of stand-up comedy, a place that's always been the home of comedy from The Riverstone Mall in Manzini," he explained. Cedric is passionate about ensuring that every show is a unique experience. "We are committed to providing a fresh and clean lineup every month. No two shows will ever be the same. Every comedian will be bringing their A-game, so you can expect new faces, new jokes, and top-tier performances," he stated. Tickets for the show are priced affordably, with pre-sale tickets available for E50 and tickets at the door costing E80.

►► SWAZI RALLY

When: Weekend

Where: Riders Ranch

Fee: E300

South African legendary DJ Oskido is set to headline the 32nd Swazi Rally, a much-anticipated event in the motorcycling calendar in the Kingdom. Early bird tickets for this exhilarating rally are now officially on sale, sparking enthusiasm among fans eager to be part of this iconic celebration. Priced at E300, these tickets can be conveniently purchased online at [www.howler.co.za/swazirally2025] (http://www.howler.co.za/swazirally2025). Scheduled to take place from August 29 to 31, 2025,

at Riders Ranch in Sidvokodvo, this annual international motorcycling rally is expected to attract bikers and fans from across the region and beyond. The announcement of Oskido as the headliner has only added to the buzz surrounding the event, with many eagerly anticipating the electrifying performances that will accompany the thrilling motorcycle festivities. The news was officially shared through the Swazi Rally's social media platforms, generating a wave of excitement among fans and participants. A post read, "The ultimate biking festival returns, bigger and better than ever! Stay tuned for more details!"

►► MR & MISS ZHUMIAO

ELIMINATION PARTY

When: Saturday

Where: Zhumiao Lounge

Fee: E70

Talented South African record producer and musician, Xowla, is set to headline the highly anticipated 'Mr & Miss Zhumiao Elimination Party,' at Zhumiao Lounge. Scheduled for August 30, 2025, the event will also feature the popular duo Trend Twins and two surprise acts that have yet to be revealed. The lineup is further bolstered by the presence of renowned artists Phara, DJ Smallz, and DJ Chomzin, ensuring a diverse range of performances that will appeal to a wide audience. Ticket prices have been structured to accommodate fans of all backgrounds. General pre-sale tickets are available for E70, while those wishing to purchase tickets at the gate can expect to pay E100 before 10 pm and E120 thereafter. For those looking for a more exclusive experience, VIP presale tickets are priced at E200, with VIP tickets at the gate costing E250. Additionally, VVIP tickets are available for E300, providing fans with an elevated experience at this much-anticipated gathering.

Your guide to this weekend's best events

Tribal Natives to ignite Futopia Zanzibar

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE music landscape in Eswatini is undergoing a remarkable transformation, propelled by a new generation of artists who are capturing the attention of audiences both locally and internationally.

Among these trailblazers, the dynamic duo known as Tribal Natives is poised to make a significant impact with their upcoming performance at Futopia Zanzibar, scheduled for August 29-31, 2025.

This event, supported by the renowned Bushfire Festival, represents a pivotal moment for Tribal Natives as they prepare to showcase their innovative sound on a prominent African stage. Tribal Natives, consisting of DJ Ash and Nelson X, have been steadily building a reputation for their distinctive fusion of Afrohouse, Afrotech, and culturally rich storytelling.

Their music transcends mere entertainment; it is a vibrant expression of Eswatini's cultural heritage and contemporary artistic innovation. DJ Ash's fearless approach to genre blending, combined with Nelson X's Swati-Mozambican production influences, creates a soundscape that is both deeply rooted in tradition and boldly forward-looking. Their performances are known for infectious rhythms that compel movement and lyrics that evoke a profound emotional connection, inviting listeners into a sonic journey that reflects their unique identity and artistic vision.

The significance of their Futopia Zanzibar appearance extends beyond the music



▲ Tribal Native.

itself. It symbolises a broader movement toward artistic collaboration and cultural unity across the African continent. The partnership between Bushfire and Busara Promotions, the visionary organisers behind Futopia Zanzibar and the celebrated Sauti za Busara Festival—exemplifies a commitment to fostering cross-cultural exchange and providing platforms for emerging talent. This alliance highlights the importance of nurturing artistic communities that transcend national borders, encouraging a shared creative dialogue that enriches the African music scene.

In recent months, Tribal Natives have electrified audiences at several high-profile events, including the Bushfire festival and the Standard Bank Luju Food & Lifestyle Festival. Their energetic and engaging live shows have earned them a loyal fan base and heightened anticipation for their Futopia Zanzibar set. Attendees can expect a performance that not only celebrates the power of music but also honours the cultural identity of Eswatini, weaving together ancestral rhythms with contemporary beats to create an unforgettable experience.

Eswatini artists unite for DJ Wacko

ESWATINI'S music industry is rallying behind one of its own.

IF's Lounge, a popular entertainment hub in the heart of Manzini, has announced that it will host a Benefit Concert for DJ Wacko on Saturday, August 30, 2025, at its Moneni-based Carson Building venue. The event aims to raise funds to support the beloved DJ, who was recently involved in a serious car accident that left him with severe injuries.

The statement released by IF's Lounge explains that this special event is not just about music but about solidarity, care, and the spirit of ubuntu that defines emaSwati. "Eswatini musicians and DJs have come together to organise a special show in support of DJ Wacko, who sustained severe injuries in a recent car accident. We invite everyone to join us in contributing to his medical expenses and well-being during his recovery, which has temporarily paused his ability to perform," the statement reads.

DJ Wacko is a household name in Eswatini's entertainment circles, known for his electrifying sets and ability to keep crowds on their feet. But beyond his craft, he is admired for his humble personality and commitment to uplifting young talent. His sudden pause from the decks, due to the accident, has sent shockwaves throughout

the industry.

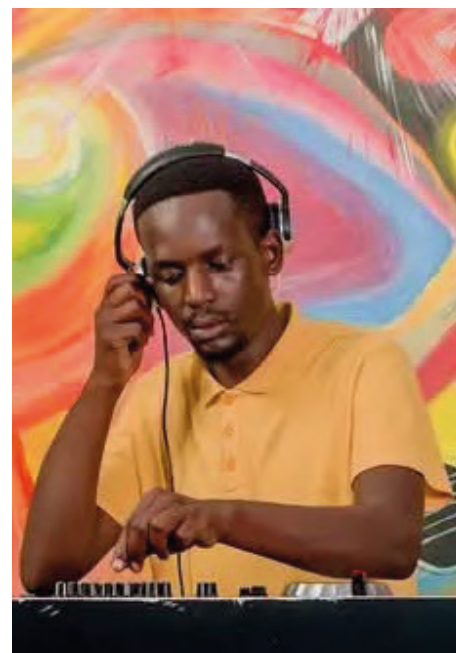
The benefit concert is expected to feature performances from a star-studded lineup of local artists and DJs, all of whom are contributing their talents for free in a show of solidarity. According to organisers, this is not just an event but a movement to remind artists that the industry thrives when they support one another.

The entrance fee for the concert is E30, with all proceeds going directly to DJ Wacko's medical care. "Every ticket purchased is more than just an entry to enjoy music – it is a contribution to restoring hope, health, and healing to one of our own," the statement emphasises.

