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landmark Defence agreement

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PM URGES GLOBAL SUPPORT:
‘Boost Africa’s
renewable energy
financing to 20% by 2030’

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini has delivered a compelling call for international support to accelerate Africa’s transition to renewable energy and secure equitable climate financing. Speaking at the opening of Africa Climate Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Prime Minister emphasised the urgent need for transformative investments to raise Africa’s share of renewable energy financing to at least 20 per cent by 2030.

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PM URGES GLOBAL SUPPORT:

‘Boost Africa’s renewable energy financing to 20% by 2030’

By Siphesihle Dlamini
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini has delivered a compelling call for international support to accelerate Africa’s transition to renewable energy and secure equitable climate financing.

Speaking at the opening of Africa Climate Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Prime Minister emphasised the urgent need for transformative investments to raise Africa’s share of renewable energy financing to at least 20 per cent by 2030. The event, themed “Accelerating Global Climate Solutions – Financing for Africa’s Resilient and Green Development,” provided a critical platform for African leaders to unite on climate action and sustainable development.

Highlighting the continent’s significant financing gap, PM Dlamini referenced the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), which states that Africa requires nearly US\$3 trillion to meet its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2030. Despite this enormous need, climate finance flows to Africa remain grossly inadequate, totalling only US\$30 billion between 2021 and 2022. This shortfall threatens the continent’s ability to combat climate change effectively and transition to clean energy sources.

“The Kingdom of Eswatini joins the call in the Draft Declaration for transformative climate financing, moving from aid to strategic investments in local innovation,” the



▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini joined other African leaders and dignitaries for a group photo at the opening of the Second Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Prime Minister asserted. He stressed the importance of equitable access to finance and called for reforms in global funding mechanisms, including Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), to increase concessional finance and enhance African representation. He also advocated for debt instruments that facilitate climate action without imposing unsustainable burdens on African economies.

A key component of the PM address was the emphasis on operationalising critical climate finance instruments. He underscored the necessity of activating the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage and advancing the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance. Furthermore, he supported the establishment of high-integrity carbon markets through initiatives such as the Africa Action Plan on Carbon

Markets (AAPCM).

The Prime Minister warned against unilateral measures like the European Union’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which risks penalising developing countries and could cost Africa up to US\$25 billion annually by 2030, jeopardising the continent’s development trajectory.

Reaffirming Eswatini’s commitment to climate action rooted in African values, Dlamini invoked the Tinkhundla system of governance, which centres decision-making on people and communities. He pledged to collaborate with all African Member States to ensure climate action is inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of citizens.

The Prime Minister also expressed support for the Africa Climate Innovation Challenge (ACIC) and other mechanisms designed to channel catalytic finance toward youth-led

enterprises and nature-based solutions, recognising the pivotal role of grassroots innovation in building climate resilience.

“Africa’s climate resilience is not just essential for our survival, it is indispensable to global stability and prosperity,” he stated. He urged global partners to view Africa’s climate challenges as opportunities for green growth, shared prosperity, and climate justice that will benefit generations to come.

Africa Climate Week serves as a vital forum for governments, private sector stakeholders, civil society, and international partners to collaborate on climate solutions tailored to the continent’s unique challenges. The Prime Minister’s address underscored the need for solidarity, strategic investment, and inclusive governance to unlock Africa’s renewable energy potential and build a sustainable future.

Head of Mission Masuku hits the ground running in Malawi

By Thokozeni Mazibuko

THE Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to Malawi’s upcoming General Election has officially hit the ground running, under the leadership of former Deputy Prime Minister of Eswatini and Shiselweni Regional Administrator, Themba Nhlanganiso Masuku. Malawi heads to the polls on 16 September 2025 in a vote widely expected to test the nation’s democratic resilience.

Upon his arrival in Lilongwe, Hon. Masuku wasted no time in setting the tone for the mission. He hosted a high-level working dinner with the SADC Organ Troika, the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC), and the SADC Secretariat. The briefing session provided him with a comprehensive update on Malawi’s electoral landscape and preparations ahead of polling day.

On Tuesday morning, Masuku paid a courtesy call on Malawi’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nancy Tembo (MP). Minister Tembo expressed deep appreciation to His Majesty King Mswati III for assigning Eswatini to spearhead the observation mission, particu-



▲ SADC Electoral Mission Head Themba Masuku with Malawi Foreign Affairs Minister Her Excellency Nancy Tembo and the SADC Electoral Observation Mission team.

larly at such a crucial time for Malawi. She highlighted the importance of Eswatini’s leadership, noting that Malawi, as the current Chair of SADC, is legally precluded from observing its own elections.

Later in the day, Hon. Masuku engaged with members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Malawi, including Commissioner Mlondi Dlamini, who represented Eswatini from Maputo, Mozambique. He also presided over the certification of SADC election observers who successfully completed their training and are now set for deployment across Malawi. Among them is Dr. Bonginkosi Dlamini from Mhlambanyatsi Inkhundla, who will be stationed in Rumphu District in

northern Malawi.

The official launch of the SEOM is scheduled for 10 September 2025, where Hon. Masuku will oversee the deployment of 80 observers from ten SADC Member States. The observers will be assigned to all 28 districts of Malawi to monitor the elections and ensure the process is credible, transparent, and peaceful.

His Majesty King Mswati III, as the Incoming Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, appointed Masuku to lead this critical mission. The SADC Secretariat, under Executive Secretary Elias Mpedi Magosi, has been tasked with coordinating and supporting the



▲ SADC Electoral Mission Head Themba Masuku having a light moment with H.E Kaunda, Zambia’s Ambassador to Malawi (The late President Kenneth Kaunda’s son).

in-country deployment.

The SADC Electoral Observation Mission is part of the regional bloc’s broader commitment to democratic governance, peace, and stability in Southern Africa. Through initiatives like SEOM, SADC works to ensure that elections across member states adhere to established regional principles and international standards of credibility and fairness.

It should be noted that as Malawi counts down to Election Day, the presence of SADC observers under Masuku’s stewardship is expected to play a crucial role in bolstering confidence in the process and strengthening democratic norms in the region.

By **Ncaba Ntshakala**
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IN a significant move towards enhancing regional peace and security, the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of Zambia have officially signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a Joint Permanent Commission on Defence and Security. The signing ceremony was held on Tuesday, marking a pivotal moment in the shared commitment of both nations to collaborate on defense and security initiatives.

The MoU aims to strengthen joint efforts in addressing various defense and security challenges, while facilitating the exchange of critical information and expertise between the two countries. Through this partnership, Eswatini and Zambia will be better equipped to tackle pressing security issues, including cross-border crimes and illegal migration, thus contributing to broader regional peace and stability.

During the ceremony, the Acting Minister in the Ministry of Defence and Security, Senator Pholile Shakantu, emphasized that this Commission reflects His Majesty King Mswati III's unwavering commitment to enhancing relationships in key strategic areas. She stated, "This partnership is grounded in the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charters of the United Nations and the African Union, as well as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which underscore the importance of respecting national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence."

Echoing her sentiments, the Honourable Ambrose Lwinji Lufuma, Minister of Defence for Zambia, highlighted the vital connection between peace and development, quoting President Hakainde Hichilema: "Instability anywhere on the continent is instability everywhere." He emphasized that peace is not just an end but the very foundation upon which development is built. Minister Lufuma reaffirmed Zambia's confidence in the Kingdom of Eswatini and reiterated that

Eswatini, Zambia sign landmark Defence agreement



▲ Acting Minister in the Ministry of Defence and Security Senator Pholile Shakantu shaking hands with Honourable Ambrose Lwinji Lufuma, Minister of Defence for Zambia during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to establish a joint Permanent Commission on Defence and Security between Eswatini and the Republic of Zambia on Tuesday.

expanding relations across various fields remains a top priority for his government.

The roots of this collaboration extend back to earlier engagements and discussions between both nations, demonstrating a long-standing commitment to working together in pursuit of shared goals.

As both countries move forward under this new framework, they aim to strengthen ties, enhance security cooperation, and ultimately foster a stable and prosperous environment for their citizens.



▲ Acting Minister in the Ministry of Defence and Security Senator Pholile Shakantu and Minister of Defence for Zambia Honourable Ambrose Lwinji Lufuma holding the MoU documents after the two countries signed a landmark defence deal.

By **Delisa Thwala**

THIRTY people, including farmers, farm owners, and business operators, have been arrested for violating Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) restrictions by moving cattle during the country's on-going outbreak.

Minister of Agriculture, Mandla Tshawuka, strongly condemned the actions, describing them as selfish and reckless.

He said such behaviour undermines national efforts to contain the disease and protect the livestock industry.

"This is witchcraft. These individuals are only looking out for their own interests while putting the entire nation's herd at risk. It is wrong and unacceptable,"

The arrests come at a critical time, as Eswatini continues to battle a surge in FMD cases. The Ministry of Agriculture has imposed strict controls on the movement of cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, goats, and pigs, to curb the spread of the highly contagious viral disease.

Under current FMD regulations, the movement of cattle is prohibited without prior authorisation from veterinary authorities.

Farmers and traders are required to comply with quarantine measures, inspections, and vaccination campaigns.

Any violation of these rules carries heavy penalties, including arrest, fines, and the possible destruction of infected animals.

Officials noted that moving cattle without clearance not only risks spreading the disease

30 Arrested for defying FMD restrictions

to new areas but also threatens national and regional trade. FMD is one of the most feared animal diseases globally because of its severe economic consequences.

Though it does not affect humans, it spreads rapidly among animals and reduces productivity through weight loss, decreased milk yields, and in severe cases, death.

In Eswatini, the livestock sector is a crucial part of the rural economy and household income. The country also relies heavily on beef exports, particularly to the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) region. An uncontrolled outbreak could lead to export bans, further straining the economy.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Eswatini has previously experienced FMD outbreaks that led to significant losses.

Regional partners, including South Africa and Botswana, have also suffered periodic outbreaks, highlighting the importance of strict disease control.

Minister Tshawuka urged farmers and business owners to take responsibility and comply fully with veterinary directives.

He warned that anyone found flouting the regulations would face the full force of the law. "Government has made it clear: these restrictions are not a suggestion, they are mandatory. Those who defy them put the livelihoods of thousands at risk," the Minister said.

He also appealed for unity and cooperation, emphasising that the livestock industry's survival depends on collective action.

"We cannot allow a few people's greed to undo the hard work being done to contain this disease," Tshawuka said. Meanwhile the Ministry of Agriculture has intensified surveillance, vaccination, and awareness campaigns in affected areas.

Veterinary teams are monitoring farms, enforcing quarantines, and working with community leaders to spread information about the dangers of non-compliance.

The arrests of the 30 individuals are expected to serve as a warning to others. Authorities say investigations are on-going, and further arrests may follow if additional violations are discovered. Foot and Mouth Disease is a severe, highly contagious viral disease affecting cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs.

It is characterised by fever, blisters in the mouth and feet, excessive salivation, and lameness.

The virus spreads easily through direct contact between animals, contaminated feed, equipment, or even by humans who have been in contact with infected livestock.

Outbreaks can devastate national herds, leading to mass culling and severe economic losses.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) recommends immediate reporting, strict movement controls, and vaccination as the primary tools for managing outbreaks.

Eswatini, as part of the Southern African



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Development Community (SADC), is bound by regional protocols to report and manage FMD outbreaks promptly. Compliance is crucial to maintaining trade access and safeguarding food security.

As Eswatini intensifies its fight against FMD, authorities stress that cooperation from all stakeholders is the only way to protect the livestock sector and the broader economy.

The arrests underscore the government's determination to enforce restrictions and safeguard the national herd.

Minister Tshawuka said they are dealing with a national crisis.

Anyone who disregards these measures is working against the country. Let us work together to defeat FMD and protect our farmers' livelihoods.

MD Mbetse wins against Status Capital Building Society – again

By Lwazi Dlamini
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ESTRANGED Status Capital Building Society Managing Director Michael Mbetse has come out victorious against the organisation again after the Industrial Court on Tuesday declared his suspension unlawful and set it aside.

The Industrial Court Judge Velaphi Dlamini handing down his judgement said the First respondent, Bismal De Silba, who had suspended Mbetse upon taking over Status Capital Building Society as curator appointed by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA), had no powers and/or authority to take disciplinary actions against the Applicant (Michael Mbetse).

“The First respondent and/or anyone acting under his authority is hereby interdicted from taking any disciplinary action against the Applicant. The charge sheet dated 12 May 2025 and the suspension letter dated 14 July 2025 issued by the first respondent are hereby declared unlawful and set aside,” the judgement reads in part.

Mbetse had instituted proceedings in the Industrial Court, where he was challenging his second suspension. In his founding affidavit, he outlined a despite over the powers of the institution’s appointed curator against the backdrop of previous court rulings and his recent attempt to return to his position.

The dispute was centred on a declaratory order sought by Mbetse who argued that De Silva had no authority to suspend him

...Industrial Court Judge says Curator has no power to take disciplinary action and suspension letter by Status Capital declared unlawful and set aside.



▲ Estranged Status Capital Building Society Managing Director Michael Mbetse.

from employment. Mbetse maintains that his contract is with the Board of Directors of Status Capital Building Society and that only the Board can exercise such disciplinary powers.

In his court papers, Mbetse had also stated that the curator’s mandate, as defined in his terms of reference, is ‘clear and unequivocal’ and limited in scope. The affidavit specifies these powers, including taking control of the

company’s assets, collecting debts, investigating financial distress and recommending a course of action to FSRA.

Mbetse’s main argument was that the curator had allegedly overstepped this mandate, instead of focusing on these duties, De Silva had reportedly instituted disciplinary charges and most recently, suspended him again. Following the court judgement in December 2024 where he won, Mbetse several attempts to return to work were thwarted in what the first applicant describes as ‘defiance of the order of this court.’

On July 14, 2025, Mbetse said, he proceeded to his workplace to resume his duties, having given notice to the respondents (De Silva and Status Capital). He said upon his arrival, he was once again suspended by De Silva.

Judge Velaphi Dlamini dismissed the point in limine (at the beginning) by the respondents (De Silva and Status Capital) and then handed his judgement that the curator had no powers and/or authority to take disciplinary actions against the Applicant (Michael Mbetse) and he also declared unlawful and set aside the suspension letter by Status Capital Building Society allowing Mbetse to return to work on Wednesday.

The curator and Status Building Society have been ordered to pay punitive costs of application filed by the applicant under Case No. 230/2025.

By Kwanele Dhladhla

Prime Minister Russell Dlamini delivered a powerful address on Saturday during the official closing of the Eswatini International Trade Fair (EITF), a ceremony that coincided with the Kingdom’s 57th Independence Day celebrations.

