



# PM hints at possible police recruitment, promotions



By Kwanele Dhladhla

PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini has hinted that government may soon consider fresh recruitments and promotions within the Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) as part of efforts to strengthen the force's capacity and morale. The PM made these remarks in response to questions from Sigwe Member of Parliament (MP) David Ngcamphalala. The MP had raised concerns about manpower shortages, delayed promotions, deteriorating police housing, and the lack of adequate transport in some police stations.

SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2



## German Embassy's support revitalises Eswatini Theatre Club Page 2

Eswatini Theatre Club Chairperson Phila Koshin, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Senator Pholile Shakantu and Ambassador of Germany to Eswatini H.E Andreas Peschke at the grand reopening of The Foyer at Eswatini Theatre Club.

## 'Dreaming of my late mother saved my life'

Page 3

## Gogo Mamane Simelane's miracle escape from inferno



A Rubicon Media Group publication

Build on SNL when you earn  
E3000 – E8000 monthly  
with Sicalo Home

Apply today

Call 8006100

Help Changes Everything

Powered by FNB Umkhaya Home Loan

First National Bank of Eswatini Limited, Company Reg. No:24/1988 - A financial Institution licensed under the Financial Institutions Act of 2005, and an Insurance Services Provider under the Insurance Act of 2005.



30  
YEARS  
of help that works



# PM hints at possible police recruitment, promotions

By Kwanele Dhladhla

PRIME Minister Russell Dlamini has hinted that government may soon consider fresh recruitments and promotions within the Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) as part of efforts to strengthen the force's capacity and morale.

The PM made these remarks in response to questions from Sigwe Member of Parliament (MP) David Ngcamphalala. The MP had raised concerns about manpower shortages, delayed promotions, deteriorating police housing, and the lack of adequate transport in some police stations.

In his response, the PM acknowledged the challenges facing the police service but assured the House that the government was looking into measures to address them.

"Government will consider the issue of recruitment in the Police Service, as we are aware that there are existing vacancies that need to be filled for the organisation to be properly capacitated to discharge its man-



▲ Prime Minister Russell Dlamini.

date. It must be acknowledged, though, that such things largely depend on budget availability," said Dlamini.

The response has been largely viewed to rekindle hope among many young Emaswati who have long awaited an opportunity to join the police service, as well as within the ranks of serving officers who have been an-

ticipating promotions.

On the issue of promotions, the PM revealed that the process was already under consideration.

"Promotions in the police service will, in due course, be announced when all necessary processes have been undertaken. The Police leadership is consulting with the Ministry of Public Service on this issue and is positive that there will be a fruitful outcome," he assured.

Ngcamphalala also questioned the state of police accommodation, noting that many officers were housed in dilapidated structures unfit for habitation. In response, the PM conceded that the housing situation remains a concern but stated that government was taking steps to improve conditions.

"It is true that most housing structures for the Police Service are not in a good state. To address this problem, government provides a budget for the rehabilitation of old housing units for the Police Service on an annual basis," Dlamini said.

He further announced that government, through the Eswatini National Housing Board (ENHB), would roll out a programme

to construct new housing units for police officers in various regions.

Turning to the issue of transport shortages, Ngcamphalala cited Matsapha police station as an example. He claimed that it only had one operational vehicle, which hindered effective policing.

In response, Dlamini said government was aware of the challenge and had begun addressing it during the current financial year.

"The persistent problem of shortage of transport for the police is being addressed by government. During the current financial year, new vehicles were allocated to the police service to alleviate the problem, and more will continue to be provided," he stated.

The PM commended the National Commissioner, Manoma Masango, and the entire police service for their continued commitment despite operational constraints.

"We thank the MP for the plaudits and recognition of the National Commissioner's efforts in ensuring effectiveness of the Police Service in discharging its mandate," said Dlamini. The PM's remarks reaffirmed that while budgetary limitations remain a challenge, the government was intent on prioritising police welfare and operational capacity in the near future.

The recruitment and promotions, if approved, could mark a significant morale boost for the force and potentially enhance law enforcement visibility and effectiveness across the country, said one of the affected police officers who preferred anonymity.

By Siphesihle Dlamini

siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

**BOOSTING arts and culture!**The Eswatini Theatre Club has celebrated the grand reopening of its beautifully renovated foyer, a milestone marked by a strong message of friendship, creativity, and cultural partnership between Eswatini and Germany.

Senator Pholile Shakantu expressed heartfelt joy and emphasised the deeper significance behind the refurbishment, highlighting it as a symbol of collaboration and shared vision rather than just a physical upgrade. Shakantu remarked, "It is such a joy to be here with all of you as we open the doors to this beautifully renewed foyer of the Eswatini Theatre Club. What we celebrate today is more than fresh paint and polished floors, it's a reflection of friendship, creativity, and shared vision between Eswatini and Germany."

The renovation was made possible through the generous contribution of approximately €21,000 from the German Embassy. Shakantu pointed out that this financial support represents far more than just money; it is an investment in Eswatini's creative community and the cultural heartbeat of the nation. She emphasized the longstanding partnership between the two countries, rooted in mutual respect and a shared commitment to progress.

Germany's engagement with Eswatini spans various sectors, with a strong focus on education, development, and the arts. Shakantu highlighted several initiatives funded by the German Embassy that have enriched Eswatini's cultural landscape:

- A 2-day dance industry workshop in 2024, which included DJ training, aimed at enhancing skills within the local creative sector.
- The Creative Mixer Series, organized in collaboration with the Antidote Culture Foundation, which offered a series of masterclasses to build creative skills throughout 2024.

## German Embassy's support revitalises Eswatini Theatre Club

- The National Museum Project, running from 2024 to 2025, which includes the San Bushmen exhibition, cultural heritage collection, and curator training.

Beyond the arts, German organizations have contributed significantly to Eswatini's cooperative development, water supply, and energy sectors. The German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation (DGRV) has been instrumental in strengthening cooperatives since 2022, resulting in the establishment of a permanent office in Eswatini.

The Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) is supporting a cross-border water supply project between Lomahasha and Namaacha, scheduled for completion in 2026.

The German organization for international development, GIZ, has led multiple projects, including initiatives in energy and the successful development of Eswatini's Industrial Policy for 2023-2033.

Additionally, the Goethe Institut continues to support cultural heritage preservation and training for young artists on grant applications.

Shakantu described the renovated foyer as "a tangible symbol of our cooperation, showing how diplomacy can touch lives in real and lasting ways." She highlighted the growing vibrancy of Eswatini's creative sector, noting how artists are increasingly gaining international recognition and how the Eswatini Theatre Club has been pivotal in nurturing emerging talent in acting, directing, and playwriting.

The importance of spaces like this foyer was stressed as vital for fostering connections between artists and audiences, providing a venue to "connect, to laugh, to reflect, and to dream together." For Shakantu, the arts are a powerful reminder of shared humanity and a worthy focus of investment. The event also aligned with Eswatini's broader national development vision.



▲ Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Senator Pholile Shakantu speaks at the grand reopening of The Foyer at Eswatini Theatre Club.



▲ Ambassador of Germany to Eswatini H.E. Andreas Peschke makes his address at the event.



▲ Part of the audience that attended the reopening ceremony enjoying the ambiance of the renovated foyer.

Cultural institutions, Shakantu explained, are not merely entertainment venues but essential components of national identity and international representation.

The German Embassy's support strengthens these foundations and helps position Eswatini as a hub for creativity and cultur-

al tourism. Shakantu expressed gratitude to the German Embassy and the Theatre Club community, saying, "May this foyer become a space where new ideas are born, where talent shines, and where audiences feel inspired, a place where art continues to bring us together."



Arson survivor recalls...

# 'Dreaming of my late mother saved my life'

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

WHAT began as an ordinary night for KaGogo Mamane Simelane of Timbutini under Mafutseni Inkhundla turned into a moment of divine intervention and later, a story of restoration and hope.

The elderly woman, whose home was destroyed during the recent civil unrest, has received a brand-new house, a gesture that has brought comfort and dignity back to her life.

Recalling the chilling moments before the tragedy, Gogo Simelane said she owes her survival to a dream that felt like a warning from her late mother.

"I dreamt of my late mother," she said quietly, tears welling in her eyes. "She told me to take the children and leave the house immediately. I listened. The moment we stepped out, I heard a loud sound fire had started and within minutes, my house was gone."

The mysterious dream, which she believes was a spiritual rescue, saved her and her grandchildren from certain death. But in the aftermath, they were left homeless and heartbroken. Community leaders, moved by her plight, joined hands with government authorities under Mafutseni Inkhundla to rebuild her home. The successful completion and handover of the new house marks a turning point in Gogo Simelane's life restoring her sense of security after months of uncertainty.

The Indvuna yeLutsango for Timbutini praised the teamwork that made the project possible, describing it as a powerful example of community unity and compassion.

"We could not stand by while one of our own suffered," she said. "This house shows that when we come together, we can change lives. We are thankful to the government and all partners who made this dream a reality."

... Gogo Mamane Simelane's miracle escape before her house burned down during unrest



▲ The new house which was handed over to Gogo Mamane Simelane by the Deputy Prime Minister.

During the joyous handover ceremony, neighbours and relatives gathered to celebrate, singing traditional songs and expressing gratitude for what they called "a miracle fulfilled."

## Comfortable

The new two-room house offers Gogo Simelane and her grandchildren a safe and comfortable place to live. Standing at the doorway of her freshly painted home, the elderly woman lifted her hands in gratitude.

"I thank God, my ancestors, the government, and everyone who remembered me," she said. "My mother warned me in that dream and today, I know she continues to watch over me."

The story of KaGogo Mamane Simelane is one of faith, survival, and renewal, a reminder that even in the darkest moments, light can return through the kindness of others and the strength of a community united in care.



▲ The Deputy Prime Minister Thulisile Dladla with Gogo Mamane Simelane.

... Bayethe wena waPhakathi – elderly woman

JOY and gratitude filled Lozitha under Ludzeludze Inkhundla on Monday as the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), Thulisile Dladla, officially handed over newly constructed houses worth E180,000 each to three vulnerable families.

Among the recipients was Nomsa Lukhele, who could not contain her excitement after receiving her new three-room house. With tears of joy, she praised His Majesty King Mswati III and the government for transforming her life.

"Bayethe wena waPhakathi! I never imagined owning such a beautiful home. I thank His Majesty and the government for remembering us," Lukhele said, beaming with happiness. According to the Deputy Prime Minister, each of the houses comprises two bedrooms and a bathroom and includes a toilet, water tank, and labour costs.

## Hope

"These houses are not just structures they are symbols of hope and dignity," said Dladla. "His Majesty's government remains committed to ensuring that vulnerable emaSwati live in safe and decent homes."

The DPM explained that the project forms part of the Vulnerable Group Housing Programme, which seeks to improve the living conditions of the elderly, orphans, and people living with disabilities across the Kingdom. She urged beneficiaries to take good care of their new homes and use them as a foundation to rebuild their lives.

Community members and leaders gathered for the handover ceremony, celebrating the milestone with songs and ululations. One local leader praised the government for its compassionate initiative, saying it brings "real and visible change to those in need."

DPM Dladla reaffirmed the government's commitment to extending the programme to all corners of Eswatini.

"Every liSwati deserves a dignified home. No one should be left behind," she declared.

For Nomsa Lukhele and the other beneficiaries, the day marked a new beginning a moment of restored dignity, hope, and belonging.

## DPM praised for E23.5 mln timely grants

By Kwanele Dhladhla

THE Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), led by Thuli Dladla, has been widely commended by Members of Parliament (MPs) for its ongoing efforts to improve the welfare of vulnerable groups through comprehensive social protection programmes.

Presenting her second quarter (July-September) performance report before Parliament, Dladla revealed that her office disbursed a total of E23.5 million to benefit 17,100 persons with disabilities, widows, and the elderly under various social welfare schemes. These include the Elderly Funeral Cover, Disability Fund, and support for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC).

A total of 132 Ex-Service Men Widows benefited from E118,800, while the Old Age Grant reached 88,548 elderly persons, marking an increase of 687 beneficiaries from the previous quarter. The government

spent E162.4 million on the elderly grant during this period.

Dladla further announced that the Funeral Cover initiative facilitated dignified burials for 140 deceased elderly persons at a cost of E420,000. Meanwhile, the OVC Fund disbursed E155.9 million, covering school and examination fees for 67,438 learners for the current academic year.

"These initiatives demonstrate government's unwavering commitment to ensuring that no vulnerable citizen is left behind," she said.

## Recommendations

Beyond financial support, the DPM's Office also intensified efforts to combat gender-based violence (GBV) through awareness campaigns across all four regions of Eswatini. These engagements, which brought together various stakeholders, led to key recommendations such as the establishment of a One Stop Centre for survivors, enhanced collaboration among service providers, and continuous public education.

The office also continued implementing

the Hlonipheka Programme, which reached 3,037 Emaswati with information on GBV prevention. Additionally, a gender mainstreaming toolkit was developed and training sessions were conducted for cross-border traders to promote gender equality in trade. The popular "Asibambaneni Sibe Ngumndeni" programme also continued to make a significant national impact through its broadcasts on Eswatini TV and EBIS Radio, promoting unity and family values.

MPs across the political divide heaped praise on Dladla for her leadership and efficiency in delivering social assistance. Ndzingeni MP Gcina Magagula, who chairs the DPM's Portfolio Committee, lauded the office for increasing grants for the elderly and persons with disabilities by 20 per cent, urging government to consider further increases over the next five years.

"We appreciate the increase and appeal for it to be sustained because these beneficiaries often care for impoverished children in rural areas," he said.

The MPs all echoed appreciation for Dladla's leadership, describing her as

humble, efficient, and a true embodiment of the Nkwe spirit espoused by His Majesty King Mswati III. Meanwhile, MPs also used the session to call for tougher penalties against Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) offenders, and the fast-tracking of the sexual offenders register. Lushaba said this would help curb the growing number of cases involving children and ensure justice for victims.

Lomahasha MP Zanele Mashaba recently recommended the convening of a national women's conference to deliberate strategies to reduce SODV cases in the country.

The DPM's Office, which also oversees the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), was applauded for rehabilitating 96 homes, restoring damaged roads and bridges, and distributing food to 263,090 individuals affected by natural disasters, all achieved despite limited financial resources.

MPs concluded by reaffirming Parliament's support for the DPM's social protection agenda, describing it as a cornerstone in safeguarding Eswatini's most vulnerable citizens.



By Kwanele Dhladhla

# EWSC's E600mln prepaid meter rollout progresses steadily

THE Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) has confirmed that the rollout of its E600 million prepaid water meter project continues to progress steadily across the country, marking a major step in the corporation's digital transformation strategy.

According to EWSC Public Relations and Communications Specialist Hlobile Jele, the initiative was aimed at enhancing customer experience, billing accuracy, and operational efficiency. The project forms part of the corporation's long-term plan to modernise service delivery and promote responsible water usage.

"To date, we have successfully implemented the prepaid pilot project at Mndoni Estate, and we are now rolling out installations in several key areas, including Piggs Peak, Glen Township, Moyeni, Siteki, Nkhanini, Nhlangano, Moneni, Manzini, and Goje Township and Mukela in Ezulwini," Jele said.

She further revealed that EWSC was extending the system to public prepaid standpipes to improve accessibility and ensure fair water distribution in communities.

"We have already introduced prepaid standpipes in

Mangwaneni, and we are currently planning further installations in Lobamba, Ezabeni, Nkhanini, and Nshakambili," Jele explained.