Contributions

Community members who are unable to attend the show but still wish to assist can make contributions directly. Donations can be made by contacting Big Sister at +268 7629 1185. Musicians who wish to participate can also reach out to the organisers at +268 7840 4690.

In their heartfelt appeal, IF's Lounge highlighted the importance of collective action in times of hardship. "We warmly invite all Eswatini musicians and DJs interested in contributing with their talents to DJ Wacko's Benefit Concert. This is more than a performance; it's an act of love and



▲ DJ Wacko.

community," the statement continues.

Fans of DJ Wacko and music lovers at large are also encouraged to show up in numbers. The concert is being framed not just as entertainment but as a symbol of how the arts can be used as a tool for healing and restoration.



▲ Attendees at the previous edition of the Eswatini Farmers Market

Eswatini Farmers Market tickets fly off the shelves

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

Tickets for this vibrant event are selling rapidly, reflecting the enthusiasm of the public. Early bird general tickets are 90 per cent sold out, and the early bird kid's tickets have followed suit, as they are sold out, leaving only the general tickets available at E250. The festival will take place at the picturesque Malkerns Country Club. Mbekezeli 'Culolam' Dlamini, the festival's director, confirmed the details in an exclusive interview, expressing his excitement for this year's market. "I am thrilled to announce the return of the Eswatini Farmers Market, and I can assure you that this year's event will surpass all expectations. Get ready for a day filled with endless excitement and unforgettable moments," he stated.

Phenomenon

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

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

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



Nomzamo Mbatha spreads body positivity this Women’s Month

SHAKA Ilembe actress Nomzamo Mbatha (Nxumalo) has secured yet again the deal to be the brand ambassador for popular denim company Levi’s Curve.

The 35-year-old model, actress, humanitarian, and brand ambassador has been working with the brand since 2019 to spread body positivity through the Levi’s Curvy edition.

To celebrate the launch, Levi’s and Mbatha hosted an intimate brunch. They gave guests a glimpse of the new design and created space for conversations.

The celebration relocated to the Levi’s store at Cape Town’s V&A Waterfront for a store relaunch. Honours women in all shapes

The campaign celebrated women in all shapes and sizes.

“What an incredible series of events to officially launch the 501 Curve in South Africa. Surrounded by some of the coolest, most authentic, and most dynamic people,” she gushed.

This deal is personal for Mbatha, as she looks back at her years as a university student.

“I began as a Levi’s brand promoter during my university days,” she said.

“Today, as the returning face of the Levi’s Curvy campaign, and I’m embodying a full-circle moment.”

This Women’s Month, she wants women to embrace their unique shapes and forms.

“This makes sense for our women who want to celebrate their curves,” she said.

Goodwill ambassador

The actress from KwaMashu, Durban, is not only an influencer but serves as a Goodwill Ambassador for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mbatha holds a degree in accounting from the University of Cape Town.

She has been running the Nomzamo Light-house Foundation since 2015. Through it, her goal is to provide youth and women with opportunities that break the cycle of poverty through entrepreneurship and grants.

Mbatha has opened up about dealing with body image and some insecurities.

She expressed how being in the limelight does not mean being naturally born with confidence.

“I always have eyes on me, and that comes with pressure,” she said.

“I am still a woman at the end of the day. And I want other women not to feel pressure into having a certain body type.” fter accepting herself, Mbatha said things became easier.

“The more you force yourself into something you are not, the more inauthentic you become.”

(Sunday World)



▲ South African artist Ciza.

Ciza, Tems, and Omah Lay unite for ‘Isaka (6am)’ Remix

SOUTH African artist Ciza (real name Nkululeko Nciza) is celebrating the release of the remix of his hit track “Isaka (6am)”, featuring Nigerian artists Tems and Omah Lay.

The collaboration has been described by Ciza as both a personal and musical milestone, highlighting the power of music to connect people across borders. Sharing a video on social media of himself in the studio with his parents, TK Nciza and Nhlanhla Mafu, Ciza wrote: “I’m so proud of this remix. Tems and Omah Lay took it to the next level.”

“The first thing I wanted to do was share it with both of my parents. Proof that good music brings people together. I can only go back to the days you guys told me I’d be making the world dance one day.” Ciza reflected on the journey of “Isaka (6am)” and the impact it has had on his career.

He explained that the track was created one night in the studio while working with two friends.

“One night I played ‘Isaka’ live and the internet went crazy. Then the dance challenge took over and changed everything. The official video reached one million views in just 48 hours. Because of ‘Isaka’, I have performed on stages all over the world with artists like Black Coffee.”

“I’ve been able to achieve all of this with my family by my side. The support of my friends and the love from my hometown raised me. Every time a DJ spins or remixes ‘Isaka’, it feels like it can’t get any bigger. But then two of the biggest artists in the world came together for the official remix. And the rest will be history.”

On his 24th birthday, Ciza noted he realised the scale of the song’s success. “‘Isaka (6am)’ is the most-streamed song on Spotify in South Africa this year,” he shared. Ciza collaborated on the song with Jazzworx and Thukuthela, whose real names are Kamohelo Monese and Kgotso Dube, respectively.

The remix brings together different styles and influences, reflecting both South African and Nigerian sounds. The official release of “Isaka II (6AM)” is scheduled for Thursday, August 28, at 8pm on music platforms.

Fans can expect a blend of rhythmic energy and melodic interplay, continuing the momentum of the original track while highlighting the contributions of Tems and Omah Lay.

(Showbiz)

Blxckie responds to backlash over Prokid comments in freestyle debate

HIP hop is still at the centre of hot topics weeks later, with conversations growing and different opinions flying after K.Keed refused to freestyle on DJ Speedsta’s 5FM show.

What started as an awkward moment between the radio host and the Cape Town-born rapper has since evolved into one of the year’s biggest hip hop debates. The discussion revolves around the culture, the role of freestyles, and the beats that shape them.

During the interview, Speedsta pushed rapper K.Keed to deliver an on-the-spot freestyle on Prokid’s “Uthini ngo PRO” beat.

She declined, brushing off the request with the words, “Nah, let’s not do that, Speedsta ... what do we think this is?”

Speedsta questioned why young rappers today avoid freestyling, but K.Keed later took to Instagram to make her position clear.

Posting a snippet of her song “Harsh Truths” alongside a strongly worded caption, she stressed that her focus is on making intentional music rather than chasing viral freestyles.

“I make real music for real music lovers, take that however pleases you,” she wrote. Her post, which also directly referenced the 5FM exchange, has since sparked conversations about the art of freestyling in the hip hop cul-

ture online.

While many in the industry, including Blxckie and DJ Slique, rallied behind her, others questioned whether a rapper refusing to freestyle undermines one of hip hop’s foundations.

The debate gained even more traction after Blxckie’s interview with hip hop blogger Okayswisher, who asked the “Kwenzekile” hitmaker for his take on the matter. Blxckie then weighed in, saying that while freestyling on the radio is part of the culture,



▲ SA Hip Hop artist Blxckie.

the choice of beat should fit today’s sound.

