



HMK JOINS
BLOOMBERG
GLOBAL FORUM

▲ His Majesty King Mswati III joined global leaders at the 2025 Bloomberg Global Forum in New York. The forum was hosted by Mr Michael Bloomberg (centre, next to King), founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg LP. It brought together top figures from governments, business, and nonprofits to tackle pressing global challenges, including geopolitical shifts, economic fragmentation, and evolving power dynamics. During the forum, Bloomberg announced a US\$75 million (about E1.35 billion) initiative by Bloomberg Philanthropies to address untreated vision impairment affecting one billion people globally, 90% in low and middle-income countries.

King denounces coups, urges African unity

By King's Office Correspondents

NEW YORK, USA — His Majesty King Mswati III has called for resolute rejection of coups and non-recognition of any governments installed through unconstitutional means. Delivering his address at a special meeting of the African Union(AU) Peace and Security Council(PSC) here yesterday the King emphasised Africa's firm stance against such power grabs stressing that no matter how popular a coup might seem it must face consequences rather than acceptance.

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By King's Office Correspondents

NEW YORK, USA — His Majesty King Mswati III has called for resolute rejection of coups and non-recognition of any governments installed through unconstitutional means.

Delivering his address at a special meeting of the African Union(AU) Peace and Security Council(PSC) here yesterday the King emphasised Africa's firm stance against such power grabs stressing that no matter how popular a coup might seem it must face consequences rather than acceptance.

"We must reject any attempt to overthrow a legitimate government," His Majesty declared. "Those who ascend to power through coups must face consequences not acceptance. The African Union and the United Nations have a responsibility to act decisively ensuring that no coup is legitimised or recognised. This is not merely a policy - it is a moral imperative."

The King's speech came during the AU Observer Mission's gathering on the sidelines of the 80th United Nations General Assembly where leaders discussed pressing security challenges across the continent including resurgent violent conflicts, unconstitutional changes of government and emerging threats from climate-induced instability to transnational crime.

His Majesty highlighted the AU's long-standing commitment to not tolerating coups or recognising regimes established by force drawing on the principles enshrined in the AU's 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration and Agenda 2063, which pledge to silence the guns by 2030.

As Eswatini assumes its role on the AU Peace and Security Council for the 2025-2028 term, the King called for a reassessment of the body's conflict resolution efforts urging the codification of best practices from successful interventions and the establishment of a General Assembly-led compliance unit with clear timelines to transform resolutions into unbreakable commitments.

"We must safeguard the efficiency and legitimacy of African solutions to African problems the very essence of our Union," he said advocating for the full operationalisation of the African Standby Force and bolstered financing through the AU Peace Fund and innovative partnerships.

His Majesty also stressed the need to review the PSC's relations with partners including the Regional Economic Communities the UN Security Council the European Union Peace and Security Committee and

King denounces coups, urges African unity



▲His Majesty King Mswati III has called for the resolute rejection of coups and non-recognition of any governments installed through unconstitutional means. His Majesty has been addressing a special meeting of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) in New York, USA.

the League of Arab States Peace and Security Council proposing harmonised protocols for joint early warning shared intelligence and coordinated actions under African leadership. In a broader call for structural reform, the King advocated UN Security Council changes in line with the Ezulwini Consensus to ensure Africa's equitable representation, to address the imbalances that hinder the continent's global voice.

He urged intensified efforts to implement AU-facilitated peace agreements and complete political transitions swiftly, warning that fragmented collaborations have impeded progress.

Guided by Eswatini's foreign policy principles of respect for sovereignty non-interference and dedication to multilateralism dialogue and unity, His Majesty framed the meeting as a call to action rooted in African wisdom and determination.

"We must as Heads of State and Government provide the space to reassess the African Union's conflict resolution efforts, reflecting on critical lessons and best practices to enhance the PSC's mandate," he noted.

He said this generation bears the duty to turn vision into reality: beyond rhetoric with courage and unity.

"Let us silence the guns forever. May this meeting mark a turning point where Africa's



▲His Majesty King Mswati III makes his address as Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Pholile Shakantu, the King's Private Secretary Mbongeni Simelane and Deputy Principal Chief of Protocol, Baya Dlamini listen in.

children inherit peace and a brighter future brimming with hope not challenges," he concluded.

The gathering included the Chairperson of the AU the President of the Republic of Angola other Heads of State and Government, members of the AU Peace and Security Council and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Examples of Coups and AU Actions

Recent coups in Africa include the 2020 coup in Mali where the military overthrew President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta leading to the AU suspending Mali's membership and

imposing sanctions until a civilian-led transitional government was established. In Sudan, the 2021 coup saw the military dissolve the transitional government prompting the AU to suspend Sudan's participation in all activities until the restoration of civilian rule.

The 2023 coup in Niger ousted President Mohamed Bazoum resulting in the AU demanding a return to constitutional order and suspending Niger while calling for regional mediation. The AU consistently enforces its policy of non-recognition of unconstitutional governments often applying diplomatic pressure sanctions and suspension to uphold democratic principles.

Eswatini gains UN Climate Forum observer status



▲Agriculture Minister, Mandla Tshawuka.

By King's Office Correspondents

NEW YORK, USA — The Kingdom of Eswatini has been granted observer status at the United Nations Climate Vulnerability Forum (CVF-V20).

This is a coalition dedicated to tackling climate change challenges for vulnerable nations. Agriculture Minister, Mandla Tshawuka, announced the development while delivering remarks on behalf of Prime Minister, Russell Dlamini, who was invited to participate in the forum during the UN General Assembly.

"For us, as the Kingdom of Eswatini, efforts to fight climate change and build resilience are vital international issues demanding global attention," the Prime Minister

said through the minister.

"Climate change and vulnerability are not a distant story but a lived reality. We face its effects continuously through violent hailstorms, prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall patterns."

He noted that these events lead to hunger, poverty, destruction of critical infrastructure and a regression of livelihoods.

"We therefore believe in the urgency of concrete global initiatives to halt the decimation of our production potential, retardation of our economic development and threats to our survival as a species," Dlamini added.

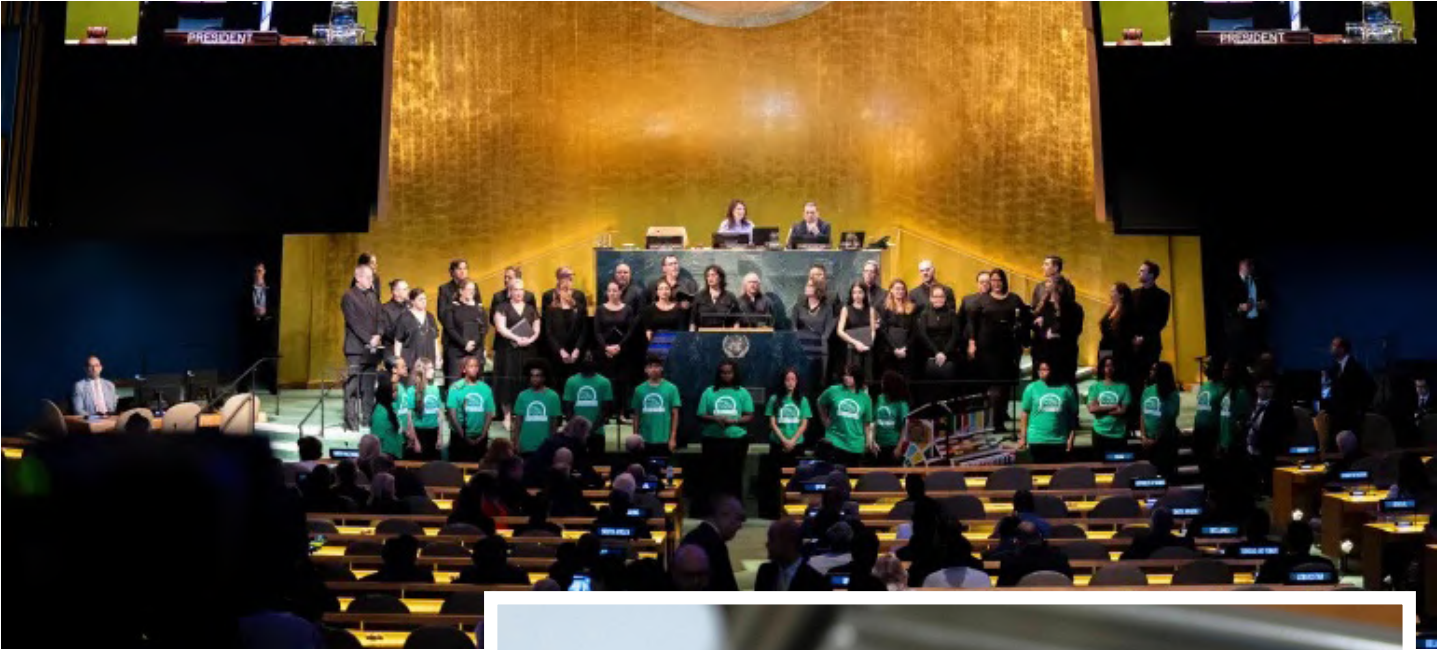
The prime minister expressed support for the CVF leaders' declaration, endorsed the request for UN observer status for the CVF-V20 and called for significantly increased contributions to the Adaptation Fund.

"As we drive these processes, it is imperative to act with urgency as nations to secure the future for posterity," he said. "This requires dedication, collective responsibility, sharing of ideas and technologies, innovation, commitment to clear policies and programmes and equitable funding for execution. The time to act is now."

The agriculture minister is accompanying His Majesty King Mswati III at the UN General Assembly alongside other ministers, including Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Pholile Shakantu, Commerce Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo, Natural Resources and Energy Prince Lonkhokhela, Finance Neal Rijkenberg, ICT Savannah Maziya, Tourism Jane Mkhonta-Simelane, Economic Planning and Development Dr Thambo Gina and Health Mduduzi Matsebula.

By King's Office Correspondents

HIV drug price cut hailed



NEW YORK, USA - UNAIDS has announced a dramatic price reduction for lenacapavir, a revolutionary HIV prevention drug, described as a watershed moment for global health.

The announcement, made on Tuesday during the United Nations General Assembly, detailed two agreements slashing the cost of lenacapavir from USD 28,000 (approximately E504 000) per patient per year to just USD 40 (about E720).

“This is a watershed moment. A price of USD 40 per person per year is a leap forward that will help unlock the revolutionary potential of long-acting HIV medicines,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima.

Lenacapavir, produced by US company Gilead, prevents HIV infection with just two injections annually. The agreements, supported by UNITAID, the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), and Wits RHI, enable Indian generic manufacturer Dr Reddy's Laboratories to offer the drug at USD 40 per year, with an initial oral dose costing no more than USD 17 (about E306). The Gates Foundation will support Hetero Drugs with funding and volume guarantees to maintain this price following a short pre-treatment oral regimen.

Byanyima noted that 1.3 million people were infected with HIV in 2024, far exceeding the 2025 target of 370,000. The PURPOSE 2 Trial, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, found lenacapavir 96 to 100 per cent effective in preventing new HIV infections. UNAIDS estimates that access for 20 million high-risk individuals, including men who have sex with men, sex workers, people who inject drugs, and young women and adolescent girls in sub-Saharan Africa, could significantly reduce infections and advance the goal of ending AIDS by 2030.

“UNITAID, Gates, CHAI, Wits RHI, Reddy, and Hetero have shown what is possible when companies prioritise equitable access to lifesaving medicines. Gilead must match this ambition by reducing its price for len-

acapavir, being transparent on cost and pricing, expanding its generics licence to all low and middle-income countries, and enabling rapid access for more people in developing countries,” Byanyima said.

Health Minister Mduduzi Matsebula welcomed the development, calling it timely for Eswatini. “We support the reduced pricing for this important commodity in the fight against HIV. This ensures the government can roll it out to all who need it. One of our vulnerabilities has been the persistently high rate of new infections among women of childbearing age, and this will help us turn this trend around,” he said.

NERCHA Executive Director Dr Nondumiso Ginindza-Ncube and Board Chairman Ntsika Fakudze, attending the UN General Assembly, described the breakthrough as a game-changer for HIV prevention globally. “As a country, we are looking forward to its launch during World AIDS Day on December 1 and have it ready for roll-out in January. Through UNAIDS, we have been promised about USD 660 000 (approx-



▲ UNAIDS has announced a dramatic price reduction for lenacapavir, a revolutionary HIV prevention drug, described as a watershed moment for global health.

mately E11.8 million) for a start, which is likely to benefit about 16 000 Emaswati,” Dr Ginindza-Ncube said. She added that PEPFAR has pledged further funding to support the programme.

Dr Ginindza-Ncube noted that Eswatini

has been prioritised for the drug, with roll-out guidelines being developed with the World Health Organisation. “Emaswati were either taking medications daily or monthly. Now, they will only need two injections per year at a lower cost per patient,” she said.

Health minister meets US advisor

By King's Office Correspondents

HEALTH Minister Mduduzi Matsebula met United States Government Senior Advisor for Global Health Security and Diplomacy Brad Smith on Tuesday.

Accompanied by NERCHA Executive Director Dr Nondumiso Ginindza-Ncube and other officials, Matsebula expressed gratitude for the US government's support through PEPFAR, which has been pivotal in reducing HIV infections, expanding treatment, and advancing epidemic control.

“Eswatini is ready to work with the US on developing a compact that reflects mutual accountability, shared priorities, and sustainable health outcomes, and we are committed to building stronger, more resilient sys-



▲ Minster Matsebula with US govt Senior Advisor for Global Health Security and Diplomacy Brad Smith.

tems that reduce dependency over time while safeguarding gains in HIV and other health areas,” Matsebula said.

Smith promised a draft agreement within weeks, addressing HIV commodities, human resources, supply

chain, information systems, and laboratory systems. Matsebula thanked the US for including Eswatini among the countries benefiting from lenacapavir support, affirming the government's commitment to an impactful partnership.

Hepatitis poses significant threat

By King's Office Correspondents

ON Monday, Health Minister Mduduzi Matsebula attended his first UNGA health side meetings, highlighting the threat of hepatitis and its complications, despite its potential for elimination.

“We must create awareness of the disease, its causes, and its double burden as a communicable disease that can lead to a non-communicable disease like liver cancer,” he said.

He stressed the need to strengthen prevention through vaccination, including introducing the birth dose, enhancing laboratory capacity for diagnosis, ensuring availability of lab commodities through improved supply chains, integrating the triple elimination of HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis into primary healthcare, and exploring local drug manufacturing.

“Some efforts require country-level action, while others need regional and global collaboration through forums like the UN Group of Friends to Eliminate Hepatitis,” Matsebula said.



▲ Minster Matsebula with US govt Senior Advisor for Global Health Security and Diplomacy Brad Smith with Nercha Executive Director Dr Nondumiso Ginindza Ncube and officials

Minister Appolo commissions Ekukhanyeni Water Scheme

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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ACTING Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, Appolo Maphalala has commissioned the Ekukhanyeni Water Scheme.

This inauguration represents a landmark achievement in the ongoing development and transformation of the Ekukhanyeni Constituency.

This milestone is the culmination of a 16-year partnership spearheaded by World Vision Eswatini, with support from its international offices in Germany and Italy, aimed at dramatically improving access to clean and safe water for communities across the region.