The prepaid meter system allows customers to manage their water consumption more effectively while helping the corporation reduce arrears and improve efficiency in revenue collection. Jele noted that this innovation also aligns with the government's digital transformation agenda to make public services more transparent and customer focused.

On the tariff adjustment implemented earlier this year, Jele clarified that the change was gazetted and approved by Parliament, and that customers were notified well in advance. "The tariff adjustment took effect on April 1, 2025, following public communication campaigns in November 2024 and February 2025 to ensure transparency and customer awareness," she said.

The new residential standard charge was E189.06, representing an increase of E7.27, or four per cent, from the previous rate of E181.79. The rate applies to water consumption ranging from 0-10

kilolitres, meaning customers will only pay more if they exceed this usage limit.

"This adjustment is a necessary measure to sustain and improve service delivery. It enables EWSC to continue maintaining, upgrading, and expanding the country's water infrastructure to meet rising demand," Jele emphasised.

In addition to the prepaid meter rollout, she said EWSC was implementing several major water access projects, including the ESWAP Project and the Manzini Integrated Water Supply Project.

The ESWAP Project focuses on extending water access to communities between Nhlangano and Siphambanweni, targeting a total of 11,880 beneficiaries, with about 2,000 individual connections upon completion.

Meanwhile, the Manzini Integrated Water Supply Project aims to meet the growing needs of the country's expanding urban population, extending services beyond the Manzini region. Upon completion, it is expected to benefit 120,000 people, with approximately 15,000 individual



▲ EWSC Managing Director Jabulile Mashwama. The corporation has reported that the company has made significant progress in rolling out prepaid meters.

connections during the initial phase.

"These projects reaffirm EWSC's commitment to ensuring reliable, sustainable, and equitable water access for all Emaswati," Jele said.

She added that the corporation

continues to encourage customers to register for prepaid meters and adopt responsible water usage habits as part of the shared national effort to safeguard Eswatini's precious water resources for future generations.

# Army hopeful wins gold medal at Imbube Marathon

By Thokozani Mazibuko

AT just 24 years old, Manqoba Finose Sangweni has emerged as one of Eswatini's most talked-about young athletes celebrated for both his athletic excellence and his remarkable resilience.

The determined young man from Mtfongwaneni Inkhundla in the Manzini Region recently found himself caught in controversy during the Zombodze Emuva Army Recruitment Exercise, yet what could have been a career setback has instead become a story of perseverance and redemption.

Sangweni captured public attention after being suspended for participating in two separate army recruitment exercises first at his home constituency of Mtfongwaneni and later at Zombodze Emuva Inkhundla in the Shiselweni Region. In an astonishing turn of events, he clinched first place in both constituencies, showcasing his exceptional strength and discipline. While the incident drew mixed reactions, it also highlighted the depth of his ambition and drive.

Rather than letting the controversy define him, Sangweni turned the episode into motivation. Within days, he traded military drills for running shoes, stepping back into the limelight at the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of



▲ Manqoba Sangweni at Imbube Marathon.

the Imbube Marathon 2025, held at the Somhlolo National Stadium. Determined to prove that his focus and talent extend beyond the barracks, he delivered an unforgettable performance.

Competing as athlete number 6187, Sangweni stormed through the 10-kilometre race, finishing in 31 minutes and 7 seconds earning himself a gold medal. His nearest

challenger, Samuel Mathabatha, crossed the line almost a minute later in 31 minutes and 53 seconds. For Sangweni, victory at the Imbube Marathon was more than a sporting triumph it was a powerful declaration of endurance, discipline, and mental strength. It reminded the nation that true champions rise above criticism and adversity. His performance



▲ Sangweni during the army recruitment where he did well.

has since inspired countless young people who see in him a reflection of their own struggles and dreams. "Every challenge is a test of faith," Sangweni said after the race. "When life knocks you down, you rise, train harder, and show that your story is far from over."

Those close to Sangweni describe him as a disciplined and focused young man, one whose mindset

mirrors that of a true soldier calm under pressure, resilient in defeat, and relentless in pursuit of success. Despite the setback at the army recruitment, his dream of serving his country remains firm.

His journey, though marked by controversy, has evolved into a symbol of hope and determination. Manqoba Sangweni's story reminds Eswatini that greatness



# SEL records E30.4mln profit

By Kwanele Dhladhla

SWAZI Empowerment Limited (SEL) Chairman of the Board, Sithofeni Ginindza, has reaffirmed the company’s commitment to maintaining a resilient and diversified investment portfolio, anchored in strong governance, disciplined strategy, and long-term value creation.

Ginindza said that despite global and domestic economic pressures, the company had remained focused on its core mandate of building sustainable wealth for its shareholders and contributing to Eswatini’s broader economic development.

“SEL remains committed to its mission of building a diversified portfolio of equity investments across listed and unlisted companies. Guided by a disciplined strategy, we continue to prioritise investments in businesses with proven growth potential and strong governance,” he stated.

Ginindza said SEL’s approach focuses on acquiring significant stakes in well-managed entities that demonstrate operational efficiency and experienced leadership, noting that this has allowed the company to deliver consistent value to its investors even through market volatility.

“By managing our portfolio across the economic cycle, we continue to offer investors access to an asset class traditionally less accessible, thereby delivering sustained value,” he explained.

The chairman said the financial year had been influenced by various macroeconomic developments, some of which presented challenges, while others created new investment opportunities.

He highlighted SEL’s key holdings, led by a 19 per cent equity stake in MTN Eswatini Limited, which continues to deliver strong value.

“MTN remains our largest and most strategic investment. Its market leadership, brand strength, and extensive 3G and 4G network coverage, including in rural areas, continue to underpin its success,” Ginindza said.

He also commended First National Bank (FNB) Eswatini, in which SEL holds a 4.9 percent equity stake, for delivering steady performance supported by macroeconomic stability, low inflation, and accommodative monetary policy during the period under review.

“Three discount rate reductions during the year created favourable conditions for both the banking and fixed-income sectors,” he added.

SEL’s fixed-income investments in Fincorp and Select also continued to yield above-prime returns, helping to stabilise the portfolio.

**The company’s current investment holdings include:**

- 19 per cent equity stake in MTN Eswatini Limited
- 4.9 per cent equity stake in First National Bank Eswatini Limited
- Select Bond
- Eswatini Development Finance Corporation Bond (FIN 507)
- Swaziland Building Society Permanent Shares

Ginindza announced that SEL delivered a solid financial performance in 2025, achieving a profit before tax of E32.7 million

. . . Chairman declares that company remains strong, focused on long-term value creation



▲ Shareholders of SEL listen attentively during the AGM convened at Royal Villas Hotel last Friday.

and a net profit after tax of E30.4 million.

The company recorded E34.5 million in dividend income from its investee companies and an additional E11 million from fixed-income and money market instruments. Operating expenses stood at E2.6 million, while interest expenses amounted to E10.1 million.

However, a non-cash fair value adjustment of E163 million on unlisted investments, largely driven by external market movements, resulted in a comprehensive loss of E132 million for the year.

“Importantly, this adjustment does not diminish the strength of our underlying portfolio. SEL remains confident in the long-term value of its holdings and expects this adjustment to reverse over time,” Ginindza assured shareholders.

Looking ahead, Ginindza said SEL was poised to sustain value creation through a balanced mix of listed and unlisted investments.

“Post year-end, we acquired a 49 percent equity stake in Usutu Forest School International, further diversifying our portfolio and enhancing growth prospects,” he revealed.

He said SEL’s strategy going forward will focus on value-driven investments, strengthening shareholder returns, and deepening the company’s contribution to Eswatini’s economic transformation.

Reaffirming the company’s social commitment, Ginindza said SEL invested E750,000 in community initiatives focusing on education, health, and youth empowerment.

“We remain committed to supporting programmes that empower communities and drive sustainable development,” he said.

**Key contributions included:**

- E60,000 to Hospice at Home.



▲ SEL Chairman Sithofeni Ginindza delivers his remarks.

- E250,000 towards construction of facilities at Manyandzeni Primary School, in partnership with the Ministry of Education.
- E50,000 to Young Heroes Eswatini for vocational skills training and business start-up support.
- E40,000 to PIES, supporting orphaned and vulnerable children.

Ginindza reaffirmed that strong corporate governance remains central to SEL’s operations, with continuous alignment to leading governance standards and regulatory requirements.

He acknowledged the resignation of EBJ Arden from the Board, stating that a replacement would be communicated by the appointing shareholder in due course.

**Current directors as of March 31, 2025,**

**include:**

- J. Ndlangamandla (Chairperson)
- S.M. Ginindza
- S.R. Ndlangamandla
- S.M.I. Dlamini
- M.S.J. Hlatshwayo
- M. Simelane
- D.D. Ntshalintshali

In closing, Ginindza extended gratitude to shareholders, board members, and partners for their continued support.

“SEL remains in a strong position to deliver long-term value to its shareholders. We are confident that our disciplined strategy, resilient portfolio, and commitment to governance and social responsibility will continue to create sustainable growth for years ahead,” he concluded.



By Delisa Magagula

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY SITTING:

# Population growth key to sustaining 24/7 operations

THE call for Eswatini to strengthen its capacity for round-the-clock economic activity dominated part of the House of Assembly sitting with legislators linking 24-hour production to population growth and labour availability.

Mbabane East Member of Parliament Welcome Dlamini said the country's ambition to sustain full-time industrial and commercial operations would depend on a growing and productive population.

He made the remarks after the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development tabled its Second-Quarter Performance Report before Parliament.

Dlamini noted that while Eswatini continues to prioritise investment attraction and infrastructure expansion, the success of continuous operations in key sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, and services will ultimately rely on the strength and structure of its labour force.

He said the economy cannot expand on a 24-hour basis without sufficient human resources to support the demand for production, distribution, and essential services. Dlamini further cautioned that the country's current population growth rate, estimated at below 1.6 per cent, may not be adequate to sustain long-term industrial output.

"To sustain and grow a country's economy, a steady increase in population is essential. For a country to attain population growth, it needs to increase by at least 2.1 per cent.

Anything below that signals a declining population, which can strain economic activity and the labour supply. The shift toward 24-hour operations requires a healthy, educated, and employable population capable of meeting industrial demand," he said.

He added that each household and community has a role in developing citizens who are mentally and physically prepared to contribute to a modern economy that no longer functions within traditional working



▲ Mbabane East Member of Parliament Welcome Dlamini says the country's ambition to sustain full-time industrial and commercial operations would depend on a growing and productive population.



▲ Minister of Economic Planning and Development Dr Tambo Gina acknowledged that population growth is a fundamental consideration in planning for future economic expansion.

hours.

In response, Minister of Economic Planning and Development Dr Tambo Gina acknowledged that population growth is a fundamental consideration in planning for future economic expansion, including the development of a workforce able to sustain continuous production cycles.

## Support

He said the government, through the Central Statistical Office and the National Development Plan, is closely monitoring demographic and employment trends to ensure that population dynamics support economic goals.

"Our planning approach emphasises balanced and sustainable growth. The aim is not only to grow the population but to

align that growth with the capacity of the economy to absorb and productively employ people. Expanding industrial operations to 24-hour schedules demands both numbers and capability within the labour market," said Gina.

Dr Gina said the ministry's demographic data feeds into sectoral planning for manufacturing, mining, transport, and healthcare, all of which require reliable workforce availability to operate beyond standard hours.

He added that population and labour forecasts are being used to guide investments in education, skills development, and health infrastructure.

## Visible

Industry leaders say the move toward full-time production is already visible in sectors such as food processing, energy, and transport. However, they maintain that workforce readiness must be addressed for the economy to benefit fully.

Business Eswatini Chief Executive Officer E Nathi Dlamini said private-sector productivity depends heavily on human capital.

He explained that a smaller or ageing workforce could make it difficult to sustain 24-hour operations without significant investments in automation and training.

"Businesses can extend operations, but the key question is whether there are enough skilled workers to run shifts safely and efficiently. Population growth, together with education and health investment, directly influences the feasibility of continuous production."

He added that increased employment opportunities from expanded operations would, in turn, support consumer spending, trade, and overall economic resilience.

Development economist Themba Mavuso said Eswatini's demographic and labour patterns must be integrated into long-term industrial strategies.

He noted that while 24-hour production enhances competitiveness and output, it also increases demand for health services, urban infrastructure, and social protection for workers engaged in non-traditional shifts.

"Population growth provides the labour base, but productivity determines how

effectively that labour supports extended operations. Planning must link demographic realities with industrial policy and human-capital investment," he said.

He added that several regional economies have demonstrated that sustained population growth combined with education and technology investment creates conditions for 24-hour economic activity, attracting both domestic and foreign investment.

The Ministry of Economic Planning's Second-Quarter Report projects moderate GDP growth supported by industrial recovery and stable inflation.

However, the report also highlights structural challenges, including limited labour absorption, uneven urban expansion, and the need for enhanced vocational training.

Analysts note that Eswatini's ability to transition into a 24-hour economy will depend on synchronising population growth, workforce development, and energy reliability.

Expanding sectors such as textiles, retail, and transport logistics could benefit most from extended operating hours if supported by adequate policy and demographic planning.

For now, the government's position remains that population growth must align with economic capacity, while legislators continue to urge stronger measures to ensure that Eswatini can meet the workforce demands of continuous industrial and commercial operations.

**“Businesses can extend operations, but the key question is whether there are enough skilled workers to run shifts safely and efficiently. Population growth, together with education and health investment, directly influences the feasibility of continuous production”**

Eswatini Daily News

Now Available on Press Reader  
An International Newspaper Platform



BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Top Women Farmers to be honoured at National Awards

THE Woman Farmer Foundation (WFF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, will host the 18th Annual Woman Farmer Competition Prize-Giving Ceremony next week to honour Eswatini's leading female farmers. The event marks the conclusion of a nationwide selection process that began in September and drew a record 247 participants from across all four ecological regions of the Kingdom.

Wall St. climbs with earnings, inflation set to test sentiment

WALL Street advanced on Monday as investor concerns over the stability of regional banks eased, turning focus to a wave of corporate earnings and a closely watched inflation report. Earnings season shifts into high gear this week, with Wall Street heavyweights, including Tesla, Ford, GM, Netflix, Procter & Gamble, Coca-Cola, IBM and Intel, set to report.

Oil prices slip on concerns over a supply glut

LONDON — Oil prices fell by nearly 2 per cent on Monday, pressured by worries over a global glut as U.S.-China trade tensions added to concerns about an economic slowdown and weaker energy demand. Brent crude futures were down \$1.06, or 1.7 per cent, at \$60.23 a barrel as of 1312 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate futures fell \$1.03, or 1.8 per cent, to \$56.51.

Greystone Partners Ltd takes biggest hit as share price down 13%

By Delisa Magagula

GREYSTONE Partners Limited recorded the largest annual share price drop on the Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE), falling by 13.24 per cent between September 2024 and September 2025.

According to the ESE's Third Quarter Trading Statistics, Greystone's share price declined from E340 to E295, reducing its market capitalisation from E781.7 million to E678.2 million over the period.

The fall represents one of the most notable single-year losses among listed companies, pulling overall market performance into negative territory.

The ESE report attributes the overall 1.47 per cent decline in total market capitalisation largely to losses in Greystone Partners, Inala Capital Limited, and Swazi Empowerment Limited.

Together, these three counters erased earlier gains recorded by Nedbank Eswatini and SBC Limited.

While Greystone showed an annual loss, its stock registered a short-term rebound during the third quarter, rising by 13.46 per cent from E260 at the end of June 2025 to E295 by September.