The Prime Minister began his remarks by extending deep gratitude to His Majesty King Mswati III for his unwavering support and annual presence at the Trade Fair.

“On behalf of the Government, the Investment Promotion Authority and the entire nation, I would like to express our profound appreciation to you, Your Majesty, for consistently gracing the Trade Fair with your presence every year. Your visit to many stalls, though arduous, is a demonstration of your leadership and commitment to the vision of growth and prosperity for our country,” said Dlamini.

September 6, 2025, marked a double celebration—57 years since Eswatini regained independence from colonial rule, and 57 years since the inception of the Trade Fair. Dlamini reflected on the historical significance of the day, acknowledging the foundation laid by King Sobhuza II, who attained independence through peaceful means.

“As citizens, we pride ourselves on the progress in infrastructure development, the progress in human development, growth in the economy, and the peace and stability we enjoy in our country. We will continue to cherish and protect peace in the Kingdom,” he said. The Prime Minister described the Trade Fair as a beacon of Eswatini’s resilience and economic ambition. From its

Trade Fair, Independence mark Eswatini’s journey of growth — PM

humble beginnings in 1968 as an agricultural exhibition, the fair has transformed into a globally recognised platform showcasing innovation, entrepreneurship, and cross-border collaboration.

During his tour of the fair stands earlier in the week, Dlamini noted that the current premises were no longer adequate to accommodate the increasing interest from businesses, both local and international.

“It is therefore paramount for His Majesty’s Government to prioritise the expansion of the Trade Fair grounds. We foresee exponential growth in industries involving local and international companies in the near future, aligning with the goals of the Nkwe Programme of Action and the Grand Plan for National Transformation,” he stated.

This year’s theme, “Digital Transformation: Creating Business Networks,” was highlighted as a forward-looking declaration of Eswatini’s aspirations to leverage technology for trade and innovation. Dlamini emphasized the government’s commitment to positioning the Kingdom as a hub for commerce while empowering small and medium-sized enterprises.

He further praised the introduction of the Green Zone at the fair, a space dedicated to renewable energy, environmental conservation, and green financing initiatives.

“It is encouraging to see our entrepreneurs, especially women and youth, actively engaging in solutions that protect our plan-



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et while creating jobs and economic opportunities,” Dlamini said.

In his concluding remarks, the Prime Minister turned to his principal task of introducing the guest of honour, His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Dlamini outlined President Mnangagwa’s illustrious political journey spanning over six decades, detailing his roles in Zimbabwe’s independence movement, cabinet positions, and leadership as both Vice Presi-

dent and Head of State.

“Your Majesty, please allow me to now humbly request His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, to take to the stage,” Dlamini concluded.

The closing ceremony was attended by dignitaries, government officials, international investors, and members of the public, marking yet another milestone in Eswatini’s journey of unity, innovation, and transformation.

Man found murdered at Mabhubukweni

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

SHOCK and grief have gripped the community of Mabhubukweni after a 37-year-old man from Luve was discovered dead in the early hours of Monday morning, with multiple injuries covering his body.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Senior Superintendent Phindile Vilakati, the victim was found at around 05:30 a.m. on 08 September 2025. Police confirmed that he had sustained severe injuries, suggesting a violent assault that led to his untimely death.

While the identity of the deceased has been withheld until the family is formally notified, authorities revealed that initial investigations point towards foul play. “The circumstances surrounding his death remain under investigation, and we are appealing to members of the public who may have information to come forward,” Senior Superin-

tendent Vilakati said. Residents in the area were left shaken by the gruesome discovery, describing the incident as deeply unsettling for their usually quiet community. Some community members reported hearing disturbances during the night, though no immediate arrests have been made.

Police have since launched a full-scale investigation, and detectives are working around the clock to trace suspects and establish a motive for the killing. The body of the deceased has been conveyed to the nearest government mortuary for a post-mortem examination, which is expected to shed further light on the cause of death.

Senior Superintendent Vilakati assured the public that the police remain committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice. She further urged communities to continue co-operating with law enforcement in the fight against violent crime.

The murder adds to a growing concern about violent attacks in rural communities, raising calls for increased security patrols and closer community-police cooperation.



Step dad arrested in connection to the rape of step daughter

A step-father has been arrested for allegedly raping his 15-year-old step daughter.

The name of the step-father and that of the survivor are known to this publication but they will not be revealed to protect the survivor.

The accused appeared yesterday at the Manzini Magistrates’ Court before Principal Magistrate Florence Msibi, charged with two counts of contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act.

He committed both the offences on May this year in one of the areas in the Manzini region.

On the first count, the accused is said to have forced the 15-year-old minor into having sexual intercourse without a condom, and yet according to the law, she was incapable of consenting to sexual interaction and thereby contravened the aforementioned Act.

According to the charge sheet, the rape

was accompanied by aggravating factors as envisaged by Section 185 bis of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, in that the accused did not use a condom during the commission of the offence, thus exposing the survivor to Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD’s), including HIV/AIDS.

He is also said to have caused lasting trauma to the survivor by his act. The accused is further said to have broken the element of trust he had with the survivor, since he was her step-father.

“Take further notice that in the event of conviction, your particulars will be added on the register of sex offenders,” the charge sheet further read.

On the second count, the accused was charged with unlawfully maintaining a relationship with a minor.

He was remanded in custody until November 17, 2025, pending his trial on November 5, 2026.



First ever public transport awards on the cards

IN a bid to professionalise the public transport industry, Creative Collaboration Foundation in partnership with the National Road Transport Council is set to host the first ever public transport awards for public transport workers.

This was revealed by Creative Collaboration Foundation Chairperson and the Public Transport Awards Coordinator Menzi’okuhle Mthethwa.

According to Mthethwa, as Creative Collaboration Foundation in partnership with the National Road Transport Council (NRTC), they sent proposals to public transport associations with the main aim of celebrating the work done by public transport workers, including kombi, bus and taxi drivers as well as bomalume in the public transport industry, alongside their relevant partners and stakeholders such as the Road Safety Council, Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) Sincephetelo Motor Vehicle Accident Fund (SMVAF) and Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society to name just a few.

He mentioned that after having deliberations with senior officials from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, they (authorities from the ministry) advised them that the best programme to launch in a bid to celebrate the personnel within the public transport industry was the awards for the public transport workers as part of the commemoration of Public Transport Month, which is an international event that is celebrated worldwide annually during the month of November.

He mentioned that during this commemoration, Eswatini was also expected to undertake certain activities as part of the celebration of the Transport Month.

“We decided to align ourselves with the commemoration of the Public Transport Month, and celebrate the public transport industry, alongside the public transport associations and the National Road Transport Council by hosting the first ever public transport awards,” he said.

Mthethwa mentioned that once the authorities from the ministry have official launched the event; they will begin by conducting a capacity building programme. He said through this programme, they will be conducting countrywide trainings for the public transport workers, whereby they will be capacitating them on customer care, financial literacy, savings, and adherence to traffic laws amongst other thematic areas.

Mthethwa said all the relevant stakeholders will be participating in the capacity building programme.

He said after that they will then host road shows until the month of November in all cities and towns across the four regions of the country. Mthethwa stated that during the road shows, they will be engaging with the members of the public, in order to find out from them what exactly they were ex-

pecting from public transport workers, in so far as their behaviour was concerned.

He said after the road shows, they will give the members of public an opportunity to vote for the best public transport worker in 13 different categories.

He said during the main day (commemoration of the Public Transport Month) in November, they will then present awards to the outstanding public transport workers, who would have been voted for as the best by the members of the public across the different categories.

Mthethwa said through this event, they aimed to celebrate the good work done by public transport workers and to professionalise the public transport industry through capacitating the public transport workers on areas where they were not doing well.

“The aim is to professionalise the public transport industry. We acknowledge the fact that government departments have done so much to improve the public transport industry but this time around, we deemed it fit to join forces with them in a bid to professionalise and transform the public transport industry for the better,” he said.

He mentioned that they will be rolling out this programme annually. He, therefore, pleaded with companies to collaborate with them in their mission of professionalising the public transport industry by supporting them financially.

Mthethwa said this will go a long way in ensuring that they purchase the prizes to be won during the award ceremony as well as conducting the capacity building programme with ease over the next coming years.

“This will encourage those public transport workers, who would have won the awards to keep on doing the right thing in an effort to defend their titles,” he said.

He said nominations were on-going. He pointed out that all nominees will undergo a vetting process, qualify for regional selection, public voting, regional eliminations, and last national public voting.

Awards Categories

1. Driver of the Year
2. Public Transport Company of the Year
3. Safety Excellence Award
4. Customer Service Excellence
5. Lifetime Achievement Award
6. Marshal of the Year
7. Public Transport Conductor of the Year
8. Most Hygiene Friendly Public Transport of the Year
9. Long Serving Driver
10. Archived Public Transport Owner of all Times
11. Funniest Public Transport King
12. Popular Public Transport Personality of the Year
13. Empowered Woman in the Public Transport Industry

‘Sigujana’ drama lands couple in Court

Stories by Delisa Magagula

THE family of Futhi Simelane, who was allegedly chased by his wife with a spear, has accused her of witchcraft after reportedly finding a calabash ‘sigujana’ in their home.

Simelane’s family appeared before the Mbabane Magistrates Court seeking a peace binding order. However, the matter could not proceed as the wife, Portia Dlamini’s family, was not present.

Dlamini, of Siphocosini, nonetheless appeared before Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi, charged under the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act of 2018.

She faces two counts of threatening violence one for allegedly brandishing a spear at her husband, and another for allegedly threatening Jerry Dlamini in a similar manner.

During testimony, Simelane told the court that his wife threatened him with a spear in October 2023 after he asked her to return to her parental home following three family meetings.

He said he eventually moved out of the matrimonial home because of her violent behaviour, noting that they have lived under a court order since 2022 which she allegedly disregarded.

“She is violent, and I had to move out because I feared for my safety,” Simelane testified.

He further claimed that his wife falsely told family members she was pregnant, despite them not having been intimate for seven years.

He alleged she also informed their children that he had found them a new mother.

For her part, Dlamini denied the allegations, insisting her husband abandoned her because he said she was old and ugly.

The matter has been postponed to September 13 to allow both families to attempt a resolution.



▲ Portia Simelane who is accused of having Sigujana appeared before court on Tuesday.

Robbery accused remanded in custody after stealing over E11 000

BONGUMUSA Shongwe has been remanded in custody after he was charged with robbery with intent to steal, following a housebreaking incident in which he allegedly stole more than E11,000.

The court heard that Shongwe allegedly stole E7, 000 and a further E4, 400 during the break-in. Of the stolen amount, E3, 000 was recovered, leaving a balance of E8, 400 still unaccounted for.

When appearing before Mbabane Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi, Shongwe apologised for his actions, pleaded for leniency, and told the court that the complainant had since forgiven him.

However, the magistrate dismissed his plea, ruling that forgiveness did not absolve him from responsibility.

Magistrate Nhlabatsi ordered that Shongwe remain in custody until he pays back the outstanding E8,400. The matter has been postponed to September 11.



▲ Bongumusa Shongwe allegedly stole money worth E11 000.

Wife fined for damaging husband’s car in cheating row

A MARITAL dispute took centre stage at the Mbabane Magistrates Court when a woman was fined for damaging her husband’s car after accusing him of using it to visit a mistress.

Thembeke Sikhondze was convicted of malicious damage to property and ordered to pay a E5,000 fine or serve five years in prison. The incident arose when Sikhondze allegedly struck her own vehicle with stones, angered that her husband, Khulekani Sikhondze, was using it to pursue an extramarital affair.

In her defence, Thembeke told the court that she had damaged the car because it was repeatedly being used by her husband to cheat.

“I hit the car because he uses it to hurt me,” she explained.

Khulekani was summoned to the witness stand, where he faced a stern reprimand from Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi.



▲ Thembeke Sikhondze was fined E5000 for malicious damage property.

The magistrate expressed concern about the toxic state of the couple’s relationship and warned that unresolved tensions could lead to serious harm.

“You need to fix your issues so that you do not end up killing each other and traumatising your children,” Magistrate Nhlabatsi told the couple.

Turning to Thembeke, the magistrate advised her to distance herself from destructive behaviour and instead prioritise her personal growth and her children’s wellbeing.

“You must detach and focus on yourself and the children,” she said.

The court also rebuked Khulekani for his conduct, stressing the importance of respecting his wife and their marriage.

“Do not use your wife’s things to cheat,” Magistrate Nhlabatsi cautioned.

The ruling underscored the court’s disapproval of both the criminal act of vandalism and the marital infidelity that sparked the conflict.

Magistrate Nhlabatsi urged the couple to seek healthier ways of addressing their disputes, emphasising that violence and betrayal only deepen family wounds. The E5000/5 years sentence was suspended on condition that she does not commit a similar offence.



▲ Emmanuel Dlamini asked for his prosecutor Muzi Nxumalo to be removed from his case.

Man facing rape allegations seeks recusal of prosecutor

A man appeared before Mbabane Principal Magistrate Fikile Nhlabatsi facing charges of contravening the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act of 2018.

The accused is alleged to have, on December 23, 2023, at or near Mdzangwini in the Hhohho region, unlawfully engaged in a sexual act with one Elizabeth Veli Dlamini.

The offence is said to have been committed without the use of a condom, thereby exposing the complainant to the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

The State has also indicated that, in the event of conviction, the accused’s name will be entered into the National Register for Sex Offenders.

Alternatively, the accused faces a second charge of sexual violation, in that he allegedly committed a sexual act without the complainant’s consent, thereby contravening Section 5(1) of the SODV Act.

During proceedings, the accused applied for the recusal of Prosecutor Muzi Nxumalo, alleging bias and intimidation.

He told the court that Nxumalo had been calling his witnesses aside and that he did not want to work with him on the matter.

Magistrate Nhlabatsi stood down the matter and reassigned it to Prosecutor Motsa for continuation. The case continues.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Eswatini producers get fully funded global certification programme

MANUFACTURERS, processors, and producers in Eswatini now have a golden opportunity to put their products on the global map through a fully funded certification programme spearheaded by the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO) in collaboration with the Eswatini Standards Authority (SWASA).

Anglo American, Teck to merge in second-largest mining deal ever

LONDON — London-listed miner Anglo American and Canada's Teck Resources plan to merge, the two companies said on Tuesday, marking the sector's second-biggest M&A deal ever and forging a new global copper-focused heavyweight. Under the proposed deal, which still needs regulatory approval, Anglo American shareholders would own 62.4 per cent of the newly combined company, Anglo Teck, while shareholders in Teck will hold 37.6 per cent.