Since its inception, the Ekukhanyeni Area Programme has focused on delivering sustainable water solutions to five communities, including critical public institutions such as schools and clinics. The impact of this long-term investment is evident in the significant increase in safe water access, which has risen from 46.7 per cent in 2010 to an impressive 76 per cent in 2025. This improvement has transformed daily life for many residents, especially women and children, who historically faced the arduous task of walking long distances to collect unsafe water, a burden that often compromised their health, education, and safety.

During the commissioning ceremony, Minister Maphalala highlighted the far-reaching benefits of the water scheme. He emphasised that the availability of clean water has not only reduced the physical strain on vulnerable groups but also contributed to better health outcomes by lowering the prevalence of waterborne diseases. Moreover, the increased water access has positively influenced school attendance and child protection, as children are freed from the time-consuming and sometimes dangerous chore of fetching water.

The Ekukhanyeni Water Scheme is part of a comprehensive approach to water security within the Inkhundla, which includes the protection of 13 natural springs, the drilling of boreholes, and the installation of sanitation facilities. This integrated strategy ensures that water supply improvements are sustainable and resilient, addressing both quantity and quality. Maphalala praised the holistic nature of the project, noting that it significantly enhances the well-being of the community, particularly its most vulnerable members.

The Minister further underscored the importance of partnerships in driving community development. He acknowledged the collaborative efforts of local leadership, government ministries, and World Vision Eswatini, which have been instrumental in the successful implementation of the water scheme.



▲ Acting Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, Appolo Maphalala holding a glass of water as Minister of Tinkhundla Administration and Development Sikhumbuzo Dlamini applauds.

LUCT shuttered following student's sudden death

By Thokozeni Mazibuko

PUBLIC Relations Officer of the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology Lucky Mathonsi has said as an institution they were shuttered at the tragic death of one of their students.

“These are very bad news for our institution, and we sadly mourn the passing of one of our own who had a very bright future,” Mathonsi told Eswatini Daily News.

Tragedy struck on Tuesday when a 23-year-old Limkokwing University student lost her life after being hit by a speeding vehicle which lost control along the MR3 public road near Sidvashini, Ngwenya Lane.

According to a source who spoke on condition of anonymity, the student had been walking from a nearby hiking spot after allegedly being left behind by her sister.

The student, who resided at Esitibeni, was making her way along the highway and had just passed the flyover bridge when the incident occurred. Witnesses claimed the Toyota Fortuner struck her not once but twice, fatally wounding her on the spot.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service, however, provided official details confirming the accident. Deputy Chief Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, reported:

“On 23/09/2025 at 1015 hours at or near Sidvashini, Ngwenya lane along MR3 public road, a Toyota Fortuner vehicle, driven by a 27-year-old man of Manzana, lost control of the motor vehicle, veered off the road and knocked down a 23-year-old female pedestrian before overturning.



The pedestrian sustained serious body injuries and was conveyed to Mbabane Government Hospital where she was certified dead upon arrival. The driver of the motor vehicle sustained head injuries and was treated and discharged at Mbabane Government Hospital. The motor vehicle has multiple damages.”

The accident left fellow students devastated. Some of her colleagues who spoke on condition of anonymity with this publication say that the deceased was left behind by her sister whom she always travels with after classes.

“After classes on Tuesday, her sister told her that she was hurrying to the house as she was tired and left the deceased behind before she met her death,” alleged one of the students said in an interview. In other news, A 41-year-old man tragically lost his life on Tuesday evening after being struck by a heavy-duty truck along the Phumlacashi/St Philips D50 public road.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Police Information and Communication Officer, Assistant Superintendent Nosipho Mnguni, the accident occurred on 23 September 2025 at around 7:00 p.m. The collision involved a Power Star truck pulling two trailers, which was driven by a 73-year-old man from Game 5.

The pedestrian sustained severe head injuries after being knocked down. He was quickly transported to Good Shepherd Hospital, but despite efforts to save him, medical personnel certified him dead upon arrival.

Police confirmed that the truck did not suffer any damage during the incident. Investigations are currently underway to determine the exact circumstances that led to the accident.

The Royal Eswatini Police Service has once again urged pedestrians and motorists to exercise caution on public roads. With the country recording an increasing number of road fatalities, authorities stress the impor-



▲ Limkokwing University of Creative Technology PRO Lucky Mathonsi.

tance of vigilance, particularly on busy rural routes such as the D50 road which connects Phumlacashi and St Philips.

Residents of the area expressed shock at the tragic loss, highlighting ongoing concerns over pedestrian safety along the stretch of road where visibility is often poor after dark. Police investigations continue, and further details are expected to be released in due course.

Government in bid to transform country's schools into sanctuaries of growth – Minister

Stories By Thokozani Mazibuko

ESWATINI will continue expanding Competency-Based Education (CBE) into the secondary phase of General Education beginning in 2026, in a bid to transform the country's schools into sanctuaries of growth, creativity and opportunity.

This was disclosed by the Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo yesterday during the 5th National Conference on Curriculum held under the theme, 'Working Towards the Education Global Agenda 2030: Implementing Curriculum Reform(s) in Eswatini,' held at The George Hotel.

Making his remarks, the minister said as stakeholders, they were gathered under a shared vision, one that places education at the very heart of national transformation and global progress for Eswatini.

"Our theme, 'Working Towards the Education Global Agenda 2030: Implementing Curriculum Reform(s) in Eswatini,' is more than a slogan. It is a declaration of intent, a commitment to shaping a future peace, where education

drives prosperity, and inclusivity," he said.

The minister said this theme aligns with the nation's aspirations of relevant and quality education stipulated in numerous policy documents.

He said at the core of these aspirations lies a powerful truth: education is a catalyst for sustainable development and social change.

"That is why the importance of this conference cannot be overstated. I am pleased to affirm that our national pursuit of relevant and quality education aligns seamlessly with global aspirations, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which champions inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all," he said.

The minister said the ministry's policies and the work of the conference reflect Eswatini's belief that SDG 4 was not a distant ambition but a shared responsibility they are determined to fulfil.

He said the ministry's journey toward educational transformation began in earnest in 2011, with the launch of the Education Sector Policy. He said this policy empowered their institutions, including the National Curriculum Centre, to lead the development and implementation of CBE across all levels of General Education.

Nxumalo stated that through ongoing

curriculum reform, the ministry aims to transform the country's schools into sanctuaries of growth, creativity, and opportunity.

"To our educators, industry leaders, parents, and stakeholders, we emphasise that CBE is not just a new approach; it is a transformative one. CBE nurtures learners to become problem-solvers; individuals who acquire knowledge and apply it to develop relevant skills, values, and shape positive behaviours," Nxumalo said.

He stated that by integrating essential 21st Century Skills, CBE seeks to empower the country's learners to compete and collaborate on a global scale.

He pointed out that the ministry of education and training was committed to ensuring that CBE was implemented in classrooms across Eswatini with real, measurable impact.

"In this journey, teachers are the champions of change. You are the architects of this transformation and are therefore urged to embrace CBE as the cornerstone for equipping learners with the skills, values, and behaviours needed to thrive in a dynamic world. As we gather here today, let us remember that the future of our nation will be crafted in classrooms, with teachers as the authors of our destiny," he said.



▲ Minister of Education and Training Owen Nxumalo.



▲ Catholic Bishops.

THE Prime Minister Russell Dlamini is expected to open the IMBISA conference at Esibayeni Lodge.

Eswatini has become the centre of Southern Africa's Catholic community as more than 120 Roman Catholic Bishops from across the region converge for the Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa (IMBISA) mega conference.

The gathering, which marks the 50th anniversary of IMBISA's Golden Jubilee, is being hosted in the kingdom for the first time in history.

The high-profile event will officially open on Friday at Esibayeni Lodge, where Prime Minister Russell Mmiso is expected to deliver the keynote address. The conference is anticipated to draw attention not only for its religious significance but also for the role of the Catholic Church in shaping education,

PM to open the Catholic Bishops' IMBISA Golden Jubilee conference

health, and social justice across the Southern African region.

Speaking ahead of the celebrations, Father Ncamiso Vilakati, Media Liaison Officer of the Roman Catholic Church in Eswatini, described the event as both a historic and spiritual milestone for the country.

"This Golden Jubilee is not just about celebrating 50 years of IMBISA's existence, but also about reflecting on the journey of the Church in Southern Africa," Father Vilakati said. "We are grateful that Eswatini was chosen as the host nation, and this provides an opportunity for Emaswati to

experience the richness of the universal Church within our own borders."

IMBISA was founded in 1975 to strengthen collaboration among Catholic bishops in the Southern African region. It has since played a pivotal role in promoting unity, pastoral formation, and joint responses to social issues, including poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS care, and peacebuilding efforts.

Father Vilakati further noted that the Jubilee will serve as a platform to discuss pressing issues affecting the Church and society today.

"Our discussions will focus not only on

faith and evangelisation but also on how the Church continues to respond to challenges such as climate change, migration, and the need for peace and justice in our communities," he explained.

Delegations have already begun arriving in Eswatini from countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Angola. The programme will feature plenary sessions, workshops, and liturgical celebrations, with the highlight being a Jubilee Mass attended by thousands of Catholic faithful.

Stories By Delisa Magagula

MILLIONS of Emalangeni continue to leak from government coffers through unlawful payments made to deceased beneficiaries and former employees, exposing serious gaps in financial oversight and accountability.

A recent compliance audit for the quarter ending March 31, 2025, revealed that more than E1.3 million in elderly grants was disbursed to people who had long passed away.

The audit, compiled by the Auditor General (AG), further pointed to weak monitoring systems, negligence, and ineffective recovery measures as key factors fuelling the losses.

Payments

The payments were processed by the Deputy Prime Minister's (DPM) Office between 2020 and 2023.

The breakdown provided by the AG shows:

- 465 deceased individuals were each paid E1, 500, amounting to E697, 500.
- 222 deceased individuals received E1, 500 each, totalling E333, 000.
- 162 deceased individuals were each overpaid E500, totalling E81, 000.
- 79 deceased individuals were each overpaid E1, 000, totalling E79, 000.
- 31 deceased individuals received E500 each, totalling E15, 500.

The cumulative unlawful payments amounted to E1.36 million.

The AG noted that the losses occurred because the DPM's Office failed to establish a reliable verification system to immediately stop payments once a beneficiary had died.

Family members or proxies allegedly continued collecting the grants.

E1.3 mln paid by Govt to deceased beneficiaries



▲ The payments were processed by the Deputy Prime Minister's (DPM) Office between 2020 and 2023.

"This situation has subjected the government to serious financial losses, as non-entitled persons unduly benefitted from the grant payments," the AG stated.

The DPM's Office responded that it was

working with chiefdoms and the Ministry of Home Affairs to provide records of all deaths among the elderly and disabled.

The plan included issuing exercise books to chiefdoms to capture every death.

However, the AG dismissed this explanation as insufficient, warning that the response does not address how the total unlawfully paid amount of E1, 368,000 will be recovered.

Ex- Govt employee confirms E171 000 debt on WhatsApp

IN another case, the AG flagged a government employee who absconded from duty but continued to receive a salary, pocketing E171, 000.

The employee acknowledged the debt via WhatsApp, offering to repay it in monthly instalments of E2, 000.

The AG sharply criticized the acceptance of a WhatsApp message as an official debt acknowledgment.

"The WhatsApp acknowledgement of debt is not an official document. The suggested monthly repayment is trivial, and the debt will not be recovered within a reasonable time to avoid a financial loss to the government," he said.

According to the report, the government is still pursuing recovery of over E712, 000 from various absconded officers, but no robust systems are in place to track or penalize employees who abandon posts without honouring their bonding agreements.

The AG highlighted a glaring deficiency in controls, noting that disciplinary action and legal enforcement are either slow or

non-existent.

Both cases underscore systemic weaknesses in financial accountability. The Public Finance Management Act of 2017 obliges public officers to safeguard state resources, report losses, and recover public funds where negligence is involved. Yet, in both instances, officers responsible for preventing losses failed to act.

The AG recommended that controlling officers immediately recover the funds, enforce disciplinary measures against negligent officials, and formalize all debt recovery through proper legal documentation instead of informal agreements.

The revelations come at a time when government resources are already stretched. The unlawful disbursement of millions not only undermines fiscal stability but also deprives genuine beneficiaries of much-needed support.

The AG concluded that unless decisive action is taken, the hemorrhage of public funds will persist, eroding public confidence in the government's ability to manage taxpayer money.



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BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Family businesses urged to build legacies beyond generations

ESWATINI has placed family enterprises at the heart of its economic transformation agenda, recognising their central role in job creation, national identity, and long-term resilience. This was the key message delivered by SMEs Director Meluleki Dlamini, speaking on behalf of the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo, at the official opening of the 2nd Family Business Summit in the Kingdom of Eswatini at Happy Valley Hotel on Wednesday.

India's EXIM Bank boosts credit to exporters hit by US tariffs

MUMBAI — India's Export-Import (EXIM) Bank is increasing credit support to exporters and helping them diversify into newer markets, particularly Africa, following punitive U.S. tariffs on imports from the South Asian nation, a top official said. State-owned EXIM Bank has eased risk limits on at least a fourth of its overseas banking partners, said Tarun Sharma, the deputy managing director at EXIM Bank of India.

Dollar edges up after Powell reiterates caution over further easing

TOKYO/LONDON — The U.S. dollar edged higher on Wednesday, rebounding from its lowest level in nearly a week, after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell struck a cautious tone on further easing overnight, though markets still priced in two more rate cuts this year.

EswatiniBank

FX RATES

Notes/Cash	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	16.8274	17.2964
G.B. Pound	22.6987	23.3845
EURO	19.8716	20.4835
Bank Rate	(July 2023)	7.50%
Prime Rate	(July 2023)	11%
Inflation	(July 2023)	4.5%
Petrol	E21.60/Litre	
Diesel	E22.90 /Litre	
Paraffin	E17.25/Litre	

Eswatini charts way forward for African mining

By Delisa Magagula

HIS Royal Highness Prince Lonkhokhela, Minister for Natural Resources and Energy, has called for greater collaboration, transparency, and investment in mineral exploration across Africa.

Speaking at the 2nd Africa Mineral Strategy Group (AMSG) Roundtable, the Minister outlined a clear pathway for unlocking the continent's mineral wealth while ensuring sustainable development.

The Roundtable, convened as a side meeting during the United Nations General Assembly, brought together African ministers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders under the theme 'Forging a Common African Voice, Advancing Global Partnerships'.

The event was officiated by the Vice President of Nigeria, representing the country's Head of State, and marked a significant step in shaping the future of Africa's mining sector.

Prince Lonkhokhela emphasised that the benefits of Africa's mineral wealth would remain elusive unless governments and private investors committed to scaling up exploration.

"Benefits from the mining industry will remain a distant dream unless exploration activities are increased," he said.

He revealed that the Government of Eswatini had already launched a multi-disciplinary geoscience mapping project to identify mineral targets.

This project, he noted, would prioritise follow-up exploration programmes aimed at transforming raw potential into tangible economic opportunities.

Another priority area highlighted by the Minister was the urgent need for African countries to ratify and adopt the African Mineral and Energy Resource Classification and Management System (AMREC) and the Pan-African Resource Reporting Code (PARC).

These frameworks are designed to bring consistency, transparency, and comparability to



▲ Minister of Natural Resources and Energy HRH Prince Lonkhokhela addressed fellow delegates at the 2nd Africa Mineral Strategy Group (AMSG) Roundtable.

mineral resource reporting across the continent.