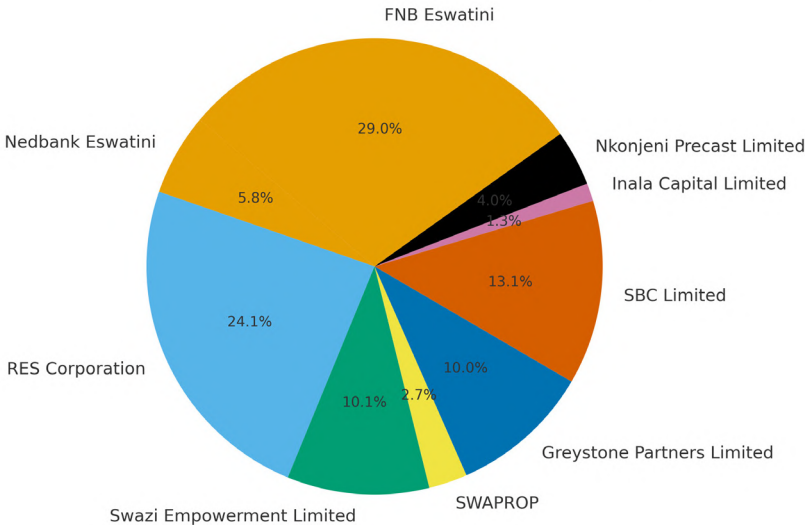
This movement made it the strongest quarterly performer in the latest trading period, suggesting a limited recovery in investor activity.

Market observers note that Greystone Partners remains a key investment company listed on the ESE, with a diversified portfolio across several sectors. Its share price movement is often viewed as a general indicator of investor sentiment within the private equity and investment segment of the market.

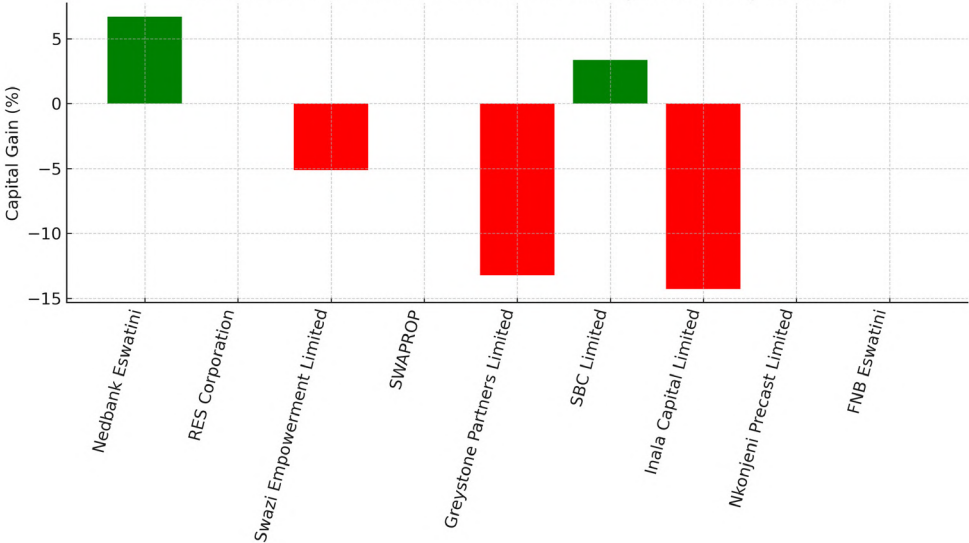
In contrast, most other listed companies recorded minimal changes in share prices, with FNB Eswatini, RES Corporation, SWAPROP, and Nkonjeni Precast remaining unchanged over the year. SBC Limited gained 3.37 per cent, while Nedbank Eswatini rose 6.67 per cent year-on-year, offsetting part of the overall market contraction.

The quarterly data shows that the market

Company Contribution to ESE Market Capitalisation (Sept 2025)



ESE Annual Share Price Movements (Sept 2024-Sept 2025)



remains relatively stable despite limited trading activity. Greystone's rebound, alongside gains from SBC and Nedbank, helped prevent deeper losses. However, the absence of broad-

based growth suggests that the ESE remains in a consolidation phase, with investors focusing on dividend stability and sectoral performance rather than short-term speculation.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE) ended the financial year with a slight 1.47 per cent decline in total market capitalisation, despite gains from major banking counters that helped cushion overall losses.

ESE Trading Statistics for 2025 show that total market value dropped from E6.89 billion in September 2024 to E6.79 billion in September 2025.

The decline is attributed to weaker performance by investment and financial holding companies, including Greystone Partners Limited, Swazi Empowerment Limited, and Inala Capital Limited.

Nedbank Eswatini recorded the highest increase among all listed entities, rising 6.67 per cent from E1, 500 to E1, 600 per share. SBC Limited followed with a 3.37 per cent gain, while

ESE market value down 1.47%

most other counters remained unchanged. The resilience of banking shares helped stabilise the market amid a mixed trading environment.

"In contrast, Swazi Empowerment Limited's share price slipped 5.13 per cent, while Inala Capital fell 14.29 per cent, the second-largest drop after Greystone Partners' 13.24 per cent decline. These losses weighed on overall market performance, particularly in the investment sector, which represents a significant portion of the exchange's listed value," reads the report in full.

The latest data also indicates that the market has maintained relatively low volatility, with seven out of nine listed companies showing either positive or static share price performance.

Market analysts say this reflects limited trading volumes and cautious investor participation. The third-quarter comparison further shows modest improvement, led by Greystone

Partners, which gained 13.46 per cent between June and September. SBC Limited rose 2.22 per cent, while other companies, including RES Corporation and FNB Eswatini, remained stable.

Market Overview by Counter (Sept 2025):

Nedbank Eswatini: +6.67%  
SBC Limited: +3.37%  
Greystone Partners: -13.24%  
Inala Capital: -14.29%  
Swazi Empowerment Limited: -5.13%  
FNB Eswatini, RES Corporation, SWAPROP, Nkonjeni Precast: No change

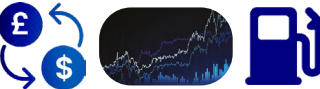
The ESE continues to play a key role in mobilising domestic savings and supporting corporate financing through equity issuance.

The 2025 performance, while marginally lower, demonstrates on-going market stability amid regional economic challenges and fluctuating investor confidence.



FX RATES

Notes/Cash		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	16.9066	17.3696
G.B. Pound	22.6731	23.3452
EURO	19.7282	20.3347
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	





By Delisa Magagula

# Top women farmers to be honoured at national awards

THE Woman Farmer Foundation (WFF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, will host the 18th Annual Woman Farmer Competition Prize-Giving Ceremony next week to honour Eswatini's leading female farmers.

The event marks the conclusion of a nationwide selection process that began in September and drew a record 247 participants from across all four ecological regions of the Kingdom. All the contestants farm on Swazi Nation Land, reflecting the growing participation of women in the country's agricultural production.

The Manzini Region recorded the highest number of entries, reaffirming its position as Eswatini's agricultural hub.

The large turnout also signals rising interest in agribusiness among women farmers, particularly in key sectors such as crop production, livestock, and dairy.

The competition featured two main categories: the Youth Category and the Adult Category. The first phase of judging held from September 15-30, 2025, shortlisted the Top 15 contestants in each category.

A second, more detailed round of evaluations followed, conducted by a panel of judges drawn from major agricultural institutions.

These included the National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBoard), National Maize Corporation (NMC), World Vision, the Dairy Board, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Woman Farmer Foundation.



▲ The Woman Farmer Foundation is preparing for 18th Annual Prize Giving Ceremony.

The multi-institutional panel assessed each contestant based on productivity, innovation, sustainability, and community impact. The process concluded with the selection of the Top 10 finalists in both the Youth and Adult divisions.

The much-anticipated Woman Farmer of the Year Award Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, October 23, 2025, at Riders

Ranch in Sidvokodvo.

The Minister of Agriculture, Mandla Tshawuka, will deliver the keynote address, expected to focus on the critical role of women in strengthening food security and driving economic resilience through agriculture.

According to the WFF, this year's event aims not only to recognise excellence but

also to inspire more women to engage in productive and profitable farming ventures.

"The finalists represent hard work, innovation, and resilience," a WFF representative said, adding that the foundation was proud of the growth of women-led farming initiatives across the country.

The ceremony is expected to attract key players in Eswatini's agricultural sector, including agribusiness investors, policymakers, development partners, and previous competition winners.

The Woman Farmer of the Year Competition has become a flagship event in the country's agricultural calendar, promoting gender inclusion, food production, and sustainable farming practices.

Over the years, the initiative has contributed to empowering rural women through training, mentorship, and exposure to agricultural markets.

Many past winners have since expanded their operations, creating employment opportunities and improving food availability at the community level.

As preparations intensify for next week's event, anticipation is building among farmers and stakeholders alike.

The 18th edition is expected to highlight not only the progress made by Eswatini's women farmers but also their growing contribution to national economic development.

# Eswatini, Moz strengthen partnership for water project

By Delisa Magagula

A SIGNIFICANT step towards addressing water scarcity in the region has been taken by the Government.

HRH Prince Lonkhokhela, Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy of Eswatini, and Fernando Rafael, Minister of Public Works, Housing, and Water Resources of Mozambique, signed a Declaration of Intent for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Lomahasha-Namaacha (LoNa) Transboundary Water Supply Project.

"The signing of this Declaration of Intent underscores the commitment of both Eswatini and Mozambique to ensure access to clean water for our communities," Prince Lonkhokhela said.

The LoNa project, a cross-border initiative, is designed to provide clean drinking water to an estimated 50,000 people in Eswatini and Mozambique.

It involves the construction of a water treatment plant, pumping stations, and reservoirs, with water sourced from the Mbuluzi River. The raw water will be conveyed from the treatment plant operated by the Eswatini Water Services Corporation.

During a site visit, the Ministers observed progress made since the project's inception in June 2024. Currently in Phase 1A, the project is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Two reservoirs are near completion, and pipelines have been laid to transport raw water from the river.

"Working together, we are able to leverage joint funding and technical expertise to ensure this project meets the needs of our citizens," Minister Rafael said.



▲ Eswatini and Mozambique delegations led by HRH Prince Lonkhokhela, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy of Eswatini, and Fernando Rafael, Minister of Public Works, Housing, and Water Resources of Mozambique during the signing.

The Declaration of Intent signals a commitment by both countries to pursue additional funding and technical support for future phases of the project.

The LoNa initiative has received support from the German Government and KfW, demonstrating international cooperation in regional water development.

"The LoNa Project is not just about infrastructure; it is about strengthening our bilateral relations while improving access to clean water for thousands of people," Prince Lonkhokhela added.

The project is expected to make a lasting impact on water access in the border communities of Eswatini and Mozambique.



▲ The site where the project is going to be implemented.



# Wall St. climbs with earnings, inflation set to test sentiment

By Pranav Kashyap  
and Twesha Dikshit

WALL Street advanced on Monday as investor concerns over the stability of regional banks eased, turning focus to a wave of corporate earnings and a closely watched inflation report.

Earnings season shifts into high gear this week, with Wall Street heavyweights, including Tesla, Ford, GM, Netflix, Procter & Gamble, Coca-Cola, IBM and Intel, set to report. Their results will offer a fresh stress test for equities trading near lofty valuations.

Upcoming U.S. regional bank results will also be monitored to get a read of the sector's health, after renewed fears of systemic credit stress triggered a flight to safety last week.

S&P 500 companies are expected to post a 9.3 per cent year-on-year growth in third-quarter earnings, according to LSEG IBES data. But with expectations running high, investors will look for strong beats to justify the market's recent rally.

"Renewed credit concerns and concerns over trade policy are indicative of just how vulnerable the market conditions are," said Jordan Rizzuto, chief investment officer at GammaRoad Capital Partners.

U.S. President Donald Trump suggested easing tariffs on China if Beijing resumes key agricultural purchases such as soybeans. He, however, blamed the latest breakdown in talks on China's tightening control over rare earth exports.

Meanwhile, Trump vowed to keep "massive" duties on India unless it halts Russian oil imports, and considered raising levies on Colombia amid a feud over its role in illicit drug trade.

At 09:51 a.m., the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 254.07 points, or 0.55 per cent, to 46,452.52. The S&P 500 gained 50.26 points, or 0.75 per cent, to 6,713.77, while the Nasdaq Composite advanced 234.19 points, or 1.03 per cent, to 22,914.16.



▲A trader works on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York City, U.S.

AI-driven optimism continued to boost markets, with the Philadelphia Semiconductor Index (hitting an all-time high. It was last up 1.8 per cent.

Micron shares rose 3.2 per cent and hit a record high after Barclays raised its price target on the stock. ON Semiconductor and KLA added 4.4 per cent and 3.7 per cent, respectively. S&P Energy index gained 0.7 per cent, while industrials added almost 1 per cent.

## Delayed CPI

A U.S. government shutdown, which began on October 1, has halted key economic data releases, leaving investors without crucial indicators. That places Friday's consumer price report, a pivotal inflation gauge, firmly in the spotlight ahead of the Federal Reserve's policy meeting on October 28-29.

While September's core inflation is expected to hold steady at 3.1 per cent, markets widely expect a quarter-point rate

cut this month, with another reduction likely in December.

"The reports that come out, not just this one, but also in the coming months, still will not answer how trade policy over the longer term is going to influence inflationary pressures," Rizzuto said.

Among other stocks, Applovin dropped 5.1 per cent after Fuzzy Panda disclosed a short position in the company. Boeing rose 1.3 per cent after the planemaker won approval from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration to raise 737 MAX production to 42 planes per month. WeightWatchers climbed 11.2 per cent after the company partnered with Amazon for weight-loss drug delivery.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 6.13-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and by a 4.24-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq.

The S&P 500 posted 10 new 52-week highs and three new lows, while the Nasdaq Composite recorded 43 new highs and 33 new lows. (Reuters)



▲U.S. Dollar banknotes.

## Dollar wavers focus on politics, credit risks

By Stefano Rebaudo

THE dollar edged up against the yen but was flat versus the euro on Monday as investors shifted their focus to political developments in Japan and the euro area, while lingering concerns about U.S. credit risks kept weighing on sentiment.

The yen weakened as hardline conservative Sanae Takaichi is almost certain to become Japan's first female prime following a decisive parliamentary vote on Tuesday.

The dollar was up 0.1 per cent to 150.73 yen, after hitting 151.20 earlier in the session.

The euro edged higher against the dollar as political tensions in France eased, but investor caution lingered.

Markets have yet to fully price out French risk from the euro, with the government's decision to freeze pension reform offering only a temporary political breather while complicating already fragile budget talks.

The euro was flat at \$1.1653.

"This week the focus should stay on the U.S., and a further souring of credit sentiment could send the euro on a path to \$1.180," said Francesco Pesole, a foreign exchange strategist at ING.

The U.S. dollar index, a measure of its value relative to a basket of other major foreign currencies, rose 0.05 per cent to 98.58. It hit 98.025 on Friday, its lowest level since October 6.

Economists warned that the dollar's resilience will be tested on multiple fronts.

"One, the government shutdown is hurting economic activity, both directly and indirectly," said Klaus Baader, global chief economist at Societe Generale Corporate and Investment Banking (SGCIB), adding U.S.-China tensions were a second major concern.

"Three, the (import) tariffs that are already in effect continue to feed through, slowing real household income growth and weighing on corporate margins," he said.

Barclays flagged that, with no obvious catalyst to end the federal government shutdown in the next few weeks, the stoppage may extend well into November, when political and economic pressures should intensify.

