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By Kwanele Dhladhla

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▲ His Majesty King Mswati III flanked by Zulu King Misuzulu KaZwelithini and former South African President Jacob Zuma going towards the arena to perform kudlalisela to the young maidens during the 2025 UMhlanga Reed Dance at Ludzidzini Royal Residence on Monday.

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# King Misuzulu gets hitched to Undlunkulu LaMawewe at Umhlanga

By Kwanele Dhladhla

THE Zulu Kingdom has entered a historic new chapter following the announcement that His Majesty King Misuzulu Ka Zwelithini has officially chosen Her Royal Highness Princess Sihle LaMawewe of the Ndwandwe Royal Family as his Queen Consort at Umhlanga 2025.

In a detailed explanation of this monumental decision, Squire Arnold Nododile (Ndamase) — Chief Director of the Private Office of His Majesty the Zulu King and Private Secretary to the monarch—said the recognition of UNdlunkulu LaMawewe and the planned return to Emashobeni Royal Palace during Umhlanga 2025 carried profound ancestral, cultural, and spiritual meaning.

According to Ndamase, the investiture of Her Royal Highness' (HRH) UNdlunkulu Sihle LaMawewe as UNdlunkulu wase-Mashobeni is not merely a personal choice by the King, but a symbolic act of reconnection between two historic royal bloodlines—the Ndwandwe and the Zulu. It also marks the formal establishment of the royal household at Emashobeni, in Pongola, a site deeply embedded in the ancestral memory of the Zulu nation.

Ndamase emphasised that the selection of Emashobeni was intentional and carries generational weight. Nestled in the Zulu heartland near the Eswatini border, Emashobeni has historically linked to King Zwide, the Ndwandwe-Zulu wars, and the sacred pathways that connect the Ndwandwe, Zulu, and Dlamini monarchies.

“For centuries, Emashobeni has represented both conflict and convergence in the story of our people. By returning Umhlanga to this sacred land after more than four decades, His Majesty is reclaiming continuity, authority, and legitimacy rooted not in politics but in ancestral mandate,” Ndamase explained.

The decision to re-establish royal presence at Emashobeni was therefore both cultural and strategic—a way of restoring rituals to their rightful places and reaffirming the monarchy’s living connection with its forebears.

While Emashobeni will be the royal seat, Ndamase noted that the presentation of UNdlunkulu LaMawewe must take place in Eswatini during Umhlanga. This annual reed dance, preserved with great reverence,

was more than a cultural celebration—it was a sacred rite of passage for maidens, symbolising purity, fertility, and womanhood.

“For His Majesty King Misuzulu to present the new Queen Consort before King Mswati III is an act of ancestral alignment and pan-African monarchical solidarity. It affirms that the Zulu Kingdom honors Eswatini-Zulu customs and acknowledges Eswatini as a guardian of traditions that have withstood colonial disruption,” Ndamase said.

Ndamase explained that the investiture of UNdlunkulu LaMawewe through Umhlanga carries multi-layered significance:

- **Spiritual:** It validates the Queen’s purity and readiness for her sacred role. It also reconnects Zulu traditions with their



▲ EmaSwati were fortunate to witness the official introduction of Liphovela Ndlunkulu laMdhuli by King Misuzulu to Their Majesties. The King publicly declared his love for Ndlunkulu laMdhuli by plugging feathers on her hair during the main day of the Reed Dance.

- shared Ndwandwe and Swazi ancestry.
  - **Diplomatic:** Eswatini remains Africa’s monarchy, and the endorsement of King Mswati III lends weight to the legitimacy of Zulu royal succession. Presenting the Queen in Eswatini solidifies ties between the two monarchies.
  - **Cultural:** The ritual underscores the shared legacy of King Mswati II, King Shaka, and King Zwide — monarchs whose legacies shaped southern Africa’s history.
- “Through this act, His Majesty demonstrates that our monarchy is not a relic, but a living institution bound by sacred responsibility,” Ndamase observed.

Beyond its cultural symbolism, the move represents a broader strategy: reclaiming royal rituals from politically mediated arenas and returning them to spaces of ancestral authority. Ndamase described the plan as “a public declaration that the Zulu Kingdom is reclaiming its legitimacy through tradition, not state negotiation.”

The return of Umhlanga to Emashobeni was therefore not a nostalgic gesture, but a strategic recalibration of royal authority, prioritizing ancestral tradition over political interference.

Ndamase said the recognition of UNdlunkulu LaMawewe should be viewed within the broader context of Africa’s monarchical revival. By embracing cross-border rituals, ancestral alignments, and intermarriage between royal houses, King Misuzulu affirmed that the monarchy remains central to Africa’s identity and future.

“This is about more than one Queen. It is about reasserting the monarchy’s place as a unifying, guiding institution in African civilization. Through these sacred acts, His Majesty is calling our people back to cultural sovereignty and spiritual unity,” he added.

The investiture is thus a statement of intent: that the Zulu Kingdom, far from being diminished in modernity, is positioning itself at the forefront of Africa’s cultural and political renaissance.



▲ King Misuzulu and his fiancée Ndlunkulu OkaMawewe smiling after the historic moment.

As preparations for Umhlanga 2025 gather momentum, the recognition of UNdlunkulu LaMawewe and the re-establishment of the royal household at Emashobeni promise to be defining moments for the Zulu nation.

“This act revives the spiritual essence of Zulu queenship, honors Eswatini’s enduring

custodianship of sacred rites, and anchors Emashobeni as the rightful center of Zulu royal continuity,” Ndamase concluded.

It was, in every sense, an ancestral proclamation —one that unites bloodlines, honors history, and charts a bold course for the monarchy’s next chapter.



# Umhlanga reed dance main day thrills thousands at Ludzidzini Royal Residence

By Sebenele Ndlovu

THE climax of Eswatini's annual Umhlanga Reed Dance ceremony unfolded in grand style at Ludzidzini Royal Residence, as Imbali (maidens) from across the Kingdom and beyond showcased their cultural pride before Their Majesties.

Led by Inkhosatana Sakhizwe, Liphovela LaZuma, and the newly appointed Indvuna yeMbali Bongiwe Hlatjwako, Imbali from South Africa, including Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal Natal danced in high spirits, celebrating tradition, purity, and unity.

This day, regarded as the most significant of the eight-day cultural event, carries deep cultural, spiritual, and symbolic meaning for the Swazi nation.

The ceremony drew thousands of Emaswati and international visitors, filling the royal arena to near capacity.

Among the dignitaries and guests were South Africa's King Misuzulu kaZwelithini, former South African President Jacob Zuma, Botswana's former President Ian Khama, Princess Sibahle's husband Yassin Monteiro Nunes, Emakhosikati, and members of the Swazi royal family.

Princess Sihle Mdluli, Liphovela to King Misuzulu, led her regiment of Zulu maidens from eMashobeni Royal Residence and was seen dancing proudly before Their Majesties and the Zulu King himself.

In a parallel highlight, King Misuzulu formally engaged his fiancée, Ndlunkulu okaMawewe, who also led the Zulu maidens during the festivities.



▲ Imbali expressed appreciation and honor as His Majesty King Mswati III did Kudlalisele to Imbali, in a way of expressing his gratitude to the maidens.

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Inclusivity was celebrated this year as Imbali, living with disabilities, took part in the dance, supported by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office. Their participation underscored the unifying and inclusive nature of the cultural event.

On the same platform, Indvuna yeMbali Bongiwe Hlatjwako, together with princess-

es from the Hhohho region, Inkhosatana yakaBhamsakhe Themabheka and Inkhosothando of Engabezweni, demonstrated their traditional dance skills before Their Majesties, captivating the crowd.

The maidens, dressed in vibrant beadwork, sashes, and traditional attire, formed large dancing circles (umkhumbi) as they sang, stamped their feet, and chanted rhythmically. Their performance symbolized purity, discipline, loyalty to the monarchy, and respect for Swazi customs.

The Umhlanga Reed Dance, one of Eswatini's flagship cultural tourism events, continues to place the nation on the global map. It is both a rite of passage for young maidens and a reaffirmation of the Queen Mother's role as "Mother of the Nation."

As the sun set on the main day, the event left a strong reminder of Eswatini's commitment to cultural preservation, national pride, and unity - drawing the admiration of both locals and international guests who witnessed the deeply symbolic occasion.

## Maidens' unwavering dedication shines as heavens open up at 2025 Umhlanga Ceremony dancing arena

By Sebulelo Magagula

THE main day of the 2025 Umhlanga ceremony was marked by a powerful display of cultural pride as thousands of maidens continued their traditional dance through a heavy downpour, demonstrating their unwavering loyalty to King Mswati III and the Eswatini culture.

Their spirited performance, as they sang the rallying song 'asinandzaba tsine stofela eNkosini, served as a testament to their dedi-

cation, showing that neither circumstances nor weather could deter them from honouring their nation's heritage.

The commitment of the maidens was echoed by the Royal family, as both a Princess and members of the Royal regiments remained present in the rain, highlighting the shared symbolic belief that culture is of paramount importance to Eswatini and its people.

The ceremony ultimately proceeded to a Ncangosini to conclude the main day's events, but the earlier scenes of cultural defiance against the elements are what will be remembered by the entire nation.



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# PM urges transformative climate finance for Africa's sustainable future

By Siphesihle Dlamini  
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PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini delivered a powerful message of unity, resilience, and urgent climate action on behalf of the Kingdom of Eswatini at a historic African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa.

Speaking with deep appreciation for the host nation Ethiopia and its ambitious Green Legacy Initiative, Dlamini emphasised the continent's shared responsibility to confront the escalating climate crisis while highlighting Eswatini's commitment to sustainable development and climate resilience.

Opening his address, Dlamini extended "warm greetings and heartfelt appreciation to the African Union Commission and the Government and People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting this historic Summit" on behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Ndlovukazi, the government, and people of Eswatini. He praised Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's visionary leadership, noting how the Green Legacy Initiative has "mobilised millions to plant billions of trees and restore degraded landscapes, inspiring a continental movement toward ecological renewal." This initiative, Dlamini said, embodies the spirit of African solidarity as nations unite "under a common purpose to safeguard our shared future from the escalating climate crisis."

Despite Africa's minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions—less than 4 per cent, the continent, including Eswatini, suffers disproportionately from climate change. Dlamini highlighted the severe impacts faced by his country: "erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, devastating floods, and



▲ The Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini at a historic African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

the disruption of our agricultural systems." With over 70 per cent of Eswatini's population reliant on rain-fed agriculture, these challenges threaten livelihoods and food security, especially in rural communities.

To counter these threats, Eswatini has set ambitious targets and policies. The Prime Minister referenced the nation's National Climate Change Policy (2016) and updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021, committing to an economy-wide emissions reduction target of 5 per cent by 2030 despite the country's minimal emissions footprint. He also described ongoing efforts such as flood control measures, ecosystem-based adaptation via the Eswatini Environment Fund, and a goal to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030.

Yet, Dlamini stressed that Eswatini refuses to be defined solely by vulnerability. Instead, he portrayed a vision of resilience and innovation rooted in African unity and

homegrown solutions. Aligning with the African Union's Agenda 2063, which envisions "a prosperous, inclusive, and climate-resilient continent," Eswatini is investing in nature-based and technology-driven strategies. These include watershed management, community reforestation, climate-smart agriculture, and renewable energy projects spanning solar, wind, and hydropower. He underscored the importance of empowering local communities, especially women and youth, to take ownership of these initiatives.

Dlamini also addressed the critical issue of climate finance. Citing the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, he noted Africa's need for nearly US\$3 trillion to meet its climate goals by 2030, contrasting this with the paltry US\$30 billion received between 2021 and 2022. He called for "transformative climate financing, moving from aid to strategic investments in local innovation," and urged reforms to global funding mechanisms to increase concessional finance and African

representation. He warned against punitive measures such as the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which could cost Africa up to US\$25 billion annually by 2030.

Regarding energy transition, Dlamini emphasised that it must be just and inclusive, ensuring that "energy transitions should not leave our people in the dark." For Eswatini, this means harnessing renewable energy potentials while protecting livelihoods dependent on traditional energy sources. He called for international support to implement continental initiatives like the Africa Single Electricity Market and the Africa Clean Cooking Programme to achieve equitable access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy.

Concluding his address, the Prime Minister urged that the outcomes of the Summit—the Addis Ababa Declaration and Call to Action—be actionable and aligned with Africa's broader development goals, including reparations for historical injustices. He called for a united African voice ahead of global forums such as COP30, G20, and the UN General Assembly, "speaking not as victims of climate injustice, but as architects of global solutions." He reaffirmed Eswatini's commitment to inclusive, equitable climate action grounded in African values and governance systems, pledging support for youth-led innovation and nature-based solutions.

Minister Dlamini's address was a clarion call for solidarity, ambition, and justice in the face of climate change. His vision positions Eswatini and Africa not only as vulnerable victims but as resilient leaders poised to transform the climate challenge into an opportunity for green growth, shared prosperity, and lasting climate justice.



## Eswatini, Moz Parliaments sign Cooperation Protocol

Stories by Delisa Magagula

THE Parliament of the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Parliament of the Republic of Mozambique on Monday formalised a cooperation framework with the ceremonial signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) during the Umhlanga Reed Dance.

The historic protocol was signed in the presence of high-level dignitaries, including Speaker of the Parliament of Mozambique Margarida Adamugy Talapa, Eswatini Senate President Pastor Lindiwe Dlamini, Deputy Speaker Madala Mhlanga, and Senate Deputy President Senator Ndumiso Mndzuli.

The event was also attended by delegations from Zambia, South Africa, and Lesotho, along with members of the Pan African Tourism Board.

Speaker of the House of Assembly Jabulani Mabuza described the signing as a milestone in parliamentary diplomacy, noting

that it affirms cultural ties and strengthens institutional collaboration.

"Today's ceremonial signing is a historic moment one that transcends protocol and speaks to the enduring bonds of friendship, mutual respect, and institutional cooperation," Mabuza said.

"This agreement is not merely symbolic; it is an instrument of transformation, designed to foster legislative excellence, capacity building, and inclusive governance across our region," added Mabuza.

He also outlined the structure of Eswatini's Parliament, highlighting its bicameral system of the House of Assembly and Senate, and the country's distinctive Tinkhundla system of governance.

Mabuza emphasised that the Constitution vests supreme legislative authority in the King-in-Parliament, reflecting both monarchical democracy and grassroots representation.

The Speaker said the MoU would be guided by the spirit of Ubuntu and anchored in traditions that strengthen unity and cooperation across borders.

## Senate President hails Mozambique-Eswatini Parliamentary accord

ESWATINI Senate President Pastor Lindiwe Dlamini has hailed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Parliaments of Eswatini and Mozambique as a landmark step in strengthening regional parliamentary cooperation.