According to HRH Prince Lonkhokhela, adherence to internationally recognised standards will be instrumental in building investor confidence, attracting financing, and ensuring that African nations negotiate from a position of strength when entering into mining agreements.

Prince Lonkhokhela reminded delegates that the continent's mineral wealth could only be fully harnessed if African states worked together and spoke with one voice on global platforms.

"This Roundtable has been convened under a theme of immense significance for our continent 'Forging a Common African Voice, Advancing Global Partnerships.' It is precisely this theme that we must take to heart, as we embark on the path to ensuring African nations, and indeed our people, benefit from our mineral wealth," he said.

He stressed that alignment across nations would not only prevent fragmentation but also strengthen Africa's bargaining power in global mineral markets.

Delegates at the Roundtable agreed that mining must not be pursued in isolation but integrated into broader development frameworks

that promote industrialisation, job creation, and environmental sustainability.

Prince Lonkhokhela reaffirmed Eswatini's commitment to pursuing mining as part of a balanced growth strategy that includes renewable energy, skills development, and inclusive community participation.

The AMSG Roundtable closed with a renewed commitment to advancing Africa's mineral agenda through exploration, adoption of reporting standards, and regional collaboration.

Leaders recognised that mineral wealth represents one of Africa's strongest levers for economic transformation if harnessed responsibly and collectively.

For Eswatini, the meeting reaffirmed its role in shaping continental policy and underscored the country's determination to transform its mineral resources into a pillar of national development.

At the close of his address, HRH Prince Lonkhokhela urged African leaders and stakeholders to seize the moment:

"We must not let this opportunity slip. Our mineral resources are a blessing, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure they translate into prosperity for our nations and our people," said Lonkhokhela.

Former Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng for ESIA dinner

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI Institute of Accountants (ESIA) is preparing for what promises to be a landmark event in its calendar: the 2025 ESIA Annual Dinner and Graduation Ceremony, at which the Former Chief Justice of South Africa, Mogoeng Mogoeng, will deliver the keynote address.

Former Chief Justice of South Africa, Mogoeng Mogoeng, is scheduled to deliver a keynote address at the annual dinner and graduation ceremony of the Eswatini Institute of Accountants (ESIA) on Thursday, September 25, 2025. The Institute is calling on all members, graduates, stakeholders, and friends to reserve their seats, as the event will be a night of celebration and leadership.

Messaging, ticketing, and preparations are

underway. According to ESIA's Executive Director, Dr Ndiphethe Olive Mabila, this coming appearance marks an important moment for the profession in Eswatini.

The Annual Dinner and Graduation Ceremony for 2025 will bring together graduates of accounting and auditing programs, ESIA members in public practice, private sector, and public sector, as well as invited dignitaries, business leaders, educators, and government representatives.

Former Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng is confirmed as the Distinguished Speaker.

His role will be to deliver the keynote address, to inspire graduates and seasoned professionals alike, at what ESIA describes as a night of celebration and leadership.

The dinner and ceremony will also serve as the graduation for ESIA-certified accountants, awarding them recognition, formalising their entry or continued standing in the profession.

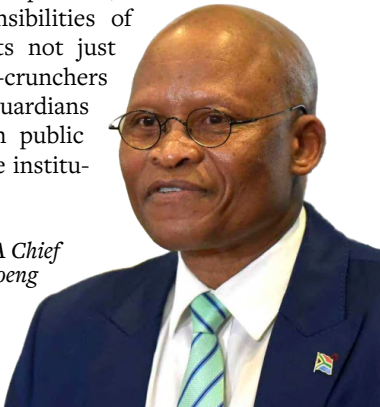
Former Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng

brings with him a reputation for leadership in judiciary, ethical governance, and public service.

His selection as keynote speaker is viewed by ESIA as aligning with its values of integrity, standards, accountability, and ethical conduct.

The address is expected to touch on themes of leadership, the rule of law, the role of ethics in professional practice, and the responsibilities of accountants not just as number-crunchers but as guardians of trust in public and private institutions.

► Former SA Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng.



Family businesses urged to build legacies beyond generations

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI has placed family enterprises at the heart of its economic transformation agenda, recognising their central role in job creation, national identity, and long-term resilience.

This was the key message delivered by SMEs Director Meluleki Dlamini, speaking on behalf of the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo, at the official opening of the 2nd Family Business Summit in the Kingdom of Eswatini at Happy Valley Hotel on Wednesday.

The summit, themed ‘Growing Legacies, Embracing Change’, drew participants from across Eswatini, South Africa and beyond.

Convened by REDI and Sothaba Enterprises, with the support of Standard Bank and KPMG, it has quickly become a cornerstone of Eswatini’s business calendar.

Globally, family businesses contribute between 70% and 90% of GDP and provide more than 60% of jobs. In Africa, over 80% of private enterprises are family-owned. Eswatini mirrors this reality, with family enterprises forming the backbone of local com-



▲ Stakeholders who attended the 2nd Edition of the Family Business Summit that took place at the Happy Valley hotel in Ezulwini.

merce and community development.

“This Summit challenges us to change the narrative to grow businesses that endure beyond one generation, creating lasting legacies of wealth, employment, and national pride,” he said.

Dlamini outlined the economic weight of family enterprises in Eswatini, noting that they contribute to GDP growth, create jobs, anchor communities, and carry the national

identity through home-grown brands.

He emphasised their resilience, as many prioritise long-term sustainability over short-term gains.

Dlamini challenged family business leaders to focus on succession planning, governance, and innovation to ensure continuity.

“Put in place strong governance structures. Plan carefully for succession. Resolve disputes with wisdom. Innovate, diversify,

and embrace technology,” he said.

Quoting an African proverb, he reminded entrepreneurs that true wealth is measured not by what is inherited, but by what endures when the elders are gone.

The summit placed emphasis on how Eswatini’s family enterprises can become engines of sustainable growth, positioning themselves not just as local players but as regional and global contenders.

Cars, electronics up for grabs at U.S. Embassy

By Delisa Magagula

THE United States Embassy in Eswatini will host a public auction of vehicles, electronics, appliances, and office furniture on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at its compound in Kent Rock, Mbabane.

The highly anticipated event is expected to draw a large crowd of bidders ranging from business owners and institutions to individuals looking for quality goods at competitive prices.

Among the headline items up for grabs are motor vehicles, including two 2017 Chevrolet Trailblazers and a 2020 Kia Picanto.

These vehicles, prized for their reliability and versatility, are expected to attract strong interest from buyers seeking well-maintained models.

Beyond vehicles, the Embassy will also dispose of a wide variety of electronic equipment such as monitors, CPUs, printers, copiers, and laptops essentials for businesses and households alike.

Household appliances will also feature prominently in the sale. Freezers, refrigerators, dryers, washing machines, microwaves, and even an air purifier are listed among the items, offering bidders the chance to secure modern appliances at potentially discounted prices.

In addition, the auction will showcase an extensive range of office furniture and household goods. Items include filing cabinets, office chairs, chests of drawers, dressers, single beds with headboards, dining suites with chairs, buffets, sofas, coffee tables, ottomans, mirrors, TV stands, and more.

With such variety, the auction presents a one-stop opportunity for households and



▲ Furniture will also be sold.



▲ Some of the electronics to be sold on the day.

businesses looking to upgrade their furnishings affordably.

Public viewing of the items is scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at the U.S. Embassy compound in Kent Rock, Mbabane, between 10:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. This will give prospective bidders the chance to inspect the quality and condition of the goods ahead of the auction.

Registration requires a refundable deposit



▲ This set of chairs will go under the hammer.

of E5,000 for vehicles and E2, 000 for other items.

Interested bidders can register at REXY’s Investments offices at Lot 613, Shiselweni Avenue, Warehouse No. 2, opposite Matsapha Central Garage, or on-site at Kent Rock starting from 8:00 a.m. on the day of the auction.

The auction will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. on October 8.



▲ One of Standard Bank Eswatini Branches.

Standard Bank Eswatini largest bank — Dr Gumbi

STANDARD Bank Eswatini has been recognised as the biggest bank in the country in terms of assets, underlining its dominant role in the local financial sector.

The announcement was made by Dr. Sikhomba Gumbi, CEO of REDI Eswatini and founder of the Family Business Summit, during his remarks at the 2nd Family Business Summit in Ezulwini.

While thanking sponsors, he singled out Standard Bank for its contribution to strengthening the platform and supporting family-owned enterprises.

“Standard Bank Eswatini is the biggest bank in the country in terms of assets, and we are grateful for their vision and partnership in supporting family businesses,” Dr. Gumbi said.

India's EXIM Bank boosts credit to exporters hit by US tariffs

By Robert Harvey

MUMBAI — India's Export-Import (EXIM) Bank is increasing credit support to exporters and helping them diversify into newer markets, particularly Africa, following punitive U.S. tariffs on imports from the South Asian nation, a top official said.

State-owned EXIM Bank - which provides export financing and backs loans granted by commercial lenders to buyers of Indian goods - has eased risk limits on at least a fourth of its overseas banking partners, said Tarun Sharma, the deputy managing director at EXIM Bank of India.

"Wherever there's a requirement, we are working to see how do we give enhanced limits to the exporters," Sharma said in an interview. The bank has partnerships with more than 100 overseas banks across 54 countries under its trade assistance program.

EXIM Bank is also offering more shorter-tenure credit and credit against future receivables to address exporters' immediate working capital needs, Sharma said.

The U.S., India's largest export partner, imposed a 50 per cent tariff on Indian exports on August 27. Businesses in sectors such as textiles, chemicals, gems and jewelry, and fisheries, faced with job cuts and uncertain order flows, have scrambled to find new buyers in markets across Europe,

... eyes Africa expansion



▲ A mobile crane carries a container at Deendayal Port in Kandla, in the western state of Gujarat, India.

Africa and Asia. The government has yet to announce any financial or credit support for affected exporters but has directed banks to ease credit access for the sector.

Exporters initially coped with the tariff shock by frontloading shipments to U.S. clients before the August deadline. However, Sharma said longer-term strategies involve shifting export capabilities to "non-traditional" markets such as Africa and Latin America.

Diversifying into Africa

EXIM Bank is in talks with African banks to increase its presence in the region, aiming to support diversification efforts.

While EXIM Bank currently finances government projects in over 40 African countries, Sharma said it is now shifting its focus in the continent to commercial financing and trade facilitation. The lender is exploring credit lines ranging from \$100 million to \$150 million for regional banks, or

\$25 million to \$50 million for smaller local banks, and expanding partnerships with major lenders across the region including the Afrexim Bank (African Export-Import Bank) and the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), Sharma said. Indian exporters, facing challenges from U.S. tariffs, have shown "greater receptivity for dialogue and moving ahead to diversify into African markets" with an incremental export opportunity of over \$31 billion, Sharma said. (Reuters)

By Kevin Buckland and
Canan Sevgili

TOKYO/LONDON — The U.S. dollar edged higher on Wednesday, rebounding from its lowest level in nearly a week, after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell struck a cautious tone on further easing overnight, though markets still priced in two more rate cuts this year.

The euro, meanwhile, remained largely unchanged by data that showed German business morale fell unexpectedly in September, with Ifo's business climate index dropping to 87.7 from 88.9 in August amid a weak economic outlook.

It was last down 0.4 per cent at \$1.177, but was relatively steady against other currencies, like the pound and the Swiss franc, highlighting investor buying of the dollar. Sterling declined 0.3 per cent to \$1.34820.

Key for markets now is the expectation of quarter-point rate cuts at the remaining two Fed meetings this year and another in the first quarter of 2026, in line with the central bank's guidance after last week's meeting.

This week's U.S. data will be in focus, particularly Friday's release of the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, a key input for shaping expectations on the Fed's next policy steps.

"We still see the balance of risks as skewed to the downside for the dollar into the core PCE release at the end of this week, with a 0.2 per cent MoM print cementing expectations for two Fed cuts this year. That is, unless the geopolitical picture in Europe deteriorates,"

Dollar edges up after Powell reiterates caution over further easing



▲ Euro and U.S. dollar banknotes are seen in this illustration.

said Francesco Pesole, FX strategist at ING.

He added that moves in the dollar were contained, given Powell essentially reiterated the cautious view he offered last week.

At that time, the dollar bounced back from its lowest level since early 2022 after the Fed's policy announcement and Powell's subsequent news conference, which fell short of the market's more dovish expectations following a recent, sharp weakening of the labour market.

US dollar index adds 0.35%

The U.S. dollar index, which measures the currency against six major rivals, added 0.35

per cent on Wednesday to trade at 97.575, attempting to claw back ground after two straight losing sessions in which it touched its lowest since Thursday at 97.198 overnight.

"Powell acknowledged the absence of risk-free policy options, warning that premature easing could entrench inflation whilst excessive monetary restriction might unnecessarily damage employment prospects," said James Kniveton, senior corporate forex dealer at Convera.

Against the yen, the dollar added 0.29 per cent to 148.065 yen.

Candidates for the next leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party answered journalists' questions on Wednesday.

Frontrunner Sanae Takaichi, a fiscal and monetary dove, said monetary policy was up to the Bank of Japan but higher rates could affect mortgages and corporate investment.

Elsewhere, Australia's dollar rose 0.23 per cent to \$0.66140, erasing an earlier small loss, after the consumer price index (CPI) climbed to 3 per cent in August from 2.8 per cent in July, slightly above the 2.9 per cent median forecast and less than a week before the Reserve Bank's next policy meeting.

However, the data picture was complicated by a key measure of core inflation easing back to 2.6 per cent.

Traders slightly pared back bets for a rate cut by year-end to about 33 per cent, according to LSEG data.

Markets continue to expect no change to policy on September 30.

Data suggest sticky prices could hinder the RBA's ability to deliver rate cuts to support a weak labour market, though the jump in headline inflation is largely due to expiring energy subsidies and may not be as bad as it looks, said Kyle Rodda, an analyst at Capital.com. New Zealand's dollar held steady at \$0.5851 after the appointment of a new central bank chief.

New Zealand Finance Minister Nicola Willis on Wednesday announced that Swedish central banker Anna Breman has been appointed as the next Reserve Bank governor, becoming the first woman in the role. She takes over from December 1. (Reuters)

Malawi president concedes election defeat hours before result announcement

MALAWI'S President Lazarus Chakwera on Wednesday conceded defeat in the Southern African country's presidential election, less than two hours before the final result was due to be announced.

Official results released so far show ex-president Peter Mutharika, Chakwera's predecessor, has built a commanding lead in the September 16 election.

"It is only right that I concede defeat out of respect for your will as citizens and out of respect for the constitution," Chakwera said in an address to the nation.

"I am fully committed to ... a peaceful transfer of power."

Malawi's electoral commission is due to release the presidential election result later on Wednesday.

Mutharika's supporters celebrated at the national results centre when they heard Chakwera had conceded.

This month's election was the fourth showdown between Mutharika, 85, and Chakwera, 70.

Mutharika won in the 2014 and 2019 elections, though his 2019 victory was annulled by the constitutional court because of widespread irregularities including the use of correction fluid on results sheets.

Chakwera won the re-run of that election in 2020.

Political analysts had predicted that Mutharika would mount a strong challenge to Chakwera's re-election bid, as the economy has



▲ Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera waits to vote in the country's general election at Malembo village, west of the capital, Lilongwe, Malawi.

worsened since the last election.