The Australian dollar rose 0.1 per cent to \$0.6491 on Monday, cheered by data from top trade partner China showing its economy reasonably resilient to U.S. tariffs.

Official data on Monday showed China's economy grew 1.1 per cent in the third quarter, to top forecasts, while industrial output also beat with a rise of 6.5 per cent. Although the 4.8 per cent annual growth rate marked the weakest pace in a year, it kept the country on track to meet its official growth target of around 5 per cent. (Reuters)

# Oil prices slip on concerns over a supply glut

By Shadia Nasralla

LONDON — Oil prices fell by nearly 2 per cent on Monday, pressured by worries over a global glut as U.S.-China trade tensions added to concerns about an economic slowdown and weaker energy demand.

Brent crude futures were down \$1.06, or 1.7 per cent, at \$60.23 a barrel as of 1312 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate futures fell \$1.03, or 1.8 per cent, to \$56.51.

Oil traders' concerns have shifted from under-supply to over-supply, the futures contract structure of the global benchmark Brent showed.

The six-month spread for Brent shows contracts for earlier loading are trading below those for later loading, a structure known as contango, which encourages traders to pay for storing oil so it can be sold at higher prices when supplies are expected to have shrunk.

The Brent contango, which emerged on Thursday for the first time since a brief appearance in May, has deepened to minus 56



▲A view shows an oil pump jack outside Almetevsk, in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia.

cents, its biggest since late 2023.

Both benchmarks declined more than 2 per cent last week, marking their third consecutive weekly decline, partly due to the International Energy Agency's outlook for a growing supply glut in 2026.

Last week, the head of the World Trade Organization said she had urged the United States and China to de-escalate trade tensions, warning that a decoupling by the world's two largest economies could reduce global economic output by 7 per cent over the longer term.

The two top oil consumers have recently

renewed their trade war, imposing additional port fees on ships carrying cargo between them - tit-for-tat moves that could disrupt global freight flows.

Uncertainty remains over what may happen with Russian oil supply, with U.S. President Donald Trump warning again on Sunday that Washington would maintain "massive" tariffs on India unless it stopped buying Russian oil.

On the supply side, U.S. energy firms last week added rigs for the first time in three weeks, energy services firm Baker Hughes said. (Reuters)



# Civilians in Sudan's al-Fashir cower from drones as siege worsens hunger

RESIDENTS of Sudan's besieged city of al-Fashir have been taking refuge in underground bunkers to try to protect themselves from drones and shells after intensifying attacks on displacement shelters, clinics and mosques.

Famine-stricken al-Fashir is the Sudanese army's last holdout in the vast, western region of Darfur as it battles the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in a civil war that has raged for two-and-a-half years.

The conflict, which erupted from an internal power struggle, has triggered ethnic killings, drawn in foreign powers and created a massive humanitarian crisis.

The army has been gaining ground elsewhere in Sudan, but Darfur is the RSF's stronghold where it aims to base a parallel government, potentially cementing a geographical splintering of the country.

More than one million have fled al-Fashir during an 18-month siege by the RSF, according to the U.N., but it has become dangerous and expensive to leave. An estimated quarter of a million civilians remain, and there are fears of mass reprisals if the city falls.

## STRUGGLE TO AVOID DRONE STRIKES

Many of those still in the city have dug bunkers for protection after repeated strikes on civilians, according to more than a dozen residents reached by phone as well as footage obtained and verified by Reuters.

The residents described avoiding drones by limiting movements and large gatherings during daytime, and not using lights after dark.

"We can only bury people at night, or very early in the morning," said Mohyaldeen Abdallah, a local journalist. "It's become normal for us."



▲ Remnants of a shell that targeted the refugee center, in El Fasher, Sudan.

Five residents said drones have followed civilians into areas where they gather, such as clinics. "When you're walking around you stick to the wall like a gecko so the drone won't see you go inside," said Dr. Ezzeldin Asow, head of al-Fashir's now-abandoned Southern Hospital.

At one shelter in al-Fashir's Abu Taleb school at least 18 people were killed in the week from September 30 by bombardment, a drone attack and an RSF raid, said Abdallah, who visited the site before and after the

Footage verified by Reuters showed the school's shattered ceilings and scarred walls. On the school grounds, it showed a dead body lying outside a shipping container

buried in the ground to create a shelter, with sandbags around the entrance.

Neither the army nor the RSF responded to written requests or calls seeking comment on the incidents at Abu Taleb school and elsewhere in al-Fashir.

Residents captured in the footage blamed the RSF for attacks. Reuters could not independently verify who was responsible.

"They don't distinguish between civilians and soldiers, if you're human they fire at you," Khadiga Musa, head of the North Darfur health ministry, told Reuters by phone from al-Fashir.

The RSF and its allies have been blamed for waves of ethnically driven violence in

Darfur during the war, with the U.S. determining last year that they had committed genocide. Its leadership denies ordering such attacks and says rogue soldiers will face justice.

In a statement on October 12, the RSF said al-Fashir was "devoid of civilians". The army and allied self-defence fighters and former rebels had "turned hospitals and mosques into military barracks and rocket launchers," the RSF said.

The Sudanese army, which has denied responsibility for civilian deaths, has also used drones in al-Fashir.

## REPEATED ATTACKS ON SECOND SHELTER

On October 10-11 another displacement shelter, Dar al-Arqam, located on university grounds that also house a mosque, suffered repeated strikes. The centre's manager, Hashim Bosh, recorded 57 dead including 17 children, among them three babies.

"They were aiming at the mosque. They attacked right after Friday prayer," he said in a voice note to Reuters, describing the first strike. A second strike, he said, came from a drone that followed people running to another shipping container used as a shelter.

The next morning four more shells hit during dawn prayers, Bosh said. Residents interviewed in footage taken by local activists and verified by Reuters confirmed the attacks.

The footage also showed what appear to be 10 bodies covered in sheets at the site, a child-sized body covered by a small prayer rug, and several bodies, mangled and uncovered, inside the container.

Satellite imagery published by the Yale Humanitarian Research Lab (HRL) on October 16 showed six impact points on Dar al-Arqam's buildings. (Reuters)

By Nellie Peyton

JOHANNESBURG — The Democratic Alliance, the second-biggest party in South Africa's coalition government, wants to axe race-based laws aimed at boosting Black jobs in an economy still dominated by white people three decades after the end of apartheid.

How to address the legacy of white minority rule is a big debate between the DA and its larger coalition partner, the African National Congress, with the issue further amplified by criticism from U.S. President Donald Trump.

The DA's proposed "Economic Inclusion For All Bill" would amend the Public Procurement Act of 2024, which gives an advantage to companies that are Black-owned or run when bidding for government contracts. The DA says this system has encouraged corruption and failed to help most Black people.

The DA calls for the removal of references to Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment - the ANC's flagship affirmative action programme - across legislation.

The ANC says that race-based legislation is necessary for redress and has accused the DA - whose party leader is white - of protecting white interests. The DA denies this.

The bill is unlikely to pass, but it highlights racial tensions that had drawn little attention from outside South Africa until Trump highlighted them by criticising the government's race-based policies, opens new tab during a testy White House meeting with

## South Africa's DA party proposes bill to repeal race-based legislation



▲ Democratic Alliance party leader John Steenhuisen speaks at South Africa's parliament in Cape Town, South Africa.

President Cyril Ramaphosa in May.

White people still occupy over 60% of top management positions in South Africa, despite being 7% of the population.

DA head of policy Mathew Cuthbert rejected comparisons with Trump's moves

to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion programmes.

"We are not trying to copycat ... conservative policies which have been taken in the U.S.," he told a press conference.

"This bill aims to replace years of ineffec-

tive ANC empowerment policies that have left the vast majority of South Africans unemployed, impoverished and hopeless," said Cuthbert.

The bill targets poverty as a proxy for disadvantage instead of race, he said. (Reuters)



# New copper demand drivers from US, India as China juggernaut slows

COPPER consumption in the United States and India is set to emerge from China's shadow over the next decade as demand growth in the world's largest consumer of the industrial metal slows. Beijing's industrial and infrastructure expansion has helped fuel a rally that has seen copper prices rise to above \$10,000 a metric ton from \$1,500 25 years ago.

But while China is forecast to remain the largest market for copper into the next decade and beyond, analysts expect other demand and price influences to increasingly come into play.

Changing regional policies, infrastructure cycles and geopolitical shifts are likely to mean producers, consumers, traders and investors need to adapt to a market that has many different drivers.

"China will reduce its rate of copper consumption and stockpiling. We are going back to old-fashioned drivers of copper, which is basically replacement cycles outside China," said Panmure Liberum analyst Tom Price.

The impact has yet to be seen, but moves by the U.S. and other countries to promote local manufacturing also mean China's export machine and manufacturing activity is expected to slow and weigh on its demand for refined copper, which is estimated at around 15 million tons this year.

Meanwhile, the data centres needed to support AI technology and upgrades to power grid infrastructure mean copper demand growth outside China will become the driving force for prices.

"China has built its infrastructure, including its power distribution grid. Its activity will drift to a lower level to match (its) requirement," said Price, who forecasts Chinese demand will be 6% lower in 2031 than in 2026.

Price predicts China will account for 52% of global consumption of primary copper, at

around 27 million tons, in 2031 compared with 57% in 2026.

And he expects U.S. copper demand of 2.2 million tons in 2031, up nearly 50% from 2026, while for India, he forecasts copper demand to rise above 1 million tons, representing a rise of more than 30%.

**'INCREASING PUSHBACK BY COUNTRIES IN THE WEST'**

Analysts also expect U.S. President Donald Trump's imposition of 50% tariffs on copper pipes and wiring to help encourage local production.

For China, the likely outcome is the loss of a major market for its exports of copper pipe. Trade Data Monitor ranks the U.S. as China's fourth biggest market for the product.

Last year, it imported 14.4 million tons of copper tubes and pipes directly from China and in the first seven months of this year these totalled some eight million tons, TDM data shows, underlining the potential loss of a major market for Beijing.

"China's output of manufactured goods, particularly for export, is likely to slow down to some extent as a function of increasing pushback by countries in the West," said Duncan Hobbs, research director at Concord Resources.

Those exports will include copper wire used for power grid infrastructure. In its last network-infrastructure review a decade ago, the U.S. Department of Energy found 70% of U.S. transmission lines were more than 25 years old.

Meanwhile, India is expanding its transmission infrastructure to support its goal of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based capacity by 2030.

And in Asia, excluding China, consultancy Benchmark Mineral Intelligence expects copper demand to jump 25% to more than 9.2 million tons between 2025 and 2030.



▲ A coil of copper rod sits on the production line for copper flat wire at the Wellascent factory in Ganzhou, Jiangxi province, China.

For electric infrastructure which includes power grids and generation, data centres and telecoms, BMI expects demand to rise 35% to 2.2 million tons.

BMI's forecasts for China are 4% and 11% respectively.

**MODERNISING INFRASTRUCTURE**

Grid improvements in the West mainly mean modernising infrastructure. This will be slow and steady and not as copper intensive as building from scratch, as China has been doing.

Robert Edwards, principal analyst at metals consultancy CRU has expected China's

influence on the copper market to wane for some years. But this did not materialise because of Chinese investment in electric vehicles, renewables and its power grid.

CRU expects China's consumption of global mined and recycled copper consumption to fall to 57% of 31.36 million tons in 2030, from 59% of 27.62 million tons this year.

"Demand growth potential in China is limited. You should see more growth in the rest of the world," said Edwards.

(Reuters)

## "Instagram pushes 'eating-disorder adjacent' content to vulnerable teens"

META researchers found that teens who report that Instagram regularly made them feel bad about their bodies saw significantly more "eating disorder adjacent content" than those who did not, according to an internal document reviewed by Reuters.

The posts shown to those users featured "prominent display" of chest, buttocks, or thighs, "explicit judgement" about body types and "content related to disordered eating and/or negative body image."

While such material is not banned on Instagram, the researchers noted that parents, teens and outside experts have told Meta they believe it is potentially harmful to young users.

Meta surveyed 1,149 teens over the course of the 2023-2024 academic year about whether and how often they felt bad about their bodies after using Instagram. Then they manually sampled the content those users saw on the platform over a three-month period.

The study showed that for the 223 teens who often felt bad about their bodies after viewing Instagram, "eating disorder adjacent content" made up 10.5% of what they saw on the platform. Among the other teens in the study, such content accounted for only 3.3% of what they saw.

"Teens who reported frequent body dissatisfaction after viewing posts on Instagram... saw about three times more body-focused/



▲ Teenagers pose for a photo while holding smartphones in front of a Instagram logo in this illustration.

ED-adjacent content than other teens," the authors wrote, referring to eating disorders, according to a summary of the research reviewed exclusively by Reuters.

In addition to seeing more eating disorder-adjacent content, researchers found, the teens who reported the most negative feelings about themselves saw more provocative content more broadly, content Meta classifies as "mature themes," "Risky behavior," "Harm & Cruelty" and "Suffering." Cumulatively, such content accounted for 27% of what those teens saw on the platform, compared with 13.6% among their peers who hadn't reported negative feelings.

**META RESEARCHERS EXPRESSED CONCERN**

The researchers stressed that their findings did not prove that Instagram was making users feel worse about their bodies. "It is not possible to establish the causal direction of these findings," they wrote, noting

the possibility that teens who felt bad about themselves could be actively seeking out that material.

The Instagram research, a redacted replica of which is published here and has not been previously reported, demonstrated that Instagram exposed teens who "report frequently experiencing body dissatisfaction" to high doses of content that Meta's own advisors "have expressed support for limiting," the writup said.

In a statement, Meta spokesperson Andy Stone said the document reviewed by Reuters demonstrates Meta's commitment to understanding and improving its products.

"This research is further proof we remain committed to understanding young people's experiences and using those insights to build safer, more supportive platforms for teens," Stone said, noting the company's recent announcement that it would attempt to show minors content in-line with PG-13 movie standards.

In the study, Meta said that its existing screening tools - which were designed to catch violations of platform rules - were incapable of detecting 98.5% of the "sensitive" content that the company believes might not have been appropriate for teens.

The finding was "not necessarily surprising," the researchers wrote, because Meta had only recently begun work on building an algorithm to detect the potentially harmful content they were examining. (Reuters)



# US steps up diplomacy after Gaza truce shaken

U.S. envoys met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday aiming to corral Israel and Hamas to get the Gaza ceasefire plan back on track after an explosion of violence over the weekend that threatened to derail the week-old truce.

Israel and Hamas have both recommitted to the ceasefire plan pushed by U.S. President Donald Trump since Sunday's flare-up in which a Palestinian attack that killed two soldiers prompted an Israeli bombardment killing at least 28 people in Gaza.

However, with even the first stages of the truce shaken by repeated flashes of violence, including on Monday, it is far from clear whether the U.S. will be able to keep pressure on the two sides and maintain momentum to end the conflict.

## TALKS ON NEXT PHASE OF CEASEFIRE PLAN

The U.S. envoys, Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, were expected to push to shore up the truce and then start talks on the next, more difficult, phase of the 20-step plan during their visit.

U.S. Vice President JD Vance was also due to visit Israel on Tuesday, with Netanyahu saying the pair would discuss regional challenges and opportunities.

High-level U.S. diplomacy in the region, with talks also due later on Monday with Hamas in Egypt, underscores the importance of cementing the ceasefire to Trump, who last week proclaimed "the historic dawn of a new Middle East".

Trump said the ceasefire he brokered was still in place. Hamas leadership, he said, may not be involved in the violations. "We think maybe the leadership isn't involved in that," he told reporters aboard Air Force One.