The protocol was signed during the Umhlanga Reed Dance, witnessed by delegations from Mozambique, Zambia, South Africa, and Lesotho, along with members of the Pan African Tourism Board.

In her address, Dlamini said the agreement was a living testament to shared aspirations for institutional modernisation and inclusive governance.

"This Protocol of Cooperation is more than a document it is a living testament to our shared aspirations for legislative excellence, institutional modernisation, and the upliftment of our peoples," she said.

Dlamini highlighted the growing role of women in legislative leadership, noting that both she and Speaker Talapa preside over their respective chambers.

She also pointed to the work of Eswatini's Women's Parliamentary Caucus, which champions gender-responsive laws and mentorship programs.

The Senate President further noted that the MoU follows Eswatini's institutional visit to the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature in South Africa earlier this month, where MPs and parliamentary staff exchanged best practi-



▲ Senate President Lindiwe Dlamini making her remarks.

es in administration, oversight, and governance.

"This engagement served as a dynamic platform for benchmarking and sharing of best practices in parliamentary administration and oversight," she said.

"It underscored our shared commitment to strengthening institutional coherence, enhancing legislative responsiveness, and cultivating a culture of excellence," added the Senate President.

Dlamini concluded by reaffirming the commitment of both Parliaments to collaboration based on mutual respect, cultural enrichment, and sustainable progress.

# Man wanted for multiple crimes fatally shot while fleeing arrest

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

A 29-year-old man from Ticantfwini, who was wanted by police for a series of serious crimes, was fatally shot by Manzini police officers on Saturday morning while attempting to evade arrest.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, the incident occurred on 06 September 2025 at around 09:20 a.m. at Ticantfwini.

The deceased, identified as Mhhekeni Mazibuko, sustained a single gunshot wound to the back after allegedly fleeing from police officers who were executing an arrest. He was quickly transported to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial (R.F.M.) Hospital, where he was certified dead upon arrival.

Police confirmed that Mazibuko was a wanted suspect linked to a string of criminal cases recorded at the Manzini Royal Eswatini Police Service (R.C.C.I.). The list of cases included:

- Housebreaking and Theft – Case N° 5272÷25
- Robbery – Case N° 7085÷25



- Robbery – Case N° 7086÷25
- Robbery – Case N° 7126÷25
- Assault with Intent to Cause Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) – Case N° 7231÷25
- Theft of Copper – Case N° 5762÷25
- Theft of Copper – Case N° 5869÷25

Senior Superintendent Vilakati stated that the police operation was part of ongoing efforts to apprehend suspects involved in violent crimes and property-related offences in the

Manzini region.

She further urged members of the public to continue cooperating with law enforcement agencies by providing information that can assist in the arrest of other suspects still at large.

“The Royal Eswatini Police Service remains committed to ensuring public safety and to bringing perpetrators of crime to justice,” she said.

The shooting incident is under investigation, and the matter has been referred to the relevant authorities for further review.

## Garden fork used to kill young man at Vuvulane Farm

A 28-year-old man from the Vuvulane area has died following a violent attack in which he was struck on the head with a garden fork.

According to a police report, the incident occurred at Farm 208, Vuvulane, at around 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, 6 September 2025. The deceased has been identified as Machawe Dlamini (28).

His cousin, Thandeka Mavuso (35), reported to the police that Machawe was assaulted once on the head with a digging garden fork by a man identified only as Mlandvo, whose surname remains unknown.

Confirming the incident, the Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, said the victim was rushed to Mhlume Clinic, where he was unfortunately declared dead upon arrival.

“The suspect fled the scene

immediately after the attack. At this stage, no arrests have been made. The Royal Eswatini Police Service is pursuing all leads to ensure that the perpetrator is apprehended and brought to justice,” said Vilakati.

The motive behind the attack remains unclear, but police have launched a full investigation. Officers have also appealed to members of the public who may have information on the whereabouts of the suspect to come forward.

The brutal killing has left the farming community in shock. Residents expressed fear and sadness over the violent nature of the attack, urging authorities to strengthen safety measures in the area.

The deceased’s body has been taken to the morgue pending a post-mortem examination, while funeral arrangements will be communicated by the family.



## Man found dead with stab wounds in Mhlume dagga field

POLICE have launched an investigation after a man was found dead with multiple stab wounds in a dagga field at Mhlume Section 16 on Saturday morning.

According to a report filed by Vuyo Magongo (23) of Ndzinzeni, the discovery was made at around 08:10 a.m. on 6 September 2025. Magongo found the lifeless body of Mthokozisi Banda Nhleko (36) of Gundvuni lying in the field with visible stab wounds to the head and body.

Confirming the incident, the Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, said the deceased was rushed to Good Shepherd Hospital, where he was officially certified dead.

“The Royal Eswatini Police Service has opened a murder inquiry. At this point, no arrests have been made, but investigations are ongoing. We appeal to anyone with information that could lead to the apprehension of the suspect or suspects to come forward,” said Vilakati.

The motive behind the killing remains unclear, and the violent nature of the attack has shocked



▲ PICO Phindile Vilakati.

the farming community. Residents in the area have expressed fear following the discovery, urging the authorities to tighten security and ensure swift justice.

The body of the deceased has since been transferred to the mortuary, where a post-mortem examination will be conducted to assist with the ongoing investigation.

Police have reassured the public that efforts are underway to track down the perpetrator.

## Young man burns beyond recognition in raging fire

A 21-year-old man tragically lost his life in the early hours of Saturday morning when a fire broke out at his family’s homestead in Nhlambeni, leaving him burnt beyond recognition.

According to police reports, the deceased has been identified as Philani Dlamini, son of 49-year-old Vusi Dlamini, who made the devastating discovery at around 05:30 a.m. on 6 September 2025.

Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, confirmed the incident in a statement issued yesterday. She said the

victim’s charred remains were found in the yard of the homestead, and the matter is under thorough police investigation to establish the exact cause of the fire.

“The Royal Eswatini Police Service has launched an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding this tragic incident. At this stage, we cannot rule out foul play or accidental causes until all investigations have been concluded,” Vilakati said.

The sudden loss has plunged the Nhlambeni community into shock and mourning. Neighbours described the late Philani as a “humble and hardworking young man” whose

life was cut short in the most heartbreaking manner.

Emergency services were immediately alerted following the discovery, and the remains were later conveyed to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial Hospital mortuary for post-mortem examination.

Senior Superintendent Vilakati urged members of the public to remain vigilant about fire safety, particularly during the dry season when incidents of accidental fires are more frequent. She further appealed to anyone with information that might assist in the investigation to come forward.



# Man claims innocence after alleged rape of teen

Stories by Delisa Magagula

A 27-year-old man from Mliba, arrested for the alleged rape of a 17-year-old girl, has claimed he is innocent, describing the accusation as a fabrication.

Banele Tfumbatsa was arrested by Mliba police and charged under several sections of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act No. 15/2018.

In his bail application before the High Court, Tfumbatsa maintained that he did not commit the offence and that the allegations were false.

He explained that he first met the complainant in April while at Croydon Bar, where he was drinking with friends. The complainant and her friends joined them, and after socializing, the groups parted ways, each going to their respective homes.

Tfumbatsa said he dropped off at his stop first, while the complainant initially indicated she would follow her friends to Khuphuka.

However, she requested to spend the night at his home. He described how he prepared food and bathing water for her, but she fell asleep after eating.



Tfumbatsa stated that he slept after she blacked out and that the following morning, he awoke to his sister instructing him to run errands.

He recounted that he gave the complainant transport money to leave and later learned from her friend that she had arrived home safely after being missing for several

days.

During her absence, the complainant's parents conducted a search, and Tfumbatsa was ultimately named in her account of events. He was granted bail of E15,000, with E3,000 in cash and the remainder in surety.

## Man fined for appearing drunk in Court

A 25-year-old man from Ndzingeni faced fines after appearing intoxicated before the Pigg's Peak Magistrate's Court. Chawe Clement Dlamini, charged with two counts of house-breaking with intent to steal and theft, arrived at court late and in a visibly impaired state, prompting a warrant of arrest to be considered.

Dlamini admitted to consuming alcohol and was fined E1,500 or, alternatively, re-

quired to serve five months in prison.

Senior Magistrate Sindisile Zwane highlighted the importance of maintaining the dignity of the court and condemned Dlamini's behaviour, stressing that appearing drunk before the court is unacceptable.

Dlamini had been out on bail for allegedly breaking into a homestead on January 5, 2024, and the Ndzingeni teachers' quarters on January 8, where property worth over E7,000 was reportedly stolen.

## Bail granted in car theft case

A 38-year-old man from Sigombeni was granted bail of E4,000 after being charged with theft of a motor vehicle and malicious damage to property.

Simanga Simelane appeared before the Mbabane Magistrate's Court facing two counts of contravening the Motor Vehicle Act.

According to the charges, Simelane unlawfully stole a silver Toyota Cressida valued at E37,000, owned by Elijah Mavuso of Mankayane.

He was also accused of damaging the vehicle by stripping it of its parts during 2023.

Simelane's attorney requested a trial date, which was set for October 14, and applied for bail, noting that Simelane is unemployed but the sole caretaker of a daughter with a rare medical condition.

The prosecutor did not oppose the bail request. Magistrate Chazile Thwala granted bail with strict conditions, including that Simelane must refrain from committing similar offences while out on bail.

## 42 year old arrested for murder after accommodation dispute

A 42-year-old man from Ndzingeni, Sibusiso Ginindza, has been arrested and charged with murder after allegedly killing his friend during an argument over accommodation. The incident reportedly occurred on August 31 in Mvuma, Hhohho region.

Ginindza and the victim, 39-year-old Ncamiso Dlamini, had attended a lobola ceremony together. Ginindza requested to spend the night at Dlamini's home, but the request was refused, leading to a heated exchange.

It is alleged that Ginindza reacted violently, slapping

Dlamini, who fell and was repeatedly kicked and punched. The assault occurred in the presence of Dlamini's family and neighbors, who later rushed to assist.

Dlamini was initially treated at Mkhuzweni Health Centre and later transferred to Pigg's Peak Government Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Medical examinations revealed that internal injuries from the assault had caused severe damage to his heart, lungs, and liver. Ginindza appeared in court intending to represent himself and was remanded in custody pending committal to the High Court.

## Businessman and accomplice's kidnapping case postponed

THE case of a businessman and his accomplice, arrested for allegedly kidnapping and assaulting two men, has been postponed to September 10.

Bariki Mkholo, 49, from Fairview, and 22-year-old Geoffrey Candwong, from Uganda, appeared at the Manzini Magistrate's Court, facing four counts of kidnapping and assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

The offences reportedly took place on August 28 at Ngwane Park and Two Sticks, where the duo allegedly abducted 19-year-old Kelly Mnyanyi and 26-year-old Joshua Dacunha. Both victims were assaulted, with Mnyanyi reportedly stabbed on the arm during the incident.

The pair was granted bail of E2,000 each following a separate court appearance. The matter will continue in court as the trial date is set.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Eswatini improves compliance, greylisting threat averted

ESWATINI initially fell short in meeting international anti-money laundering (AML) standards during a recent assessment by the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), prompting a series of legislative and regulatory measures to strengthen compliance. The ESAAMLG audit evaluates member countries on adherence to AML legislation and procedures, aligning with global standards set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Fed rate cut optimism lifts stocks, as investors watch global politics

STOCKS rose and Treasury yields held lower on Monday after last week's dismal U.S. labour data sealed the case for an interest rate cut this month, with investors preparing for a week heavy on politics, crucial data and central bank activity. U.S. S&P 500 futures were up about 0.2 per cent, leaving the index set to head back towards the record intraday high hit immediately following last week's jobs data.

**Oil gains after OPEC+ output hike seen modest**  
LONDON — Oil prices climbed more than \$1 on Monday, regaining some of last week's losses, after OPEC+'s output hike was seen as modest and due to concerns over the possibility of more sanctions on Russian crude. OPEC+ flagged plans to further increase production from October but the amount was less than some analysts had anticipated. Reuters had reported earlier this month that members were considering another hike.

# FNB disburses E250mln to support over 1 000 SMEs

By Delisa Magagula

FNB Eswatini has disbursed E250 million in supporting more than 1,000 local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through its innovative automated scoring lending approach.

The announcement was made during an FNB SME Seminar held at the Eswatini International Trade Fair (EITF) which brought together over 50 SME owners seeking guidance on business growth and sustainability. The bank's Head of SME Banking, Nombuso Mndzebele, explained that the initiative is part of FNB's ongoing commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and economic development in Eswatini.

"Every business deserves the right tools to succeed. We have introduced automated scored lending, a solution that uses behavioural data to determine lending facilities for our clients," she said.

According to Mndzebele, the scored lending system evaluates SMEs based on a combination of factors, including repayment behaviour, cash flow patterns, and historical financial activity.

The automated approach enables faster access to finance, while ensuring that businesses are matched with loans that suit their capacity and growth potential.

"Through this solution, we have disbursed nearly E250 million over the past two and a half years, benefiting over 1,000 SMEs. Our customers must experience us at a level that meets their expectations and supports their ambitions," Mndzebele added.

The seminar also highlighted the importance of financial literacy and business management skills. FNB Eswatini's Sales Manager, Dumsani Sikhosana, introduced attendees to the bank's Business Toolkit, a comprehensive support package designed to help entrepreneurs address common challenges.

Sikhosana emphasised that meticulous record-keeping is critical to success. "It is essential to record all income and expenses, no matter how small. We encourage SMEs to do this daily, weekly, or at least monthly. Proper financial tracking allows business owners to make informed decisions and avoid unnecessary pitfalls," he explained.

Another key area addressed during the seminar was the separation of personal and business finances. Sikhosana noted that entrepreneurs should treat their businesses as independent entities.

"As a business owner, set aside a standard salary that you will draw from your business. This ensures clarity in your accounts and prevents personal expenses from compromising your business's cash flow," said Sikhosana.

In addition to financial management, the seminar focused on risk mitigation, particularly regarding fraud and scams targeting small businesses.

FNB's Chief Risk Officer, Gugu Matiwane, warned entrepreneurs to remain vigilant and informed.

"It is crucial to protect your business from scams that exploit unsuspecting entrepreneurs. Red flags include deals that appear too good



▲ FNB Head of SME Banking, Nombuso Mndzebele.

to be true, urgent requests for immediate action, and unusual payment methods, such as requests for gift cards, cryptocurrency, or wire transfers. If you encounter a scam, cancel the transaction immediately, report it, and contact your bank for guidance," Matiwane advised.

The seminar also provided insights from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Trade. Philiswa Dlamini highlighted the Ministry's new Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Policy, which seeks to provide comprehensive support across multiple facets of business development.