Dollar slips to 7-week low as jobs gloom bolsters Fed cut wagers

MUMBAI — The dollar hit a seven-week low on Tuesday as investors braced for U.S. data revisions that could point to a jobs market in worse shape than initially thought, shoring up the case for even deeper Federal Reserve interest rate cuts. The dollar slumped 0.7 per cent against the Japanese yen to 146.32, its weakest level since mid-August while sterling was up 0.2 per cent at \$1.3558.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy		Sell	
U.S. Dollar	17.0646		17.5272	
G.B. Pound	23.1663		23.8331	
EURO	20.0924		20.7064	
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			

UNDP targets 5 000 jobs and 25 000 sustainable livelihoods in Eswatini

By Delisa Magagula

THE United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has unveiled its new Country Programme Document (CPD) for Eswatini, setting out ambitious targets to create 5,000 direct jobs and support 25,000 sustainable livelihoods by 2030.

The initiative is designed to drive annual economic growth above 4 per cent, while strengthening governance, social cohesion, and sustainable development in line with the Kingdom's national priorities.

According to the UNDP, the programme is the result of extensive consultations, evaluations, and lessons learned from previous interventions.

It aligns with both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, while directly supporting Eswatini's National Development Plan.

UNDP officials stated that the CPD also contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) through two interconnected priorities which are promoting good governance and social cohesion and advancing sustainable and resilient economic development.

At the heart of the programme is the creation of new employment opportunities for Eswatini's growing youth population.

UNDP emphasised that the goal is not only to generate 5,000 direct jobs but also to secure 25,000 sustainable livelihoods across different sectors.

"This programme responds to the pressing challenge of youth unemployment in Eswatini. By investing in sustainable livelihoods, skills development, and entrepreneurship, we aim to ensure that young people can contribute meaningfully to the economy," UNDP said.

Officials further explained that job creation will be supported by policies aimed at strengthening the macroeconomic framework.

By addressing systemic challenges and promoting private sector growth, the programme targets consistent annual growth above 4 per cent.

Beyond economic development, the CPD places significant emphasis on improving governance and access to justice.

"By 2030, UNDP plans to ensure that at least 50 per cent of people interacting with the justice system including litigants, accused persons, and vulnerable communities have access to fair, fast, and affordable justice," further read the UNDP statement.

According to the statement, this will be achieved through the establishment of small claims courts expanded access to legal aid, and the promotion of inclusive alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

According to UNDP, such reforms are aimed at reducing barriers to justice, especially for vulnerable groups, and fostering greater social



▲ Representatives who attended the UNDP meeting.

cohesion.

"The CPD also prioritises digitisation to improve governance and service delivery. UNDP targets a scenario where at least 25 per cent of the population can reliably access essential public services through digital platforms," states the statement.

These services will include access to justice, healthcare, economic opportunities, and business support.

Officials explained that leveraging digital technologies will help to improve efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in government processes.

"Digitisation is not just about technology. It is about inclusion, ensuring that ordinary citizens, particularly in rural areas, can access the services they need without barriers," UNDP stated.

The programme also addresses the need to protect Eswatini's environment while promoting economic growth. By 2030, UNDP aims to mobilise at least \$10 million in biodiversity finance through private sector engagement and resource mobilisation.

At the same time, the programme seeks to expand the nation's renewable energy capacity by at least 4 megawatts, contributing to both energy security and climate resilience.

"These measures will help Eswatini transition towards a greener economy while protecting its rich biodiversity," UNDP noted.

UNDP has also highlighted the importance of strengthening fiscal and resource management systems.

The CPD sets out to achieve a 3 per cent increase in domestic revenue mobilisation and to expand fiscal space by 5 per cent to support priority investments.

Additionally, the programme seeks to enhance governance and transparency in the management of public and local resources.

Officials stressed that effective financial management is crucial for ensuring that development outcomes are sustainable.

The CPD was developed in close collabora-

tion with the Government of Eswatini and other stakeholders. It aligns with the country's National Development Plan and responds to key national challenges, including unemployment, inequality, and climate change.

It is also framed within the global and continental development agendas, namely the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, ensuring that Eswatini's development is part of a broader regional and international effort.

UNDP stressed that the success of the programme will depend on strong partnerships with government, civil society, the private sector, and international development partners. The organisation reiterated its commitment to working alongside all stakeholders to deliver tangible results by 2030.

"This programme is about building on lessons from the past while focusing on the future. It is about strengthening systems, creating opportunities, and ensuring that no one is left behind," UNDP concluded.

By 2030, the Country Programme Document aims to deliver on five major outcomes:

1. Justice for those who need it most: At least 50 per cent of justice system users accessing fair, fast, and affordable services
2. Digitally enabled services for all, at least 25 per cent of the population accessing essential services through digital platforms.
3. Secure and grow the economy, creation of 5,000 direct jobs and support for 25,000 livelihoods, backed by 4 per cent annual economic growth.
4. Clean energy and biodiversity protection, \$10 million mobilised in biodiversity finance and 4MW of renewable energy added.
5. Stronger development finance and governance 3 per cent rise in domestic revenue mobilisation and 5 per cent expansion of fiscal space.

Through these outcomes, UNDP seeks to ensure that Eswatini advances toward inclusive, sustainable development and that citizen's benefit from stronger governance, economic

By Delisa Magagula

MANUFACTURERS, processors, and producers in Eswatini now have a golden opportunity to put their products on the global map through a fully funded certification programme spearheaded by the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO) in collaboration with the Eswatini Standards Authority (SWASA).

This initiative, which is open until September 15, 2025, is designed to support companies and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across different value chains to obtain certification under harmonized African Standards (ARS).

“The core purpose is to uplift the quality of goods made in Africa, ensuring that they meet continental and international standards, while boosting their competitiveness in both regional and global markets,” read the statement from SWASA.

For decades, African products have faced difficulties in entering larger markets due to non-compliance with technical and safety requirements.

According to the statement, each country often has its own standards, leading to costly duplication and confusion for manufacturers.

The ARSO certification programme addresses this challenge by harmonising standards across African countries.

According to SWASA, this initiative will reduce technical barriers to trade by ensuring that certified products meet a single, unified benchmark.

This makes it easier for Eswatini-made goods to move freely across African borders without being hindered by differing national requirements.

“Producers who take part in this programme will not only meet African standards but will also place themselves in a stronger position for international trade. The ARS certification acts as a passport, giving products recognition across borders and beyond the continent,” SWASA explained.

The programme offers several advantages for local producers, from reduced costs to stronger market confidence.

First, reduced technical barriers to trade mean that once a product is certified under ARS, it no longer needs to undergo multiple national tests to be accepted in different countries. This saves both time and money, particularly for small enterprises.

Second, certification enhances consumer confidence. Products carrying the certification mark send a clear message to buyers.

This item has been tested, it meets the highest safety and quality requirements, and it can be trusted. In a world where consumers are increasingly conscious about what they buy, this stamp of approval is a powerful selling point.

According to SWASA third, the programme provides a gateway to global recognition. ARSO certification schemes are aligned with guidelines from global organisations such as the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and the International Electro technical Commission (IEC). This alignment ensures that certified African products are not only accepted regionally but also credible in markets worldwide.

“This is more than just a certificate; it is an opportunity for African producers to prove that their goods can compete on the same stage as those from Europe, Asia, and the Americas,” SWASA added.

“One of the most attractive aspects of this



▲ Stakeholders from Government and major entities who attended the training on ARSO programmes earlier this year.

Eswatini producers get fully funded global certification programme

opportunity is that it is fully funded. Companies and MSMEs in Eswatini that wish to participate will not be required to shoulder the costs of the certification process, which is often a significant barrier for small businesses,” explained the statement.

SWASA has called on all interested businesses to apply by completing and submitting the necessary forms before the 15 September 2025 deadline.

The authority emphasised that participation is not limited to large corporations. Even small-scale producers who believe in the quality of their goods and want to access wider markets are strongly encouraged to take part.

Eswatini has long sought ways to diversify its economy and increase exports beyond traditional markets.

The ARSO-SWASA programme comes at a crucial time, as global trade is shifting and consumers are showing a growing appetite for authentic, high-quality African products.

For local producers, this initiative is not just about meeting a standard it is about unlocking new opportunities.

Whether it is agricultural produce, processed foods, textiles, or manufactured goods, certification under harmonised African Standards can provide the key to breaking into new markets.

Economists have noted that if more Eswatini products are certified and exported, the country stands to gain from increased foreign exchange earnings, job creation, and a stronger industrial base.

SWASA has urged companies and MSMEs to act quickly, as the window of opportunity is short. Interested producers must fill in and submit the application form provided by SWASA before the deadline.

The selection process will ensure that only those products which comply with ARS requirements are supported.

“Do not miss this chance. If you are a producer who dreams of seeing your products



▲ SWASA CEO Ncamiso Mhlanga.

on supermarket shelves across Africa and beyond, this is the time to take action,” SWASA stated.

The certification drive also aligns with the objectives of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which seeks to create a single market for goods and services across the continent.

By harmonising standards and boosting intra-African trade, the ARSO certification scheme directly supports the vision of an integrated and prosperous Africa.

For Eswatini producers, this means they are not only competing locally but are also

becoming part of a continental movement toward greater economic self-reliance and international visibility.

The closing date for applications is September 15, 2025. All interested businesses are encouraged to seize this fully funded opportunity by contacting SWASA and submitting their applications before the deadline.

With certification, Eswatini producers can break barriers, earn global recognition, and showcase that products made in the Kingdom meet the highest standards of quality and reliability. This is an opportunity not to be missed.

Anglo American, Teck to merge in second-largest mining deal ever

By Clara Denina

LONDON — London-listed miner Anglo American and Canada's Teck Resources plan to merge, the two companies said on Tuesday, marking the sector's second-biggest M&A deal ever and forging a new global copper-focused heavyweight.

Under the proposed deal, which still needs regulatory approval, Anglo American shareholders would own 62.4 per cent of the newly combined company, Anglo Teck, while shareholders in Teck will hold 37.6 per cent.

Anglo Teck will be headquartered in Canada but have a primary stock listing in London, said the two companies, whose combined market capitalisation exceeds \$53 billion.

The deal, which makes the new entity the world's fifth-largest copper company, also is a big bet by Anglo on copper.

Glencore's \$90 billion merger with Xstrata in 2013 remains the largest mining deal in history.

Copper, used in the power and construction sectors, is poised to benefit from burgeoning demand from the electric vehicle sector and other new applications such as data centres for artificial intelligence.

A race by miners to dominate the copper space has fuelled a rush to develop new projects as well as a flurry of takeover bids, though no major acquisition has so far succeeded.

Both Anglo and Teck have undergone significant restructuring in recent years, driven by external takeover attempts and strategic shifts within the mining industry.



▲ The Anglo American logo is seen in Rustenburg, South Africa.

Anglo faced a £39 billion (\$53 billion) takeover bid from BHP last year that was ultimately rejected by its board. Teck rejected a \$22.5 billion takeover offer from Glencore in 2023, though it sold its steelmaking coal business to Glencore for \$6.93 billion.

"I think the deal itself is a very strong defence," said one source with knowledge of the negotiations between Anglo and Teck.

The transaction has a zero-premium, all-share structure.

That lack of a premium could open the door to rival bids, but Anglo's shareholders will receive a \$4.5 billion special dividend.

"Interloper risk will be a big question for the market on this deal," Berenberg analysts wrote in a note, adding that Glencore and BHP, notably, could still step in.

While Anglo and Teck can still consider unsolicited acquisition proposals, a \$330 million break fee would apply.

Merger of equals

Anglo's London shares were up over 9 per cent on Tuesday, on track for their biggest daily gain in more than a year, while U.S.-listed Teck shares were up 10.4 per cent in pre-market trading.

"This is a consolidation that makes sense and brings complementary cultures together," said Adam Matthews of the Church of England Pensions Board, an Anglo shareholder.

"Both companies are ones we hold high regard for, and the industry will be stronger for this move," he said.

Anglo Chief Executive Officer Duncan Wanblad will remain CEO of the new company, while Teck's Jonathan Price will be deputy CEO. Wanblad, speaking to journalists from Vancouver, called the deal a "true merger of equals", adding that Anglo Teck's board would be drawn equally from

the two companies' existing directors.

"We will have a stronger, more resilient financial platform with scale advantages, including greater flexibility to reallocate capital dynamically to the highest returning opportunities," he said.

The tie-up is expected to generate annual cost savings and efficiency gains of \$800 million by the fourth year after completion, Anglo said.

"As a merger, we absolutely get to draw on the best of both, and we don't really need to pay away anything on either side in terms of premium to get the full benefit," Wanblad said.

The two companies operate adjacent copper mines in Chile - Quebrada Blanca and Collahuasi - which are expected to deliver further operational benefits.

Quebrada Blanca is Teck's flagship mine, but a tailings issue that relates to the disposal of mine waste has seen it miss production guidance, dragging down the company's shares. Teck's Price said securing the regulatory approvals for the deal could take between 12 and 18 months. He added that Canada's Keevil family, which owns a majority of Teck's A-class shares, backed the deal.

"We have irrevocable support from Dr. (Norman) Keevil and the other A-share voters," he said.

A source close to the deal said that the decision to maintain the new company's headquarters in Canada, safeguarding Teck's "Canadian legacy", would likely help ease the way for regulatory approval by authorities there. Canadian officials had shown hostility to Glencore's previous bid to acquire Teck, and the source said such concessions in the new deal could help fend off rival bids from companies unwilling to include similar proposals. (Reuters)

By Jaspreet Kalra

Dollar slips to 7-week low as jobs gloom bolsters Fed cut wagers

MUMBAI — The dollar hit a seven-week low on Tuesday as investors braced for U.S. data revisions that could point to a jobs market in worse shape than initially thought, shoring up the case for even deeper Federal Reserve interest rate cuts.

The dollar slumped 0.7 per cent against the Japanese yen to 146.32, its weakest level since mid-August while sterling was up 0.2 per cent at \$1.3558. The euro slipped to \$1.1752 after touching its strongest level since July 24.

A Bloomberg news report that Bank of Japan officials believe it may be possible to raise the benchmark interest rate again this year also helped boost the Japanese currency.

The yen is likely to be exposed to heightened volatility due to ongoing political uncertainty and was likely helped along on Tuesday by market participants bringing forward expectations of a BoJ rate hike, said Samy Chaar, chief economist at Lombard Odier.

Against a basket of peers, the dollar slipped to a low of 97.25, its weakest since late July, ahead of the release of preliminary benchmark revisions, opens new tab for jobs

data covering the period from April 2024 to March 2025.