Israel is unlikely to publicise any progress in the talks until the remains of more hostages are returned, and it believes Hamas could hand over up to six more bodies immediately out of the 16 still in Gaza. Other bodies may be hard to recover because of destruction in the enclave.

Hamas said it would hand over the body of



▲ Smoke rises following an Israeli strike in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip.

another hostage later on Monday.

Egypt will host talks in Cairo on Monday with Khalil Al-Hayya, Hamas' exiled Gaza chief, over ways to follow up on implementing the ceasefire, the group said in a statement.

A Palestinian official close to the talks said the group's delegation would discuss ways to push forward the formation of a technocratic body to run Gaza without Hamas representation.

Hamas and other allied factions reject any

foreign administration of Gaza, as envisaged in the Trump plan and has so far resisted calls to lay down arms, which may complicate implementation of the deal.

## RESIDENTS FEAR MORE OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE

Both Israel and Hamas have said they remain committed to the ceasefire after Sunday's violence.

Israel said it launched strikes across the enclave in response to a Palestinian attack that killed two soldiers operating within the

agreed deployment line in Rafah in southern Gaza.

"Israel will not accept any violations of the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip," an Israeli government spokesman said on Monday, repeating that Hamas could have no future role inside Gaza and would be disarmed.

Hamas' armed wing, which has refused to commit to disarmament under the plan, said it was unaware of clashes in Rafah and had not been in contact with groups there since March.

Hamas has detailed what it calls a series of violations by Israel that it says killed 46 people and stopped essential supplies from reaching the enclave.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said any Hamas militants in areas of Gaza still under Israeli control must leave immediately and anyone remaining beyond the yellow line would be targeted without warning.

Despite an earlier threat to withhold supplies from Gaza over the brief truce breakdown, an Israeli security official said aid convoys would continue to enter the enclave.

With the truce still uncertain, Gaza residents fear more violence.

"I felt my heart dropping to the ground, I felt the ceasefire collapsed," said Abu Abdallah, a Gaza City businessman displaced in the central Gaza Strip.

"What happened yesterday made people go crazy to buy food, greedy merchants hiked the prices. The deal looks so fragile," he told Reuters via a chat app.

(Reuters)

# France scrambles to protect museums after Louvre heist

FRANCE will review the protection of cultural sites across the country and beef up security if needed, officials said on Monday as a manhunt was under way for the four people who staged an audacious daylight robbery at the Louvre museum.

The thieves broke into the Louvre using a crane to smash an upstairs window, then stole priceless objects from an area that houses the French crown jewels before escaping on motorbikes.

The theft, which several newspapers called "heist of the century", grabbed headlines globally. The museum, which shut after the robbery on Sunday morning, remained closed on Monday.

## EMERGENCY MEETING OVER SECURITY

The break-in raised awkward questions about security at the museum, which is home to art works such as the Mona Lisa and which welcomed 8.7 million visitors in 2024.

Justice Minister Gerard Darmanin said the theft had cast France in a "deplorable" light. Opposition politicians criticised the government for what they branded a national humiliation at a time when the country is already hit by a deep political crisis.

"What is certain is that we failed," Darmanin told France Inter radio. "Someone was capable of putting in a crane truck in the open in the streets of Paris, to have people walk up for a couple of minutes and take priceless jewels and give France a deplorable image."

The Culture and Interior Ministers held an emergency meeting on Monday and agreed to ask senior officials across France "to immediately assess the existing security measures already in place around cultural institutions, and to strengthen them if necessary", the Interior Ministry said.

"For too long we have looked into the security of visitors but not the security of art works," Culture Minister Rachida Dati told M6TV, adding that she was hoping to put in place shortcuts to public procurement rules to speed up security enhancements in museums.

## MANHUNT UNDER WAY

The robbery took between six and seven minutes and was carried out by four people who were unarmed but who threatened the guards with angle grinders, Paris prosecutor Laure Beccau said on Sunday.

The probe has been entrusted to a specialist police unit that has a high success rate in cracking high-profile robberies, Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said on Sunday.

## NATIONAL HUMILIATION?

Darmanin said the robbers, who are still on the run, would eventually be found. But that did not quell the dismay over the theft.

This heist "is an unbearable humiliation for our country. How far will the disintegration of the state go?", Jordan Bardella, leader of the far-right National Rally party, said on X.

Francois-Xavier Bellamy, of the conservative Republicans party, called it "a symptom of a country that cannot protect its heritage".



▲ A placard which reads "The Louvre Museum will be closed today for exceptional reasons" is seen near the glass Pyramid of the Louvre Museum as the museum remains closed the day after a spectacular jewel heist by thieves who broke into the landmark by using a crane and smashing an upstairs window, stealing priceless jewelry from an area that houses the French crown jewels before escaping on motorbikes, in Paris.

The stolen jewellery included a tiara from the jewellery set of Queen Marie-Amélie and Queen Hortense, from the early 19th century, as well as an earring, part of a pair from the sapphire jewellery set of the same queens.

The crown of Empress Eugenie was found outside the museum. The thieves apparently dropped the piece, made of gold, emeralds and diamonds, as they made their getaway.

## LOUVRE CLOSED TO VISITORS

Meanwhile the museum, which had been expected to reopen on Monday, remained closed.

"I bought my entries (tickets) more than

one month ago, so it's, like, kind of sad," said Samuel Joya, a 28-year-old tourist from Colombia.

Maryanne Day, a U.S. visitor, said she was shocked by the heist, saying "it feels like a museum like this would have the security that would stop something like that".

Christopher Marinello, founder of Art Recovery International, an organisation specialising in the recovery of stolen art, said most museums complained they did not have enough funding for security.

"The Louvre is one of the most well funded museums in the world.

(Reuters)



# Lady Sphesh joins SA big names for Ladysmith show

By Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

ESWATINI music star Lady Sphesh is gearing up to headline the highly anticipated Menzi Homecoming Festival in Ladysmith, South Africa.

The event is set to be held on November 29, 2025, at Settlers Park Stadium, featuring an impressive lineup of South African heavyweights, including Khuzani, Mthandeni SK, Big Zulu, uGatsheni, uMafikizolo, Bahubhe, and Limit, among others. For Lady Sphesh, this opportunity marks a significant milestone in her burgeoning career. Expressing her excitement, she shared that performing at such a prestigious event is a testament to her growth as an artist.

She described the moment as deeply meaningful, especially given the challenges of securing platforms in foreign countries. "I'm feeling happy because it shows growth, and it's proof that I'm slowly becoming one of them," she said. "It's not easy to get platforms like this, especially in foreign countries, so this moment means a lot. It tells me that the hard work is starting to pay off."

Sharing the stage with some of the biggest names in South African music is a dream come true for Lady Sphesh. She reflected on the honour and inspiration she draws from performing alongside artists she has long admired. "These are artists I've looked up to, and now to share the same stage with them. It's humbling and empowering at the same time," she revealed.

Fans attending the Menzi Homecoming Festival can expect an electrifying performance from Lady Sphesh. Known for her dynamic stage presence and infectious energy, she promises to deliver a show that



▲ Lady Sphesh.

is nothing short of spectacular. "People can expect a fiery and energetic set as always. I bring my full self to the stage every time. It's going to be a vibe.

## Passionate

It's going to be lit, and it's going to be 100 per cent Lady Sphesh," she assured.

In a passionate call to action, Lady Sphesh urged music lovers to seize the chance to

be part of this cultural extravaganza. She emphasised that the festival is more than just a concert, it's an immersive experience that celebrates heritage and unity. "To everyone out there, do not miss this. This is more than a show. It's an experience. Come through, support the culture, and witness history being made. Let's turn up together," she encouraged.

## Celumusa, Wassabee for Swazi Plaza Nights

THE vibrant Mbabane is set to come alive once again as two of the country's most dynamic artists, vocalist Celumusa and Hip Hop DJ Wassabee, prepare to headline the highly anticipated Swazi Plaza Nights event.

Scheduled for October 24, 2025, at the Food Court in Swazi Plaza, Mbabane, this 26th edition promises an evening filled with soulful music, electrifying beats, and a celebration of local talent.

Swazi Plaza took to social media to announce the event, highlighting the unique blend of artistry and entertainment that attendees can expect. "Swazi Plaza Nights, 26th Edition! This Friday, 24 October, the stage lights up at the Food Court, Corporate Place, from 6:30 pm with another unforgettable evening of local artistry, great food, and good vibes," the announcement read.

Celumusa, renowned for his soulful Afro Pop and Afro Soul sound, is the voice behind hits like "Sondzela" and "Tears." His

smooth vocals paired with heartfelt guitar melodies have earned him a revered spot on stages such as the MTN Bushfire Festival and the Farmer's Market. His music, deeply rooted in emotion and cultural expression, is expected to captivate the audience and provide a powerful live experience.

Joining him is Wassabee, a trailblazing figure in Eswatini's hip hop scene. As a DJ and producer, Wassabee has carved out a distinct niche with her innovative sound and energetic performances. Fresh off the release of her latest single "For the Kulture Remix," which boldly celebrates Eswatini's vibrant hip hop community and features some of the country's most talented voices, she is poised to deliver a set that will electrify the crowd and showcase the evolving landscape of local hip hop.

The event offers more than just music; it is a cultural gathering that combines live entertainment with food and drinks, all set against the backdrop of the city's night lights. Best of all, entry to Swazi Plaza Nights is free, making it accessible to a wide audience eager to engage with Eswatini's flourishing arts scene.



▲ Lusanda Beja.

## Lusanda Beja to minister at Bongekile's live recording

GOSPEL music enthusiasts are gearing up for a remarkable event as celebrated gospel star Lusanda Beja prepares to feature in the live recording of Bongekile Nxumalo's debut album, 'In Spirit and In Truth.'

Set to take place on December 6, 2025, at the TLC Events Centre, this event promises to be a profound celebration of faith, ministry, and heartfelt worship, beginning at 4 pm. Bongekile Nxumalo, a gospel musician known for her inspiring hit song 'Uthando,' is poised to make a significant mark with this live recording.

In a recent interview, she shared the driving force behind the album and event, emphasising the importance of honouring the ministry entrusted to her. "The main aim is appreciating the ministry God has placed in my life," Nxumalo said with conviction. Her inspiration draws heavily from the Parable of the Talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**), which teaches the value of faithfulness and obedience in serving God. Nxumalo expressed her heartfelt prayer that her efforts will be met with divine approval: "I pray that when Christ comes back, He says, 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' for being obedient to His call." This biblical foundation sets the tone for the album's message and the live recording experience.

## Challenge

The title In Spirit and In Truth is a direct reference to **John 4:23**, where Jesus speaks about worshipping God authentically and sincerely. Nxumalo explained that the album is a "cry for living purely even when no one sees us," highlighting the challenge of maintaining holiness in the often demanding and competitive music industry. "It's encouraging that we live a holy life even in the music industry where holiness matters more than talent," she noted.

Attendees of the live recording can expect an atmosphere charged with spirit-filled worship and praise, creating a communal space where truth and unity prevail. Nxumalo assured that the songs will uplift hearts and glorify God, urging everyone to come with an expectant heart ready to receive. "I encourage that they come expectant from God," she said.

The event is open to all, regardless of faith background, reflecting Nxumalo's inclusive vision. Tickets are currently on sale, with general tickets set at E200, while VIP tickets sell for E400. Given the anticipated demand, Nxumalo stressed the urgency of securing tickets early. "Everyone is invited, saved or not, and tickets are already available. I must emphasise that they are very limited, so run while you still can get them," she urged.



► Wassabee and Celumusa.



# Gifted Kosie for Uganda show

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini  
siphesihled@rubiconmedia.group

ESWATINI'S star female DJ Gifted Kosie is set to headline the highly anticipated 'Shakedown Saturday' event in Uganda.

The event is set to be held on October 25, 2025. This international platform marks a significant milestone in her career, showcasing her talent on a broader stage and highlighting Eswatini's vibrant music culture to a diverse audience.

In a recent interview, Gifted Kosie expressed deep appreciation and excitement about the opportunity to perform internationally. She shared, "I feel so appreciative and honoured because I get a chance to connect with diverse cultures and gain new perspectives."

International gigs hold a special place in Gifted Kosie's journey as a professional DJ. She explained that such experiences are crucial for her personal growth, stating that international exposure "builds my confidence, leading me to be a more resilient DJ." She emphasised how these opportunities not only expand her fan base but also inspire fresh artistic ideas, fueling her ambition to "build a sustainable and lasting international presence." This vision reflects her commitment to evolving as an artist while representing her roots on the global stage.

Representing Eswatini with pride is a responsibility Gifted Kosie embraces wholeheartedly. She promised to deliver a performance that is both energetic and memorable, aiming to leave audiences with a powerful impression of her music and culture. "On stage, I promise to deliver a high-energy and memorable experience that leaves audiences with a great impression of



▲ Gifted Kosie.

the music and culture," she affirmed. Beyond the performance, she is equally dedicated to professionalism and embodying the values of her homeland.

"Off stage, I will maintain professionalism, embodying the best qualities of the country's passion, resilience, and creativity," she added.

Gifted Kosie's participation in 'Shakedown Saturday' not only elevates her own career but also shines a spotlight on Eswatini's growing influence in the regional and international music scenes. Her journey from local stages to international platforms serves as an inspiration to many aspiring artists in her country.

## Da Mabusa to dazzle Espinho Lounge

DA Mabusa, one of South Africa's most dynamic and influential musical talents, is set to perform at the Espinho Lounge in Siteki on October 24, 2025.

This highly anticipated event promises to be a landmark night in the local entertainment calendar, drawing fans eager to experience the electrifying energy and soulful sounds that have made Da Mabusa a household name. The announcement, made via the Espinho Lounge's social media channels, has already generated significant buzz.

The venue described the upcoming show as more than just a party, but a "concert-level experience" featuring a heavyweight lineup of DJs alongside Da Mabusa's live performance. The event will kick off at 6 pm and continue late into the night, offering attendees a full evening of music and celebration. Fans are encouraged to secure presale tickets priced at E50, with gate tickets available for E80. The Espinho Lounge event will also showcase the talents of DJs Njebza, Maye, and Moon-Elo.

Da Mabusa, born Johan Sifiso Sithebe in Kwamhlanga, Mpumalanga, has carved out an impressive career since his early

days in a clap and tap choir in 2007. His breakthrough came in 2022 with the release of "Umama Owangizalayo," a single that quickly achieved triple gold status and established him as a powerful independent artist in the South African music scene. This success was followed by the EP "Izipho" and the single "Syke," further solidifying his presence.

### Collaborations

Among his most celebrated tracks are the "Umama Owangizalayo 2.0 Piano Remix" and "Ithuba," both of which have earned platinum sales. His collaborations reflect his versatility and wide appeal, featuring partnerships with prominent South African artists such as Shebeshxt, Lungelo Hlongwane, Mduduzi Ncube, and Leon Lee, as well as international stars Nutty O and Rayvanny. Sharing stages with acclaimed performers like Makhadzi and Nkosazana Daughter has further enhanced his reputation as a compelling and energetic live act.



◀ Da Mabusa.



▲ Seluleko Ndlangamandla.

## Seluleko added to Mount Zion lineup

THE Mount Zion Experience, one of Eswatini's most anticipated gospel music events, is set to light up the Metropolitan Evangelical Church on October 24, 2025, with an impressive roster of celebrated artists, including the beloved Seluleko Ndlangamandla.