The policy focuses on five strategic pillars which are creating a business-enabling environment; providing business support services; developing human capital; improving access to finance; expanding market access and integrating value chains; fostering an entrepreneurial culture; and enhancing infrastructure and technology.

Dlamini encouraged entrepreneurs to actively participate in business associations, explaining that these networks facilitate engagement with government and other stakeholders.

"Joining associations strengthens your voice as a business owner and makes it easier to access support programs, share knowledge, and influence policy decisions that affect your sector," she said.

The event also offered practical guidance for SMEs looking to scale their operations. Attendees learned about the importance of developing clear business plans, adopting digital solutions for accounting and inventory management, and establishing effective marketing strategies.

Mndzebele stressed that these tools are designed not just for immediate survival but for long-term sustainability.

"Access to finance is only one component of business growth. Entrepreneurs must also invest in systems, training, and processes that enhance efficiency and competitiveness," she said.

Over the past few years, SMEs in Eswatini have faced challenges ranging from limited access to capital to the disruptive effects of the global economic climate.

FNB's scored lending initiative aims to bridge the financing gap while ensuring that SMEs are not overburdened with debt they cannot manage.

By leveraging data-driven assessments, the bank can provide tailored financing solutions that align with each business's cash flow and growth trajectory.

The seminar also highlighted success stories from SMEs that had benefited from FNB's support. Several business owners shared experiences of expanding operations, hiring additional staff, and exploring new markets thanks to the timely access to finance.

These testimonies reinforced the importance of an integrated support system that combines financial assistance with advisory services, risk management, and skills development.

By providing E250 million to over 1,000 SMEs, FNB has positioned itself as a critical partner in the growth and sustainability of small businesses in Eswatini.

The bank's holistic approach combining financing, education, and risk awareness reflects a commitment to empowering entrepreneurs to thrive in a competitive market. Mndzebele noted, that supporting SMEs is not just about lending money but building capacity, enabling growth, and creating a lasting impact on the economy. The seminar concluded with interactive sessions where SME owners could ask questions, share challenges, and receive tailored guidance.

Participants left with actionable insights on finance management, fraud prevention, and strategies to scale their businesses.

Through initiatives such as these, FNB demonstrates a commitment to fostering a resilient SME sector that contributes meaningfully to Eswatini's economic development.

**EswatiniBank**

**FX RATES**

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	17.2040	17.6689
G.B. Pound	23.2871	23.9671
EURO	20.1485	20.7572
Bank Rate (July 2023)	7.50%	
Prime Rate (July 2023)	11%	
Inflation (July 2023)	4.5%	
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90 /Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	

# Eswatini improves compliance, greylisting threat averted

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI initially fell short in meeting international anti-money laundering (AML) standards during a recent assessment by the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG), prompting a series of legislative and regulatory measures to strengthen compliance.

The ESAAMLG audit evaluates member countries on adherence to AML legislation and procedures, aligning with global standards set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Countries that fail to meet the minimum requirements risk being grey listed, which can restrict financial flows and limit access to international banking services. Blacklisting, a more severe measure, can effectively halt normal banking transactions, causing significant disruptions to a country's economy.

According to the Minister of Finance, Neal Rijkenberg said Eswatini's initial ESAAMLG assessment revealed that the country met only 14 of the 20 required AML criteria.

This placed Eswatini in a vulnerable position, as falling below the 20-point threshold triggers warnings and may lead to increased scrutiny from international financial institutions.

Following the audit, the government undertook a series of legislative reforms to address the deficiencies.

Multiple bills were consolidated into an omnibus bill, which was processed through the Attorney General's office, Cabinet, and Parliament before being signed into law.

These legislative adjustments aimed to enhance the country's legal framework for anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing, and financial regulation.

"The government subsequently applied for a re-rating to ESAAMLG, requesting consideration under 15 of the possible 19 re-rating opportunities. All 15 applications were approved, effectively raising Eswatini's compliance score above the required 20-point threshold," said Rijkenberg.

This improvement reflects the government's efforts to align the country with international AML standards and reduce the risk of grey listing.

While the country now exceeds the minimum requirements, the Minister noted that a few additional legislative measures are still needed to ensure full compliance before the end of the year.

These steps are intended to maintain Eswatini's improved standing and prevent the country from remaining in a grey-listing pipeline.

The Minister of Finance also highlighted the broader objectives of AML measures. The primary goal is to disrupt the financing of terrorism by monitoring and regulating the flow of funds that could be used for unlawful activities.

Countries with robust AML frameworks contribute to regional and global efforts to combat terrorism and financial crime, ensuring greater stability for local and international financial systems.

In addition to legislative reform, the gov-



ernment is taking steps to improve financial operations within the public sector, particularly in payments to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Delays in government payments have been identified as a challenge affecting SME liquidity. The Ministry of Finance has been working closely with Treasury to reduce the backlog of unpaid suppliers and improve cash flow management.

The Minister stated that recent Cabinet approvals for new loans are expected to support timely payments to government suppliers.

"These measures aim to ensure that SMEs receive payment for services and goods provided, including indirect supply chains such as catering and agricultural products. Timely payments are expected to help SMEs manage expenses and maintain operational stability," he said.

Government officials also emphasised the need for public cooperation in reporting corruption, which can undermine both financial compliance and SME operations.

Citizens are encouraged to provide evidence of corrupt practices, either directly or through public channels, to help authorities address unethical activities.

By promoting transparency and accountability, the government aims to strengthen governance in both the public and private sectors.

The ESAAMLG assessment and subsequent reforms underscore Eswatini's engagement in regional efforts to maintain financial integrity.

ESAAMLG, as a regional body, monitors compliance among member states, shares best practices, and provides guidance to improve national AML and counter-terrorism financing regimes. This framework allows countries to collectively reduce the risk of financial crimes and enhance economic security. The Minister noted that Eswatini's performance in the audit provided a benchmark for areas requiring improvement. While the country initially fell short, the rapid enact-



▲ Minister of Finance, Neal Rijkenberg.

ment of legislation and successful re-rating demonstrate the government's capacity to respond to international compliance challenges.

The improvements are part of a continuous process to strengthen financial oversight, safeguard the banking system, and protect the economy from potential vulnerabilities.

"Eswatini's experience highlights the importance of legislative agility, institutional cooperation, and adherence to international standards in maintaining credibility in global financial networks. Moving forward, the government plans to continue monitoring AML compliance, implement remaining legisla-

tive measures, and ensure that the country meets or exceeds all ESAAMLG and FATF requirements," said the Minister.

By addressing the deficiencies identified in the ESAAMLG audit, Eswatini has positioned itself to maintain access to international banking and financial services, prevent restrictions on fund flows, and contribute to regional and global efforts against money laundering and terrorism financing.

The government's ongoing initiatives are intended to provide both stability and transparency in the national financial system while supporting economic factors such as SMEs through timely and reliable transactions.



# Fed rate cut optimism lifts stocks, as investors watch global politics

By Ankur Banerjee and Alun John

STOCKS rose and Treasury yields held lower on Monday after last week's dismal U.S. labour data sealed the case for an interest rate cut this month, with investors preparing for a week heavy on politics, crucial data and central bank activity.

U.S. S&P 500 futures were up about 0.2 per cent, leaving the index set to head back towards the record intraday high hit immediately following last week's jobs data, while European and Asian shares were up 0.3 per cent and 0.6 per cent, respectively.

The first political drama of the week took place in Japan, where the yen and longer-dated bonds fell and stocks rose following the resignation of Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, as traders bet heightened political uncertainty would make the Bank of Japan less likely to raise rates in the near term.

Attention is turning to who will replace Ishiba, and whether it could be an advocate of looser fiscal and monetary policy such as Liberal Democratic Party veteran Sanae Takaichi, who has criticised the BOJ's interest rate hikes.

Meanwhile, France could be forced to look for its fifth prime minister in three years as the incumbent Francois Bayrou faces a confidence vote on Monday that he is expected to lose.

The selloff in French assets after Bayrou called the vote last month has eased, and French stocks and bonds were slightly outperforming European peers on Monday.

But uncertainty about whether President Emmanuel Macron would try to appoint



▲ A passerby walks past an electric monitor displaying various countries' stock price index outside a bank in Tokyo, Japan.

another prime minister or call fresh parliamentary elections if Bayrou loses means French and wider European assets are not yet out of the woods.

A slew of upcoming French debt rating reviews are also on investors' radar.

Nor is it just developed markets where investors are watching political developments.

A heavy election defeat for Argentine President Javier Milei's ruling party in Buenos Aires province put the country's

strained markets on track to extend a recent selloff, while Indonesia's stocks fell and its currency jumped after its well-regarded finance minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati was removed from her position.

## Dollar held in check

The political uncertainty in France and Japan is also keeping the dollar in check - even after last Friday's soft jobs data, which has left markets fully pricing in a 25 basis point rate cut from the Fed later this month,

and showing a small chance of a 50 basis point cut.

The numbers raise "the question as to whether U.S. employment conditions are now shifting from cooling to deteriorating and if the Fed should cut rates faster," said Paul Mackel, global head of FX research at HSBC.

He said this had "opened the door" for the dollar to weaken again, but with "political noise around the yen and euro, the likelihood of dollar weakness will be reflected more easily against other currencies".

The dollar hit a six-week low against a basket of currencies on Friday after the jobs data. On Monday, while it was down markedly on the Swiss franc, and Antipodean currencies, the euro was just 0.1 per cent higher at \$1.1731 and the dollar was 0.3 per cent higher on the yen at 147.

U.S. Treasury yields dropped sharply on Friday but were last steadier, with the benchmark 10-year yield marginally softer on the day at 4.07 per cent and the rate sensitive two-year yield at 3.49 per cent.

U.S. CPI data due on Wednesday will be the last major data point before the Fed's meeting, and a hot print could temper bets on a super-sized rate cut.

The European Central Bank meets on Thursday, but is expected to hold rates steady for a second straight meeting.

In commodities, gold continued to surge, hitting its latest all-time high of 3,622 an ounce. The precious metal is up 37 per cent this year after rising 27 per cent in 2024.

Oil prices climbed after the OPEC+ group agreed over the weekend to raise output at a slower pace from October on expectations of weaker global demand. Brent crude and U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude rose over 2 per cent each. (Reuters)

## Oil gains after OPEC+ output hike seen modest

By Anna Hirtenstein

LONDON — Oil prices climbed more than \$1 on Monday, regaining some of last week's losses, after OPEC+'s output hike was seen as modest and due to concerns over the possibility of more sanctions on Russian crude.

OPEC+ flagged plans to further increase production from October but the amount was less than some analysts had anticipated. Reuters had reported earlier this month that members were considering another hike.

"The market had run ahead of itself in regard to this OPEC+ increase," said Ole Hansen, head of commodity strategy at Saxo Bank. "Today we're seeing a classic sell the rumour, buy the fact reaction."

Brent crude climbed \$1.13, or 1.7 per cent, to \$66.63 a barrel by 1308 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude rose \$1.02, or around 1.7 per cent to \$62.89 a barrel.

Both benchmarks fell more than 2 per cent on Friday as a weak U.S. jobs report dimmed the outlook for energy demand. They lost more than 3 per cent last week.

OPEC+, which includes the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries plus Russia and other allies, agreed on Sunday to further raise oil production from October.

OPEC+ has been increasing production since April after years of cuts aimed at supporting the oil market.

The latest decision comes despite a likely looming oil glut in the Northern Hemisphere winter months.

The eight members of OPEC+ will lift production from October by 137,000 barrels per day. That, however, is much lower than increases of about 555,000 bpd for September and August and 411,000 bpd in July and June.

The impact of the latest increase is expected to be relatively low, because some members have been overproducing. So the higher output level would likely include barrels that are already in the market, analysts said.

"Expectations of tighter supply from potential new U.S. sanctions on Russia are also lending support," said Toshitaka Tazawa, an analyst at Fujitomi Securities.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday he is ready to move to a second phase of sanctioning Russia, the closest he has come to suggesting he is on the verge of ramping up sanctions against Moscow or its oil buyers over the war in Ukraine.

New sanctions on buyers of Russian oil could disrupt crude flows, energy trader Gunvor's global head of research and analysis, Frederic Lasserre, said on Monday.

Russia launched its largest air attack of the



▲ An installation depicting barrel of oil with the logo of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is seen during the COP29 United Nations climate change conference in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Ukraine war over the weekend, setting the main government building on fire in central Kyiv and killing at least four people, Ukrainian officials said.

Trump said on Sunday that individual European leaders would visit the United States on Monday and Tuesday to discuss how to resolve the conflict.

In a note over the weekend, Goldman Sachs said it expects a slightly larger oil surplus in 2026 as supply upgrades in the Americas outweigh a downgrade to Russian supply and stronger global demand.

It left its Brent/WTI price forecast unchanged for 2025 and projected the 2026 average at \$56/\$52 a barrel. (Reuters)

# SpaceX buys wireless spectrum from EchoStar in \$17 billion deal

ELON Musk's SpaceX said Monday it will buy wireless spectrum licenses from EchoStar (SATS.O), opens new tab for its Starlink satellite network for about \$17 billion, a major deal crucial to expanding Starlink's nascent 5G connectivity business.

The companies also agreed to a deal that will enable EchoStar's Boost Mobile subscribers to access Starlink direct-to-cell service to extend satellite service to areas without service.

The spectrum purchase allows SpaceX to start building and deploying upgraded, laser-connected satellites that the company said will expand the cell network's capacity by "more than 100 times."

Gwynne Shotwell, president and COO, SpaceX, said the deal will help the company "end mobile dead zones around the world... With exclusive spectrum, SpaceX will develop next-generation Starlink Direct to Cell satellites, which will have a step change in performance and enable us to enhance coverage for customers wherever they are in the world."

The news sent shares of EchoStar surging 19% in early trading. Shares of U.S. wireless carriers AT&T (T.N), opens new tab and T-Mobile (TMUS.O), opens new tab were down more than 3% and Verizon (VZ.N), opens new tab was down more than 2%.

The push comes amid fast-rising wireless usage. In 2024, Americans used a record 132 trillion megabytes of mobile data, up 35% over the prior all-time record, industry group CTIA said Monday.

SpaceX has launched more than 8,000 Starlink satellites since 2020, building a dis-



▲ Elon Musk, Chief Executive Officer of SpaceX and Tesla, gestures as he attends the Viva Technology conference dedicated to innovation and startups at the Porte de Versailles exhibition centre in Paris, France.

tributed network in low-Earth orbit which has seen demand from militaries, transportation firms and consumers in rural areas.

Roughly 600 of those satellites - which SpaceX calls "cell towers in space" - have been launched since January 2024 for the company's direct-to-cell network, orbiting closer to Earth than the rest of the constellation.