“It’s a radio show, people are listening for the first time, and you need to drop some bars. But at the same time, it’s 2025, you’re not playing a Prokid beat for me to freestyle on in 2025, that’s my opinion. Play some Gunna or a Miggos beat,” he explained.

His comments quickly drew criticism, with some fans accusing him of disrespecting one of South African hip hop’s most iconic figures.

Blxckie later defended himself, clarifying that his words had been taken out of context.

“Nobody disrespected Prokid. I literally gave him his props, go watch the full video,” he wrote.

He explained that his point was not about Prokid’s influence, but about creating a relevant platform for today’s artists.

“K.Keed just dropped an album; they should’ve given her a beat that speaks to what she put out. If Gunna goes on the radio, they’re going to give him a beat that suits what he’s doing in 2025.” The clash highlights the tension between honouring the legacy of South African hip hop and adapting to its present.

For some, freestyling over a Prokid beat pays tribute to a legend. For others, it risks feeling out of touch with the new wave of music shaping young artists and their audiences.

The conversation also lands just as K.Keed prepares to release the deluxe version of her album “Bite the Bullet”, which originally dropped in February.

What Is an Ice Pick Headache?

WHAT’S the best way to describe how an ice pick headache feels? It’s like someone’s stabbing your face with an ice pick. So, they’re also called stabbing headaches.

Many people, from time to time, feel quick jabs or jolts of severe pain around one of their eyes or at their temple. They usually last only a few seconds.

They might happen in the same spot over and over again. Or you could feel them in different places each time, such as one temple and then the other.

Thunderclap Headache vs. Ice Pick Headache

Like an ice pick headache, a thunderclap headache comes on suddenly. But the difference is that an ice pick headache lasts a few seconds, while a thunderclap headache can stick with you anywhere between 1 and 5 minutes. Also, ice pick headaches happen in clusters, but a thunderclap headache happens in one burst. A thunderclap headache could also be a sign of a serious health issue, while an ice pick headache usually isn’t.

Who Gets Ice Pick Headaches?

You’re more likely to get ice pick headaches if you’re prone to migraines or cluster headaches. But you could get them even if you don’t normally have migraines. People usually first notice them between the ages of 45 and 50.

Ice Pick Headache Causes

It’s not clear what causes ice pick headaches. But doctors do know they’re not caused by disease or injury. You may get them because something is wrong with how your brain sends pain signals to your body.

Ice pick headache triggers may include:

- ▶ Sudden movements
- ▶ Bright light
- ▶ Stress

Track Your Triggers

It’s a good idea to keep a headache diary. Write down when you have an ice pick headache and what happened before it started. If you had a stressful day at work before it hit, write that down. You can also use a mobile phone app instead of a diary.

Take this information to your next doctor’s appointment so you can discuss ways to prevent these headaches. They may be able to suggest lifestyle changes, such as relaxation, to reduce stress.

Ice Pick Headache Treatment

Ice pick headaches may come and go quickly, so they’re hard to treat. One medicine you might try to prevent an attack is indomethacin (Indocin, Tivorbex). It’s a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). It could cause side effects such as nausea, stomach bleeding, heartburn, and eye or kidney problems. You’ll need an annual eye exam to make sure your eyes are healthy if you take it.

Ice Pick Headache Home Remedies

At-home treatments are another option to ease an ice pick headache. You can try:

- ▶ Massaging your head
- ▶ Placing a warm or cold compress on your head
- ▶ Resting in a cool, dark room
- ▶ Drinking water

Ice Pick Headache Complications

See a doctor if you have an ice pick headache along with the following:

- ▶ Trouble with balance
- ▶ Dizziness
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Throwing up
- ▶ Vision changes

Ice pick headache aneurysm

A stabbing headache, such as an ice pick headache, could be a warning sign of an aneurysm. Researchers have found a link between the two conditions. An aneurysm is a bulge in the wall of an artery that can burst and cause internal bleeding. If you

suddenly start having stabbing headaches, especially if they’re always on the same side, get worse over time, or are triggered by movement, see a doctor right away.

Ice Pick Headache Prevention

You may be able to avoid ice pick headaches with these steps:

- ▶ Eat nutritious foods.
- ▶ Get enough sleep.
- ▶ Cut back on caffeine and alcohol.
- ▶ Manage stress with exercise and relaxation techniques.
- ▶ Don’t smoke or use other tobacco products.
- ▶ Try biofeedback or acupuncture.

When to Seek Emergency Help

Ice pick headaches aren’t serious in most cases. But other serious brain conditions could also make you feel similar pains. If you have brief headaches that feel like

stabbing, see your doctor to rule out other health concerns.

Takeaways

Ice pick headaches feel like a sudden, stabbing pain in your face, often around the eyes or temples.

They’re brief, usually lasting just a few seconds. They can happen repeatedly in the same or different spots throughout the day. People prone to migraines or cluster headaches are more likely to have ice pick headaches, though anyone can have them.

Doctors don’t know the exact cause, but it may involve how the brain sends pain signals.

Triggers could include sudden movements, bright light, or stress. Because ice pick headaches are short-lived, they can be hard to treat. Your doctor may prescribe indomethacin, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug

WebMD



MANY medical conditions can mimic anxiety disorder symptoms, leading to a potential misdiagnosis.

Anxiety is a feeling of intense worry, nervousness, and fear. Anxiety disorders are common mental health conditions.

Certain medical conditions have similar symptoms to that of anxiety, such as heart palpitations, shortness of breath, fatigue, and dizziness.

As a result, it's possible to have one of these conditions and have it misdiagnosed as an anxiety disorder. It's also possible to have an anxiety disorder alongside one or more of these conditions.

Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS)

An excessive increase in the heart rate when moving from lying down to standing up characterizes POTS. This can cause dizziness, lightheadedness, and palpitations, which are also common in anxiety disorders.

► **How POTS mimics anxiety:** Symptoms, like a rapid heartbeat, dizziness, and fatigue, can be mistaken for panic attacks or generalized anxiety.

► **Differentiating features:** Changes in posture specifically trigger symptoms of POTS, and fainting or near-fainting episodes often accompany them. A tilt table test can help a medical professional diagnose POTS.

Inappropriate sinus tachycardia (IST)

IST occurs when the heart rate is abnormally high without a clear cause. This can lead to sensations of a racing heart and palpitations.

► **How IST mimics anxiety:** The primary symptom of IST is a rapid heartbeat, which is also a common symptom of anxiety and panic attacks.

► **Differentiating features:** IST involves a persistently high resting heart rate that doesn't decrease with rest. Holter monitors or ECGs can help distinguish IST from anxiety-induced tachycardia.

Endometriosis

Endometriosis is a condition where tissue identical to the lining inside the uterus grows elsewhere in the body, causing pain and may lead to fertility issues.

Endometriosis and anxiety can happen in the same person. Doctors may mistake endometriosis for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or heavy, painful periods. Anxiety disorders, depression, and other mental health conditions are common among people with endometriosis.

► **How endometriosis mimics anxiety:** Chronic pain and fatigue associated with endometriosis can lead to increased stress and anxiety-like symptoms.

