



Inkhosikati Make LaMatsebula
launches inaugural volume of ESWERJ

▲Inkhosikati Make LaMatsebula has highlighted the capacity of innovation to address disparities in access, quality, and equity between education and ICT. The Inkhosikati was speaking at the official opening of the 2025 ESWERA DEASA-KEAS-RSTP International Conference held at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA). The three-day conference is held under the theme: “Education in the 21st Century: Access, Sustainability, Affordability, Innovation and Relevance.” During the event, the Inkhosikati also launched the inaugural volume of the Eswatini Education Research Journal (ESWERJ).

Public outcry
over bread price
hike as cost-of-
living soars

By Kwanele Dhladhla

THE recent approval of a seven percent bread price increase has sparked widespread frustration and despair among EmaSwati, who said the government’s decision could deepen financial hardship at a time when basic living costs were already unbearable. From bus drivers and marshals to pensioners, the sentiment was unanimous: the price of bread has become the latest blow to struggling households.

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Government urges high performance as salary review takes effect

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By Kwanele Dhladhla

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From bus drivers and marshals to pensioners, the sentiment was unanimous: the price of bread has become the latest blow to struggling households.

According to the Eswatini Daily News (EDN), random interviews conducted in Mbabane on Tuesday, many citizens expressed disbelief over the government’s decision to approve the hike despite the escalating cost of fuel, electricity, water, and transport fares.

Bus driver Sanele Hadzebe, who was interviewed while operating at the Mbabane Bus Rank, said he was shocked that the government found it fit to approve the increase when wages in most sectors had remained stagnant.

“In the transport industry, our salaries have not been increased for over two years, yet we are expected to shoulder this bread price hike. We will lose more customers, especially those who are not civil servants. It’s the ordinary people, transport workers, the elderly, and the unemployed, who will feel this the most,” Hadzebe lamented.

He expressed a general concern among public transport operators that higher living costs could lead to fewer passengers, as many commuters were already forced to choose between daily essentials and bus fares.

Bus Rank Marshal Velaphi Sibandze of Mdzangwini echoed similar concerns. He said the rise in bread prices signaled an impending crisis for working-class families.

“This is heartening because our salaries remain the same as everything else goes up. We will be forced to go back to cooking sour

Public outcry over bread price hike as cost-of-living soars



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CURRENT ESWATINI BREAD PRICE SCHEDULE

DESCRIPTION	WHITE BREAD INCLUDING 15% VAT		BROWN BREAD	
	Max Wholesale	Max Retail	Max Wholesale	Max Retail
800g	16.33	16.73	14.17	14.58
700g	14.87	15.29	13.26	13.68
600g	13.40	13.82	11.59	12.02
500g	12.29	12.72	10.63	11.05
400g	7.70	7.91	6.87	7.08

PROPOSED BREAD PRICE INCREASE SCHEDULE AT 7%

DESCRIPTION	WHITE BREAD INCLUDING 15% VAT		BROWN BREAD	
	Max Wholesale	Max Retail	Max wholesale	Max Retail
800g	17.47	17.90	15.16	15.60
700g	15.91	16.36	14.19	14.64
600g	14.34	14.78	12.40	13.05
500g	13.15	13.61	11.37	11.82
400g	8.24	8.46	7.35	7.56

porridge (incwancwa) because we won’t afford bread anymore. People will even start walking home from town instead of taking a bus,” said Sibandze.

For pensioners like 67-year-old Busisiwe

Dlamini from Msunduzi, the increase was devastating.

“We will no longer be able to afford bread after this hike. Has the government taken into consideration that there has not been

an increase in grants for the elderly, and that we have to buy our own medication because of shortages in hospitals? We plead with His Majesty King Mswati III to consider increasing our grants to cushion us from these rising prices,” she commented.

Emaswati will now have to dig deeper into their pockets as the new bread prices take effect on November 1, 2025. An 800-gram loaf of white bread will now cost E17.90, up from E16.73, representing an E1.17 increase. A similar-sized loaf of brown bread will sell for E15.60, up by E1.02 from the previous E14.58.

The price increase was approved by Cabinet following a request from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, led by Minister Manqoba Khumalo, after a proposal by the Eswatini Bakers Association.

The bakers’ group had initially requested a 7.1 per cent hike, citing surging operational costs despite relatively stable flour and fuel prices.

“Apart from flour and fuel, the industry has faced inflationary increases in all other inputs over the past three years,” the association stated.

The last bread price adjustment, a 20.76 per cent increase, was effected on July 1, 2022.

By Delisa Magagula

THE Minister of Finance, Neal Rijkenberg, might have his cake and get to eat it too.

That is if Senators support a series of proposed loan bills amounting to E2.2 billion, which he has described as critical to Eswatini’s economic development agenda.

On Tuesday, the Minister met with members of the Senate and other legislators to justify the new financial measures, which form part of a broader plan to secure more than E12.7 billion in total funding for national development.

The proposed loan bills are intended to address key national priorities such as infrastructure development, electricity access, fiscal reform, and support for government suppliers.

If approved, the bills will authorise the Minister of Finance to enter into loan agreements with various international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Export-Import Bank of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

The loan proposals, currently before Parliament, are designed to address key national priorities such as infrastructure development, electricity access, fiscal reform, and support for government suppliers.

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Neal pushes for E2.2 billion loan bills

ments with various international financial institutions, including the African Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Export-Import Bank of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Rijkenberg explained that these loans will not only stimulate investment in strategic sectors but also enhance the country’s capacity to sustain growth and maintain debt stability.

“We are seeking these facilities to fast-track development and support our fiscal framework,” he said.

The move comes as the government accelerates its post-pandemic recovery strategy and attempts to address long-standing infrastructure gaps that have constrained economic expansion.

Parliament has already been briefed on several loan bills, which collectively amount to E12.7 billion, with some portions already earmarked for specific projects.

Among the proposed loans is the Export-Import Bank of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Loan Bill, valued at approximately US\$300 million, or E5.2 billion. This facility is intended to finance the construction of a Strategic Oil Reserve Facility, a project that has been in planning stages for several years.

The oil reserve is expected to bolster Eswatini’s energy security, reduce the risk of fuel shortages, and strengthen the country’s



▲Minister of Finance, Neal Rijkenberg, emergency preparedness.

Another significant facility is the African Development Bank (AfDB) Loan Bill, amounting to US\$140.6 million, or about E2.5 billion.

This loan will fund Phase I of the Road Infrastructure Improvement Programme, including the upgrading and tarring of the 105-kilometre Siphofaneni–Siphambanweni road. The project, according to government projections, is expected to create around 1,500 jobs during its implementation and improve connectivity in the Lubombo region, a key agricultural and tourism zone.

The International Bank for Reconstruction

and Development (IBRD), also known as the World Bank, is offering another facility valued at US\$100 million (E1.8 billion). This funding falls under the Fiscal Management and Competitiveness Development Policy Loan, aimed at supporting the government’s reform agenda, improving budget efficiency, and assisting with payments owed to suppliers.

Additionally, two Electricity-Access Loan Bills are being considered to accelerate rural electrification and promote renewable energy.

One loan, through the International Development Association (IDA), is valued at €37 million (E752 million), while the second, through the IBRD, amounts to €48.3 million (E982 million).

Combined, these facilities will support the rollout of clean and sustainable energy systems, expand grid connections to underserved communities, and modernise Eswatini’s power infrastructure.

The government is also preparing two additional bills for loans totalling US\$95 million (about E1.7 billion) to clear arrears owed to local suppliers.

The Ministry of Finance says this measure will restore liquidity in the private sector and boost confidence among service providers who rely on timely payments from government contracts.

IPU Summit:

By Siphesihle Dlamini
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SPEAKER of the House of Assembly of Eswatini Jabulani Mabuza delivered a compelling and comprehensive address at the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Switzerland, emphasising the urgent need to uphold humanitarian norms and support humanitarian action amid global crises.

The Assembly, convened under the theme “Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting Humanitarian Action in Times of Crisis,” is a vital platform for parliamentary leaders worldwide to engage in dialogue, share perspectives, and forge collaborative responses to humanitarian challenges.

The Speaker opened his remarks by drawing attention to the profound connection between humanitarian norms and the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

He explained that while the agenda does not explicitly contain a chapter titled “humanitarian norms,” it adopts “a transformative and universal approach that links humanitarian action to sustainable development.” Central to this framework is the principle of “leaving no one behind,” which, according to the Speaker, “requires humanitarians and development actors to work together to address the root causes of crises.” This principle, he emphasised, mandates prioritising the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, including migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people.

The Speaker elaborated on the key humanitarian norms reinforced by the 2030 Agenda, highlighting three pillars:

- **Leaving no one behind:** This principle reinforces the commitment to prioritise vulnerable populations, ensuring that humanitarian efforts reach those most in need.
- **Universal human rights:** Grounded explicitly in international human

Eswatini pushes for inclusive refugee policies, crisis support



▲ Speaker of the House of Assembly of Eswatini Jabulani Mabuza delivered a compelling and comprehensive address at the 151st Assembly of the (IPU).

rights standards, humanitarian aid and sustainable development must be guided by a human-rights-based approach, with success measured by the extent to which individuals can enjoy their rights.

- **Gender equality:** Assistance and protection must consider the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in crises, including safeguarding them from violence and exploitation.

Mabuza further invoked the leadership of His Majesty King Mswati III, recalling the King’s call during the 78th session of the UN General Assembly for “collective action on both domestic and international actors to work together in crises such as pandemics and natural disasters.” This call for solidarity and cooperation resonates deeply with the Assembly’s objectives.

Turning to the legal foundations of humanitarian norms, the Speaker noted that they are “grounded mainly in international humanitarian law, the body of law that regulates the conduct of hostilities and, to an extent, in international human rights law as it continues to apply in times of armed conflict.” These norms include vital protections

such as shielding civilians from attack, safeguarding those not engaged in fighting, and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid.

A poignant segment of the speech addressed the ongoing threat posed by nuclear weapons. Marking the 80th anniversary of the nuclear detonations in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Speaker Mabuza warned that “the risk of using nuclear weapons is higher than ever before.” He described the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons as “a humanitarian imperative,” emphasising that “a nuclear conflict would have catastrophic effects on human health, the environment, the climate, food production and socio-economic development.” Eswatini’s commitment to this cause is demonstrated by its piloting of the ‘Nuclear Radiation and Safety Bill,’ a legislative initiative aimed at enhancing nuclear safety and humanitarian protection.

The Speaker also paid tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), describing it as “the only institution explicitly named under international humanitarian law as a controlling authority.” He highlighted that the ICRC’s “legal mandate stems from the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, as well as from its own statutes,” and that its continued relevance lies

in its mission “of protecting the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and providing them with assistance.”

On the practical dimension of humanitarian action, Mabuza defined it as “providing timely, needs-based assistance to save lives and alleviate suffering through a range of activities such as delivering food, water, shelter, and medical care.” He clarified that this assistance is “a short-term, emergency response to disasters, conflicts, and health crises,” with the goal of helping affected individuals “maintain their dignity and return to a normal life.” He highlighted Eswatini’s own collaborative approach through its National Disaster Management Unit, which coordinates efforts to provide such assistance during emergencies.

Addressing the plight of asylum seekers and refugees, the Speaker explained that Eswatini’s refugee regime “encourages asylum seekers and refugees to integrate into society and they peacefully live alongside the host community.” He added that “asylum seekers and refugees are allowed to work,” reflecting the country’s inclusive and humane policies.

In closing, Honourable Mabuza urged the Assembly to embrace four fundamental humanitarian attributes:

- **Save lives:** Provide immediate support to prevent loss of life and suffering.
- **Alleviate suffering:** Focus aid on reducing the impact of crises on affected populations.
- **Maintain human dignity:** Ensure the basic needs and dignity of those affected are protected.
- **Provide impartiality:** Deliver assistance based solely on need, without discrimination based on ethnic origin, gender, or ideology.

CMS Transformation; New digital system on the cards

By Kwanele Dhladhla
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THE long-awaited transformation of the Central Medical Stores (CMS) has officially begun, marking a major step toward modernising Eswatini’s public health supply chain.

The process has been set in motion through the phasing out of the outdated Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2017 system, paving the way for a more advanced, fully integrated digital platform.

This development was revealed through an Expression of Interest (EOI) issued by the Eswatini Public Procurement Regulatory Agency (ESPPRA), which outlined government’s commitment to transform CMS into a semi-autonomous entity known as the Eswatini Medical Supply Service (EMSA).

According to the EOI, EMSA would function as a high-performing public health supply chain agency tasked with ensuring efficient, transparent, and accountable management of medical supplies nationwide.

“The Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini is transforming the Central Medical Stores into the Eswatini Medical Supply Service (EMSA), a semi-autonomous, high-per-

forming public health supply chain agency. As part of this transformation, EMSA will upgrade its current ERP system from Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2017 to Microsoft Dynamics 365,” reads EOI in part.

It has been explained that the upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics 365 represents a critical part of Eswatini’s national vision to modernise health logistics. It was expected to strengthen efficiency, enhance transparency, and ensure accountability within the supply chain, aligning operations with Ministry of Health priorities and donor expectations.

As a semi-autonomous entity, EMSA stands to take full control of its finances, operations, and performance, implementing a robust, modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system as a necessity.

It was pointed out that the current system, NAV2017, has served as a foundational warehouse management platform, but was now considered obsolete. Its limited ability to integrate with complementary systems such as OpenLMIS and CMIS had created operational bottlenecks, including duplicate data entry, fragmented reporting, and poor visibility into stock levels.

Low digital maturity across some functions and limited infrastructure capacity had also hindered the system’s effectiveness.

It was explained that EMSA’s future oper-

ating model envisions real-time, integrated, and automated workflows across warehouse management, procurement, finance, customer service, and data reporting, capabilities that the current system cannot deliver without significant and costly retrofitting.

The upgraded ERP platform could consolidate key functions into a single, unified system, offering interoperability with national health systems such as the Laboratory Information System (LIS), OpenLMIS, CMIS, and the National Product Catalogue.

Beyond improving data integration, it has been stated that the system would enable data-driven decision-making, regulatory compliance, and enhanced auditability. It can also introduce real-time analytics and data visualisation dashboards accessible to all registered users, ensuring that management decisions are informed by accurate, up-to-date information.

Officials described the ERP implementation as the digital backbone for EMSA’s future growth and sustainability. It was emphasised that the investment underscores CMS’s readiness to evolve from a foundational government unit into a tech-driven, autonomous health supply chain leader.

“This marks a major leap toward a more accountable, efficient, and resilient medical supply system in Eswatini. With this trans-



▲ Ministry of Health Principal Secretary Khanya Mabuza.

formation, CMS is laying the groundwork for long-term operational excellence,” an official to the process said.

He added that the move signals the government’s firm commitment to strengthening Eswatini’s health sector through technology and innovation while ensuring that the supply of medicines and medical equipment keeps pace with the country’s growing healthcare demands.

Prayer, fasting earned me first place – Winner

Stories by Thokozani Mazibuko

FOR 27-year-old Khethukuthula Mdluli from Buseleni, victory didn't come from sheer physical strength alone it was faith, fasting, and unshakeable belief that carried her to first place in the army recruitment race held at Nkwene Inkhundla.

Tears streamed down her face as she crossed the finish line ahead of dozens of determined competitors, each fighting for a dream that could change their lives forever. For Mdluli, this was more than a race it was the culmination of weeks of prayer and spiritual preparation.

"I told myself that I would not rely only on my body but on God's strength," she said, her voice trembling with emotion. "I fasted, I prayed, and I asked God to guide my steps. Today, I am living proof that faith and endurance can take you places you never imagined."

The Nkwene recruitment exercise drew hundreds of hopefuls from across the Shiselweni region, all competing for a chance to join the Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force (UEDF). The competition was intense, with participants battling scorching heat, fatigue, and anxiety as they tackled the challenging course.