A devastating cyclone and a regional drought, both linked to climate change, have wiped out crops and worsened hardship.

Inflation has been above 20% for more than three years.

Nearly three-quarters of Ma-

lawians live below the World Bank's poverty line of \$3 a day. Around half the population does not get the minimum number of calories for adequate nutrition, according to the bank's estimates.

(Reuters)

Voters in Guinea approve new constitution with 89% support

A new constitution in Guinea that could permit junta leader Mamady Doumbouya to run for office was backed by 89% of voters, according to complete provisional results released late Tuesday.

According to provisional figures, subject to confirmation by the Constitutional Court, 89.38% of voters backed the proposed constitution, with a turnout of 86.42% from the 6.7 million registered voters, territorial administration minister, Ibrahima Kalil Conde announced.

The new charter replaces the transitional framework that had barred members of the ruling junta from contesting elections, opening the door for Doumbouya's candidacy in the upcoming presidential vote, expected in December 2025, though Doumbouya has not said whether he will run.

The new constitution also

introduces institutional changes such as longer presidential terms, from five years to seven, renewable once, and a new Senate.

Doumbouya seized power in Guinea, home to the world's largest reserves of bauxite, in 2021. It was part of a wave of eight coups that swept West and Central Africa between 2020 and 2023.

Despite calls for a boycott from opposition leaders such as Cellou Dalein Diallo and former President Alpha Conde—both of whom are currently suspended from political activity—Guineans turned out in large numbers, with a provisional turnout of 86.42% and 5,951,807 voters recorded across all constituencies, many expressing a desire to move forward from military rule.

Opposition politicians contested the turnout, citing an "abnormally high" rate compared with their observations at polling stations. (Reuters)



▲ Election officials count ballot papers in a referendum on a new Guinean constitution that could permit coup leader Mamady Doumbouya, who seized power in 2021, to run for president, in Conakry, Guinea.

Ugandan pop star Bobi Wine cleared to challenge aging incumbent again

UGANDAN opposition leader, pop star-turned-politician Bobi Wine, was cleared on Wednesday to stand for president, pitting him against Yoweri Museveni for a second time during a career in which he has been arrested and jailed multiple times for his opposition to the long-serving incumbent.

Wine, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, first challenged Museveni in the 2021 polls but came in second place.

The 43-year-old however rejected the results and said his victory had been stolen through pre-ticked ballots, intimidation by security forces, falsification of results and voter bribery.

Museveni, 81, who has ruled the east African country since 1986, was cleared to seek another term on Tuesday. If he wins, his rule will span nearly half a century.

"Our country is one of the richest countries on the planet in terms of natural resources so...our problem is not lack of wealth," Wine said after he was declared a candidate by the electoral body's top official in the capital Kampala.

"Our problem is lack of leadership, leadership that serves the people instead of terrorising them and exploiting them."

Kyagulanyi's party, the National Unity Platform (NUP), has over the years decried what they say is continuous kidnapping, illegal detention and torture of its supporters and officials by Museveni's government.

Muhoozi Kainerugaba, Museveni's son and head of the military, in January threatened to behead Wine.



▲ Robert Kyagulanyi, also known as Bobi Wine, of the National Unity Platform (NUP) party, and his wife Barbara Itungo Kyagulanyi, attend a ceremony for his nomination as a presidential candidate at the Electoral Commission offices in Kampala, Uganda.

In May, Muhoozi also admitted to confining a missing NUP official in his basement and also threatened violence against him.

Dozens of NUP supporters and officials have spent months and years in prison over what Wine and others say are politically motivated charges.

The government has rejected accusations

it has kidnapped and tortured opposition members and says security forces only detain people based on legitimate suspicions a crime has been committed.

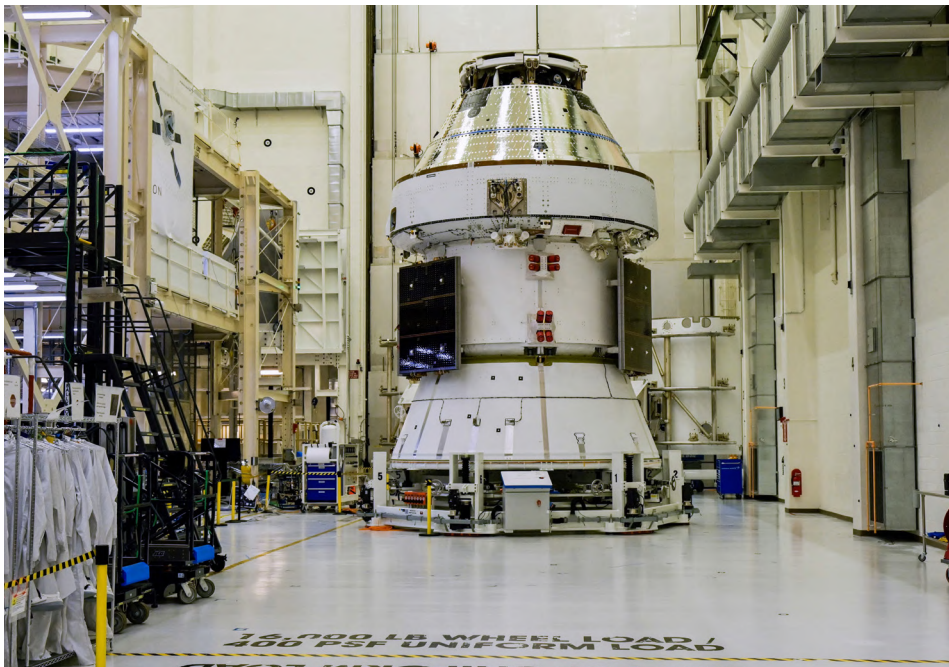
"We are fighting for a better Uganda, we are fighting for the farmers...for the young graduates who have no jobs, we are fighting for the ghetto people, those ghetto youth

whose future is being stolen," Wine said.

Nicknamed "Ghetto President" for his popularity in a large ghetto in the capital and where his music career initially took off in early 2000s, Wine says he is best placed to address the needs of Uganda's large youth population since he is one of them.

(Reuters)

First US Artemis astronaut mission around the moon on track for April



▲ The Artemis II Orion crew and service modules sit inside the Operations & Checkout Building during a NASA media day event at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, U.S.

NASA officials on Tuesday said the agency's first crewed flight in its Artemis program - a trip around the moon and back - is on track for launch in April and could potentially be moved up to February.

The space agency's Artemis program is the flagship U.S. effort to return humans to the moon, a multibillion dollar series of missions that rivals a similar effort by China, which is aiming for a 2030 astronaut moon landing.

Artemis 2, a 10-day flight in which a crew of four astronauts will fly around the moon and back, is a precursor test to the agency's first astronaut moon landing since 1972.

That mission, Artemis 3, is a far more ambitious and complex endeavor currently planned for 2027 and involving a moon lander variant of SpaceX's Starship rocket.

Artemis 2 involves NASA's Space Launch System rocket, built by Boeing (BA.N), opens new tab and Northrop Grumman (NOC.N), opens new tab, and its Orion capsule, built by Lockheed Martin (LMT.N), opens new

tab. Last year, NASA delayed the mission by several months to April 2026.

"We intend to keep that commitment," Lakiesha Hawkins, an acting senior official in NASA's exploration unit, said during a news conference on Tuesday of the 2026 date.

She added that the readiness of NASA's SLS and Orion spacecraft could potentially warrant an earlier launch date, but that safety considerations will ultimately guide when the mission launches.

The Orion capsule will ride atop the giant, 322-foot-tall (98 meters) SLS rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the first time the spacecraft duo will fly with humans.

Artemis 2 will fly astronauts Reid Wiseman, the mission's commander who last flew on a Russian Soyuz rocket to the International Space Station in 2014; Victor Glover, the pilot who flew to space in 2020 on a SpaceX ISS mission; Christina Koch, a mission specialist who flew on a Soyuz ISS mission in 2019; and Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen, (Reuters)

OpenAI, under pressure to meet demand, widens scope of Stargate and eyes debt to finance chips

AT the White House this year, OpenAI outlined its lofty "Stargate" infrastructure project that would cost half a trillion dollars and be developed with partners including SoftBank opens new tab and Oracle

Now, after some fits and starts, OpenAI executives say the joint venture is far more expansive than previously outlined and involves almost everything OpenAI does related to artificial intelligence chips and data centers.

Stargate was initially conceived as a new company that would invest \$500 billion in AI infrastructure. Now OpenAI executives say the parameters have expanded to include data center projects launched months before Stargate was announced.

OpenAI, best known for its ChatGPT chatbot, argues that the AI revolution needs computing systems like Stargate to deliver on its immense promise.

OpenAI will pursue different creative financing options, some of which have only emerged within the last year, to secure chips for the data centers, the executives added.

CEO Sam Altman has repeatedly said that creating data centers is the key to progress, writing in a blog on Tuesday that he eventually aimed to get to the point of building a gigawatt of new AI infrastructure, opens new tab every week. Expanding chip availability was also the key idea behind the announcement of Stargate in January.

The initial vision for Stargate, however, ran into delays, executives said. Protracted negotiations with other parties and decisions on locations have bogged down the process, SoftBank's Chief Financial Officer Yoshimitsu Goto said last month.

The sweep of projects in OpenAI's expanded vision all have the same goal: to help meet significant demand for its AI tools.

"We cannot fall behind in the need to put the infrastructure together to make this revolution happen," Altman said on Tuesday at a briefing with reporters, tech executives and politicians, including U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, and newly named Oracle co-CEO Clay Magouyrk. The briefing was held at a massive data center in Abilene, Texas, where OpenAI and its partners are rapidly building a data center.

Despite widespread expectations that AI will fundamentally change the world, inves-

tors have voiced substantial concern about a potential bubble from building too quickly. Altman acknowledged those concerns while remaining optimistic.

"There will be a lot of short-term ups and downs, day-to-day quarter, whatever," he said. "You zoom out enough and the charts look like this," he said, gesturing with his hands sloping upwards.

A new partnership of up to \$100 billion with Nvidia announced on Monday is part of the project. OpenAI plans to use an initial \$10 billion in cash from the chipmaker to secure additional funding to use its products. OpenAI estimates that leasing instead of buying chips could save the company 10-15%, a person familiar with the matter said.

Executives familiar with Stargate said it would help OpenAI tap debt markets for future sites.

Stargate's projects will not include some companies, including longtime sponsor Microsoft (MSFT.O), opens new tab, executives said. OpenAI negotiated terms with Microsoft to enable working with multiple partners.

THE INDUSTRY'S LIFEblood

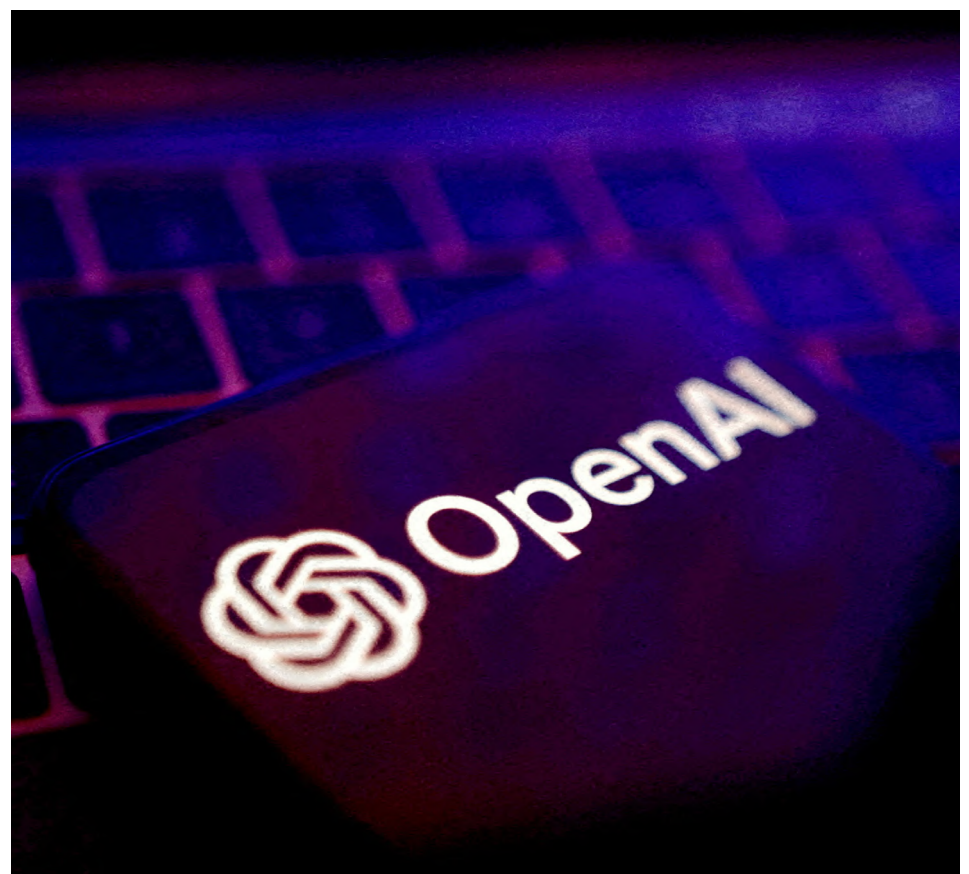
Computational resources, or "compute" in industry parlance, are the lifeblood of the AI industry. OpenAI executives have said for years that the company is significantly short on compute required to power its services, especially ChatGPT, and develop new tools.

Just this week, OpenAI decided to delay launching a product outside the United States due to a lack of compute, people close to Stargate said. OpenAI would like to quickly minimize such trade-offs, they added.

On Tuesday, OpenAI, Oracle and SoftBank unveiled plans for five new U.S. AI data centers for Stargate. These include three sites with Oracle, two affiliated with SoftBank and expansion of an Oracle site in Abilene, Texas.

Altogether, OpenAI's projects account for nearly 7 gigawatts of the 10 gigawatts of compute initially envisioned for Stargate.

Abilene, dubbed the flagship Stargate project, has been under construction for more than a year by Oracle and AI startup Crusoe. The site spans 1,100 acres (445 hectares) and employs thousands of construction workers. Cranes and hydraulic platforms are spread across the campus, with some hoisting American and Texan flags. The facility also includes fiber cable long enough to stretch



▲ OpenAI logo is seen in this illustration.

from the earth to the moon and back.

Stargate projects also include initiatives for OpenAI to build data centers on its own or with partners.

DEBT FINANCING AND NVIDIA BACKING

After announcing Stargate in January, OpenAI held hundreds of meetings across North America with potential partners that could provide land, power and other resources. "It was a flood of people," one executive said.

The expanded Stargate plan now includes self-built data centers and third-party cloud capacity. The new Nvidia deal is part of this broader strategy that allows OpenAI to pay for its chips over time, rather than purchasing them outright.

Of the roughly \$50 billion estimated value of a new data center, about \$15 billion covers land, buildings and standard equipment. Financing the GPU chips is more challenging due to shortages and uncertainty over the life of the chips in a fast-changing new industry.

Meta tapped U.S. investment manager PIMCO and alternative asset manager Blue Owl Capital to lead a \$29 billion financing for its data center expansion in rural Louisiana, Reuters reported earlier this month. This reflects a broader trend of massive data centers operated by cloud service providers, called hyperscalers, turning to outside financing to help cover the rising costs of building and powering centers for generative AI.