► **Differentiating features:** Endometriosis symptoms are often related to the menstrual cycle and can include severe pelvic pain, heavy periods, and pain during intercourse. A diagnosis typically involves pelvic exams and imaging studies.

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

PCOS is a hormonal disorder causing enlarged ovaries with small cysts on the outer edges.

Anxiety disorders are also common among people with PCOS.

Health conditions mistaken for anxiety



spine, leading to severe, chronic pain and stiffness.

► **How AS mimics anxiety:** The chronic pain and fatigue associated with AS can contribute to feelings of anxiety and stress.

► **Differentiating features:** AS symptoms typically include back pain and stiffness that improves with exercise and worsens with rest. Imaging studies and genetic tests — known as HLA-B27 — can help a healthcare professional diagnose AS.

Lyme disease

Lyme disease is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*. It's transmitted through tick bites. Lyme disease can get progressively worse over time, especially if left untreated and unmanaged.

► **How Lyme disease mimics anxiety:** Many symptoms of Lyme disease, such as fatigue, headaches, and cognitive difficulties — including a lack of concentration or “brain fog” — can be mistaken for anxiety or depression. Feelings of irritability and anxiety are common among people with Lyme disease.

► **Differentiating features:** Lyme disease often has a characteristic bull's-eye rash, joint pain, and flu-like symptoms. Blood tests for Lyme antibodies can confirm the diagnosis.

Fibromyalgia

Fibromyalgia is a chronic condition, and widespread musculoskeletal pain, fatigue, and tenderness in localized areas characterize it.

► **How fibromyalgia mimics anxiety:** The chronic pain and fatigue associated with fibromyalgia can lead to significant stress and anxiety. In fact, anxiety and depression are common symptoms of fibromyalgia. Traumatic events may also trigger fibromyalgia, as they can anxiety disorders.

► **Differentiating features:** Fibromyalgia often affects specific, tender points on the body, as well as causing symptoms, like sleep disturbances and cognitive difficulties. To make a fibromyalgia diagnosis, a healthcare professional will usually rule out other causes and use specific criteria to assess your pain levels.

Takeaway

If you have received an anxiety disorder diagnosis but suspect a different condition may be at play, it may be a good idea to seek a second opinion with another medical professional. No matter what condition, or conditions, you may have, proper diagnosis and treatment can improve your quality of life. The correct diagnosis can be the first step in feeling better.

Healthline

► **How PCOS mimics anxiety:** Hormonal imbalances can lead to mood changes, fatigue, and irritability, which are common in anxiety disorders.

► **Differentiating features:** An important characteristic of PCOS is higher-than-usual testosterone levels, which can be determined via a blood test. Other PCOS symptoms include irregular menstrual cycles, excessive hair growth, acne, and weight gain.

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)

IBD is a group of conditions that involve chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract. It includes conditions like Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

► **How IBD mimics anxiety:** Symptoms, like abdominal pain, cramping, and fatigue, can lead to significant stress and anxiety. Abdominal pain can also be a symptom of anxiety.

► **Differentiating features:** IBD symptoms often include chronic diarrhea, blood in the stool, and weight loss. To diagnose IBD, a healthcare professional may order a colonoscopy and imaging studies.

Hyperthyroidism

Hyperthyroidism, or an overactive thyroid, occurs when the thyroid gland

produces excessive amounts of thyroid hormones, accelerating the body's metabolism.

► **How it mimics anxiety:** Symptoms, like a rapid heartbeat, nervousness, and sweating, can be mistaken for anxiety.

► **Differentiating features:** Hyperthyroidism often presents with physical symptoms, like tremors, unexplained weight loss, heat intolerance, and goiter — enlargement of the thyroid gland. Blood tests measuring thyroid hormone levels are crucial for diagnosis.

Adrenal insufficiency

Adrenal insufficiency, including Addison's disease, is when the adrenal glands do not produce enough hormones, particularly cortisol.

► **How adrenal insufficiency mimics anxiety:** Symptoms like fatigue, muscle weakness, and low blood pressure can resemble those of anxiety and panic attacks.

► **Differentiating features:** Adrenal insufficiency can cause salt cravings, weight loss, and hyperpigmentation, a darkening of the skin. Doctors use blood tests to measure cortisol and ACTH levels for diagnosis.

Ankylosing spondylitis (AS)

Also called Bechterew's disease, AS is a type of arthritis that primarily affects the

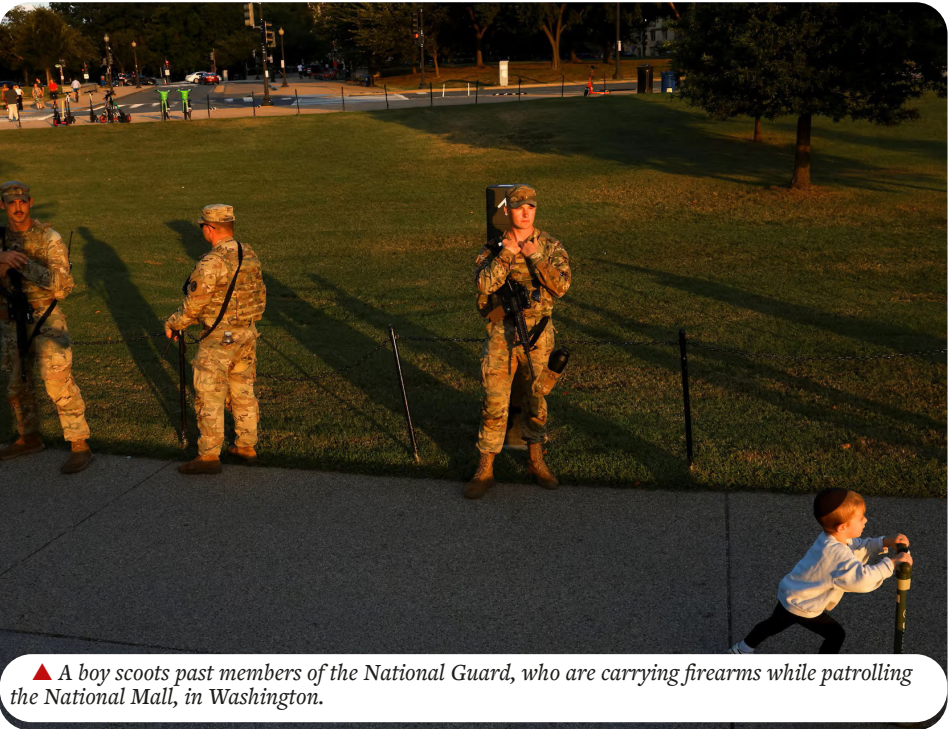
News in pictures from around the world



▲ A protester holds a photo of an Israeli hostage as demonstrators block a main road during a demonstration demanding the immediate end of the Gaza war and the release of all hostages, in Yakum near Tel Aviv, Israel.



▲ A low-flying tanker drops retardant as the Garnet Fire burns in the Sierra National Forest, Fresno County, California.



▲ A boy scoots past members of the National Guard, who are carrying firearms while patrolling the National Mall, in Washington.



▲ Cate Blanchett poses on the red carpet, ahead of the opening ceremony of the 82nd Venice Film Festival.