For Mdluli, however, the journey to victory began long before the starting whistle. She

revealed that she spent the past two weeks in spiritual preparation fasting, meditating, and maintaining a strict training routine.

"Every morning I woke up before sunrise to train, and before every session I prayed. I told myself that if this is God's will, then no obstacle would stand in my way," she explained.

As she crossed the finish line to thunderous applause, spectators described her as "a woman on a mission." Fellow competitors praised her discipline and humility, saying she remained calm and encouraging throughout the race.

Local leaders at the event also commended the spirit of determination shown by all participants. An army official on site, speaking anonymously, said Mdluli's performance stood out not just for her pace but for her composure and positive attitude.

"You could see she was not just running to win she was running with purpose," the official said. "That kind of mindset is what we look for in the force. It's not just about fitness; it's about character."

As the recruitment process continues into the next phases of assessment, medical evaluation, and interviews, Mdluli says she remains grounded and prayerful.

"Winning the race was one step," she said. "Now I have to keep the same faith and energy for the next rounds. I know the journey isn't over yet."

Her story has already inspired many young people in Nkwene and beyond, proving that



▲ Winner, 27-year-old Khethukuthula Mdluli from Buseleni.

perseverance, discipline, and belief can transform even the most uncertain path into triumph.

As she left the race grounds surrounded by friends and family, her final words summed up the day perfectly: "I ran with faith and God ran with me." Would you bet on faith and endurance getting her to the final round?

School dropout comes second in army recruitment race

FROM the dusty school tracks of Nsongweni to the demanding army recruitment field, 18-year-old Siyanda Myeni has proven that determination can outshine circumstance.

Once a pupil at Nsongweni Primary School, Siyanda's educational journey came to an abrupt halt in Grade 7. Yet, rather than letting his dropout status define him, he turned his focus to his true passion athletics.

Under the guidance of local coaches at Nhlanguano Track Club, Siyanda began training seriously last year, showing relentless discipline and raw potential. His hard work paid off spectacularly when he clinched second place in the Shiselweni II Army Recruitment Race (males category), a feat that surprised none of his teammates but inspired everyone watching.

"We saw it coming," said one of his training partners. "Siyanda has been putting in the work every single day. He deserves this win, and we're proud of him."

The race, held as part of the Royal Eswatini Army's regional recruitment exercise, drew hundreds of hopefuls from across the Shiselweni region — all competing for a chance to qualify for military training. Finishing second was no small achievement, especially for someone who had limited formal education and no prior professional running experience.

For Siyanda, the moment was deeply emotional. "I dropped out of school, but I never dropped my dream," he said after crossing the finish line, drenched in sweat but smiling with pride. "I always told myself that one day, I'll make my family and my community proud and this is just the beginning."



▲ The army hopefuls at Nkwene Inkhundla.

His story has since ignited hope among other young people in the area, many of whom face similar struggles due to poverty and limited educational opportunities. Local leaders have praised Siyanda for his resilience and for showing that success is possible through hard work and faith.

Community elder Gogo Maseko described him as "a beacon of hope" for local youth. "Our children need to see that even if school doesn't work out for everyone, there are still paths to greatness. Siyanda is proof of that," she said.

With his impressive performance, Siyanda now stands a strong chance of being short-listed for army training a lifelong dream that could finally become reality.

As he continues to train with his teammates at Nhlanguano Track, Siyanda says he's not slowing down anytime soon. "This is only the start. Whether I make it into the army or not, I'll keep running. Running is my life."



▲ 18-year-old Siyanda Myeni

General warns against recruitment scams

THE Army has finally spoken out regarding the controversy surrounding Manqoba Finose Sangweni, the young athlete whose double participation in recent army recruitment races caused confusion and public speculation.

Addressing the matter this week, Brigadier General Sotja Dlamini confirmed that Sangweni's participation at Zombodze Emuva Inkhundla was indeed irregular but clarified that he remains the recognised winner from the earlier race held at Mtfongwaneni Inkhundla in the Manzini Region.

"We can confirm the incident involving Mr. Sangweni, but it must be made clear that he has not been disqualified from the army recruitment process," said Brigadier General Dlamini. "His result at Mtfongwaneni still stands. However, we strongly urge all candidates to respect recruitment guidelines and to participate only within their designated Inkhundla."

The army's clarification follows a wave of public debate and misinformation on social media after Sangweni was seen competing and winning again at Zombodze Emuva, Shiselweni Region. Recruitment officials later discovered that he had already qualified at Mtfongwaneni the previous month.

According to sources close to the athlete, Sangweni claimed he had run again at Zombodze because his chief advised him to compete "in his real Inkhundla." The situation quickly escalated into confusion, with some participants and onlookers alleging that Sangweni had been disqualified entirely an allegation the army has now firmly dispelled.

Brigadier General Dlamini used the opportunity to issue a stern warning to army hopefuls and the general public about rising scams during the recruitment process.

"We are aware of individuals pretending to represent the army and demanding money from job seekers. These are criminals and have no association with the Royal Eswatini Army," he warned.

"Recruitment is completely free of charge. No one should pay or offer money to secure a spot. Anyone approached by such scammers should report the matter immediately to the nearest police station."

The Brigadier General emphasized that the army is committed to maintaining transparency, fairness, and integrity throughout the ongoing national recruitment exercise. Meanwhile, Sangweni's case has reignited discussions about the pressure and confusion faced by rural candidates during the recruitment process especially when traditional and administrative jurisdictions overlap.

Despite the controversy, Sangweni remains one of the standout performers of this year's recruitment, having placed first in two separate races. His athletic ability and determination continue to earn him support from his community, even as he awaits official communication from the army regarding the next stage of selection. "I am happy that the truth is out," Sangweni told a local reporter briefly.

"I respect the army's decision and I'm grateful that they've cleared my name. I just want to serve my country." Brigadier General Dlamini concluded by assuring the public that the army's recruitment process remains on course and that discipline, honesty, and merit will continue to guide the selection of new recruits.

By Stories by Delisa Magagula

Govt urges high performance as salary review takes effect



▲ Members of parliament during their sitting in this file photo.

MINISTER of Public Service Mabulala Maseko has urged civil servants to match their long-awaited salary increases with higher levels of commitment and performance, warning against absenteeism and declining productivity in the public sector.

Speaking in an interview with this publication, Maseko said the government expects the recently approved salary review to translate into improved service delivery across all ministries.

“The government has fulfilled its part. With the new increases and the back pay that will follow, we expect civil servants to reciprocate through dedication, punctuality, and high performance,” he said.

“We must see fewer cases of absenteeism and underperformance. The people of Eswatini deserve value for every cent spent on the public service,” he added.

The minister said the government was pleased with the outcome of the review and the manner in which the negotiations were conducted between the Ministry of Public Service and the public-sector unions.

“The process was consultative and balanced. We are happy with the agreements reached and now expect all government departments to deliver results,” he added.

The salary review, which takes effect from October 2025, covers about 44,000 civil servants across all ministries.

It includes both salary adjustments and back pay, part of a wider E1.6 billion wage reform exercise facilitated by Emergence Human Capital and Umelusi Capital under the Ministry of Public Service.

Public servants interviewed said the review brought long-overdue relief, particularly amid rising living costs.

“It has been years since we had any meaningful adjustment. Many of us have been struggling to keep up with prices,” said Sibongile Dlamini, a nurse based in Mbabane Government Hospital.

“We appreciate the government’s effort. But we also understand that this means expectations will rise we have to deliver,” said another Civil Servant.

Another civil servant, Bongani Nxumalo, a senior clerk in the Ministry of Education, said the back pay will help many families’ clear debts.

“The back pay comes as a big help. Some of us have loans we took just to make ends meet. This is a fresh start. I agree with the

minister now we must work harder because the excuses will no longer hold,” Nxumalo said.

Teachers, who form the largest segment of the public service, also welcomed the government’s commitment to fully implement the Scenario 3 salary model under the review.

“We’re encouraged that government honoured the agreement in full. It motivates us to keep standards high. When people are fairly compensated, they perform better,” Thuli Mavuso a school principal in Manzini said.

Worth noting is that, the comprehensive salary review began in 2024, aiming to align Eswatini’s public-sector pay with regional benchmarks and to address internal inequities. It assessed job profiles, allowances, and benefits across all grades.

Key components of the reform include:

- Revised housing allowances ranging from E800 to E4, 000, depending on grade.
- An increase in travel allowance from E0.16 to E0.67 per kilometre.
- Implementations of 100% of the Category 3 scenario, with six months’ back pay effective from April 2025.

- An estimated annual cost of E1.2 billion to E1.6 billion to the national budget.

The government has said 15% of back pay will be released in October 2025, with the remaining 85% scheduled for July 2026.

The salary review follows extensive negotiations under the Public Service Joint Negotiating Forum, representing government and worker federations, including SNAT, NAPSAWU, and SNA.

Maseko’s call for accountability echoes growing concern within government that increased pay must be matched by measurable results.

The Ministry of Public Service has also hinted at linking future adjustments to performance management outcomes.

“This is a new chapter for the public service. We want civil servants to take pride in their work and to deliver timely, quality services. The salary review should not just be about money it must be about renewed commitment to excellence,” Maseko said.

He further said, for many civil servants, the message is clear; the long-awaited salary increases come with renewed expectations from the nation they serve.



▲ Minister of Public Service Mabulala Maseko has urged civil servants to match their long-awaited salary increases with higher levels of commitment and performance, warning against absenteeism and declining productivity in the public sector.

Govt warns of tight budget year ahead after salary review

MINISTER of Finance Neal Rijkkenberg has warned that Eswatini faces a challenging fiscal year ahead as government spending pressures mount following the implementation of the public service salary review.

Speaking on the side-lines of the World Bank International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meetings, Rijkkenberg said the salary adjustments, while necessary, will add significant strain to the national budget, forcing tighter fiscal management in the 2025/26 financial year.

“As a country, with the salary review coming up and expenditure pressures, we are looking at a probably tough year next year from a budget perspective,” he said.

The recently approved salary review is expected to cost government more than E1.6 billion, including back pay and revised allowances for about 44,000 civil servants.

While unions have welcomed the increases, the adjustments are expected to raise



Eswatini’s wage bill substantially at a time when fiscal space remains limited.

Rijkkenberg said Eswatini is engaging closely with international financial institutions to maintain stability and secure on-going project support.bv“We’re putting that forward to make sure the IMF and World Bank understand our fiscal position. The World Bank has been very supportive in terms of funding and project assistance,” Neal said.

Despite these challenges, the minister said

government remains committed to its obligations and reform plans. Rijkkenberg is also set to represent the African Union (AU) at the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting, where he will deliver Africa’s position on debt sustainability and development financing.

His participation comes as Eswatini works to balance wage commitments with broader goals of economic growth, fiscal discipline, and continued international cooperation.



▲ Minister of Finance Neal Rijkkenberg has warned that Eswatini faces a challenging fiscal year ahead as government spending pressures mount following the implementation of the public service salary review.

By Delisa Magagula

ESWATINI has taken another major step toward a seamless cross-border trade environment, following the successful completion of a two-week Coordinated Border Management (CBM) workshop that united all border agencies under one framework of cooperation.

Facilitated by the World Customs Organization (WCO), the workshop concluded on October 2025 17, marking what officials described as a historic moment of inter-agency collaboration.

For the first time, every key government body involved in border operations including the Eswatini Revenue Service (ERS), Ministry of Agriculture, Eswatini Police Service, national intelligence units, and NAMBOARD participated together under the guidance of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

The CBM initiative aims to harmonize procedures and communication among border agencies, reducing delays, duplication, and costs for traders.

The outcome of the workshop has laid the groundwork for implementing a 'One Border Stop' model a concept that has long been a goal of regional trade reforms but has proven difficult to achieve in practice.

A senior official within the NTFC described the collaboration as a turning point for the country's trade system.

To see intelligence officers, police, and agricultural inspectors sitting side-by-side with customs officials, all dedicated to designing a streamlined process, is a game-changer," the official said.

"The workshop did not only focus on coordination but also set out a clear vision for the future. In his remarks, ERS Commissioner General Brightwell Nkambule challenged all agencies and private sector players to pursue a model where border procedures are so efficient that compliant traders can cross without stopping.

Nation moves closer to 'No-Stop' border operations



▲ Eswatini has taken another major step toward a seamless cross-border trade environment, following the successful completion of a two-week Coordinated Border Management (CBM) workshop that united all border agencies under one framework of cooperation.

"Our ultimate goal must be a 'No-Stop Border. This is where trusted; compliant traders who are part of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programme experience a border crossing without the need to stop. It is achievable if we continue this collaborative spirit and if businesses make use of the AEO facility," said Nkambule.

The AEO programme is designed to reward businesses that maintain high standards of compliance and supply chain security by granting them expedited customs clearance and other trade facilitation benefits.

Worth noting is that, a central feature of the workshop was a joint session between government and private sector stakeholders,

including importers, exporters, and freight forwarders, coordinated through Business Eswatini, which serves as co-chair of the NTFC. This engagement ensured that private sector perspectives directly informed the new border management framework.

Meanwhile Business Eswatini Chief Executive Officer, E. Nathi Dlamini, said the collaborative approach taken during the workshop was exactly what the private sector has been calling for.

"Trade facilitation can only succeed if it is practical for the traders who move goods every day. We are encouraged that government agencies have opened the door for genuine dialogue. Extending operating hours and introducing coordinated procedures are real solutions that will make Eswatini more competitive," he said.

He added that the improvements at border posts such as Lavumisa, which serves as a key trade route to South Africa, would directly reduce costs for farmers and transporters.

"For traders in agriculture and logistics, time is perishable. Every hour lost at the border translates into lost revenue. The discussions on extending Lavumisa's operating hours to midnight, and eventually 24 hours, are a breakthrough that deserves recognition," Dlamini said.

The WCO experts supporting the process commended Eswatini's progress in developing two major technical instruments the

Inter-Agency Cooperation Framework and the National Data Harmonisation Plan both of which will feed into the design of the National Single Window system. The Single Window will allow traders to submit all regulatory documents through one digital platform instead of multiple agencies.

These outputs are expected to reduce clearance times, enhance data sharing, and improve transparency in cross-border processes.

Already, the momentum from the workshop has prompted immediate action. According to officials, consultations are underway to pilot extended hours at the Lavumisa Border Gate before the end of the year, with a long-term goal of establishing 24-hour operations.

Observers say the coordinated approach now adopted by Eswatini represents a shift in how the country handles trade logistics from agency-specific mandates to a shared vision of national competitiveness.

The completion of the CBM workshop, coupled with the emerging plan for No-Stop Borders, positions Eswatini among the region's most forward-looking nations in trade facilitation.

"This is not just about customs or infrastructure. It's about changing the culture of how we do business at the border. What we are witnessing is the foundation of a truly modern, efficient, and collaborative trade environment," said Dlamini.



▲ Business Eswatini CEO E. Nathi Dlamini.



▲ Business Eswatini launched the historic workshop to streamline border management in the country

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS BRIEFS

ERS-EPTC partnership now live across Eswatini

IT'S now all systems go for the Eswatini Revenue Service (ERS) and Eswatini Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (EPTC) partnership, which officially went live this week. From Monday, October 20, citizens were able to pay for a variety of government services at 16 post offices across the country marking a major step in bringing government services closer to the people.

Stocks rise and gold dips as investors regain confidence

LONDON Stocks edged up on Tuesday, taking comfort from a possible easing in trade tensions between the U.S. and China and an ebbing of nerves over credit risks in the banking sector, which in turn nudged gold lower. In Asia, the near-certainty of Sanae Takaichi becoming Japan's next prime minister briefly sent Tokyo's Nikkei to a record high and dented the yen.