Musician Seluleko Ndlangamandla, a prominent figure in Eswatini's gospel music landscape, has been confirmed as part of the star-studded lineup, adding significant excitement to the event. Known for his soulful voice and inspiring messages, Seluleko's participation is expected to elevate the spiritual atmosphere and connect deeply with attendees. The event kicks off at 7 pm and is expected to continue late into the night, offering a rich tapestry of worship experiences.

Alongside Seluleko, the lineup features other gospel luminaries such as Takie Ndou, Sphiwo Ndoni, Shekinah Motsa, Mzayoni, Zamar Mabuza, and Simiso Simelane. Each artist brings a unique style and message, promising a diverse and enriching evening that caters to a wide range of gospel music lovers.

### Celebration

The Mount Zion Experience is more than just a concert; it is a celebration of faith designed to unite believers from all walks of life. The event's theme, 'All White, All Night,' underscores a commitment to purity and spiritual enlightenment. Attendees are encouraged to wear white attire, symbolising unity and devotion, which is expected to create a visually stunning and spiritually uplifting environment.

Ticket pricing is structured to accommodate various preferences and budgets. Presale tickets are available for E150, offering an affordable way for many to participate. Tickets purchased at the gate will be priced at E200, while VIP tickets, costing E400, provide enhanced experience with additional perks for those seeking a more exclusive evening.

Sphiwo Ndoni, the event's director and a respected voice in Eswatini's gospel community, shared his excitement about the upcoming gathering. "I am thrilled to announce the Mount Zion Experience," Ndoni said. "It's not just an event; it's a spiritual journey that we will embark on together. I invite everyone to come and experience the power of worship in a vibrant and uplifting atmosphere."



# DJ Maphorisa waxes court lyrics against Sars over tax bill

A legal battle has broken out between DJ Maphorisa and the South African Revenue Service (Sars) over a R3.3-million tax bill, which the award-winning musician is disputing.

Sunday World can exclusively reveal that Maphorisa, born Themba Sunnyboy Sekowe, has dragged Sars to the South African Tax Court at Megawatt Park, Johannesburg to appeal against the bill after the two parties failed to reach a settlement of their imbroglio.

According to the court papers, which Sunday World has seen, Sars informed Maphorisa on July 13, 2018, that it intended to conduct an income tax audit of his books because he had not submitted his tax returns.

It asked him to provide it with his IRP5/IT3 certificates, investment income certificate and bank statements.

The papers stated Maphorisa explained at the pre-trial conference that the tax returns were submitted on time after the audit commenced.

The papers also state that Maphorisa further alleged that he provided reasons why the returns were not submitted timeously, ostensibly, due to his mental ill-health.

After the assessment, the taxman questioned whether the funds, which were paid into his FNB account, were part of his gross income.

Maphorisa disputed the assessment and contended that he had provided the receiver of revenue with his Standard Bank account details, bank statements and invoices relevant for the determination of his gross income.

Using the information extracted from Maphorisa's FNB bank statements, Sars issued an audit finding in respect of the tax years on November 14, 2018.

Sars concluded after its assessment that Maphorisa intentionally evaded tax and imposed 200% penalties on his debts.

"The respondent has proven the facts relied upon to impose the USP (underestimated penalties) at

the rate of 200% on the basis that the appellant's conduct is correctly classified as intentional tax evasion," read the papers.

"Due to the appellant's failure to respond to the audit findings, the respondent used and applied the information that was readily available to issue the letter of finalisation of audit on 20 December 2018", read the papers.

Sars said it raised estimated assessments, which in total amount to more than R3.3-million.

Afterwards, Maphorisa lodged his objections on May 23, 2022, in respect of the 2017 tax year and on July 11, 2022, regarding the 2015 to 2016 tax years.

He then informed Sars of his intention to object to the assessment, but Sars disallowed the objections on July 1, 2022, and on September 1, 2022, respectively.

Maphorisa lodged his notice of appeal on September 6, 2022, in response to the disallowance of the objections. (Sunday World)

## Blac Chyna sparks reunion rumours with Rob Kardashian

ANGELA White, formerly known as Blac Chyna, has sparked rumours about a possible reunion with her ex-fiancé, Rob Kardashian, eight years after calling off their engagement.

The model and rapper had fans turning heads after she tagged her ex-fiancé on her recent Instagram post. S

he posted a series of pictures, dressed in an all-white outfit while posing by a Ferrari on the side of the road.

The reality star tagged Kardashian and captioned the post: "This is love forever @robkardashianofficial".

Kardashian subtly reacted to the post by liking it, which sent fans into immediate speculation about the nature of their relationship.

The pair got engaged in 2016, the same year they welcomed their daughter Dream. Their relationship ended in 2017 after a public split that included cheat-

ing allegations, leaked nude pictures and legal battles.

According to reports, the "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" star leaked explicit nude pictures of the "Can't See Me" rapper after their breakup and accused her of cheating on him with multiple men.

White also obtained a restraining order against Kardashian and accused him of being physically abusive.

She later sued Kardashian's mother, Kris Jenner, and his sisters Kim Kardashian, Khloe Kardashian and Kylie Jenner for defamation, seeking over 100 million dollars (over 1 billion rand) in damages.

The model's lawsuit claimed that her ex-fiancé's family used their influence to get her E! reality show with Rob, "Rob & Chyna", cancelled. The show aired for just one season in 2016, and White believed the Kardashians were to blame for it not returning.

(IOL)



▲ A legal battle has broken out between DJ Maphorisa and the South African Revenue Service.



▲ Angela White, formerly known as Blac Chyna.

# Brandy walks off stage mid-performance

AFTER a smooth opening night in Cincinnati, things took a turn during the second stop of Brandy and Monica's "The Boy Is Mine" tour in Chicago, where Brandy abruptly walked off stage mid-performance.

The tour, which began on October 16, has been one of R&B's most talked-about events this season.

Brandy and Monica launched it alongside Kelly Rowland and Muni Long, delivering not only strong vocals but bold fashion moments and nostalgic performances that had fans raving online.

However, just a day after the tour's successful debut, the Chicago show left fans unhappy and shocked.

While performing at the United Center on Saturday night, Brandy appeared frustrated

with sound issues before walking off stage mid-song.

She walked off and went straight to the sound crew in an attempt to fix the sound issue that persisted during her performance.

"Give me one second y'all, I gotta get my..." she said to the audience while back-stage. The songstress never returned, leaving Monica to close out the show alone.

The pair's signature duet, "The Boy Is Mine", which had been a highlight of the tour's first night, was not part of the set, according to attendees. Fans quickly took to social media to share their confusion and disappointment.

"I went to the Chicago Boy Is Mine Tour stop. Brandy walked off stage & said sum like 'give me a sec y'all.' We never saw her again," tweeted one concertgoer, @Phrozenthunda.

"Imagine going to The Boy Is Mine Tour and they never play the song.

Brandy walked off mid-set, cut her mic mid-sentence, and never came back," said @csandreas.

Following the incident, Brandy released a statement addressing what happened. In her note to fans, she explained that she experienced dehydration and felt faint during the show.

"After weeks of nonstop rehearsals, last night I experienced de-

hydration and feelings of wanting to faint.

Everyone involved agreed that prioritising my well-being was of the utmost importance," she wrote.

"I still made the decision to try and return and give it my all despite not feeling ok. With having to make adjustments and the show being very technical, unfortunately, it was impossible to fully connect sonically with the production. I'm deeply grateful to my sister Monica for stepping up with such grace and professionalism," she added.

(IOL)



▲ Singer Brandy.



SOME ingredients gain popularity for treating certain skin issues because they often work.

However, they may not be for everyone. When you're working on your skin, chances are you're following the popular suggestions for solving your particular skin issue, like a salicylic acid treatment for acne or a vitamin C serum for dullness.

After all, what works for hundreds must work for you... right? If only skin transformations were that simple.

When you're faced with a skin care solution that just isn't solving your problem or is actually making your skin worse, it can be not only frustrating but also confusing. There's never only one answer. No one-size-fits-all skin care solution.

Let's look at some of the most popular reasons your skin care routine might not be working, plus alternatives you can try to get your skin issues back under control.

**Your routine is inconsistent**

Skin care products work best when used daily as part of a routine. Some research shows that stopping a long-term moisturizer can cause excessive dryness, although the skin does bounce back within a month.

The American Academy of Dermatology Association (AAD) also recommends applying products in a certain order. For example, you can try applying moisturizer or sunscreen after any prescription skin medications or treatments.

For the best results, start by cleansing, then medicate, moisturize, and leave makeup for last.

**Your product could be expired**

If a product has been sitting on the shelf too long, it can definitely make it less effective and less likely to deliver the results you're looking for.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), cosmetics can degrade over time due to several reasons. For example, products like emulsions can break down as the water and oil separate.

"Consumer skin products should undergo stability and efficacy tests," says Dr. Brundha Balaraman, board certified dermatologist and founder of the SkinTRUST Society.

"Since these tests aren't mandatory, and nonprescription cosmetics aren't approved by the FDA, there's really no way for American consumers to know how long a product will last," Dr. Balaraman says.

The FDA notes that expiration dates for cosmetics are "rules of thumb," and some products should be thrown out within weeks of opening. Mascara, for instance, can easily become exposed to microbes and bacteria, so you should replace it every 3 months.

In general, "all natural" skin care products may contain plant-based ingredients that make bacterial growth more likely, so it's best not to leave them sitting on your shelf for too long.

**You're storing your products in the sun or a humid area**

According to Dr. Debra Jaliman, a dermatologist based in New York City, where you're keeping your products matters.

"Storing your products in your bathroom where the temperature can get very high due to hot showers may change the effectiveness of some ingredients," Dr. Jaliman explains.

"Extreme ambient temperatures may



significantly affect product stability and efficacy," Dr. Balaraman says. This means it can make your product react, look, feel, and even work differently.

"For example, sunscreen products that are overheated in cars may no longer be effective against ultraviolet radiation, or may cause skin irritation," Dr. Balaraman says.

The FDA notes that exposure to sunlight might cause cosmetics to change color and texture, and moisture can increase the risk of bacterial contamination.

You might want to store your products the way you store food: in a mini beauty fridge.

**Humidity, cold, and sun can throw off your routine**

When the weather changes, so does your skin care routine. This can lead to less consistent use of products.

For example, in the hot summer months, the FDA suggests reapplying sunscreen every 2 hours. This can make it harder to

layer other products or keep makeup in place.

During colder months, on the other hand, dry winter air can leave your skin parched. This can lead you to reach for heavier moisturizers, shifting the balance of products you typically apply.

Weather can be unpredictable, but a temporary change in your skin care regimen probably won't stop you from getting back on track later.

**The product is of low quality**

"Low quality ingredients can cause a product not to work as well," says Dr. Tsippora Shainhouse, a board certified dermatologist in Los Angeles. Not all skin care products are created equal, and sometimes we see that reflected in prices.

Dr. Shainhouse refers to inferior ingredients, subpar formulations, unstable molecules, or packaging as potential areas for quality checks. For example, open-jar packaging can let a lot of oxygen in, causing destabilization in active ingredients.

If you've eliminated any potential issues with the product, then chances are it's the ingredients.

**Your product doesn't have enough active ingredients**

"It may be the proper ingredient, but the concentration is so low that by the time some of it reaches the target area in the skin, there's not enough to have a qualifiable or quantifiable effect on the skin," says Dr. Shainhouse.

Before you chalk up an ingredient as ineffective for your skin, search for the ingredient list of your product. If the active ingredient isn't in the top five, there's probably not a high enough concentration to see results.

**You have too many (or too few) products**

So, how much is too much? Or too few? This depends largely on the products and how you're using them.



According to the AAD, using too many products can irritate your skin. That’s especially true for pro-aging remedies, which can actually make your skin look older if you use too many.

Some skin care products are quite powerful, and using too much can have negative effects. If niacinamide, for example, is pilling on your skin, use less and give it a few minutes to absorb after application. But if it’s causing changes in skin color or irritation, consider something else entirely.

The same is true with some prescription retinoids for acne. If you’re living with skin color changes or irritation, check in with your dermatologist. They might recommend using less of this product.

But sometimes it’s a good idea to use products in combination. Hyaluronic acid, which is usually touted as a product that helps retain moisture, can, in some cases, dry out the skin. So, it may work better when combined with a moisturizer.

#### You’re not getting the right information

If your skin care routine falls short of your expectations, it might not be your fault. It could be the information you’re relying on.

There are several skin care sources online, many published by people who lack the training or credentials to give sound advice.

Consider speaking with a dermatologist, especially if you have a skin condition like rosacea that requires special care.

#### Alternative products to try

If retinol is too intense for your skin, try bakuchiol, a natural alternative. Bakuchiol “imitates retinol to a degree because of its pro-aging properties, but it’s all-natural, unlike retinol,” Dr. Jaliman says.

Bakuchiol extract is also a good alternative to niacinamide. You can also try rosehip seed oil or a face acid. Since niacinamide can treat many conditions, your replacement depends on your goals.

Salicylic acid is a common acne treatment, but not everyone sees results. Many alternative ingredients may work for acne, such as:

- ▶ face acids
- ▶ retinol
- ▶ zinc
- ▶ sulfur
- ▶ tea tree oil

You may even want to try at-home blue light therapy. However, if your acne is chronic and cystic, Dr. Jaliman recommends consulting a dermatologist. They can prescribe a stronger treatment, such as a prescription topical or antibiotic, to get your acne under control.

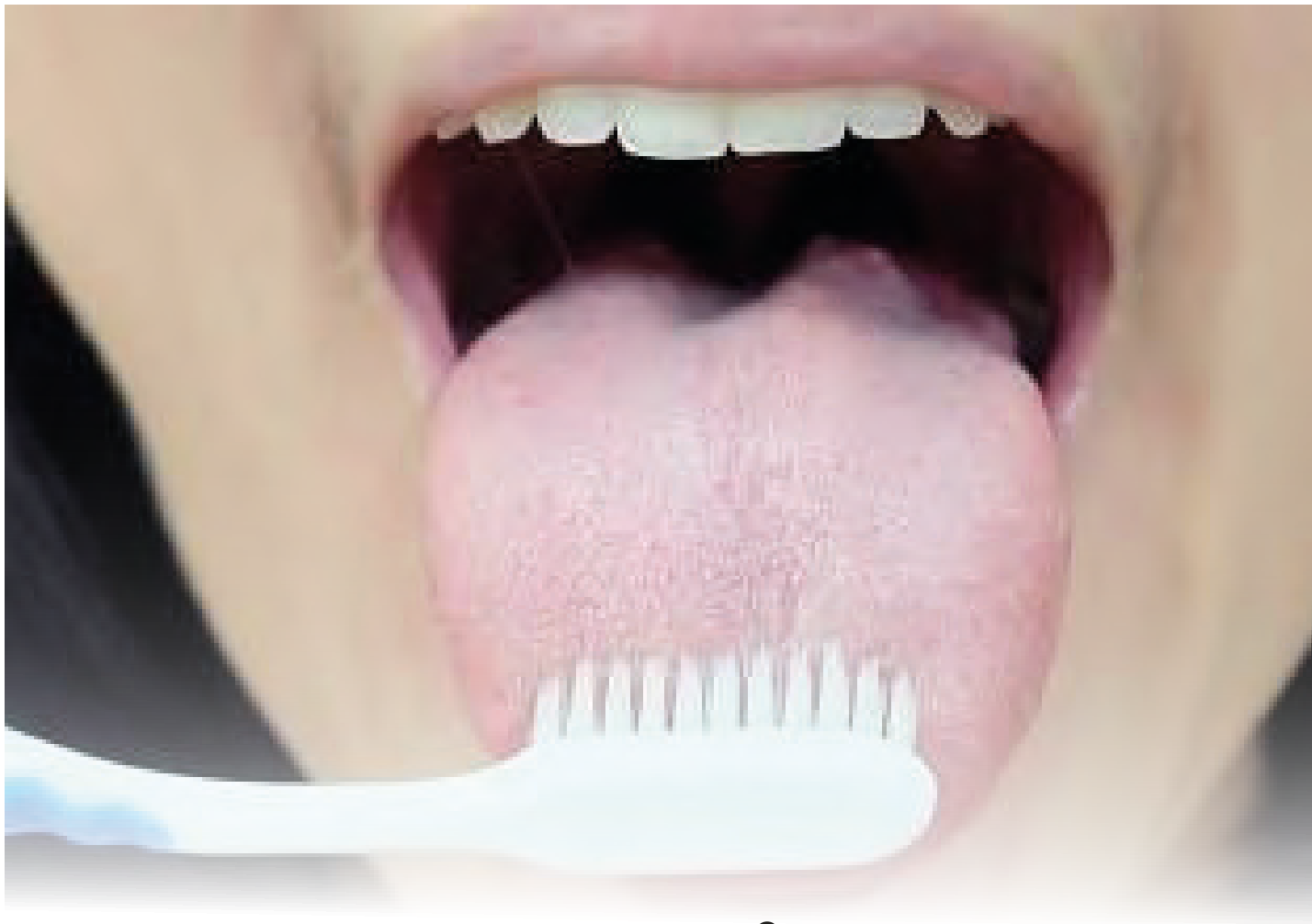
If you have a prescription for your skin and it’s not working, consider speaking with a doctor about making changes.