▲ A reveler gestures while lying in tomato pulp, as people attend the annual 'La Tomatina' food fight festival in Bunol, near Valencia, Spain.



▲ Families and loved ones reunite outside the police barricades after a shooting at Annunciation Church, which is also home to an elementary school, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

‘Something has to change’, says Amorim after United humiliation

A furious Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim said “something has to change” within the team after the pressure mounted on him following a humiliating League Cup loss to Grimsby.

In arguably their worst result since legendary boss Alex Ferguson retired at the end of the 2012/13 season, United were knocked out of an English cup competition by a fourth-tier side for the first time.

Having fought back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2, they lost a penalty shoot-out 12-11 on Wednesday.

Amorim cut a disconsolate figure having hoped the nightmare of last season, when United finished a woeful 15th in the Premier League, was behind them.

He had been backed by the board and spent £200 million on the attacking talent of Bryan Mbeumo, Matheus Cunha and Benjamin Sesko alone.

“(I have) no more answers. I do not even have anything to say,” the 40-year-old Portuguese told the BBC after the match at Grimsby.

Amorim, who claimed his team deserved more points than just the one they have garnered in league matches with Arsenal and Fulham, conceded the performance against Grimsby rang alarm bells.

“I think something has to change,” he said.

“I think the team and the players spoke re-

ally loud today, so that’s it. (Tonight) I think the best team won, the only team that was on the pitch.

“The way we start the game without any intensity, we were completely lost.”

Amorim is the sixth permanent United manager since Ferguson retired.

Louis van Gaal and Jose Mourinho were among those to find the challenge of restoring the club as title contenders beyond them despite huge investment in players.

United defender Diogo Dalot said the team had lacked any fight.

“I think we gave the game to them, clearly, straight away, exactly what they wanted. Win duels, second balls, set-plays,” Dalot told MUTV.

“We fought back, but I think that was the minimum that we could show to the fans that travelled for ourselves, for the club, but clearly not good enough.”

AMORIM ‘NEEDS TIME’

United have yet to win after three games so far this campaign, with Amorim repeatedly criticised for tactical inflexibility given he remains wedded to a 3-4-3 formation.

The Portuguese boss has overseen more defeats (19) than wins (17) in 10 months in charge at United.

But the former Sporting Lisbon coach received support from an unlikely source in victorious Grimsby manager David Artell.

“Ruben Amorim needs time,” he said.



▲ A furious Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim.

“He is an excellent manager and you don’t become Manchester United manager, having done what he has done in his career, if he is not good at his job.

“He has shown he can do it. Just give him time and he will get it right.

“He is a good guy, I can see he is a good guy and he will put that club back to the top table if he does get that time.”

Amorim and United’s next challenge is a Premier League home game against Burnley, who are coming off a 2-0 win over fellow newly-promoted side Sunderland, on Saturday.

“In this moment, we need to focus on the weekend and then we have time to think,” said Amorim.

(Supersport)

Norris sees others closing gap with dominant McLaren

LANDO Norris said on Thursday that other teams were catching up with his McLaren outfit, expecting many tough battles ahead as the Formula One season enters the home straight.

McLaren have swept all before them this season, a dominant 299 points ahead of closest rivals Ferrari, with Norris and teammate Oscar Piastri clear favourites to take the individual title.

“Of course, we as a team (have) been strong this year. But I feel like other people have caught up a little bit the last couple of races,” Norris told reporters.

“I don’t expect to win by 20 seconds or something,” added the 25-year-old, quipping however that he would “love it if that were the case”.

He said McLaren were going into every race hoping to wrap up the top two positions but were careful to guard against complacency.

“I don’t think we expect any race to go easily now... I don’t think we ever get complacent and think it’s going to be an easy one,” he stressed.

He predicted a “long, tricky, challenging second half of the season” with 10 races to go.

One of the key factors in this year’s Formula One run-in will be the extent to which McLaren allow their two drivers to race competitively for the title.

Norris said both drivers were still free to choose their own strategies



▲ Lando Norris.

and race fairly – what McLaren calls “papaya rules” after the team colours.

As for championship leader Piastri, the Australian said he was steeling for a fierce climax to the season.

“The intensity will kind of naturally increase as we get close to the end of the year and I’m ready for that,” said the 24-year-old.

The current world champion, Dutch driver Max Verstappen, goes into his home Grand Prix in an unfamiliar position – he is not the favourite.

While the hoardes of orange-clad fans will be hoping Max can pull off a miracle, his Red Bull is unlikely to have the pace to challenge the McLarens.

However, the famously changeable weather at the Zandvoort circuit – just a stone’s thrown from the North Sea – is poised to play a role again.

Rain is forecast for all three days of the weekend and Verstappen is known for his skill at wet-weather racing.

“There might be some weather coming in as well. So that always creates a bit of chaos, so we just need to see what happens,” said Verstappen.

Verstappen currently sits third in the drivers’ championship, 97 points behind pace-setter Piastri, but insisted the situation was not getting to him.

(Supersport)

Pirates coach looking to juggle selection

ORLANDO Pirates coach Abdeslam Ouaddou wants to get his squad back to full fitness as quickly as possible to ensure he has many players to choose from as their fixture demands get more intense.

After Sunday’s clash against Chipika United in Gqeberha (live on SuperSport, kick off 3pm), Pirates will have played eight matches in the first month of the new campaign and with participation in the African Champions League coming up next month, they face an even more hectic schedule as they juggle commitments both domestic and continental.

“We have such a big squad, and we are playing many competitions,” Ouaddou said.

“So like I always say, everybody will be important in the team. Everybody will have time to show his abilities in the team, depending on the situation, regarding the games and the competitions that will come.”

The Pirates coach referred to the case of 34-year-old left-wingback Deon Hotto, who he took off at halftime on Tuesday when he showed signs of fatigue against Orbit College in their 1-0 victory in the Betway Premiership.

“With Hotto, we have to manage him because we are playing every three days, and I am not sure that if we want to protect the health of the players and for them to perform in the season, we can overplay them,” he added.

(Supersport)



▲ Orlando Pirates coach Abdeslam Ouaddou.

Bafana's Broos blasts Bloem pitch ahead of World Cup qualifiers

HUGO Broos hit out at the state of the pitch at the Free State Stadium in Bloemfontein as he named his final squad yesterday for the 2026 Fifa World Cup qualifiers against Lesotho and Nigeria.

Bafana will play Lesotho on September 5 and Nigeria on September 9, with both Group C games at the Free State Stadium.

Bafana's Broos – 'I saw the pitch' The Lesotho game is technically an away game, with Dikwena forced to play away from their home country as they do not have a stadium that meets requirements.

"I am a bit disappointed, I was in Bloemfontein and I saw the pitch," said Broos.

"They said they had the Cosafa Cup there, but that ended halfway through June. They had six weeks to fix it.

"I have seen the effort that other cities made – Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Polokwane. I am very disappointed they (Bloemfontein) didn't do the same."

The Bafana coach added that Bafana have changed their plans, and will now stay in Johannesburg from Monday before only going to Bloemfontein next Thursday.