Oil prices stabilise as oversupply concerns ease

LONDON — Oil prices steadied on Tuesday on easing concerns about an oversupplied market and the trade dispute between the U.S. and China, the world's top two oil consumers. Brent crude futures were up 7 cents, or 0.11 per cent, at \$61.08 a barrel at 1320 GMT. The U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude (WTI) contract for November delivery, set to expire on Tuesday, was up 14 cents, or 0.24 per cent, to \$57.66.



Notes/Cash		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	16.9053	17.3679
G.B. Pound	22.5931	23.2660
EURO	19.6547	20.2661
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

The Eswatini economy slipped into negative territory in the second quarter of 2025, with new data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO) showing a slight but notable contraction in overall output.

According to the CSO's latest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates, real economic activity measured at constant prices to reflect actual production volumes fell by 0.34 percent in the second quarter compared to the same period in 2024.

The results mark a slowdown from the moderate growth recorded a year earlier and underline the growing strain across several key sectors.

The report points to a broad-based decline in goods-producing industries, led by Manufacturing, Construction, and Agriculture. Together, these sectors dragged down the national output, reversing the fragile recovery that had begun to take shape in 2024.

According to the report, the Manufacturing sector, long regarded as one of the country's economic anchors, posted the sharpest decline among major industries.

Real output in the sector fell by 2.59 percent year-on-year in the second quarter of 2025. This contraction effectively ended the rebound the industry experienced last year, when improved production levels had raised hopes of a sustained recovery.

"The downturn also follows a steep drop between the fourth quarter of 2024 and the first quarter of this year, suggesting that the challenges facing manufacturers are deepening rather than easing," states the report in part.

However, the CSO did not specify the exact causes of the decline. Still, analysts often point to rising input costs, weak external demand, and supply chain disruptions as recurring pressures on local factories.

The result has been lower production volumes and reduced export competitiveness factors that continue to weigh heavily on one of Eswatini's largest employers and exporters.

The slowdown extended beyond manufacturing, with the Construction and Agriculture sectors both registering significant declines.

"Construction activity dropped by 5.19 percent compared to the same quarter last year, deepening a downward trend that began in 2024. The reduction signals weaker investment in infrastructure, housing, and other building projects. Reduced public spending and tighter private sector investment may also have contributed to the ongoing slump," reads the report in part.

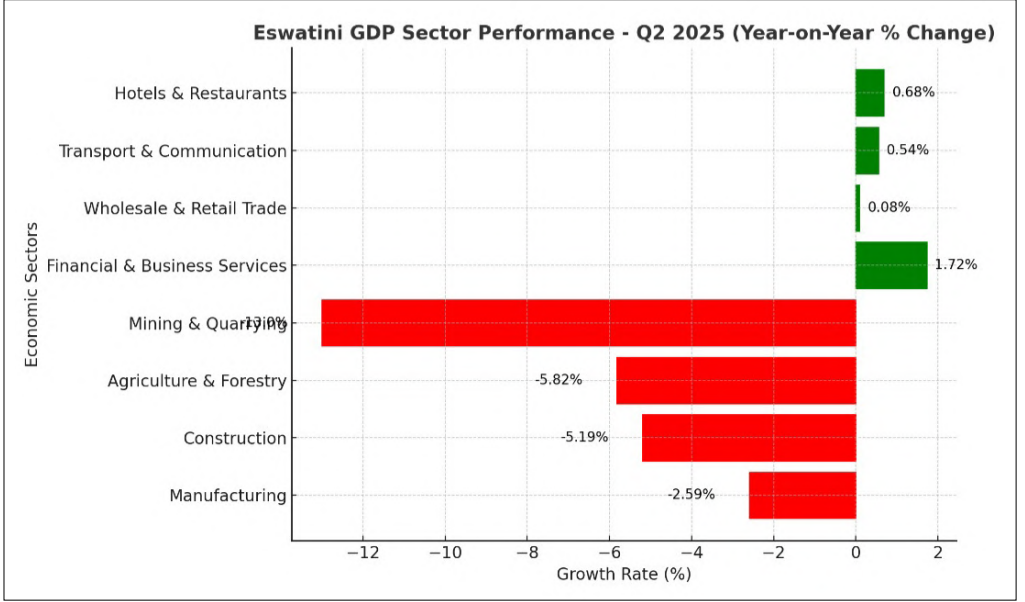
Agriculture and Forestry, another pillar of the economy, recorded an even steeper fall, with real output shrinking by 5.82 percent year-on-year.

Meanwhile, the report notes that, the decline reflects the continued vulnerability of the sector to changing weather conditions, rising production costs, and operational difficulties affecting both smallholder and commercial farmers.

Mining and Quarrying performed even worse, plunging by more than 13 per cent in real terms. This steep contraction highlights the instability facing Eswatini's resource-based industries, where production is often influenced by volatile global prices and unpredictable operating environments.

Combined, these declines in the primary and secondary sectors signal reduced activity in the backbone of the country's real economy where goods are produced, exported, and form the

Eswatini economy contracts in Q2 ... manufacturing leads decline



base of national income.

While the goods-producing side of the economy faltered, some areas of the service sector offered a limited cushion against the overall decline.

The Financial and Business Services sector remained the strongest performer, expanding by 1.72 percent during the quarter.

This steady growth indicates ongoing resilience in financial intermediation, professional services, and related business activities.

However, the momentum was not strong enough to offset the losses elsewhere. Wholesale and Retail Trade registered only a marginal increase of 0.08 percent, pointing to sluggish consumer spending and subdued domestic demand.

The Transport and Communication sector grew slightly by 0.54 percent, while the Hotels and Restaurants industry a key indicator of tourism performance rose by just 0.68 percent compared to last year.

The modest increase in hospitality suggests a flat tourism season, with limited growth in visitor numbers and spending.

Overall, the tertiary sector maintained positive growth but at a level too low to counterbalance the deep contractions in production industries.

Furthermore, the second quarter results underscore the challenges facing Eswatini's economy as it moves into the latter half of the year.

The contraction of 0.34 percent, though modest in scale, highlights broader weaknesses in output and investment.

"The slowdown in manufacturing and construction, combined with shrinking agricultural production, points to declining business confidence and reduced capital formation. For a small, trade-dependent economy, these signals are concerning especially as the country continues to grapple with external pressures such as regional competition and fluctuating export demand," stated Economist Mkhosi Thwala when speaking on the report.

He further mentioned that, Government efforts to stimulate recovery through public investment and industrial support will likely be key in determining whether growth stabilizes in the second half of the year.

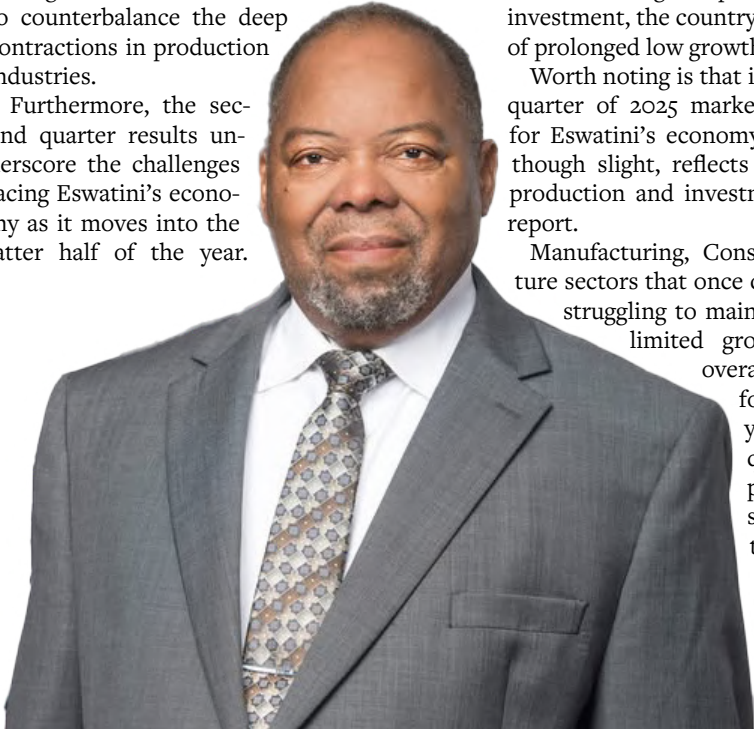
Thwala said attention may need to focus on improving manufacturing capacity, reviving construction activity, and supporting agricultural resilience amid changing climate conditions.

The CSO's report paints a clear picture: while the service sector remains steady, the foundation of Eswatini's real economy is under strain.

Without targeted policy action and renewed investment, the country risks entering a period of prolonged low growth.

Worth noting is that in summary, the second quarter of 2025 marked a challenging phase for Eswatini's economy. The decline in GDP, though slight, reflects deeper weaknesses in production and investment, according to the report.

Manufacturing, Construction, and Agriculture sectors that once drove recovery are now struggling to maintain momentum. With limited growth in services, the overall economic outlook for the remainder of the year depends on how quickly confidence and productivity can be restored across the country's core industries.



Minister of Economic Planning and Development
Dr Thambo Gina.

By Delisa Magagula

IT’S now all systems go for the Eswatini Revenue Service (ERS) and Eswatini Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (EPTC) partnership, which officially went live this week.

From Monday, October 20, citizens were able to pay for a variety of government services at 16 post offices across the country marking a major step in bringing government services closer to the people.

The initiative allows members of the public to process and pay for services from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport without visiting traditional revenue offices.

This is the first phase of a national rollout that will eventually extend to all 35 post offices under EPTC, ensuring every region has access to government payment services.

The services are currently available at the following post offices:

- Hhohho Region: Mbabane, Swazi Plaza, Lobamba, Piggs Peak
- Manzini Region: Manzini, Matsapha, Malkerns, Mankayane
- Shiselweni Region: Hlatikhulu, Nhlangano, Hluthi
- Lubombo Region: Simunye, Siteki, Tshaneni, Siphofaneni, Matata

At these locations, citizens can pay for:

- Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Trade: Trading and liquor licences, company registration
- Ministry of Home Affairs: Birth, marriage, and death certificates, passports, travel documents, national IDs, permits, and visas
- Ministry of Public Works and Transport: Drivers’ licences, professional driving permits, vehicle registration and renewals, change of ownership, and related services.

Further details are available on the ERS website at www.ers.org.sz.

EPTC Acting Managing Director Lungile Nxumalo described the partnership as a milestone for Eswatini Post, saying it aligns with the organisation’s mission to ensure no Liswati is left behind.

“This collaboration reflects what Eswatini Post stands for accessibility, convenience,

ERS–EPTC partnership now live across Eswatini



▲ ERS Commissioner General Brightwell Nkambule.

and inclusion,” Nxumalo said.

With more than 30 post offices nationwide, EPTC has evolved into a multipurpose service hub, handling everything from mail and money transfers to insurance collections and utility payments. The addition of government payment services now makes post offices a one-stop point for both personal and official transactions.

At the Mbabane Post Office, Phindile Motsa, a small business owner, said she was able to renew her trading licence in less than fifteen minutes.

“Normally I’d spend half the day at Revenue, but it was quick and smooth, this is really helpful for people who work we can

do everything in one stop without leaving town,” she said.

In Matsapha, Sabelo Dlamini, a professional driver, processed his vehicle renewal while Gugu Mabuza from Nhlangano applied for a passport at her local post office. Both described the experience as straightforward.

“It’s closer, cheaper, and the staff were helpful, for those of us in rural areas, this is a big relief. We don’t have to spend money travelling to Manzini or Mbabane just to make a payment,” Dlamini said.

Meanwhile ERS Commissioner General Brightwell Nkambule said the collaboration supports the national transformation agenda and the implementation of the

Second Schedule of the Revenue Act of 2008, which consolidated all government revenue collection under ERS.

“This marks a significant milestone. We begin with 16 strategically located post offices, with more to follow in the coming months. This partnership expands access and reduces the time and cost citizens spend to reach our services,” said Nkambule.

This rollout represents Phase II of the Revenue Takeover, following Phase I in April 2024 when ERS began collecting trading licence and company registration fees.

With Phase II, all remaining revenue functions previously managed by the Treasury Department have been fully transferred to ERS.

Public trust strengthened as ERS scores 70%

The launch comes at a time when ERS has recorded notable progress in customer satisfaction and digital transformation. The organisation’s Net Promoter Score (NPS)

This is a key indicator of customer trust and service quality now stands at 70%, reflecting strong public confidence in its operations.

Between March 2022 and March 2025, ERS’s NPS grew from 6.7% to 70%, demonstrating improvements in efficiency, customer experience, and responsiveness.

The agency says it will continue using feedback to enhance service delivery and maintain accountability. For citizens, especially those in rural communities, the ability to make payments at nearby post offices reduces travel costs and waiting times. For government, the system strengthens revenue compliance, improves transparency, and supports Eswatini’s long-term digital transformation goals.

With the system now live, both ERS and EPTC say they are confident the partnership will make public services more accessible, reliable, and citizen-focused bringing government operations closer to where people live and work.

EYA National Gala dinner rescheduled to November

By Delisa Magagula

THE Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, in partnership with the Small Enterprises Development Company (SEDCO), has confirmed the new date for the Entrepreneur of the Year Awards (EYA) National Gala Dinner.

The event will now be held on November 7, 2025, instead of the earlier scheduled date of October 22.

The annual EYA Gala celebrates Eswatini’s leading entrepreneurs and innovators whose businesses drive national growth and job creation.

Speaking at a press briefing, Minister Manqoba Khumalo said the event reflects the country’s commitment to His Majesty’s vision of producing Eswatini’s first billionaire

business.

The awards mark the culmination of a nationwide selection process identifying outstanding enterprises with potential for international competitiveness, in line with the MSME Policy (2024–2029).

The programme supports innovation, market expansion, and the development of a robust entrepreneurial culture.

Title sponsor First National Bank (FNB) Eswatini has contributed over E1.7 million towards the grand prize and regional awards, underscoring the strength of public-private collaboration in promoting business excellence.

The Ministry and SEDCO encourage all stakeholders, partners, and investors to update their calendars for November 7, 2025, when the nation will once again honour the spirit of enterprise and innovation. The statement was issued by the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Manqoba Khumalo.



▲ The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, in collaboration with SEDCO announced the rescheduling of the Entrepreneur of the Year Awards National Gala Dinner.

By Amanda Cooper

LONDON Stocks edged up on Tuesday, taking comfort from a possible easing in trade tensions between the U.S. and China and an ebbing of nerves over credit risks in the banking sector, which in turn nudged gold lower.

In Asia, the near-certainty of Sanae Takaichi becoming Japan's next prime minister briefly sent Tokyo's Nikkei to a record high and dented the yen.

U.S. President Donald Trump said he expected to reach a fair trade deal with Chinese President Xi Jinping when the two meet next week in South Korea, and played down the risks of a clash over the issue of Taiwan.

The prospect of a resolution helped bolster investor sentiment, along with a deal between Australia and the United States for the supply of rare earth materials.

Investors buy the dip

Investor confidence was hit hard last week as a clutch of bad loans at U.S. regional banks ignited concern over credit risks that threatened to spill into the broader markets. The prolonged U.S. government shutdown also weighed on risk assets.

But these worries have abated somewhat and prompted investors to buy the dip ahead of earnings from several large firms.

"The market has hurdled the wall of worry with ease, with new capital injected into risk and fresh oxygen into the market's lungs," said Chris Weston, head of research at Pepperstone.

That said, European Central Bank chief economist Philip Lane on Tuesday issued a stark warning for euro zone banks, saying

Stocks rise and gold dips as investors regain confidence



▲German share price index DAX graph is pictured at the stock exchange in Frankfurt, Germany.

they could come under pressure in a scenario in which dollar funding dries up.

"The combined presence of substantial USD-denominated off-balance sheet exposures and volatile funding means that sudden changes in these net exposures cannot be ruled out," he said.