Crucial to those larger satellites' deployment is Starship, SpaceX's giant next-generation rocket that has been under development for roughly a decade. Increasingly complex test launches have drawn the rocket closer to its first operational Starlink mis-

sions, expected early next year.

The deal comes months after the Federal Communications Commission questioned EchoStar's use of mobile-satellite service spectrum and raised concerns about whether it was meeting its obligations to deploy 5G in the country.

EchoStar said it anticipates that the transaction with SpaceX and the AT&T deal will resolve the FCC's inquiries.

An FCC spokesperson said the "deals that EchoStar reached with AT&T and Starlink hold the potential to supercharge competition, extend innovative new services to millions of Americans, and boost U.S. lead-

ership in next-gen connectivity."

The company in August sold some nationwide wireless spectrum licenses to AT&T for \$23 billion. AT&T agreed to acquire 50 MHz of nationwide mid-band and low-band spectrum.

President Donald Trump previously prodded EchoStar and FCC Chair Brendan Carr to reach an amicable deal for the company's wireless spectrum licenses.

SpaceX will pay up to \$8.5 billion in cash and issue up to \$8.5 billion in stock. SpaceX has also agreed to cover roughly \$2 billion in interest payments on EchoStar's debt obligations through late 2027.

After the sale, EchoStar will continue operating its satellite television service Dish TV, streaming TV platform Sling, internet service Hughes and its Boost Mobile brand.

SpaceX had aggressively pressed the FCC to reallocate underused airwaves for satellite-to-phone service after alleging EchoStar failed to meet certain obligations.

In a letter to the FCC in April, SpaceX said EchoStar's spectrum in the 2 gigahertz band "remains ripe for sharing among next-generation satellite systems" and that the company has left "valuable mid-band spectrum chronically underused".

The deal with EchoStar will allow SpaceX to operate Starlink direct-to-cell services on frequencies it owns, rather than relying solely on those leased from mobile carriers like T-Mobile.

In May, the FCC approved Verizon's \$20 billion deal to acquire fiber-optic internet provider Frontier Communications. Verizon spent \$52 billion to acquire and clear key spectrum in 2021. (Reuters)

## Apple iPhone event may lack sparkle, but rumored iPhone Air likely to spur upgrades

WHEN Apple, opens new tab debuts new iPhones on Tuesday, analysts say its biggest challenge will be to ride out another ho-hum launch as rivals have skated past it in embedding artificial intelligence into their products and services.

The biggest draw this year could be a rumored "iPhone Air", a phone slimmer than what Apple has sold before and taking its name from the company's slender laptop MacBook Air.

Apple would need to iron out how to pack batteries and cameras into a thinner device, analysts said, and seek to price it between the base iPhone 17 models and more expensive Pro models to attract a large number of customers.

Dipanjan Chatterjee, vice president and principal analyst at Forrester, said a slimmer iPhone could spur upgrades. "It's been a while since we have seen any meaningful update to the form factor of the device beyond tepid incremental changes, and the novelty of the Air will likely induce many 14, 15 and even 16 iPhone users to migrate up," Chatterjee said.

The slimmer phone could also be a stepping stone toward an iPhone that folds out flat like a book and would act as a platform for an upgraded Siri, neither of which are likely to arrive until next year, analysts said.

Samsung Electronics (005930.KS), opens new tab is on its seventh generation of folding phones and Alphabet's (GOOGL.O), opens new tab is Google on its third, yet Chatterjee estimates they are less than 2% of all phone sales and will not grow beyond 5% "anytime soon."

A foldable phone is important for Apple to

appeal to its customers in China, where consumers like foldables and the company has been losing market share, analysts said.

Historically, Cupertino, California-based Apple has received nearly a quarter of its total sales from the mid-price iPhone segment, said Gene Munster, managing partner at Deepwater Asset Management, which holds Apple shares. He expects Apple to find a way to raise prices across its iPhone lineup without any allusion to U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs, perhaps by raising prices for larger storage capacity.

"They learned to play nice with Washington - a straight up price increase might not come off well," Munster said. "But I think they have rising costs, and they have been loyal to growing margins, and to do that, you have to find some method."

### AI STRUGGLES

Initially, Apple slated improvements to Siri for last spring, but delayed them due to engineering setbacks. Instead, it leaned on a partnership with ChatGPT creator OpenAI to power many AI features on its devices. In contrast, Google's latest flagship phones were largely designed to showcase the capabilities of its Gemini AI models.

Apple is also in early talks to use Google's Gemini AI to revamp Siri, according to a recent media report.

Ben Bajarin, CEO of technology consultancy Creative Strategies, said Apple may highlight improved AI processing capabilities of its next generation of Apple Silicon chips that could, in the future, power an "agentic" Siri that takes care of tasks in the background for the owners of the 2.35 billion Apple devices in use around the world, without draining the device's battery.



▲ A man check his phone near an Apple logo outside its store in Shanghai, China.

"It could be foreshadowing of a broader kind of agentic integration with their operating system, because the operating system is going to be the thing that hits the (chip's AI processing capabilities) the most," Bajarin said.

Bob O'Donnell, president at TECHanalysis Research, said that while AI adoption remains in early stages, Apple's time to catch up without suffering a long-term setback is

now likely measured in months rather than years.

"They have a huge share in the U.S., and most people are perfectly content," he said. "But by this time next year, if Siri still sucks, and if they don't get the foldable out, I don't know" whether that contentment will continue, O'Donnell said.

(Reuters)

AFRICAN leaders aim to offer a global model for tackling the climate crisis through green investments, they said on Monday, after the United States' withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement deflated the fight against climate change.

The continent, which has been buffeted by landslides, floods and droughts this year, is holding its second climate summit in Ethiopia, seeking a common voice before global climate talks in Brazil, COP30.

"We are not here to negotiate our survival. We are here to design the world's next climate economy," Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed told the opening ceremony.

Africa's development lenders and commercial banks signed a deal at the summit to mobilise up to \$100 billion to power a "green industrialisation" using renewable energy, said Kenyan President William Ruto.

Participating institutions include the Africa Export-Import Bank, the African Development Bank and commercial lenders like Ecobank Transnational and KCB Group, Ruto said.

Abiy proposed a new Africa climate innovation initiative, funded by the continent, bringing together African universities, research institutions, startups, rural communities and inventors to deliver 1,000 solutions to tackle climate challenges by 2030.

"If we make the right choices now, Africa can be the first continent to industrialize without destroying its ecosystems," said Abiy, who wants his country to host COP32 in 2027.

Leaders sought more financing at the inaugural summit in Nairobi two years ago to help governments to tackle climate challenges amid fiscal constraints and heavy debt burdens,

but the continent is still badly short of funding, receiving just 1% of the annual global climate financing, officials say.



# African leaders seek to offer climate model after US pullback

African countries, which are among the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of manmade global warming despite being among those least responsible for it, have long demanded that COP meetings yield more funds to help them adapt.

"Climate finance must be fair, significant and predictable," said Mahamoud Ali Yousouf, chair of the African Union Commis-

sion.

Leaders also expressed concerns about the potential damage from a fraying of the multilateral approach to tackling climate change.

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration pulled out of the landmark Paris agreement on climate change for the second time earlier this year and has also withdrawn

from clean energy partnerships with countries such as South Africa.

"Commitments are broken and international solidarity is dismissed as weakness precisely when the scale of the climate crisis demands enhanced cooperation, not less," said Ruto.

(Reuters)

## M23, Congolese forces may have committed war crimes in Congo

THE Rwandan-backed rebel group M23, Congolese armed forces and other armed groups have committed serious rights violations in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, some of which may amount to war crimes, the U.N. Human Rights Office said on Friday.

M23, Congolese armed forces and other groups have been responsible for gross violations of international humanitarian law since late last year when fighting began

"The atrocities described in this report are horrific," said U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk in a statement, calling for accountability on behalf of the victims.

The governments of Rwanda and Congo and pro-government militia fighters known as Wazalendo were not immediately available for comment.

M23 leader Bertrand Bisimwa told Reuters the U.N.'s allegations were fabricated and represented an unprofessional attempt to turn public opinion against the group. M23 has also denied past allegations it has committed atrocities.

M23 seized Goma, eastern Congo's largest city, in January and went on to make gains across North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. The fighting has killed thousands and displaced hundreds of thousands more this year, while escalating the risk of a full-blown war in a region rich in tin, gold and coltan.

While multiple human rights bodies and the U.N. have accused parties in the Congo conflict of gross atrocities, this is the first U.N. report to find that those abuses may have constituted crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The report found the ethnic Tutsi-led M23



carried out summary executions, torture, and enforced disappearances - which may amount to crimes against humanity, as well as war crimes including wilful killing and the taking of hostages.

### SYSTEMATIC SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The group also used systematic sexual violence, including gang rape, largely against women, with an intent to "degrade, punish, and break the dignity of victims," the report stated.

M23 received training and operational support from the Rwandan Defense Forces, and there were credible allegations of the covert presence of RDF personnel within M23, the report said.

Rwanda has repeatedly denied backing M23 and says its forces act in self-defence against Congo's army and ethnic Hutu militiamen linked to the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The report also found that the DRC armed

forces and affiliated armed groups, such as the Wazalendo, had committed grave violations, including gang rape, the deliberate killing of civilians, and looting.

The report investigated whether repeated rapes by specific Congolese armed units in January and February amounted to crimes against humanity, but it could not determine if these acts were state policy.

It said that certain Wazalendo members and leaders may have committed the war crime of conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 and using them in the fighting. While multiple human rights bodies and the U.N. have accused parties in the Congo conflict of gross atrocities, this is the first U.N. report to find that those abuses may have constituted crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The report found the ethnic Tutsi-led M23 carried out summary executions, torture, and enforced disappearances - which may amount to crimes against humanity, as well as war crimes including wilful killing and the taking of hostages.

"This report should drive home the importance of accountability and justice for these violations," the chief spokesperson for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ravina Shamdasani, told reporters in Geneva.

The OHCHR has called for adequate financing so a Commission of Inquiry into violations in eastern Congo, which has been stalled due to funding shortages, can proceed.

(Reuters)

# French parliament votes to oust prime minister, deepening political crisis

FRANCE'S parliament voted on Monday to bring down the government over its plans to tame the ballooning national debt, deepening a political crisis and handing President Emmanuel Macron the task of finding a fifth prime minister in less than two years.

Francois Bayrou, 74, took office as prime minister only nine months ago. He will tender his resignation on Tuesday, his office said, leaving Macron to face a narrowing set of options, with financial markets signalling worry at France's political and fiscal crisis.

Bayrou had called the confidence vote unexpectedly to try to win parliamentary support for his strategy to lower a deficit that stands at nearly double the European Union's 3% ceiling and to start tackling a debt pile equivalent to 114% of GDP.

But opposition parties were in little mood to rally behind his planned savings of 44 billion euros (\$51.51 billion) in next year's budget, with an election for Macron's successor looming in 2027.

They forced Bayrou out, with 364 votes against him and only 194 backing him.

"This moment marks the end of the agony of a phantom government," far-right leader Marine Le Pen said, pushing for a snap parliamentary election, which Macron has so far ruled out.

"Today is a day of relief for millions of French people, of relief over your departure," Mathilde Panot of the hard-left France Unbowed told Bayrou in the debate before the vote.

Macron could now nominate a politician from his own centrist minority ruling group or from the ranks of conservatives as the next premier, but that would mean doubling down on a strategy that has failed to yield a



▲ A screen shows the result of a confidence vote after French Prime Minister Francois Bayrou failed to secure a majority during an extraordinary session at the National Assembly in Paris, France.

stable alliance.

He could tack to the left and nominate a moderate socialist, or choose a technocrat.

No scenario would be likely to hand the next government a parliamentary majority. It was inevitable that the need to form a new government would result in a dilution of the deficit reduction plan, Finance Minister Eric Lombard said before the vote.

Macron may eventually decide the only path out of the crisis lies in calling a snap election, but he has so far resisted calls from Le Pen's National Rally and from France Un-

bowed to dissolve parliament a second time.

## FISCAL MESS

The next government's most pressing task will be to pass a budget - the same challenge Bayrou faced when he took office.

"You have the power to bring down the government, but you do not have the power to erase reality," Bayrou told lawmakers before the confidence vote.

"Reality will remain relentless: expenses will continue to rise, and the burden of debt, already unbearable, will grow heavier and more costly," he said.

France's EU peers will be watching closely.

France holds the highest deficit as a percentage of GDP in the euro zone - the bloc using the EU's single currency. It pays more to service its debt than Spain and spreads against benchmark German 10-year bonds are at their highest level in four months.

Fitch, often seen as a first mover among rating agencies, reviews its AA- rating with a negative outlook on September 12. Moody's and S&P Global, which have equivalent ratings, follow in October and November.

A downgrade would hamper France's ability to raise money at low interest rates from investors, potentially deepening its debt problems.

A lengthy period of political and fiscal uncertainty risks undermining Macron's influence in Europe at a time when the United States is talking tough on trade and security, and war is raging in Ukraine on Europe's eastern flank.

Macron and political figures from centrist and conservative parties deem that a snap election would not solve the crisis and that talks with the Socialists should be pursued, two sources familiar with Macron's thinking said.

The Socialists have offered a counter-budget that would impose a tax of at least 2% on personal wealth greater than 100 million euros and generate savings of 22 billion euros - a proposal that would be tough to marry with the pro-business reform agenda of Macron's presidency.

Discontent may also start brewing on the streets. A grassroots protest movement called "Bloquons Tout" ("Let's Block Everything") is calling for nationwide disruption on Wednesday. Trade unions are plotting walkouts the week after.

(Reuters)

## Palestinian gunmen kill six in Jerusalem bus stop shooting



▲ Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visits the scene where a suspected shooting attack took place at the outskirts of Jerusalem

TWO Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a bus stop on the outskirts of Jerusalem on Monday, killing six people in what police described as "a terrorist attack," one of the deadliest in the city in the past few years.

Footage from a dashboard camera at the scene in Ramot Junction showed people fleeing from around a bus at the side of a road as shots rang out. Israel Police said the attackers were shot dead at the scene by a soldier and an armed civilian.

"Suddenly I hear the shots starting ... I felt like I was running for an eternity," Ester Lugasi, who was injured in the attack, told Israeli TV from hospital. "I thought I was

going to die."

The ambulance service identified the five of the victims as a 50-year-old man, a woman in her fifties and three men in their thirties. It said six others were in serious condition with gunshot wounds. Police said more than 20 people were injured.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said later a sixth person had died and that the gunmen were Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

In a later statement by the Israeli military on Monday, the Chief of the General Staff, Eyal Zamir was quoted as saying that he had ordered a full closure of the area from which the gunmen came.