Economists anticipate a downward revision of as much as 800,000 jobs, which could signal that the Fed is behind the curve in efforts to achieve maximum employment.

While the job revisions data could heighten expectations of an outsized rate cut, inflation data due later in the week could also temper those expectations, Chaar said.

U.S. producer price inflation data is due on Wednesday followed by the consumer price inflation reading on Thursday.

The data points will be in focus to gauge the impact of tariffs on prices in the world's largest economy.

Traders' expectations of more aggressive Fed easing are gradually increasing. Money markets have fully priced in a 25 basis-point cut, and the odds of an outsized 50 basis-point reduction have drifted higher to nearly 12 per cent as well, per CME's FedWatch tool.

Burgeoning expectations of policy easing by the Fed have also helped lift the spot gold price to a record high of \$3,659.10 per ounce on Tuesday.



▲ A U.S. dollar note is seen in this illustration.

Among other currencies, the Norwegian crown advanced about 0.2 per cent against both the dollar and the euro after Norway's minority Labour Party government won a second term in power on Monday.

Political developments from Tokyo to Buenos Aires are likely to stay in focus for

investors after the resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, the ouster of French Prime Minister Francois Bayrou and the abrupt removal of Indonesia's finance chief, all over the past few days.

"While the political uncertainty is an unfavourable development, we continue to believe that it is unlikely to be sufficient on its own to trigger a weaker euro," Lee Hardman, senior currency analyst at MUFG, said in a note.

Later this week, the European Central Bank is widely expected to keep rates unchanged at its policy meeting on Thursday.

Economists were split last month on the likelihood of further rate reductions by the ECB, but sentiment has shifted with recent data showing inflation holding close to the 2 per cent target and unemployment at a record low.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian rupiah weakened 1 per cent after the government replaced its finance minister on Monday. Bank Indonesia was seen buying longer-dated government bonds on Tuesday in an attempt to stabilise the market, according to two traders. (Reuters)

Musk's pay package: How does Tesla get to \$8.5 trillion in value?

HOW can Tesla, opens new tab become an \$8.5 trillion company? That's the market valuation the electric vehicle maker would have to reach to justify CEO Elon Musk's new pay package announced last week.

Selling 100 million humanoid robots in a year could do it; creating a robotaxi network with more than 10 times the revenue of Uber (UBER.N), opens new tab might as well. And of course, investor hope is part of the equation.

Musk on Friday was given a decade to expand Tesla's \$1 trillion valuation into a company worth more than the combined current value of Nvidia (NVDA.O), opens new tab and Microsoft (MSFT.O), opens new tab, the two most valuable publicly traded companies in the world. If he succeeds, Musk, already the best-paid CEO in the world, would receive a trillion-dollar pay package.

Musk's new pay package was granted on September 3, but it is subject to shareholder approval in November.

The board showed how and where it expects Tesla to make its money by structuring Musk's pay package around 12 milestones that are primarily based on products and profit, as well as market capitalization. They target enormous increases in profit as Tesla rolls out its Optimus humanoid robots and a robotaxi fleet that it hopes will be more efficient than human-driven rivals.

A lot depends on how investors value the company. Tesla, for example, is valued as a growth stock, trading at around 75 times its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, or EBITDA, even though its vehicle sales dropped last year and are



▲ A Tesla robotaxi drives on the street along South Congress Avenue in Austin, Texas, U.S.

likely to drop this year.

The payoff is astounding - and so are the goals. Gene Munster, managing partner at Deepwater Asset Management, broadly estimated that robotaxis and self-driving software could be worth a trillion dollars of market cap each, with cars another half-trillion. "At the end of the day, the reason why this is going to work or not work really comes down to Optimus," he said. "It's a fairy tale, but it's one that could actually happen."

Musk has been betting the company on self-driving software and robotaxis for some time. Tesla currently has a small fleet of robotaxis - estimated to be about three dozen

vehicles - in a part of Austin, Texas. An early Musk milestone is to have a million robotaxis in operation.

One of Tesla's biggest fans, ARK Invest, predicted an even sunnier case well before the Musk pay package was announced. They see Tesla's market capitalization hitting \$7 trillion to \$10.9 trillion in 2029, opens new tab, with a Tesla robotaxi network bringing in between \$603 billion and \$951 billion of ride-hail revenue per year. Global ride-hailing leader Uber, by comparison, will have revenue of \$52 billion this year, according to LSEG.

Tesla would start off owning and operat-

ing a robotaxi network, which would eventually be taken on by another company, ARK forecast. Tesla's share of the ride fare would be 40-60%, double that of Uber, ARK said.

ARK did not include a valuation for robots in its model, although it said that could become a \$24 trillion market.

BANKING ON BOTS

More recently, Musk has described robots as the future, saying the Optimus humanoid robot could account for 80% of Tesla's value eventually, opens new tab.

If Tesla's future depends on Optimus, it will have to sell a lot of robots - maybe more than 100 million a year, according to Reuters calculations.

If Tesla's business was only robots, that 100 million figure is what it would take to hit the top EBITDA profit target, as specified in the Musk pay package, of \$400 billion. Optimus is expected to be priced at around \$25,000 and Tesla's current EBITDA profit margin is around 15%. For twice the profit margin, Tesla would have to sell only half as many robots.

EBITDA this year is expected to be \$13 billion, according to LSEG, so Tesla has a long way to go.

Much will also depend on how investors calculate Tesla's potential at the end of the decade-long pay package. If investors were to continue pricing Tesla at 75 times EBITDA, it would take \$113 billion in EBITDA for Tesla to reach a \$8.5 trillion valuation, or less than the profit goal Tesla has set in Musk's pay package. That package has a top EBITDA of \$400 billion and a top market cap of \$8.5 trillion, a multiple of 21.

(Reuters)

US sanctions billion-dollar cyber scam networks in Myanmar and Cambodia

THE United States imposed sanctions on cyber scam operators in Myanmar and Cambodia on Tuesday, a booming industry the U.S. says stole tens of billions from Americans last year, according to a Treasury Department statement.

Criminal networks have trafficked hundreds of thousands of people into Southeast Asian scam compounds, especially along the Thai-Myanmar border, where they are forced into debt bondage and defrauding strangers online.

"Southeast Asia's cyber scam industry not only threatens the well-being and financial security of Americans, but also subjects thousands of people to modern slavery," Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence John K. Hurley said in the statement.

The Myanmar junta's spokesman did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment, and neither did a Cambodia government spokesman.

The scams include money laundering, illegal gambling and persuading victims to make fraudulent investments, and the operators tend to be people - usually foreigners - who have been trafficked and coerced into working in scam compounds.

Sanctioned entities included nine companies and individuals in Shwe Kokko, a town in Karen State on the Thai border.

The U.S. sanctions aim to choke off funds to the criminal networks, which have flourished in regions controlled both by militias and Myanmar's junta.

COERCION AND VIOLENCE

At Shwe Kokko, operators lured people from across the globe with deceptive offers, then confined, mistreated and coerced them into carrying out online fraud for criminal networks, the Treasury Department said.

The criminals often use debt bondage, violence, and the threat of forced prostitution as part of their coercion tactics, it said.

The department also sanctioned 10 entities in Cambodia, where centres run by Chinese criminal networks were focused on digital currency fraud. Some compounds in Cambodia resembled prisons, according to Amnesty International, which accused the country of ignoring the industry, allegations it denies.

Since a 2021 military coup, scam centres have expanded rapidly in Myanmar, spreading from militia-controlled areas into those under junta control, a report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute said.

Shwe Kokko was established in 2017 by Hong Kong-registered Yatai International Holdings Group and the Karen National Army, an armed group allied with Myanmar's military, according to the United States Institute of Peace. Yatai group is sanctioned and KNA has been previously sanctioned.

British media reported that Postecoglou, who was sacked by Tottenham in June just days after winning the Europa League, could be appointed in time to face Arsenal in Saturday's Premier League clash.

Despite ending Spurs' 17-year wait to win a trophy, the Australian was dismissed due to Tottenham's worst league season since 1976/77 as they finished 17th.

RELATIONSHIP 'CHANGED'



▲ Victims of scam centers who were tricked or trafficked into working in Myanmar, are stuck in limbo at a compound inside the KK Park, a fraud factory, and a human trafficking hub on the border with Thailand-Myanmar after a multinational crackdown on the compounds run by criminal gangs, operated by the Karen Border Guard Force (BGF) in Myawaddy, Myanmar.

Nuno took charge in December 2023 after Steve Cooper was sacked and went on to save the club from relegation.

Forest surpassed all expectations last season, but cracks in the relationship between Nuno and Marinakis began to show after they let slip a promising opportunity to qualify for the Champions League.

Marinakis appeared to confront Nuno on the pitch following a 2-2 draw against Leicester in May, although the club claimed that was due to the decision to let striker Taiwo Awoniyi play on following an 88th-minute injury that later required urgent abdominal surgery.

Nuno was then publicly critical of Forest's transfer activity before the season began, saying he was "worried" about their prospects and his squad had been left "unbalanced".

Forest eventually brought in 13 players as new sporting director Edu Gaspar took a more hands-on role in signings.

"I always had a very good relationship with the owner. Last season we were very close and spoke on a daily basis. This season it is not so well," Nuno said last month of his dealings with Marinakis.

(Reuters)

Escaping residents describe siege of Sudan's al-Fashir

AS the siege by Sudan's Rapid Support Forces tightens around al-Fashir, the few able to pay to escape describe living under constant shelling and negotiating violence at checkpoints to get out of a city where people have resorted to eating animal feed.

Last week, a U.N. fact-finding mission found that the RSF had committed crimes against humanity in al-Fashir, the final holdout of the Sudanese army in the Darfur region of western Sudan.

"Hearing about this is nothing compared to living it," said one escapee, Dar al-Salam Hamed. When she and her family finally decided to leave, she said they were searched aggressively by RSF soldiers and robbed on the road.

"We truly wish to never meet these people ever again," she told Reuters at a camp in al-Dabba, an area under army control.

The RSF did not respond to requests for comment.

Two-and-a-half years of war between the paramilitary RSF and the army has created what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis in Sudan, with widening pockets of famine across the country including in al-Fashir, the capital of North Darfur state.

The city has become a main frontline of the war as the RSF seeks to solidify its hold on Darfur as the base for a parallel government. The leaders of that government were sworn in last month and on Monday they began appointing ministers.

Almost half a million have fled al-Fashir since the fighting there began in May 2024 and 270,000 remain, according to U.N. estimates.

MASS DEATHS

Ahmed Haj Ali and his family left the city last week, arriving just days ago at al-Dabba, where a Reuters reporter spoke to more than a dozen people who had fled.

"The situation is disastrous, there's shelling 24 hours a day from all directions," he said, describing people dying by the dozens and hospitals packed with injured people but with no stocks of gauze to stop their bleeding.

The army and its allied Joint Forces have maintained control of al-Fashir, and though the RSF advanced close to the military headquarters last week, in recent days the army has carried out a drone campaign that has pushed them back.

The Joint Forces are largely made up of non-Arab tribes long in rivalry with the Arab tribes that make up the core of the RSF, leading to ethnically-based attacks, including during the capture of the vast Zamzam displacement camp in April.

Recently, the RSF widened the 31 kilometres (19 miles) of berms surrounding much of the city, making it even harder for civilians to leave and forcing smugglers to carry food supplies on foot, said one resident who asked to stay anonymous for protection.

As a result, a bowl of the staple grain, millet -- which would provide one meal for 3-5 people -- has risen to more than \$35, and a pound (450g) of sugar to almost \$20. Ambaz, a form of animal feed most people have resorted to, has seen its price rise six-fold and become scarce, residents say.

A senior army source said the army had launched a major air and ground offensive in neighbouring North Kordofan state on Sun-



▲ Displaced Sudanese children who fled intense fighting in al-Fashir sleep at a displacement camp, as the humanitarian situation deteriorates amid the ongoing conflict between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese army, in Al Dabba, Sudan.

day to break the siege on al-Fashir as well as the cities of al-Dalanj and Kadugli to the south.

STARVATION, SEXUAL ASSAULTS

The U.N. fact-finding mission found that in al-Fashir the RSF "committed the war crime of intentionally using starvation as a method of warfare" and that the deprivation of access to food, destruction of hospitals, and obstruction of humanitarian assistance "may also amount to the crime against humanity of extermination."

In a statement last week, U.N. Women said that rape and sexual assaults had been used as a weapon of war in North Darfur.

"Pregnant women are giving birth into the

hands of unskilled attendants with no access to emergency obstetric care," it said.

Escapee Ali said he and his brother were beaten at a checkpoint when they left al-Fashir at dawn "due to the conditions ... the shelling, the humiliation, and many other things".

Leaving has become not only dangerous but expensive, costing him 5 million Sudanese pounds (about \$1,600), he said, and few people have any money at all. Members of the RSF have turned evacuations, like smuggling, into a side business.

"That's why people are forced to stay there," he said. "We left them behind."

(Reuters)

Egypt's Sisi orders authorities to study pardon for activist Alaa Abd el-Fattah

EGYPTIAN President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi ordered authorities on Tuesday to study the possible pardon of high-profile Egyptian-British activist and blogger, Alaa Abd el-Fattah, a statement by the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights said.

Abd el-Fattah, 43, is a leading symbol of resistance to authoritarian rule and has spent most of the past decade in prison. Earlier this month his mother, Laila Soueif, said in a social media post that on September 1 he had started his latest hunger strike in protest against his detention.

"President Sisi directs the relevant authorities to study the petition submitted by the National Council for Human Rights to issue a presidential pardon for a number of convicts," the human rights council statement said, listing Abd el-Fattah's name among seven others.

"This is really promising, we hope these authorities follow through with urgency and that Alaa will be reunited with us soon," his sister, Sanaa, said on X.

Tarek al-Awady, a member of Egypt's presidential pardons committee, told Reuters that the decision to release Abd el-Fattah is expected to be issued within "a few days".

A UK foreign ministry spokesperson said that the country's government remains committed to securing the release of Abd el-Fattah so that he can be reunited with his family.

"We continue to raise his case at the highest levels of the Egyptian government," the spokesperson said.



▲ Egyptian-British hunger striker Alaa Abd el-Fattah poses for a photo in unknown location, in this undated handout image obtained by Reuter.

Abd el-Fattah rose to prominence as an impassioned voice in the Arab Spring uprising that toppled Egypt's veteran autocrat Hosni Mubarak in 2011.