He cited April's extreme market turmoil, in which the dollar and safe-haven U.S. Treasuries sold off hard, which he said made it more difficult for euro zone banks to rely on their dollar-denominated liquid assets.

Daiwa Capital Markets economist Chris Scicluna said Lane's remarks spoke to the concern among investors about pockets of risk building across the U.S. financial sector, as investors pile into areas such as AI or

credit, and what may happen if those trends reverse.

"One of the big focuses has been on the private credit strains recently in the regional banks. And quite clearly, if there's a sudden pullback in or sudden problems in the U.S. financial sector, it will have a significant impact on European banks and others," he said.

"The tone of the speeches out of the (ECB) Governing Council has been, on balance, becoming more cautious, more attuned to risks and downside risks," he added.

The ECB, which meets next week, is not expected to deliver a rate cut any time soon, compared with the Federal Reserve, which could deliver as many as three rate cuts in

the next six months, based on market-based expectations.

Investors jump back in

The chance of a series of U.S. rate cuts, along with comments from White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett that the federal government shutdown is likely to end this week also encouraged investors to dive back into equities.

A broad rally sent all three major U.S. stock indexes to a sharply higher close overnight with chip stocks hitting a record high.

In Europe, the STOXX 600 rose 0.1 per cent to trade narrowly below record highs, while U.S. stock futures, edged down 0.1 per cent. Analysts currently expect third-quarter S&P 500 earnings growth, on aggregate, of 9.3 per cent year-on-year, marking an improvement over their 8.8 per cent growth estimate as of October 1.

In currencies, the dollar rose 0.7 per cent against the yen to 151.83.

Takaichi is expected to be pro-stimulus and against further hikes in interest rates, a negative for the Japanese currency and bonds but a plus for equities. The Nikkei hit a record peak just shy of a landmark 50,000 points.

The Bank of Japan meets next week. Traders are attaching a 20 per cent chance to a hike, although Governor Kazuo Ueda has so far left his options open by offering few clues on the timing of a rate hike.

Gold prices fell 2 per cent to \$4,262 an ounce, just below Monday's record high of \$4,381.21 an ounce. (Reuters)

Oil prices stabilise as oversupply concerns ease

By Seher Dareen

LONDON — Oil prices steadied on Tuesday on easing concerns about an oversupplied market and the trade dispute between the U.S. and China, the world's top two oil consumers.

Brent crude futures were up 7 cents, or 0.11 per cent, at \$61.08 a barrel at 1320 GMT. The U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude (WTI) contract for November delivery, set to expire on Tuesday, was up 14 cents, or 0.24 per cent, to \$57.66.

Prices stabilised on Tuesday after hitting their lowest levels since early May on Monday, amid mounting concerns of oversupply and slowing economic growth resulting from an escalation in the U.S.-China trade dispute and a move by OPEC+ to push ahead with plans to add more oil to the market.

US crude stockpiles likely rose last week

Both WTI and Brent have started to shift to contango market structures, where prices for immediate supply are lower than for later delivery and which typically indicate that near-term supply is abundant and demand is declining.

Some analysts, however, said the concerns over an oil glut were overblown.

Ole Hansen, head of commodity strategy at Saxo Bank, said the market structure



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

had not yet shifted to levels that would encourage large stock builds.

"This may signal a market reluctant to fully price in the anticipated surplus - perhaps reflecting expectations that the glut will prove smaller than feared," he said.

The International Energy Agency's forecast for a massive surplus would lead to a strongly upward-sloped futures curve, called super contango, but that has not emerged so far, UBS analyst Giovanni Staunovo said in a note.

Oil inventories and fuel demand have been key factors supporting the market. A preliminary Reuters poll released on Monday ahead of weekly reports from the American Petroleum Institute and the EIA showed that U.S. crude oil stockpiles likely rose last week while those for gasoline and diesel are expected to have fallen.

For the week ending October 10, crude builds were more than expected, while gasoline and diesel stocks declined more than forecast. (Reuters)



▲The Warner Bros logo is seen during the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in Cannes, France.

Warner Bros Discovery ponders outright sale

WARNER Bros Discovery is considering an outright sale following unsolicited interest, the company said Tuesday, in what would be the latest shakeup across legacy media.

Shares of the company rose 9.4 per cent in morning trading. Netflix and Comcast are among the interested parties, CNBC reported Tuesday, citing sources, following earlier reports that Paramount Skydance CEO David Ellison was also in talks to acquire the combined company.

Warner Bros Discovery - home to CNN, HBO Max and the "Harry Potter" franchise - announced plans in June to split its Warner Bros and Discovery Global units by next year to separate its growing streaming business from its slower-growing legacy cable network unit.

A sale or a split would be one of the most consequential reshaping moments in the

media industry, potentially prompting other legacy media houses to revisit their own structures. Streaming has fundamentally reshaped the media industry, leaving traditional broadcasters with mounting debt, higher content budgets and fragmented viewership.

"This latest development potentially opens up further discussions with interested parties. For Hollywood and other traditional media giants, all roads lead to consolidation," PP Foresight analyst Paolo Pescatore said.

The company already rejected an initial bid from Paramount, Bloomberg News reported earlier this month, because the offer of around \$20 per share was too low.

Reuters could not immediately verify the CNBC report.

The company is also considering an alternative separation structure that would enable a merger of Warner Bros and a spin-off of Discovery Global. (Reuters)

PERIODIC Labs, a new startup by one of OpenAI’s most respected researchers, Liam Fedus, and his former Google Brain colleague, Ekin Dogus Cubuk, came out of stealth last month with an enormous \$300 million seed round. It was led by Felicis and included a who’s who of angels and other top VCs.

The startup began when Fedus had a conversation with Cubuk (whose friends call him “Doge”) about seven months ago. Cubuk was one of Google Brain’s foremost machine learning and material science researchers.

After endless Silicon Valley takes on how generative AI would radically change scientific discovery, they decided that the pieces were finally in place to make this a reality. Or at least to found a startup that attempted it.

“There are a few things that happened in the LLM field, in experimental science and in simulations that kind of made this the right time,” Cubuk told TechCrunch.

For one, he said, robotic arms that could handle powder synthesis — the process of mixing and creating new materials — had recently proved themselves reliable. For another, machine learning simulations had become efficient and accurate enough to model complex physical systems such as those needed to develop new materials.

And, third, LLMs now had powerful reasoning capabilities — in part through the work of Fedus and his team at OpenAI. Fedus was one of the small team that created ChatGPT to begin with and was running OpenAI’s uber-important post-training team, which refines models after their initial development.

Stitched together, the picture was clear: A simulation could theoretically discover new compounds, a robot could mix the materials, and an LLM could analyze the results and suggest course corrections. AI-automated material science was ready to be built.

In fact, Cubuk was one of the researchers who published a groundbreaking paper in 2023 documenting a precursor Google research project. The team built a fully automated, robotic-powered lab and created 41 novel compounds from recipes suggested by language models.

Equally importantly, the founders realized that even failed experiments would be valuable for their new startup because data is

OpenAI, Google researchers set off \$300mln VC frenzy



▲ The startup began when Fedus had a conversation with Cubuk (whose friends call him “Doge”) about seven months ago. Cubuk was one of Google Brain’s foremost machine learning and material science researchers.

the lifeblood of AI. AI science offered an entirely new source for real-world training and post-training data. This could, the founders believe, turn the existing scientific motivation system on its head, which seeks success, not exploration, rewarded via paper publication and grants.

“Making contact with reality, bringing experiments into the loop — we feel like this is the next frontier,” Fedus told TechCrunch.

Felicis wins the deal; OpenAI does not invest

After that discussion with Cubuk, Fedus went to the powers that be at OpenAI to share his resignation and his plan. He then gleefully tweeted to the world that he was leaving with what appeared to be OpenAI’s blessing and investment.

That investment didn’t actually material-

ize, however. OpenAI is not a backer of Periodic, the founders confirmed to TechCrunch. And while Fedus declined to say why, they actually didn’t need OpenAI’s money. Fedus’ tweet set off a frenzy of VCs courting the company. “There was almost like a feeling of being reverse pitched. One investor actually wrote a love letter to Periodic Labs,” Fedus laughed, explaining that neither he nor Cubuk “knew what to make of it.” Others sent multi-page documents pitching themselves.

But the first call that they actually took was from Peter Deng, a former OpenAI colleague turned investor for top-tier seed firm Felicis. (Deng left OpenAI for Felicis at the start of 2025.)

“Liam is a very big deal within OpenAI, very well loved and an extremely impactful researcher,” Deng told TechCrunch. “When

I heard he left, I texted him immediately.”

Deng met Fedus for coffee in the Noe Valley neighborhood of San Francisco. Hyped on caffeine and enthusiasm, Fedus invited Deng to finish their conversation on a walk over the area’s famously hilly terrain. Pitch walks may be a Silicon Valley trope, but they also really happen.

The chilly day had turned hot. Deng, wearing a sweater, sweated and scrambled to keep up with the fit and friendly Fedus until the founder said something that “literally stopped me in my tracks,” Deng told TechCrunch. He told Deng that “everyone talks about doing science, but in order to do science, you actually have to do science,” Deng recalls.

In other words, they needed to give AI a fully equipped wet lab to try its ideas in a real-world, controlled setting.

“The truth about these models is that everything that the models know is within normal distribution. We take a bunch of data, and it can just regurgitate what it knows,” Deng said.

Discovering something new has to involve testing hypotheses.

“And I committed on the spot, in the middle of the hills of Noe Valley, to write the check,” Deng says. Fedus also remembers the moment Deng asked how he could be involved, and Fedus told him the startup needed cash for laptops and a temporary office. And “he’s like, great, I’ll give you money right now. And it was just this huge vote of confidence.” But Deng didn’t actually whip out his checkbook on the street. He went back to the office elated over the deal only to encounter Felicis’ lawyer, who pointed out that the firm couldn’t promptly sign a contract. (Tech Crunch)

Airbnb becoming more social by allowing users to connect with fellow travelers

AIRBNB announced new features today that will help users connect with fellow travelers while participating in the same activity.

The company is also improving search by suggesting properties that you might have missed due to your filters, and has redesigned the Maps view to let you search for points of interest such as nearby landmarks, attractions, and restaurants.

Earlier this year, Airbnb launched Experiences, activities like cooking classes and guided tours that travelers can book and enjoy with other travelers. At the time, the company hinted that the Airbnb app would lean toward fostering connections with fellow travelers. The company is now releasing a few features in that direction.

First, when you book an experience, you will be able to see the names of other people who are in the same experience, along with where they are from. Once the event is over, you can connect with others you met during the experience to exchange photos or make

further plans through the app’s chat feature after sending them a message request. Users will also see people they met in a new Connections tab on their profile.

Airbnb said it has thought carefully about privacy, and the app gives you full control over sharing information with others. When you book an experience, you will get a pop-up asking if you want to share your profile picture, name, and where you are from. If you dismiss that, the app defaults to “don’t share,” and others will only see the picture and initials you choose to share.

The company added that you can always block and report other users if you feel uncomfortable, and the community team will review your report. Plus, you can always remove the connection even after accepting a request.

During the company’s summer release in May, it teased these features with the goal of increasing interaction between users that could result in more bookings for both properties and experiences. However, it will have to deal with the

moderation issues that any chat-based social platform faces.

As part of its winter release, the company is introducing a new search experience to show properties just outside users’ search criteria. To do this, the company will show three kinds of new scrollable lists (called carousels) in the search results. The first one will show properties that might be just outside your chosen price range; the second will show properties that might not have some of the amenities, such as a pool, that you selected; and the third one will show properties in nearby locations that would fit your criteria.

The company said it observed that people often change search parameters to look at different properties and even book ones that are outside their initial constraints. With this new search experience, it is proactively showing some of those properties.

Airbnb is also improving its maps view, which will now show points of interest around you, including landmarks, attractions, and restaurants. (Tech Crunch)



▲ The startup began when Fedus had a conversation with Cubuk (whose friends call him “Doge”) about seven months ago. Cubuk was one of Google Brain’s foremost machine learning and material science researchers.

UN rights work faces existential threat amid funding crisis

UNITED Nations rights work is being disproportionately targeted for cuts amid a deep UN funding crisis, posing an “existential threat” to vital investigations and accountability efforts, a report warned Tuesday.

Washington’s failure to pay UN membership fees, coupled with Chinese and Russian efforts to defund rights bodies, could deal a death-blow to the UN battle against rights abuses, the NGO report said.

“At a moment of sweeping UN reform and financial crisis, these efforts... pose an existential threat to the UN’s human rights system,” the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) cautioned.

Already, a high-level war crimes investigation ordered by the UN Human Rights Council into violence sweeping the Democratic Republic of Congo has failed to launch due to lacking funds.

And other investigations warn cuts could leave them severely crippled.

The UN is mulling reforms including a 15-percent cut across its 2026 budget to tackle chronic liquidity problems exacerbated by US President Donald Trump’s policies.

The United States, the UN’s biggest contributor, paused funding after Trump returned to power in January.

As of September 30, Washington owed \$1.5 billion in unpaid UN membership fees, including \$300 million in arrears from previous years, according to the ISHR report.

China, the second-highest contributor, has fuelled the crisis by paying its dues “extremely late”, the report said.

Beijing only completed last year’s payment on December 27, essentially rendering the funds unusable since UN financial rules require budget amounts not spent by year-end to be returned to member states, ISHR said.

UN chief Antonio Guterres’ UN80 reform proposal aims to spread cuts across the body’s three pillars: peace and security; human rights; and sustainable development.

But ISHR warned the cuts would “disproportionately hit the human rights pillar due to years of underfunding”.

The human rights segment receives less than one percent of the total UN budget.

Cuts being discussed could take a heavy toll on the UN rights office OHCHR, which has already seen tens of millions of dollars in US voluntary funds evaporate this year.

The agency has received just 73 percent of member states’ promised regular budget contributions for 2025, leaving \$67 million unpaid. (Reuters)



▲ United Nations rights work is being disproportionately targeted for cuts amid a deep UN funding crisis.

Mchunu concedes recording of Mkhwanazi threatening him ‘doesn’t exist’

PARLIAMENT’S ad hoc committee is proceeding with the conclusion that the recording of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) police commissioner Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi allegedly threatening Police Minister Senzo Mchunu does not exist.

This comes after Mchunu last week accused Mkhwanazi of making threats in response to his decision to dismantle the political killings task team (PKTT).

Mchunu made another appearance before the committee on Tuesday, where MPs grilled him on his 31 December 2024 directive to disband the PKTT and the recording of a phone call between Mkhwanazi and his chief of staff, Cedric Nkabinde.

Mchunu’s immediately vs Ramaphosa’s immediately

ANC MP Thokozile Sokanyile told the minister that the timing of his directive to disband the PKTT was questionable, provided that national police commissioner Fannie Masemola was on leave at the time.

“When I look at that correspondence and its timing, I can say that it was contentious, given that you were aware that the national commissioner was on leave. You didn’t even brief the national commissioner on your intentions to disband the PKTT. It even had that ‘immediate effect’ on it, hence I’m saying it was contentious,” said Sokanyile.

Read more

In the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, President Cyril Ramaphosa would address the nation, where he would announce the immediate implementation of a lockdown. Mchunu explained that his “immediately” should not be confused with Ramaphosa’s.



▲ Suspended Police Minister Senzo Mchunu at the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee inquiry into alleged corruption and political interference in the criminal justice system at Good Hope Chambers.

“Immediate effect should never be read outside of the reference to the preliminary report [on 20 January 2025] and other meetings because it will be out of context. There was a clear indication that there would be engagements in the future,” explained Mchunu.

“There was nothing wrong with the timing from where I’m sitting because I wanted a situation where, at the beginning of the year, we would have something concrete and clearly identified that it was something I wanted to get rid of immediately, amid all other issues.”