Companies rated below investment grade normally face higher costs when raising debt. Nvidia's equity backing gives lenders confidence in OpenAI, executives said. OpenAI has not yet drawn on debt financing but plans to for future builds.

The buildout pace is limited by supply chain bottlenecks and GPU availability, executives familiar with Stargate said. Site configurations vary, and most workloads currently focus on reasoning tasks, so low-latency optimization is less critical.

(Reuters)

Typhoon Ragasa bears down on southern China after killing 17 in Taiwan

TYPHOON Ragasa, the world's most powerful tropical cyclone this year, struck the southern Chinese city of Yangjiang on Wednesday after killing 17 people in Taiwan and lashing Hong Kong with ferocious winds and heavy rains.

The typhoon was tracking towards Maoming, one of China's biggest oil refining cities, in Guangdong province.

In Taiwan, 17 people were missing in the eastern Hualien county after a barrier lake overflowed and sent a wall of water into a town, while Ragasa brought Hong Kong to a standstill.

More powerful typhoons are likely to hit southern China due to climate change, said Benjamin Horton, dean of the School of Energy and Environment at the City University of Hong Kong, after a summer of record-breaking rainfall.

"The weather experienced in Hong Kong this summer is only a taste of what is to come," Horton said.

GUANGDONG GIVEN RED STORM SURGE WARNING

Officials in Taiwan are used to moving people out of potential danger zones swiftly as the island is frequently hit by typhoons, but many residents in the tourist town of Guangfu said they were given insufficient warning when a lake overflowed during Tuesday's torrential rains brought by Ragasa.

In Hong Kong, where huge waves crashed over areas of the Asian financial hub's eastern and southern shoreline, some roads and residential properties were submerged.

At the Fullerton Hotel on the island's south, videos on social media showed seawater surging through glass doors. No injury has been reported, the hotel told Reuters.

China's marine authority issued its highest red wave warning for the first time this year, forecasting storm surges of up to 2.8 metres (9 feet) in parts of Guangdong province, as Ragasa headed towards the densely populated Pearl River Delta.

Ragasa formed over the Western Pacific last week. Fuelled by warm seas and favourable atmospheric conditions, the tropical cyclone rapidly intensified to become a Category 5 super typhoon on Monday with winds exceeding 260 kph (162 mph).

It has since weakened, but was still powerful enough to bring down trees and power lines.

"Authorities have taken lessons from Hato and Mangkhut, which both caused billions of dollars in damage in 2017 and 2018," said Chim Lee, a senior energy and climate change specialist at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

"The Pearl River Delta is one of the best-prepared regions for typhoons, so we're not expecting major disruptions. One change this year is that the Hong Kong stock market has stayed open during typhoons - a sign of how resilient the infrastructure has become," he said.

That said, Zijin Gold International, delayed its \$3.2 billion IPO in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN STORM'S PATH

After passing around 100 km (60 miles) south of Hong Kong, Ragasa made landfall along the south Chinese coast. Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Foshan and Dongguan, the largest cities in the storm's path, are home to around 50 million people.

More than 2 million people have been evacuated across Guangdong and the ministry for emergencies dispatched tens of thou-



▲ Waves crash onto the shore, as Super Typhoon Ragasa hits Tseung Kwan O, in Hong Kong, China September 24, 2025, in this screengrab obtained from social media video

sands of tents, folding beds, lighting equipment and other rescue supplies, Chinese state media reported.

Some shops and restaurants in the province parked large rented trucks in front of storefronts in a bid to shield them from the storm, local media reported.

"We live on an upper floor and saw there wasn't too much danger, so I brought the kids out to experience this heavy rain and wind," a 40-year-old Shenzhen resident surnamed Liang said. "We walked along the open road to make sure to stay safe."

A crowd chasing the storm under Shenzhen Bay Bridge was moved on by traffic

police. "The typhoon was really intense, but I've not been out long," said an electric scooter delivery driver who goes by the name of Tim and was using his vehicle to assess the damage.

areas, with a storm surge alert expected to remain in effect until Thursday.

A woman and her five-year-old son were swept into the ocean on Tuesday after watching the typhoon from the Hong Kong waterfront, according to the South China Morning Post, which said they were now in intensive care.

(Reuters)

Israeli tanks push deeper into Gaza City as Trump talks peace

ISRAELI forces pushed towards the heart of Gaza City on Wednesday, placing at risk the lives of Palestinians who had stayed put in hopes that growing pressure on Israel for a ceasefire would mean they would not lose their homes.

U.S. President Donald Trump met leaders of Muslim countries at the United Nations in New York on Tuesday, for talks that the Emirati state news agency said focused on a permanent ceasefire in the war as well as the release Israeli hostages and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Trump, who earlier condemned moves by several Western countries to put pressure on Israel by recognising a Palestinian state, said a meeting with Israel would be next.

Israel has pressed on with its military campaign on Gaza City despite repeated calls for it to pull back, urging the population to move south.

Hundreds of thousands have left the city in northern Gaza but many others have hesitated because of security risks and widespread hunger.

"We moved to the western area near the beach, but many families didn't have the time, tanks took them by surprise," said Thaer, a 35-year-old father of one from Tel Al-Hawa.

AIRSTRIKES HIT SHELTER

Israeli forces began closing in on the city of more than a million in August, with Israel saying it aimed to destroy the last stronghold of Hamas militants whose attack on Israel and seizure of hostages triggered the war nearly two years ago.



▲ Smoke rises from an Israeli strike, as displaced Palestinians, fleeing northern Gaza due to an Israeli military operation, move southward after Israeli forces ordered residents of Gaza City to evacuate to the south, in the central Gaza Strip.

On Wednesday, medics said at least 20 people were killed and many others wounded when Israeli airstrikes hit a shelter housing displaced families near a market in the middle of the city. Two other people were killed in a house nearby, they said.

The Israeli military said that the strike had targeted two Hamas militants and that its forces tried to reduce harm to civilians in the area.

Footage obtained by Reuters showed people sifting through the rubble.

"We were sleeping in God's care, there

was nothing - they did not inform us, or not even give us a sign - it was a surprise," said Sami Hajjaj. "There are children and women, around 200 people maybe, six to seven families -- this square is full of families," he said.

In the city's Tel Al-Hawa suburb, tanks entered populated areas trapping people in their homes, while more tanks were seen stationed close to Al-Quds Hospital, witnesses said.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said an oxygen station had been damaged.

Tanks have also advanced closer to Gaza's

largest hospital, Al Shifa, witnesses and Hamas media said. The Israeli military said the group's militants had opened fire from within the hospital compound, which Hamas denied.

"We fear that these lies may be a prelude to another raid on the hospital," said Ismail Al-Thawabta, the director of the Hamas-run Gaza government media office, in reference to several previous raids by Israeli forces.

Israel's military released grainy aerial footage which appeared to show gunfire coming from two windows. The military did not immediately respond to Reuters queries about how it established that it was Hamas militants who had opened fire and at whom.

A security official in Hamas said that "criminal gangs" had opened fire at the hospital from outside the complex.

Reuters was unable to independently verify the conflicting accounts.

INTERNATIONAL FRUSTRATION OVER THE WAR

In Gaza's south, seven people were killed in Nuseirat and near Rafah, medics said. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which insists its attacks are aimed at ending Hamas rule of the enclave.

Israel has drawn widespread condemnation over its military conduct in Gaza, where more than 65,000 Palestinians have been killed according to local health authorities, and famine has spread.

International frustration over the war in Gaza prompted some Israeli and U.S. allies to recognize a Palestinian state this week.

(Reuters)

Thapelo Mokoena joins Swazi Polo lineup

Stories By Siphesihle Dlamini
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

FUN lovers are in it for a treat as South African actor Thapelo Mokoena is set to headline the Swazi Polo.

Fashionista Enhle Mbali and music duo Jaziel Brothers will also headline the event. Fashion lovers should mark their calendars for October 4, 2025, as Yellowstone, Swazi Lizkhar is set to transform into a vibrant hub of culture, sport, and community spirit from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

This year's event will be a spectacular affair, centred around the lively theme of "Polka Dot." Attendees can expect a day filled with live entertainment, high-end fashion shows, and an array of gourmet delicacies that showcase the best of Eswatini's culinary offerings.

Thapelo Mokoena is a versatile South African actor, television producer, and presenter known for his dynamic presence across film and television. He gained international recognition for his role as William in the third season of the UK series 'Bulletproof.' In addition, Thapelo starred in the acclaimed South African series Trackers, showcasing his range and depth as an actor.

In an exclusive interview with Swazi Boy Entertainment's Public Relations Officer, Nduduzo Dankos, the inspiration behind the Swazi Polo event was unveiled. "The Swazi Polo event draws inspiration from Eswatini's rich cultural heritage and breathtaking natural beauty. It merges the timeless elegance and thrill of polo, a sport steeped in tradition with a distinctly local flair, symbolised by our vibrant polka dot theme. The imagery of galloping horses and lush green landscapes reflects the strength, grace, and vitality of our beloved nation," Dankos explained. The choice of October 4 as the date for the event is particularly significant. "This date is a deliberate nod to unity and com-



▲ Actor Thapelo Mokoena.

munity spirit, aiming to position Eswatini as a hub of cultural celebration and sporting excellence on a global stage," he added. He further assured attendees of a fun-filled experience that goes beyond the sport itself.

"Swazi Polo is more than a sporting event; it's a full-day celebration. Attendees can look forward to exhilarating polo matches, gourmet food stalls, lively entertainment, and a

festive atmosphere highlighted by the cheerful polka dot theme. I warmly invite everyone to mark their calendars for October 4, 2025. Bring your family, gather your friends, and join us for a memorable day in the heart of Eswatini. Let's celebrate our heritage, elegance, and community spirit, together," he concluded.



▲ Gospel artist Simiso Simelane.

Simiso Simelane to release single "Worthy is the Lamb"

GOSPEL artist Simiso Simelane is set to release a powerful new worship single titled "Worthy is the Lamb" on September 30, 2025.

The song is set to be a heartfelt tribute to the majesty and faithfulness of Jesus Christ, designed to inspire listeners to enter a space of genuine worship both individually and collectively. Simelane describes "Worthy is the Lamb" as a celebration of Jesus' love, mercy, and sacrifice.

He explained that the song serves as a reminder of Christ's incomparable worthiness, encouraging believers to reflect deeply on the One who saved humanity from sin. "To me, this song is a reminder of the incredible worthiness of Jesus Christ, how His love, mercy, and sacrifice deserve our genuine praise," Simelane shared. He emphasised the boldness of the song's praise, quoting its rhetorical question: "Who is like you," underscoring that no one compares to Jesus. Ultimately, the song is about lifting voices in honour of the Lamb who has given life, hope, and victory.

The creative process behind the song was both simple and inspiring. Simelane recalled a moment of divine inspiration as he walked toward his favourite spot by the pool. "Creating this song was not a complicated case, because I was gracefully walking to the pool area where I spend most of my days, and God gave me the sound," he revealed. After singing the melody, he recorded it and later confirmed its message through scripture. When he shared the song with his Music Director, the response was overwhelmingly positive, and soon after, the song was recorded live at Zakhele FEA Old Auditorium. Simelane worked alongside gifted musicians to bring his vision to life, blending Christian Contemporary worship with elements that make the song suitable for both congregational singing and personal devotion.

Simelane encouraged everyone to stream "Worthy is the Lamb" once it becomes available on all digital platforms. He urged listeners to join voices in worship, sharing the song widely to spread its message. "Let's join voices in worship, sharing the song with friends and family, and letting the message of Jesus Christ's worthiness touch as many hearts as possible," he said. He believes that with support, the song can transcend borders and inspire genuine worship in new spaces. Simelane concludes with a powerful affirmation: "Jesus Christ is The Lamb Of God!"

Gospel outreach to ignite Matsamo

THE Gospel Explosion and Family Outreach event is set to take place in Mashobeni, Matsamo, on September 27, 2025.

This significant gathering will feature the renowned Itende Worship Experience and offer free transportation from Pigg's Peak, ensuring broad community participation. Easter Sihlongonyane of Itende Worship Experience explained the deep personal and spiritual roots of the event, stating, "The Gospel Explosion and Family Outreach event is born out of my upbringing, my identity, and the way I live and view life.

It reflects the values instilled in me from childhood: faith, resilience, community, and the joy of celebrating life together." He emphasised that the event is more than just a program, de-

scribing it as "an extension of who I am, a testimony of God's goodness, and a platform to share that same hope with others."

Anchoring the event's mission in scripture, Sihlongonyane cited Habakkuk 2:14, saying, "We believe that every song sung, every word spoken, and every act of service offered during this gathering contributes to the fulfilment of God's promise, that His glory and knowledge will spread across the earth like waters covering the sea."

He further highlighted the event's broader vision: "This vision is not only about one event, but about igniting a movement of faith, love, and unity that will ripple far beyond Matsamo Lake, touching lives and leaving a legacy of hope for generations to come." The event is hosted

by Phumzile Manana Bithu, Director of Bithu Group, the entrusted custodians of Matsamo Lake Tourism Park.

Bithu shared the group's purpose in organising the outreach, stating, "As Bithu Group, entrusted custodians of Matsamo Lake Tourism Park, our ob-



▲ Easter Sihlongonyane of Itende Worship Experience.

jective in opening the lake with a Gospel Explosion and Family Outreach is to dedicate the Park to God's Glory." She elaborated on the significance of the park, saying, "We aim to launch Matsamo Lake not just as a tourism destination, but as sacred ground where faith, culture, and community converge.

We want to align the park's identity with Habakkuk 2:14, ensuring its foundation is rooted in the knowledge of God's glory."

Jimmy Kimmel defends remarks made on Charlie Kirk's death

JIMMY Kimmel has insisted it was “never [his] intention to make light of” Charlie Kirk’s death.

The 57-year-old presenter looked emotional as he delivered his lengthy monologue to open the first Jimmy Kimmel Live! show since the long-running ABC chat programme was pulled off the air last week following his comments about right-wing activist Kirk - who was gunned down in Utah on September 10 - and Tyler Robinson, the 22-year-old man accused of killing him.

At the start of Tuesday’s episode, Kimmel said: “I do want to make something clear because it’s important to me as a human, and that is you understand that it was never my intention to make light of the murder of a young man.”

After he received an applause from the audience, the choked-up star continued: “I don’t think there’s anything funny about it.

“I posted a message on Instagram on the day he was killed, sending love to his family and asking for compassion, and I meant it, I still do.

“Nor was it my intention to blame any specific group for the actions of what - it was obviously a deeply disturbed individual. That was really the opposite of the point I was trying to make, but I understand that to some, that felt either ill-timed or unclear, or maybe both.

“And for those who think I did point a finger, I get why you’re upset. If the situation was reversed, there’s a good chance I’d feel the same way.

“I have many friends and family members on the ‘other side’, who I love and remain close to, even though we don’t agree on politics at all.

“But I don’t think the murderer who shot Charlie Kirk represents anyone, this was a sick person who believed violence was a solution, and it isn’t - ever!”

He continued: “And also selfishly, I am a



▲ Jimmy Kimmel has insisted it was “never [his] intention to make light of” Charlie Kirk’s death.

person who gets a lot of threats. I get many ugly and scary threats against my life, my wife, my kids, my co-workers, because of what I choose to say, and I know those threats don’t come from the kind of people on the right who I know and love.