#### Takeaway

If your skin care routine is falling short, don’t worry. Making some small tweaks, like replacing products with alternatives and storing them properly, can help get things back on track.

If you continue to have skin issues, consider consulting a dermatologist for more personalized advice.

#### Healthline



# Why brushing your tongue is important

**YOU brush and floss twice a day, but you could be doing your mouth a disservice if you aren’t also attacking the bacteria living on your tongue.**

Whether it’s to fight bad breath or just for good dental health, cleaning your tongue is important, dentists say.

#### Your tongue is covered with bacteria

Coffee turns it brown, red wine turns it red. The truth is, your tongue is just as much of a target for bacteria as your teeth are, even if it is not at risk for developing cavities itself.

“Bacteria will accumulate greatly in the areas of the tongue between the taste buds and other tongue structures,” says John D. Kling, DDS, of Alexandria, Virginia. “It’s not smooth. There are crevices and elevations all over the tongue, and the bacteria will hide in these areas unless it is removed.”

#### Rinsing won’t work

So, what is this buildup? It’s not just harmless saliva, says Kling. It’s a biofilm, or a group of microorganisms, that stick together on the surface of the tongue. And unfortunately, getting rid of it isn’t as simple as drinking water or using mouthwash.

“It’s difficult to kill the bacteria in the biofilm because, for example, when mouth rinses are used, only the outer cells of the biofilm are destroyed,” says Kling. “The cells beneath the surface still thrive.”

These bacteria can lead to bad breath and even tooth damage. Because of this, it’s necessary to physically remove the bacteria



by brushing or cleaning.

#### How to clean your tongue

Kling says you should brush your tongue every time you brush your teeth. It’s pretty simple:

- ▶ brush back and forth
- ▶ brush side to side
- ▶ rinse your mouth with water
- ▶ Be careful not to over brush, though.

You don’t want to break the skin!

Some people prefer to use a tongue scraper. These are available in most drugstores. The American Dental Association says there is no evidence that tongue scrapers work to

prevent halitosis (bad breath).

#### Bad breath still a problem?

Cleaning your tongue usually makes bad breath go away, but if it’s still a problem, you may want to consult with a dentist or your doctor. Your problem could be more serious. Bad breath can be caused by tooth decay; infections in your mouth, nose, sinuses, or throat; medications; and even cancer or diabetes. Tongue brushing is an easy addition to your daily dental routine. Experts recommend making it a regular habit.

#### Healthline



NEWS IN PICTURES



▲ The mother and other relatives of Israeli hostage Bar Abraham Kupershtein, speak to him by video call ahead of his release, in Holon, Israel,



▲ A model presents a creation by designer Gloria Coelho during Sao Paulo Fashion Week as people ride the subway.



▲ Behati Prinsloo walks the runway during the 2025 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show in New York City



▲ Released hostage Evyatar David, who was kidnapped during the deadly October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas and taken to Gaza, reacts upon arriving at Rabin Medical Center-Beilinson Hospital, in Petah Tikva, Israe



▲ A general view as the Arca Sgr wins the Barcolana Sailing Regatta, the largest sailing regatta in the world, in Trieste, Italy.



# Slot seeks solutions as Liverpool crisis deepens

LIVERPOOL'S blip is becoming a full-blown crisis as manager Arne Slot urgently seeks answers after the Premier League champions suffered a fourth straight defeat for the first time in more than a decade.

The Reds lost 2-1 to Manchester United on Sunday – the first time their bitter rivals have won at Anfield since January 2016.

Liverpool rode their luck in a seven-game winning run at the start of the season, boosted by a flurry of late goals, but an expected improvement in performances has failed to materialise.

They have now lost four consecutive games in all competitions for the first time since November 2014 when Brendan Rodgers was manager.

AFP Sport looks at the serious issues that Slot must address to save Liverpool's season.

### SALAH SLUMP

Mohamed Salah looks a pale shadow of the man who terrorised defences last season on his way to winning the Premier League's Golden Boot award.

The "Egyptian King", so often the fulcrum of Liverpool's attack, has scored just one goal from open play in the Premier League this season, on the opening weekend.

On Sunday he was guilty of missing two big chances against United.

The forward was left out of the starting line-up in the recent Champions League defeat at Galatasaray and, starkly, was hauled off on Sunday even as Liverpool chased an



▲ Manager Arne Slot.

equaliser.

Slot will hope it is just a temporary loss for form for a player who signed a new two-year contract in April but there must be concerns that, at 33, his best days are behind him.

Former Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher, now a Sky Sports pundit, says Salah should no longer have a guaranteed spot every week.

"I don't think Salah should be starting every game right now, certainly away from home, with the form he's in," he said on Sky. "Would he be OK with that? Probably not.

But when you get to a certain age you have to understand that, especially when you're not playing well, where's your argument?"

### STRUGGLING SIGNINGS

Slot chose to go big in the summer transfer window, splashing out more than \$450 million (\$604 million) on new signings.

The club twice broke their own transfer record to bring in playmaker Florian Wirtz from Bayer Leverkusen and forward Alexander Isak from Newcastle.

But neither player is yet to register a Premier League goal.

Hugo Ekitike, another big-money arrival, has made a splash but the Frenchman now appears to be behind the misfiring Isak in the pecking order.

Liverpool's substantial spending on forwards was partly driven by the death of Diogo Jota in a car crash in July.

His absence is the elephant in the room at a club still coming to terms with the absence of the 28-year-old Portugal international.

At the other end of the pitch, new arrival Milos Kerkez has struggled to settle at left-back, where he has been preferred to veteran Andy Robertson, and Jeremie Frimpong has failed to nail down his spot on the other flank.

### DEFENSIVE CRISIS

Could Liverpool's failure to sign central defender Marc Guehi from Crystal Palace on transfer deadline day cost them the Premier League title?

Since the beginning of May, Liverpool have conceded two more goals in more Premier League games than any other side, doing so in eight of their 12 league matches.

Slot's men have let in 11 goals in their eight league games, in stark contrast to just three by Premier League leaders Arsenal.

Kerkez and Frimpong have struggled to fill the shoes of Robertson and the departed Trent Alexander-Arnold in the full-back positions.

Centre-back Ibrahima Konate has come under sustained fire for his poor performances and even the usually imperious captain Virgil van Dijk was caught out in the build-up to Bryan Mbeumo's opening goal on Sunday.

Guehi has told Crystal Palace he will not sign a new deal at the club, meaning he could leave in January or at the end of the season.

But even if the England defender chooses Liverpool over other potential suitors, it could be too little, too late.

# Maguire urges Man Utd to build on Liverpool triumph

HARRY Maguire said Manchester United must build on their momentum after a long-awaited win at Liverpool gave manager Ruben Amorim back-to-back Premier League victories for the first time.

The centre-back headed an 84th-minute winner to seal a 2-1 win against the champions on Sunday, meaning United have now won four of their past six matches.

The club, who slumped to a 15th-place finish in the Premier League last season, are up to ninth following their win at Anfield – just two points behind third-placed Bournemouth and Liverpool, in fourth.

But former United captain Maguire says the team need to use the result – their first win at Anfield in nearly a decade – as a springboard.

"This club will probably get a few plaudits this week – resilience, fighting spirit," he said.

"But if we don't perform next weekend against Brighton, it will be exactly the same the following week so we need to build on it, we need to build momentum, we need to build positive performances – that's the most important thing.

"Performances breed results in the end. Take the positives, take the confidence but at Old Trafford next week against Brighton, we have to make sure we perform and get the win."



▲ Harry Maguire.

In last season's fixture at Liverpool, Maguire squandered a glorious chance to score a last-gasp winner in a match that ended 2-2 so he was delighted to find the target this time.

The England international may have played for United for the final time at Anfield as his contract expires at the end of the season.

"I've been here seven years now

and it's been tough not getting that win, it's been on my mind a little bit to be honest," said the 32-year-old.

"I'm in my last year now so this could be the last time I play at Anfield for this club so it's really important I came here and ticked that one off because it has been playing on my mind."

# Verstappen to the max: watching history in the making

MAX Verstappen dominated the weekend, winning both the sprint and the main race, reigniting his title hopes.

This was his 68th career victory and cut his deficit to championship leader Oscar Piastri to 40 points. This weekend alone he clawed back 23 points.

Lando Norris finished P2 after an intense battle with Charles Leclerc, who secured P3 for Ferrari. Lewis Hamilton came home in P4, while Piastri managed only P5 after a tough race.

Verstappen led from lights to flag, with strong pace and strategy making the difference in the first stint.

### SPRINT DRAMA

The Sprint was chaotic: both McLarens (Norris and Piastri) retired on Lap 1 after a Turn 1 collision triggered by Nico

Hülkenberg tagging Piastri. Verstappen won the sprint ahead of George Russell and Carlos Sainz.

### CHAMPIONSHIP IMPACT

Verstappen's double win means he has scored as many points as both McLaren drivers combined over the last five races, putting him firmly back in contention. Norris is now just 14 points behind Piastri in the drivers' championship.

### BATTLE FOR P2

The battle between Norris and Leclerc was one of the highlights of the race, and it lasted almost the entire 56 laps.

With about five laps to go, Norris launched his last charge. He first tried a move into Turn 1 on lap 51, but Leclerc countered brilliantly.

Later on the same lap, Norris attacked down the back straight and finally secured P2 for good.



▲ Max Verstappen.



# Lupopo coach explains how they humbled Pirates

FC St Eloi Lupopo head coach Guy Buaksa said sharpness on the counter-attack was key in his side's stunning 3-0 win over Orlando Pirates in the first leg of their Caf Champions League final qualifier at the Stade Kibasa Maliba in Lubumbashi on Sunday.

The DR Congo giants powered past Abdeslam Ouaddou's Buccaneers, leaving Pirates with a mountain to climb at Orlando Stadium in the second leg on Saturday at Orlando Stadium.

Lupopo coach Bukasa – 'We knew their strengths'

An early goal from Kashala Wanet gave Lupopo the lead and the home side rammed home their advantage in the later stages, with Dramane Kambou and Jean Benoit Tukumbane Banga also getting on the scoresheet.

"We knew their (Pirates) strengths and it showed," said Bukasa at the post match press conference.

"They kept possession, they were very good, and we were sharp, especially in transition.

"That was the key, the secret to holding our own against a team like that. We were very patient. We let them have the ball when we needed to, and we knew how to take advantage of our strong moments. The team is improving ... there is still a lot to do."

The Lupopo coach added that his side would again look to stifle Pi-



▲ FC St Eloi Lupopo head coach Guy Buaksa.

rates on Saturday. The Buccaneers will need a near-faultless display to have any chance of overcoming the deficit and reaching the group stages of this season's Champions League.

An early exit from the competition would be a huge blow for Pirates, who made it all the way to the semi-finals of last year's competition.

"They still caused us problems"

"We will analyse this match and

define the strategy for the return leg later this week," added Bukasa.

"They (Pirates) still caused us problems. We need to pin them down well to overcome each challenge. It won't be the same type of match, but they will have possession like here. It's up to us to find the right formula so they don't pose a threat."

(The Citizen)

# Sinner opts out of Davis Cup, Alcaraz to represent Spain

JANNIK Sinner has decided not to take part in this year's Davis Cup Finals with reigning champions Italy confirming his absence in Monday's team announcement, while world No 1 Carlos Alcaraz will represent Spain at next month's competition.

Sinner, ranked No 2 in the world, led Italy to a successful defence of their title last year in Spain, but will not be on home soil when the Final 8 takes place in Bologna from November 18-23.

"Jannik Sinner has not given his availability for 2025," Italian captain Filippo Volandri said.

"The Davis Cup is, and will remain, always his home and I am sure that Jannik will soon be part of the team again. In the meantime, I can count on a group ready to fight and give everything for the blue jersey."

Volandri's team is made up of Matteo Berrettini, Simone Bolelli, Flavio Cobolli, Lorenzo Musetti and Andrea Vavassori.

Sinner, who won the Australian Open and Wimbledon this year and reached the final of all four Grand Slams, will be in Turin a week before the Davis Cup to defend his ATP Finals title, where Alcaraz has also



▲ Jannik Sinner.

secured his place in the season-ending event.

Alcaraz will be bidding to earn Spain their first Davis Cup success since 2019, with Jaume Munar, Pedro Martinez, and Marcel Granollers also selected by the Spaniards.

World No 3 Alexander Zverev is set to make his first appearance at the Davis Cup Finals, with the 28-year-old named on the Germany

team.

Lupopo coach explains how they humbled Pirates

FC St Eloi Lupopo head coach Guy Buaksa said sharpness on the counter-attack was key in his side's stunning 3-0 win over Orlando Pirates in the first leg of their Caf Champions League final qualifier at the Stade Kibasa Maliba in Lubumbashi on Sunday. (Supersport)

# Arteta praises Arsenal's commitment, wary of Simeone

ARSENAL manager Mikel Arteta said he was pleased with his players' commitment, but warned that they cannot get ahead of themselves as they fight for silverware on multiple fronts.

Arsenal, unbeaten since August, are three points clear at the top of the Premier League and have won both their Champions League matches so far, but Arteta was not keen to accept the "favourites" tag in the English top-flight.

"The only thing I embrace is when I see the team, the energy, the temperature, the commitment and quality that they can deliver. That gives me the conviction that we can go all the way," Arteta told reporters on Monday, a day before hosting Atletico Madrid in the Champions League.

"But that's just a feeling, then the next day you have to prove it and you can't be busy thinking about those topics.

"Every game in (the Premier League) is must-win. We are very appreciative of that, so we don't get carried away with anything."

Asked about a video shared on social media that showed Arsenal defender William Saliba watching Atletico Madrid on the coach after Saturday's 1-0 win at Fulham, Arteta praised the France international's eagerness to prepare for future opponents.

"Very pleased because I didn't encourage it, that came from them. We know this will be a tough one, so the earlier we think about it the better. I love that initiative from the players," Arteta said.