Mchunu further explained that when he saw the commissioner at a funeral on 28 December 2024, he had “no solid idea” how to engage with him on the disbandment.

“It was only after relaxing at home that

everything shaped up in my mind,” he said.

Last week, Mchunu instructed parliament to play an audio recording that he believed would prove Mkhwanazi’s anger over the PKTT disbandment to the point where he allegedly threatened the minister.

That was not the case.

MPs grilled him on Tuesday, with EFF MP Julius Malema slamming the minister for playing a recording he had not listened to himself.

“The minister does not have the recording he told us about. He wanted us to listen to something he never listened to himself because it’s not there. We don’t have a recording; that recording doesn’t exist,” said Malema.

(Reuters)

I. Coast town rocked by massacre uses marriages to make peace

IN a town in Ivory Coast torn apart by election violence and mass killings more than a decade ago, peace activists say they have hit on a way to help avoid a repeat of the bloodshed - “reconciliation marriages” between rival groups.

Dozens of men and women from different communities have tied the knot in recent years. Many had joined youth groups and other activities organised by local nonprofit Limpia, which offered support and counselling to any couples that got together.

As the West African nation prepares for another election on Saturday, Limpia is pressing on with its work and planning for another run of 10 weddings in Duekoue in a mass civil ceremony early next year.

“These marriages will create many grandsons and great-grandsons ... who will be forced to share everything in terms of heritage and language,” Limpia director Alexis Kango said as he scrolled through photos on his phone of couples he has worked with.

Two who have already taken the leap, with Limpia’s support, are Matinez PODE, from the Guere group, and Elisabeth Kouadio Ahou, a Baoule. They told their parents they were getting married in 2012, a year after the massacre in Duekoue.

The killings took place at the height of fighting set off by former President Laurent Gbagbo’s refusal to concede defeat to his successor, Alassane Ouattara.



▲ Matinez PODE, from the Guere ethnic group, and his wife Elisabeth Kouadio Ahou, from the Baoule community, both from the two communities formerly opposed during the civil war and the post-election crisis, hold hands during a walk near a mountain in Duekoue, Ivory Coast.

Human Rights Watch said in a report that year that pro-Ouattara forces killed several hundred people, targeting members of the Guere group who are broadly seen as pro-Gbagbo.

Quattara’s government has denied supporting the forces that carried out the massacre. At the time, both Kouadio and PODE’s parents tried to talk them out of the union. Kouadio’s relatives even repeated false rumours that Gueres practice cannibalism. (Reuters)

EUROPEAN leaders said on Tuesday that current battle lines in Ukraine must be the starting point for any peace talks, as preparations for a summit between Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin appeared to have hit a snag.

Trump, who last week spoke by phone to Putin and met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has said he aims to hold a summit with the Russian leader in the Hungarian capital Budapest within two weeks in a push to end the war in Ukraine.

But summit preparations appear to be held up after a preliminary meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov - expected to take place in Budapest on Thursday - was postponed.

Lavrov and Rubio spoke by phone on Monday. Lavrov's deputy, Sergei Ryabkov, said on Tuesday it was premature to speak about the timing of any face-to-face meeting between them.

Hungary's foreign minister, Peter Szijjarto, was in Washington on Tuesday, where he posted on Facebook: "We have some serious days ahead".

Ukraine's European allies have been concerned that Trump could meet Putin for a second time without getting any serious concessions from the Russian leader. Putin rebuffed Trump's call for a ceasefire when Trump hosted Putin in Alaska in August.

In a statement on Tuesday, the leaders of European powers including Britain, France, Germany and the EU, said they "strongly support President Trump's position that the fighting should stop immediately, and that the current line of contact should be the starting point of negotiations".

Ukraine and its European allies have long insisted on an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine at present battle lines before peace talks, a position Trump publicly endorsed last Friday after a meeting with Zelenskiy at the White House.

Moscow has said it wants Ukraine to cede more territory as one of several conditions it

Europeans say Ukraine battle lines must be start point for talks

... as Trump-Putin summit plans hit snags



▲ Trump, who last week spoke by phone to Putin and met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has said he aims to hold a summit with the Russian leader in the Hungarian capital Budapest within two weeks in a push to end the war in Ukraine.

has raised for a ceasefire.

Reuters and other news organisations reported that Trump's meeting with Zelenskiy behind closed doors last week

was contentious, with the U.S. president repeatedly using profanity and pushing Zelenskiy to accept some Russian demands.

But Zelenskiy has painted the meeting

as a success because it ended with Trump publicly backing a ceasefire at the present lines, Kyiv's longstanding position.

(Reuters)

Russian bombardment plunges thousands of Ukrainians into blackout

RUSSIAN attacks killed four people and left hundreds of thousands without power and many without water in Ukraine's Chernihiv region on Tuesday, Moscow's latest salvo in a campaign to break its neighbour's energy system ahead of winter.

The energy ministry said in the morning that the regional capital, also called Chernihiv, and the northern part of the province had lost all electricity supply after strikes on power facilities.

By the afternoon, Reuters reporters in Chernihiv saw that power supply had been restored to some homes.

A subsequent daytime attack by about 20 Russian kamikaze drones killed four civilians and wounded at least seven more in the town of Novhorod-Siverskyi, local officials said.

They did not specify what the drones had been targeting, but said the town, which is about 20 miles (32 km) from the Russian border, had suffered significant damage.

In Chernihiv, residents filled containers with water from cisterns on the street, and people headed to "invincibility points" -- tents with stoves and generators



▲ People shelter inside an invincibility centre, where they can use Internet connection, charge their devices and warm up, amid water and electricity supply outage, after critical infrastructure was hit during Russian drone attack, in Chernihiv, Ukraine.

set up by authorities to give locals some access to heat and electricity.

"It's hard," said a weary 45-year-old nursery assistant, Nina Dymyrets, who was sitting in one of the tents with her two grandsons. "One child didn't go to nursery because there was no power, another

didn't go to school because there was no power and no lessons either."

Chernihiv region, which borders Russia and had a pre-war population of just under a million, has been hammered by drone and missile attacks on its power infra-

structure in recent weeks, causing regular blackouts and disrupting daily life.

The attack also targeted the neighbouring Sumy region, where local authorities said nine people were hurt.

The energy ministry said in the

morning that emergency crews were initially unable to start work at damaged power facilities because of the lingering threat of Russian drones.

It accused Russia of circling drones above damaged facilities to make it impossible to carry out repairs and "deliberately prolong the humanitarian crisis".

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy later wrote on Telegram that repairs were underway. "Russia's tactics are to murder people and terrorise them with the cold," he said.

"(Russian President Vladimir) Putin pretends to be ready for diplomacy and peace negotiations, while in reality this night Russia launched a brutal missile and drone attack," Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X.

Russia has consistently hit Ukrainian energy facilities since launching a full-scale 2022 invasion of Ukraine, maintaining that they are a legitimate military target in war.

Chernihiv's acting mayor, Oleksandr Lomako, said Moscow was seeking to deprive local residents of power and heat ahead of the cold winter.

(Reuters)

THE OUTPOURING WORSHIP NIGHT:

Pastor Collen Maluleke joins star-studded lineup

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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THE upcoming ‘Outpouring Worship Night’ has announced the addition of the esteemed Pastor Collen Maluleke and the dynamic Sound of Goshen to their already impressive lineup.

This event, scheduled for Friday, October 31, 2025, at 6 pm, will be hosted at the Jesus Calls Worship Centre, located opposite Voctim in Matsapha, and is open to the public free of charge. Pastor Collen Maluleke, a globally recognised worship minister and visionary leader of Goshen City Church, is set to bring his powerful anointing and spiritual presence to the night.

Known for his transformative worship songs such as ‘Ukhona,’ ‘Shine Jesus Shine,’ and ‘You Are Glorious,’ Pastor Collen has established himself as a household name in contemporary African gospel music. His previous collaborations with the iconic Spirit of Praise and his close spiritual relationship with Apostle Joshua Selman have further solidified his influence and leadership within the gospel community.

Joining Pastor Collen will be Sound of Goshen, adding a fresh and vibrant sound to the worship experience. They will share the stage with other notable worship ministers, including Oncemore Six, Shekhinah Motsa, Psalmist Muzi, and the in-house worship group Rushing Wind Music, all of whom have been praised for their anointed and dynamic worship styles.

The event, aptly named ‘The Outpouring,’



▲ Pastor Collen Maluleke.

carries deep spiritual significance. Pastor Jude Kasaro, the youth leader of Gideon’s Army, articulated the vision behind the worship night, emphasizing its prophetic alignment with Joel 2:28. He explained that the event is designed to be a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit, especially

for young people, as they prepare for what they believe to be the final and greatest move of God before the return of Jesus Christ. “We are in the last days, preparing for the greatest and final move of God before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Pastor Kasaro stated.

Mzayoni joins Bongekile Nxumalo’s live recording

FANS of gospel music are eagerly anticipating a special occasion as renowned gospel artist Mzayoni Tsabedze gets ready to appear 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. The event is more than a musical showcase; it is a spiritual milestone that reflects Nxumalo’s deep commitment to the calling she believes God has placed on her life.

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.

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 minimal, so run while you still can get them,” she urged.



► Mzayoni Tsabedze.



▲ Sancheziey.

‘Siyabonga Gogo’ visuals surpasses 50 000 YouTube views

THE pulse of Eswatini’s music scene beats stronger than ever as musician Sancheziey celebrates a significant milestone with his heartfelt single “Siyabonga Gogo.”

Released on August 2, 2025, the official music video has garnered over 50 000 views on YouTube, captivating audiences with its powerful message of gratitude and vibrant visual storytelling. In a jubilant post on his Facebook page, Sancheziey shared his excitement: “50 000 views for Siyabonga Gogo music video,” he said.

“Siyabonga Gogo,” which translates to “Thank You, Grandma,” is more than just a song; it is a heartfelt tribute to the unsung heroes in our lives, particularly grandmothers, who embody strength, wisdom, and unconditional love. The lyrics resonate deeply within the Eswatini community, touching on themes of appreciation and reverence that are woven into the fabric of daily life. Through warm and affectionate verses, Sancheziey honours these matriarchs, acknowledging their vital role in nurturing and guiding generations.

Project

The music video is a collaborative masterpiece featuring notable artists such as Stufuza We Country, Mbali Shongwe, Nhlanganiso Mapot, and Sthera Maggz. Each artist infuses the project with their unique style and energy, creating a rich, multi-dimensional experience that elevates the song’s message. Their performances blend seamlessly, offering viewers a vibrant auditory and visual journey that complements the song’s emotional core. Behind the scenes, the creative vision of Cece Mntimandze Mageangelubisi has been instrumental in bringing Sancheziey’s artistic concepts to life. The meticulous production quality is evident throughout the video, showcasing a blend of creativity and professionalism.

Ejal’dini Studios, renowned for their innovative approach to music video production, crafted the stunning visuals that perfectly capture the song’s heartfelt sentiment. Their expert cinematography and attention to detail immerse viewers in a narrative that is both visually captivating and emotionally stirring.

Since its release, “Siyabonga Gogo” has sparked meaningful conversations about the importance of gratitude and the recognition of those who shape our lives. Sancheziey’s ability to translate personal experiences into universally relatable music has fostered a strong sense of community among listeners.

Blaq Major to ignite Brema Takeover Party

Stories by Siphesihle Dlamini
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SOUTH African top producer Blaq Major is set to headline the highly anticipated Brema Takeover Party.

Scheduled for October 31, 2025, at Neves Bar in KaNongoloza, this party is poised to be a landmark celebration featuring an impressive lineup of artists, including Snapking, Snolove, Mr Kangaroo, Ugesi Oshisayo, and Preedy P, among others. Best of all, entry to this vibrant event is completely free, inviting music lovers from all walks of life to join the festivities.

The Brema Takeover Party is more than just a night of music; it is a cultural gathering that embodies the spirit of unity and joy through sound. With Blaq Major at the helm, the event promises an immersive experience where electronic music enthusiasts and casual partygoers alike can revel in the dynamic energy of live performances. With its stellar lineup, free admission, and the magnetic presence of one of South Africa's most exciting producers, this event is a must-attend for anyone passionate about electronic music and the pulsating sounds of Amapiano.

Blaq Major, hailing from the bustling city of Durban, has rapidly risen to prominence as a formidable force in the electronic music scene. His signature sound is a thrilling blend of electronic beats seamlessly fused with the unmistakable energy of Amapiano, a genre that has revolutionised South African music and captivated audiences worldwide.

What distinguishes Blaq Major is his



▲ Blaq Major.

remarkable ability to craft music that resonates deeply on multiple levels. His electrifying performances are defined by pulsating basslines, catchy melodies, and infectious grooves that compel audiences to surrender to the rhythm and dance with

abandon. Each track he spins transports listeners to the vibrant streets of Durban, where the heartbeat of the city pulses through every beat, creating a euphoric celebration of life, culture, and community.

Lomasoul leads Karaoke Night

ESWATINI'S music landscape is poised for an electrifying boost this week as the acclaimed local artist Lomasoul prepares to headline the highly anticipated Karaoke Nights event.

Set to take place this Wednesday at IF's Lounge, the evening is set to be an exceptional fusion of music, laughter, and community spirit, running from 6 pm well into the night. The spotlight will shine brightly on Lomasoul, a powerhouse in Eswatini's music scene, known for her dynamic stage presence and impressive vocal abilities. Her participation is expected to elevate the night, drawing her devoted fans and new listeners alike. Complementing her performance will be the skilled Resident DJs, with Thando taking on the role of Master of Ceremonies.

In an exclusive interview, Mistosoul, the Entertainment Manager at IF's Lounge, expressed his excitement about the growing popularity of Karaoke Nights, now entering its third month. He revealed that the event's success stems from a deep passion for music and a commitment to nurturing local talent. "We have been receiving massive support for this mid-week concept," Mistosoul said. "Our love for music and commitment to supporting local artists and musicians in the country drives us to create this platform. This event is another opportunity to uplift local musicians while providing our patrons with an entertaining and laid-back atmosphere where live musicians can mesmerise the audience."

Unique

Mistosoul also highlighted the event's unique theme, which goes beyond a simple dress code. The denim and white theme is designed to foster a sense of unity and style among attendees, transforming the night into a celebration of community and culture. "The denim and white theme add a fashionable touch to the evening, making it not just a night of music but also a celebration of community and culture," he explained. He further emphasised the warm hospitality that IF's Lounge is renowned for, assuring that every guest and performer will feel welcomed and appreciated. "We pride ourselves on delivering the best experience for our guests, and we want every musician and DJ to shine on that night," he added.

A standout feature of Karaoke Nights is its inclusivity and accessibility. Participation is completely free for both artists and patrons, removing financial barriers and encouraging a diverse array of musicians to take the stage. This open-door policy creates a vibrant melting pot of talent, from seasoned performers to emerging artists eager to share their voice. "We believe in creating an environment where everyone can participate and enjoy music together," Mistosoul stated.

Indian show for Gifted Kosie

ESWATINI'S dynamic female DJ, Gifted Kosie, is poised to make waves on the international music scene as she headlines the much-anticipated 'Chisa Nyama' event in India.

The event is set for November 8, 2025. This milestone marks a significant leap in her career, providing a global platform to showcase not only her exceptional talent but also the rich and vibrant music culture of Eswatini to a diverse and enthusiastic audience. The 'Chisa Nyama' event is set to bring together eclectic sounds and artists from around the world, offering Gifted Kosie an unparalleled opportunity to expand her artistic horizons and connect with new fans across continents.

In a recent interview, she expressed heartfelt gratitude and excitement about this international breakthrough. "I feel so appreciative and honoured because I get a chance to connect with diverse cultures, and gain new perspectives," she shared.