He frequently challenged the authorities' tough crackdown on dissent following a mil-

itary takeover led by then-army chief Sisi in 2013.

He has been serving a five-year sentence that was imposed in December 2021 after he shared a social media post about a prisoner's death.

CAMPAIGNS

Abd el-Fattah comes from a family of well-known activists and intellectuals, and his relatives had campaigned for him to be released and allowed to travel to Britain after he gained British citizenship through his mother in December 2021.

Repeated family campaigns and pressure from the British government, including a plea from Prime Minister Keir Starmer to Sisi in February, have previously failed to persuade Egyptian authorities to release him.

Abd el-Fattah had been jailed for five years in 2014, the year Sisi assumed presidency, for protesting without permission.

Released on probation in 2019, he was detained again in September that year amid a wave of arrests following rare protests against Sisi, leading to his current five-year sentence.

Earlier this year Abd el-Fattah had also been on hunger strike in solidarity with his mother, whose health deteriorated as she staged her own lengthy hunger strike in Britain over his imprisonment.

He moved to a partial hunger strike in late July after his name was taken off Egypt's terrorism list, while his mother had ended hers earlier in the month.

(Reuters)

ISRAEL launched an airstrike against Hamas leaders in Qatar on Tuesday, expanding its military actions that have ranged across the Middle East to include the Gulf Arab state where the Palestinian Islamist group has long had its political base.

Qatar, which has acted as a mediator alongside Egypt in talks on a ceasefire in the almost two-year-old war in Gaza, condemned the attack as “cowardly” and called it a flagrant violation of international law.

Two Hamas sources told Reuters that Hamas officials in the ceasefire negotiating team survived the attack, which followed an evacuation order in Gaza City where Israel is waging an offensive to try to destroy the group and its military capabilities in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli officials told Reuters the strike was aimed at top Hamas leaders including Khalil al-Hayya, its exiled Gaza chief and top negotiator.

The attack took place shortly after Hamas’ armed wing, the al-Qassam Brigades, claimed responsibility for a shooting that killed six people at a bus stop on the outskirts of Jerusalem on Monday.

The assault is likely to deal a serious, if not fatal, blow to efforts to reach a ceasefire, especially since negotiations took place in the Gulf Arab country Qatar.

The United Arab Emirates, which normalised relations with Israel under the Abraham Accords in 2020, called the Israeli attack on Doha “blatant and cowardly”.

Abu Dhabi was already angry over an Israeli minister’s plan for annexation in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, saying that was a red line that cannot be crossed.

Regional power Saudi Arabia denounced

Young anti-corruption protests force Nepal PM Oli to quit

NEPALI Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli was forced to resign on Tuesday by angry young anti-corruption protesters who defied a curfew and clashed with police, a day after 19 people died in the violence.

The outrage was sparked by a social media ban, which Oli’s government lifted after police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters trying to storm parliament, and 100 people were injured alongside the 19 dead.

But there was no let up in the protests on Tuesday, which plunged Nepal into fresh political uncertainty.

The unrest is the worst in decades in the poor Himalayan country, which is wedged between India and China and has struggled with political and economic instability since protests led to the abolition of its monarchy in 2008.

Young Nepalis have for years been frustrated at the lack of jobs, and millions have gone to work in the Middle East, South Korea and Malaysia, mainly on construction sites, and send money home.

“In view of the adverse situation in the country, I have resigned effective today to facilitate the solution to the problem and to help resolve it politically in accordance with the constitution,” Oli said in his resignation letter to President Ramchandra Paudel.

An aide to Paudel told Reuters the president had begun the process of finding a new premier, but also summoned protest leaders for talks.

A military source said army chief Ashok Sigdel would address the nation later on Tuesday.

Jubilant youths entered the parliament complex on hearing the news, waving their hands in the air and shouting slogans as smoke rose from sections of the building.

“We won,” one protester wrote in huge

Israel targets Hamas leadership in military strikes on Qatar



▲ Smoke rises after several blasts were heard in Doha, Qatar.

what it called a “brutal Israeli aggression” against Qatar’s sovereignty.

AMBULANCES GATHER AROUND ATTACK SITE

The Israeli military, meanwhile, issued evacuation orders for residents of Gaza City, causing panic and confusion, after Israel said it was about to obliterate the area in an as-

sault to wipe out Hamas.

Residents of Gaza’s biggest urban area, home to a million Palestinians before the war, have been expecting an onslaught for weeks, since the Israeli government devised a plan to deal Hamas a fatal blow in what it says are the group’s last strongholds.

Anxiety was spreading through a tent area

in Gaza City housing displaced cancer patients.

“There’s no place left, not in the south, nor the north, nothing. We’ve become completely trapped,” said Bajess al-Khaldi, a displaced cancer patients, as people looked on at the rubble of several buildings destroyed in an Israeli attack.

Several blasts were heard in Qatar’s Doha, Reuters witnesses said. Plumes of black smoke were billowing from the city’s Legtifya petrol station. Next door to the petrol station is a small residential compound that has been guarded by Qatar’s Emiri Guard 24 hours a day since the beginning of the Gaza conflict.

Ambulances and at least 15 police and unmarked government cars thronged the streets around the blast site an hour after the strike.

Israel has killed several top Hamas leaders since the Palestinian militant group attacked Israel in October 2023, killing 1,200 people and taking 251 hostage, according to Israeli tallies.

Israel has also launched airstrikes and other military action in Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Yemen in the course of the Gaza conflict.

In Lebanon, it attacked the heavily armed Iran-backed group Hezbollah and in Yemen it launched airstrikes on the Iran-aligned Houthi group. Both groups have launched strikes on Israel during the Gaza conflict.

(Reuters)



orange letters on the wall of the parliament building.

Although the protesters were still on the streets of the city, there was no more violence as security forces kept their distance.

PRIME MINISTER’S HOUSE RAN-SACKED

Oli, 73, was sworn in for his fourth term in July last year as Nepal’s 14th prime minister since 2008. Two of his cabinet colleagues had resigned on “moral grounds” late on Monday.

Early in the day, Oli had called a meeting of all parties, saying violence was not in the interest of the nation and “we have to resort to peaceful dialogue to find solutions to any problem”. He did not respond directly to the

protesters’ complaints about corruption.

But protesters continued gathering in front of parliament and elsewhere in the capital Kathmandu, defying an indefinite curfew.

They set fire to tyres on some roads, threw stones at police in riot gear and chased them through narrow streets.

Witnesses also said protesters were setting fire to the homes of some politicians in Kathmandu, and local media reported that some ministers had been plucked to safety by military helicopters.

The Singha Durbar area, which houses the Prime Minister’s Office and other ministries as well as Parliament House, and Oli’s private residence were also set on fire, they

said.

Footage circulating on social media showed former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife Arzu Rana, foreign minister under Oli, and Finance Minister Bishnu Paudel being attacked by protesters.

Reuters could not immediately verify the information.

KATHMANDU AIRPORT SHUT

Kathmandu airport, Nepal’s main international gateway, was closed because of smoke from fires set by protesters, the Civil Aviation Authority said.

Organisers of the protests, which spread to other cities, have called them “demonstrations by Gen Z”,

(Reuters)

Limuva Arts Festival bigger and better!

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE much-anticipated Limuva Arts Festival is set to return this year with an expanded scope and fresh energy, promising an unforgettable experience for attendees.

Festival director M Nation revealed in an exclusive interview that the 2025 edition will take place at the Mkhuzweni Technical Centre on October 25, marking a strategic shift aimed at engaging a broader audience, particularly from the northern part of the Hhohho region. "We want to grow the festival and have everyone mostly on the Northern side of Hhohho since we are doing it at Mkhuzweni Technical Centre this year. We want the Hhohho people to know the festival and own it since we are doing it for them," M Nation explained. This relocation underscores the festival's commitment to inclusivity and regional cultural celebration, making it more accessible to communities that have previously been less involved.

This year's Limuva Festival promises a vibrant lineup of cultural activities throughout the day, designed to offer something for everyone. Attendees can expect traditional dances, craft exhibitions, storytelling sessions, and interactive workshops that highlight the rich heritage of Eswatini's northern communities. Adding to the excitement, there will be numerous prizes to be won, encouraging participation and fostering a lively, competitive spirit among festivalgoers.

"We are introducing a lot of cultural activities with a lot of prizes to be won, so



▲ Limuva Arts Festival director M Nation.

it's so different from the past one," M Nation said, emphasising the festival's evolution from previous editions. This approach aims to deepen community engagement and create a festive atmosphere that celebrates both tradition and creativity.

Safety remains a top priority for the

organisers, who have put comprehensive measures in place to ensure a secure and enjoyable environment for all attendees. "There is going to be a lot of fun, and their safety will be our priority," M Nation assured, highlighting the festival's dedication to providing a worry-free experience.

Mozambique dances to rhythm of ZaiMarn, Zeh McGebe's tour

THE vibrant city of Maputo, Mozambique, came alive this past weekend as award-winning artist ZaiMarn teamed up with South African 3Step/Gqom sensation Zeh McGebe for a dynamic tour that electrified audiences and celebrated a rich fusion of musical cultures.

The collaboration between these two powerhouse performers showcased the growing trend of cross-border musical innovation, blending South African beats with Mozambican rhythms to create an unforgettable experience for fans. The weekend kicked off with an energetic start as ZaiMarn and Zeh McGebe appeared on popular local radio stations Radio Indica and Cidade FM.

These exclusive interviews set the stage for what would become an action-packed series of performances, building anticipation and excitement among listeners across the city. Friday night marked the first live showcase at the stylish Sky Lounge, where the crowd was immediately immersed in a high-energy mix of South African 3Step and Gqom sounds fused seamlessly with Mozambican musical influences. The performance was a thrilling introduction to the weekend, highlighting the artists' ability to blend

genres and captivate diverse audiences.

Saturday night elevated the excitement further with a massive event at South Beach, hosted by ZaiMarn and featuring the renowned Mozambican Amapiano superstar Bander. The night was a true celebration of African music's evolving landscape, with standout performances by Deckshake, South African DJ Qbase, and Afro House DJ Pyto. This eclectic lineup created a vibrant melting pot of sounds that kept the crowd dancing well into the early hours of Sunday, demonstrating the powerful synergy between different African music styles.

The momentum did not slow down as Sunday featured back-to-back shows at Havana Pool Bar and Alzira's Bar, both of which attracted large audiences eager to experience the dynamic collaboration live. These final performances solidified the weekend's success, leaving fans buzzing with excitement and anticipation for what's next.

Reflecting on the tour's impact, ZaiMarn expressed gratitude and enthusiasm: "The reception was truly epic. Mozambique showed us so much love, and it's only the beginning. We're excited to announce that even more shows are confirmed for the end of September and throughout October."



▲ Itallo.

Itallo to dish out premium jazz at Mountain View

MULTI-award-winning Afro-Jazz trumpeter Itallo is set to bring his captivating jazz vibes to the Mountain View International Hotel on September 26, 2025.

This highly anticipated event, hosted by The Jazz Gallery, will commence at 7 pm. and tickets are available for E350. Itallo has garnered acclaim for his soulful trumpet playing, which masterfully weaves traditional African rhythms with contemporary jazz influences. His performances are not merely concerts; they are celebrations of life and culture, showcasing a profound connection to African musical traditions. With a rich discography and a reputation for electrifying live shows, Itallo has become a beloved figure in the jazz community.

Fans can look forward to an exciting twist at the upcoming event, as Itallo is set to unveil some new music alongside his classic hits. This blend of the old and the new promises to create a dynamic and engaging experience for attendees. In an exclusive interview, Nelisa Lawton, the director of Into Music Society and The Jazz Gallery, shared her enthusiasm for the event.

Opportunity

"Our patrons have been asking for an Itallo show for quite some time, and we are happy to oblige," she stated. "This event is also an opportunity for Itallo to present some new music alongside old favourites. We also have new patrons who have never experienced an Itallo show."

Lawton emphasised the importance of this performance, noting that Itallo's music resonates deeply with audiences, making it a must-see event. "People should attend because Itallo never disappoints; a great time is guaranteed," she added, urging jazz enthusiasts and newcomers alike to join in the celebration.

The Jazz Gallery has a reputation for hosting exceptional musical events, and this concert is expected to be no different. With Itallo at the helm, the evening will be filled with rich melodies, intricate rhythms, and an atmosphere of joy and celebration. Attendees can expect a night where the boundaries of jazz are pushed, and the audience is invited to take part in a musical journey that transcends genres.



▲ ZaiMarn.

Sun-El Musician returns to Eswatini Farmers Market

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE Eswatini Farmers Market has confirmed the return of Sun-El Musician.

Sun-El Musician is a rare and unique South African producer who is known and loved countrywide, not only for his distinctive sound, but also for his ‘golden ears’ in scouting, producing, and signing phenomenal South African voices to his label, El-World. Sun-El Musician is known for his humility, profundity and the movement he has created in building the Afro-house sounds.

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 and MaWhoo. The show provides a unique platform where music, food, and local crafts converge, fostering a spirit of unity and pride among the people of Eswatini. 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 heritage through a vibrant mix of



▲ Sun El Musician.

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.

Flex of He & I headlines Poetry & Acoustics

THE heartbeat of Mbabane is set to pulse stronger this September as Poetry & Acoustics, the city’s beloved concert series, returns with an exceptional lineup.

Known for its unique fusion of poetry and acoustic music, the event promises an evening of soulful introspection and artistic connection on Thursday, September 25, 2025, featuring the acclaimed South African poet and musician Flex of He & I. Since its establishment, Poetry & Acoustics has transcended the typical concert experience, evolving into a cherished sanctuary where attendees can momentarily escape the rush of everyday life.

Nestled within the serene and art-filled environment of Bahle Gallery 112, the event’s signature candlelit creates an intimate atmosphere that encourages deep emotional engagement. The stripped-back acoustic performances complement the gentle ambience, allowing the raw power of words and music to resonate fully with the audience.

This edition of Poetry & Acoustics introduces an exciting international dimension by welcoming Flex of He & I, whose artistry is celebrated for weaving poetic narratives with compelling rhythmic soundscapes. His presence in Mbabane is part of a culturally enriching week-long exchange program, funded by Concerts SA,



▲ Flex of He & I.

aimed at fostering artistic collaboration and development between South African and Eswatini creatives. Beyond the headline performance at Bahle Gallery, Flex will lead an arts development workshop for local artists and perform at the renowned House On Fire venue in Malkerns on Friday, September 26, 2025, further deepening the cultural dialogue.