"Even the training pitch (in Bloemfontein) is bad," he said.

"Lesotho are the hosts (of the first game) so we can't really complain. But then we have Nigeria and we are disappointed."

Bafana in fine fettle, but...

Bafana are currently five points clear at the top of Group C and in a good position to qualify for the World Cup, a position that will get even better if they can beat Lesotho and Nigeria.

Only the group winners are guar-



▲ Hugo Broos.

anteed a place in the USA, Canada and Mexico next year.

There remains an added caveat, however, in that Bafana may be docked three points for fielding an ineligible player – Teboho Mokoena – against Lesotho in March.

The rules suggest this will happen, but Fifa have thus far said absolutely nothing. Nigeria, currently six points behind Bafana, are certainly doing all they can to get Fifa to act.

Bafana seem to still be leaning on a suggestion that as Lesotho did not submit an official complaint, Fifa may not act.

"There was no complaint. How can you punish someone if there is no complaint?," added the Bafana coach.

"It is not Lesotho who are pushing. We didn't know Mokoena couldn't play that game.

"They (Nigeria) were not involved. They have an opportunity to come three points closer now. But if we see what we did until now why should we doubt and be worried and afraid? We have won all the games we needed to win."

(Supersport)

Al-Ahly begin search for Riveiro's replacement

AL-AHLY are reportedly considering sacking head coach Jose Riveiro after an indifferent start to the Egyptian Premier League season.

Riveiro joined the Reds at the end of May, following a successful three-year stay at Orlando Pirates, where he won five trophies.

The Spanish coach led Al-Ahly at the FIFA Club World Cup in the US in June, but was knocked out in the group stages.

Now, after only three games in the new Egyptian Premier League season, fans are calling for his axing.

The Reds currently sit in sixth place in the league table with five points, having collected five points from three matches, with one win and two draws, prompting fans to revolt against the Spanish coach.

They next face Pyramids FC in the league on Saturday, a match that could determine Riveiro's future with Al-Ahly.

Search for Riveiro's replacement begins

According to reports, Al-Ahly have already begun the search for a replacement for the Spanish coach.

"A source within Al-Ahly club revealed that Mahmoud El-Khatib has tasked Mohamed Youssef, the club's sporting director, with opening a line of communication with former Zamalek coach Jose Gomes," reported Eremnews.com.

"Youssef will contact Gomes in the coming hours and test his interest in coaching Al-Ahly, if Riveiro's departure is decided.

"Gomez achieved good results with Zamalek, winning the African Confederation Cup and then the African Super Cup against Al-Ahly."

Meanwhile, club legend Ahmed Shobier has called on the Al-Ahly fans to defend Riveiro like they did with other former Reds coaches like Pitso Mosimane and Marcel Koller.

"I see that Riveiro has been surrendered over a little to the fans," said Shobier as quoted by Nabd.com. (Supersport)



▲ Jose Riveiro

US Ryder Cup captain Bradley won't have playing role

US Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley rounded out his squad on Wednesday, opting not to become the first playing captain in 62 years in the biennial match play showdown with Europe.

Bradley named his six captain's selections to complete the 12-man US team and didn't call his own name, saying he ultimately decided he must focus on his captain's duties as the Americans vie to regain the trophy they lost in Rome two years ago.

"I grew up wanting to play Ryder Cups," Bradley said at a press conference at the PGA of America headquarters in Frisco, Texas. "I grew up wanting to fight alongside these guys. And it just broke my heart no to play.

"But ultimately I was chosen to do a job," he added. "I was chosen to be captain of this team. And my ultimate goal to start this whole thing was to be the best captain that I could be.

"And this is how I felt like I could do this."

The 39-year-old's strong season -- including a victory at the Traveller's Championship and six other top-10 finishes -- sparked speculation he would choose himself and become the first US playing captain since Arnold Palmer in 1963.

US President Donald Trump, who plans to attend the first of three days of competition at Bethpage Black in New York, was among those weighing in with the opinion that

Bradley should select himself -- Bradley calling it "surreal" that the matter would catch the attention of the president.

Bradley, who said he thought the Ryder Cup had grown into "a different animal" since Palmer's day, instead named two-time major winners Justin Thomas and Collin Morikawa, Ryder Cup veterans Patrick Cantlay and Sam Burns and Ryder Cup rookies Ben Griffin and Cameron Young.

"It was an extremely difficult decision," Bradley said. "I would say there was a point this year where I was playing, a while ago, and these guys stepped up in a major way and played their way onto this team," Bradley said.

"It was an extremely difficult decision, but one that I'm really happy with and with these six players.

"And I'm glad it's over," he added of the agonizing selection process.

They join the six automatic qualifiers for the US lineup: top-ranked Scottie Scheffler, two-time major winners Xander Schauffele and Bryson DeChambeau, US Open winner JJ Spaun and fellow Ryder Cup rookie Russell Henley and Harris English.

Scheffler has enjoyed another stellar season, with his five victories including major titles at the PGA Championship and British Open.

He headlines a US team vying to regain the

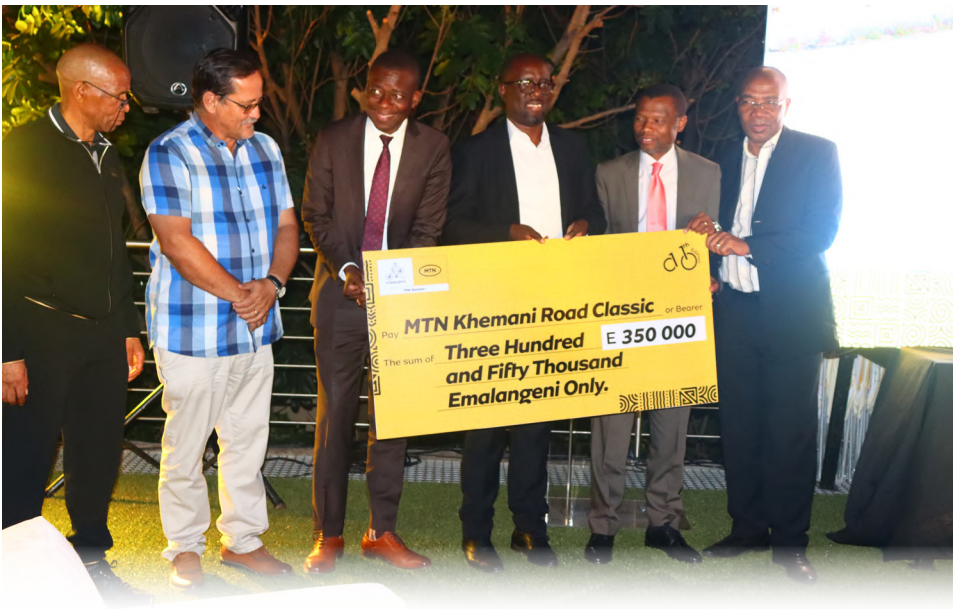


▲ captain Keegan Bradley.

trophy they surrendered with a 16.5-11.5 loss to Europe in Rome.