This India performance is part of a broader international tour that includes a show in Uganda, underscoring her growing footprint in the global music industry. For Gifted Kosie, international gigs are more than just performances; they are vital steppingstones in her artistic journey. She explained that exposure to different audiences and musical styles "builds my confidence, leading me to be a more resilient DJ." These experiences also spark creativity, inspiring fresh ideas that fuel her ambition to "build a sustainable and lasting

international presence."

Gifted Kosie's vision extends beyond personal success; she is deeply committed to representing Eswatini with pride and authenticity. She views her role as a cultural ambassador, tasked with sharing the passion, resilience, and creativity that define her homeland. "On stage, I promise to deliver a high-energy, and memorable experience that leaves audiences with a great impression of the music and culture," she affirmed. Her dedication to professionalism and cultural representation continues off stage as well. "Off stage, I will maintain professionalism, embodying the best qualities of the country's passion, and resilience, and creativity," she added.



▲ Gifted Kosie.

▲ Lomasoul.

Jub Jub set to make comeback on ‘Uyajola 9/9’

RAPPER and TV host Molemo “Jub Jub” Maarohanye is gearing up for a highly anticipated return to the controversial reality show “Uyajola 9/9”, which is set to premiere on November 2 on Moja Love (DStv channel 157).

While many fans expressed excitement over the comeback of the popular host, Jub Jub is simultaneously facing a legal storm, having been sued for R12 million by a woman whose privacy he allegedly invaded.

According to reports emerging online, Sheron Tose has taken legal action against the host, stemming from an incident where the “Uyajola 9/9” crew supposedly barged into her and her partner’s bedroom.

The allegations state that both she and her partner were filmed without consent while in a vulnerable state, leading to claims of emotional trauma and humiliation.

The lawsuit, which is currently before the Johannesburg High Court, has ignited a heated de-

bate online, with responses divided.

Some fans have rallied behind Jub Jub, expressing their ongoing support, while others have raised ethical concerns about the show’s practices and the impact they might have on the lives of those featured in its segments.

@DMN4ever commented on X: “They must just cancel that show.. It’s f***in useless and it only favours that other gender..!!!!” ”There are multiple human rights violations. This show was flawed from the word go. They even discontinued it in America because of the violations. It’s illegal to follow someone for days without their consent, invade their privacy in any form, and videotape them without consent.” This is not the first time Jub Jub has found himself in hot water. He previously made headlines for being investigated over a R120 000 fraud case.

Despite the setbacks, fans can’t wait to have Jub Jub back on their screens.

(IOL)



▲ *Rapper and TV host Molemo “Jub Jub” Maarohanye.*

Akon jumps into country music

AKON is beginning to carve a new path for himself in the country music scene.

In a recent Instagram post, the multi-platinum artist revealed plans to re-interpret his pop and R&B hits through a country lens.

“Great songs live forever,” he wrote. “It’s just about how you tell the story.”

The post included a clip in which Akon spoke directly to fans, sharing both excitement and apprehension about the project. “I don’t know about this one,” he laughed, “but I’m ready to try something new.”

His message reflected a willingness to experiment while acknowledging that some listeners might be sceptical.

Looking back on his early career, Akon reminded followers that risks have long been part of his approach to music. He recalled the release of his breakthrough single, “Locked Up”, saying, “Nobody wanted to hear about life in prison. But I gave it a chance, and look what happened.” In a recent interview with the Grammy Awards team, he described the country project as a long-standing passion of his.

“Country is a passion project. It’s an opportunity for me to actually do what I always wanted to do. Now that I’m fully independent and own my master’s, I’m free to do what I need to do and put my money where I want to put it,” he said.

Gospel star mourns the loss of his son

SOUTH African gospel singer Ntokozo Ngongoma is mourning the loss of his son, Ziphozenkosi Mpumelelo Ngongoma.

Friends, fans and colleagues have shared messages of support as the artist navigates this difficult time.

Ngongoma posted on Facebook, writing: “Greetings family. Our hearts are torn as we share this sad news with you. Please pray with us during this season

mourn our beloved son Ziphozenkosi Mpumelelo Ngongoma.”

The family released a statement announcing Ziphozenkosi’s passing, saying he departed peacefully at midnight following a brief illness.

“Ziphozenkosi was a light in the lives of those who knew him, a gentle soul whose warmth, laughter and kindness touched everyone he met,” the statement read.

“His passing leaves an unfilled void in the hearts of our family and all who held him dear. We are grateful for the love, support and prayers that have poured in. Your compassion brings comfort and strength.”

The family has requested privacy while finalising burial arrangements, with details about the memorial and funeral to be shared soon. Tributes came in from fans and friends.

Bule Kovane wrote: “Askies Bhuti, please accept our heartfelt condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult period. May God give you strength to navigate through this trying time, uThixo anipholise anixolise (May God heal and comfort you).”

Mncedi Puwe said, “May the good Lord comfort your family.”

Nokukhanya Msomi shared, “Condolences to you and your family. May you find comfort in Jesus Christ.”

Zithobile Ndlovu wrote: “I cannot even begin to imagine what you must be going through as parents and his family. May the Lord be with you and comfort you during this difficult time.”

(IOL)

Makhanj on collaboration, creative freedom in ‘Mix It Up Vol.4’

SOUTH African artist Makhanj, born Mbali Kanyisile Makanya, continues to carve her space in the global music scene with two standout features on “Mix It Up Vol. 4”, a cross-continental amapiano project executive produced by Uncle Waffles.

The EP brings together various artists, including Nigerian singer Fave, UK’s Ghetts, and North London’s Chy Cartier, alongside South Africa’s own Ice Beats Slide, TK Creedlion, Sbuda Maleather and Makanya.

On “Mix It Up Vol. 4”, Makanya collaborated with Chy Cartier on “Jozi” and with Ghetts on “Bad One”, along with Royal MusiQ and TK Creedlion, showcasing her ability to blend local sounds with international energy while adding that Mzansi flair.

While on “Jozi”, she offers her hypnotic vocals with a chant that is true to the South African sound and can resonate with many. She brings a catchy vibe to Royal MusiQ’s heavy, bass-driven production, while “Bad One” captures the grit and flair of Ghetts’ lyricism.

Both songs reflect her growing reputation as a bridge between different cultures, with one rooted in authenticity but open to new influences.

Speaking to “Independent Media Lifestyle”, the amapiano vocalist reflected on the experience, saying, “It felt so reassuring as an artist because it’s one of those indicators of you being on the right track. It was incredibly motivating.”

She recalls that both collaborations came together organically. “They came together by virtue of us all being in the studio. We had so much fun recording them and listening to the many beats the producers had,” she add-



▲ *South African artist Makhanj, born Mbali Kanyisile Makanya,*

ed. “For ‘Jozi’, Chy had already written the first verse, so I just had to come in and do the chorus, and what I did on the song was very much an amplification of her energy on the first verse. Royal MusiQ provided the perfect canvas for us to jump on.”

On “Bad One”, she adds, “Ghetts was so smooth with it, freestyling throughout. It was such a delight working with him and TKCreedlion. I love having the opportunity to try new things, so this was just an opportunity to stretch myself and see what other things I can do. I loved that for me.”

The result is a rich blend of different voices and sounds that celebrates collaboration while maintaining its African heartbeat.

When it comes to balancing amapiano’s South African roots with global influences, Makanya believes the key lies in authenticity.

(IOL)



▲ *South African gospel singer Ntokozo Ngongoma is mourning the loss of his son, Ziphozenkosi Mpumelelo Ngongoma.*



DIARRHEA can do much more than ruin your vacation.

It sometimes triggers irritable bowel syndrome, a chronic condition that can linger months or even years after you've arrived back home.

"It's important for people to know this can happen," said gastroenterologist Xiao Jing Wang, MD, an assistant professor at the Mayo Clinic. "We have a lot of patients whose symptoms don't go away, and they start doing all types of testing. It's worth it to know that sometimes, these infections can have aftereffects that can linger."

The Basics: Diarrhea

Tired of running to the bathroom? Here's how to ease that troublesome diarrhea.

Nearly 1 in 8 people who get traveler's diarrhea continue to have symptoms for at least six months, one study found. Of those, nearly 80% have symptoms for at least a year.

IBS causes belly pain and bloating, as well as diarrhea or constipation – or both. The after-travel condition is called post-infectious IBS (PI-IBS), and it can become a lifelong issue for some. "About 25% to 30% continue to have symptoms after 10 years," said Wang.

What Is Post-Infectious IBS?

Traveler's diarrhea, which is caused by bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, essentially falls under the umbrella of food poisoning. You get it from picking up pathogens like campylobacteria and E. coli from poorly sanitized food or water when traveling.

Post-infectious IBS is when your symptoms persist after the infection clears.

"We now believe that a lot of IBS in this country may have started with an enteric [food poisoning] infection," said Bradley Connor, MD, medical director of the New York Center for Travel and Tropical Medicine in New York City.

There are different theories as to how traveler's diarrhea triggers IBS, and experts agree it's likely a combination of things. One theory is that it triggers an autoimmune response due to a mistaken identity of a protein.

The bacteria most commonly linked to traveler's diarrhea – shigella, campylobacter, salmonella, and E. coli – release a toxin. This toxin resembles a protein in the intestines, called vinculin, that's important for healthy gut function.

Common Causes of Diarrhea

Diarrhea may be brought on by an infection or new medication. At what point should you consult with your doctor?

The theory is that the immune system can confuse the two molecules. So it produces antibodies to the toxin – but also to vinculin, said Mark Pimentel, MD, executive director of the Medically Associated Science and Technology program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Disrupting vinculin can lead to poor gut function and an overgrowth of certain bacteria, which contributes to IBS. Pimentel published a study that found 56% of people with IBS tested positive for vinculin antibodies.

Traveler's diarrhea can also be caused by parasites, like giardia, which has the highest rate of triggering PI-IBS. But giardia doesn't release the toxin, meaning something else is probably at play.

It is likely a disrupted gut microbiome, said Wang. Traveler's diarrhea changes the

makeup of good bacteria and bad bacteria in the gut. "We know that there are major distortions in the microbiome when people travel," said Connor.

The good bacteria have anti-inflammatory properties and help control how well something can pass from the gut to the bloodstream. If the gut gets overwhelmed by bad bacteria, it can lead to chronic inflammation, changes in how the intestines empty, and ultimately the symptoms of IBS.

Risk Factors for Post-Infectious IBS

It's not known why some people develop PI-IBS, though certain things can increase your risk. It's more common in women and young people, and some may be more likely to have it because of their genes, said Wang.

The risk tends to be higher if you have a severe case of food poisoning. Also, if you already have PI-IBS, you have a higher

chance of getting it again or having more severe symptoms.

What Can You Do to Reduce Your Risk?

The most important thing is to protect yourself from getting traveler's diarrhea. If you're visiting high-risk regions, such as developing countries in Central and South America, Mexico, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, take these precautions:

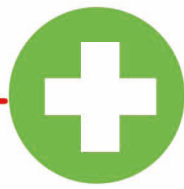
- Avoid raw food, including unpasteurized dairy products, and raw or undercooked meat, fish, shellfish, eggs, and produce.
- Avoid salads, uncooked vegetables, and raw and unpeeled fruit.
- Avoid food and beverages from street vendors.
- Avoid tap water and ice unless it's known to be safe, and use bottled water instead.
- Taking bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol) preventively has been shown to

reduce the risk of getting traveler's diarrhea. But the recommended dose is two tablets four times a day, which is inconvenient, said Connor.

For people with a higher risk, such as those with PI-IBS or inflammatory bowel disease, doctors may prescribe an antibiotic called rifaximin preventively if they're travelling to high-risk regions. Rifaximin is poorly absorbed, so it doesn't negatively affect the gut biome. It's approved to treat traveler's diarrhea but used preventively off-label (meaning doctors prescribe it to help prevent diarrhea, even though it's not FDA approved for that use).

Lastly, if you get food poisoning, avoid taking antibiotics for mild traveler's diarrhea. Antibiotics can make symptoms worse because they disrupt the microbiome even more. More severe cases caused by certain bacteria may need antibiotics. "It's OK to use them if your doctor says you need it," said Wang. **WebMD**





YOU know them by names like Ozempic and Wegovy, and for what they can do – help people lose weight.

But if you're among the roughly 1 in 8 Americans who've tried GLP-1 drugs – including newer options like Zepbound and Mounjaro, which target more than one hormone – you could be at risk of nutrient deficiency, muscle loss, and even bone loss, unless you make diet and exercise part of the picture.

Watch Out for These Weight Loss Myths

Should you steer clear of carbs? Do smaller, frequent meals keep the pounds off? What's the secret to shedding pounds?

“Although GLP-1 medications are a major breakthrough in obesity management, lifestyle factors still matter,” said JoAnn E. Manson, MD, a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “Outcomes of patients on these medications are much better with attention to adequate protein intake, healthy diet, good hydration, and regular muscle-strengthening exercises to mitigate the loss of lean body mass.”

Manson is a co-author of new guidelines to help, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, one set for doctors and another for patients. “These represent what we believe are the first systematic tools to implement lifestyle interventions alongside GLP-1 medications,” said Farhad Mehrtash, MPH, a co-author of the guidelines and a graduate of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Here's a three-pronged approach to make the most of modern weight loss medications.

1. Maintain Your Muscle

With any weight loss, including that with GLP-1s, you don't get to pick where you lose it. “Loss of muscle and lean body mass is common on these medications, on average about 25%,” said Manson. Over time, that can lead to bone loss too, especially in older adults or those with sedentary lifestyles.

Eat plenty of protein, the guidelines say. Aim for 1 to 1.5 grams per kilogram (or about half a gram per pound) of body weight each day – or 20 to 30 grams per meal. That's slightly higher than the standard 15 to 30 grams per meal recommended for all adults.

Exercise is also critical. Start with an evaluation of where you are now, and slowly work up to 150 minutes of cardio (like walking) and two to three 30-minute strength sessions each week, the CDC's recommended activity level.

Don't just rely on your doctor to guide you. “Most doctors won't have the time to thoroughly go through your exercise history, current lifestyle, and any hurdles to beginning exercise,” said Samuel Klein, MD, a professor of medicine and nutritional science at Washington University in St. Louis. “Work with a trainer or someone who is an expert in how to exercise.”

Insurance might cover personal training (if a doctor prescribes it as part of a medically necessary treatment plan), but a better bet: Ask your health care provider if it offers a formal weight management program – many qualify for reimbursement.

2. Sidestep Side Effects

The right eating strategy can help offset potential digestive side effects, such as constipation, nausea, and heartburn. “I recommend smaller, more frequent meals,



Weight loss drugs work – but only if you do these 3 things



decreasing fat and salt intake, and chewing slowly so that you reduce the amount of bulk leaving your stomach,” said Klein. That helps your gut better manage the slower-than-usual movement of food into your intestines caused by GLP-1s.

Staying hydrated helps keep things moving, too – and dehydration is a risk of these medications, which suppress thirst along with appetite. The guidelines encourage eight to 12 glasses of water a day, along with soups and water-rich fruits and vegetables like cucumbers and watermelon.

Keep dehydrating drinks with things like alcohol and caffeine to a minimum.

3. Keep These Habits – Even Post-Meds

These medications are intended for long-term use, said Jody Dushay, MD, a co-author of the guidelines and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. “That said, once people reach a weight loss plateau at the highest tolerated dose, then you move to the weight maintenance phase

of treatment.” That could mean “lowering the dose, staying on the same dose but extending the number of days between injections, or, least commonly, a trial off medication,” Dushay said.