“So, that’s what I wanted to say on that subject.” But I don’t want to make this about me - and I know this is what people say when they make things about them - this show is not important.

“What is important is that we get to live in a country that allows us to have a show like this.” Kimmel also thanked “everyone who checked in”, including his “fellow late and night talk show hosts”, such as his “friend” Stephen Colbert, 61, whose The Late Show programme has been axed by CBS, with the final episode to air in May 2026, and he stressed the importance of free speech.

He said: “I’ve had the opportunity to

meet and spend time with comedians and talk show hosts from countries like Russia, countries in the Middle East, who tell me they would get thrown in prison for making fun of those in power and worse than being thrown in prison.

“They know how lucky we are here. Our freedom to speak is what they admire most about this country.”

Kimmel was suspended following the broadcast of his show on September 15 in which he talking about the killing, saying: “We hit some new lows over the weekend with the MAGA gang [Make America Great Again] gang desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it. In between the finger-pointing, there was grieving.”

(Bang Showbiz)

Cardi B to headline 2025 Global Citizen Festival

GLOBAL Citizen has announced that Cardi B will perform at the 2025 festival in Central Park this Saturday.

The New York-born rapper will be replacing singer The Weeknd, who, according to the organisation, had to cancel due to personal reasons.

The organisation took to X to share the line-up update:

“We’re thrilled to welcome New York City’s own Cardi B to the 2025 Global Citizen Festival stage in Central Park!

“Due to personal reasons, The Weeknd will no longer be performing. We’re grateful for his support and for every fan who’s taken action with us to help end extreme poverty.” In a statement, the Canadian singer expressed his regret and appreciation to his fans, apologising for not being able to make it to the festival.

“I regret to share that, due to personal reasons, I am unable to perform at Global Citizen. Thank you to my fans for taking action, as I believe in their mission deeply. Thank you for your understanding and support,” he said.

On the other hand, Cardi B is excited to be part of the event once again.

“Central Park, I’m coming for you!!!,” she said. “I can’t wait to be home in New York, and to bring my new songs and all the DRAMA to the Global Citizen Festival.

“This one’s not like other music festivals; this one is about coming together to help children around the world, and I’m so proud to support such an important cause. New York City, see you Saturday. Let’s get it.”

According to the organisation, the “Nice Guy” hitmaker first performed at the Global Citizen Festival in 2018, gracing the movement with an unforgettable show. She has also supported campaigns like “Just Vote” in 2020 and the Global Citizen Rewards programme, encouraging fans to take action on global issues. (Bang Showbiz)

Did A\$AP Rocky, Rihanna secretly tie the knot?

A\$AP Rocky has hinted he’s married his partner Rihanna in secret after five years together.

The couple have been dating since 2020 and they are parents to two sons together, RZA, three, and Riot, two, and they also have a third baby on the way - and the rapper/actor has now suggested the pair have already tied the knot,

During an interview with Elle magazine, he was asked if he’s looking forward to becoming a husband and he replied: “How you know I’m not already a husband? ... I’m still not gonna confirm it.”

A\$AP Rocky also spoke about the couple’s new baby - due later this year - and revealed he’s is “praying” for a girl after previously welcoming two boys.

He said: “I hope it’s a girl. I really do. We’re praying for a girl. Our first time, we wanted to know the sex of the baby. The second time, we didn’t want to know.

“Third time, we don’t want to know until, you know. I feel like it’s going to be a girl. This pregnancy is so different from the other two.

“You can tell from the experience. I hope it’s a baby girl, man. I need that.” He also spoke about the couple’s relationship and insisted they try not to talk about work when they are enjoying quality family time together.

He said: “We don’t talk too much about work, because we deal with that all day, every day. When you come home, it’s about family. It’s about your relationship. It’s about your household. It ain’t about all that other s***.” Rihanna has previously admitted

she’s “always wanted” a baby girl. When asked about the sex of her unborn baby, the 37-year-old pop star told Extra: “You have to wait and see. Oh, my gosh, are you guys going to be so hurt if it’s a boy?”

Extra’s Terri Seymour then replied: “I think we’re secretly hoping you have a girl ... because you’ve got your two sweet, sweet boys.”

Rihanna subsequently admitted that she’d love to have a baby girl, even though she’s relished the experience of raising her two boys.

She explained: “I’ve always wanted a girl. God knows best, right? And I love my boys.”

Rihanna also confirmed that her unborn baby’s name will begin with the letter R, describing it as a “tradition”. She said: “I mean, of course. It’s tradition at this point.”

(Bang Showbiz)



▲ A\$AP Rocky has hinted he’s married his partner Rihanna in secret after five years together.

Joseph Shabalala's widow mulls legal action against concert organisers

THOKOZILE Shabalala, the widow of Joseph Shabalala, the late founder of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, is not impressed with the Heritage Day festival honouring her late husband, which will be held at the Durban Playhouse.

Shabalala has disassociated herself from Lebohang "Lebo M" Morake's hosting of the African Icons Tribute Concert.

She told Sunday World on Tuesday that the only ways she found out about the concert were through social media posts and media reports.

"I had no idea it [the concert] was happening until I saw articles and reports on social media.

"There was no communication between me and the organiser, Lebo M. I have never met him, and I don't even know him," she said with disappointment.

The Shabalala family was fortunate to have seven children. In 2022, Joseph married Thokozile after his first wife, Nellie Shabalala, passed away after 30 years of marriage.

Shabalala said that, although her late husband was a public figure who loved people, it

was also her duty to preserve his legacy, or at least be part of any celebration that was in his honour.

"I am deeply committed to preserving my husband's legacy, and I always extend a warm welcome to those who wish to commemorate his life in various ways.

"But I needed to be informed to grant permission and support that initiative. Dr Joseph Shabalala was a global icon who deserves to be celebrated by people around the globe, and anyone wishing to honour him should follow proper channels," she said.

In a perfect world, she would have preferred the organisers to have told her about the initiative in advance, but the proper procedures were never followed, she said.

"I would then reach out to express my endorsement and initiate a conversation with the foundation."

The Joseph Shabalala Foundation confirmed in a statement that it was not consulted or informed about the tribute concert.

As an organisation, the foundation expressed disappointment at the exclusion of key figures in Shabalala's life.

"While we appreciate the sentiment behind this event and recognise the efforts to honour Dr Shabalala, it is important to emphasise that the proper protocols and communication channels were not followed," the foundation said in a statement.

Shabalala plans to take legal action. "Anyone using Dr Joseph Shabalala's name without permission is breaking the law, so legal action should take effect."

The concert is set to unveil new artist Nkosinathi Shabalala, who is the firstborn son of the late Black Mambazo founder and is signed under Lebo M Productions.

Nkosinathi will honour his father with a special performance of Imisebenzi.

South African celebrities like Blaq Diamond, Big Zulu, Khuzani, Mngqobi Yazo, Naima Kay, and Thee Legacy are anticipated to perform live at the tribute concert.

In a statement, Lebo M Productions' sister company, Till Dawn Productions, said that it had communicated with the foundation and family.

(Sunday World)



▲ Former Muvhango star Maumela Mahuwa.

MAUMELA MAHUWA: From star to building Africa's next storytellers

FOR years, Maumela Mahuwa was a constant presence in South African homes, her character in Muvhango woven into the cultural fabric of television. But as the beloved show wrapped up after a long, successful run, Mahuwa was already walking a new path. One that had little to do with red carpets and applause, and everything to do with purpose.

She isn't stepping away from acting. But with Muvhango done, her energy is firmly invested in something bigger. She is shaping the next generation of storytellers through education.

In 2017, guided by conviction and a clear sense of mission, Mahuwa co-founded the African Academy of Cinematic Arts (AACA Film College) alongside acclaimed filmmakers Dr Frank and Alisha. Their vision was simple yet radical: To make world-class film education accessible to young South Africans, regardless of background.

"Setting up a film school was necessary," Mahuwa reflects. "But access was my true motivator."

"The journey was anything but easy. Building a film academy from scratch meant financial strain and doubt from outsiders. Also the challenge of offering quality training in an industry often closed off to those without connections. But my partners and I pushed through."

Their approach was hands-on: students wouldn't just sit through theory. They would write scripts, shoot films, act on camera, and direct. By the time the first class graduated in 2019 at Nu-Metro Cinema in Hyde Park, the proof was undeniable. Today, AACA alumni can be seen on Netflix, Showmax, SABC shows, and feature films.

The success only fuelled bigger ambitions. The college expanded into accredited three-year BA degree programmes. These include BA in Acting and BA in Film and Cinematic Studies. Both are registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training, SAQA, CHE, MICT SETA, CATHSSETA, and QCTO. AACA also offers certificate courses in journalism, advertising, acting for TV, photography, and filmmaking.

But what truly sets the institution apart is its fearless embrace of the future. Students are exposed to the latest technologies and even the disruptive role of Artificial Intelligence in film. This is ensuring they graduate not just as artists, but as innovators ready for a rapidly changing industry.

Inside AACA, acting is taught as more than performance. It's discipline, imagination, and an understanding of the mechanics that drive the entertainment world. Film students, meanwhile, are guided through the full spectrum of storytelling. (Sunday World)



▲ Thokozile Shabalala, the widow of Joseph Shabalala, the late founder of Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

How SAMRO publisher members manipulated royalties system

IN what could be described as the real events depicted in the fictional crime drama series, Money Heist on Netflix, a Spanish series created by Álex Pina, the Southern African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO)'s shenanigans proved on how easily it was for the funds of the organisation to be looted high and dry. In the forensic investigation reportedly conducted by Fundudzi Forensic Services after being commissioned by SAMRO in 2022, shocking details are revealed on how big bosses of the giant record and music publishing companies, including some board members and staff members of the royalties music collecting society had put their hands in the cookie jar and stole millions belong to musicians, composers and authors among them.

The shocking report was only handed to a few selected board members and two top executives of the troubled organisation on 19 July 2023. In it, investigations reveal scandalous events which had been taking place at the entity.

Sunday World is in possession of the forensic report that details the capture of the royalties system.

And also grand looting of the funds belonging to SAMRO members. The report was, however, kept hush hush from the roving eye of the media and the public.

Fundudzi stated that during its investigations relating to allegations against SAMRO board members, a lot of uncultured misconduct and corruption was uncovered. The probe was on is-

sues of unethical behaviour, brought to the attention of the forensic investigators.

They involved irregularities by publishers, authors and composers in the submission of undocumented works. "During the investigations relating to allegations against SAMRO board members, allegations of unethical behaviour were brought to our attention relating to alleged irregularities by publishers and author/composers in the submission and claiming undocumented works, reads the report.

"We did not investigate the undocumented works allegations during investigations relating to allegations against SAMRO board members. The undocumented works allegations did not form part of the scope of that investigation.

(Sunday World)



▲ SAMRO CEO Annabell Lebeth.



TAKING time to prepare for your doctor's appointment can help ensure you make the most of your time and cover everything important to you.

This can include writing down your questions beforehand and thinking about desired outcomes.

Preparing for your doctor's appointment can allow you to communicate your health needs more effectively and ensure your doctor can create a treatment plan that addresses your health priorities.

This can also help you walk away from your appointment feeling heard and as though you have an active role in your healthcare.

Taking time to prepare for your doctor's appointment can involve considering your questions and concerns beforehand, identifying your desired outcomes, and requesting any needed accommodations.

Write down your questions beforehand

Taking the time beforehand to think about any questions you'd like to ask can help ensure Trusted Source your appointment stays on track and that you can cover what is important to you.

You may find yourself unable to think or overwhelmed by health information during your appointment. This is why it can be helpful to write your questions down and bring them with you, either on a piece of paper or on the notes app of your phone.

If you have limited time, consider prioritizing your concerns to ensure the most important points are dealt with first.

Identify potential desired outcomes

It can be beneficial to spend some time thinking about what you would like to achieve during your appointment. This may include:

- getting a referral to a specialist
- discussing any concerning symptoms
- seeking a diagnosis or further testing
- having an effective treatment plan put in place
- making adjustments to a current treatment plan so it better addresses your needs or changing symptoms

Ask for any accommodations you need

You can request any needed accommodations before your appointment to ensure you are comfortable and can communicate effectively.

This can include language interpretation and assistance, such as:

- requesting an interpreter if your preferred language is not English
- requesting a sign language interpreter or non-verbal signals from reception staff, such as a wave, to let you know when it's your turn, if you are hard of hearing or deaf
- asking the doctor to avoid wearing a mask and face you when speaking, if you read lips

You can also request mobility support to help you get to your appointment, such as:

- requesting accessible parking be made available
- asking for assistance to get to the examination room
- requesting an appointment at a facility that is accessible for you, such as

one with ramps, an elevator, or with doorways that have a clear opening for a wheelchair

Consider taking a companion with you

It can be helpful to bring a companion with you to your doctor's appointment, particularly if you are feeling anxious or would benefit from a second set of ears to understand and recall medical information.

This may be a friend or family member who:

- you feel safe and comfortable with
- you don't mind hearing your private or sensitive medical information
- can ask necessary questions on your behalf if you feel overwhelmed by health information
- can take notes for you, including follow-up information and next steps, if you feel unable to in the moment
- can act as a support system if you need to advocate for better care

It's important to confirm beforehand whether a companion is allowed to attend your appointment with you, as some clinics and hospitals have certain restrictions, especially during flu season.

If you are unable to have a companion with you, it may be helpful to arrange to see them after your appointment, to ensure you have someone to talk with about any health updates or how you're feeling.

Prepare anything you need to bring with you

There are several things and documents that can be helpful to bring to a

doctor's appointment, including:

- Any medications you are taking. This should include prescription and over-the-counter medication, vitamins, and herbal supplements. If it isn't possible to bring your medications with you, consider making a list of medication names along with your dosage information.
- Medical records. It can be helpful to bring along any copies of important test results or reports you would like to discuss.
- Information about your family health history. It can be beneficial to take time before your appointment to gather any information about your family health history. This is a common question asked when a doctor is assessing your health status, and so it can be helpful to have this information readily available.
- Health insurance information. It is important to bring your health insurance card along with you.

It will typically be mentioned in the communication of your appointment whether you should bring anything specific with you. However, you can also ask the clinic or doctor's office beforehand.

Setting up for a telehealth appointment

If you have a telehealth appointment, there are several things you can do to prepare:

- arrange for a quiet and private space where you can take the call
- ensure you have access to a stable internet connection
- make sure your device has enough

charge

- make sure you are comfortable
- have a pen and paper or a notes app open to jot down anything important mentioned
- know the name and location of your preferred pharmacy

It may be helpful to test your device before the call to ensure your camera, audio, and microphone are working properly.

Takeaway

Taking some time to prepare for your doctor's appointment can help ensure you make the most of your time and allow you to communicate your health needs more effectively.

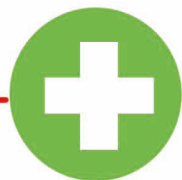
This can involve considering your questions and concerns beforehand, identifying your desired outcomes, and requesting any needed accommodations.

(Healthline)

It can be helpful to bring a companion with you to your doctor's appointment, particularly if you are feeling anxious or would benefit from a second set of ears to understand and recall medical information.



How to prepare for a doctor's appointment



IF you're running out of time to exercise today, you should probably just skip it, right?

Wrong!

You can reap the benefits of working out with sweat sessions as short as five minutes. You read that correctly: five minutes. Still skeptical?