Team Europe will retain the bulk of their

line-up from 2023 as they try to capture their first away victory since the "Miracle at Medinah" in 2012.(Supersport)



Ministry of Sports thanks MTN for Khemani sponsorship

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

GOVERNMENT has thanked MTN Eswatini for its continued support towards the MTN Khemani Road Classic. This comes after the mobile network company pumped in E350 0000 towards the 11th edition of the annual road classic on Wednesday at Mahlalekhukwini House.

Minister of sports, culture and youth affairs Bongani Nzima said the sponsorship plays a key role in the development of sports in the country.

“Allow me to start by extending a profound vote of thanks to MTN Eswatini for the E360 000 sponsorship. Your commitment to the development of sports in our country is exemplary. Year after year, MTN continues to demonstrate that it is more than just a telecommunications company but a true partner in national development. The decision to sponsor this event for the eleventh consecutive year is a clear testament to your unwavering faith in our athletes and in the power of sport to transform lives,” he said.

Nzima also said the race promotes mass participation which is line with the ministry vision.



▲ Minister of sports, culture and youth affairs Bongani Nzima said the sponsorship plays a key role in the development of sports in the country.

“The MTN Khemani Road Classic has grown to become a cornerstone of our national sports calendar. It not only provides a competitive platform for our elite cyclists but also encourages mass participation, which is a key objective of our Ministry’s mandate,” he said.

The minister also said the race also improve the lives of Emaswati.

The sight of professional and non-professional cyclists from Eswatini and across the SADC region, riding side-by-side, is truly inspiring. It promotes a healthy and active lifestyle, which is crucial for our nation’s well-being and productivity,” he said.

He also thanked MTN Khemani and the Eswatini cycling association for their collaboration in the race.

“I would also like to commend the Eswatini Cycling Association and the MTN Khemani Cycling Club for their tireless work. Your dedication to developing the sport, particularly at the grassroots level, is not going unnoticed. It is through your efforts that we are seeing more young people take up cycling, a sport that instils discipline, resilience, and a spirit of determination,” he said.

The minister also pledged commitment towards the development of sports in the country. “As a Ministry, we are committed to creating an enabling environment for all sports to flourish. We will continue to support associations and federations that demonstrate good governance, transparency, and a clear vision for development. We urge more companies to follow MTN’s example and invest in our talented athletes and vibrant sports industry,” he said.

MTN Eswatini CEO Wandile Mtshali said they are committed to supporting the race.

“This is more than a race but a legacy of endurance, unity, and shared growth. The Khemani Cycling Club is a space where our employees can pursue health, camaraderie, and personal achievement,” he said.

The launch was also attended by members of MTN Khemani cycling members and local cycling club’s representatives.



▲ The late Malvern Masango friend Arnold Mafukidze announcing the newly introduced race.

MTN Khemani introduces the Malvern Masango category

HE may be gone, but his legacy lives forever. This is none other than the late MTN Khemani rider Malvern Masango.

Masango will be honoured with the Mal Mass trophy during the 11th edition of the prestigious race held on Wednesday at Mahlalekhukwini House.

This was revealed by the late Masango’s friend Arnold Mafukidze during the launch of this year’s race.

Masango lost his life in 2024 after being knocked down by a car at Mfabantfu along the Mbabane -Manzini highway.

“We will honour the late Masango with a trophy for the most resilient rider in the race. This will be a way of remembering Masango, who was a passionate rider,” he

said. Other riders who lost their lives on the roads include Shirley Motsa (Newcomm Wheels) and Victor Oliveria (Kusekhaya cycling club).

The race will have four categories: 100km, 60km, 30km, and 5km.

Registration details for the 100km, 60km, and 30km categories are available at E200.

Eswatini Cycling Association (ECA) president William Kelly said they are happy with the return of the race.

“We are grateful for the support of the sponsor towards the race and look forward to a successful, exciting competition. We further appreciate the support of the Government through the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism,” he said.

ESA partners with ESRIC

By Sibusiso Masilela
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MAJOR boost for swimming.
The Eswatini Swimming Association has received E10 million insurance sponsorship from Eswatini Royal Insurance Corporation (ESRIC).
The cover will cover Swimmers during the 2025 Africa Aquatics Zone IV Championships to be held in September 3-7, 2025.
The package includes accident and life cover worth E250 000.

The games will feature 10 countries such as Eswatini, Angola, Seychelles, Comoros, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe, among others
Eswatini Swimming Association Secretary Nozipho Mahlalela confirmed the latest updates.
“We are grateful for the support of the sponsor. This assistance will play a major role in the development of the sport in the country,” she said.
Other sponsors include MTN Eswatini, Jenny Internet, Extreme Trade, Eswatini Air, and Coca-Cola, among others.



▲ Eswatini Swimming Association Secretary Nozipho Mahlalela confirmed the latest updates.

MPC crowned Sphana KO champs

By Chris Dlamini

MONEY in the bag.
Sphana Investments E10 000 Pool Teams Knockout Tournament 2025 champions Manzini Pool Club (MPC) were crowned champions on Sunday, August 24.
The experienced MPC edged tough rivals Manzini Masters in what was a derby finale. MPC took home the title against a team of players they play with daily at MPC.
The final score was 13-4.
The champions took home the trophy, gold medals and a cash prize of E5 000.
The presentation took place at MPC.
The knockout was part of the E110 000 Sphana Investments sponsorship package to the Manzini/Matsapha Zonal Pool League.
The runner-up, Masters, pocketed E3 000 and silver medals for their efforts. Semi-finalists Give Thanks and surprise package Zakhele Potters received E1 000 each.
Winners and prizes:
Champions: MPC - E5 000 + Trophy + Gold medals
Runner-up: Manzini Masters - E3 000 + Silver medals
Semi-finalists: Give Thanks and Zakhele Potters - E1 000 each.



▲ Swimming national team during the previous World aquatics Zone IV championships in Angola.



▲ Swimming stakeholders during the launch of the Africa Aquatics at Enjabulweni School.

International quartet to join the squad this weekend

ESWATINI international swimmers are expected to join the national team over the weekend.
The foreign based swimmers include Siwakhile Dlamini, Chadd Ning, Hayley Hoy, and Luca Fraser. These four swimmers are part of the national team representing Eswatini at the 2025 Africa Aquatics Zone IV Championships, scheduled for September 3 to 7, 2025.
The championships will be held at Enjabulweni Independent School and Luphohlo Dam in Eswatini.
National team coach Welcome

Nhlabatsi confirmed the latest news when quizzed about the availability of the four swimmers.
“We are expecting the four swimmers to arrive in the country over the weekend. The presence of the swimmers will help us to polish our preparations for the games, and we want to make the country proud during the assignment,” he said.
Siwakhile and Chadd recently represented the country in the 2025 World Aquatics Championships in Singapore, where the Australia-based Siwakhile was elected to the World Athletics commission.