Spain's foreign ministry said a Spanish cit-

izen was among those killed and condemned the attack. France, the EU and the United Arab Emirates also issued statements of condemnation.

The shooting took place against the backdrop of nearly two years of war in Gaza, where Israel's campaign against militant group Hamas has left the territory in devastation. In the West Bank, Palestinians have faced tightened military restrictions and a surge in attacks by Jewish settlers.

"A painful and difficult morning. Innocent civilians, women, men, and children were brutally murdered and wounded in cold blood on a bus in Jerusalem by vile and evil terrorists," Israeli President Isaac Herzog said while commenting on the attack.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas issued a statement which condemned "any targeting of Palestinian and Israeli civilians".

But Hamas praised two Palestinian "resistance fighters" who it said had carried out the attack and Islamic Jihad, another Palestinian militant group, also praised the shooting. Neither group claimed responsibility.

## POLICE PRESENCE

Speaking at the scene of the attack, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israeli forces were pursuing suspects who aided them.

Israeli police said the two attackers had arrived by car and opened fire at a bus stop at Ramot Junction, an area straddling a part of Jerusalem that Israel captured in the 1967 war and later annexed in a move unrecognised by the United Nations and most countries.

Several guns, ammunition and a knife used

by the attackers were recovered at the scene and a suspect from East Jerusalem whose alleged involvement in the shooting was being investigated had been arrested, police said.

Reuters footage showed a heavy police presence in the Ramot area following the shooting. The ambulance service said a paramedic arriving at the scene reported that several victims were lying on the road and the sidewalk, some unconscious.

The Israeli military said it had deployed soldiers to the area who were aiding police in the search for suspects. Soldiers were also operating in areas of Ramallah in the West Bank to conduct interrogations and "thwart terrorism", it said.

More than 64,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli military in Gaza since the war began in October 2023, say Gaza health officials. The war was triggered by a Hamas-led attack on Israel which killed around 1,200 people, while another 251 were taken captive into Gaza, according to Israeli tallies.

There have been several shootings and stabbings targeting Israeli civilians and soldiers in Israel and the West Bank carried out by Palestinians since the Gaza war started.

In October 2024, two Palestinians, one armed with a gun and the other with a knife, killed 7 people in Tel Aviv. In November 2023, two Palestinian gunmen killed 3 people at a Jerusalem bus stop. Israeli security services said that the attackers in the Jerusalem shooting were linked to Hamas.

A Palestinian gunman killed 7 people in a Jerusalem synagogue in January 2023.

(Reuters)

# Gogo & Co brings 'Lugodvo Kimi' comedy show to SA

Stories By Sipheshle Dlamini  
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ESWATINI'S comedy scene is set to make waves beyond its borders as the talented ensemble of comedians, Gogo, S'lwane, Slim Bee, and Hembe, prepare to take their acclaimed and trending content, 'Lugodvo Kimi,' to South Africa.

The much-anticipated live comic theatre event is scheduled for October 3, 2025, at KaMhlushwa T-Vet College in Nkomazi, South Africa, starting at 7 pm.

'Lugodvo Kimi' content, which has gained significant popularity through its viral video, is now being transformed into a live performance that promises to deliver laughter, entertainment, and a fresh comedic experience.

Tickets are priced at E150 for general admission and E250 for VIP access, making it accessible to a wide range of comedy lovers eager to enjoy the unique humour that Gogo & Co are known for.

In an exclusive interview, Gogo, one of the leading figures in the troupe, shared insights into the inspiration behind the live show. "The idea came from the overwhelming response to our 'Lugodvo Kimi' video. Fans have been urging us to bring it to life on stage, and we are excited to do just that," he explained. The show aims to offer more than just entertainment; it seeks to open



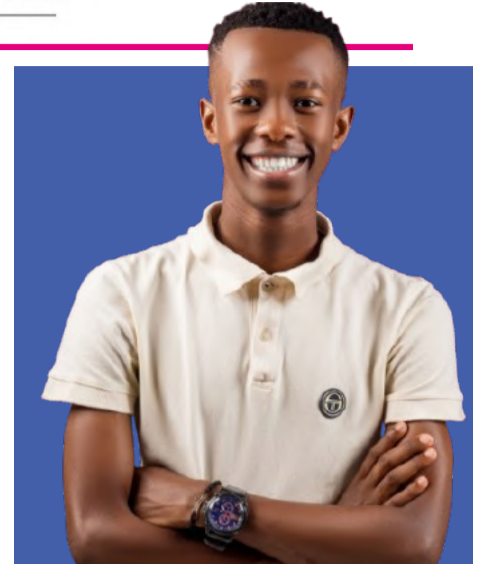
▲ Comedian Gogo and S'lwane.

conversations on sensitive topics through humour, providing a safe space for audiences to reflect and laugh simultaneously.

Gogo emphasised the therapeutic power of comedy, stating, "We believe that comedy can be a powerful tool to relieve stress and reduce feelings of depression. Our goal is to create an environment where people can forget their worries for a while and enjoy a night filled with joy and laughter."

The ensemble's approach to comedy is described as innovative and engaging, promising a new style that will captivate attendees.

"We guarantee fun and a memorable experience. Everyone should come and witness what we have prepared. We are looking forward to a successful event and can't wait to see everyone there," Gogo concluded enthusiastically.



▲ Poet Christian Maz.

## Christian Maz slated for War Words

POETRY In Comfort, one of the premier poetry shows in the Kingdom, is poised to make a grand return on December 6, 2025, and has revealed Poet Christian Maz as a performer.

The show has also announced Anthonimass, Poet Amandla, and Tincane The Poet. This event promises to be a celebration of both established and emerging poets, offering a unique blend of art and luxury in an outdoor setting.

In an exclusive interview, Project Manager Mnqobi Tsabedze shared insights into the vision behind this year's show. "We are presenting the art space with a poetry in comfort outdoor concept," he explained. "We take it this is a self-explanatory concept; we want to provide an exclusive, luxurious experience to poetry lovers and art enthusiasts. Our goal is to create lasting memories for attendees, rather than just having them attend an event and leave."

The event will feature distinct segments designed to enhance the overall experience for participants and attendees alike. The first segment focuses on Talent Search/Talent Appreciation, where young and undiscovered poets will be given a platform to showcase their skills on a significant stage. "This segment allows us to crown the best poets of the day," Tsabedze noted. "We believe that this will change the poetry industry; it is what it needs now. We aim to award all the amazing undiscovered talent a stage to showcase what they have to the world."

Tsabedze emphasised the importance of maintaining a classy and manageable event, which is why they are limiting the number of entries. "We want to ensure that the event remains intimate and allows for meaningful interactions," he added. Attendees can anticipate an experience unlike any other. "Poetry lovers should expect a memory they will keep forever," Tsabedze stated. "We urge poetry lovers, art lovers, and young people to buy tickets to support this great initiative, which looks at empowering youth and uplifting the art space in the country."

The Poetry In Comfort initiative is more than just a show; it is a movement aimed at uplifting the art scene in the Kingdom. By providing a platform for young poets, the event seeks to inspire the next generation of artists and encourage them to pursue their passion. "We believe that art is a powerful tool for change," Tsabedze remarked. "By empowering young poets, we are not only enriching the cultural landscape of our country but also fostering a sense of community and belonging among the youth."

## Hipnotik Festival tickets now on sale

THE highly anticipated Hipnotik Festival is set to electrify Eswatini once again on October 4, 2025, marking a significant return after a seven-year hiatus.

Since its inception in 2012 by Sakhile Nkambule and hosted by Swazi Jive, Hipnotik has grown to become the country's biggest local hip hop festival, a vibrant celebration of youth culture, music, and entrepreneurship. Tickets are now on sale, with general admission priced at E400, VIP access at E800, and exclusive Golden Circle tickets available for E1,500.

Hipnotik's revival is more than just a musical event; it is a strategic initiative aimed at revitalising Eswatini's creative economy and empowering the nation's youth. In an exclusive interview, festival director and founder Sakhile Nkambule shared his vision for the event's comeback. "We're incredibly excited. The return of Hipnotik isn't just nostalgic, it's strategic," Nkambule stated. He highlighted the festival's role as a critical platform for local creatives, entrepreneurs, and service providers, describing it as "a proven youth-led economic vehicle" that extends far beyond entertainment.

The festival's seven-year pause allowed the organisers to reflect deeply on the needs of the creative community and the broader market. Nkambule noted the detrimental impact Hipnotik's absence had on the local entertainment ecosystem and expressed a strong commitment to restoring and

elevating that cultural pulse. "We've seen what the absence of Hipnotik did to the local entertainment ecosystem. Now, we're here to restore that pulse and take it further," he said. While the festival promises a fun and immersive experience, Nkambule emphasised that empowerment is the ultimate product: "It's business time now, fun is the by-product, but empowerment is the product."

Hipnotik was founded on the belief that Eswatini's youth possess exceptional talent and ambition but lack the necessary platforms, business acumen, and networks to thrive. "Talent alone is insufficient; it requires platforms, business knowledge, networks, and brand equity. Hipnotik is that convergence point," Nkambule explained. The festival aims to demonstrate that creative industries can be structured, monetised, and scaled to generate sustainable economic growth. Looking ahead, Nkambule envisions Hipnotik as a premier youth development platform anchored in entertainment. He described the festival as a catalyst for job creation, SME development, digital storytelling, and brand partnerships. "This event is a catalyst for job creation, for SME development, for digital storytelling, for brand partnerships," he said. The festival will serve as a testbed for innovative creative business models that foster sustainable collaborations with the private sector and deliver measurable economic impact for young people.



▲ Hipnotik Director Sakhile Nkambule.

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# MaWhoo set to entice Eswatini Farmers Market

THE Eswatini Farmers Market is set to return with a spectacular lineup and vibrant cultural festivities, headlined by South African renowned musician MaWhoo.

Born Thandeka Nontobeko Ngema in Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal, MaWhoo is a dynamic female performer with a distinct voice that sets her apart from her peers. Her emphatic, emotionally resonant, and spiritually indented songwriting has made her a go-to vocalist for many esteemed producers. MaWhoo harnessed her gift through singing at church and began recording music during her early teens.

Scheduled for October 11, 2025, at Malkerns Country Club, the Eswatini Farmers Market has become a beloved annual celebration of culture, community, and creativity. Notably, the event has also confirmed South African DJ Mörda. The show offers a unique platform where music, food, and local crafts converge, fostering a spirit of unity and pride among Eswatini's people. The festival's director, Mbekezeli 'Culolam' Dlamini, shared his enthusiasm in an exclusive interview, describing this year's edition as poised to "surpass all expectations" with "endless excitement and unforgettable moments."

General admission tickets are available at E250, encouraging early purchase to avoid missing out on the festivities. Dlamini emphasised the importance of community involvement, urging locals to secure their spots promptly. "This is for us Eswatini," he said, highlighting the festival's role in strengthening communal bonds.

The Eswatini Farmers Market is much more than a marketplace; it is a cultural phenomenon that celebrates the nation's rich



▲ MaWhoo will be performing at the Eswatini Farmers Market.

heritage through a vibrant mix of activities. Attendees can look forward to a diverse array of live music performances featuring local artists, showcasing the depth and variety of Eswatini's musical talent. Families will

also enjoy a range of games and activities designed to engage children, ensuring the event is inclusive and fun for all ages.

Dlamini stressed the festival's commitment to growth and innovation, noting that

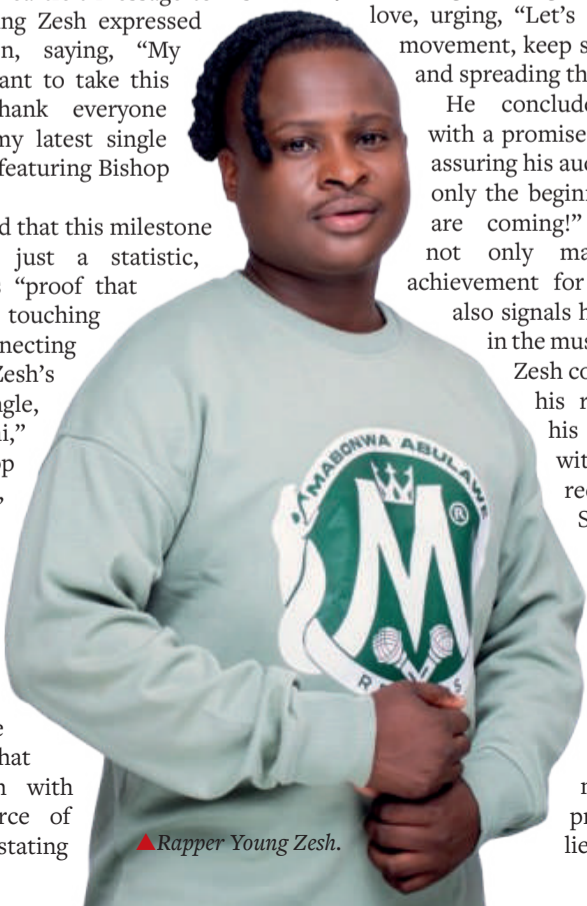
each year brings new ideas aimed at creating a legacy. "We aim to make the festival bigger and better, bringing in new ideas that will leave a lasting legacy and uniqueness for each year," he remarked.

## Young Zesh celebrates milestone of 9,000 monthly Spotify listeners

RISING artist Young Zesh has reached a significant milestone, garnering over 9,000 monthly listeners on Spotify.

This achievement marks a moment of gratitude and motivation for the artist, who credits his fans for the growing success of his music. In a heartfelt message to his supporters, Young Zesh expressed his appreciation, saying, "My People I just want to take this moment to thank everyone for streaming my latest single 'Inhlitiyo Yami' featuring Bishop Gina Masuku."

He emphasised that this milestone is more than just a statistic, describing it as "proof that the music is touching hearts and connecting us." Young Zesh's latest single, "Inhlitiyo Yami," featuring Bishop Gina Masuku, has clearly resonated with listeners, contributing significantly to the increase in his monthly audience. The artist shared that this connection with fans is a source of inspiration, stating



▲ Rapper Young Zesh.

he is "truly humbled and inspired to keep giving you the best of me."

Looking ahead, Young Zesh is optimistic about the future of his music career and the movement he is building. He encouraged his fans to continue supporting his work by streaming, sharing, and spreading the love, urging, "Let's keep growing the movement, keep streaming, sharing, and spreading the love."

He concluded his message with a promise of more to come, assuring his audience that "this is only the beginning bigger things are coming!" This milestone not only marks a personal achievement for Young Zesh but also signals his rising influence in the music industry. Young Zesh continues to expand his reach and deepen his connection with listeners, his recent success on Spotify serves as a testament to the power of authentic music and dedicated fan support. The artist's journey is one to watch as he builds momentum and prepares for what lies ahead.