Keep reading to learn more about how micro-workouts can boost your health and strengthen your body.

Do 5-minute workouts help?

It's possible you've never considered working out for only five minutes.

It doesn't sound like enough time to make a difference. After all, the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion says that aerobic activity lasting longer than 10 minutes in duration counts toward the 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise you should aim to get each week. But that doesn't mean shorter, high-intensity exercises can't help.

Benefits of regular exercise include everything from losing weight to getting better sleep to increasing energy levels. Keeping fit can also help tremendously with your self-confidence.

So, shouldn't anything count toward this goal?

Well, researchers are discovering that even exercise sessions as short as a minute may help you keep fit and active.

What the science says

A study from the University of Utah shows that all those little bits and pieces of exercise you do throughout the day can add up to something big. In fact, even a single "brisk" minute of moving can have a noticeable impact.

Women who incorporated short bursts of high-intensity activities into everyday life had a small decrease in their body mass index (BMI), compared to control subjects. Men had similar results. The calorie burn during this short but intense session of exercise allowed the women to weigh about 1/2 pound less than their nonactive counterparts. Odds of obesity also went down for both men and women who did these quickie workouts. The key is kicking up the intensity level of whatever you're doing, versus focusing solely on the length of time.

Another study published in Obesity revealed that splitting exercise up into short chunks makes some sense when it comes to appetite control. One set of obese participants did one hour of exercise each day while another set did 12 sessions of five-minute workouts. In the end, both groups had similar

amounts of the protein that controls appetite in their blood.

The group that did the short workouts, though, said they felt an average of 32 percent fuller throughout the daytime hours. In other words, their satiety had increased by doing intermittent workouts of just five minutes in length.

You also may have heard of something called Tabata training. A Tabata workout is actually a four-minute high-intensity interval training workout that is made up of 20 seconds of hard effort and 10 seconds of rest, repeated eight times. The name comes from the author of a study on interval training that was published in 1996. The results of this study showed that short interval sessions greatly improved the body's anaerobic and aerobic systems.

Fitting exercise into your routine

This all sounds good, but you

may feel like finding even five minutes to exercise is impossible with your busy schedule. Or maybe when you finally do get some down time, you just want to rest. Nobody says staying fit is easy, but it doesn't have to be impossible either.

Short workouts to try

You don't need a gym membership to work up a sweat, either. In fact, the logistics of getting to the gym, getting changed, and finally working out may kill time and your motivation. When you feel inspired to move, try searching for quickie workouts that you can find for free on YouTube.

Some examples:

- Work your core with XHIT's 5 Minute Abs routine. You'll complete a series of five exercises that are each one minute long. Prepare to become an expert at straight-edged planks, hip thrusts, oblique crunches, side planks, and full situps.
- Work your favorite asset with this 5-minute Butt and Thigh Workout by Fitness Blender. You'll do a variety of squats using the pattern of 40 seconds on with five seconds of rest. These moves will help lift, tone, and strengthen your bottom half so you'll look better in your jeans and have more power for your daily activities.
- POPSUGAR Fitness shares this 5-Minute Fat-Blasting Bodyweight Workout video for those of you who need an all-over burn. You'll start with jump-

ing jacks and sprint intervals. Then you'll move on to pike jumps, scissor jacks, and jumping lunges and squats.

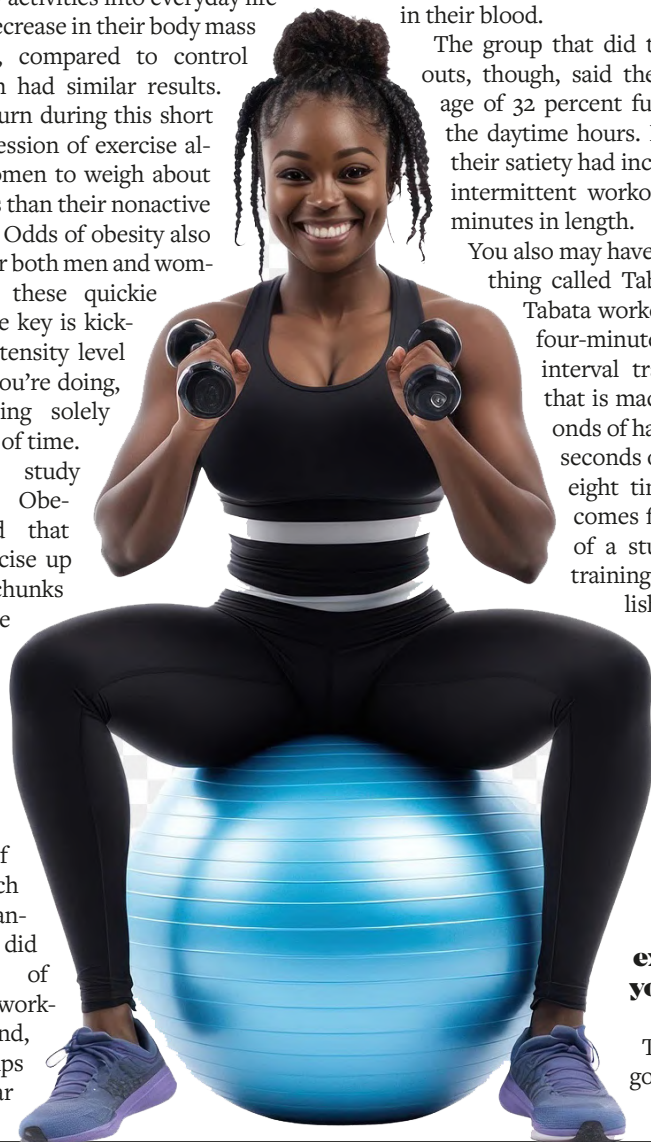
- This 4-minute Tabata workout by Rebekah Borucki has been viewed over 2 million times. It's part of her series titled "You have four minutes" — and it's killer. Each exercise in the workout is performed twice, each for 20 seconds, followed by 10 seconds of rest. She suggests doing it as a warm-up to a longer routine or as a start to your morning.

Not near a computer? Set your watch or phone for a five-minute alarm and try doing as many bodyweight exercises as you can fit in. You can do pushups, situps, planks, squats, jumps, lunges, jogging in place, or whatever else. Just stick to it and try to get to the highest intensity level possible. And don't forget to drink plenty of water when you're done!

TAKEAWAY

Get moving

Yes. Just five minutes of exercise at a time may be beneficial to your health in many ways. If you're still not sure it's enough, try doing one of the workouts in the section above. When you finally catch your breath, ask yourself again if five minutes can get your heart pumping. And, really, doing something is usually better than doing nothing, so get moving! ([Healthline](#))



News In Pictures



▲ A protester uses a pole to break a window at Milano Centrale railway station, during a demonstration that is part of a nationwide “Let’s Block Everything” protest in solidarity with Gaza, with activists also calling for a halt to arms shipments to Israel, in Milan, Italy.



▲ Husam Zomlot, head of the Palestinian mission to the United Kingdom, raises his hand as the Palestinian flag is raised during a ceremony after the British government announced on Sunday



▲ U.S. President Donald Trump listens while U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. makes an announcement during a press conference to announce a link between autism and childhood vaccines and the use of popular pain medication Tylenol for pregnant women and children.



▲ U.S. President Donald Trump speaks at the State Banquet during his state visit, at Windsor Castle, in Windsor, Britain.



▲ A heron takes flight during an misty early autumn sunrise, in Richmond Park, London, Britain.



▲ Television presenter Bill Nye poses by his star after it was unveiled on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles, California.

Ekitike apologises to Liverpool fans after ‘stupid’ red card

HUGO Ekitike has apologised to Liverpool fans after he was sent off for removing his shirt following his late League Cup winner against Southampton - a celebration labelled “stupid” by manager Arne Slot.

The 23-year-old new signing slid home Federico Chiesa’s pass five minutes from time to seal a 2-1 win over second-tier Southampton as Liverpool produced another late show at Anfield on Tuesday.

The France forward had replaced £125 million (\$168 million) British-record signing Alexander Isak at half-time after the Sweden international opened his account for the club.

Ekitike’s first involvement was to be booked for punching the ball away in frustration.

Shea Charles equalised but Ekitike scored the winner in the 85th minute -- wheeling away to the corner flag and removing his shirt before holding it up for the cameras.

Referee Thomas Bramall had no option but to issue a second caution followed by a red card, meaning the forward will be suspended for the Premier League leaders’ trip to Crystal Palace on Saturday.

A shame-faced Ekitike, who signed for the club in July for £69 million, said he had got carried away.

“I was so excited tonight to help the team achieve another victory here in our home for my first Carabao Cup (League Cup) match,” he posted on Instagram.

“The emotion got the better of me tonight,” he added. “My apologies to



▲ Hugo Ekitike.

all the Red family.”

Liverpool manager Slot was distinctly unimpressed, labelling Ekitike’s behaviour in the third-round tie “needless” and “stupid”.

“I told him that if you score in the Champions League final in the 87th minute after outplaying three players and hitting it in the top corner I can maybe understand,” he said.

“He is like, ‘This is all about me, what did I do?’

“But I am old-fashioned, I’m 47 and old. I never played at this lev-

el but did score a few goals and if I scored a goal like this, I’d have turned around and walked up to Federico Chiesa and said: ‘This goal is all about you, this is not about me’.”

Ekitike has started the season well, with three goals in five Premier League games.

But he is locked in a battle for a forward slot with Isak and can ill afford to miss games, with the Swede eager to make his mark.

(Supersport)

Ouaddou hails ‘fantastic’ Pirates players after Siwelele win

ORLANDO Pirates coach Abdeslam Ouaddou was full of praise for his squad after their hard-fought victory over Siwelele FC.

An excellent finish by substitute Oswin Appollis in the 80th minute earned the Buccaneers a 1-0 victory in a Betway Premiership match played at the Free State Stadium on Tuesday night.

Ouaddou was delighted with the Appollis’ and other substitutes’ impact in the game.

“Like I told you, I’m a very happy coach,” said Ouaddou after the game.

“I told you that I have a fantastic dressing room, all the guys who come on the pitch have the ambition to change the game.”

“They are fantastic, I call them impact players, it’s why

I call them impact players because they are here to change the game and since a few games they did and I hope they will continue like that,” he added, singing praise of his squad,” added the Moroccan coach.

Ouaddou, however, admitted that Siwelele gave them a tough time and were unlucky to walk away from the match with nothing.

“You know, this team studied us well. They played a very compact block with a lot of aggression, they didn’t allow us to play so we didn’t have the time to play our football. But we made some changes again and the chance came at the end of the second half with the shoot from Appollis.

(Supersport)



▲ Orlando Pirates coach Abdeslam Ouaddou.

US veterans confident in four Ryder Cup rookies

JUST because they have never played in a Ryder Cup before does not mean newcomers can’t play well enough to make a crucial difference in this week’s showdown at Bethpage Black.

The United States team boasts 12 players ranked in the world top 23 and has four rookies in third-ranked Russell Henley, US Open winner J.J. Spaun, Ben Griffin and Cameron Young.

“All these guys that are rookies, they performed at the highest level when they needed to to make the team,” US captain Keegan Bradley said. “Being a bubble guy, I think, is the hardest amount of pressure I’ve ever played under.

“If you can go out there and win under those conditions, you can play well anywhere.”

Europe captain Luke Donald returns 11 of 12 players from a 2023 win at Rome, the lone newcomer being Dane Rasmus Hojgaard, replacing twin brother Nicolai in the line-up.

“Embrace the week as much as possible. You never know when it’s going to be your last,” Donald advised rookies. “Being here is great, but it’s your opportunity to contribute now. It’s one thing to qualify, but you’re here to help the team.”

World No 6 Spaun snapped a three-year win drought in a major way and lost twice in playoffs, including to Europe star Rory McIlroy at the Players Championship. He has sought advice from Cup veterans.

“Just trying to pick their brains,” Spaun said. “I just want to know how they feel, so I can get an estimation of how I’ll most likely



▲ Golfer J.J. Spaun.

feel. The common theme is everyone is very nervous, so if you feel nervous, don’t worry, everyone else is as well.”

Justin Thomas, making a team-best fourth

Cup start with seven wins in 13 matches, gave Spaun sage advice.

“He’s like, you earned your spot on this team, don’t feel like this is a handout or a

pick. You have a major that a lot of us are very jealous of and you deserve to be on this team,” Spaun said. “Hearing that has helped me feel like I fit in more as a core player than a rookie... so that’s huge for my confidence.”

BRING OUR A-GAME

Henley won his fifth career title in March at Bay Hill, shared second at the Tour Championship and had 10 top-10 finishes this season.

“I’m still kind of pinching myself,” Henley said. “This is a dream come true. I’m just so excited and thankful. I feel like a little kid or something. It’s really fun.”

Griffin won at Colonial and in the PGA pairs event at New Orleans this year and was second two weeks ago in a final Cup tuneup, his 11th top-10 showing this year.

“We’re going to have to bring our A-game and play really well,” Griffin said.

Young won his first PGA title at last month’s Wyndham Championship and has eight top-10 efforts in 2025.

Two-time major winner Xander Schauffele, who has played only twice since July, says he is seeking help as much as giving tips.

“I’m just trying to get some advice from them. They’ve been kicking my ass all year and playing unbelievable golf. That goes for all our rookies on this team,” Schauffele said.

“If they have any questions, I try to help them, but they’re very accomplished and I’m not too worried about them.”

(Supersport)

Kane ‘welcome’ to make Spurs return: Frank

TOTTENHAM manager Thomas Frank says England captain Harry Kane is welcome to return to the north London club if he ever leaves Bayern Munich.

German publication Bild on Monday reported that Kane has a £56.7 million (\$76 million) release clause which could be activated at the end of this season.

It has also been reported that Tottenham have a buy-back option on the Bayern striker, sparking speculation that he could make an emotional return to north London.

Kane is Tottenham’s record scorer with 280 goals in all competitions during 14 years with the club after emerging from the youth academy.

He joined Bayern in 2023 and already has 98 goals in 103 games for the Bundesliga champions.

Asked if he would be interested in signing Kane, Tottenham boss Frank said: “I didn’t know there was a clause.

“He is an unbelievable player who did fantastic for Spurs and is doing fantastic for Bayern. Top player.

“I think there’s a lot of Tottenham fans, including myself, who would like to see Kane back.

“Personally, I don’t think he will do it right now if I’m honest. He’ll probably stay in Bayern and continue performing well.”

Frank has not worked with Kane, having only taken charge of Tot-



▲ Captain Harry Kane.

tenham this summer following his move from Brentford to replace Ange Postecoglou.

But the Dane is a confirmed admirer of the 32-year-old, who is also England’s record scorer with 74 goals.

“He was top scorer last year, won the championship and he’s doing fantastic now. I don’t know what he’s thinking,” Frank said ahead

of Wednesday’s League Cup third round tie against Doncaster.

“Myself, I’m a traveller, I like to travel, I like to explore things as well. He’s been here for many years so why not enjoy the time at Bayern a little bit more?

“But he’s welcome. If he wants to join us, he’s more than welcome!”

(Supersport)

Sinner says ‘changing a lot’ after US Open loss to Alcaraz

JANNIK Sinner said on Wednesday he has been making changes to his game and “reflecting a lot” ahead of his first appearance since losing the US Open final to Carlos Alcaraz. The Italian failed to defend his title in New York this month after Alcaraz emphatically overpowered him in four sets and snatched back the world number one ranking.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Sinner said afterwards he would need to be more unpredictable in his play if he was going to beat his rival from Spain.