The full squad
Head Coach: Welcome Nhlabatsi
Assistant Coach: Baphelele Masilela
Team Manager: Illana George
Team A
Kai Du Pont
Ivile Myeni
Joao Nunes
Harper Payne
Tsailin Barbosa
Portia Mabila
Sivikelwe Shongwe
Leah Dlamini
Sekukahle Mtsetfwa
Rachel Dlamini
Josea Potgieter

Kendra Mc Namara
Gabriel Paiva-Jarvis
Danika Wilsch
Sinovuyo Dlamini
Daniella Nunes
Milani Ndzinisa
Sihlelelwe Shongwe
Emmanuel Dlamini
Bahle Simelane
Luca Fraser
Hayley Hoy
Tristan Way
Siwakhile Dlamini
Jordan Ryan
Tiano Fraser
Damien De Sousa
Chadd Ning

Simphiwe Dlamini
Simanga Dlamini
Team B
Bayanda Dlamini
Mukelwe Zwane
Fezibunye Mayabane
Esther Mlambo
Tumelo Sihlongonyane
Joy Maphalala
Vuyo Kunene
Hlelolwenkhosi Dlamini
Mukelwe Maziya
Wakhile Maseko
Wakhile Sambo

MRPA returns with Mlu & Lee KO

By Chris Dlamini

A new era it is for Manzini Regional Pool League (MRPA)!
After running the highest sponsored regional pool league in Eswatini for five successful seasons, MRPA suffered a setback due to internal power struggles.
This cost them their E40 000 sponsorship by Dixie’s International, a sports equipment dealing company in Matsapha, Manzini.
However, the Regional association is moving on from Dixie’s International to Mlandvo Restaurant and Bar, renowned as Mlu & Lee Restaurant and Bar in Luyengo. The new sponsor, mainly the MRPA Secretary Musa

Dlamini who is also a businessman, has already set in motion a knockout tournament for teams. “This is MRPA returning to action. New and existing teams are invited to a teams’ knockout tournament at Mlandvo Restaurant & Bar on September 6-7,” said Dlamini. He announced that champions were set to take home E2 000. For the runner-up, a cash prize of E1 200 is on the table, while semi-finalists will each receive E500.
For any information or clarity regarding this tournament and payment of the joining fee, Dlamini and Errol ‘Beyonce’ Kunene can be reached at 7626 3690 and 7675 5145.
Prizes:
1. E2 000
2. E1 200
3. E500
4. E500



▲ Manzini Pool Club.



Put your houses in order – PLE tells clubs

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

THE Premier League of Eswatini has urged clubs to put their houses in order ahead of the 2025 8Bet Trade Fair Cup kick off on Saturday. The topflight football entity's Chairman Polycarp Dlamini says this would ensure smooth proceedings of the annual knockout tournament.

This was during the kit presentation for the E2.5million sponsored knockout tournament held on Thursday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

"We call upon teams to put their houses in order before the kick-off of the tournament on Saturday. Teams only have Friday to sort out their differences to ensure smooth proceedings of the tournament," he said.

Dlamini said they are independent from club ownership.

"We shouldn't be dragged into club disputes, and clubs are allowed to run their affairs independently. We only mediate when approached by the affected parties," he said.

Dlamini's statement comes after capital city giants Mbabane Swallows are engulfed by an ownership wrangle between the two factions headed by Absalom Ngwenya and Princess Lungile.

Mbabane Highlanders AM FC is also having a pending High Court battle between former President Bheki 'Rubber' Simelane and the Patrons.

Simelane is challenging the termination of his 18 months contract and the appointment of South African businesswoman Shauwn Mkhize.

The matter will be back in court on September 21, 2025, before High Court Judge Titus Mlangeni.



▲ The topflight football entity's Chairman Polycarp Dlamini.



The 8 Bet Trade Fair Fixtures
30 August, 2025
Mavuso Sports Centre

Ubombo Sugar	vs	Sisonkhe	1.30pm
Nsingizini Hotspurs	vs	Tambankulu Celtics	4pm
Moneni Pirates	vs	Rangers	6pm

August 31, 2025
Mavuso Sports Centre

Amawele	vs	Royal Leopards	1.30pm
M Highlanders AM	vs	Ezulwini United	4pm
Manzini Wanderers	vs	Green Mamba	6pm

Itu Khune, George Lebesse for 8Bet Trade Fair grand opening

By Sibusiso Masilela
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LOCAL Kaizer Chiefs fans will be able to mingle with their Soweto glamour side former players, Itumeleng Khune and George Lebesse.

The two players will grace the grand opening of the 2025 8Bet Trade Fair Cup this weekend at Mavuso Sports Centre.

The sponsor's Marketing Officer,

Mnqobi Tsabedze, affirmed the news during the kit presentation held on Thursday.

"We look forward to the exciting edition, which will be spiced by the presence of two former Kaizer Chiefs legends. We believe the move will promote the standard of the sport in the country," he said.

The event was graced by Eswatini Investment and Promotion Authority Chief Executive Sibani Mngomezulu.

The second edition of the historic knockout tournament is sponsored

to the tune of E2.5million by the local betting company.

Army side Young Buffaloes are the defending champions of the tournament after beating Moneni Pirates last year.

Champions for this year's edition will take home E630 000 following the increase of the first prize money by E30 000.

The runner-up will walk away with E320 000 following the release of the prize money by the management committee on Thursday.

Me, 'Birds' not true – Nyawo

By Chris Dlamini

AFTER shockingly leaving Mbabane Highlanders, what is goalkeeper Qiniso Nyawo's next move?

Nyawo is on the move once again after just one season with Inkunz'emnyama. His shocking move comes just days before Highlanders take on Ezulwini United in a tricky 8Bet Trade Fair Cup 2025/26 clash on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini.

Nyawo left the club's camp unexpectedly after a reported falling out with his employers in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa (SA) where they are camped for preseason. He returned home on Wednesday alongside the then team captain and midfielder-turned-defender Thando Langa.

The latter left due to a disagreement on contractual terms. The duo's move was an unexpected development as they were both regulars in the starting line-up last season.

"It's true that I've left the team, but that I'm joining Swallows is not," said the former Mbabane Swallows goalminder Nyawo, when asked about the news.

He would not commit himself further when asked what his next move would be. Nyawo could also not respond to claims



▲ Qiniso Nyawo.

he was released for allegedly feigning injuries.

Langa, on the other hand, confirmed he was also out of the team but asked not to comment any further.

"In respect of the team, may I not say why I left," he said.

However, Langa later posted on Facebook and still stuck to not revealing anything, instead, cleared the air about a social media speculation that he allegedly did not agree to an offer of E11.5k salary but wanted E15 000. He dismissed it as far from the truth, and said his conduct has never been in doubt at Highlanders, a club he thanked for taking his game to another level, including the senior national team Sihlangu Semnikati call-ups.

Meanwhile, it has been reported that some of the players were discontent with the way they were treated in SA where they had been for a month now. Highlanders is now under the leadership of SA's renowned businesswoman and former Royal AM FC boss Shauwn 'MaMkhize' Mkhize.



‘Something has to change’, says Amorim

Page 19



Khune, Lebesse for 8Bet Trade Fair grand opening

Page 23



Eswatini Daily News Sport


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A Partnership That Kicks Off



MAVUSO EXHIBITION & TRADE CENTRE



Put your houses in order - PLE



... The Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) has urged teams to put their houses in order ahead of the 2025 8Bet Trade Fair Cup which kicks off on Saturday.

Page 23