## Sancheziey enters a new era with a new management team

THE Sancheziey brand, known for its dynamic presence and rapid growth since March 30, 2025, has announced a significant change in its management structure aimed at global expansion.

In a recent press release, the brand revealed the appointment of a new management team, tasked with overseeing all aspects of Sancheziey's operations moving forward. This strategic shift comes as a response to the brand's impressive development, which has outgrown its previous organisational framework.

The release stated, "Since March 30, 2025, the brand has grown tremendously and the current structure couldn't keep up anymore," highlighting the necessity for a more robust management system to sustain and accelerate Sancheziey's trajectory.

Under the new management, all business and booking inquiries will now be directed at updated contact numbers: (+268) 79 034 174 and 7647 9938. However, the official email address, arielempiresd@gmail.com, remains unchanged to ensure continuity and ease of communication. The brand assured that "bookings that were confirmed with the previous management would continue as planned," providing reassurance to partners and clients during this transitional phase. The press release also paid tribute to the outgoing management team, acknowledging their pivotal role in establishing a solid foundation for the Salukazana brand.

It expressed "sincere gratitude to the outgoing management following the great job done in putting such a strong foundation in the Saluka-



▲ Sancheziey.

zana brand," emphasising respect and appreciation for their contributions.

Importantly, the announcement clarified that this is a management deal rather than a record label agreement, signalling a focus on organisational leadership and strategic direction rather than contractual changes with artists or production.

Concluding the statement, the new management appealed to the brand's supporters, stating, "We believe in your love and support as we go through such a change," underscoring the importance of community backing during this period of transformation.

# Tyla excited to bag second MTV Video Music Awards gong

**SOUTH African singer Tyla Laura See-thal has once again put her name into music history after she won the Best Afrobeats award at the 2025 MTV Video Music Awards.**

The 23-year-old from Johannesburg outshone a star-studded category, including Nigerian heavyweights Burna Boy, Rema, Wizkid, and Tems.

The ceremony was held on Sunday at the UBS Arena in Elmont, New York, and Tyla arrived on the red carpet wearing a vintage Chanel ensemble from the Spring/Summer 1993 collection, a beige cropped top transformed into an ultra-short minidress, accessorised with gold medallions, and practical black shorts.

## Second consecutive win

She described the victory as special.

"I am excited; honestly, this is amazing. The category was very tough, so shoutout to all the nominees, and shoutout to Africa, my team. It is just a blessing to be here, winning another award, so special," she said. This

victory marks her second consecutive win in the category, following her groundbreaking 2024 win for her song Water.

Talking about her outfit, she said she wanted to be in a Chanel. "With this outfit, I said, 'put me in Chanel'," she chuckled. Tyla was nominated twice for Best Afrobeats and Best Choreography, both for her hit Push 2 Start.

She promised her fans that she is working on another album that they can expect soon.

"It is coming, and it's coming in hot, like, for real; just keep an eye out, but for now, keep an eye out for Chaneles coming soon," she said. This accolade adds to Tyla's forever-growing trophy case, which includes her 2024 Grammy for Best African Music Performance and recent Kids' Choice Awards hosting gig. Tyla has been challenging her talent, as she has collaborated with various artists and producers in the amapiano space, including Kelvin Momo, Kooldrink, and Luu-DaDeejay, and recently confirmed on her Instagram that she will be working with DJ Maphorisa. (Sunday World)



▲ South African singer Tyla.

## Phumeza Shoba dumps cheating husband Mngqobi

**THE 11-year-old marriage between popular house music singer Mngqobi Shoba and revered actress Phumeza Shoba is on the brink of reaching a coda.**

Sunday World can exclusively reveal that Phumeza has dumped Shoba like an obsolete music instrument after -accusing him of adultery and emotional and psychological abuse.

The startling tidbits were revealed by sources close to the couple, who did not want to be identified for fear of victimisation.

The deep throats, who are privy to the estranged two lovebirds' private lives, said Phumeza kicked Mngqobi to the kerb in July this year, and the thespian has informed the artist she wants out of their union, and has already instructed her lawyers to file for divorce.

The mole said that Phumeza, who acted in SABC1's drama Sokhulu and Partners, alleged that Shoba, who shot to stardom with the blockbuster ditty Uyangicomela, which he did with the music hybrid Shana, cheated on her and emotionally and psychologically abused her.

"Phumeza said Mngqobi cheated on her, and that was the last straw that broke the camel's back. She tried to forgive him but she found it impossible because he had betrayed her trust.

"You see, when you cheat, other women can forgive you, but Phumeza is unfortunately not one of those," said the tipster.

The informant said before the infidelity allegations, the two lovers often quarrelled a lot in their union.

"They differed a lot about how a marriage should exist. They also could not meaningfully or constructively engage in a conversation about it," said the source.

The source further said initially Phumeza contacted Mngqobi and tried in vain to sep-



▲ The 11-year-old marriage between popular house music singer Mngqobi Shoba and revered actress Phumeza Shoba is on the brink of reaching a coda.

arate from him amicably without involving lawyers, but he did not cooperate. "That made things worse because Phumeza felt that he did not take her efforts to part ways amicably seriously, and as a result, she would not settle for mediation once she had kick-started the divorce.

"We just hope that it does not get messy because they still live together even though Mngqobi is currently out of the country. He leaves the country between April and October every year, and we hope that when he returns they will find each other and resolve their differences."

The source alleged that Phumeza told them that if they parted amicably, she would

want them to equally share the residue of their estate, which includes, among others, Porsche and Volvo SUVs, which are the assets they collectively accumulated since they entered into an out-of-community-of-property-with-accrual agreement in 2014.

The source also said Phumeza indicated that she would also want him to pay her R45000 in spousal maintenance per month plus R5000 towards the upbringing of their partially blind child. Phumeza feigned surprise when we asked her about the separation. "No its not true," she claims. Attempts to solicit comments from Mngqobi drew a blank.

(Sunday World)

## I'm a victim of tax fraud, says Moshe Ndiki

**NDIKI, who played Prince in the Mzansi Magic soap opera The Queen, made the startling claims when responding to questions sent to him by Sunday World regarding the papers the taxman filed at the Johannesburg High Court for a default judgment against him last week.**

The star of the reality TV show Life with Moshe Ndiki alleged that irregularities were committed against his tax profile, saying that he is on the rack. "Fraud was committed against my tax, and I'm resolving it. This whole thing is stressing me out.

"I know I did not do anything wrong, and I am working closely with Sars [South African Revenue Service] to make sure the matter is resolved and my name is cleared," he said in a text message. Ndiki, however, would not be drawn into explaining the alleged fraud committed against him. "Unfortunately, I can't elaborate any further," he stated when quizzed further.

According to the judgement application, which we have seen, Ndiki initially owed Sars more than R500000, but the amount spiked to about R600000 after Sars imposed R28 000 in penalties and levied over R67000 in interest.

Before applying for the default judgement, Sars wrote a final letter of demand on June 20 to Ndiki, who played Andile Faku in the telenovela Gomora, pleading with him to settle the bill.

"According to the records of the South African Revenue Service, you have failed to pay your tax debt for one or more tax years and tax periods

"You are requested to make full payment within 10 days from the date of this letter of demand," reads the letter.

Sars advised Ndiki to apply within 10 business days of the date of issuance to arrange to pay the debt in installments if he was unable to pay the full amount.

Sars also advised the thespian to apply for suspension of the debt if he intended to submit or had submitted a formal dispute or compromise of a portion of the tax, where this would provide a higher return to the fund than liquidation, sequestration or other collection measures.

Sars informed Ndiki that if he did not comply with its demands, it would go to court to seek an order to attach and auction off his assets.

"Failure to make full payment or use the above remedies may result in the following actions and possibly others: Sars may appoint any third party who presently or in the future will owe you money or hold money for you to settle your tax debt with this money.

"A civil judgement is being entered against you, in which case a warrant of execution may be issued for the sheriff of the court to attach and sell your assets. "If you are a natural person, you may apply for a reduction of the amount to be paid to Sars based on your and your dependants' basic living expenses.

"If you are a non-natural person, you may apply for a reduction of the amount to be paid to Sars based on serious financial hardship," the papers read.

(Sunday World)



# Is Alzheimer's contagious?

PEOPLE who experience new or unusual symptoms as they age may want to consult their healthcare team.

This could be a warning about more serious health concerns.

As we get older, it may seem easy to dismiss unusual symptoms or blame them on aging alone.

However, some symptoms could be a warning of a more serious health concern. That is why it's important to maintain a relationship with your healthcare team and have any sudden or unusual symptoms evaluated.

## Unusual shortness of breath

In some cases, shortness of breath (dyspnea) may be a partial or complete blockage of an artery that carries blood to your heart, or coronary ischemia. Both a complete and partial arterial blockage can cause a heart attack.

Don't dismiss this symptom simply because you don't feel chest pain.

The sensation of chest pain is only one of several possible symptoms of a heart attack. Symptoms can vary from one person to another.

Make an appointment to see your doctor if you experience chronic or unusual shortness of breath. Seek emergency care if you develop any additional symptoms, such as:

- pressure in your chest
- tightness in your chest
- shortness of breath
- dizziness

## Sudden speech or balance and coordination difficulties

The symptoms of a stroke can be subtle, but you shouldn't ignore them.

Possible symptoms include sudden trouble with walking or a loss of balance and coordination. Additional symptoms include:

- feelings of extreme dizziness
- speech difficulties
- the slurring of words
- changes in vision
- weakness or numbness in your face, arms, or legs

For any of these symptoms, it's important to seek emergency care right away. When a person is having a stroke, getting medical attention quickly can help limit or prevent complications.

## Postmenopausal bleeding

Vaginal bleeding after menopause is unusual. In some cases, it isn't a sign of anything serious. For example, sex can be a cause of non-serious bleeding.

However, if bleeding occurs without any apparent cause or occurs repeatedly, it's important to see a healthcare professional. Postmenopausal bleeding can be a symptom of some gynecological cancers. That's why it's important to get it checked out.

## Erectile dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction (ED), also called impotence, becomes more common with increasing age. It affects an estimated 30 to 50 million men in the United States.



can be associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other conditions. ED often has a physical cause, but it can also be a response to increased stress or depression. In most cases, treatment can make a difference.

## Constipation

Constipation can lead to excessive pushing and straining during a bowel movement.

This strain increases your chances of developing hemorrhoids.

Occasional constipation is common and can become more frequent after you reach 50 years old.

However, constipation may signal that something is blocking stool from properly exiting.

This could be a tumor, a polyp, or some other obstruction.

Ongoing constipation can even lead to a hard stool that packs the intestine and rectum so tightly that normal pushing isn't enough to expel the stool. This is called fecal impaction.

Treatment can help ease constipation and prevent the condition from getting worse.

## Bloody or black stools

Stool color can change daily based on the food you eat and any medications you take. For example, iron supplements and anti-diarrheal medications, such as Pepto-Bismol, may turn your stool black or tarry.

Anything in the brown or green spectrum is generally typical.

But black or bloody stool may be a sign of something more serious.

Black stool suggests bleeding in the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract, while maroon-colored or bloody stool suggests bleeding lower in the GI tract.

See your doctor if you experience bloody or tarry stool.

They can check for the presence of ulcers, hemorrhoids, diverticulitis, and other digestive conditions.

## Swollen or discolored breast

If you find a lump in your breast, or notice any major changes in your breast tissue, it's important to see your doctor. Some breast lumps are benign, but a hard breast lump may be a sign of cancer.

Other common symptoms of breast cancer can include swelling, tenderness, or breast discoloration. Additional symptoms include nipple discharge and skin changes on the breast.

Breast cancer is treatable and early detection makes a difference. Breast cancer is less common in men, but men should nonetheless be mindful of possible cancer symptoms.

## Skin lesions that don't heal

The majority of skin cancers develop on areas of the skin that regularly get sun exposure, such as the:

- scalp
- face
- arms
- hand
- neck
- chest
- legs

Skin cancer can also develop in areas that seldom get sun exposure, such as under toenails or in the genital area. The three most common types of skin cancer are melanoma, basal cell carcinoma, and squamous cell carcinoma. Skin cancer can affect anyone, regardless of skin pigmentation.

The risk of skin cancer increases with age.

Never ignore skin lesions or moles. Skin lesions that cause pain, ooze, or don't heal may be cancerous.

Other potential symptoms of skin cancer include:

- a flat, flesh-colored lesion
- a brown, scar-like lesion
- a pearly or waxy bump
- a flat lesion with a crusted surface
- a red nodule
- a large brownish spot with dark specks
- small lesions with irregular borders and parts that look red, white, or bluish

toes, or the mucous membranes, which include the mouth, nose, vagina, or anus

## Depressive symptoms

Older adults and their family members tend to focus on physical ailments, not emotional ones. Seniors are at greater risk for depression because they may face more feelings of loss and loneliness.

The symptoms of depression include:

- sadness
- anxiety
- feelings of worthlessness
- unusual fatigue
- a decreased interest in formerly enjoyable activities
- changes in appetite
- a loss of sleep
- sleeping excessively

Seek help from your doctor or a mental health professional if you or a family member experiences any of these symptoms. Depression symptoms and severity can worsen without proper treatment.

## Confusion, delirium, or memory problems

While a gradual change in memory is a normal part of aging, sudden changes in memory or the abrupt onset of confusion or delirium could indicate a more serious issue.

Abrupt changes could occur due to:

- a urinary tract infection
- a reaction to medication
- thyroid problems
- dehydration
- brain tumors
- anoxia
- other infections

All of these conditions are generally treatable.

However, some of these changes may also be a sign of Alzheimer's disease or other progressive dementias.

Be sure to see your doctor right away if you experience these symptoms.

(Healthline)





# How to build a home gym

**WORKING** out can start (or continue) from home. You can almost always find a way to repurpose furniture to fit your needs.

Some people might want dumbbells and other equipment, too, but they're not necessary for a good workout.

Finding the time to go to the gym a few times each week might not always be realistic. Life can get in the way.

Maybe you feel more comfortable exercising from the comfort of your home, or don't want to dish out money for something you can just do from home anyway.

No matter which boat you find yourself in, this article can help you set up a home gym and reach your fitness goals.

## What do you already have?

Not everyone will have extra space for large workout equipment like a treadmill or stationary bike — and that's OK!

Instead, think of ways you can repurpose existing structures or furniture for your workouts.

You won't need a StairMaster if you have a staircase in your home. Or, you could opt for a mini stepper (and other miniature or more compact equipment, if such variations exist).

A couch could become a bench that you could do triceps dips at, and all you'd need is some dumbbells to do bench presses and countless other exercises.