Poetry & Acoustics is more than a night of entertainment; it is a platform for nurturing creative expression and sparking meaningful conversations. The event’s commitment to showcasing diverse voices

and facilitating cultural exchange enriches Eswatini’s artistic landscape, offering audiences a rare opportunity to experience performances that are both globally informed and intimately personal.

Attendees can anticipate a carefully curated program that explores themes of love, resilience, identity, and the universal human condition through the interplay of poetry and music. Tickets for this much-anticipated event are available at E200, inviting all who seek a night of artistic depth and soulful connection to join this celebration of creativity and community.



▲ Eswatini poetess Dzeli.

Dzeli joins Poetry In Comfort lineup

LEGENDARY Eswatini poetess Dzeli has been added to the Poetry In Comfort lineup.

Poetry In Comfort, one of the premier poetry shows in the Kingdom, is poised to make a grand return on December 6, 2025. The show has also announced acts Anthonimass, Christian Maz, Poet Amandla, and Timcane 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 Mngqobi 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.”

Importance

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.”

Nasty C discusses his new album ‘Free’ and embracing independence

RAPPER Nasty C is gearing up for the release of “Free”, an album where he allowed his creative juices to flow freely. Speaking to “Independent Media Lifestyle”, the rapper, whose real name is Nsikayesizwe David Junior Ngcobo, opened up about life as an independent artist, working on new music, and why he has been exploring everyday jobs outside of entertainment.

His latest offering is set to mark the beloved musician’s fifth studio album and the first as an independent artist, a route he decided to take after founding his own record label called “Tall Racks Records”.

Sharing the inspiration behind his album title, he revealed that it stemmed from him feeling “free” from the pressure of being an artist.

“The title was inspired by me feeling free from a lot of different things, a lot of external pressures, internal pressures, but also feeling free to create, free to be whoever I want to be and express however I want to express,” he explained. While the process of making the album was no different from his earlier projects, he explained that fans can expect some growth.

“I still work the same way. But sonically, I guess you can expect a little bit of growth. For the most part, I am still the same person, the same artist.”

The “Black And White” hitmaker also said he has no expectations for how the album will be received by his fans, as “pressure” is one of the things he has decided to free himself from.

He added he didn’t feel the pressure for his music to be received a certain way and



▲ Rapper Nasty C is gearing up for the release of “Free”, an album where he allowed his creative juices to flow freely.

instead wanted his fans to enjoy it in their own way. Meanwhile, some of the topics the rapper tackles on his upcoming album include faith and love, which he touches on in “Evidence” and “Selfish”.

Ngcobo shared that on “Evidence”, he talks about the push and pull with faith that many go through.

“Just knowing there’s a God above and that you’re not the one totally responsible for everything, but at the same time questioning where the proof is,” he said. On “Selfish”, he talks about the mother of his child, Sammie Heavens, as well as grappling with the acceptance of the reality of life being blindsiding to one sometimes.

“In the hook, I speak about telling her how much I love and appreciate her before God takes her. And in the verses, I speak about the possibility of him (God) taking me first and what I would want to happen to my family, to her and my child,” he concluded.

Apart from Blxckie, the album will include features from Tellaman and DJ Speedsta. Ngcobo shared that Tellaman being featured on his album is very exciting for him, as he is one of the artists he enjoys working with and regards as a brother.

Outside of music, the multi-award winning artist has been experimenting with everyday jobs as part of a series that puts him in ordinary roles. He said it has helped

him connect more with people.

“What it did is really help me connect more to people, give me a lot of perspective. I get to experience so many things that in my normal life I probably wouldn’t”. Now, as an independent artist, he plans to release a lot of content more frequently and shared that he is gearing up to start working on a clothing brand, which fans can look forward to.

“Since I’m independent now, I can pretty much drop whatever I want, which is exciting. A lot of music, a lot of new content, a lot of collaborations, a lot of music videos. ‘The Ivyson Tour’ is coming up very soon,” he said.

For aspiring artists, Ngcobo’s advice is to enjoy the journey while having fun creating the music.

“Have fun making music, have fun being the artist, and really enjoy the process from the ground up. Don’t only look forward to the times when you can spend all this money.”

“Really cherish all the moments from the moment you start. I find myself missing those days a lot. It’s not really a struggle, it’s the process.”

When asked if independence is the best route for upcoming artists, he said yes, but that they should proceed with caution.

“I definitely would, provided that they still make connections with people who are either behind the scenes when it comes to record labels or people who are signed.

“You can still get that knowledge secondhand. Be a student of the game, study it through and through. But yeah, definitely being independent is the way to go, in my opinion.” (IOL)

Tyla’s ‘popiano’ sound continues to take the world by storm

SOUTH African artist Tyla has once again made headlines by winning her second MTV Video Music Awards (VMAs) in the Best Afrobeats category. She won the Moonman for her hit song “Push 2 Start”, a year after she won for her chart-topper “Water”.

In a competitive field that included heavyweights like Burna Boy, Wizkid, Tems, Asake, Shenseea, Skillibeng, and Rema, Tyla’s back-to-back wins highlight her growing international presence.

However, what makes her stand out is that she continues to be recognised in Afrobeats categories despite her music being rooted in Amapiano, the South African sound she proudly represents on the world stage.

The Grammy award-winning star has also carved out her own lane by blending Amapiano with R&B and pop, creating a distinctive style that fans have dubbed “popiano”.

This fusion has broadened her appeal while keeping her sound set in her culture, and it is part of why she has become one of the most recognisable new voices in global music. In her 2024 MTV VMAs acceptance speech, when she won for “Water”, she made it clear that her sound is rooted in her South African heritage.

“I come from South Africa. I represent Amapiano. I represent my



▲ South African artist Tyla.

culture,” Tyla stated, also calling out the tendency to categorise all African music under the Afrobeats label.

“This is such a big moment for African music,” she added. “It’s special, but also bittersweet because African music is so diverse and more than just Afrobeats.”

Since then, Tyla has swept Afrobeats

categories across major international stages.

In 2024, she won Best Afrobeats at both the MTV VMAs and the MTV Europe Music Awards, and was named Top Afrobeats Artist along with the Top Afrobeats song for “Water” at the Billboard Music Awards.

This year, she added another milestone by winning Favorite Afrobeats Artist at the American Music Awards before returning to the VMAs to claim her second Best Afrobeats trophy.

While award organisers continue to place her under Afrobeats, Tyla has used her wins and music to spotlight Amapiano and South Africa’s contribution to global music.

Her insistence on naming the genre in her speech has kept the conversation alive about how African music is classified abroad.

She continues to fill up her accolades stand, which shows how quickly she has risen to the top. With “popiano”, the 23-year-old artist has created a sound that travels across continents without losing its South African roots.

Therefore, her sound should be honoured and recognised for what it truly is, rather than being confined to a single category each year.

(IOL)

South African Guild of Actors, Numsa highlight exploitation in creative industry and demand reform

SOUTH Africa’s creative industry generates billions for the economy, yet unions warn that the artists, actors, writers, and crews behind it remain excluded from labour protections and are too often left in poverty.

In a joint statement, the South African Guild of Actors (SAGA) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) described the sector as “parasitic, feeding off the labour of artists while denying them fair compensation and security.”

SAGA chairperson and actor Jack Devnarain said: “For fifteen years, SAGA has lobbied government for labour protections and fair regulation. Until freelance actors are recognised as workers under labour law, we will continue to see heartbreaking stories of celebrated performers dying in poverty.”

He added: “We’ve waited 30 years, how much longer must we wait while politicians prepare their next eulogy for another actor who dies desti-

tute? This is not neglect. It is a deliberate strategy to deny creatives their constitutional rights.”

Numsa’s deputy general secretary Mbuso Ngubane said the situation was a reversal of the sector’s historical role. “Cultural workers played a central role in the fight against apartheid. Protest theatre and music were tools of resistance, used to educate, mobilise, and unify communities. Icons like Bra Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba used their art to challenge oppression. Yet today, the very sector that helped liberate this country is left to rot.” The organisations pointed out that the creative sector spans music, film, television, performing arts, digital media, crafts, and design, contributing 6.72% to the economy and employing over a million people. Yet most of those workers remain freelancers with no standard contracts, no benefits, and no legal protections.

“Actors, writers, directors, and crew have no recognition under labour law.

(IOL)



Make Food Your Plan A

WITH hundreds of supplements available, it's hard to believe that not every nutrient in whole foods has been captured in a capsule.

That's why eating a variety of healthy foods is the best way to meet your health needs. But if you're low on a certain vitamin or mineral, or just want to cover all bases with a daily MVM (multivitamin/mineral), these tips will help you get the most from it.

Timing Your Multi

You can take your MVM any time you'd like. Your body absorbs some of its vitamins better with food, so you may want to take it with a meal or a snack. You'll also avoid the upset stomach that you can get when you take it on an empty stomach. Not a breakfast person? Have it with lunch or even dinner.

When to Take Water-Soluble Vitamins

Water dissolves them, and your body doesn't store them, so most must be taken every day. They include C and the B's: thiamin (B1), riboflavin (B2), niacin (B3), pantothenic acid (B5), pyridoxine (B6), biotin (B7), folic acid (B9), and cobalamin (B12). Take them with or without food, with one exception: You'll absorb B12 better with a meal. If you also use vitamin C, put 2 hours between them. Vitamin C can keep your body from using B12.

When to Take Fat-Soluble Vitamins

Vitamins A, D, E, and K need to go with fat from a meal for your body to absorb and use them. But you don't need a lot of fat -- or any saturated fat. The healthy plant-based kind you find in foods like avocado or nuts will do just fine.

If You Take Iron Supplements

You absorb iron best on an empty stomach. Take it with water or, better yet, a citrus juice: Iron and vitamin C have a tag-team effect. If it makes you queasy, save it for right after a meal. But don't mix it with calcium or high-calcium foods -- these interfere with iron. You won't take in either one fully. Men and postmenopausal women should skip supplements with this mineral unless a doctor says otherwise. The average MVM has more than you need.

If You Take Mineral Supplements

Large doses of minerals can compete with each other to be absorbed. Don't use calcium, zinc, or magnesium supplements at the same time. Also, these three minerals are easier on your tummy when you take them with food, so if your doctor recommends them, have them at different meals or snacks. Don't take any individual mineral at the same time as an MVM or an antioxidant vitamin formula, like one with beta-carotene and lycopene. Also see: What is silicon dioxide and how is it used in supplements?

If You Take Vitamin A

Watch the amount of what's called preformed vitamin A. If you're pregnant, doses over 10,000 IU a day can cause birth defects. High levels of both A and the usually safe beta-carotene (a substance that

the body coverts to vitamin A) may raise your chances of having lung cancer if you're a smoker, and maybe even if you're a former smoker.

Prenatal Vitamins and Morning Sickness

Extra folic acid and iron are very important for a healthy baby. They can be found in most prenatal vitamins. But some prenatal vitamins can make nausea worse, mostly because of the iron. If this happens to you, pair your prenatal vitamins with a light snack before you go to bed. Talk to your doctor about the best prenatal formula for you.

Supplements and Your Prescriptions

Even essential nutrients can interfere with many common medications. If you take a traditional blood thinner like warfarin, just the small amount of vitamin K in an MVM can cut its strength. Taking more than 1,000 mg of vitamin E per day can raise your risk for bleeding. And if you take thyroid medication, taking calcium, magnesium, or iron within 4 hours can cut its strength. Ask your doctor about how best to time it.

The Alphabet of Amounts

RDA (recommended daily allowance) is the daily amount of a nutrient you

should get, based on sex and age. DV (daily value) is the percentage of a nutrient that a supplement or food serving adds to the average daily diet for all ages. UL (upper limit) is the most of a nutrient you should get in a day. Side effects from big doses range from tiredness or diarrhea to kidney stones or organ damage.

Know What's Inside

There's no one standard MVM formula. Some have more nutrients than recommended. Others may come up short on some RDAs. For instance, the amount of calcium you need to meet the RDA is too much to fit into a tablet that you could easily swallow. Scan the full ingredients list so you know exactly what's in the supplement you're considering. This will also help you know if you need to time when you take it.

Personalize Your Formula

Another way to get more of the nutrients you need is to shop for formulas geared to your age and sex. For example, many vitamins for seniors have more calcium and vitamins D and B12 than younger people need. As you get older, your body doesn't do as good a job of absorbing B12. Women in particular often need extra calcium and vitamin D after menopause to protect bones. Men's formulas leave out the iron.

Are Gummies Any Good?

Opinions about gummy vitamins are mixed. One study found that people who take vitamin D in gummy form get more from it than from a tablet. On the other hand, gummies can have a lot of sugar and calories. And because they taste like candy, it's easy to go overboard and eat too many. They may even cause cavities. Also, not all brands contain all essential vitamins and minerals. Some may not even contain the amounts listed on the label.

Look for Quality Checks

Since the FDA doesn't regulate supplements, look for brands that have been "verified" by one of the three companies that test supplements in the U.S.: Pharmacopeia, Consumer Lab, or NSF International. These testing organizations verify that what's on the label is in the bottle in the right amounts.

Keep a Supplement Diary

If you keep a log, it can help you time out different supplements and keep track of how much you take every day. The National Institute of Health's Office of Dietary Supplements has a form called "My Dietary Supplement and Medicine Record" that you can print out and fill in. Bring it with you, along with your medication list, when you go to doctor visits.

WebMD



Do: Sleep Smart

SLEEP is a tricky trigger. Too much or too little of it can bring on a migraine. The key is to keep your downtime constant. Figure out your sleep schedule sweet spot and stick with it.

Don't: Skip Meals

When your blood sugar drops, your brain feels it first. Hunger is a common cause of headaches. Be sure you're giving your body the fuel it needs to work all day.

Do: Watch the Caffeine

This pick-me-up is both a trigger and a treatment for migraines. Some headache meds add caffeine because it boosts the effectiveness of the pain relievers. The problem comes when you have too much. You could set yourself up for a rebound headache, so be careful with caffeine.

Don't: Over- or Underdo Exercise

Sometimes too much exercise can spark a migraine. But regular, moderate activity will give your overall health a boost and help you stay headache-free. Remember to start slowly and increase your activity level gradually.

Do: Watch the Weather

Storms often come with changes in atmospheric pressure. These shifts can be a doozy on your head, so don't get caught off guard. Check the forecast often so you can have treatment on hand if you need it.

Don't: Dry Out

Even mild dehydration can spell trouble if you get migraines often. Give yourself a goal of eight glasses of water a day to keep the head pain away. Limit caffeine-containing and alcoholic beverages since they can dehydrate you.

Do: Plan for Your Period

Hormones can wreak havoc on your head. It's common to get migraines with your period. Some women get them when they ovulate and during menopause, too. Have a pain-relief plan in place when you know your hormones will be in flux.