In general, keeping weight off is notoriously difficult, but research suggests that the key to success comes down to one thing: consistency. “Weight regain is highly individualized and depends on many factors,” said Dushay. Chief among them is an “ongoing engagement in a healthy lifestyle.” **WebMD**

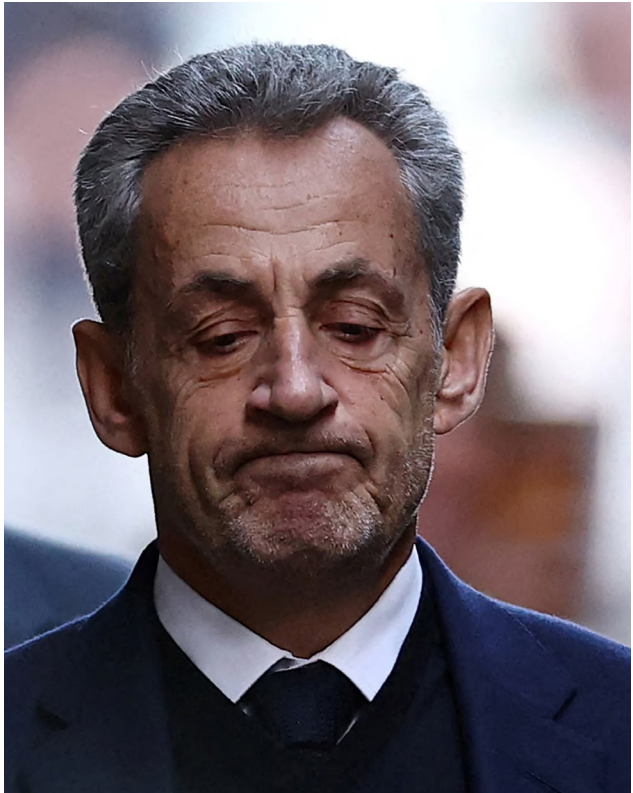
Around the world in pictures



▲ A view of the construction on the East Wing of the White House where U.S. President Donald Trump's proposed ballroom is being built, in Washington.



▲ Emergency personnel work near a cargo plane lying partially in the sea after it veered off the runway during landing at Hong Kong International Airport.



▲ Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy leaves his house on the day of his incarceration at the Sante prison to begin his five-year prison sentence for criminal conspiracy over attempts to raise campaign funds from Libya, in Paris, France.



▲ A man reacts as waves crash against the Kalk Bay harbour wall during high tide in Cape Town, South Africa.



▲ Fans with shaved heads sit in a cinema hall waiting for a free preview of Yorgos Lanthimos's new film 'Bugonia', in Culver City, California.



▲ A dog belonging to the Armed Police Force jumps through a ring of fire while performing a trick during Kukur Tihar as part of Tihar, a term used in Nepal for Diwali, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

BAYERN Munich coach Vincent Kompany did not waste time thinking about his new contract, saying his main request to club bosses was that Tuesday's announcement did not disrupt preparations for Wednesday's Champions League match against visiting Club Brugge.

The German champions announced a contract extension with the Belgian coach by two years following Bayern's winning start to the season with 11 wins from 11 matches across all competitions.

"I did not spend any time thinking about it," Kompany told a press conference. "The question came and my only request was that this was not going to become a big issue. It will be done with quickly and we can focus on the next game."

"It was no big issue and no talks. Quickly and clearly and then we can focus on the next game. There are not too many better places (to work at) than Bayern."

Kompany won the Bundesliga with Bayern in his first season in charge and the German champions are now on seven league wins from seven matches to top the league table.

In the Champions League they are seeking their third straight victory when they host the Belgian club on Wednesday in a match

Kompany is happy with fuss-free Bayern contract extension

for which Kompany, a product of Belgian rivals Anderlecht, feels like a bit of a rivalry.

"I just thought about it. We play a Belgian team but my youth was spent at Anderlecht. There is a bit of a competition feeling," he said.

"I have a lot of respect individually for people at Club Brugge but if it is only about me, there is a bit of that rivalry feeling."

One experience he is not keen on revisiting was the racist abuse he and his then Anderlecht team had to endure at a game in Brugge in 2021 when he was coaching the Brussels club.

"It's a really difficult answer. I was the captain of the national team, I played for the national team for 17 years and you go to a place and your staff gets called 'a brown monkey'," Kompany said.

"It is not easy. I don't want to focus on anything else right now. After the game I was speechless, four years later I am still speechless."

(Reuters)



▲ Bayern Munich coach Vincent Kompany.



▲ Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) lifts the Larry O'Brien Championship Trophy as the Oklahoma City Thunder celebrate after winning game seven of the 2025 NBA Finals against the Indiana Pacers at Paycom Center.

Record 135 international players on NBA opening-night rosters

A record 135 players born outside the United States were on National Basketball Association opening-night rosters, the NBA said on Tuesday, with 43 countries represented across six continents.

The 2025-26 NBA season tips off on Tuesday, marking the 12th consecutive year that opening-night rosters have had at least 100 international players in the U.S.-based league.

The previous record for international players was

125, a mark reached at the start of the 2023-24 season.

or a 12th consecutive season, Canada is the most-represented country outside the United States with 23 players, a group headlined by Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, who led the Oklahoma City Thunder to the NBA title in June.

France, Australia and Germany were the joint-second-most represented countries outside the U.S. with seven players each, followed by Serbia (6).

The Atlanta Hawks

feature a record-tying 10 international players, followed by the Portland Trail Blazers and Golden State Warriors with seven apiece.

The NBA also said there are a record 71 European players on opening-night rosters, a star-studded group that includes Giannis Antetokounmpo (Greece), Nikola Jokic (Serbia) and Luka Doncic (Slovenia) and Victor Wembanyama (France).

(Reuters)

Curran's maiden ton puts Zim on top

ZIMBABWE'S Ben Curran scored his maiden test century to help his side to a 198-run lead over Afghanistan on the second day of the one-off test in Harare, with the visitors 34-1 in their second innings at the close on Tuesday.

The 29-year-old Curran, brother of England players Sam and Tom Curran, made 121 as Zimbabwe were bowled out for 359 in response to Afghanistan's 127 all out at the Harare Sports Club.

Curran, whose father Kevin also played for Zimbabwe, featured in a 99-run partnership with Sikandar Raza for the fifth wicket before Raza was caught for 65. Zimbabwe resumed on 130-2 overnight with Curran on 52 and he reached his century off 217 balls before being trapped lbw. Seamer Ziaur Rahman took 7-97 on test debut for Afghanistan, the second best figures for his country in tests behind Rashid Khan's 7-66, also against Zimbabwe. (Reuters)



▲ Zimbabwe's Ben Curran scored his maiden test century.

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You have read the rest, now read the best



▲ Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe reacts with coach Xabi Alonso.

Alonso hails prolific Mbappe

REAL Madrid manager Xabi Alonso praised Kylian Mbappe for his stellar form this season, as the French forward tops both the LaLiga and Champions League scoring charts ahead of Wednesday's home clash with Juventus.

Mbappe, 26, who joined Real from Paris St Germain last season, has scored 10 goals in nine LaLiga matches and five in two Champions League appearances, alongside three goals for the French national team this term.

His form has helped Real make a strong start under Alonso, winning 10 of their 11 games across all competitions. The Spanish side lead LaLiga with 24 points, two ahead of Barce-

... ahead of Juventus clash

lona, and have secured maximum points in the Champions League.

"It's not just the goals," Alonso told reporters on Tuesday. "His influence is almost as important in terms of his teammates following him with and without the ball. He's helping us. He's scored goals everywhere. The influence, as well as the goals, is what the team needs."

Real face a struggling Juve side who have not won in more than a month and sit seventh in the Serie A standings, four points behind leaders AC Milan. However, Alonso warned against taking the Italians lightly.

"We're on alert for Juve tomorrow. Any Italian team that's struggling can be dangerous. We must not forget history. Juve are a big club, both now and in the past. They have some very good players," he said.

"It's a European classic. They have faced each other many times, and I've played in some of those games. We feel very prepared. We want our third Champions League victory and to get off to a great start.

"We need the stadium. People go to the Bernabeu wanting to see big games. We have to give them what they want so that they respond in kind." (Reuters)

'It could get ugly for us'

THE Sharks will be relieved that injury and Springbok-related absences will not affect them during their one-month break, which begins after their United Rugby Championship clash with Scarlets at Kings Park on Saturday.

It is an ideal time for the Durban side to secure their first URC win of the season, now in round five, and go into the break with some confidence after three losses and a draw.

A victory would also help them climb from 14th on the table.

Seven Springboks (Eben Etzebeth, Siya Kolisi, Ox Nche, André Esterhuizen, Ethan Hooker, Edwill van der Merwe and Grant Williams) will likely be unavailable for the away clash against Connacht after the break, on 29 November, as they are part of the Bok squad due to play on five straight Saturdays next month, finishing against Wales on that day.

The Sharks already have a long list of player injuries, including Springboks Aphelele Fassi and Trevor Nyakane and the latest being former Bok prop Ruan Dreyer (knee).

Makazole Mapimpi's red card against Ulster for a tip tackle will possibly keep him out of action for a few games too.

It leaves the Sharks in a similar position to last year, where injuries and Springbok absences made the going very tough.

"It could get ugly for us," head coach John Plumtree said of the situation.

He said rectifying the mistakes of their 34-26 loss against Ulster was crucial. "We've only got seven days to get it right.

"We've got to be able to be harder on ourselves and look at the reasons why and where we can be better. That's during our preparation, that's coaches and everyone."

A silver lining for the Sharks was the signing of Bok prop Thomas du Toit for next season.

The 30-year-old tighthead will leave Premiership champions Bath to rejoin the team of his youth, for which he racked up over 100 caps between 2014 and 2023.

"A good signing for usm," Plumtree said. "Obviously, a good Sharks man, a lot of experience. Getting those types of characters back here in the jersey is a real positive for us."

After their URC match against Connacht, the Sharks play their opening Champions Cup match against Toulouse in France on 7 December. (The Citizen)



▲ Former Springbok prop Ruan Dreyer is the latest Sharks player to join the infirmary.

Forest hire ex-Everton boss Dyche to replace Postecoglou

NOTTINGHAM Forest have appointed former Everton boss Sean Dyche as their new manager, the Premier League club announced on Tuesday, following the sacking of Ange Postecoglou.

"The former Forest youth player joins the club on a contract running until the summer of 2027 and will take charge of his first match on Thursday night as the Reds take on FC Porto in the Europa League," Forest said in a statement.

Forest sacked Postecoglou barely 20 minutes after the final whistle blew in their 3-0 home defeat by Chelsea on Saturday, a loss that left the Midlands side 18th in the league standings with five points from eight matches.

Postecoglou's Forest reign of just 39 days makes the Australian the shortest-serving permanent Premier League manager to be sacked mid-season.

"A respected and experienced Premier League manager, Dyche brings the perfect blend of character, tactical acumen and proven achievement to guide the club through its next chapter," Forest said.

"As a former Forest youth player who lives locally, Dyche also has a deep understanding of the values and pride of Forest and its supporters." Dyche, 54, has been out of work since January when he was sacked by Everton after a poor run of results.

The Englishman's most notable managerial achievements came during his decade-long tenure at Burnley from 2012 to 2022. During that period, he guided them to promotion twice from the Championship, secured two top-half league finishes and led the club to European qualification for the first time in 51 years. (Reuters)



▲ New Nottingham Forest manager Sean Dyche looks on during a match.



▲ Women Football Association Chairman Bonginkhosi Mhlanga during the Imbube marathon.



▲ Boxing coach Maxwell Ngwenya and Muzi Shongwe during the race.

Sports personalities in Imbube marathon

Stories by Sibusiso Masilela
sibusisom@rubiconmedia.group

SPORTS integration was evident at the 2025 Imbube marathon, setting the stage for a diverse gathering of influential figures.

In line with this integration, several personalities attended the seventh edition of the prestigious marathon held on Sunday at Somhlolo National Stadium.

The football personalities include Premier League of Eswatini Chairman Polycarp

Dlamini, Eswatini Football Association Medical Committee Chairman Welcome Motsa, Women’s Football Association Chairman Bonginkhosi Mhlanga, and Manzini Wanderers Public Relations Officer (PRO) Mongi Simelane.

Other sports personalities included Mbabane Highlanders patron Musa Masuku, Boxing Coaches Maxwell Ngwenya and Muzi Shongwe,among others.

EWFA Chairman Bonginkhosi Mhlanga said the race helped to improve their health.

“I am happy to take part in the race, which improved my health, and I am looking forward to attending the next edition,” he said.

Wanderers PRO Mongie Simelane said he



▲ Manzini Wanderers PRO Mongi Simelane. was a regular participant in the race.

“I always attend the race, and it contributes to my healthy lifestyle. I will continue taking part in the race,” he said



Imbube marathon promotes athletics internationally – Zakhele

SOUTHERN African Confederation of Athletics (SACA) president Zakhele Dlamini believes the Imbube marathon contributes to the development of sports in the region.

Dlamini, who is also the president of Athletics Eswatini, said this after witnessing the seventh edition of the marathon over the weekend at Somhlolo National Stadium.

“We are happy with the attendance of regional runners, and this enhances the development of sports in the region. We commend the collaboration and unity among regional countries following the successful hosting of the region v marathon in Tshwane,” he said.

Dlamini also commended local Athletics performance in the race, following their gallant performances in the race.

“We are happy with the performance of our athletes in the race. This shows that we are on the right track as a country in terms

of conquering international competitions,” he said.

The male duo of Ncamiso Hlatshwako and Mancoba Sangweni conquered the 21 and 10km categories.

Hlatshwako is fresh from competing in the 2025 Region V marathon and further won the 5 000 m during the 2025 Confederation of Southern Africa Athletics regional championships held two months in Zimbabwe.

Female Correctional Service runner Thobile Ngwenyama clinched gold in the ladies’ section of the second biggest race.

He also commended Mancoba Nhlabatsi for his gallant performances on the day.

“We are proud of Mancoba for his resilience in the rave and we urge him to continue working hard in his career,”he said.

The Lesotho based Nhlabatsi finished second in the 42km category behind new champion Tete Tjiane.