“We’ve been reflecting a lot,” the 24-year-old Sinner said in Beijing, where he returns to action at the China Open.

He was beaten in the final by Alcaraz a year ago in three thrilling sets.

“We are changing a lot of small things where I’m thinking of now,” added the world number two, without divulging what the alterations were.

Sinner will try out the adjustments to his game in the Chinese capital and said they will come with a small price.

“The amount of mistakes at the moment is for sure a little bit higher, but I hope that this after recovers in a very positive way,” he said.

Sinner will open his title bid



▲ Jannik Sinner.

against Croatia’s Marin Cilic on Thursday.

Alcaraz will not defend his crown and is instead playing in Japan this week.

The “Sincaraz” rivalry is now the biggest in men’s tennis but the legendary Roger Federer has warned that tournaments are now less interesting.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Laver Cup, Federer said there was “definitely” a need to change up court surfaces to amp up competition.

He accused tournament directors of giving a helping hand to Sinner and Alcaraz with generally slower courts.

Asked about the comments, Sinner agreed there was little variety in court speeds on tour.

“We have more or less similar game situations on the court, yes. This is how it is already since a long time,” he said.

“I don’t know if there is going to be a change or not. I’m just a player who tries to adapt myself in the best possible way.”(Supersport)

NBA icon Jordan’s insights help Europe’s Donald at Ryder Cup

LUKE Donald is using lessons learned in his college days from NBA legend Michael Jordan to mold Europe’s top golfers into a formidable team at the Ryder Cup.

The 47-year-old Englishman attended Northwestern University in suburban Chicago starting in 1997 and became friends with Chicago Bulls superstar Jordan.

Donald never dreamed he would use the insights gained from the six-time NBA champion as Europe’s captain in this week’s showdown against the United States at Bethpage Black.

“Very surreal for me,” Donald said Tuesday. “I grew up in England so I wasn’t that exposed to how big he was, but I came to college in Chicago in ‘97, sort of the end of his major run, and all you hear about is people talking about him.

“So you understand, start watching more games and understanding the influence he had.”

Through mutual pals, Donald became friends with Jordan, an avid golfer and golf fan. As Jordan was winning his last NBA crowns in 1997 and 1998, Donald was winning the 1999 US college crown, breaking a record belonging to Tiger Woods in the process.

Donald gathered insights about what made Jordan not only a great player but a tremendous leader of championship teams.

“Michael is someone I’ve been very fortunate to get access to and pick his brain occasionally about what made him tick, what motivated him, how he was able to get the best out of himself,” Donald said.

“He was never going to do anything he didn’t ask his teammates to do. He set the example. He led from the front. He was very passionate about it and he was very good at breaking down things into smaller manageable goals.”

Donald cited Jordan wanting to win an NBA season scoring title and breaking down what he needed to score into points per quarters to simplify the challenge and goal.

Jordan won five NBA scoring

titles before leading the Bulls to their first crown.

“You need your teammates around you. You can be a team of champions but not a championship team,” Donald said. “You always need the people around you. You’re always stronger being a collective.

“I think that’s something that I certainly took from him and I’ve tried to implant on my teams the last two times, that we’re always stronger together. Those are strong values that we try and live up to.”

Donald’s team emphasis paid dividends with a Europe victory in Rome in 2023. He hopes to repeat the feat on US soil with 11 of the same 12 players in the line-up.

‘A USA HAT ON’

Jordan won three NBA titles from 1991-1993, stepped away from the sport, then returned for crowns in 1996-1998 with mostly a new supporting cast and a learned trust in teammates.

“I got to play some golf with him even at the end of my college career, so back in the early 2000s, with being in Chicago,” Donald said.

“We had some mutual friends. He loved to play golf with good players and I was lucky enough to be put into the group and we formed a friendship. We live very close to each other in Florida now and remain good friends.”

Also good friends with both men is US Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley.

“Michael is also very close to Keegan and I’m sure Keegan has maybe leaned on MJ a little bit as well over the last year,” Donald said. “He’s not going to specifically give me advice this time around, but certainly my friendship over the years I’ve picked up many things.

“It’s nice to have someone that is a legend of their sport, the greatest ever, quite arguably, to sit down occasionally and pick their brains.”

Donald said he expects to see Jordan at Bethpage Black this week.

“I think he will have a USA hat on,” Donald said.

(Supersport)



▲ Luke Donald.

TOTAL ENERGIES CAF GAMES ANALYSIS



It's Leopard's game to lose

By Chris Dlamini

... Eswatini outfit needs to cement path to Mauritius or DR Congo on Friday

IF you missed the trip to Francistown, Botswana last week, then this Friday is your chance to watch the second leg of the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup 2025/26 action between Eswatini police side Royal Leopard and Namibia's youthful but impressive Young African.

It is game on at Somhlolo National Stadium, Lobamba, at 3pm. With a 2-0 first-leg advantage, Ingwe Mabalabala (Leopard) is expected to seal their path to the second preliminary round, which will see them play a team from Mauritius or the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) mid-next month. Ahead of this game, we weigh the odds.

Royal Leopard

- The Ingwenyama Cup champions made things easier for themselves in the away first leg with a 2-0 win. It could have been more but brilliant goal-keeping by Young African's Moses Makhae kept the score line respectable.



▲ Royal Leopard coach Edwin Matsebula reacting during the match.



▲ Royal Leopard player Simanga Masangane celebrating one of their goals during their 2-0 win over Young Africans.

This is a very experienced side in the CAF interclub tournaments, and they showed just that at the Obed Itani Chilume Stadium in Francistown, Botswana last Saturday. Coach Edwin Matsebula hardly missed midfielder Junior Magagula, who stayed behind due to a shoulder injury. He recalled winger Muzi 'Mzoro' Dlamini who has hardly featured for them in recent times, to lead the squad as captain, as he wanted his experience. He joined his senior national team, Sihlangu Semnikati teammates, to outfox a potentially good Young African side that is still trying to get its rhythm after signing 10 new players. Leopard knows they have an easy job, but it can also get complicated, as Young African showed glimpses of brilliance and that they can turn on the heat in the second leg. They have confidence and sure-footed stars with good footwork in the middle and upfront.



▲ Muzi 'Mzoro' Dlamini sandwiched by the opposition players.



▲ Felix Badenhorst controls the ball in front of the opposition players.

The Players:

- Six players from the senior national team, Sihlangu Semnikati are enough to show Leopard's strength. It could simply be eight to 10 players in the senior national team - that is the amount of quality they have at their helm. They also anticipate welcoming Junior Magagula back in their midfield. They are simply star-studded with a wealth of international experience.

Intensity:

- This is not an issue for Leopard. With such an experienced squad, they took control of the game soon after the opening 10 minutes with wave after wave of attacks. They also had aggression and urgency in their play. They remain favoured to progress to the second preliminary round where they will possibly travel to Mauritius or the DRC.

Substitutes:

The technical bench is spoilt for choice.

- Edwin can decide to change his midfield and forward line a bit by starting twins Fanelo and Lungelo Tsabedze to add that quick-fire and skill if he likes. Or he can stick to the same lineup he started in Francistown and later changed. He has vast options in all departments, and anyone he starts is good enough to complete the task.

How they go through:

- A goalless draw will be enough for Ingwe Mabalabala to go through with a 2-0 aggregate score.

- If Young African scores and makes it 2-0, it will be 2-2 aggregate, and penalties will decide the winner.

- Leopard must avoid conceding and score a goal if Young African proves to be difficult this time around to advance on a 3-0 aggregate.

- Leopard will not advance if the Young African or Youngile as they fondly trade, win 3-1 or 3-0. This will equate to a 3-3 or 3-2 aggregate score, with the away goals rule favoring the visitors.

Coaches mourn ‘King Clay’

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE Eswatini Football Coaches Association has mourned the passing of Manzini Wanderers assistant coach Clement ‘King Clay’ Mdluli.

Mdluli lost his life after a battle with an undisclosed illness. He was one of the assistant coaches to the ‘Weslians’ current head coach, Nyanga Crooks Hlophe. He spent a better part of his playing career with the ‘Weslians’ in the 90s and had national team caps as a striker. The coaches extended their condolences

through a press statement. “On behalf of the Eswatini Football Coaches Association, we extend our deepest and most heartfelt sympathies for the loss of our beloved Clement Nkosinathi King Clay Mdluli. We were deeply saddened to hear of his passing. King Clay was more than just a coach; he was a true leader and an inspiration to so many in our coaching family and Football community. We will always remember his dedication to his work as a coach and as a member of the Association. King Clay showed great dedication in Coaching Education, such that he was able to acquire the highest required credentials,” the association said. The Association further described the late

Mdluli as a humble individual. “King Clay has coached at the Team Level and National Level and represented the country as a player and coach. We have lost a down-to-earth member who was close to all members of the Eswatini Football Coaches Association. The entire Coaches Association is thinking of you and your family during this profoundly difficult time. May God bring comfort at this saddest moment to all persons who have worked with Mr Mdluli, our coach,” the association said. Mdluli’s demise comes after the passing of former Eswatini Football Association executive member Johannes ‘Ace’ Sibozza.



▲ The late Manzini Wanderers assistant coach Clement ‘King Clay’ Mdluli.

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE Eswatini Boxing Association has until December to sort its pending registration with World Boxing.

The issue has stalled the 2028 Olympic Games scholarship for Boxing recently announced by the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association. Other beneficiaries for the E7 million scholarship include Swimming, judo, Athletics and Taekwondo. EBA is still in the process of registration with World Boxing, also recognised by the International Olympic Committee. Boxing has been caught in an affiliation dilemma since the tension between the IOC and the International Boxing Association prior to the 2024 Olympic Games. EOCGA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Maxwell Jele confirmed the latest news during a press briefing held at their offices on Wednesday. “We have been given Boxing a three-month period to resolve their registration with World Boxing so that they can access the scholarship,” he said. EBA Secretary Nkosinathi Dlamini said they were still in the registration process. The IOC and IBA tension sparked by the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Eswatini Boxing Association handed a three-month grace period



▲ The boxing national team.

Eswatini returns to Lesotho Youth Games

By Sibusiso Masilela
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THE bilateral sporting relations between Eswatini and Lesotho continue to grow stronger. Lesotho has invited Eswatini to their 2025 Youth Games between October 1-4, 2025, in Maseru as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries. The 17-member delegation will be led by Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association board member Sibusiso ‘SwaziBolt’ Matsenjwa. Team Eswatini first attended the games in 2024, and it will partake in four disciplines: Athletics, Taekwondo, Boxing, and Chess. EOCGA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Maxwell Jele confirmed the latest news. “We will be sending our junior teams to the Lesotho youth games, and these games

will help us prepare for international assignments such as Youth Olympic Games,” he said. Jele further revealed that the country will take part in the ANOCA seminar in Mozambique between October 27-28, 2025. The meeting is in preparation for the 2025 ANOCA youth games set to take place in Angola before the end of the year. The Lesotho Games national team Athletics Machawe Mahlalela, Bandzile Sime-lane, Mbali Zungu Coach: Siyabonga Ngwenya Taekwondo Prince Langwenya, Siphowokuhle Ndlela, Sinenkhosi Buckum, Coach: Fakazile Nxumalo. Boxing Calvin Gumbi, Nothando Mshayise Coach: Mpendulo Mbingo Chess: Kwanele Ngwenya, Santiago Denobrega, Nolwazi Buthelezi, Simphiwe Dlamini, and Wenzokuhle Mnisi



▲ EOCGA CEO Maxwell Jele and president Adam ‘Bomber’ Mthethwa during the press briefing.



▲ Sihlangu's Justice Figareido who plays for Chippa United.

He said of the two, he would welcome whoever made it to the next round. For now, he needed his team to focus on getting past Simba Bhora first.



Ekitike
apologises to
Liverpool fans

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Coaches
mourn ‘King
Clay’

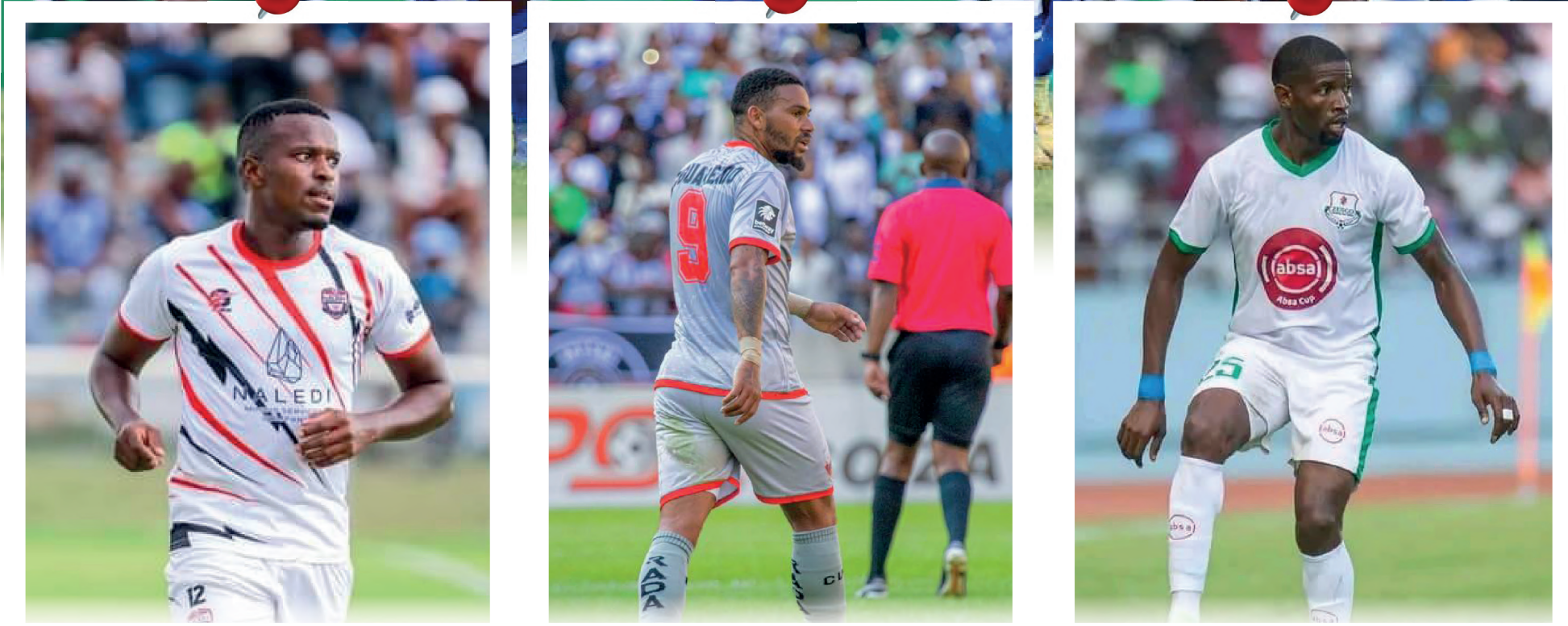
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Sport





Three internationals for Sihlangu camp

... The nation’s pride will take on Angola and Cape Verde next month in the last two fixtures under the guidance of the former Royal Leopards mentor Sifiso ‘Nuro’ Ntibane. *Page 23*