Don't: Stare at Screens

Hours in front of a computer or TV can strain your eyes. For some people with migraine, eyestrain can trigger head pain. Take breaks often. Stretch, close your eyes, and get up to get your blood flowing. That'll help stop a migraine before it starts.

Do: Track Your Attacks

You can't avoid your triggers if you don't know what they are. Keep a migraine diary and write down what you eat, your sleep patterns, medications you take, and any symptoms you have. This will help your doctor come up with a prevention and treatment plan, too.

Don't: Grit Your Teeth

Teeth grinding and jaw clenching are common migraine triggers. If you're doing it in your sleep, talk to your dentist about a device that helps hold your jaw in place and

Dos and don'ts with migraines



prevent problems. If daytime grinding gives you pain, try to pinpoint the source of stress and work to lower it.

Do: De-stress

Constant worry and tension can harm your health. If you're migraine-prone, your stress can bring one on. You may even get them after your stress is over and you're ready to relax. Exercise, eat right, and get enough sleep to help lower your stress. You may also find counseling, biofeedback, or even medications can bring more calm to your life.

Don't: Ignore Your Environment

From loud sounds to certain smells to flashing lights, migraine triggers are everywhere. Know what things set off your headaches, and do your best to avoid them.

Do: Be Wary of Wine

Alcohol is supposed to relax you, right? But for some people, the opposite can

happen. Certain ingredients in drinks like red wine may cause headaches instead. Watch for a reaction when you drink -- you may be able to have a glass from time to time, or you may need to avoid booze altogether.

Don't: Smoke

There's no doubt about it: Smoking isn't good for you. But if you deal with frequent migraines, lighting up can be especially harmful. Nicotine, the smell of burning tobacco, and secondhand smoke are all migraine triggers. Talk to your doctor about treatments that can help you quit.

Do: Treat Your Body Like a Temple

The best thing you can do to prevent migraines is to take really good care of your health. Feed yourself nutritious foods, drink water, move your body every day, and get regular sleep. If you focus on your health, your head will thank you.

WebMD

● Even mild dehydration can spell trouble if you get migraines often. Give yourself a goal of eight glasses of water a day to keep the head pain away. Limit caffeine-containing and alcoholic beverages since they can dehydrate you.

News In Pictures



▲ U.S. President Donald Trump throws a hat after Spain's Carlos Alcaraz won the men's singles final at the U.S. Open in New York.



▲ A demonstrator jumps from the gate of the Parliament during a protest against corruption and the government's decision to block several social media platforms, in Kathmandu, Nepal.



▲ Spain's Carlos Alcaraz celebrates winning the men's singles final against Italy's Jannik Sinner at the U.S. Open in New York.



▲ Israeli police officers, forensic experts and emergency personnel work at the scene where a suspected shooting attack took place at the outskirts of Jerusalem.

World Cup so close for Bafana after Nigeria draw

BAFANA Bafana edged ever-closer to the 2026 Fifa World Cup finals yesterday, battling to a hard-fought 1-1 draw with Nigeria at the Free State Stadium in Bloemfontein.

Super Eagles captain William Troost-Ekong, Bafana's nemesis in the past, netted an own goal before being subbed off at half time on a poor evening for the defender.

Not enough for Nigeria

Calvin Bassey got a controversial equaliser, but the point was not enough for Nigeria. Bafana moved to 17 points at the top of Group C, six clear of Benin, who played Lesotho later yesterday.

Hugo Broos brought Siyabonga Ngezana back into the heart of the Bafana defence for this match, and also sprung a bit of a surprise in preferring Samukelo Kabini to Aubrey Modiba at left back.

In midfielder, Bathusi Aubaas came in to partner Teboho Mokoena, while the Bafana coach went with the same front four that played against Lesotho.

That meant Sipho Mbule stayed as the playmaker and he showed off his silky skills and delightful range of passing for much of the first half.

The Super Eagles started off by allowing Bafana far too much time on the ball and Oswin Apollis and Mohau Nkota gave them all sorts of problems down the flanks.

Nkota magic

In the 5th minute, Appollis skipped past his man and sent in a good cross that Nkota headed well off target.

There were some feisty challenges while both teams battled at times to cope with a poor playing surface. Ngezana and Ademola Lookman both got themselves booked for some off the ball antics.

Bafana took the lead in the 25th minute. Teboho Mokoena's fine pass released Nkota and his low cross from the right was steered into his own net by William Troost-Ekong.

The goal seemed to wake Nigeria up and they started to take control of midfield in the final 15 minutes of the half. Alex Iwobi was pulling the strings and Nigeria forced a series of corners before they finally scored a minute before the break.

Lookman found Faruq Dele-Bashiru, who got to the byline and sent a cross to the back post. Bassey hurled himself at the ball to force it over the line. Replays showed that the ball came off the Fulham defender's hand but with no VAR, the goal stood.

Nigeria made a double change at half time, Wolves striker Tolu Arokodare coming on for Cyriel Desser, while Troost-Ekong went off and was replaced by Bruno Onyemaechi.

Aubaas was a little lucky to escape with a yellow card for a poor over-the-top challenge on Samuel Osayi in the 48th minute.

Arokodare came close to scoring in the 50th minute, easily beating his man and



▲ Mohau Nkota celebrates after creating Bafana's opening goal against Nigeria.

sending a cross-shot flying across the face of goal.

Bafana seal a point

Bafana did work their way back into the match a little, and Mohau Nkota's burst forward almost gave Mbule an opportunity, but he wasn't able to get a shot away.

Mbekezeli Mbokazi then almost produced a piece of magic. The Orlando Pirates de-

fender danced his way into the midfield and sent a chip over Nwabali that flew inches over the bar.

Broos brought on Kamogelo Sebelebele for the tireless Appollis and Thalente Mbatha replaced Mbule as Bafana looked to wrap up a point. And Bafana did so, putting them on the brink of qualification.

(The Citizen)

Schauffele not with Ryder Cup teammates after son's birth

XANDER Schauffele is not at the Procore Championship in Napa, California, with the rest of his United States Ryder Cup teammates in order to be at home in Florida with his newborn son.

The rest of the US team is in Northern California this week to squeeze in a final competition before the Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black in Farmingdale, New York, from September 26-28.

Even Bryson DeChambeau, who is ineligible for PGA Tour events due to his contract with LIV Golf, said he would make the trip to Napa to bond with his teammates.

However, Schauffele confirmed to the Associated Press on Tuesday that he chose to remain in Florida after his wife, Maya, recently gave birth to a boy the couple named Victor.

Schauffele clinched his spot on the Ryder Cup team with a tie for 22nd at the FedEx St. Jude Championship on 10 August.

He hasn't competed since the following week, when he tied for 28th at the BMW Championship to fall short of qualifying for the Tour Championship.

Schauffele indicated at the time that he might skip the Procore Championship if he didn't think it would help him prepare for Bethpage Black.

The 31-year-old has made only 15 starts this year after missing six weeks in January and February be-



▲ Xander Schauffele.

cause of a strain in the rib cartilage on his right side.

While Schauffele has yet to win and has only three top-10s in 2025, two of those came in majors – a T8 at The Masters and a T7 at The Open Championship.

He also remains third in the Official World Golf Ranking as well as the US Ryder Cup standings, and

Schauffele was long considered a lock to make captain Keegan Bradley's team even if he had not earned an automatic spot.

Schauffele went 3-1-0 during the Americans' 2021 victory at Whistling Straits, but struggled to a 1-3-0 record in the United States' loss in Italy two years ago.

(Supersport)

Davis Cup tie between Canada and Israel to be played without spectators

A Davis Cup World Group I tie between Canada and Israel will be played in a closed venue without spectators this weekend in Halifax, Nova Scotia, due to escalating safety concerns, Tennis Canada said on Tuesday.

Tennis Canada, who made the decision in consultation with the International Tennis Federation, said intelligence from local authorities and national security agencies indicated a risk of significant disruption to the event.

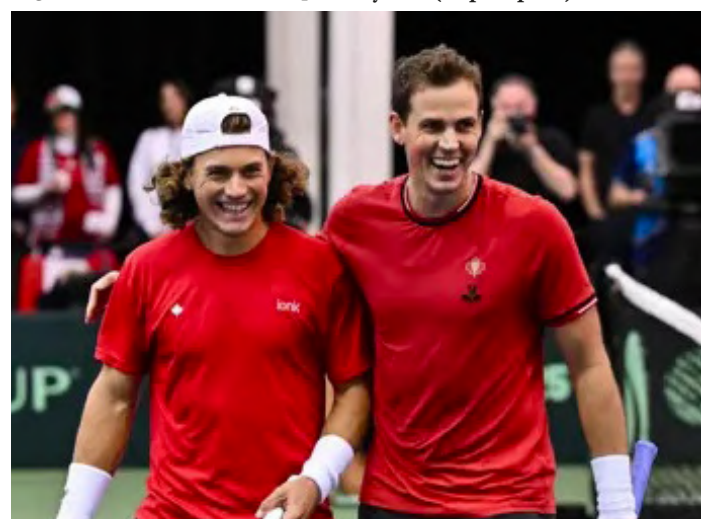
Four hundred academics, activists, athletes and writers had urged Tennis Canada in an open

letter to cancel the event amid Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

"At the heart of this difficult decision is our responsibility to protect people while ensuring that this Davis Cup tie can still take place," Tennis Canada CEO Gavin Ziv said in a news release.

"We were forced to conclude that playing behind closed doors was the only way to both safeguard those involved and preserve the event itself."

Ziv acknowledged disappointment surrounding the decision, but expressed optimism about returning to Halifax with Team Canada in the coming years. (Supersport)



▲ Liam Draxl and Vasek Pospisil.

Kane surprised by Levy’s departure but praises former chairman’s legacy at Spurs

FORMER Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane was surprised by Daniel Levy’s decision to step down as executive chairman after nearly 25 years at the club but said the Englishman’s impact on the club had been transformative.

While he was unable to end Spurs’ wait for a first English top-flight title since 1961, Levy leaves behind a legacy that includes a new stadium and state-of-the-art training ground as well as a first major trophy since 2008 following their Europa League triumph last season.

“I didn’t expect it, didn’t see that coming,” Kane told British media ahead of England’s World Cup qualifier in Serbia on Tuesday.

“Daniel has been a fantastic chairman for Tottenham in the 20 years or so he’s been there.

“Considering where the club was and where it is now, I think it’s been a big change, not just on the pitch, but off the pitch as well,” added Kane, who joined Bayern Munich in August 2023.

“Overall for Tottenham, it’s a new chapter they’re trying to create now.”

Speculation about a possible change of ownership has increased since Levy stepped down, though the club’s majority shareholder has said Spurs are not for sale.

While Spurs chief executive Vi-



▲ Former Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane.

nai Venkatesham described Levy’s contribution as “extraordinary” he downplayed the potential for upheaval following his departure.

“The club is well organised for succession, so we have a very strong executive team in place and, while

it might feel like a slightly strange thing to say to the external world, although it’s big news, inside the club, it really is business as usual,” he told the club’s website on Monday.

(Supersport)

McIlroy takes Federer advice to avoid golf boredom

RORY McIlroy has revealed advice from tennis legend Roger Federer is providing the inspiration for his battle to avoid becoming bored of golf.

McIlroy became the newest member of golf’s career Grand Slam club after his victory in the Masters earlier this year

The Northern Ireland star’s fulfilment of his bid to win each of golf’s major prizes has left him pondering what can motivate the rest of his career.

After speaking to 20-time Grand Slam winner Federer towards the end of his career, McIlroy believes the answer is to play only the tournaments that he has a special feeling for, regardless of their size and status.

With that in mind, the 36-year-old will play in India for the first time this year and also plans to feature in Australia.

The world No 2 was criticised last month for skipping the first FedEx Cup event on the PGA Tour.

But McIlroy wanted to take a break before a busy September that began with him winning last week’s Irish Open and has now taken him to Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship before the Ryder Cup in New York.

“I want to go and play in different places in the world and experience things that I haven’t experienced before, to be able to do things for the



▲ Rory McIlroy.

first time 18 years into a career,” he told reporters on Tuesday.

“I had a chat with Roger Federer, I don’t know, a few years ago sort of at the end of his career and he was saying he wanted to go and play a lot of the places he could never play in his career, some of the smaller events, just because a lot of people had never seen him play tennis before.

“I think as time goes on and I get to this stage of my career, I get excited about doing that sort of thing.

“I don’t want to name a tournament but you’re going back to the same place, the same thing 15, 20 years in a row, it can get a little bit monotonous and a little bit tedious.

“I want to play in the locations

that I love to go to, and I want to play the majors and the Ryder Cup. That’s it.”

McIlroy is not thinking about the end of his competitive career, but the five-time major winner acknowledges his priorities have shifted and he is no longer beholden to the weekly trudge around the golf circuit.

“I don’t want to be grinding out here at 50 years of age. I’ll turn up and play the majors and have a nice time but whenever I’m done, I’m done, whenever that is,” he said.

“That’s certainly not right now, but I’m certainly closer to that point now than I was in 2007 when I turned pro. (Supersport)

Alcaraz says completing career Slam his ‘first goal’

CARLOS Alcaraz says winning next year’s Australian Open to seal a career Grand Slam is his main objective after securing a sixth major title in New York on Sunday.

Alcaraz beat chief rival Jannik Sinner 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 to claim his second US Open crown and would become the youngest man to win all four majors if he lifts the trophy in Melbourne next January.

“It’s my first goal, to be honest,” said the 22-year-old Alcaraz, who has not made it past the quarterfinals in four trips to Australia.

“When I just go to the pre-seasons to what I want to improve, what I want to achieve, Australian Open is there.

“It’s the first or second tournament of the year, and it is always the main goal for me to complete a career Grand Slam, calendar Grand Slam. So it’s going to be great.”

Alcaraz’s compatriot Rafael Nadal holds the record as the youngest man to win all four majors. He achieved the feat at the age of 24 in 2010 when he won the first of his four US Open titles.

“Obviously I’m going to try to do it next year, but if it is not next year, hopefully in two and three and four. So I will try to complete it,” said Alcaraz.

He will reclaim the world No 1 ranking from Sinner on Monday, returning to the top of the men’s game for the first time since September 2023.

“When you achieve the goals you set up yourself at the beginning of the year, it feels amazing,” said Alcaraz.

“Since I got the chance to recover the No 1, it was one of

the first goals that I had during the seasons, just to try to recover the No 1 as soon as possible or end the year as the No 1.

“For me, to achieve that once again, it is, as I said, it is a dream. Doing it the same day as getting another Grand Slam feels even better.”