You could also temporarily push aside easy-to-move furniture to make more room for a yoga mat or to do exercises that require enough space to fully extend your arms or legs, like Zumba.

You could take runs or brisk walks outside, and come back home to do more strength training.

## What equipment do you want?

An Internet search can find you thousands of zero-equipment exercises — standing, sitting, lying down (even from your bed) — so you may not even need anything in particular to get started, just your own body weight.

**But if you find that you'd like to involve equipment in your fitness routine, consider:**

- dumbbells
- plates
- exercise balls
- resistance bands
- a yoga or exercise mat

These items take up relatively little space, and you can still get in a good workout with them — and without something more technologically advanced.

But if you decide that you want a treadmill because you have the space for it and it would be an integral part of your workout, go for it!

Your fitness routine doesn't need to fit a mold. It just has to fit your needs, and you can accomplish that in several ways.

## Do you prefer guided workouts?

You might already have a list of exercises to incorporate into your routine and be ready to dive right in. Or maybe you prefer following along with a guided video or



fitness app.

Another Internet search and you'll find infinite options to choose from. Just try to be specific in your search.

Do you want Pilates, yoga, non-jumping, full-body, core, legs, or arm videos? How long do you want your workout to last? Are you a beginner or looking for something more advanced?

Guided workout videos are available in DVD format, or you can access some on your TV (if it can connect to the Internet). Otherwise, a phone or laptop can do well.

## Safety tips for working out from home

Be sure to exercise caution when you're working out from home. While in-person gyms have trained staff on the floor who can assist you, you won't have that experience from your home.

### Here are some additional safety tips:

- Clear the area of hazards you could potentially hit, bump into, break, or otherwise hurt yourself from.
- If your workout requires jumping, be mindful of ceiling height and anything that may be hanging from it.
- Wear cushioned shoes to better support your joints.
- Keep water nearby (but not in a place that you could bump it!).
- Use a mat, blanket, or something else as a cushion if you're on your back or hands and knees.
- Push yourself, but not too hard. You shouldn't be short of breath, dizzy, or feel faint while exercising.



## The takeaway

Working out from home is possible — with or without special equipment. Either way, you can get in a great workout.

Consider using what you already have. For example, a couch could also be used for bench presses or triceps dips, and any stairs

could be a stair stepper.

Be sure to check with your doctor before starting or changing a workout routine.

Depending on your physical health, they may recommend avoiding some and opting for others.

(Healthline)

# News In Pictures



▲ Mariah Carey performs at the 2025 MTV Video Music Awards.



▲ Lincoln United Methodist Church Pastor and longtime immigrant-rights activist Emma Lozano, poses for a portrait inside of the church in Chicago.



▲ Detroit Lions wide receiver Isaac TeSlaa makes a catch for a touchdown against Green Bay Packers cornerback Carrington Valentine during the fourth quarter at Lambeau Field.



▲ Women take part in a mass self-defense class aimed at empowering participants and raising awareness on gender-based violence, at the Monumento de la Revolucion, in Mexico City.



▲ Oliver Strumpf attempts to break the world record for beer-mug carrying with 31 mugs, but dropped some mugs along the way, at the Hofbrauzelt tent in Gillamoos festival, in Abensberg, Germany.



## McIlroy wins Irish Open playoff for first title since Masters

RORY McIlroy won the Irish Open in a thrilling playoff against Joakim Lagergren on Sunday for his first tournament triumph since his Masters success in April. World No 2 McIlroy had to eagle the 72nd hole just to force a playoff after Lagergren's own remarkable eagle at the 16th at the K Club near Dublin.

After the first two additional holes were tied in birdie fours, Sweden's Lagergren found the water third time around to allow McIlroy to win with two putts.

"I just feel so lucky that I get to do this in front of these people," said McIlroy. "The support has been amazing all week. So happy I could play the way I did this week and get the win."

Lagergren added: "This is a tough one to swallow. I really thought I had that out there today. Obviously posting minus 17 going into the clubhouse, could have been enough.

"I played really good in the play-off as well. Hit a solid 5-iron down on the last play, but it got a horrendous bounce. It's

a metre from being dead to the hole. So it's tough."

Victory gave Northern Ireland's McIlroy his second Irish Open title nine years after his first.

The 36-year-old became just the sixth man to complete a career Grand Slam of major titles following his Masters triumph at Augusta National.

McIlroy is warming up for the Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black later this month, when he will be leading Europe's defence of the trophy they won against the United States in Rome two years ago.

"To do what I did earlier in the year and then to come home and win my national Open, no matter what happens for the rest of the year, that's a pretty cool year -- 2025's going to be one of the best, if not the best, of my career," said McIlroy.

"But we're not finished yet, I've got a big week next week at Wentworth (BMW PGA Championship) and then obviously everybody's looking forward to the Ryder Cup."

(Supersport)



▲ Rory McIlroy.

## Truly something unique: Hamilton pays tribute to Tifosi

LEWIS Hamilton's first Italian Grand Prix as a Ferrari driver at Monza this past weekend was filled with emotional and memorable moments, especially in his interactions with fans — the legendary Tifosi.

From the moment Hamilton arrived in Milan for pre-race events, he was enveloped by the warmth and intensity of Ferrari's fanbase.

He described the experience as "truly something unique", saying that the affection he received from Wednesday onward gave him an emotional boost.

Practice Sessions: Hamilton

topped FP1, thrilling the crowd and giving Ferrari fans hope for a strong weekend. The start of the 2025 season is still around two months away, but the celebrations seemed to have begun. Hamilton took notice of it, and being himself, decided to thank the fans who braved the cold and foggy weather in the region to come watch him drive.

After his session, which he described as one of the biggest moments of his career to date, Hamilton took a car to the fenced area from where the fans were watching him. He got close to them, waved at them, and showed his gratitude for their support. (Supersport)

# Ribeiro bids emotional farewell to Sundowns

LUCAS Ribeiro has penned what appears to be an emotional farewell message to Mamelodi Sundowns, bringing to an end his two-year spell with the Betway Premiership champions. Sundowns have yet to confirm his departure, but Ribeiro took to social media to express his gratitude to the club, supporters, coaches and teammates.

Has Ribeiro got his wish?

It looks like the Brazilian forward has finally got his wish to leave the club, having failed to report back for pre-season in an effort to force move abroad.

"From the very first day I arrived, I gave my all, on and off the field, to earn my place and proudly defend Mamelodi Sundowns. These past two years have been incredible and full of emotions. I have learned so much from this beautiful culture — not only to become a better player, but also a better human being," he wrote.

"I want you to know that your support and love meant so much to me, and I will never forget you. I will always carry in my heart the memories of the emotions I lived — the goals, the assists, the trophies, and the magical nights with you that made me feel at home."

Following a stellar 2024-25 campaign, the 26-year-old was deservedly named the PSL Footballer of the Season. He also walked away with



▲ Lucas Ribeiro.

the Player's Player of the Season award after ending last season as the league's top goalscorer with 16 goals.

Ribeiro also expressed his appreciation to the technical staff and his teammates

'I will miss you so much'

"Thank you for every battle, every title won, every smile, and every moment we shared together. You will always be my brothers, and I will miss you so much," he said.

"Playing for Sundowns and living

this beautiful culture has been such a great honour for me. I will truly miss it," he concluded, signing off with a heartfelt message of thanks to South Africa.

For Ribeiro, it was a remarkable season that culminated in him also winning the FIFA Club World Cup Goal of the Tournament for his brilliant solo effort against German club Borussia Dortmund.

(The Citizen)

## Tau's Chiefs deal collapsed over high salary demands

MGOSI Squad has uncovered the real reason why Percy Tau's proposed move to Kaizer Chiefs collapsed. The former Al Ahly star has since signed for Vietnamese V.League 1 champions, Xanh Nam Dinh FC. Before sealing his deal in Asia, Tau explored a possible return to the PSL, with Chiefs among the clubs keen on his services.

Talks, however, broke down after the two parties failed to agree on his salary demands, which proved too costly for Amakhosi.

Tau was one of the best-paid players during his four-year stay at Al Ahly before a short stint with Qatar Sports Club earlier this year.

Even though he agreed to a reduced package compared to his earnings abroad, the figure was still considered excessive by the Soweto giants.

Had the move succeeded, the 31-year-old would almost certainly have become one of the highest earners at Chiefs and in the PSL.

Instead, he has opted for a new chapter in Vietnam, where he will attempt to revive his form and push for a recall to the Bafana Bafana squad.

Tau, crowned the 2023 African Inter-club Player of the Year, enjoyed a decorated spell at Al Ahly, win-



▲ Percy Tau.

ning two CAF Champions League titles, two Egyptian Premier League crowns and several domestic honours.

After missing out on Tau, Chiefs

have since signed Khanyisa Mayo from Algerian club CR Belouizdad to further bolster their attacking options

(The Citizen)

# France coach Deschamps plays down rift with PSG over Dembele, Doue injuries

FRANCE coach Didier Deschamps calmed suggestions of a rift between the national team and Paris Saint-Germain after the European champions were left fuming after Ousmane Dembele and Desire Doue picked up injuries on international duty.

Dembele, PSG's leading scorer last season and one of the favourites to win the Ballon d'Or, has been ruled out for between six and eight weeks after coming off hurt in France's 2-0 win over Ukraine in World Cup qualifying on Friday.

Doue was injured in the same game and is expected to be sidelined for a month, dealing a major blow to PSG as they prepare to begin their defence of the Champions League title.

The club wrote to the French Football Federation (FFF) on Sunday calling for a "more transparent and collaborative coordination protocol to be put in place between clubs and national teams".

PSG, whose squad had a significantly shortened close-season break after going all the way to the final of the Club World Cup in July, said they had provided the FFF with "concrete" medical information about how much workload their players could withstand.

They said that their recommendations were ignored.

Deschamps insisted that the



▲ France coach Didier Deschamps.

French team's medical staff "did things in a very professional and progressive way, as we do with all the players, taking into account how each player feels".

"Even if they are eager to play, that feeling is always a very important element for us," added the French coach, who was speaking before Les Bleus host Iceland at PSG's Parc des Princes stadium on Tuesday.

"PSG are not our adversary, and never have been. The clubs never have been, even if our interests go in different directions, and that is normal.

"I have been on the other side of the barrier. Our only opponent is

Iceland," Deschamps said, insisting that there are always exchanges between his team and the clubs.

He used the examples of Manchester City's Rayan Cherki and Arsenal defender William Saliba, who picked up injuries and were told they would not need to come to the French team's training base for further assessment despite having being called up.

"I am not going to make them come when we are perfectly aware it's not possible, because our doctor was sent the images from their scans," said the coach.

(Supersport)



▲ Liverpool striker Hugo Ekitike.

## Ekitike welcomes Isak competition at Liverpool

LIVERPOOL striker Hugo Ekitike has welcomed the arrival of British record signing Alexander Isak and says he is excited about the challenge of competing for a place in the line-up with the Swedish forward.

Ekitike is Liverpool's third-most expensive signing this summer following the acquisition of Isak from Newcastle United for a reported fee of 125 million pounds (\$168.93 million), and midfielder Florian Wirtz from Bayer Leverkusen for a guaranteed 100 million pounds plus bonuses.

Ekitike has already bagged three goals in four appearances for the reigning Premier League champions.

"When you play for the best teams, you inevitably expect to be competing with the best players," Ekitike told reporters on Sunday. "Isak is a player I used to watch, so seeing him arrive is a pleasure.

"It's going to be tough competition, but I'm going to work hard to be good and perform well so that it's just the coach's problem."

Ekitike joined Liverpool after a standout 2024-25 campaign with Eintracht Frankfurt, where he netted 15 Bundesliga goals in 33 appearances.

(Supersport)

# Alcaraz beats Sinner to win US Open and reclaim No 1 ranking



▲ Carlos Alcaraz.

CARLOS Alcaraz beat Jannik Sinner in four sets on Sunday to win the US Open and reassert his dominance of an era-defining rivalry in a final delayed by the visit of President Donald Trump.

The 22-year-old Alcaraz won 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 to capture his second US Open crown and sixth Grand Slam title, avenging his lone defeat in a major final by Sinner at Wimbledon in July.

"It's a great feeling. I'm working really hard just to lift this trophy. It's my second one but it's still a dream come true," said Alcaraz.

Alcaraz will reclaim the world No 1 rank-

ing from Sinner, returning to top spot on Monday for the first time since September 2023 after ending the Italian's 27-match winning run at hard-court Grand Slams.

"It was one of the first goals that I had, to recover the No 1 (ranking)," said Alcaraz, who also defeated Sinner in an epic French Open final in June.

Alcaraz has now won seven of the past eight meetings and is 10-5 overall against Sinner.

"I tried my best today. I couldn't do more," said Sinner. "I felt like he was doing everything slightly better today.

"He raised his level when he had to... He

played better than me today."

Alcaraz and Sinner have shared the last eight Grand Slams on offer, winning four apiece to assert their superiority over the rest of the sport including Novak Djokovic.

But while Sinner is 109-4 against the rest of the tour over the past two seasons, Alcaraz has had his number.

"It's going to be on me if I want to make changes or not," said Sinner. "That's what I have to do, trying to become a better tennis player."

Sinner's defeat at Flushing Meadows extends the longest drought without a successful men's title defence of any Grand Slam in the Open era.

No man has retained the US Open crown since Roger Federer won five in a row from 2004 to 2008.

Anticipation for the third straight Grand Slam final between the game's top two players assumed an even greater dimension with the presence of Trump.

It was the latest in a series of visits to major sporting events for the US leader after his trip to the NFL's Super Bowl in February and the Fifa Club World Cup final in July.

He appeared before the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner, waving to the crowd, which greeted him with a mix of cheers and boos. He was given a frostier reception later in the match though when shown again on the stadium's big screens.

A constellation of showbiz and sports icons turned out as well Sunday, with rock star Bruce Springsteen, fashion icon Tommy Hilfiger, actor Michael Douglas and basketball superstar Stephen Curry all on hand.

START DELAYED BY TRUMP VISIT

The start of the final was pushed back 30 minutes to allow fans additional time to enter Arthur Ashe Stadium as a result of tighter security measures in effect due to Trump's attendance.

Even then the 23 000-capacity venue was no more than three-quarters full when Alcaraz broke Sinner in the opening game of the match.

As he did in the Wimbledon final, Alcaraz pinned Sinner on the back foot early and broke a second time for a 5-2 lead before serving out to love.

With hundreds of spectators still waiting to get in at the start of the second set, Alcaraz sought to hammer home his advantage against Sinner.

He created a break point but Sinner hung on and stalled Alcaraz's momentum, belatedly ramping up his game and surging 3-1 ahead as the Spaniard suffered a brief dip on serve.