10 km race

1.Manqoba Sangweni	00:31:07
2.Samuel Mathabatha	00:31:53
3.Prince Ndlovu	00:32:50
4.Sozabile Malinga	00:33:53
5.Musawenkosi Mamba	00:34:39
6.Thamsanqa Hunguana	00:35:20
7.Bukhosi Dlamini	00:36:37
8.Mmeleli Mkhonta	00:37:08
9.Sayitsheni Shongwe	00:37:19
10.Sithando Shongwe	00:37:23
11.Akhona Malindzisa	00:37:41
12.Sibandze Majahonkhe	00:38:00
13.Bongani Gama	00:38:11
14.Andile Magagula	00:38:34
15.Thokozeni Dlamini	00:39:02
16.Abner Zwane	00:39:14
17.Daryl Mokenzie	00:39:36
18.Sigoino Gwadze	00:39:43
19.Bhekumusa Sibandze	00:40:14
20.Moolisi Mvila	00:40:15
21.Sifiso Gina	00:40:20

40 km race

1.Charles Tjiane	02:33:04
2.Manooba Nhlabatsi	02:33:09
3.Ntokozi Nkonyane	02:33:35
4.Lungelo Nxumalo	02:35:15
5.Nkululeko Gama	02:37:18
6.Fikinkosi Zondo	02:37:43
7.Peter Muthubi	02:38:49
8.Itumeleng Phala	02:39:59
9.Thulane Magagula	02:40:32
10.Sifiso Ngcobo	02:43:41
11.Mancoba Sihlongonyane	02:44:27
12.Mancoba Tsela	02:44:59
11.Mancoba Tsela	02:44:59
12.Sihle Khumalo	02:45:57
13.Pfarelo Mathada	02:47:09
14.Lovers Hlatshwayo	02:48:52
15.Zibuse Austin Dlamini	02:50:09
16.Avhatalkali Khorommbi	02:51:09
17.Thokozeni Tk Dlamini	02:52:00
18.Professor Mthethwa	02:52:05
19.Nkululeko Mthembu	02:52:22
20.Thulani Lion Ngubane	02:53:53
21.Sipho Hlatshwayo	02:54:30
22.Moses Mthembiseni	02:55:06
24.Mduduzi Dlamini	02:59:00
25.Sifiso Vilakati	03:04:05
26.Promise Msitshana	03:04:22
27. Sibusiso Mamba	03:04:33
28.Nhlanhla Vilakazi	03:05:08
29.Mbuso Dlamini	03:05:58
30.Sbusiso Shabangu	03:07:06
31.Willie Lucky Bhembe	03:08:06
32.Bongani Dlamini	03:09:08
33.Maxwell Nzima	03:12:09
34.Mongi Zwane	03:12:32
35.Phumlani Nyembe	03:13:05
36.Sifiso Zimu	03:14:29
37.Emmanuel Mavundla	03:14:56
38.Rosina Kiboino	03:15:13
39.Nomvula Sithole	03:17:57
40.Phila Mangwe	03:18:09
41.Phumlani Siwela	03:18:16
42.Samkelo Shabangu	03:21:32
43.Michael Hauser	03:24:53
44.Mzwandile Dlamini	03:25:29
45.Diola Dlamini	03:25:32
46.Fana Vincent Nkosi	03:26:15
47.Nkosiyethu Nala	03:26:26
48.Samkelo Vilakati	03:28:43
49.Thamsanqa Ngwenya	03:28:47
50.Malungisa Mavuso	03:31:12

21 km race

1.Noamiso Hlatshwako	01:08:06
2.Mohau Rasogo	00:36:21
3.Sipho Mamba	00:36:09
4.Sipho Mndzebele	00:37:00
5.Kgaugelo Rasogo	00:37:09
6. Phumlani Jele	00:37:17
7.Melusi Khumalo	00:37:16
8.Ntuthuko Maseko	00:38:23
9.Phila Khumalo	00:38:09
10.Simpfiwe Dlamini	00:38:48
11.Mlandvo Matlala	00:40:05
12.Musa Vilakati	00:39:56
13.Mbhekwa Matsebula	00:41:31
14.Celumusa Dlamini	00:40:23
15.Njabulo Dlamini	01:21:11
16.Victos Vilakati	00:42:47
17.Goodwill Mashaba	00:43:02
18.Dootor Magagula	00:42:23
19.Sabelo Mkhonta	00:42:49
20.Mndeni Shabangu	01:03:06
21.Bhekisisa Khumalo	01:24:21
22.Siyabonga Tfwala	01:24:27
23.Bhekizwe Msibi	01:24:30
24. Mfundo Dlamini	01:24:34
25.James Matse	01:24:54
26.Bongumenzi Magagula	01:26:26
27.Sunday Nxumalo	01:26:34
28.Mfan’zile Magongo	01:26:39
29.Mayibongwe Dlamini	01:28:07
30.Samkeliso Shabangu	01:28:07
31.Mlondi Bhila	01:28:40
32.Simpfiwe Skhondze	01:28:50
33.Njabulo Zwane	01:29:05
34.Phumlani Masango	01:29:27
35.Helda chembeni	01:29:39
36.Sibusiso Matsebula	01:30:20
37.Sihle Dlamini	01:30:28
38. Faneleko Simelane	01:31:41
39.Siphiwe Mahlalela	01:31:44

Amawele's biggest clash ever!

By Chris Dlamini

CALL it a Mbabane mini derby if you want, but this Sunday, elite debutants Amawele FC will clash head-on with capital city giants Mbabane Highlanders.

The latter remains the country biggest and most successful team, making this fixture the biggest yet for the new boys from the country second-tier league. This matchup definitely is our PICK OF THE WEEK, alongside Young Buffaloes and Malanti Chiefs.

The latter two have their own story to finish - surely Buffaloes is like; 'We still know what you did last summer'. In case you have forgotten, it is Malanti that knocked Buffaloes out of the second edition of the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup recently, depriving them of the chance to defend their title. Our last pick is the tricky clash between Rangers and Manzini Wanderers - both sides are yet to win a match, and Rangers often makes life difficult for LiWeseli as Wanderers is fondly known. Who walks away victorious? Let's weigh in on these fixtures.

Can Amawele stun Highlanders?
Mbabane Highlanders vs. Amawele
Date: Sunday, October 26, 2025
Venue: Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini
Kick-off: 2pm

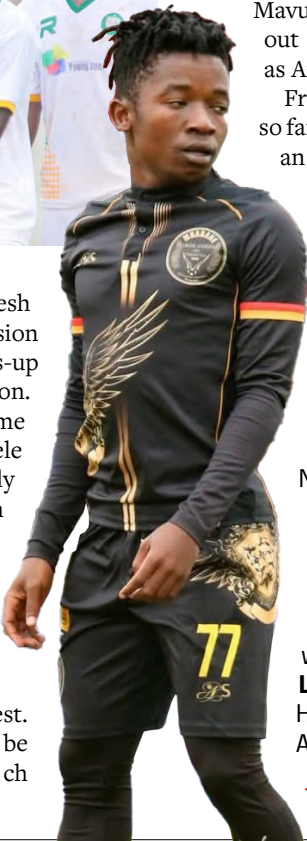


▲Amawele FC players.

Winning a football match must always feel good, and capital city giants Mbabane Highlanders know that already this season - they just outfoxed Manzini Sea Birds 2-0 at Mavuso Sports Centre, Manzini last Saturday. Moreover, Highlanders Chairman and attacking midfielder Andile Mpisane declared soon after they were going to win the next match and probably the league this season. The next match happens to be their mini derby rivals from Msunduzi, right where Highlanders has a strong fanbase in Mbabane. It is Amawele they meet next, and they will be aiming for nothing but a second win in three games.

By their standards, Inkunz'emnyama, as Highlanders is fondly known, remain favourites to take the maximum points from

the elite debutants who are fresh from the National First Division (NFD) League as runners-up to Malanti Chiefs last season. Making it an interesting game is that if you are an Amawele player right now, you definitely get the energy and motivation to play against such a big team. The coaches usually have an easy job on the players' mentality as they all want to be in this match to showcase their talent and probably attract interest. However, Highlanders will be expected to win with coach Ernest Mavuso at the helm.



He has the quality in the likes of former Royal AM star attacking midfielder Sicelo Hopewell Cele, wingers Siyabonga Mkhonto, Kenneth 'Mashaba' Moloto, goalkeeper Innocent Adja, and forward Siphamandla '24 Reasons' Maseko among others. Mavuso knows his rivals will be all out to frustrate him and his troops as Amawele seek their first elite win.

From what Amawele has shown us so far, they have the potential to cause an upset, but it will not be easy against a team of Highlanders quality with a super 12th man behind it on the stands. However, Amawele come to this fixture also gunning for the second win after edging Rangers 3-2 in their last match.

Key Players
Mhlengi Mngomezulu (Amawele striker)
Njabulo Magongo (Amawele striker)
Siphiwe Hopewell Cele (Highlanders attacking midfielder)
Siyabonga Mkhonto (Highlanders wing forward)
LOG STANDINGS:
Highlanders - 6th (3 points)
Amawele - 9th (3 points)

◀Siphiwe Hopewell Cele.



▲Action between Malanti Chiefs and Amawele at Ka Langa Technical Centre.



▲Buffaloes strikers Phiwa Dlamini and Bongwa Matsebula celebrating.

It's about revenge, summit for Buffaloes

By Chris Dlamini

Malanti Chiefs vs. Young Buffaloes
Date: Sunday, October 26, 2025
Venue: Killarney Stadium, Pigg's Peak
Kick-off: 3pm

Has this game come too soon for these two rivals? It is only in the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup 2025/26 last 16 in early September that they clashed, and the result went against the bigger side, Young Buffaloes. After a 1-1 draw in regulation time, Malanti won it in the dreaded penalty shootout and advanced.

This was a big blow for Emathole Ezinyathi (Buffaloes) to take as they were the defending champions. Currently sitting at the top of the standings, Buffaloes will be aiming at nothing other than a win to retain their position and avenge the 8Bet Trade Fair Cup setback.

Four points under their belt, Buffaloes

know only a win will keep them at the summit, or they will drop places down. They are level with second and third-placed Malanti and Ubombo Sugar.

So, it gets even more interesting that they play Malanti in the latter's backyard. Malanti is coming from a 1-1 draw with winless hub giants Manzini Wanderers, at result preceded by a 2-0 win over Amawele in the opening day fixtures. With all these, it is fair to say Buffaloes has the upper hand to get the maximum points, at least on paper.

Key Players
1. Siphosethu Mabilisa (Y. Buffaloes left back)
2. Innocent 'Makhehleni' Dlamini (Y. Buffaloes midfielder)
Zipho Ngoobo (Malanti Chiefs defender)
Daniel Appiah (Malanti Chiefs striker)
HEAD-TO-HEAD:
8Bet Trade Fair Cup 2025+26
Y. Buffaloes 1-1 M. Chiefs
(Malanti won 4-3 on penalties)

'Westians' in Rangers 'den of fire'

By Chris Dlamini

Rangers vs. Manzini Wanderers
Date: Saturday, October 25, 2025
Venue: King Sobhuza Stadium, Nhlanguano
IT'S a tricky one for Manzini Wanderers. Winless after two league games, the Westians, as Wanderers is also passionately known, will be looking for its first albeit in Rangers territory. Can coach Nyanga 'Crooks' Hlophe and his troops finally deliver the win their supporters long for after spending the whole of last season inactive due to their marathon relegation court case?

Without a doubt, the supporters are back in the stadia and rallying behind their team, but they so much long for a win to mark their return to action after winning the relegation case. Against Rangers, it can not be any easy, and with their former coach Mthunzi 'Lomphofu' Ginindza in charge, Wanderers must brace for a tough outing. Winning at King Sobhuza will not be easy against Rangers, who will also be looking for their first win of the season. Their past meetings are encouraging and enough to give Rangers the confidence to upset the maroon and white outfit. Rangers will want to make up for the 3-2 defeat inflicted by Amawele last Saturday. It's an interesting match to watch! If it helps, Rangers has beaten Wanderers 2-0 before.

►Manzini Wanderers captain Mlamuli'Mlaba' Nkhambule.

Key Players
Sandile Mazibuko (Wanderers winger)
Pius Baffour (Wanderers defender)
Hleliso Gamedze (Rangers striker)
Bongani Mvubu (Rangers midfielder)
HEAD-TO-HEAD 2023/24:
MTN Premier League
12/11/23
M. Wanderers 0-2 Rangers
28/03/24
Rangers 0-1 M. Wanderers

◀Hleliso Gamedze of Rangers.



One year layoff for Sitsebe

By Sibusiso Masilela
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OVER one-year layoff for Sitsebe Samhlekezi.

This follows the indefinite postponement of the 2025 COSAFA Women's Champions League due to a lack of a host country.

The annual women's showpiece will now take place between October/November 2026 at a venue still to be confirmed.

The rescheduled edition will serve as a qualifier for the 2025 Women's Africa Cup of Nations, which will be held in Morocco.

The top four teams from the continental women's showpiece will represent the continent in the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup to be hosted by Brazil.

COSAFA executive director Sue Destombes thanked member associations for their cooperation.

"We appreciate the understanding and continued support of all stakeholders as we work to maintain the high standards of Women's Football within our region," she said. Sitsebe coach Bongani Makhukhula lamented the news when reached for comment.

"It's unfortunate that the tournament has been postponed when we have started our preparations. However, this will give



▲ Sitsebe Semhlekezi.

the players an opportunity to focus on the national women's league with their respective clubs before we resume our

preparations," he said. Sitsebe last compete in the 2025 African Women cup of nations qualifiers earlier this year.

MulaSport fuels Kusekhaya cycling race with E60 000

By Sibusiso Masilela
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MULASPORT has continued with its mission to develop sports in the country.

The betting company has pumped in E60 000 towards the 2025 Kusekhaya Lowveld Invitation challenge scheduled for November 22, 2025, in Mhlume.

MulaSport Marketing Manager Phetsile Xulu said the sponsorship was part of their social investment program.

"Our partnership with Kusekhaya is about more than just a race; it's about fostering a culture of sport and healthy activity. Following our support of other sporting events during the Trade Fair, we're excited to help bring this inclusive cycling event to life and crown new champions."

The investment will be split between enhancing the event's logistics and providing a substantial prize pool for the winners, ensuring a high-quality experience for all participants.

The host club, Kusekaya cycling club principal, Mduduzi Kaudi, said the race will feature both road and mountain bikes categories.

"In a continued effort to cater to the entire cycling community, the 2025 edition will once again feature dedicated categories for both road and mountain bikes. This initiative acknowledges the diverse interests of Eswatini's cyclists and addresses a gap in the national racing calendar.

"Traditionally a road race, we've listened to our community and are thrilled to officially welcome mountain bikers again,"



▲ MulaSport Marketing Manager Phetsile Xulu.

he said.

He further stated that the aim of the race is to unite athletes from various countries.

The annual road race will be attended by international riders from South Africa and Mozambique.

Goal

"Our goal is simple: to create a premier event that brings every cyclist together for a day of competition and camaraderie," he said. The race offers a spectrum of distances to challenge athletes of all levels, from a family-friendly 5km to a demanding 120km course. Cyclists can secure their spot by registering online at: <https://forms.gle/vqMsbhmrSSrD6v8NA>.

For registration support or further information, participants are encouraged to contact the race organizers via WhatsApp at +268 7605 4338 or email at kusekayarace@gmail.com.

Proceeds from the event will help the club meet its operational goals as well as support its social responsibility programs.

This year's benefactor is the Vuvulane Town Centre, which houses 24 orphaned and vulnerable children.

MulaSport supports several sports initiative in the country, such as the E4.5 National First Division league and the annual Trade Fair cup, which includes basketball, netball, and volleyball, among others.



Eswatini reignite olympism

By Sibusiso Masilela
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ESWATINI has committed itself to spearheading the spirit of Olympism in the country.

This follows the unveiling of the Olympic rings at the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (EOCGA) headquarters in Lobamba on Monday.

EOCGA President Adam 'Bomber' Mtsetfwa said the move was part of their effort to promote Olympic values in the country.

"Today, we come together to celebrate a moment of great pride and significance for the Eswatini Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association — the unveiling of the Olympic Rings at our newly upgraded headquarters, which includes the magnificent driveway in front of you. This event symbolizes much more than a physical improvement to our facilities; it stands as a bold statement of our enduring commitment to the Olympic values of excellence, friendship, and respect, and our vision to inspire the next generation of athletes and leaders," he said.

Support

He also thanked the International Olympic Committee and other bodies for supporting their organisation.

"This milestone would not have been possible without the generous support of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) through Olympic Solidarity (OS), and our continental body, the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA). We extend our deepest gratitude to both institutions for their continued investment and trust in the EOCGA and in the development of sport within the Kingdom of Eswatini," he said. Mthethwa also applauded their standing partnership with the Eswatini Sports and Recreation Council (ESRC).

"We also take this opportunity to acknowledge our strong partnership with the Eswatini Sports and Recreation Council (ESRC). Together, we are working hand in hand to strengthen governance, promote athlete development, and ensure that sport remains a vital driver of national unity and youth empowerment," he said. The event was attended by Minister of Sports, Culture, and Youth Affairs Bongani Nzima and British High Commissioner Chris Wells, and representatives from the various member associations.



Alonso hails prolific Mbappe

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MulaSport fuels Kusekhaya cycling race with E60 000

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Daily News

Wednesday 22
October, 2025

Sport



2025 COSAFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
POSTPONED



SITSEBE SEMHLEKAZI



EFA
SINCE 1968



SITSEBE SEMHLEKAZI

One year
layoff
for Sitsebe

... Following the indefinite postponement of the 2025 COSAFA Women's Champions League, the women national team, Sitsebe Samhlekezi will be inactive until October/November 2026. **Page 23**