## ARTETA PRAISES 'INCREDIBLE' SIMEONE

Arteta said he looked up to Atletico manager Diego Simeone, who has led the Spanish club to two Europa League and two LaLiga titles since taking charge in 2011.

"What he has done since he got to Atletico has been out-

standing, not only what has achieved but the way he has done it. The identity he has created, they are simple and clear to identify because the manager is very much them," Arteta said. "Every game in (the Premier League) is must-win. We are very appreciative of that, so we don't get carried away with anything."

Asked about a video shared on social media that showed Arsenal defender William Saliba watching Atletico Madrid on the coach after Saturday's 1-0 win at Fulham, Arteta praised the France international's eagerness to prepare for future opponents.

"Very pleased because I didn't encourage it, that came from them. We know this will be a tough one, so the earlier we think about it the better. I love that initiative from the players," Arteta said.

## ARTETA PRAISES 'INCREDIBLE' SIMEONE

Arteta said he looked up to Atletico manager Diego Simeone, who has led the Spanish club to two Europa League and two LaLiga titles since taking charge in 2011.

"What he has done since he got to Atletico has been outstanding, not only what has achieved but the way he has done it. The identity he has created, they are simple and clear to identify because the manager is very much them," Arteta said.

"That's very difficult to achieve, he's been there 14 years and what he's done is incredible.

"He is someone I look up to. His passion, how long he has been in the game, how he still has that capacity to transmit a willingness to win. To keep convincing players in this environment, you have to be extraordinarily good."

Defender Piero Hincapie will be available for Tuesday's clash after recovering from a groin injury, Arteta added.

(The Citizen)



▲ Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta.



MTN PREMIER LEAGUE WEEKEND REVIEW

By Chris Dlamini

Highlanders, ‘Birds’ win!

... Andile Mpisane’s debut topical, ‘Weslians’ remain winless

ALL the action got underway on Saturday with only the Confederation of African Football (CAF) envoys Nsingizini Hotspurs and Royal Leopard exempted due to their international engagement.

It was Matchday 2 in the MTN Premier League 2025/26 season, and the country’s ‘Big 3’ got into it all looking for their first wins.

These are Mbabane Highlanders, Mbabane Swallows, and Manzini Wanderers who could not win their opening games. How did they do on Matchday 2? Let us get to it and highlight the upcoming fixtures.

**AT THE SUMMIT: Young Buffaloes**

-After their goalless opening draw with police outfit Royal Leopard, the army side ensured they attained their first win on Matchday 2 when they trounced Moneni Pirates 2-0 to go top of the standings. They dislodged elite league debutants Tabankulu Celtics who lost to Mbabane Swallows on Saturday.

**CLOSE TO SUMMIT:**

**Malanti Chiefs**

- The black and gold outfit, back in top-flight football after a few years out, played hub giants Manzini Wanderers and got a point after a 1-all draw. This took them to four points and the second spot following their opening day win over debutants Amawele. They are level with Young Buffaloes.

Ubombo Sugar

- They have four points after and occupy third place in the standings. Bafana Bashukela, as they are affectionately

known, had it sweeter on matchday 2 with a 2-1 win over a winless Sisonkhe in two games.

**‘BIG THREE’ UPDATE:**

**Mbabane Highlanders**

- After the narrow and unfortunate 1-0 to defending champions Nsingizini Hotspurs on matchday 1, Mbabane Highlanders returned to winning ways, outfoxing Manzini Sea Birds 2-0 to earn their first three points in two games. Highlanders are sixth on the log table.

**Mbabane Swallows**

- Just when things seemed gloomy, the red and white outfit did a late comeback, scoring two goals to beat elite debutants Tabankulu Celtics 2-1, getting their much-needed first three points of the season and now sit 10th with three points. Swallows had a dishevelled start, losing 1-0 to Green Mamba on opening day.

**Manzini Wanderers**

- Things have not yet worked out for the maroon and white hub giants - it’s been two draws in a row for them. They got a point against Malanti Chiefs following the 1-1 draw. Of the Big 3, they remain winless.

**THE BIG DEBUT:**

**Andile Mpisane (Mbabane Highlanders)**

- The South African attacking midfielder, Andile Mpisane, had all eyes on him over the weekend as he made his much-hyped



▲ Highlanders players celebrating with their president Shauwn Mkhize after beating Sea Birds 2-0. (Left) Andile Mpisane showcasing his skills against Sea Birds.

debut. He came on late in the second half but ensured he enjoyed the few minutes on and thrilled the crowd with his showboating, amid one stylish pass going astray, straight to a rival as his team launched an attack. The crowd loved him and definitely would be happy to see those few minutes of his flair as the season progresses. He used to get some minutes at the now-defunct Royal AM in the South African top flight.



▲ Ubombo Sugar’s Samkelo Ginindza.

**MAMKHIZE VIBES:**

Shauwn ‘MaMkhize’ Mkhize

- The flamboyant South African President of Mbabane Highlanders continues to shos her class during local games, and the fans love her presence.

She also extended such support beyond Highlanders, showing up with her players on Sunday at Somhlolo National Stadium, Lobamba to watch Nsingizini Hotspurs against Simba SC in the TotalEnergies CAF Champions League 2025/26 first leg of the second preliminary stage.

**THE GOALS:**

- Like on matchday 1, goals are proving scarce at the moment, with very few scored once again over the weekend.

It’s not so many goals once again, just like in the opening week where about nine goals were scored in all eight fixtures. We still have no brace or hat-trick after matchday 2.

- As is, Amawele and Rangers game was the highest scoring match with five goals. Amawele won it 3-2, their first-ever elite league win in two games. Amawele are elite debutants from the second-tier league.

**THE FANS CORNER:**

- The Mavuso Sports Centre in Manzini was again the place to be. After all, crowd



▲ Manzini Wanderers players line up before a match.

pullers Mbabane Highlanders and Manzini Wanderers were all there against minnows Manzini Sea Birds and Malanti Chiefs.

**UPCOMING FIXTURES:**

**Saturday, October 25, 2025**

**EFA KaLanga Technical Centre, Siteki:**

G. Mamba vs. M. Sea Birds 3pm

**King Sobhuza Stadium, Nhlangano:**

Rangers vs. Manzini Wanderers 3pm

**Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini:**

Mbabane Highlanders vs. Amawele 3pm

M. Pirates vs. Ez. United 5.30pm

**Killarney Stadium, Pigg’s Peak:**

M. Chiefs vs. Y. Buffaloes 3pm

**Mayaluka Stadium, Big Bend:**

Ub. Sugar vs. M. Swallows 3pm

**Wednesday, November 5, 2025**



IMBUBE MARATHON 2025

SA draws more international athletes



▲ City of Mbombela Athletics Club during the race.

By Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

**PACESETTERS.** South Africa had the highest number of visiting athletes in the 2025 Imbube Marathon.

The neighbouring country had 388 athletes during the seventh edition of the annual prestigious marathon held on Saturday at Somhlolo National Stadium.

The South African participants came from provinces such as Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal.

The neighbouring country further produced the 42km male category champion Charles Tjiane.

Tjiane dethroned defending champion and local star Mancoba Nhlabatsi, winning the E35 000 first prize money.

His Majesty King Mswati III's representative, Princess Tiyaanza, applauded South

Africa for its good attendance. "Our largest contingent, by far, comes from our treasured neighbours, South Africa, represented by 388 runners, with overwhelming support from the provinces of Mpumalanga, Gauteng, and KwaZulu-Natal. This kind of regional participation is a powerful sign of SADC cooperation," he said.

The King also thanked the Eswatini National Provident Fund (ENPF) for sustaining the race.

"It gives me great pleasure to express the heartfelt gratitude to Lidlelantfongeni for continuing to be the leaders of innovation, unity, and services that bring hope and dignity to all emaSwati. Your unwavering commitment to excellence and your dedication to uplifting the lives of people do not go unnoticed. The country will continue to support your efforts and projects, and the important work you are doing to drive progress and development," the King said.



▲ Imbube Marathon's oldest participant Sipho Dlamini before the start of the race.

84-year-old Sipho Dlamini makes seventh appearance

By Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

**PASSION keeps him going.** This is none other than 84-year-old Sipho Dlamini.

Dlamini has attended the seven consecutive editions of the Imbube Marathon.

Dlamini was part of the close to 7,000 participants during the seventh edition of the prestigious national marathon.

"I am always happy to be part of the race, which helps me to stay fit. I will continue attending it if my body allows me to be on the

road," he said. He also thanked His Majesty King Mswati III for introducing the race.

"We would like to thank the King for coming up with such a great initiative," he said.

Dlamini competed in the 3.3km category. Eswatini National Provident Fund Board Chairman Derrick Shiba commended the veteran participants for their passion on the day.

"We were impressed by the passion of veteran athletes on the day. This challenges us as the middle-aged group to focus on our well-being," he said.

Jabulani Dlamini conquers 3.3km

By Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

**DISABILITY is an ability.** This is the story of Jabulani Dlamini, who competed in the 2025 Imbube Marathon.

Dlamini finished the 3.3km category despite living with disability as he is walking on crutches.

He was handed a prize for completing the race.

Dlamini said he was also a usual performer in the race.

I am happy with the prize and always take part in the race. I am looking forward to next year's edition," he said.



▲ 3.3km special award winner Jabulani Dlamini receiving his prize from dignitaries led by Princess Tiyaanza, ENPF board Chairman Derrick Shiba, Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima and Standard Bank CEO Mvuselelo Fakudze.



WE CAN DO BETTER GOING FORWARD

By Chris Dlamini

ESWATINI outfit Royal Leopard has one hand on the E7 million CAF payout for reaching the group stage - only 90 or so minutes away from the money pot. The TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup 2025/26 envoys outdid themselves away in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) when they came from behind to draw level with AS Maniema Union on Saturday. This was the first leg, which now places Leopard at an advantage coming to the second leg at home this Saturday at Somhlolo National Stadium.

However, the same cannot be said about TotalEnergies CAF Champions League representatives Nsingizini Hotspurs. The Shiselweni Region side, amid starting well in the opening half, was ambushed 3-0 at the country's soccer Mecca.

Among the crowd was Eswatini Football Association (EFA) President Peter 'Samora' Simelane, who shared his sentiments after the game.

"The Nsingizini game hasn't gone as we had wished. I believe a lapse in concentration

# Nsingizini lapsed, Leopard poised for group stage – 'Samora'

was the letdown as the first half was better. Nsingizini managed to match Simba pound for pound but lost it in the second half.

"They showed in the first half that Eswatini has talent and we can do better going forward," Simelane said.

Asked about Leopard's chances following their stellar away performance to get a draw and an away goal in DRC.

"That was a big result for Leopard. We can put our hopes on them as they have high chances of reaching the group stage. If you draw 1-1 in DRC, it ceramic gives you the advantage at home, and Leopard has that advantage now. They can qualify to the group stage," Simelane said.

He congratulated the police outfit for its away result and wished it well as they prepare to host Maniema at Somhlolo National Stadium this weekend. The game is on Saturday at 3pm. Maniema is expected in the country on Tuesday, October 21.



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs defender Njabulo Macina sandwiched by Simba players.

## I'm proud of my players – Qhogi

By Sibusiso Masilela  
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

### GRACIOUS in defeat.

Nsingizini Hotspurs head coach Mandla Qhogi has commended his players' performance against Simba SC.

The South African mentor said this after watching the MTN Premier League champions suffer a 3-0 defeat to Tanzanian giants on Sunday, during a CAF Champions League clash first round encounter played at Somhlolo National Stadium.

"I am happy with the performance of my players amid the results

that didn't go our way. The boys showed character against a strong opposition that is also a regular performer in this competition," he said.

Qhogi said they were going to focus on the return leg.

"We won't sit back during the return leg, but we will go there to fight and see what we will get as part of our learning process in this competition," he said.

Simba SC captain Neo Maema said he was happy with the result.

The ex-Mamelodi Sundowns player represented the club in the post-match interview due to the

suspension of coach Dimitri Pantev.

"We are happy with the results, which is a result of hard work and unity from the entire team. The opposition gave us a tough time, but we will be able to grind results due to character inside the field of play. We will finish the job at home, where we must avoid complacency," he said.

The winner of the tie will book a place in the group stages of the continent's premier club competition and earn an E18 million bounty.



▲ The late Jerome Ntshalnshali in Sihlangu colours against Lesotho.

## A defeat is defeat – Nsingizini supporters

Stories By Chris Dlamini

A 3-0 margin at home is inexcusable.

At least, this is the feeling of two Nsingizini Hotspurs supporters, Sonkhe Dlamini and Sidumo Ngwenya.

They were both at Somhlolo National Stadium on Sunday to watch their side against the continentally respected Simba SC from Tanzania in the first leg of the TotalEnergies CAF Champions League.

Nsingizini lost the crucial first leg game 3-0, which leaves them with a mountain to climb if they are to advance to the group stage going to the second leg away in Tanzania on Saturday.

"I saw the match, and I have no complaints. Even if one could have concerns, it doesn't help when we lose 3-0. For me, the team did its best and got beaten. Defeat is a defeat, and we move on," Dlamini said.

He said he was proud that they played Simba despite losing, saying



▲ Nsingizini Hotspurs supporters Sidumo Ngwenya and Sihle Dlamini.

the experience his team was gaining would go a long way. He said they were going to improve with time in the Champions League.

Meanwhile, Ngwenya said it was a straight defeat.

"I don't want to be talking about a lot of nothing. Today, we were cleanly beaten, he said.

Ngwenya said it was pointless to point fingers when they watched the

game and saw the opposition was better than their team.

"We will go to the second leg to keep on fighting. Otherwise, we just lost the match to a better team," he said. Ngwenya then appealed to the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) to push for the national stadium to host international games and at some point have its own roof to 'protect us from the rain'.

## We are saddened by Jerome's passing – Leopard's Hurube

LOCAL football is certainly ending the year on a sad note.

This is more so because yet another former elite footballer, Jerome Ntshalintshali, has passed away.

The former senior national team Sihlangu Semnikati centre back reportedly succumbed to his death on Friday, after a short illness.

Ntshalintshali played his club football at Manzini Sundowns and Royal Leopard but had short stints with a couple of smaller teams in his career. He was a respected asset in the country's elite football for his defensive brilliance.

"We are saddened to return home to the sad news of one of ours. Jerome's passing has shocked us, but there's nothing

we can do now. Only God knows," said Leopard's Public Relations Officer (PRO) Frank Hurube on Monday.

According to close sources, Ntshalintshali passed away on Friday while undergoing treatment. Details of his funeral will be conveyed in due course, but it is anticipated that he will be laid to rest this weekend.

His demise comes just when football most recently dealt with the passing of Manzini Wanderers legend and coach Clement 'King Clay' Mdluli, and then Mbabane Highlanders and Sihlangu legend Elwell 'Cutter' Mamba almost a fortnight ago.

Meanwhile, Ntshalintshali was a police officer by profession, a job he got after joining the police outfit Leopard over a decade ago.





**Lupopo coach explains how they humbled Pirates**

Page 20

**‘We’re saddened by Jerome’s passing’**

Page 23



Eswatini Tuesday 21 October, 2025  
Daily News  
**Sport**



**WE CAN DO BETTER GOING FORWARD...**

# **Nsingizini lapsed, Leopard poised for group stage – ‘Samora’**



**EFA President Peter ‘Samora’ Simelane has said Nsingizini Hotspurs matched Tanzania’s Simba SC in the first half, while Royal Leopard has a good chance to reach the E7 million-paying group stage. **Page 23****