Sinner levelled the contest at a set apiece but Alcaraz stormed back with another break early in the third, wriggling out of a tight spot on serve with the help of a sensational baseline smash that sliced away from his rival for a 3-0 edge.

He padded his lead with another break and quickly wrapped up the set, keeping his foot down to corner Sinner again to begin the fourth set.

This time Sinner saved two break points but Alcaraz made another charge in the fifth game, delivering the decisive blow for an advantage he never relinquished as the Spaniard became only the fourth man to win multiple majors on hard courts, grass and clay.

(Supersport)



## Mbabane Pool Club Super 8 KO champs

Stories by Chris Dlamini

A SUM of E2 000 went up the Malagwane Hill to the capital city on Sunday in the pockets of Mbabane Pool Club (MPC).

The E2 000 was the main prize in the Mvutjini Pool Room Invitational Super 8 Teams Knockout Tournament. Played over two days, the tournament started on Independence Day, September 6, down the Ezulwini Valley, the title was won by MPC.

The capital city giants unlocked their rivals, Seven Secrets with a 13-5 margin in the final to walk out as champions on Sunday.

MPC was presented with the E2 000 cash prize and trophy. Their runners-up, Seven Secrets settled for E1 500 plus silver medals for their efforts.

Before these two clashed, Seven Secrets had a collision with Magesi in the semi-fi-

nals and edged the latter 13-10 in what was an evenly contested match. MPC had already cleared their path to the final on Saturday with a close 13-11 score line against Billiards Pool Team. The losing semi-finalists each received E1 000. Each of the eight teams invited to the Super 8 tournament had paid E500 as a registration fee.

“Congratulations to the finalists, particularly the champions MPC. It was a great tournament that was played over two days, being Saturday and Sunday,” said one of the tournament coordinators Sithembiso ‘Dodge’ Matsebula.

He also expressed their utmost gratitude to the venue management for once again having the interests of the sport and sponsoring the tournament.

### Winners and prizes:

1. Mbabane Pool Club - E2 000+Trophy
2. Seven Secrets - E1 500+Silver medals
3. Billiards - E1 000
4. Magesi - E1 000



▲ Mbabane pool club Owen Hlophe receiving their trophy.



## ‘Sting’ voted Manzini/Matsapha Zonal Pool Secretary

THE Manzini/Matsapha Zonal Pool League now has its full executive in place.

Following recent elections at Matsapha Police Academy, member teams voted in favour of Sifiso ‘Sting’ Dlamini to be their Secretary. The Give Thanks Pool Team star is already in the office after his election victory on August 25.

He joined the executive committee led by Chester Dlamini as its

Chairman. Meanwhile, also part of the executive is Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) Pool Team star Sibusiso Nhlabatsi who is serving as Zone Manager and Manzini Pool Club (MPC) and former Manzini Regional Pool Association (MRPA) Chairman Menzi Ngomane.

The zone foresees the inaugural Sphana Investments E45 000 Zonal League with a champions’ prize of E14 000. The full executive committee is listed in this article.

### Manzini/Matsapha Zonal League Executive Committee:

1. **Chairman** - Mhlaba Chester Dlamini
2. **Secretary** - Sifiso ‘Sting’ Dlamini
3. **Treasurer** - Dumisani ‘Dinho’ Malindzisa
4. **Zone Manager** - Sibusiso Nhlabatsi
5. **Member** - Menzi Ngomane
6. **Member** - Mloni Matsebula

## ‘Bharuka’ sinks ‘Mabura’, E2.9k richer

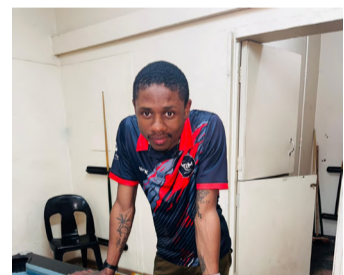
THERE is no stopping Eddie ‘Bharuka’ Mondlane on the pool table.

He just added yet another title to his already well-decorated cabinet. The Manzini Pool Club (MPC) star not only won the Sphana Investments E6 000 Singles Pool Tournament but also defeated one of the most successful players under the Manzini Regional Pool Association (MRPA) Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi in the final. The two are also big rivals in the Manzini/Matsapha Zonal Pool League, also sponsored by Sphana.

Dlamini plies his trade for Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) while Mondlane is with MPC. Their teams are chasing the inaugural league title alongside Give Thanks from Matsapha.

Mondlane, who recently won a singles knockout in early August, took home E2 500 as the champion but since he had a double life, his other entry earned him E450 after he made the quarter-finals. This was on the last day of August. This took his earnings to E2 900.

Meanwhile, the runner-up pocketed E1 500 after losing



▲ Pool player Eddie ‘Bharuka’ Mondlane displaying his cash prize.

4-7 to Mondlane. The champion ousted Sonic Dlamini in the semis, while the runner-up saw off Siphon Mabuza.

For losing in the semi-finals, Mabuza and Sonic took home E800 apiece while it was E450 from positions five to eight.

### The Top 8 winners:

1. Eddie ‘Bharuka’ Mondlane
2. Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi Prizes:
1. E2 500 - Eddie ‘Bharuka’ Mondlane
2. E1 500 - Sibusiso ‘Mabura’ Nhlabatsi
3. E800 - Sonic Dlamini
4. E800 - Siphon Mabuza
5. E450 - Malangeni Dlamini
6. E450 - Bayanda N
7. E450 - Smakhelwe Magagula
8. E450 - Smakhelwe Magagula

By Sibusiso Masilela  
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# Quality earnings for Nsingizini Hotspurs

DYNAMITE comes in small packages. The famous idiom came to fruition for local football pacesetters Nsingizini Hotspurs on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

The Shiselweni-based side's wonder kid, Quality Dlamini, earned the team E630 000 worth of 8Bet Trade Fair Cup first prize money with a well-taken free kick that ended Green Mamba's dream in the annual knockout tournament.

We reflect on the second edition of the E2.5 million worth knockout tournament, which ended in grand style in front of an impressive crowd at Mavuso Sports Centre on Sunday.

## 1. Quality wins it for Nsingizini

Nsingizini Hotspurs' new signing, Quality Dlamini, delivered the first trophy for the ambitious Mandla Thlogi led side with a first half freekick that left Green Mamba goalkeeper Xolani Gama like a newborn kitten.

The former Sisonkhe FC winger has fitted like a hand in glove in the Nsingizini set up since his move from the youthful hub outfit.

## 2. Nsingizini dominates individual awards

8 Bet Trade Fair Cup champions Nsingizini Hotspurs dominated the individual awards.

The CAF Champions League envoys produced three individual award winners in player of the tournament Yekisizwe Khumalo, goalkeeper of the tournament Sibusiso 'Bharaba' Dlamini, and Best Public Relations Officer Mnotfo Dlamini.

Khumalo has been a revelation for the champions throughout the tournament with his five star performances in the belly of the park.

'Bharaba' kept a clean sheet throughout the tournament while Mnotfo kept the Nsingizini brand on the rise on airwaves and various media platforms.

## 3. Sea Birds, Ubombo Sugar on the rise

This year's edition of the 8Bet Trade Fair cup produced two new cup specialists in Manzini Sea Birds and Ubombo Sugar FC.

The two sides surprised the football fraternity by reaching the semifinals, with Sea Birds eventually claiming the third



▲ 8Bet Trade Fair Cup champions Nsingizini Hotspurs.

prize with a win over the sugar belt side.

Sea Birds further produced the top goal scorer in Muzi Tsabedze, who netted three goals. The two sides have shown promising signs heading to the new season with some sense of professionalism on and off the field.

## 4. Malanti Chiefs make a strong Premier League return

Premier League returnees Malanti Chiefs gave a good display in the tournament despite being knocked out by eventual champions Nsingizini Hotspurs in the quarterfinals.

The Northern Hhohho side claimed the scalp of the defending champions, Young Buffaloes, in the opening round and gave

Nsingizini Hotspurs a run for their money during the quarterfinals.

The team directors, Dumisani Gumede and Victor Rodriguez, have assembled a competitive and resilient team that can secure a respectable league finish.

## 5. Big four team's choke

The traditional big four teams Mbabane Swallows, Mbabane Highlanders, Manzini Wanderers, and Moneni Pirates, did not have a good outing, with Pirates being the crowd puller that was knocked out in the quarterfinals by Sea Birds.

Highlanders, Swallows and Wanderers made an early exit in the last 16 much to the disappointment of their hordes of

supporters.

Wanderers gave a gallant display amid their 2-0 loss to Green Mamba. The hub giants spent the past season on the wilderness due to the dragging legal battle, which saw the team being reinstated in the elite league.

## 5. Tourney attracts a sizeable crowd

The 8 Bet Trade Fair is slowly gaining its popularity, like it used to be happen in the past, with the tournament attracting sizeable crowds despite the early exits of the crowd pulling teams.

The final between Nsingizini Hotspurs and Green Mamba was watched by close to 5 000 fans, which is a clear sign of popularity for the tournament.



▲ Runners-up Green Mamba receiving their second prize cheque.



▲ Malanti Chiefs celebration.



▲ Melusi Tfwala of Ubombo Sugar.



▲Nsingizini Hotspurs president Derrick Shiba celebrating.



▲Nsingizini Hotspurs players celebrating their lone goal scored by Quality Dlamini during their 1-0 over Green Mamba.

## Cup win CAF morale booster – Shiba

Stories By Sibusiso Masilela  
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A big morale boost it is for 8Bet Trade Fair Cup 2025/26 champions, Nsingizini Hotspurs!

At least that's how the club's President Derrick Shiba sees it.

'Insingizi Yezulu' can certainly build and improve in confidence as they prepare to take

on Zimbabwe's Simba Bhora on September 21, 2025 in Botswana, then in Eswatini a week later.

After winning the second edition of the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini, Shiba has said it was a good sign they were on course in as far as achieving their goals, while mentioning the fact that the title came just in good time as they prepared for their first-ever TotalEnergies CAF Champions League participation. Nsingizini beat Green Mamba 1-0, via a free

kick goal by new signing Quality Dlamini.

"I am happy with the progress of the team. We are still in the right direction in terms of achieving our goals, which is winning three competitions.

"This is a morale booster for the team ahead of our CAF assignment. We want to do better than we did last year in the Confederation Cup, and we will give our best shot," he said.

The reigning MTN Premier League champions will kick-start their continental jour-

ney with an away trip in Francistown, Botswana against Simba Bhora on September 21, 2025, at the Obed Chilume Stadium in Francistown.

The Shiselweni-based featured in the 2024 CAF Confederation Cup against Stellenbosch FC.

Ingwenyama Cup champions Royal Leopard will represent the country in the continent's second premier club competition (Confederation Cup) against Namibian side Young Africans.

## King's Golf Cup 2025: Over E90k for PROs, amateurs

By Chris Dlamini

LOCAL professional and amateur golfers shared over E90 000 in cash prizes on Sunday in the King's Golf Cup 2025.

The annual golf competition with international status had its Pre-Qualifiers over the weekend at Ezulwini Golf and Country Club, Royal Swazi Sun Hotel in Ezulwini.

The professionals were playing to qualify amid the trio of James Pennington, MJ Dlamini, and Brendon Rennie having long qualified after being the top three EmaSwati in the FNB Eswatini Challenge 2025 early last month. However, they still played here and were part of the E68 484 prize package for professionals.

Pennington excelled again, just as he was the only Swati golfer to make the top 50 in the FNB Eswatini Challenge.

He received E20 000 on Monday, while Dlamini and Rennie got E8 750 and E2 753 for being third and seventh respectively. Finishing second was Sanele Myeni who earned himself E11 200.

Meanwhile, amateur golfers shared E21 880, with Mfanzile



▲Local PRO Raymond Mathonsi in action during the Kings Golf Cup pre qualifier.

E. Dlamini winning E5 700, Nathi Tsabedze receiving E3 200 for being second, while Patson Dlamini was third and took home E2 500. Overall, a total of E90 364 was distributed to the winners of the Pre-Qualifiers.

The qualifying professionals will be joined by others from outside the country for the main tournament starting with two PRO-AM events from September 10-14. The professionals will then resume the main competition on Friday, September 12, and finish on Sunday, September 14 at the Ezulwini Golf and Country Club with 50 professionals.

## Qhogi believes in me – Quality

NSINGIZINI Hotspurs wonder kid Quality Dlamini has thanked his coach, Mandla Qhogi for believing in his talent.

Dlamini said this after netting the elusive strike that earned the Shiselweni-based side the 2025 Bet Trade Fair Cup title with a 1-0 over Green Mamba on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

"I am happy with the goal that helped us win the trophy. This came through the belief and trust that the coach has in me. He believes in dead-ball skills even at training; hence I had confidence before taking the free kick," he said.

The former Sisonke FC player also thanked the Nsingizini

Hotspurs family for welcoming me into the team.

"I have been warmly received in the team and grateful for the warm reception," he said.

Player of the tournament Yekisizwe Khumalo dedicated the award to the entire Nsingizini Hotspurs family.

"I am happy with the award, and this is through hard work from the entire team. We will continue working hard throughout the season," he said.

Meanwhile, Khumalo is the reigning MTN Premier League Player of the Season and was influential again in this knockout.



▲Quality Dlamini in action against Peter Dlamini.

## ... Qhogi praises title, awards-winning stars

NSINGIZINI Hotspurs head coach Mandla Qhogi has congratulated his players for winning the 2025 Bet Trade Fair.

The South African mentor said this after guiding to the title of the annual knockout competition with a 1-0 over Green Mamba on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

"Congratulations to the boys, and I am proud of their performance throughout the tournament. The victory has boosted our confidence heading to the new season, and we will continue working hard," he said, while adding he was also happy for the awards-winning players.

Meanwhile, his Green Mamba counterpart Bongani Mhlongo, was gracious in defeat. "I am proud of my players despite the loss. We gave it all, but mother luck was not on our side. We must pick ourselves up and prepare for the new season," he said.

The awards were all presented at the stadium soon after the final.

**The individual awards' winners:**

**Player of the Tournament** - Yekisizwe Khumalo (Nsingizini Hotspurs) - E10 000.

**Goalkeeper of the Tournament** - Sibusiso Dlamini (Nsingizini Hotspurs) - E7 000.

**Top Goalscorer** - Muzi Tsabedze (Manzini Sea Birds) - E7 000.



▲Nsingizini Hotspurs head coach Mandla Qhogi.


**Coach of the Tournament** - Bongani Mhlongo (Green Mamba) - E7 000.

**Best PRO** - Mnotfo Dlamini (Nsingizini Hotspurs) - E5 000.



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# Cup win CAF morale booster – Shiba

● **Nsingizini Hotspurs President Derrick Shiba says their goal is to win three titles as club also dominates 8Bet Trade Fair Cup awards. Page 23**