Alcaraz dropped just one set throughout the tournament and continued his recent mastery of Sinner, getting revenge for his loss to the Italian in the Wimbledon final.

“The performance today was perfect,” said Alcaraz’s coach Juan Carlos Ferrero.

Alcaraz and Sinner are the torch-bearers of the current generation, sweeping the last eight majors between them and taking 10 of the last 13. Novak Djokovic has won the other three.

Ferrero knows Alcaraz has the talent to Hoover up considerably more silverware in the years to come but is doing his best to ensure his protégé keeps working hard at his craft.

“The potential to win many titles, many Grand Slams, is there, but we take nothing for granted. Nothing is automatic; you have to make it happen,” said Ferrero.

“I don’t think too far ahead. I can’t stop to think about whether Carlos is going to win 20 Grand Slams; you have to take each day as it comes.

“He’s 22 years old; we can’t think he’s perfect, far from it. He has a lot of things to improve on.”

(Supersport)



▲ Carlos Alcaraz.

Stories by Chris Dlamini

Over 100 PROs, amateurs for King’s Cup PRO-AM



▲ Caddies and golfers during the Kings cup golf pre qualifier.

AN experience worth every swing awaits the country’s amateur golfers in the King’s Cup 2025. Following the Pre-Qualifiers over the week-end at the Ezulwini Golf and Country Club’s greens, the main tournament featuring local and international professionals is getting nigh as it kicks off on Friday, September 12 until Sunday, September 14.

However, before it tees off, it will be preceded by the two-day PRO-AM in which companies get to play alongside the local and outside professionals and win prizes.

The amateur players get to have one or two professionals in their teams, with the first group getting underway on Wednesday, then the last on Thursday.

Taking part in the PRO-AM will be 66 amateur golfers and 44 professional golfers. The professionals include last year’s champion, Keenan Davidse from South Africa (SA), Pre-Qualifiers champion James Pennington from Eswatini, MJ Dlamini, and Brendon Rennie, also from the Kingdom among others.

The first group of the PRO-AM will have its own prizes, and so is the second group to play on Thursday. This will add to the already over E90 000 spent on the King’s Cup 2025 Pre-Qualifiers in cash prizes.

This amount was split over the professionals and amateurs. The biggest pay of E20 000 went to SA-based local professional, Pennington while Mfanzile E. Dlamini pocketed E5 700 as the winner in his amateur’s level.

Meanwhile, this year’s champion will be crowned on Sunday after the last round of the King’s Cup 2025.



Undefeated ‘Bharuka’, Sonic battle resumes

THE second round of the Sphana Investments E10 000 Singles Pool League will kick off next weekend. The first round of the inaugural league proved nothing but fireworks, with two stars having a dog-eat-dog showdown to the very last match of it. These are the top two leaders, Eddie ‘Bharuka’ Mondlane and Sonic Dlamini.

The duo is once again produce expected to produce nothing but a photo finish in the exciting new pool league.

Closer to them are Flag Nxumalo and Khanyokuhle ‘PlayStation’ Simelane who have 33 points apiece on third and fourth respec-

tively after 15 matches.

Meanwhile, Mondlane finished the first round without a single defeat, while Sonic only lost once. The latter was beaten by Mondlane, and they are three points apart.

The fixture had not yet been out at the time this article was written but it was confirmed the second round would kick off between Saturday and Sunday, this week. Worth mentioning is that Mondlane will go into it in high spirit and confidence after winning the Sphana Investments Lubombo Singles Knockout Tournament over the weekend, netting E2 500 as the champion.

Mlandvo makes MRPA history

CALL it living by their name, Mlandvo Pool Club as history was rewritten. That is the story of Manzini Regional Pool Association (MRPA) debutant team, Mlandvo, whose name loosely translates to ‘History’.

The newest team defied all odds to win the inaugural Mlu & Lee Investment Teams Knockout Tournament at Luyengo, past Malkerns.

Mlandvo narrowly defeated experienced Malkerns in the final 13-12 to earn the E2 000 prize at stake for champions. This was on Sunday but the tournament started on Saturday.

On their way to the final, Mlandvo stunned Way Inn, once renowned as knockout specialists, with 13-8 defeat in the semis while Malkerns outplayed Ntongozi with the same margin. The runner-up received E1 200.

It was E500 apiece for the semi-finalists, Way Inn and Ntongozi. The full results and winners are listed in the article.

Mlu & Lee Pool Knockout Results:
Malkerns 13-8 Blackball Queens
Wayinn 13-9 Bhunya
Mlandvo 13-8 Figareido
Dvudvusini 11-13 Ntongozi

Semi-finals
Malkerns 13-8 Ntongozi
Wayinn 8-13 Mlandvo

Final
Mlandvo 13-12 Malkerns

Winners and prizes:
1. Mlandvo Pool Team - E2 000
2. Malkerns - E1 200
3. Way Inn - E500
4. Ntongozi - E500



▲ Pool players in action during the Mlu and Lee pool knockout tournament.

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

International camp for swimming youngsters

WORLD Aquatics has enhanced the development of swimming in the SADC region.

The world governing body has facilitated a one-week camp in the country, attended by representatives from 10 countries, at Enjabulweni Independent School.

This follows the conclusion of the 2025 Africa Aquatics Zone IV Championships, which were held in the country.

The training camp is conducted by international experts assigned by World Aquatics.

Eswatini is represented by six swimmers: Sihlelwe Shongwe, Dinika Wilsch, Keandra McNamara, Luca Fraser, Tristan Way, and Jordan Ryan.

Two local coaches, Mduduzi Xaba and Baphelele Masilela, are also part of the camp.

Eswatini Swimming Association president Pedro Nunes confirmed the latest developments when reached for comment.

“We are honoured to host the international camp as a country, and it will develop the sport in the region. This is also an opportunity for our young swimmers and coaches to gain international exposure. We are grateful to the world governing body for bringing the course to the country,” he said.

The president further thanked various stakeholders for their support during the recently ended international junior championships.

“We are grateful for the support of World Aquatics, the Government, and various partners for their support towards the recent event. The future of swimming in the region is bright and further commends the gallant performances of our swimmers,” he said.

Some of the sponsors for the recent competition included Eswatini Royal Insurance Corporation (ESRIC), MTN Eswatini, Jenny Internet, Extreme Trade, Eswatini Air, and Coca-Cola, among others.

The international camp athletes

Sihlelwe Shongwe
Dinika Wilsch
Keandra McNamara
Tristan Way
Jordan Ryan
Luca Fraiser
Coaches: Mduduzi Xaba, Baphelele Masilela



▲ Swimmers with national team coach Welcome Nhlabatsi.



▲ The mens netball national team.

Eswatini men’s national team conquers Zimbabwe

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE netball men’s national team conquered the international friendly series against Zimbabwe, played over the weekend at Mavuso Sports Centre.

The national side won the first match by 44-40 but lost the second match.

However, as the hosts, Eswatini ultimately secured an overall 2-1 series victory against Zimbabwe.

This was a perfect start for the newly appointed Vimbibukhosi Ndlangamandla.

Ndlangamandla has replaced Themba Sifundza, who led the team during the 2024 African Continental Cup, which was held in Namibia.

The 2025 edition of the annual continental cup will take place in Malawi in December.

Eswatini National Netball Association Secretary Nkabindze Shabalala congratulated the national team.

“We are happy with the performance of the national team and confident that the team will perform well during the African Cup. We would like to thank Zimbabwe for honouring the invitation and their support in contributing to the development of the sport in the region,” he said.

The national team includes Green Lightning stars such as Fortune Nerves, Thembeke Dlamini and Sakhile Maseko, among others.

Seasoned Royal Flames players such as Brendan Dlamini, Machawe Malindzisa and Sithabiso Mzileni are part of the national side.

Forces giants dominate the Mulasport Trade Fair Cup



▲ Ladies champions Royal Flames in a jovial mood.

By Sibusiso Masilela
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NETBALL giants Royal Flames and Green Lightning dominated the 2025 Mulasport Trade Fair cup.

Flames defeated Lightning by 49-43 in the women’s final, while Lightning won the men’s final by 43-41, both matches played on Sunday evening at Mavuso Sports Centre. Flames took home the E4,000 first prize money in the women’s category.

The female’s category third/ fourth place saw Vixiens secure a 48-74 win over ABC academy.

In the men’s category, Lightning emerged victorious with a 43-41 win over Flames, earning the E3,500 first prize money.

Eswatini National Netball Association

(ENNA) Secretary Nkabindze Shabalala congratulated the champions for their achievement.

“Kudos to the winners of the males and female’s categories. We are happy with the performances of the teams throughout the tournament, and we look forward to the kick-off of the new season,” he said.

Shabalala also thanked the sponsor for continued support.

“We are grateful for the support of the sponsor, which contributes to the development of the sport in the country,” he said.

The full results

Elite Females

Vixens 48 - 47 ABC Academy (Bronze medal)
Royal Flames 49 - 43 Green Lightning (Finals)

Elite Males

Vixens 33 - 34 Buffaloes (Bronze medal)
Green Lightning 43 - 41 Royal Flames (Finals)

Two local directors for Manzini Wanderers

By Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

IS it a wonderful combination?

Hub giants Manzini Wanderers have announced two co directors, Sibani Mngomezulu and former Khubuta Member of Parliament Mlamuli Mabuza replacing board Secretary Wellington Motsa in the hot seat. The two local businessmen were officially endorsed during a meeting held at Manzini Club on Tuesday.

The meeting further saw the appointment of a new Management committee headed by Mfanukhona ‘Gravvy’ Stewart, who is the team manager. Stewart is assisted by Mbuso Mvubu. The maroon and white outfit is also having a new Public Relations Officer, Mongie Simelane.

The supporters’ structure will be headed by two popular officials Vusi ‘Majayivane’ Dlamini and Kwaluseni Indvuna Yenkhundla Mthunzi Dlamini.

A four men committee will oversee the marketing wing in Magman Mahlalela, Mxolisi Dlamini, Eric Vilakati, and Lindelwa Mabuza. The new mouthpiece Simelane confirmed the latest news.

“We are pleased to announce the new Management Committee for the team. We call upon the ‘Weslians’ family to support the team as our mandate is to stabilise the team,” he said.

The hub giants recently returned from a one-season wilderness due to the dragging legal battle with the Eswatini Football Association, Premier League of Eswatini, Denver Sundowns, and Moneni Pirates.

The Nyanga ‘Crooks’ Hlophe led side suffered an early exit in the 8 Bet Trade Fair Cup with a 2-0 loss to Green Mamba



▲ Sibani Mngomezulu.



▲ Mlamuli Mabuza.

during the last 16 of the annual knockout tournaments.

THE FULL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Directors:** Mlamuli Mabuza, Sibani Mngometulu
- Manager:** Mfanukhona Stewart
- Assistant:** Welcome Mvubu
- PRO:** Mongi Simelane

Treasurer: Thokozani Mavimbela

Security: Mandla Khumalo

MARKETING TEAM

- Elvis Mxolisi Dlamini
- Magman Mahlalela
- Erio Vilakati
- Lindelwa Mabuza
- NSC**
- Mthunzi Dlamini
- Vusi ‘Majayivane’ Dlamini



▲ Zamani Simelane and Banele Tfwala.

Two local refs for COSAFA Under-17 championships

By Sibusiso Masilela
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TWO local assistant referees will be officiating in the 2025 COSAFA Under-17 championships in Zimbabwe. Zamani Simelane and Banele Tfwala are part of the match officials during the annual regional showpiece development showpiece between September 11-20, 2025, in Harare.

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) has congratulated the two officials for their appointment through a press statement.

Appointment

“Congratulations to Zamani Simelane and Banele Tfwala for their appointment in the COSAFA Under-17 championships,” the organisation said. The tournament will also serve as a qualifier for the 2026 CAF Under-17 championships.

The local lads will take on Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Comoros in Group A under the guidance of Mbabane Swallows assistant coach Sindiso Gama.

Group A

Teams: Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Comoros, Eswatini

FIXTURES:

Sept 11: Ngoni Mwos Stadium		
Comoros	vs Eswatini	noon
Sept 11: Ngoni Mwos Stadium		
Zimbabwe	vs Mozambique	3pm
Sept 13: Ngoni Mwos Stadium		
Mozambique	vs Comoros	noon,
Sept 13: Ngoni Mwos Stadium		
Zimbabwe	vs Eswatini	3pm,
Sept 15: Hearts Stadium		
Eswatini	vs Mozambique	3pm
Sept 15: Ngoni Mwos Stadium		
Zimbabwe	vs Comoros	3pm,

“
Congratulations to
Zamani Simelane
and Banele
Tfwala for their
appointment in the
COSAFA Under-17
championships
”

SRFA congratulates Nsingizini Hotspurs

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE Shiselweni Regional Football Association (SRFA) has congratulated Nsingizini Hotspurs for winning the 2025 8Bet Trade Fair cup.

This follows the Shiselweni based side’s 1-0 win over Green Mamba during the finals of the annual knockout tournament held on Sunday at Mavuso Sports Centre.

The Mandla Qhogi led charges secured the title through a Quality Dlamini first half free kick.

The regional association issued the message through a press statement released by the association Chairman, Nkhosinathi Kunene.

“On behalf of the Shiselweni Regional Football Association (SRFA) Executive, SRFA football clubs, SRFA football lovers, and the entire Shiselweni populace, we extend our unmatched gratitude and joy to the incumbent Champions, Nsingizini Hotspurs F.C., for your historic victory in the 8 Bet Premier League is a testament to the talent, hard work, and dedication of the entire team, and we are thrilled to celebrate this remarkable achievement,” Kunene said.

Kunene further stated that the success is a sign of hard work from the green and white ensemble.

“History has been rewritten, and we are proud to witness a team from the Shiselweni



▲ 8Bet Trade Fair Cup Champions Nsingizini Hotspurs.

Region, achieve such a remarkable feat within a short span of three years in the Premier League.

This victory not only highlights the talent and hard work of Nsingizini Hotspurs F.C. but also underscores the dedication and support of the entire football fanatics in the Shiselweni Region and the entire country,” he said.

The reigning MTN Premier League

champions will kick-start their continental journey with an away trip to Botswana against Simba Bhora on September 21,2025, at the Obed Chilume Stadium in Francistown.

Nsingizini 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).



World Cup so close for Bafana after Nigeria draw

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Two local refs for COSAFA Under-17 championships

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Sport

Two local directors for Wanderers

... Ex-Kubhuta MP Mlamuli Mabuza is the new 'Weslians' co-director with Sibani Mngomezulu. *Page 23*